

TAPY: Yes. The church as a whole, see, disapproved; but then I know some of them were members.

JW: Can you . . . what role did the First Church and other churches you're familiar with in Terre Haute take during the war years of '17-'18 and also during World War II to aid service men?

TAPY: You know, I can't tell you very much about that except our own church. I was in charge of the service flags. And whenever anyone, of course, went away to the service, why, I would see that another star was put on the flag.

And then every week we would select one service man to write him letters and encourage him and just let him know we were back of him and all that sort of thing. But, you know, we weren't too close to service men, really, that I can . . . I don't know of anything that we definitely did in the church.

JW: Can you remember troop trains coming through town with hungry soldiers?

TAPY: Yes.

JW: What was that like? Describe that.

TAPY: Well, it was sad. Of course, I have seen a lot of our boys go away, too, and, you know, telling everybody good-bye and all. And yet they were . . . the troops were glad to have somebody to talk to. I suppose we gave them some sandwiches or something, because we were always down there when a train went through. I just don't remember that, but probably we did.

JW: Did United Brethren ministers stay long at one spot?

TAPY: Our church is noted for keeping their preachers a long time. Reverend Stone was here, I believe, 14 years . . . 15 years. Rev. Wm. Todd was here 15 years.

JW: In other words, the United Brethren Church wasn't quite like the United Methodist church. The Methodist church sent them around every three or four years.

TAPY: The /United/ Methodist church now, six years is supposed to be their limit. And the conference superintendents can only /serve/ six years before they're moved on. There are advantages and disadvantages to it. You get so attached to your preacher; then when he leaves, why the church falls apart a lot of times, when he's been there a long time.

JW: Has the theology in First Church changed since you were a child?

TAPY: I don't know if it's changed in the church, but it's changed with the preachers some. (laughs)

JW: How's that?

TAPY: Quite liberal. Much more liberal than I was always brought up. And there're . . . I'm not complaining. I mean I'm going along with them, but there are some things I would rather /have the old U. B. way/.

JW: What are some of the liberal ideas that . . .

TAPY: Well, I think that not in our church I don't know of any, but I think they don't disapprove of social drinking. I know our church does but as a denomination . . . and then, of course, we were always taught that dancing was terrible and a lot of /other/ things that I was brought up on. /My family and church were very strict/ Now I'm trying to become a little broadminded (laughs), but I do think they are more liberal in /the United Methodist than in the United Brethren/.

JW: What about on issues other than cultural? What about on the basic tenets of the faith, the resurrected Christ, the Bible's inspired word of God, has it changed?

TAPY: No. No. It's the same.

JW: Well, that's good.

What was the old world connection of most of the United Brethren parishioners? Where were they from? I bet it was Germany.

TAPY: Of the U.B.'s? Yes, I'm pretty sure that it was. (laughs) I would say yes, German.

JW: German pietism.

TAPY: I would guess that you're right on that.

JW: How did the average parishioner feel about the union with the Methodist church when it took place?

TAPY: Well, I was thrilled, but I didn't realize it's so different that . . . . Now, the old Methodist church and the United Brethren church were almost the same. But the United Methodist church is a little different, their doctrines and so forth. And I prefer the old way, the old United Brethren. But then, you know, we didn't have any say on it. It was just /done/; it was never brought to a vote in the congregation /locally/. It was the delegates you know /to the General Conference who voted on it/.

JW: It came from on high, huh?

TAPY: Uh huh.

JW: What were some of the changes? I mean, what were some of the differences? You say you prefer the old United Brethren way of doing things.

TAPY: Their offices are so overlapping. They are so overly organized that nobody knows what they're supposed to do, really. They're just terribly organized. And it's so big! The Methodist church is so big. It's big business, and you just don't know anybody, and it's just not /the same friendly group that a smaller one can be/.

JW: Has your church in the past backed efforts to rid the city of prostitution?

TAPY: Oh, yes. (laughs) They got rid of one place there at 13th and Wabash one time. They're back again, but then they did for a while. They really made it rough on them. They had to move out.

JW: Was this a house of prostitution or a . . .

TAPY: No, that was /a house of pornography/.

JW: A bookstore.

TAPY: Bookstore. The other I don't know.

JW: What about prostitution though? When you were younger, I'm sure you realized there was a red light district. Well, did the pastors preach against this?

TAPY: Yes, they did. They did. I can remember that very well. If you see a red light in the window, that's . . . right down along the river, you know, 1st and 2nd Street. /You knew that was a "bad" house/

JW: Was their preaching effective? I mean would they have any crusades in the city to try to do something about it?

TAPY: I don't know of anything. Really, I can't remember of anywhere it was attacked /openly/.

JW: And you've already mentioned pornography. What effort has your church made?

