

WIU Oral Histories Program - James C. Gorsuch

Subject: James Clement Gorsuch

Birth: 06 Sep 1895

Death: 02 Apr 1984

Date of Recording: 18 Nov 1978

Interviewer: Lawrence Montgomery

Description: In this interview, Mr. Gorsuch talks about the Macomb, Industry & Littleton (M. I. & L.) Railroad, focusing primarily on its last days.

Original Media: Audio cassette

Note: Mr. Montgomery is the nephew of Mr. Gorsuch.

Length: 50:57

Montgomery: Well, ladies and gentlemen, this is a very auspicious occasion for me. Today is November eighteenth, nineteen seventy-eight [November 18, 1978]. My name is, uh, Lawrence Montgomery, and uh, at the present time I am visiting with my uncle, who- whose name is James Montgo- uh, [chuckles] James Gorsuch. Uh, [clears throat] He uh, pre- present time, lives, [clears throat] west of Littleton, Illinois, on a farm, and he was one of the last employees of the-

Gorsuch: M. I. L.

Montgomery: -defunct M, I, and L Railroad. And, uh, he has agreed today to talk to me about the railroad. I as an individual remember- remember the railroad as a, as a small child. And I, as I read the various books concerning this particular railroad, uh, it describes the equipment and such as that, and of course I remember it as a, a, some tremendous iron horses in terms of the engines. I also remember the coach, uh, which, uh, it carried a few passengers in those days. To fill you in just a little bit on M, I, and L railroad, it was originally built in nineteen oh one [1901] and it was called the Macomb and Western Illinois Railroad. And later changed in nineteen fourteen [1914] I believe it was, to um, [papers shuffling] to, uh, the M, I, and L. Macomb, Industry, and Littleton Railroad.

Now, [clears throat] the railroad was originally built by a corporation headed by Mister Chandler and William Compton, [clears throat] dignified residents of Macomb, Illinois. The railroad was originally built to carry coal from the lands owned by Mister Chandler, in the area of Gin Ridge. However, upon more exploration and testing of the coal, it was found that that coal had too much sulfur in it for good use, I guess, as a home, uh, fuel. And so, [clears throat] that- that, uh, wa- proved to be a rather inappropriate ve- venture, because, in the year of, uh, nineteen oh f- uh, [pause] in, uh, I should say first, in the, the, made their first run on the road in nineteen oh four [1904]. And, six years later, uh, it went bankrupt.

So, [clears throat] prior to, uh, they- going bankrupt, they did alter the route of the railroad from the Gin Ridge area to include several different uh, wayside stations between Macomb, Industry, and Littleton. Littleton was the southern terminal, and Macomb was the northern terminal, and in between they had what we commonly call switches. [Brief tape cut] These switches were located at Henderson, Kirkpatrick, Andrews, and Runkle. Okay, uh, [clears throat] that's enough introduction for- about the railroad. Ah, my uncle here, James Gorsuch, you were what, Uncle James? What were you [trails into mumble]?

Gorsuch: Uh, I was a conductor and brakeman. They wouldn't furnish no brakemen, so I was conductor and brakeman.

Montgomery: Yeah, when was that?

Gorsuch: Last three years I was on, it was a... see about [pause] twenty-nine or thirty [1929 or 1930], wasn't it?

Montgomery: Well somewhere around, it was, I- I believe the- believe it went bankrupt around nineteen twenty-eight [1928]. I don't know exactly when they quit running on the line myself, but the-

Gorsuch: Yeah. I didn't help, eh, finish, uh, tearing the track up, though.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: But I, uh, I worked as long as any of 'em did work.

Montgomery: Mm. [papers shuffling] I understand that, uh, you- you were not working on the railroad-

[5:05]

Gorsuch: No, I-

Montgomery: -when they were hauling gravel.

Gorsuch: No, I didn't haul gravel.

Montgomery: Mm?

Gorsuch: I just finished, eh... I was workin' on the state road.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And I come back, and they- they had a place for me. Or, I mean, place on the train for me.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: When Roy Sutherland, eh, got off, he got... off, anyhow.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: I don't know what-

Montgomery: Roy Sutherland was one of the original engineers-

Gorsuch: Yeah-

Montgomery: -wasn't he?

Gorsuch: No, he was a fir- he was a conductor.

Montgomery: He was a conductor?

Gorsuch: Yeah-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -and I took his place.

Montgomery: Ah, I see. Well now, [clears throat] who were the crewmen when you were on the rail?

Gorsuch: Otis Gunnings and Joe Johnson.

Montgomery: Otis Gunnings and Joe Johnson.

Gorsuch: Otis Gunnings was the engineer.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: And Joe was a fireman.

Montgomery: Where did Joe live? Where was his home?

Gorsuch: Littleton.

Montgomery: Littleton. Otis Gunnings, he li-

Gorsuch: Yeah, he lived in Littleton too.

Montgomery: He lived in Littleton too.

Gorsuch: We kept the train at night, at Littleton.

Montgomery: Aah. Well, then, did you ever know of a person by the name of Tom Henricks?

Gorsuch: Yeah, I've heard that name.

Montgomery: And William Harvey?

Gorsuch: I don't remember Harvey.

Montgomery: Apparently, they must have come from the Macomb area, because they were the original engineers that made the first run-

Gorsuch: Well, that was when they first put in the railroad.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: [repeating himself, softer] That was when they first put in the railroad.

Montgomery: Well I understand the fir- when they first put in the railroad, the, the track ran up near the old Macomb High School, which was on the corner of Washington and, uh, um, uh, Johnson Street.

Gorsuch: Yeah, it over- ended over by the pottery, was the end.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. I see. Well now, later on it was changed. Uh, the turntable, did you ever know of it being down by the hospital?

Gorsuch: Yeah, that was a switch in there-

Montgomery: Mm.

Gorsuch: -and where they turned- went around in this Y.

Montgomery: Uh huh, when it went in a Y?

Gorsuch: Yeah, and turned.

Montgomery: Well now, did there ever exist a track all the way up, uh, to the C, B, and Q track out by uh, west side of town, the pottery?

