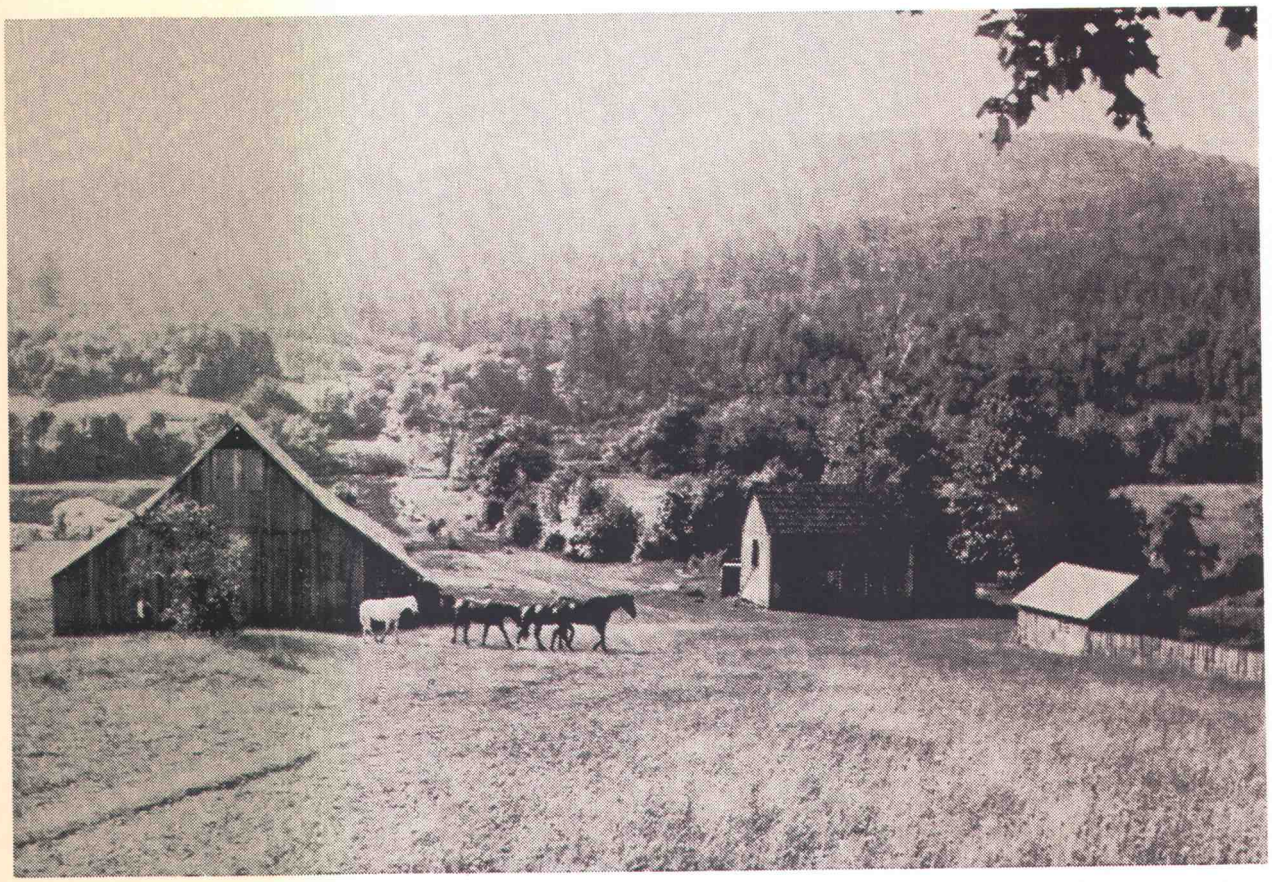
BESSIE MURPHY

Botanizing in Benton County, 1900 - 1991

Oral History Interviews by
Judy Carlson, Marlene Finley, Bob Zybach and Phil Hays



Soap Creek Valley History Project
OSU Research Forests
Monograph #11
1995

Soap Creek Valley, Oregon, Oral History Series

Monograph # 1:	Lorna Grabe. Family history and story of the Soap Creek Schoolhouse Foundation, Benton County, Oregon.
Monograph # 2:	Paul M. Dunn. Biographical sketch and story of the Adair Tract, Benton County, Oregon.
Monograph # 3:	Donald Dickey. Family history and life on Berry Creek, Benton County, Oregon: 1928-1941.
Monograph # 4:	Edward Sekermestrovich. Life at CCC Camp Arboretum, Benton County, Oregon: 1935-1940.
Monograph # 5:	John Jacob and Wilma Rohner. Family farming on Coffin Butte between World Wars, Benton County, Oregon: 1919-1941.
Monograph # 6:	James Hanish. Biographical sketch and a tour of Berry Creek, Benton County, Oregon: 1930-1938.
Monograph # 7:	Charlie Olson. Biographical sketch and early history of Sulphur Springs, Benton County, Oregon: 1900-1920.
Monograph # 8:	Neil Vanderburg. Family farming and saw milling on Berry Creek, Benton County, Oregon: 1935-1941.
Monograph # 9:	Eugene Glender. Growing up on a Tampico family farm, Benton County, Oregon: 1910-1941.
Monograph #10:	Velma Carter Rawie. A history of the Carter family and the town of Wells, Benton County, Oregon: 1845-1941.
Monograph #11:	Bessie Murphy. Botanizing in Benton County, 1900-1991.

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Monograph #12:	Wanda Marcks Cook
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Monograph #17:	Documenting Natural and Cultural Resources Research. Soap Creek Valley, Oregon, Oral History Series.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Soap Creek Valley History Project was authorized by, and is under the direction of, Dr. William Atkinson, former Director of the OSU Research Forests, from 1989 until 1993. In 1994, the oral history portion of this project was under the direction of Jeffery Garver, OSU Research Forests Manager; beginning in December of that year, responsibility for the oral histories was given to Ann Rogers, Cultural Resources Manager for OSU Research Forests. Funding for the Soap Creek Valley History Project is provided by the OSU College of Forestry.

Lisa Buschman, former OSU Research Forests secretary, initially transcribed most of the recorded interviews to computer files and assisted with draft editing, formatting, and indexing. Holly Behm Losli, Tami Torres and Md. Shahidul Islam, OSU Research Forests text editors, completed final formatting and indexing under the direction of Pam Beebee, OSU Research Forests Office Manager. This project could not have been completed without the help of these people.

Cover Photo: Courtesy of Myra Moore Lauridson and the Soap Creek Schoolhouse Foundation. Pictured is the Moore family farm on Soap Creek, taken about 1899 or 1900 by Mrs. Lauridson's father, Samuel H. Moore.

Title Page Photo: Bessie Murphy and her friend, Frances Stilwell, at Soap Creek Schoolhouse celebration in 1989.

THE SOAP CREEK VALLEY HISTORY PROJECT

The Soap Creek Valley History Project was undertaken by the Oregon State University's Research Forests in 1989 for the purpose of better understanding the history, ecology, and culture of an area that has been impacted by OSU land management practices for nearly seventy years. An important part of the project has been the location and publications of existing oral histories, recorded with individuals who have had an important influence upon the valley's history. New recordings were also made with individuals who had not been previously consulted, as well as "follow-up" interviews with people who have continued to contribute to our understanding of the Soap Creek area.