TAPY: Well, we've worked hard . . . a lot on that. There was a store on /the corner of/ 13th and Chestnut at one time -- not too many years ago, too -- where they were selling it. And, oh, our church and other churches around there really went together /made it so hot for them/, and they moved. They had to leave. Now, I don't know where they went when they went out of business, but anyhow they had to get out of there.

JW: When you went together, what'd you do?

TAPY: I don't know whether they went to the /chief of police or the mayor/. There was just a delegation that went . . . whether they went to the officials of the city or how it was. But anyhow they were too close to the church, you see, and they had to leave.

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

JW: What about gambling? Same thing? Has your church been opposed to gambling?

TAPY: Yes, all the way.

JW: Asbury Chapel, an old Methodist church torn down in 1919. Do you remember it?

TAPY: I don't remember a thing about that. The only thing I found out . . . I tried to find out a little bit /more/ about it. It was the original First Methodist church there at 7th and Poplar, wasn't it? Um hm.

JW: Um hm. In World War II, Farmers' Chapel from south of town and Breden Memorial on South 7th united, didn't they? How did that work?

TAPY: Well, according to the book here that I have that I got from one of the ladies down there at the church, Breden had built a new church. They had been quite prosperous before and during the war before this /depression/ thing happened. And when this bad time came, they were not able to pay for the church. And they went to the bank, and finally the bankers let them pay just the interest. But the officials had to even take out loans on their own homes, some of them. Well, it so happened . . . now all it says here is that Farmers' Chapel church down on 1st Street (you know where it is, don't you?) was forced to close their church. The government closed it. Now, why, I can't find that out. It's not in any of these histories.

So they, the congregation of Farmers' Chapel, joined the Breden Evangelical United Methodist church. /Then/ it was U.B. And in so doing they brought enough money with them from their church to pay off the debt. And they paid off with their help to \$33,000.

JW: Then, after the war, the Farmers' Chapel went back to being its own entity, right?

TAPY: I didn't know that it did.

JW: Oh, really?

TAPY: That's an independent church over there now.

JW: Oh, really? Could it have been the fact that that was . . . wasn't that an ordinance area down there by Pfizer?

TAPY: We wondered if that was the reason.

JW: And that they were going to use that, and they had to kind of use . . .

TAPY: I believe you might be right about that, but we had never found out just why. But they said the government closed it.

JW: I think that was it.

TAPY: But I don't believe that ever went back to a Methodist church. But it is independent now.

JW: I want to throw out a name to you, a Dr. William Hickman. He was pastor of Trinity Methodist, a former chancellor of DePauw and a Prohibition candidate for the United States Senate. And I think he pastored Trinity up until about 1918. Do you ever hear that name anywhere?

TAPY: I heard the name, but I didn't know him.

JW: Uh huh. One of the more prominent clerics here in town. I caught that in my research.

What was the church's position on temperance, your church's position on temperance during Prohibition?

TAPY: Well, they were very strict against it. I mean they were very strict against drinking anyway. As far as Prohibition, well, they approved of it. They thought it was fine. It was . . .

JW: How . . . was preaching from the pulpit done against drinking?

TAPY: Reverend Todd, especially (laughs). Yes.

JW: What would he say about drinking?

TAPY: Oh, he just . . . he was very much opposed to it and just told us what he thought about it. A Christian would not drink.

JW: Now, I assume your church today, is that still . . .

TAPY: As far as I know. We have had several Methodist

TAPY: preachers who had never been United Brethren or anything. I'm not quite sure of where they stand. Oh, I'm sure they don't believe in drinking, but I really don't know. They're a little bit more liberal.

JW: What about the Women's Christian Temperance Union? I know there's been some women active in that here in the city. Has it been a strong force in your church and in the city?

TAPY: It has. One of the ladies in our church is very active in it. She's a real old lady, and she's been in it ever since, I think, 1954. And it's not a very strong organization. What I mean is, there are not very many members now. But they're still working hard. And she told me . . . do you remember anything about Donn Roberts, the mayor, and his conviction and so forth? It was due to the efforts of the W.C.T.U. that he was exposed and convicted. There were three women who were very active (I know two of them). One was Stella Stimpson. She was a state treasurer. And one was Amelia Meyer, who was a great /and/ well-known organist in the city. And one was Mrs. Anna Robinson Black, who was an educator and everything else /very brilliant/. I knew both of them quite well. And that . . . it /Roberts' conviction/ was because of the efforts of these two or three women. They just wouldn't let him rest, and they just kept prying into it. And, I suppose, /it was because they/ went to the proper officials that he was exposed and convicted. So, that's one thing.

JW: That's interesting.

TAPY: I thought it was, too.