Gorsuch: Yeah. Uh, the switch engine come out and got us. We never went up to the depot at all.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And, uh, they [spoken under Montgomery: come out and got us-]

Montgomery: That's uh, with the C, B, and Q depot?

Gorsuch: Yeah. We, uh, yeah they took, uh, they took the, uh, all the trains with, uh, grain and hogs and cattle.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: We'd haul.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. Ha- Did uh, did uh, they ever have many box cars, or did they-

Gorsuch: No-

Montgomery: -with anybody else's name on it, or did- did- just B-

Gorsuch: No-

Montgomery: -C, B, and Q?

Gorsuch: No, Q or some other railroad-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -that we'd come in with coal, and, and then shipped in [pause] all kinds of stuff.

Montgomery: Mm.

Gorsuch: Lumber and everything.

Montgomery: Everything.

Gorsuch: And then took 'em back.

Montgomery: Well, how many pieces of railroad equipment do you think the M, I, and L had when you worked for them?

Gorsuch: Oh they, they had a lot, they had uh, a crew out of Littleton, and a crew out of Industry, and a crew out of Macomb.

Montgomery: Wow, three engines?

Gorsuch: Eh?

Montgomery: Did they have three engines?

Gorsuch: No, no, they had uh, a handcar,-

Montgomery: Handca-

Gorsuch: -and that was switch- that was the, uh, working the switching.

Montgomery: Wor- working crews, uh huh.

Gorsuch: Yeah, working crews, building up the track.

Montgomery: Uh huh, building the track. Well, I got the impression from reading a particular book, that they, they only had one engine.

Gorsuch: Well, uh, yeah, we had uh, we had two, for a while, and then one cost too much so they just fixed up the- I think it was number six.

Montgomery: Number six-

Gorsuch: I think.

Montgomery: -Old number six, huh.

Gorsuch: I believe it was.

Montgomery: Did it have a coal tender on behind, on the coal car?

Gorsuch: Oh, yeah! Yeah.

Montgomery: I- I've seen pictures of uh, of where they didn't have a coal-

Gorsuch: Yeah, we-

Montgomery: -car.

Gorsuch: We had a coal car, just like in, in-

Montgomery: The big engines.

Gorsuch: Q, Yeah.

Montgomery: I can remember when-

Gorsuch: It was a good, big engine, though-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -a pretty good engine.

Montgomery: Did, did- Yeah, it seemed like a monster when I was a kid, uh, they-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: I was quite impressed by that big engine. 'Cause I think one time you let me climb up in the cab-

Gorsuch: Oh really?

Montgomery: -and I thought that, that was just like going to the rocket, uh, to-

Gorsuch: I expect.

Montgomery: -to the moon.

Gorsuch: No, see, they, uh took it around the Y a little and turned it around.

Montgomery: Uh huh. Well. [clears throat] Well let's talk a little bit about the, uh uh, starting at Littleton. Uh, you said they took it around the Y, what did you mean by that?

Gorsuch: It just, eh, just run straight down and then back out, just like you're backing a car out-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And back way out here and then a- and then another tractor come back in, uh, headed the other way.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. 'Cause if I remember correctly, that went around a big gob pile- [also called a "spoil pile," this is a pile built of accumulated spoil – the overburden or other waste rock removed during coal and ore mining.]

[10:00]

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -with a comb on it.

Gorsuch: Yeah, that's right.

Montgomery: Yeah and, uh, well see, according to what I've read, that was the purpose of the M, I, and L. Was to haul coal, originally.

Gorsuch: Well-

Montgomery: From Chandler's coal fields.

Gorsuch: Stock, and-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: Stock and then, uh, road got into bad shape, and-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -and we couldn't pay up. Had to-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -couldn't-

Montgomery: How much were you making in a day, while working on the railroad?

Gorsuch: Uh, eighty-five dollars, uh, last of it, I got eighty-five dollars a month.

Montgomery: Eighty-five dollars a month.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Now, how many hours did you spend on the tra- on the-

Gorsuch: Oh, from ten to sixteen hours.

Montgomery: Ten to sixteen hours.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Now, in those days, were you hauling any passengers at all?

Gorsuch: Yeah-

Montgomery: [Speaking over Gorsuch] You still had the coach?

Gorsuch: -Oh, we'd have from one to three, yeah we took coach.

Montgomery: Well how- what was the fare, for that, the ride?

Gorsuch: Well, uh, sixty cents, from Littleton to Macomb.

Montgomery: Sixty cents, it cost, uh huh.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah, and then the different switches, and roads, we stopped at the house stops-

Montgomery: The house stops.

Gorsuch: -And then it cost all the way from fifteen cents to... s- eh, forty cents, eh, from-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -Industry down [trailing off] sixty cents...

Montgomery: [overlapping] I- I- I remember your brother, my uncle-

Gorsuch: Yes.

Montgomery: -my youngest uncle used to ride, uh, from Littleton to Industry, going to high school.

Gorsuch: Yeah, yeah, they-.

Montgomery: Every night and morning.

Gorsuch: Yeah, they, they, they done that, but they got so- we got off the track so much, of course we delayed.

Montgomery: You mean she'd jump the track?

Gorsuch: Yeah, sh- boxcars would.

Montgomery: Whoa, uh huh.

Gorsuch: And uh-

Montgomery: [interrupting] What were y-

Gorsuch: [continuing] -course M, I, and L, or I mean the C, B, and Q, said- one day I was up the, the switch- up the depot-

Montgomery: In Macomb?

Gorsuch: -and they backed, they backed a car off the track, and I happened to walk up to them, and he said, "Let that son of a gun from, uh, M, I, and L," he said, "He'll load that in fifteen minutes!"

Montgomery: [laughs] You mean get it back on the track?

Gorsuch: Yeah! Get it back on the track, that's right...

Montgomery: [laughs, overlapping] I, I saw a picture one time uh, in the book, about they had a big wreck. Did you ever see that, ah, where the engine was lying on its side, and uh, boxcars were kinda piled up, did you ever have a wreck like that?