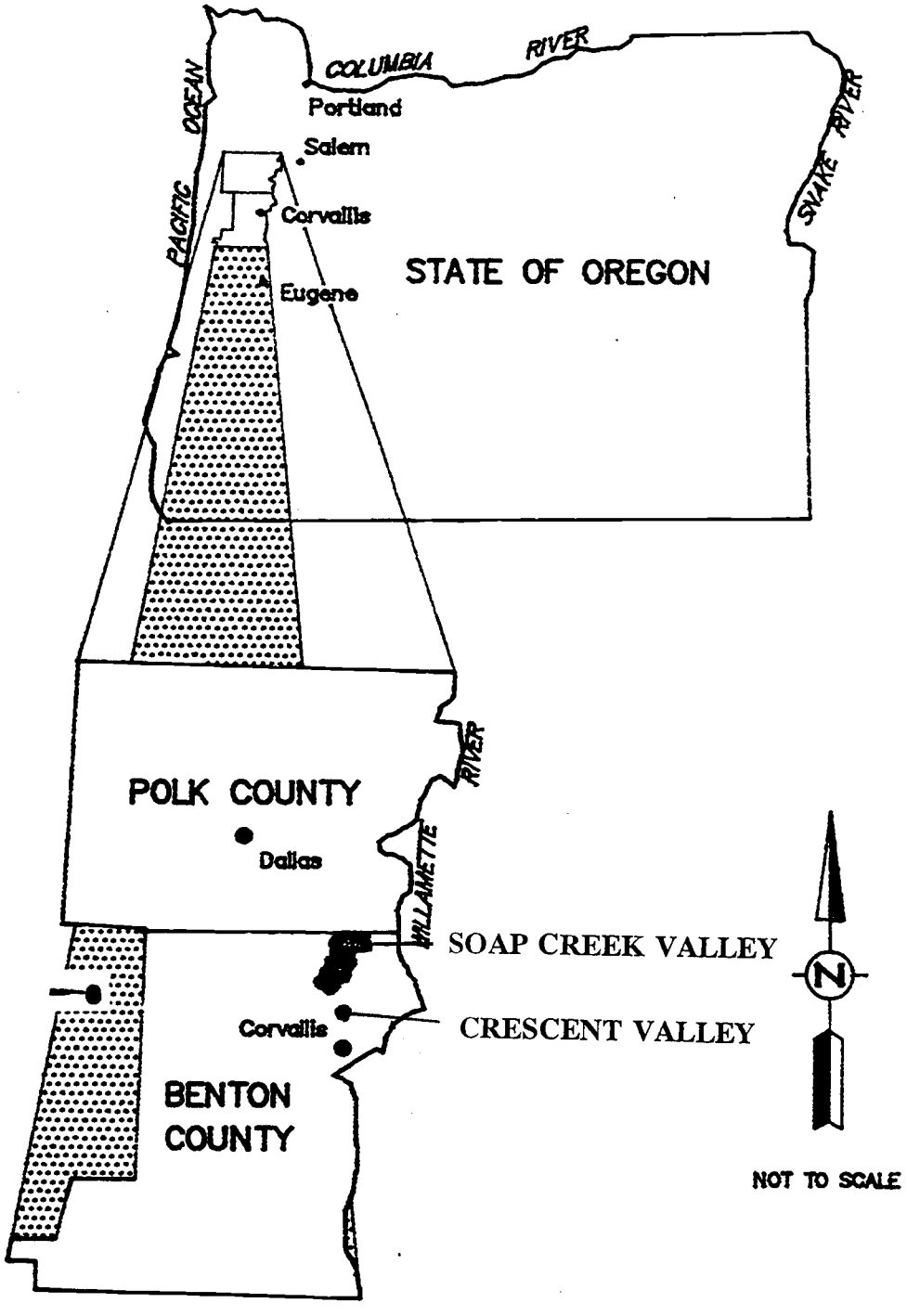
The publication of these interviews as a series of cross-referenced and indexed monographs has been undertaken in an effort to make them available to resource managers, researchers and educators. An additional specific use of these histories is the creation of an accurate and available reference for a planned written history of the area. The history is currently being assembled into a four-part series of monographs that will be completed upon the conclusion of the oral history series. Part I will be the history of Soap Creek Valley between 1826 (at its point of discovery) and 1845; Part II will detail the settlement of Soap Creek Valley between 1846 (when the first land claims were staked out and occupied) and the turn of the century; Parts III and IV will be excerpted from the oral history series and will cover the years 1900-1945 (the end of World War II), and from 1946 until the present. All documentation will be edited from primary sources of information, including oral histories, journals, correspondence, legal filings, government documents, obituaries, newspaper articles, and first hand accounts.

One of the primary accomplishments of the Soap Creek Valley History Project has been the creation of a computerized concordance file, currently on IBM Word Perfect 5.1. This was made possible through the assistance and expertise of Bonnie Humphrey, of the former Horner Museum staff, Lisa Buschman, former secretary for the OSU Research Forests, and Holly Behm Losli and Tami Torres, text editors for OSU Research Forests. In 1994, the concordance file was thoroughly tested and redesigned under the direction of Md. Shahidul Islam, currently the publications editor of this project. His refinement of the concordance file now allows for a more efficient and systematic indexing of the monographs in this series. In addition, the system will now be easier for students, staff and others to use, and will provide a better method for cross-referencing other research materials being used in the written history portion of the project.

The Soap Creek Valley history is being assembled from the written and spoken words of the people who made it and lived it. The use of the concordance file allows information from the journal entries of botanist David Douglas, the transcribed words of Kalapuyan William Hartless, the memories of pioneer "Grandma" Carter, and the recordings of Bessie Murphy to be systematically searched and organized. The index to this monograph is an example of the applied use of the file.

Citations should mention both the OSU College of Forestry and OSU Research Forests.

SOAP CREEK VALLEY MAP



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INTRODUCTION

Readers of this series will notice a number of changes in this monograph. There are few photographs, no maps, and only a rudimentary table of contents. These changes were not meant to lessen the impact of Bessie Murphy's story, only to strengthen it. Bessie's story deserves to be read as she told it: full of good humor, common sense, sparkling intelligence, outrageous comments, and meticulous observations; and not overly restricted by deadlines, organized questions, or formal outlines.

For those readers with limited time or needing more structure, please refer to the monograph's index for a comprehensive summary and organization of this history. For those who would rather capture the full humor and wisdom of Bessie's observations, then it is necessary to listen to the original recordings of these transcripts; the light, Scottish lilt to her voice, the full, merry laughter, and the sly observations that convey her very spirit and essence are impossible to fully realize through written words:

Who else but Bessie Murphy could introduce a picture of her grandfather's family as "grandpa . . . his brother and two sisters, and the old devil" and make her listeners burst into laughter? When questioned about this apparently uncomplimentary description of her own great-grandmother (did she really say "devil"?), Bessie quickly reassures her audience that it was, indeed, "the *devil* herself!" When read, these words sound harsh or even cruel; when listening to them, one catches the timing and shares the humor.

And maybe even the recordings are not enough. How else to capture the firmly set jaw, the grim look, and the wildly twinkling eyes when she says these things? Or the wonderful smile and sideways glance when she catches her listeners off-guard? Who could help but laugh along with this tiny little woman, 90 years of age and more, relishing her own assessment of an ancestor that had died nearly 100 years before? Bessie's great-grandmother may have been a devil (and probably was), but Bessie could laugh about it then, she can laugh about it now, and she can make her listeners laugh along with her. Yet her description, repeated and unmodified, will be the historical one, and she knows that.

This is probably a good place for a word of caution. Despite her humor and whimsy, Bessie is a college graduate; an educated botanist who made a living for several years by quickly and expertly noting minuscule differences in species and varieties of grass and weed seeds. There is detail (as well as judgement) in her observations that shouldn't be overlooked. When she tells the reader that she named two Crescent Valley creeks "Cave-In" and "Periwinkle" as a young girl, she is purposefully relating something about the local soils and wildlife of the area, as well as describing the childish pursuits of a Benton County farm girl at the turn of the century. There is humor in what she says and how she says it, but there is also truth and also information that can't be gotten from any other source.

And that is the true power of this oral history. Bessie Murphy looked for, found, and even named, wildflowers in Benton County for most of the years of this century. Her powers of

observation were equalled and complemented by her memory for details; as a result we have one of the only listings of local native plants that became rare or extinct during the early 1900s. Almost as an afterthought we hear of changes associated with the coming of the automobile and of telephones; visualize Corvallis during the era of horse and buggies; or learn of encounters with Indians along the Oregon Trail in the mid-1800s.