JW: These women were doing this because they were connected with the W.C.T.U. But also it was corrupt politics they were after.

TAPY: That's true. Now, this lady (I think you should have her name) is Mrs. Rueben Norton. And she is still so worked up with it and works so hard at distributing literature and all. But she said twenty years ago she went to the public library and looked up the newspaper clippings on this ordeal about Donn Roberts. And she said there was such a stack of them, even then. She said I suppose they moved them, I hope they did. (laughs) That's what she said.

TAPY: But she said she has distributed literature on the scientific temperance material since 1954 in the schools even. Now the schools will not allow her to bring it in. But through a friend of hers who works in one of the schools' administrative offices, she takes it in. She's allowed to bring it in, but no one else can do it. So, they still are getting this . . .

JW: So the schools used to allow the W.C.T.U. to come in and talk about the evils of "Demon Rum"?

TAPY: Well, they . . . I don't know if they could talk about it, but they could put their literature in there.

JW: But no more?

TAPY: That's what she told me.

JW: How do you spell Stimpson?

TAPY: S-t-i-m-p-s-o-n.

JW: O.K.

TAPY: She also told me that there were 72 countries in the world who belong to this organization, and in 1983 the worldwide convention will be someplace in the United States.

JW: Now how do you spell Meyer?

TAPY: M-e-y-e-r.

JW: O.K.

Women in the pulpit, was it done in the United Brethren Church?

TAPY: Yes, we've always had women in the pulpit.

JW: Can you recall some women pastors?

TAPY: Yes. Miss Elizabeth Chappelle was one.

JW: Spell her name.

TAPY: C-h-a-p-p-e-l-l-e. I remember her very well.

And, of course, this Mrs. Breden from . . . you know . . . that was down at Breden church was also a minister. Oh, there've been . . . I could have



TAPY: given you a lot of those names if I'd gotten . . .

JW: Why do you suppose the United Brethren church had women in the pulpit many years ago?

TAPY: I don't know. (laughs) I suppose that they felt like they had just as much right if they were called, and they felt /they were able to do as good a job as the men/.

JW: What's interesting is that, you know, the United Brethren Church was conservative in their theology and conservative on cultural issues and no smoking and I suppose . . . I mean no drinking and I suppose no . . . Did they approve of smoking?

TAPY: No, they really didn't. In the discipline I think it was there. Of course, I know some of them did. Some of the preachers do.

This ol' Daddy Brandenburg even chewed tobacco and smoked, you know, (laughs). He said, I believe it was, "Well, you can get to heaven if you chew, but you might have to go to hell to spit." (laughs) My grandma used to tell me that.

I don't know why they did unless they just felt like that was /God's will for their lives/.

JW: But they didn't have problems apparently with /St./ Paul's talking about women's place in the church.

TAPY: No.

JW: O.K. Because that's a hot issue today, you know, in Evangelical . . .

TAPY: I know. I know it is . . . in just some of the churches, not our denomination. And the Methodist /church/ has had them before, too. And we have quite a few of them now. We have two here in the city.

JW: How would a woman in the pulpit differ from a man? I mean, preaching style similar? I mean, would she really pound away?

TAPY: The ones that I knew didn't. They were very conservative. We have some that I . . . well, the one out here at Trinity Church is a little louder that way than /some I have heard/. She's a United

TAPY: Methodist.

JW: Debra Thurston?

TAPY: Debbie. /Have/ you ever heard her?

JW: Uh huh.

TAPY: She's good! She was at our church yesterday and . . . . But she's loud.

Then there's another one out here at Seelyville, and she's very soft and quiet and sweet. They're both lovely girls, but they're different.

JW: During the Depression what did area churches do -- ones that you were familiar with -- to help those who were really in trouble, desperate straits? Did you have any kind of relief for the people who were out of work?

TAPY: I know that they bought coal for people, and I know that they took up donations of food and would distribute it, and I know some girls who had absolutely not enough clothes -- teenagers and all -- to go to school. The Ladies' Aid would make dresses for them and that sort of thing. They helped a lot. They did /a good job/.

JW: Do you remember that 1916 fire at Centenary Methodist?

TAPY: I don't think I do. I've thought about that so much, and I can't find anybody else that can remember that. See, I wasn't too old; I was just 10 years old. But I sure can remember /the fire at/ St. Benedict's!

JW: O.K. Tell me about St. Benedict's, the dome that was lost. Describe that scene.

TAPY: They were painting the dome, and they had some blow torches up there to take /the paint off/. They were just going around taking one little section at a time. And they were blowing the paint off in one certain section, and it caught on fire.

And we were all alerted, of course. There were no televisions or anything, but we soon heard it by newspaper extras and all that sort of thing. And we all ran down there and watched it. It was a terrible