Gorsuch: No, we had, uh, where there's a vent, uh, north of Littleton, two mile, where there's a big, uh, holler, steep holler-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -the trestle crossed there and there was one vent fell out from unders, and the engine, when I- it was jerking the coach around, cause I- in the coach, and I couldn't, eh, get the easy end of the door out of the jump. But I couldn't get to the door til after the, I looked out and front door, and then the engine was headed up toward the sky-

Montgomery: [laughs]

Gorsuch: -sides when it come down it just went like THAT. Teetered.

Montgomery: [laughs, overlapping] Ohh, nooo... It just teetered on the rails, huh?

Gorsuch: Yeah. It j- Yeah, it come right down on the rails and went on out on level. Except the engine, eneer [engineer], and the fireman, both, was just as white as any chalk.

Montgomery: [laughs] They were really scared!

Gorsuch: Course I wasn't making a racket.

Montgomery: [laughs, overlapping]

Gorsuch: [laughs]

Montgomery: Well that about a- really must ha- how fast did you usually travel?

Gorsuch: Oh, all the way from uh, four mile an hour to ten.

Montgomery: Four to ten. Well now, were you making more than one run a day, then?

Gorsuch: Yeah, we made two runs up to the last few months.

Montgomery: Two runs a day. That-

Gorsuch: Two runs a day, yeah.

Montgomery: That's about eighty miles a day you we-

Gorsuch: Yep.

Montgomery: -you we-

Gorsuch: Yep, about eighty miles.

Montgomery: [clears throat] Well I was just curious, uh, uh, how much coal did that engine use, uh...?

Gorsuch: Well, uh, by golly I don't know. It would use, uh, the tinder I expect it drew- used two ton anyway.

Montgomery: Two ton a coal a day.

Gorsuch: Yeah, I imagine, that's a [inaudible, possibly "wild guess].

Montgomery: [talking over Gorsuch] That's, that's, What's that, fifty bushels? That's fifty bushels is-

Gorsuch: Yeah, two ton. Yeah.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Well that was kinda a whole bunch a coal.

Gorsuch: Yeah, yeah that's right.

Montgomery: Yeah. Well, talking about the, [clears throat] the, uh [papers shuffling] the railroad itself, that is, the sidings. Which was the first siding north of Macomb? I mean, north of uh, Littleton?

Gorsuch: Uh, the Runkle Switch.

Montgomery: How far was it up the track?

Gorsuch: Oh, about three mile.

Montgomery: About three miles-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -north of Macomb.

Gorsuch: North of-

Montgomery: [overlapping] I mean north of Littleton.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: North of Littleton.

Montgomery: And then, what was the next stop?

Gorsuch: Industry.

Montgomery: Industry. Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah, the next stop. And then we went up to Kirkpatrick Switch.

Montgomery: That's uh, about, what, four miles north of Industry?

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah. No, north of Industry.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: North and west of Industry.

Montgomery: North and west. Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah. And uh, then uh, from uh, that there switch over to Andrews Switch.

Montgomery: Oh, where was the Andrews Switch?

Gorsuch: It's just north a, er, tater, I uh, Camp Creek.

Montgomery: Just north of Camp Creek?

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah, up there-

Montgomery: I, I think I kinda know where it is-

Gorsuch: Yeah, Camp Creek.

Montgomery: -and before we finish this tape, I would like to take a drive up that, uh, up that way, and then you can just sorta describe more to me- What- let's take the Runkle Switch, for example, what- what was at Runkle Switch?

[15:11]

Gorsuch: They- just a, a kind of a little, uh, house for 'em to get in and out of the rain or if it was raining or something, and then they had a, an a- elevator to load a, a car of grain or-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: anything there.

Montgomery: Di-

Gorsuch: But it blowed over.

Montgomery: Oh, it blew away, huh, uh huh?

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: What about up at the Kirkpatrick Switch? Was that a pretty elaborate one?

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Well they had an elevator up there.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And, uh, they bought grain and, and shipped it out.

Montgomery: Ah. In other words, this was a commercial, uh, elevator which they bought, and then they shipped grain on to som-

Gorsuch: Well, I have an idea. Eh, I think the farmers owned that elevator.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Way- That's the way I am. It was one of those farmer co-op, uh, uh, organizations. And then Andrews Switch was the closest one to Macomb, alright.

Gorsuch: Four mile switch. Yeah.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. Where, where did the road bed run, along uh, when you came out of Macomb?

Gorsuch: Drive straight down along the, the blacktop where it is now.

Montgomery: Saint Francis street, uh huh, Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah. Saint Francis.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. And then it went below Kirkpatrick Switch, and then it turn-

Gorsuch: [interrupting] Turnt east.

Montgomery: Huh?

Gorsuch: Turnt east, toward Industry.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Yes, and it went east. It went to Industry.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Well, now, um, uh, if I am correct, the, the depot at Littleton is still standing.

Gorsuch: Yeah, it's still-

Montgomery: [overlapping] And this is nineteen seventy eight, which means that building's quite old.

Gorsuch: Yeah, but it's in, looks like in pretty good shape.

Montgomery: Yeah, it's-

Gorsuch: I think that the elevator owns it.

Montgomery: Uh huh. It's just on the south side of Route-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -one oh one [101].

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Right there in the village of Littleton.

Gorsuch: Yep.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: Yeah, they, they had stock yards along at them, uh, places too-

Montgomery: [overlapping] At the, all the sidings.

Gorsuch: -they loaded cattle, hogs...

Montgomery: Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Well now, did you have to help load 'em, or did the farmers-

Gorsuch: Yeah, we got- we helped load 'em, and the farmers helped, and we just helped, all the way down.

Montgomery: [overlapping; chuckles] Boy, everybody helped, uh huh?

Gorsuch: Yeah. But it got into such bad shape, and then the trucks got to going-

Montgomery: [interrupting] After the highway's built.

Gorsuch: And, yeah, the highway was built, and the trucks got to going, and that took, uh, the stock, uh...

Montgomery: This book I've been reading, it says that the railroad was in pretty bad shape, that is, the road-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] It was in bad shape.