Bessie died in 1991, during the course of the final editing of this oral history. Her mind was sharp and playful until the last, and she seemed to feel no particular urgency to complete this project. Although she took it very seriously and tried to make certain that the details were accurate and clearly presented and as always, she appeared to be taking great joy in the things that she did, whether for work or for play (with Bessie the difference was not always apparent). I think that she would like this result: short, accurate, irreverent, fun, and not quite finished; still something left to do for another day.

Bob Zybach
Corvallis, Oregon
May 2, 1995

Part I.
July 23, 1975 Interview

[Interview conducted by Judy Carlson at Bessie Murphy's home.]

I was born 1894 in Elsie, Oregon and we came here [Benton County] in the Spring of 1900.

Tell us about your family . . .

My father [Stephen Alexander] came with his family in 1878 from Kansas. My mother [Kate Crees Gragg] came with her father [W. M. Crees] in 1871 from Pennsylvania. They met through my father's sister and my mother being in school together. My mother went out to Clatsop County and taught a year of school. She met my father and the romance started.

Was your father a farmer?

Yes. He had a farm which now contains the new high school [Crescent Valley High School] on Highland Way, and it also contains the site of an old Indian camp. He used to dig up broken Indian bowls and arrowheads.

And your grandfather?

My maternal grandfather was William Crees and my paternal grandfather was Henry C. Gragg. They came late enough to come on the train from San Francisco and up the coast by ship. My Gragg grandparents came on the old Ajax ship. My grandfather Crees was a farmer too, on King's Road and Highland Way, off Grant Street. And the old house he built in 1878 is still standing.

And the Crees building downtown [Third Street]?

That was built on the site of his later home after he retired. His daughter named the building after him.

What kind of farm did he have?

He had general farming and a dairy farm. My father was just general farming [grain raising]. You don't have all your eggs in one basket in those days. Stock, grain, sheep, etc. 200 acre farm Dad had.

What are some of your early memories growing up on the farm? And when did you start school?

1901 . . . and I had to walk two miles through people's pastures and woods to get down to what is 9th Street now where the school was (District 45). And one of the pleasures of my childhood was having a pony and riding everywhere. In fact, I rode a pony clear through high school; I started in the town school in 4th grade and I figured it up once, 11,000 miles. The high school I went to was located in Central Park and I graduated in 1914. And on the farm we had -- for those days -- quite a large cherry orchard, and they were old-fashioned varieties like Governor Woods, Oxhart, and Black Republicans. No Royal Annes, or Lamberts or Bings. People would come from as far away as Summit to pick the cherries and can them right there. I had a wonderful time playing with the kids.

Did you pick the cherries?

Oh yes, we also picked them to ship them on the train for people west towards the coast. We would pick them early in the morning and with the stems on so they would keep.

Do you remember your grandparents?

Yes, Grandpa Crees was a wonderful man, and he just loved to mow hay. After he retired, he came out and mowed hay for my father. And in those days, there were lots of jack

rabbits, and sometimes in the mowing he'd scare up a jack rabbit, and always the farm dog was with him . . . and then there'd be a race. And Grandpa would be the fan, and he'd yell, "Sic 'em Shep!"

And your grandmother?

She died in Pennsylvania. And the other grandparents lived in Clatsop County. After we came . . . well, grandpa died in 1900. Grandpa Crees was very nice. He gave me that little chair. He always had a horse and buggy and I've ridden with him lots of times. He was always happy and singing.

Do you think people were happier then?

Yes, they didn't have so many worries. And life was simpler. They had high standards and morals, and of course, very set in their ways about it. They wouldn't be as lenient then as we are now.

And when they disagreed with other people?

Well, they ignored them or looked down on them.

What about religion?

My grandfather was very sincere in his beliefs, and brought my mother up that way. And the other grandfather was Scottish and Presbyterian. Grandfather Crees was Methodist . . . no, I don't think he was involved in building the church here, but I wish I knew.

What happened following graduation in 1914?

Well, my Mother thought she had such a struggle in life when she was teaching school, that she didn't want me to work, so I fooled around here 4 years at home. Then started college, OAC, when my brother was old enough to go with me. I graduated in 1922, and got married the same year. I majored in Home Economics, which was the main thing for women in those days.

What kinds of things did you do those 4 years at home?

Just helped on the farm mostly. There was plenty of work to do. I think the hardest work I ever did was to help my father mow [pronounced to rhyme with cow] away a load of hay. It was so dusty and hot. I worked in the fields some and drove the horses to drive the machinery and I always drove the horse to pull up the hay, which is hitched to long rope and pulley. And the man on the load of hay has to put, push the hay fork into the bunch of hay up into the mow . . . and somebody in the mow spreads it around. It's something like real work.

Are there any buildings related to families, other than the Crees?

Yes, my father's house, which was built in two parts -- one in 1912 and the other a little later -- is still standing on the L. [Lloyd] Anderson place [Highland at Crescent Valley Dr.]. I lived there until 1922.

You talked about your mother's comments on teaching?

My mother, Kate Crees Gragg, taught in several places. I wish I knew all of them. She graduated from Monmouth Normal and then taught in Airlie, Eola Hills, Clatsop County, and a few other.

What were the difficulties?

Well, she had the old-fashioned idea that a girl should be at home and when she's grown, marry and have a family, and not be out working. And some of these schools, there were discipline problems and I remember her telling another young teacher, "Well, I would knock down and drag out." Now, you're not allowed to do it.

What was Corvallis like in the early years?

Oh, Second Street was it! Corvallis in 1900 was a very small town. And Second St. was

the main street. There were no businesses on other streets for a while and no paving. Some of the dust was inches deep in the summer, and in the winter, the mud was inches deep.

How would you describe it?

Well, where Albright and Raw is was a hardware store owned by the Smiths, who are still around. And across the street was a livery stable . . . there were several. And I remember the Occidental Hotel about where the US Bank is. And the one saloon[1] on Second Street, I think the building's still there. If you saw a drunk man, that ruined the whole day. The Opera House was built around the 1880's I think, where Safeway's old parking lot is. They had traveling companies of players and I remember our high school had a play there once. It was a big rectangular building and quite a landmark.

Do you know the Kigers?

Yes. I lived on Kiger Island the first year I was married, and was a neighbor to Minerva's brother Dick. He had a peach orchard and I picked peaches off the back of a horse!

Did Chatauqua come at all?

Yes. It was a big tent at the lower end of campus. It was an educational kind of thing. I went with my fiance Phil Fleischman, and I don't remember the entertainment, but it was entertaining . . . there was variety. Everybody went, it was the thing to do.

What did you do after you were married to Mr. Fleischman?

I stayed home and kept house and raised two daughters [Phyllis Dentel and Marjory Fitzwater]. One lives east of Lebanon and the other's at Oakridge.

When did you go to work?

Yes, I went in '41 when my husband died. I worked in the Seed Lab for 18 years. I was trained for 2 weeks to be a seed analyst.

Did you ever run into some Indians around here?

Well, the Indians were on Reservations by then. When I was a child, I'd see lots of Indians in the late summer and early fall during the hop picking season. Their dress was very colorful, and they'd sometimes sell baskets. My uncle traded a suit of clothes for a basket that I have in the Museum[2].

Did you have a lot of duties as a youngster?

Yes, there was always plenty to do on the farm. All that stock had to be taken care of and fed, and watered. Therefore you had to raise and store feed for the winter. There's where your work came in. All the washing had to be done on a scrubbing board. Then my father bought one of the early washing machines . . . a little better; then he got one run by a gas motor. Then there was the canning . . . lots of fruit to can, and after we got a pressure cooker, we could can vegetables. And the meat was all hung and smoked, or put in heavy crocks cooked and covered with hot steaming lard. I also had to wash and clean Kerosene lamps . . . another little duty. George is my brother and he still owns quite a bit of the farm.