Montgomery: Yeah, before they started hauling the gravel which built the highways, which we dealt the death blow to the, to the railroad. Because it like you said, the, the trucks started to traveling, and hauling all the-

Gorsuch: Yeah, it bring-

Montgomery: -cattle and grain to, uh, Rushville-

Gorsuch: Oh, yep.

Montgomery: -uh, and it, and Ma- Macomb instead of you guys.

Gorsuch: Yep. Yep. And hauling stock, yeah.

Montgomery: Well, what was the story, as you remember, about why the railroad was not extended on to Rushville? Do you-

Gorsuch: Well, no, I didn't. They, they had the road partly fixed, part way to Rushville. The levee, eh down there, eh south of the log cabin on the hard road-

Montgomery: Which is on Route s-, one, sixty seven.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] -eh, eh, it's kind of a levee there, where they had that built. [words lost under Montgomery's speech]

Montgomery: [overlapping] In other words, so you're, you're saying to me that, uh that there was, the road bed was partially constructed on towards Rushville from Littleton.

Gorsuch: Well, uh, the rails never was going or-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -nothing, they just was starting to fix it-

Montgomery: The road bed, Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -but something, something that they didn't do it.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: Ran out of money, I expect.

Montgomery: Well I, well, my research on this has led me to believe, that uh, there was a need, for the railroad to be built. But, about that time, there was some mini, uh, railroad sales being made between the major railroad companies, and C, B, and Q decided not to co- continue the road on down to Rushville. The fact that they didn't even complete it in Macomb as far as that concerned, with Littleton. It was Chandler who did it.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: But ma, It wa-, there wa-, the uh, road would eventually connect it at Rushville, for another route, which was supposed to run from Rushville to Mount Sterling, but never did get built.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: And, at the same time, uh, the C, B, and Q decided to use their present rail road bed, from Bu-, uh, Beardstown to Frederick to Astoria to Vermont, that way, rather than come up this way,

Gorsuch: Now-

Montgomery: -uh, through uh, Schuyler County and uh, and McDonough County. So that's one of the reasons the railroad didn't get built, as I understand it. [clears throat] Um-

Gorsuch: Now they've made the cut, now they've made the cut in leaving Astoria off, only they can run down there when they need to, cars.

Montgomery: Mmhmm. I see them once in a while-

[20:00]

Gorsuch: Still.

Montgomery: -going that- going down that way. Uh, but anyway [clears throat]. Now, uh, how many years did you work for the railroad?

Gorsuch: Bout three years.

Montgomery: Bout three years.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: Last three years.

Montgomery: Last three years of the railroad. Now, [clears throat] uh, you said you hauled- well, you've said you hauled gravel to construct the highways-

Gorsuch: Yeah, to build this hard road.

Montgomery: Well, yeah. Build a hard road. Now, how many cars of gravel, or sand, did you haul at a time, all, behind one engine?

Gorsuch: Thr- three, three was all we could haul.

Montgomery: Three could, all you could haul. N-, you said it jumped off the track lots of times. And you had to put it back on the track. Ah-

Gorsuch: Yeah, them big loads, I, we, ah, of course we had to put them on too. But uh, the section crews always helped us-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -do that. But empty boxcars, or, or cattle cars, empty, we uh, load them ourselves.

Montgomery: Okay, well now, we'll say, we'll say it just got off the rails a little bit. How do you get the boxcar back on the rail?

Gorsuch: You just drop a frog, what they call a frog, it runs up on it, and then it uh, it slants off, and then it just drops back on the track.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And then-

Montgomery: Did you ever get four wheels off at a time?

Gorsuch: Oh, yes. Lots. Lots.

Montgomery: [speaking over Gorsuch] Lots of times, you got four wheels off at a time.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Was it awful difficult to get those loaded uh, gravel cars back on the track?

Gorsuch: Well, if they was loaded, we couldn't do it, but uh, we were pretty lucky on bringin' the loads. Didn't get so many of them off.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: Uh, they'd uh, the much weight they'd twist when the hold, where empty ones would be a little stiff, and they'd raise one wheel up and run off, see.

Montgomery: Oh, I see, yeah. When one got off, uh, they-

Gorsuch: They'd pull the other one off.

Montgomery: Pull the other one off, uh huh. Oh, see, well that's... Well, did you have a crane of any kind? You never had a crane of any kind. You sort of-

Gorsuch: No. No, all-

Montgomery: Pulled or pushed it back onto the tracks.

Gorsuch: No. No, our engine pulled it and pushed it.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: When we got off, he just pulled forward or back.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: Every which way that the trucks was lined up-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -we'd either push it back on the track, and if it was lined up to pull forward, we'd go forward on the track.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Mmhmm. I see. Well let's uh, [clears throat] Okay now, uh, once upon a time, well, let's talk a little bit about these bridges, now. You told me a story once upon a time, about the, uh, the train, or the engine, uh, uh, uh, or now I should say the tracks all- to terrible shape-

Gorsuch: They'd been-

Montgomery: -that you had to get off and let the engine and the car go by itself, and then you guys walked across and caught it on the other side.

Gorsuch: Well, uh-

Montgomery: How did you do that?

Gorsuch: [chuckling] No, yeah.

Montgomery: Mm.

Gorsuch: I don't know if I did- eh, we didn't exactly, but- but we had bridges where we shoulda done that.

Montgomery: Oh, I see. Oh I s-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yep. But that one can- that one holler, that one bend, fell out, clear out-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -and then this rails held together, they was bolted together, of course.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: Held it together, and carried us on out fo-

Montgomery: Oh, I see. We-

Gorsuch: And if we'd have went down, we'd have went down fifty or sixty feet.

Montgomery: Oh, boy, that was a deep kind of canyon, or deep ditch.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah, that was, and it's still, it's still there, too.

Montgomery: Uh huh. Which was your longest bridge?

Gorsuch: Well, it must have been Camp Creek.

Montgomery: Camp Creek was, that's about, uh, six miles south of Macomb, isn't it?

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Uh huh. That was your longest bridge, and your deepest bridge, where was it? I mean, the ah, deepest-

Gorsuch: Well, that there was up pretty high, Camp Creek.

Montgomery: Camp Creek was high.

Gorsuch: Yeah, really high.

Montgomery: Yeah, re-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Outside of that one holler we did cross.

Montgomery: Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm. Well, that there is, uh, uh, very interesting, that's for sure, and uh, uh, I um, uh, uh, like to uh, re-emphasize again: When you quit, I mean when the railroad went busted, and you quit running, you were the conductor and brakeman, right?

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: And Otis Gunnings was the engineer-

Gorsuch: Engineer.

Montgomery: -and-

Gorsuch: Joe Johnson.

Montgomery: Joe Johnson. Oh, yeah, I remember him now!

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah!

Montgomery: He lived up there on the corner!

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Joe- Joe Johnson was a-

Montgomery: [overlapping] Yeah, yeah!

Gorsuch: -and uh, was a, uh, fireman.

Montgomery: He was a fireman. Now, you were the youngest person, weren't you?

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: You were the youngest-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah.

Montgomery: -person because-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] They were both grown.

Montgomery: - I remember they were all older people to me.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: And when I was a kid. Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And then, uh, course when we hauled gravel, we run two engines. We had, uh, I- or, two engines then.

Montgomery: Oh.

Gorsuch: And uh, we uh, we had, uh... well now, see I d- Mack Pete. They- He was a-

Montgomery: [enunciating] Mack Pete?

Gorsuch: Mack Pete, yeah. They called him Mack Pete.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

[25:00]

Gorsuch: Yeah, was the superintendent-

Montgomery: Yeah?

Gorsuch: on hauling the, hauling the gravel.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: And, uh, course that other, uh, I forgot his name, uh, name of one.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: All before that.

Montgomery: Mmhmm, mmhmm. C, B, and Q brought you the gravel cars, didn't they?

Gorsuch: Oh, yeah, they brought the loads in, set 'em out on our track, and we just backed up, and hooked on to 'em until- and then we took the empties back and'd get the full ones, and... take 'em down.

Montgomery: [overlapping, repeatedly] Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Okay now, uh, you... still work long hours during that time period.

Gorsuch: Yeah. They uh, I don't know, they... I, one night I got off at Andrews Switch, got off a car off a track, and Otis and Joe uncoupled it, and said that we were low on water and we had to go in. So, um, I went to Springfield the next day, got off on furlough for a day or two, and uh, when I come back, there was another fellow in my job.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And they told me to come in.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And, uh, I went in, and so they told me that, that Mack Pete said, "You know a fellow might get fired for s- leaving that on the main track, not put on." So, I said, "Well, they said they's low on water, and they, they go," and so they- he said, "Who uncoupled it?" And I said, "They did."

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And, so um, he threw, uh, he said, "Well you know you might get fired up for leaving it on the main track, off [the] track," and I said, "Well, uh, you know I wouldn't give you a nickel for your job."

[both laugh]

Gorsuch: So that's, that's-

Montgomery: Uh huh

Gorsuch: -the way we got settled. So he called 'em in.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: And that other fellow went off, right quick.

Montgomery: Oh, I see! He-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] And they put me back on.

Montgomery: Put you back on! So-

Gorsuch: And said I was boss from this on.

Montgomery: Oh, well you was the boss, huh?

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah. From this on.

Montgomery: Well, you being the conductor, you would be boss, wouldn't you?

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah. I was supposed to be, before.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Supposed to be, [laughing] supposed to be before! [laughing] Well yeah, that's, that's what I always understood, that the, the conductor was always the-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -the guy that... You were talking earlier about the uh, section hands.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: And the-

Gorsuch: They had a motor car apiece-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -and then-

Montgomery: What's a motor car look like?

Gorsuch: Oh, just like a-

Montgomery: You know, the year two thousand [2000], they won't know what a motorcar looks like, unless you tell 'em.

Gorsuch: Well, it uh, you know, uh, it was just a small, like a handcar, only there was a motor on there-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -and it could go a good hickory, all fast as you wanted to go on rough as that road was.

Montgomery: [overlapping, repeatedly] Uh huh, Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: So uh... And then, for a while, it would stop for like the coal and stuff. I hauled express from Macomb to Littleton every day.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: With a motorcar.

Montgomery: Well, the benefit of people who don't know what a handcar [is], in the early days the handcar was, was propelled by about four men-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -pumping up and down on a mechanism that caused the, uh, fo- little four-wheeled vehicle with a flat bed on it, to travel down the railroad tracks. Well, later on it became mechanized, and they had a little gasoline engine that propelled it along. And I, as a little-

young kid of about fifteen years old, used to go with my father to- who was Beryl Montgomery (married to Frances L. Gorsuch), uh, and uh, and maybe with my uncle here, to work. And uh, we used to, I used to get there and run that thing up and down the railroad track, and I never will forget the day I ran it off the, through the open switch, at Runkle Switch-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -and I thought I'd really ripped it then, because-

Gorsuch: [laughs]

Montgomery: -I said it was green and they said No it wasn't, it was red, and, and, course I guess I wasn't sufficiently well trained. Anyway, I went bumping on the railroad ties, and we got it back on the track. And uh, and uh, I didn't get to drive it many more, more times than that, but it was sure a lot of fun to go up and down the track with that there, uh, motorcar, or pro- or the real, original name was a handcar. Now you said in the last few days of the- your employment on the railroad, uh [clears throat] you hauled, uh, freight, from over the line by using one of these uh, um, uh, vehicles, um... Ah, how long do you estimate that you were hauling freight like this on-

Gorsuch: On the motorcar?

Montgomery: On the motorcar.

Gorsuch: Oh, I don't suppose over three weeks.

Montgomery: About three weeks.

Gorsuch: Yeah. Something like that.

Montgomery: [overlapping] In other words, they, they, they had decided by that time the engine and there was the track was too bad for the engine to travel, and...

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Maybe the engine was busted, I don't know.

[30:00]

Gorsuch: No, the engine was doing it all right.