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[1] The saloon was on the 2nd Street, Corvallis (c. 1900).

[2] Bessie Murphy had her own museum behind her house.

Part II.
August 4, 1975 Interview

[Interview conducted by Judy Carlson at Bessie Murphy's home]

Could I hear a little bit more about your Scottish ancestry?

Gragg -- my father's people -- they came originally from Fishire to North Ireland in probably the early 1700's. And began coming to America before the Revolution, because some of them served in the Revolutionary War. Gradually, they began going West. I've got them back to Tennessee now and into Missouri, where my grandfather was born.

You're very proud of your Scottish ancestry.

Yes, I am. My father had a lot of influence on me. I just wonder if parents and generations past didn't have more influence on their children than they do now, because life went along with a great deal of the same beliefs and ideas, and now it's so radically different.

What about Scottish characteristics?

Well, in general, the men were tall and raw boned. They liked to keep family traditions, clear down to my time. One was about the uncle in the Putnams Army. One was a guard on the dock at Boston when _____ ships came, and General Washington and his aides went down to the dockside to look through their spy glasses. Then Washington turned to my uncle and asked him if he didn't want to look, and he did, and he could see the buttons on the soldiers' uniforms. Now that's several generations ago! My father talked a lot about the ones he knew. I did visit the historical society in Belfast and learned some general history. If I had more time, I could have learned a lot more.

How about the Scottish trait of "watching your pennies"?

Oh yes, there were very few of them that had any chance of making any big money, and they had to be careful with what they had.

And your father?

He was very economical, but he wasn't what you called tight. But there was more economy practiced in times past than there is now. Scotch and German and everything else were economical. The waste bothers me. And it's very, very unnecessary and makes our taxes high. And the taxes are exorbitant.

You've traveled a lot, haven't you?

Some, United States, Hebrides Islands . . . Bonnie Prince Charlie Country, still full of traditions. And some of the people would like to turn back the page of history to that time.

Would you like to return to times past?

Yes, I personally would, but if the world will not learn from its mistakes, what's the use of going back?

What time would you return to?

When I was a child. I thought that was great. Automobiles were just coming in. The transition from the horse to the automobile. To me, the automobile didn't thrill me.

Do you still horseback ride?

Not these days. Not for 20 years. My back bothers me, from a fall off a horse and arthritis.

You have so many other interests, what are they?

Well, the latest is making colored slides of wild flowers. And I try to get them all in different areas, the coast, the valley, over in the desert, and I've just returned from a trip to the Wallowa Mountains. Lots of people enjoy seeing them, but it's just for my own use.

Do you still weave?

Yes. And spin, and collect buttons. And I belong to the [Benton Co.] Historical Society. All these things give me contact with people . . . and keep me on the map. As you get older and lose your old friends, you must get some new ones or you won't have any.

Do you visit with friends that you knew from your youth?

Yes. Minerva Kiger Reynolds is about the only one left. Our old neighbors were the Sol King family and the Withams, and there are a few descendants around. And I saw Lena Saxton yesterday, she was a high school friend. After my father died, my mother sold some of the property to the Lloyd Andersons. My brother still farms some of his land on the other side of Crescent Valley High School, although he lives in Monmouth. He camps there in the summer time when he's working on his garden. The property in front of the High School his where my father had is corn patch. That's where he plowed up the Indian relics.

Did you ride into Corvallis on horseback when you were younger?

Seldom horseback. Horse and buggy usually.

Are there outings you remember.

Well always, we went to the fourth of July celebrations. That was a big red letter day. I'm sure sometimes the main events were on the courthouse lawn. And always, there was a patriotic speaker, and of course they had to get on some big open spaces where they could have merry-go-rounds and things like that. And all the little girls had to wear fancy white dresses with lace on it . . . and we had to be careful not to get them dirty . . . they were a nuisance to wash and iron.

What did you wear horseback riding?

At first I had a divided skirt, and later on a jodhpur type outfit. The turn of the century was the transition from side saddle to stride saddle.

And where did you hitch your horse in town?

Oh, there were rings in the pavement and hitching racks in various places.

What stores stand out in your memory?

Dan Nolan off Second Street (Dept. store), and then he moved to Third. Milner, who had candy and gum, on the south end of Second.

Was there a status difference between a farm child and a city child going to school?

Well, I'm really not sure. I think it more depended on what you did -- how your grades were, and how you conducted yourself. Everybody had horses. Cars were fairly common by 1915.

What about early memories in the Crees house?

No. My grandfather retired and moved downtown by the time we came. I visited there [my aunt and uncle owned it for many years] but not my grandfather. I thought it was elegant.

How well do you remember your grandfather?

Oh yes, well.

What is your philosophy of live . . . what keeps you going so actively?

Well, it's partly my idea that you keep a-0gain as long as you can. And do the best you can as you're going. I've always had a zest for life and I still have it, although I don't have the strength to go with it to do the things I'd still like to do. More travel for one thing . . . and a good garden.

Are these ideas your parents had?

Yes, I think so. They were ambitious and tried to improve their farm. It's hard to put it in words.

How about some of the clubs you belonged to at OSU?

I stayed at home, see. The Home Ec club and the Downtown Girls Club is all I remember.

Do you think you majored in Home Ec because it was expected of you?

More or less, yes. I'm not sorry although it might have been better if I could have done something else. There was a time, I think I could have indulged science, and gone in as a lab technician . . . I liked bacteriology and botany. At that time men were monopolizing science.

They still are.

Yes, I guess so.

When did you start taking pictures of wild flowers?

Just last spring. I talked to friends and got advice, and the rest is luck. I'm lucky I have this friend who has a jeep -- that's the easy way to climb a mountain.

What about the bouncing?

No, I'm used to bouncing along on a farm wagon when I was a kid, and then on a horse. I liked the farm and all the activities on it. And I really liked the horses.

Part III.
January 26, 1989 Interview

[Interview conducted by Marlene Finley at Bessie Murphy's living room overlooking her forested yard.]

[Note: There were problems recording the first seven minutes. Finley's summary of the interview was written shortly after the problem was discovered. The summary follows:

Mrs. Murphy is 94 years old. She was born before 1900. In the year 1900, she was five years old and her family moved to Corvallis. They were originally from Astoria, before that her ancestors from one side of the family lived in Tennessee, then Missouri, then they moved to Oregon. On the other side of the family they lived in Philadelphia, then they moved to Kansas and then they came out here to Oregon.

Bessie Murphy told me that her relatives that lived in Kansas were run out of Kansas when the grasshoppers invaded, that's when they decided to move to Oregon. In 1922, Bessie Murphy graduated from Oregon State College, her major was Home Economics, though she did study and take classes in Botany. She studied under a Professor [Helen M.] Gilkey at that time. I asked Mrs. Murphy how she became interested in Botany. She said that her parents weren't really interested in plants, they had the belief or felt that most of plants are weeds since they were farmers that was their perceptions, but she did have some neighbors most of whom were girls and when she was a child she enjoyed going out with them and looking for plants and identifying plants. Luckily, she said, they did not collect the plants, they did not pick them and she believes that that's good conservation, not to pick the plants and she's glad that she learned that way. She said later in high school they taught Botany, something that she wished they still taught in the high schools. So her interests in plants began when she was a child.

Over the years Bessie Murphy has been involved with several groups that enjoy going out and looking for plants in the forests and throughout this interview we spoke of places that she enjoys looking for plants. In this part of the interview that didn't tape very well, I asked Bessie Murphy about specific places that they looked for plants and what types of plants she felt were special, what were her favorites. She said that these plants, most of which were orchids that she still enjoys going out with friends and looking for, they only grow under very specific conditions. They do not grow everywhere, they will only grow in real . . . very particular places and these . . . there's good areas to find a variety of orchids near Sulphur Springs that's in the McDonald Forest, the OSU Research Forest. She also mentioned Trillium plants as being some of her favorites, and specific genus species of couple types of trilliums were mentioned.]

Okay, so no, I got this set up better it will come out . . . the tape will record better, so we talked about several plants, the moccasin flower [Cypripedium montanum] and the Trillium ovatum, is that what you called it, and then the one that you showed me, the how do you pronounce this one, Habernaria elegans.

Habernaria elegans, it's an orchid.

Okay, and spring beauty [Cardamine pulcherrima], you said is the first one that blooms.

The first really pretty, interesting one that blooms in the spring other than little weeds, you know, they come first, some of them. And then of course there's bleeding heart [Dicentra formosa].

Yeah, that's one of my favorites.

And it has to have a wet place.

Oh.

And there's a little orchid, oh, what is that common name, calypso [Calypso bulbosa], it's a little pink one.

Does that bloom around here, the calypso orchid?

Yes, if it's the right conditions, it will grow in this area. And look at the wild ginger [Asarum caudatum], isn't that interesting.

Yeah.

I've transplanted that in my yard and it grows.

Oh.

They won't all do it, but that does. I've never monkeyed with the orchids, try to do anything with them, they're too touchy. Now this is another orchid, instead of a moccasin it's sort of a lip. And this is the same. And they grow up there in those woods around Sulphur Springs. Now this is a famous twin flower [Linnaea borealis], the national flower of Switzerland.

Oh.

And it's supposed to be pink.

Real light pink.

Yes, light to medium pink and it's perennial on a little vine and these are called queen's cups [Clintonia uniflora]. They're a very interesting thing too.

Where are some other places that you liked to go out in the McDonald Forest to look for plants, or did you have any other special places?

Just explore the place, you see, I haven't thoroughly explored it. I don't know what there is there any more, it's been so long since I could walk very far.

Oh.

I don't remember much about what it is like anymore. It's awful strange, you see, it [Sulphur Springs] used to be a public campground, and I got over there and even my grandfather camped over there once with his family.

How long would they stay, usually?

It depends on how long they have time to do it. Some of them would go over and stay a week, tents . . . there were tents, and everything.

Oh, I heard that and I was just wondering if they stay for over night or if it would be a week vacation, or . . .

Yes, for a few days, it depends on how long they'd be from home and how they liked it.

I wonder what attracted people to that spot, why they liked that spot.

Well, I think it was them springs.

You think so?

They were very popular in the early days, there's sulphur springs and soda springs, there's one at Sodaville.

It doesn't seem like there's much water coming out at Sulphur Springs?

On, no. That little pocket was always full.

Oh. Is there as much water as there used to be in there, is it about the same?

The last time I saw it, it was. It isn't flowing much. You can dip it up and when . . . at various times, a person that owned it that I know of in 1900 was a Mr. Baker, Baker Creek was named for and he had it fixed up really nice and he had a croquet grounds and I don't think he did it but somebody later on cemented up the spring and had a cement thing there at the water come up like a fountain, you know. And of course vandals, they had to ruin it.

Sickening. And then during the War [World War II] the army, the men did a lot of work over there and put up tables and all kinds of things, you know, and for . . . and that was about the time my girls were big enough . . . oh, teenagers, and we did lots of horseback riding. We'd go over there horseback riding all around. We'd go over there and take our lunch and oats for the horses and we'd pour the oats on the table and they ate them off the table. Well, the vandals ruined that. It's just maddening. Fools.

Where did you keep your horses?

We had them at home.

And you rode all the way . . .

Yes, we lived on Kings Road, we took them over the hills.

Were there any logging roads up there then?

I don't remember of any logging, there may have been some but it wasn't prominent.

It . . . was it a farm . . . who owned that land, that forest then?

The valley itself has the farm land and it was being farmed by farmers.

What about up the slopes?

Oh, that was just wild country as far as I know.

Because that was . . . might have been University . . . some of it might have been donated to the University by then.

Might have been, I don't know that.

I heard that it might have been Mr. Baker used to take his cattle from Soap Creek over to Oak Creek across the hill there right by Sulphur Springs.

Yes. I understand that he did. And then there was one or two other men that were businessmen that lived over there at that time. There was one Mr. Moore who used to have . . . later had a chicken hatchery in Corvallis, and I went to school with his children. They lived there and farmed there for some years before they went to town. But it's a small valley and it isn't the best land.

For farming?

Yes.

Yeah. Well, tell me about Dimple Hill[3]*. I've heard that that is a nice spot for looking for wild flowers.*

Yes. It used to be. It's mostly unforested. It's bare, you know.

Yeah, it's a meadow.

Yeah.

A natural meadow.

And at that time it was owned by old timers here by the name of Locke. An area full of them. And it was called Locke Hill. And I don't think it is fair for some modern smart alec to come along and change the name. That was named for an old timer, pioneer. Of course, the Dimple Hill was done by just everybody because it looked like dimples, those ravines looked like dimples.

Oh.

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[3] The "Dimple Hill" Bessie is referring to is "Chip Ross Park. It was called "Dimple Hill" before "IV Hill" before Chip Ross Park. It is thought that he name Dimple Hill was accidentally transferred to the old "Jackson Hill" by an error of U.S. Geological Survey. This is also known as "Mitzie Point" named after a surveyors dog who died at this location.

And it was called Dimple Hill.

But before that it was called Locke Hill?

Yes, oh always, from the beginning.

Have you heard the name Mitzie Point?

No.

Oh.

What's that anyway?

They call . . . some people call Dimple Hill, Mitzie Point.

Well, that's some personal thing they know about that I don't. And then it was named for this boy that got killed, I guess, it was Chip Ross.

Oh, yeah, that's on the other side of Dimple Hill, the Chip Ross Park.

Well, you see we lived up against this west . . . east side, my father's farm came up that far against the Hill, or Locke Hill, whatever you want to call it. But I've noticed that lately, a good many years, there'd be some pioneer feature of the country called by a pioneer name for years and years then moderns come in and rearrange everything and change the names. I don't think it's smart.

Yeah. Are there any other points or places in the forest that you remember a name for that . . . what about McCulloch Peak, has that always been called McCulloch Peak?

I've never heard of that. I don't know where it is.

It's west of Oak Creek, it's up this way going towards Kings Valley, Kings Valley would be out here.

Little out of my range. I didn't go there with a horse.

I think you had . . . your own names for places you went to when you went horse riding.

Yes, yes, somewhat just for us so as to mark what it is, so you could tell directions.

What about Oak Creek, did you . . . do you ever spend any time looking . . . is Oak Creek a placed that you would go to look for special plants?

Let me see now, where is Oak Creek?

That's where you go by the fish lab, you get . . . there's a few buildings that OSU has.

Oh, out west of town?

Right.

Oh, yes. I've forgotten the area.

Kind of by the fairgrounds there.

Well, we didn't go out there much. It was quite a ways to go and we had plenty of other ways.

So Sulphur Springs was a place you went. Do you ever go up around Lewisburg Saddle and look for plants at all with your friends?

Let me see now, what's that?

That's where there's . . . you go over the crest on the way out to Sulphur Springs and . . .

Oh, yeah, that was our main trail, see, the Sulphur Springs Road and the Sulphur Springs area and the close by the hills.

All in there, huh?

Yes, because you don't want to just ride all day, you want to do something. And the horses got tired.

So you'd look for plants for a while and get off?

And we did climb Vinyard's Hill, but not with the horses. But we had to climb those hills, that was something to do.

So then was Vinyard Hill up behind . . . where Vinyard Estates is now?

It's the tallest hill over in there, and it's bare on the front.

And they have the TV tower up there.

I believe so. And you see, it was named . . . partly owned by the old time family, Vinyards, and the original Vinyard, was a teacher at the College.

Do you remember what he taught?

No, that was before my time. A son and his family lived there on the hill.

How about Peavy Arboretum, do you ever these days . . . do you ever go to the Arboretum and look for plants or any areas in there . . . are there any good spots in there?