Montgomery: [mumbles] Okay, well, uh, and then uh, uh, after you uh, after you uh, uh, uh... What was the, some of the things that uh, Do you have any recollections of your last payday? Of, uh, of the road, or did-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Well, that, that-

Montgomery: [overlapping] -they have a ceremony, or...?

Gorsuch: -that was, no, they didn't.

Montgomery: [overlapping] They didn't have a ceremony, eh?

Gorsuch: You just got your check.

Montgomery: You just got your check!

Gorsuch: Yeah, just got your check-

Montgomery: [overlapping] Did you se-

Gorsuch: -at the end of the month.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: And so, we, we got our check, the fireman and the rest [of the] train crew.

Montgomery: Mm.

Gorsuch: We got our money.

Montgomery: You got your money. They never did owe you any-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yep. No, they never owed us anything.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Mmhmm. Was it sort of a sad day for everybody?

Gorsuch: Huh?

Montgomery: Was it a sort of a sad day, or-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Oh, yeah in a way. But, but it was, uh, pretty well shot, the road was, in there.

Montgomery: Yeah.

Gorsuch: And we got so it, it was, uh, people was afraid to ship their stock anyhow the trucks took it, took the livestock-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -and then, uh, course the elevators, they sent wheat and stuff out on us, you know.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And corn.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And uh, so that's the way it went.

Montgomery: Well what did you start doing after you, ah, we'll say uh, we- I set to ask this question, first. Ah, when did you get your last paycheck? Was it wintertime, summertime, or what?

Gorsuch: It must have been in the fall, I-

Montgomery: In the fall.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: In other words, before the snow and freezes came, you decided to quit.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah, I, that's right.

Montgomery: Uh huh. Well that's uh, that's-

Gorsuch: And then I come out to the farm.

Montgomery: Then you came out to the farm.

Gorsuch: And I been here ever since.

Montgomery: Been here ever since!

[both laugh]

Montgomery: Well that- uh, the- that- I meant to ask you, earlier, ah, where were you born?

Gorsuch: Ah, east of-

Montgomery: Uncle James?

Gorsuch: East and a little north of Industry.

Montgomery: East-

Gorsuch: In Gid Standard's place.

Montgomery: In Gid Standard's place.

Gorsuch: Back in the field from the new house out on the road.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Uh huh, Uh huh. And then you were born, is that, that's in McDonough County, isn't it?

Gorsuch: Yeah, McDonough County.

Montgomery: And then you lived in the, Schuyler, and uh, uh, County all your life, haven't you?

Gorsuch: Yeah, eh, Schuyler and Fulton.

Montgomery: Oh, Schuy-

Gorsuch: Over in Lewistown.

Montgomery: Oh, by Lewistown, huh?

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Uh huh, uh huh.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Okay, well then you and I, you um, uh, your first wife, Bertha Bozard, is deceased-
[Bertha Edna Bozard Gorsuch (May 27, 1899 - February 23, 1966), married February 3, 1917]

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -you have a son, uh, Gerald, that lives in Rushville.
[Gerald Albert Gorsuch (March 15, 1919 - April 11, 1979), married Eileen (Grafton) Coffey]

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: A daughter by the name of Myrtle Teel?

Gorsuch: Myrtle, uh, yeah, Myrtle Terry.
[Myrtle Florine Gorsuch Terry (June 18, 1921 - August 6, 2016), married to Earl E. Terry]

Montgomery: Terry. Yeah. Mary- Myrtle Terry, that lives in Moline.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Uh, you have a daughter, uh, named Aletha. She is Missus [Mrs.] Hickman?
[Letha May Gorsuch Hickman (July 24, 1924 - December 11, 2014), married to Cleitus E. Hickman]

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Who lives next, uh-

Gorsuch: West of Littleton.

Montgomery: Just west of Littleton, right, and their farm borders your farm. And then you have another daughter by the name of Myrna Powell-
[Myrna Gorsuch Powell, married to Richard Powell]

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -who lives in Rushville, and sh- fa- ner- uh, husband's name is Dick Powell, Richard Powell, who's an auctioneer. And now, your second wife is Jo- Josephine Bozard Smith.
[Josephine S. Bozard Smith Gorsuch (October 5, 1912 - December 11, 1994)]

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: And you li-

Gorsuch: Gorsuch.

Montgomery: And you live here, uh and, on the farm, uh, what is known as Muley Ridge. Isn't that right?

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah, that's right.

Montgomery: And right at the present time, we are down here visiting. I myself have- out deer hunting, and we have our trailers parked at the old Muley school house, wh, uh, school grounds. How old are you now, uh, Uncle James?

Gorsuch: Eighty, uh, three.

Montgomery: You're eighty three years old-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -and you're going strong, too.

Gorsuch: Oh... Can't be stopped.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Boy, we- we're having lots of fun. Lots of fun together. Well, that's about all I know [coughs] to ask you about the railroad. Do you have anything you want- else you want to tell me about the railroad?

Gorsuch: Yeah. There's a... I forget who was the section foreman, there, south of Saint Francis hospital, and he lived in a- old coach he had there.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And, uh, we wasn't a pulling, and they were afraid the little boy would get out on the tracks when we come in there, switching around, so they, uh, had a clothesline stretched out about a, oh, a hundred foot of it. And they put a, a buckle on the, on the clothesline, and then they, eh, pi- pinned it to the back of his little cove-, coveralls.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: And thought that would uh, he could go back and forwards about that far, and then come back. And not get on the tracks.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Now, he- the section hand was a person who worked on the railroad, track itself.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Yeah. Section foreman.

Montgomery: Uh huh. He worked on the road bed and the rails and such as that.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: So, uh, we come in there and seen her fly out of the house, and by golly he'd uh, got on to it. He'd unbuttoned his coveralls and slid out of 'em, and-

Montgomery: [laughs]

[35:00]

Gorsuch: [laughing] -he'd, he'd, about a quarter of a mile down the railroad track.

Montgomery: Well, now where was this? At the Andrews Switch?