I don't remember, I don't do so much of it anymore. And I can't go unless somebody takes me because I'm too old to drive. I'm handicapped. I miss all this.

How about Jackson Creek, do you know where . . .

Oh, you bet your life.

Because that was closed to your family farm.

I came through my father's place . . .

Wow!

Right down by the high school. And Frazier Creek north of it.

Right. There's a cabin up in there, in the forest.

There is? I didn't know that.

Yeah, a log cabin, there's two of them, and they're all . . . nobody lives in them, they're just tiny little things, I think they were built when the conservation corps were out there, the army people.

Oh, yes, it could be.

So there was a farm up there, up Jackson Creek, there's an old farmhouse up there?

Oh, yes, that was the Stonebacks. Our neighbor, George Stoneback. If it's the one I think it is. He was up there, he wasn't on the Jackson place, he was north of it.

Maybe I'm thinking of Jackson place.

Maybe. Yeah, there's several Jackson brothers and some . . . I don't know if they all . . . or all . . . but there's two especially, I think they were bachelors and they evidently lived in town because they come out through the trail to go to the place, they'd walk along single file on the trail and come out to the place to do something, because they didn't live there anymore. You see, I was pass . . . they were . . . when they lived there and their parents and all, I wasn't there yet, I didn't know that. All I knew of them was those old men. And they didn't live by us.

What was your maiden name?

Gragg.

How do you spell it?

G-r-a-g-g.

Okay, and how many acres was your family farm there?

Supposed to be 200 about that.

Did you raise cows, did your parents raise cows?

Oh, it was general farming.

Oh, a little bit of everything?

A little bit of everything. And there was a lot of that, you see that's what most of the country consisted of was small farmers at that time. And it gave them a chance to make a living and didn't have to be beggars. I think it was a whole lot better than the way it is now. It just makes me sick, no farmers anymore. It's a mess now, all these farmers, their kids as they grow up and teenage times, there's always something for them to do, especially during the harvest season, there was hop picking. And different fruit picking. And . . . I'm trying

to think. But there was ever so many things that these children could do and earn their money and help them in school and everything like that. Now there's nothing in those, don't amount to anything. I imagine there's a little fruit picking in the fall, maybe. But it's entirely different. I saw a lot of things change. Ask me more questions if you've got them.

Okay, the main thing I was interested in is places on the forest. What . . . any stories you knew about and you've given me some really good information about where people had their farms and the Jackson place and the Stonebacks and Locke Hill, that's the kind of stuff I'm looking for.

That was the farthest west that there was any agriculture. Mr. Stoneback and Jacksons. And . . .

Well, what kind of jobs did you have, you said you worked at a . . . something about seeds?

Oh, you mean me?

Yeah.

Yes, I was . . . do you know how a seed lab functions?

No.

Well, you see there's lots of grain raised in Oregon but not necessarily this side of the mountains, it's over in Eastern Oregon, big grain fields and all. And whatever's raised that is sold has to be tested for quality. And that's what we did. They'd measure out a certain amount, by weight of those seeds, different kinds of seeds you see had different amounts, and we had to go through them with a lens and see everything in them. All the other seeds, weed seeds, everything, and estimate the amount of junk in them and all that before it was sold, so they could be told what the quality was.

There's still the seed lab.

Oh, yes.

I've seen people working on campus.

Oh, you bet. I don't think there's as much as there used to be. There used to be quite a lot of people. But the last one that I knew is retiring this week. And I think most of those that worked with me, you see, I've been retired thirty years. Most all the others are gone, they aren't all, but most of them are gone.

How many years did you do that?

Seventeen.

And how many kids do you have?

Two.

Oh, two daughters.

Yeah.

And how many grandkids?

Four, and I've got three great grandchildren.

Wow.

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There's no public roads. We couldn't even get over to those . . . And what do you want me to say about the right-of-way. What it is?

You were telling me about something about petitioning the county.

Yeah, that's to get the county road. We had to use a right-of-way before there were any county roads. And that's just going through . . . there's a law allowing you to go through your neighbors place if you have no other way to get out, but you have to go where he says you can go on his place.

And what year was that?

That was 1900.

Boy it is hard to imagine how different things were then.

Yeah, you see it from that angle, I see it from the other end.

Yeah. How much it has changed.

Yes! Well, then about the county road, in 1905 the neighbors petitioned the county court to get . . . to make them a road, to open them up a public road. And they said, "Sorry, we have no funds for a road." So then like a little red hen they said, "We'll do it ourselves." And that was something.

All the neighbors went together and built a road.

Went together except one.

Oh.

They worked all summer long, all they possibly could on that. I tell you it was something, I saw the whole thing.

And what road would that be today, is there a road there?

Highland Way.

Really? Wow!

Yeah.

That would . . . that is pretty steep hill even going over Highland.

You bet it is, it is. Coming up to it both ways from. And of course they had to go around then and get permission from the owners where to put the road.

And all the owners gave permission?

All but one.

And what did you do about that?

Well, we had to pay him.

Oh. Did he use the road?

Well, some.

He probably did eventually.

Yes, but he soon moved away, nobody was sorry. But they had to go, you see, to all Highland Way clear down to Kings Road and had to get permission from those people, one of them was my grandfather, my maternal grandfather, of course he gave the road for mama's sake.

And what was his name?

Crees.

That's the Crees House, you told me.

Yeah. There was ever so many people, you see, because it was quite a little . . . it was about three . . . at least three miles. And they didn't . . . some people grumbled about it, the road, but they couldn't get any where else, they had . . . the people make it had to take what they got and the owners and do the best that they could.

Yeah.

And then when they got the road done and a little bit of gravel on and fixed up so they could use it. That fall I came to town to school on my pony.

Really? How long did it take you to get to school?

It's farther now.

And wasn't school where the park is today, by the library?

Yes.

It's Central Park.

Central Park.

Yes. So . . . I'm just curious, what did you do with your pony tied up while you were in class?

Well, you know, at that time, that was in 1905, not nearly all the people had a car and lots of little barns in town.

Would you have to pay like to keep your pony at a barn?

A little bit because papa had to haul in hay and stuff to feed it. Yeah, but after a few years all the barns were gone or made into something else. I'm sure cars made the biggest change in civilization there's been for quite a while.

I think it would be neat to ride horses instead of driving cars. It would be cold.

Oh yes, it had drawbacks, but it has pleasure and fun. And you had to learn something too. I loved it. And let's see, the . . . and because the county didn't have the money, you see, we could . . . they couldn't make a road. But the individual little things that . . . one that will interest you the next door neighbors was named Witham and that's an old timer out south of town, it was one of the Witham boys that lived there, family. And they had a . . . on their place was a fairly level place . . . spot that was not trees and the wild strawberries were just thick, and this was in May when they were working on the Witham part. And just as the strawberries were coming, getting ready to be picked, and Mrs. Witham was about to cry because they were going to work on her part that day and ruin the strawberries, so the men got their heads together and said they'd work somewhere else till she could harvest her strawberries.

Boy, all these names, Witham Hill . . .

Yeah.

Was all families . . .

You bet, old timers.

Yeah. That's great. It gives so much more meaning to everyday things.

Yeah, that's right.

You know where the names came from.

Yes.

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Was it called Crescent Valley then? Would you . . .

For a long time it wasn't called anything I think. I don't know . . . I don't remember what it was called. I don't believe it was called, for some time at least.

Just the valley north of town. One of the valleys. Well I don't want to keep you any . . .

Part IV.
January 4, 1990 Interview

[Interview conducted by Bob Zybach and Phil Hays at the home of Bessie Murphy, Valley View Drive, Corvallis.]

We're at the home of Bessie Murphy, north of Corvallis and doing an interview and the first question I would like to ask you is when you first moved to Corvallis and why you moved here?

I moved in 1900 with my family when they left Clatsop County and came here.

And where did you first move to?

Crescent Valley Farm.

And who owned the farm?

Heavens, I don't know. I was only five years old.

Did your father buy it?

Yes, he bought it.

Oh, I see and then was he a full time farmer?

Yes.

What crops did he raise?

Well, in those days, we didn't just specialize in one crop. It was a family farm that we raised everything, we were self sufficient on the farm. And he raised hay for the horses and cows and some grain, wheat mostly at first and oats and then we had a garden which was a great deal of our food, because a lot of things we could keep for through the winter.

Do you recall the names of the farmers that lived adjacent to you?

Oh, yes, the one of the west was Old Witham and he was from an old time family.

Was he living on the Witham donation land claim?

I don't know about that. I wouldn't be surprised, but I don't know.

Was he the same type of farmer, self sufficient?

Yes. And then going still farther west, there was one by the name of George Stoneback. He had a little . . . rather hilly little farm and he didn't have very big variety of crops and then to the east toward the highway, there were several different ones that ended up with the Holbrook family. And my brother bought it from them. At that time we were grown. And he bought that from Mrs. Holbrook. Her husband died.

How big were these farms?

Papa's was 200 [acre] and the Holbrooks were 50, the Witham was probably 200 or more and Stoneback was probably 100.

Do you recall the farms to the North?

Not so good.

Do you recall any families in the Soap Creek Area?

No, I don't know . . .

Say the Marcks or the Olsons . . .

I've heard of them, but I didn't know them.

The Wiles.

Yes, I've heard of all of those.

Carters?

Wouldn't know the Carters.

So, your adjacent neighbors were the people that you knew best?

Yes.

Did you know anyone from the Locke family?

Yes, we knew them.

Did the Witham or the other families that you mentioned have children your age?

No, the Witham girl was older than me. Then on the south toward town was the King family from the Kings Valley family.

Solomon King's family?

Sol's descendants. And that was a large family. And I started out with them when I first went to school, there was a little school down on the highway. One little building and we all went there. Had to walk . . . I had to walk two miles.

What was the name of that school?

Sunnyside.

Sunnyside School?

Yes.

It's not there anymore is it?

No. No, in about two years the district . . . was taken into the city district, town district and I had to go there and then I had to go three and half miles, so I got to ride my pony.

What happened to the Sunnyside School?

It was made into a private home . . . residence. But that wasn't the original, the original was torn down.

So the Sunnyside School you were going to was a newer school and then after they stopped using it they turned it into somebody's home?

Yes.

And then what happened to it?

Well, you see when I first went there it was a little old pioneer version of it, it was just a little one room building.

About 1907 or 1908?

No, before that.

1905?

I was six in 1900 and I started school when I was seven and that was torn down and the new one was built and then two years later it was taken into the city.

Oh. Then when you went to school, you had to walk those two miles?

Yes.

Was there a road or . . .

No road in those days.

Just across the fields?

You bet. You go on somebody's right of way, there were right of ways. You had to go where the owners said you had to go.

So if somebody made a diagonal across their field or they made you follow a fence line ..

That was naughty.

You could destroy crops or get muddy or . . .

Yes. Get into trouble.

How come you didn't ride your pony to Sunnyside School?

No, I didn't.

Why not, too many fences?

Yes. And I didn't have a pony then.

Did anybody run cattle or anything that would make it kind of dangerous going across certain . . .

I don't remember any cattle, but that was a hazard. No, when I went to town to school, I rode the pony.

What was the pony's name?

Belle.

How long did you have her?

Years and years.

So the whole time you went to school you rode Belle to school when you went to town?

Yes.

Do you remember when you graduated?

From high school in '14.

And then . . . let's see if I recall, you worked at home for a few years before you went to college?

Yes.

When did you start college?

I'm not so good on dates.

Was it a four-year degree?

I think I stayed home four years from high school to college; that would have been '18 or '19 I started to college.

During World War I?

I guess it was. But I don't remember all of these.

Do you recall what you did on the farm for fun when you were a young girl?

Yeah, I jumped on that pony and went all over the place, explored, went to Sulphur Springs and around the hills. That was my main fun.

What was the main route to Sulphur Springs?

Lewisburg Road, that's the only road here when we came. The public road. All the rest were right of ways. And then you see in 1905, '04 or '05, the community put in Highland Way. Then we could get to town without right of ways and gates.

Before Highland Way was put in was there a road or a track in that general area already?

No. Just right of ways.

Did they line up into similar alignment to what was . . .

No, we couldn't go on Highland Way, there was no way. We went down to the highway here where the school is. . was.

What was the name of the highway at that time?

The right of ways didn't have names.

No when you went to the highway.

Oh, ninth street.

That was the highway. Was it called ninth street?

Yes. That's the way we left town on ninth street.

Is that . . . did you go through where the Owens . . . what was it, Applegate?

Oh, I'll tell you that.

Did you go through that?

Owens on this side of us, Mr. William Knotts was the owner and resident there. And Owens was one of his children or grandchildren or great grandchildren . . . child owns it now. And we . . . he let us have a route through his place for awhile on a certain place and he changed it. And that went along the fence from the corner of my father's place on Highland Way but before Highland Way got put in, we went down to the highway, the line of Mr. Owens'

fence on the south side of it.

On the south boundary?

Yes. Where the opposite the property where the hospital is on the south side of it, as you go out ninth street a little way, I mean the highway here, as you go out there and come to that ridge.

That the hospital is on?

Yes, the other side of the hospital, along the line of the fence, of the Knotts place or the Owens now. You can still see the tracks going west along the fence and turning to the right or south, you can see that turn just before you get to the highway.

Those are the tracks that preceded Highland Road.

Yes.

And those . . . that would be the main route to town . . . before 1905.

Yes. That was the right of way that we had a right to go on.

Would all that south traffic have a right of way on that or was that an east - west route.

That's east - west.

Did that have a name to it, that right of way or just called it the . . .?

You just call it by the name of the owner of the property.

Owens right of way.

Yeah.

And those tracks are still there . . .

Yes.

. . and they predate 1905?

No, not 1905, they don't predate it, they date that.

When was the last that those tracks were used?

Well it probably was 1905, but the road didn't get put in so it could . . . it was usable that first year that they made it, only in spots. Little sections. Yes, probably 1906 until that old right of way was dumped.

Was that the remains of that right of way, that you know?

That's all you can see, yes.

Did you pay much attention to when they stopped using a road how maybe the vegetation filled in, what types of plants began growing in the old road or . . .

Yes, I was more or less observant of it because I was interested in it.

Can you kind of describe what you noticed with that?

Well, weeds and grass come pretty soon. And the nice flowers like spring beauties that he has a picture of, they didn't . . . they were a little more delicate and harder to do anything . . . I mean, they are more liable to be not able to compete with the bad stuff, weeds and things.

Are you calling weeds, exotic plants brought into the area?

Weeds, some of the wild mustards, and things in the daisy family and buttercups and dandelions and those things. They are very prolific and they take over.

When you went to Sulphur Springs, was that just a destination a place to turn around and come back or did you do things when you got there?

Yes, you see that was a public picnic ground because of the springs. Public used it quite a bit in those days. Went there and camped. It was considered . . . you see, that was very . . . in those days the natural mineral springs were very popular. And this wasn't so popular because people didn't like water so well, it's the soda springs that were popular.

Are there any soda springs around here?

Not right around here. There's one at Cascadia, it's just where they were, but people did camp here. When we came here in 1900, that summer I remember my grandfather and his family was out there camping at those springs [Sulphur Springs]. And we went over there and visited one Sunday.

How long would people camp -- for a day or two or week?

Oh, they'd camp a week.

Would they do anything besides drink the water?

I don't know what they did. I explored of course, that's what I'd do, and I did drink the water because I thought if I came that far I should drink some of it.

Oh.

I didn't care for the taste too well.

It must of helped you, you're pretty healthy several years later. That's what they always claimed would happen.

Maybe that's the secret of it, I don't know.

Maybe we'll get more people going there to drink the water now.