Gorsuch: Yeah. No, at the, or up there at the Saint Francis Switch.

Montgomery: Saint Fran- Saint Francis. Uh huh.

Gorsuch: Yeah, there by Saint Francis Hospital.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Uh huh. Well now, did you still use the old turntable there, at the, at the...

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: How did you make the turntable turn?

Gorsuch: Well, we didn't turn it, see, we just made a figure Y come down like that-

Montgomery: [overlapping] Oh, I see.

Gorsuch: -just like you're backing the car around, so-

Montgomery: Uh huh, uh huh. There wasn't really a turntable, where you, it spins around, okay.

Gorsuch: [overlapping] No, huh uh. No.

Montgomery: Okay well, according to the, the books I've read, when the, uh, engine used to go up in- to the corner of Washington and uh, um, uh, Johnson Street, uh, they had to discontinue that because the smoke got on the, uh, ladies', uh, laundry, and such as that, so they [chuckle]-

Gorsuch: Well-

Montgomery: -as it hung on the line, so they made a big old complaint about it, so they had to stop the, uh, engines way out there by the Saint Francis Hospital. Which-

Gorsuch: Well-

Montgomery: -was at the corner- [coughs]

Gorsuch: Well, the- they're mistaken there. Cause that eh, it uh, went in clear around to that place-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -whenever we had a car, uh, to go up on. Course, if we just had the coach and no cars-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -we'd uh, st- stop and I'd walk up from there.

Montgomery: Oh, oh.

Gorsuch: At that time.

Montgomery: You'd uh, you wouldn't have to, you wouldn't have to take the engine and coach.

Gorsuch: No.

Montgomery: Okay, is there anything else you want to talk about in regards to the old-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] Not that I-

Montgomery: -M, I, and L?

Gorsuch: I can think of something later, but I-

Montgomery: [laughs]

Gorsuch: -can't think of anything now.

Montgomery: Well, we're going to keep this on the tape for a long, long time-

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: -and uh, and I certainly appreciate uh, my uncle, James Gorsuch, telling me all about the M, I, and L. The last three years of the existence of the M, I, and L. And he confirms the fact that the road bed was in terrible shape and uh, actually, when they hauled the gravel and cement and, and sand to build a concrete highway, which was Route sixty-seven [Route 67], and Route one oh one [Route 101], [clears throat] which uh, uh, that was really the death blow to the railroad itself, and of course at that time the rolling stock and the road bed were in pretty bad shape, so as a result, uh, uh, it was time for the M, I, and L to cease operations. It's one of those historical things that uh, that, that occurred here in West Central Illinois, and I'm sure that uh, this particular tape will last for many, many hundreds of years from now on. This is November the eighteenth, nineteen seventy-eight [November 18, 1978]. The weather here today is cool, about thirty-five degrees, the sun is shining, and we're enjoying ourselves very much here, uh, in the old school ground, Muley Ridge School House, um-

Gorsuch: [overlapping; inaudible]

Montgomery: -just a few feet from James Gorsuch's home here on the farm.

[Tape Cuts; 38:05-38:07]

Montgomery: My uncle, he uh, has one more story he'd like to tell us about the, another accident they had on the M, I, and L so, Uncle James, what was this deal about the engine jumping off the railroad track in, in the wintertime?

Gorsuch: We had some awful cold weather, and uh, there was some snow come and they's ice, and water froze solid over the rails, and the, it froze so solid it carried the engine, and it took off for the corn field.

Montgomery: [laughs]

Gorsuch: And, it pinned there, got off the right of way before we got stopped.

Montgomery: [laughs] You mean clear out in the ditch?

Gorsuch: Ehh, it wasn't no ditch there-

Montgomery: [laughs] Oh.

Gorsuch: -they had not be no ditch. It was uh, pretty level-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -and uh, so we pulled the fire out, and then we went and got a house mover-

Montgomery: A house mover?

Gorsuch: -and hooked on the back of the, the train-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -and uh, moved the thing back, and it followed the same rut back right onto the rail that it run off of, there.

Montgomery: [laughs] In other words it follow-

[both men speak over each other; inaudible]

Gorsuch: Took us about three days to get back too, done.

Montgomery: Why? You must have had a big cold snap with a lot of thick ice, there.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: And you used the same tracks that- that they- or, the driver wheels made in order to get it back on the track.

Gorsuch: Well-

Montgomery: On the rail track.

Gorsuch: Yeah, it, it followed the same ruts right on back right onto the track.

Montgomery: [laughing] You said you took the fire out. What do you mean, you, you-

Gorsuch: We had to, cause the, we uh, it was off the track and the, it wouldn't have, uh, fire enough to last and keep up fire until we got it moved back.

Montgomery: [overlapping] Well the, the, you're talking about the fire in the fire box.

Gorsuch: Yeah. So-

Montgomery: And then, in other words, you, you put out the fire in the engine. So it wouldn't uh, uh... Well, let me ask you this-

[40:00]

Gorsuch: [overlapping] So we had-

Montgomery: Okay, go ahead.

Gorsuch: Had to drain, had to drain the engine so we could-

Montgomery: [overlapping] Yeah. So the pipes wouldn't freeze, huh?

Gorsuch: Yeah, pipes wouldn't freeze.

Montgomery: Oh my goodness. This house mover, what'd it look like?

Gorsuch: Well, it was a big, uh, just uh, like a... I don't know, it- a big uh, roll where you hitch a team onto it and it'd go around and around the rail, and-

Montgomery: [overlapping] Windlass, isn't it, huh? Sorry, a windlass affair?

Gorsuch: Yeah. And it- cable.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: And then it didn't pull so hard, that house mover outfit moved it right back on the track.

Montgomery: [laughs] And it was off for three days.

Gorsuch: Then there was another time, ensign, I went to work and we went up to Macomb, and there was a funeral- uh, there was a gentleman passed away down there atop of Camp Creek Hill.

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: And when we got into Macomb the superintendent sent us back down there backwards, back down there, and we hauled a funeral procession up to the C, B, and Q, and the Q sent her, the switch engine out, and we, uh, hooked on to us, and took us up to the depot and the, and then we had the funeral, and then, then we took him back home.

Montgomery: That was in the wintertime?

Gorsuch: That was in the wintertime.

Montgomery: Uh huh, yeah, it was in the wintertime. You-

Gorsuch: And, and, and that uh, where the, where the blacktop is now, it, uh, there, it was all dirt roads, and uh, and it was raining, and it was bad, and uh, they uh, couldn't get out hardly with a car or anything-

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: -so we went down there backwards and got the, the uh, corpse, and the funeral procession and hauled 'em-

Montgomery: Uh huh.

Gorsuch: -up to Macomb and they buried him, and then we took 'em back home.

Montgomery: Did you ever get stuck in a snowdrift along the way?

Gorsuch: [overlapping; inaudible] No.

Montgomery: There it-

Gorsuch: Uh, not- no.

Montgomery: Mmhmm.

Gorsuch: We, when it wasn't open we just didn't go.

Montgomery: Oh, oh I see. In other words, uh, you didn't have a snowplow. To...

Gorsuch: No, didn't have no snowplow.

Montgomery: And, when, when the uh, tr- when the roadbed was drifted in, you just didn't run.

Gorsuch: Didn't run.

Montgomery: And you took a day off.

Gorsuch: Yeah.

Montgomery: Well, thanks a lot, Uncle James, and-

Gorsuch: [overlapping] You bet.

Montgomery: -these are certainly interesting stories to me, and I hope it is to so- whoer- whoever else, uh, listens to this tape. So thank you very much.

Gorsuch: You bet.

[Tape cut; 42:38-39]

Montgomery: Today is November the twentieth [November 20th], two days after the original taping of this particular tape. [clears throat] I wi- I wish to clarify some dates and some comments which were made in the original tape by my uncle, James Gorsuch. First of all, the tr- the work was begun on the original track bed for the purpose of, um, hauling coal from Gin Ridge. That work was started in nineteen oh one [1901]. It apparently took them about three years, til some time in nineteen oh four [1904], before the road bed was sufficiently well-prepared to make the first run. And they continued to operate [clears throat] as the, uh, Macomb Western Railroad until 1910, at which time the company, founded by Compton and Chandler, went bankrupt. Following their bankruptcy, the road was sold to the Chicago wrecking company. It is also m- also my understanding that an attempt was made to sell it, sell the railroad first to the local farmers. But they declined, and then it was sold to the Chicago wrecking company. Then, in nineteen fourteen [1914], the farmers decided to buy the, uh, railroad, and during that time period, the Chicago wrecking company had removed about four

miles of the track out of Macomb. [clears throat] But anyway, ah, the farmers rebuilt the road, and uh, started their, ah, operation. Then in nineteen twenty-eight [1928], the, the M, I, and L - the Macomb, Illinois-

[45:00]

-co- correction. The Macomb, Industry, and Littleton Railroad went bankrupt for the last time. [clears throat] During the interview, my uncle, he was confused as to the location of Johnson, ah, South Johnson, and West Washington Street, and the location of the Macomb High School. The old Macomb High School. I have looked at various plat maps of those years, and I do not confirm that, the fact that the railroad did go that far. I do confirm that it came about halfway. From the, what is, known as the Saint Francis [clears throat] black top, and si- uh, Ea- West Grant street. But I have not been able to confirm the fact that the railroad came up that far. Now, the railroad bed, actually in later years, veered to the northeast from the old Saint Francis Hospital location. It veered to the northeast, crossed Grant Street, and then towards what is now known as the ah [clears throat] farm bureau, or McDonough Farm Service Organization, which has a rather large complex out near where the old pottery used to exist. There used to be a clayworks and pottery manufacturing location at the corner of Ward Street, South Ward Street, and West Jackson. In that area. The M, I, and L was never permitted to bring their train crews and engine onto the C, B, and Q tracks. And when you hear mention of the gra- gravel cars being delivered, fully loaded gravel cars being delivered to the train crew, they mean that the loaded cars were backed off the C, B, and Q track onto the M, I, and I, M, I, and L track, and there the M, I, and L crews picked them up and re- took 'em to their destination. By the same token, ah [clears throat] in the days when the passenger travel was, uh, still in existence on the M, I, and L, the switch engine from C, B, and Q came and got the coach, with its passengers, and took it to the, uh, Macomb C, B, and Q railroad station, which is located on the north edge of Chandler Park in downtown Macomb. So, anyway, uh, that is something significant, that apparently, ah, they felt that, that is, C, B, and Q felt, that they should have control of all the crews who used their line.

[Tape cut and ten second pause; 48:09 - 48:19]

Came to the end of the tape, there, and didn't realize it and continued to [clears throat] continued to record and didn't realize the tape was finished on that particular side. But anyway, for historical purposes, I'd like to [pause] to include the information that James Gorsuch, that's G, O, R, S, U, C, H, [pause] Farm is located West of Littleton [clears throat] about four miles, on route, Illinois Route one oh one [IL Route 101], and then about a half a mile south of that highway, on, in the general area known as Muley Ridge.

[Tape cut; 49:11 - 49:12]

Oh, in the tape I made mention that the railroad road bed veered to the northeast from the Saint Francis Hospital building site, which was at the corner of South Johnson Street and West Grant Street. That is an error, because the road bed veered to the northwest. And in this year, of nineteen seventy-eight [1978], they are building a park [clears throat] which is on the north side of Grant Street, and I believe the park is to be called Derry Park [Present day Patton Park, 2018]. It's right opposite the present sewage disposal plant. And then it, then the railroad continued on for about a half a mile, up toward the C, B, and Q tracks, at which time it crossed South Ward Street again, and then continued on towards the present side of the, ah, Farm Service Organization, which is located in that area.

[Tape cut; 50:35-50:36]

The C, B, and Q tracks are now [clears throat] owned and operated by the Burlington Northern railroad company [BNSF], as the C, B, and Q, Chicago, Burlington and Quincy company does not exist.

[Tape cuts off]

Transcribed by Julia Thompson for Western Illinois University in January 2018.