Grandpa had a tent and was camping there and of course, when we went there was no such a thing as a car at that time so we had to go with a surrey with a fringe on top and two horses and that was quite a trip over that Sulphur Springs Hill, it's pretty rugged, pretty rough.

Had that road been in for quite awhile?

Yes.

Could people take bicycles over the road or would they hike in without buggies?

Oh, yes. All kinds of ways or they'd go horseback.

Would very many people be there at one time?

There were quite a few that Sunday, I remember, camping.

When . . . who's land was Sulphur Springs located on?

I think I've read about that but I don't remember. I know there was one man who owned by the name of Baker. I just can't remember the names.

Did they have any kind of camping tables or structures?

I don't remember of it, there may have been, but he did have . . . one of those people that had it, I don't know if it was Baker or not, but he had fixed up a croquet grounds.

Would that be where the meadow still is, maybe?

Yes. I think so. And then when the army was here [WW II, Camp Adair], they had fixed up quite a bit. I remember there were big tables, when we'd go there horseback we'd feed our horses oats on the table.

But you don't remember any houses or structures of that variety there?

No, I can't. That's not to say there might not have been.

How about at the Springs, some people say that there used to be a concrete fountain there?

Yes. Vandals broke it up.

Do you know how . . . about how tall that fountain was?

Oh, as I remember it was as tall as this table.

About three feet?

I think so.

Did it have much force? Right now it just barely bubbles out of the ground.

No, it just bubbles out.

Were there any benches or anything built around the fountain?

Well, no, but there was some benches and tables and things when the army was here.

Around the fountain?

No, not around the fountain, near the fountain.

Was the field any larger at that time?

I don't remember about that.

The hills, did they look any different?

No, . . .

About the same?

About the same.

Were there . . . was the timberline, the meadow line on those hills facing west . . . do you recall if that was any different or have you noticed any changes through time?

No, I don't remember of it.

So it's always, for the last ninety-five years it's been about the same?

Yes.

That's reassuring. How about the plants in the field, have you noticed many changes in those plants?

No. There was lots of interesting wild flowers in the area and I'd go around and spot some of them.

Are they still there, most of them?

Yes.

So that area has pretty stable variety of grasses and flowers through time?

Yes, I would say it has. And there was some there that are more or less rare like the . . . what's the name of that, there were several orchids, but I was think of that one . . . it's in the buttercup family, oh, shucks. I can't think of it.

If that area's now starting to be used more again, it's stopped for a number or years, and now people are starting to botanize in the forest more, that's what Marlene [Finley] was working on. Do you think it's a good idea for some of those plants that aren't too common to be identified and have people look at them or do you think it's better just to avoid those areas and try to keep that information privileged?

Well, I just wouldn't know, because so many times they end up . . . people don't understand how to take care of them and they end up being ruined.

Do you think if there were signs there to tell them that this is a rare plant, don't ruin it, that this would be good or bad?

Well, it all depends on the person, some people would dig it up and take it home and of course, it would never, practically never, live.

One of the things I was hoping to ask is plants that were rare or unusual in this area where you've seen them or maybe they've been exculpated or maybe where they are still there, but I'm also, since other people will be able to see this maybe it's not a good idea to identify exact locations if people would misuse the information.

That's the trouble, there's always somebody that spoils it all.

Have you seen any plants in the Soap Creek area or Sulphur Springs or Dimple Hill or . . . you call it, Locke Point?

Locke Hill.

Do you recall any plants that you've seen in those areas that maybe aren't so common anymore or maybe disappeared?

Yes. You know, the Sisyrinchium doglasii, ... grass lily,yes.

If you use Latin that's all right, Phil [Hays] is the interpreter.

Have either one of you been up the Columbia Gorge in the spring when they're thick . . . thousands of them . . . just thick masses of those?

Yes, but I've never noticed them.

Well, that's too bad because I only saw two in my lifetime in this area.

And you haven't seen any . . . have you seen any recently?

No.

What was the name of them?

It's a grass lily, it's a dainty thing that the leaves are much like grass, it's kind of flat. And the lily is about an inch or little better in diameter, I think, and on a little a dainty little stem and the wind . . . any little breeze will make it shake and it's very dainty and pretty. I'd call it a . . . I think it's a different name for it's a color. It ought to be, but I don't know what they call it. To me it was purple.

More of a crimson?

No, not crimson.

Purplish red.

It's beautiful and dainty, and I don't know why it's so scarce here. If two of them could grow why couldn't more.

Do you recall where they were located?

Oh, you bet.

Do you want to put it into the record? Maybe you'd get more people looking for them and find some, got some clues.

One was on the road going to Sulphur Springs in the south and bare face of that hill.

Of Lewisburg Saddle?

Yes.

Hill. Is that hill still bare today, the same area?

I don't know whether the trees have covered it or not. I've noticed that some of those bare spots on those hills are not so bare, the trees are closing in a little.

What do you think about that, do you think that's endangering plants by having those trees move into those bare areas?

Oh, yes, because the plants out there in the bare part, can't be happy in dense forests.

So, what would your preference be, if you owned that land would you start taking those trees out of there and making room for the plants or do you think that the trees are worth it?

The trees are worth it.

What's the reason? Why do you prefer the trees over the . . .

Oh, I don't prefer them. I'd just as soon have the flowers myself.

But if it were your land, you'd still have trees on it.

I'd probably leave it like it is. And the other one was in my father's field, one corner of the field had not been cleaned out and made into a crop. And it was in there, at the edge of that in the grass at the edge of that field where it got plenty of sun.

So it's a plant that requires a lot of sunlight?

Yes, it don't want to have any shade at all.

In your father's field, that would be flat moist area and up on the . . .

No, it was on a little hill, it wasn't perfectly flat.

Southern exposure again?

Southeast exposure, yes.

So a real dry area and sunny?

Yes.

Dry for the Willamette Valley?

Yes.

Oh, is that area, is that hill still there?

Yes, but it's made into a field.

It's been plowed since then?

Oh, yes. That's where I . . . that was sad for me.

When they plowed that?

Because that was the only one except the one on the hill that I ever saw, and nobody could think when they were cleaning that corner out to take that plant up on a shovel with a lump of dirt and plant it somewhere else.

One thing I'm hoping to accomplish with that is to make sure that those types of things don't happen accidentally again, if there are plants that are rare or endangered, particularly in the forest or on the crop lands or on the highway right of ways, that we can recognize those locations. The one on the hill, that would have been along the old grade, the one that was used in . . .

It was off the road, it wasn't on the road, but I went up there on my pony on the road and then I went off to investigate that hill.

And that hill would have been to the west?

Yes, southwest from the road.

Southwest. Did you ever go back there looking for that plant?

I think so, but I don't remember particularly when I left all that.

Do you recall any other plants that you noticed that aren't here anymore?

Well, we all know, Phil and I and a lot more of them that these strawberry pinks [Silene hookeri] are getting very, very scarce. There used to be more of them.

And Phil knows where those are located now?

Yes. Oh, yeah, we should speak of the orchids, they were especially prevalent over at Sulphur Springs . . . around Sulphur Springs. And one Cypripedium montanum. . . somebody, people [Smiths] we know out south of town actually got them to grow in their yard and they're doing wonderful. By the way, I've got a picture.

Cypripedium.

Large orchid.

So you've got some pictures?

Yeah.

I might have to describe these in the microphone because. . and that's the one we're just discussing. That's Florence Smith's, would that be related to Greenberry Smith or Joseph Smith, Alexander Smith?

I don't know. They're old timers out there, Van could tell you, her husband.

[PHIL] It's that corner of Smith Loop and Highway 99W, a white house there.

Okay, so that's south of town, near Greenberry.

Yes. Now you see these have stems about, wouldn't you say, about a foot and a half high? And they have big leaves like this and you see the long . . .

These used to grow out at Sulphur Springs?

Yes.

Do they still grow out there?

I don't know, because I can't go anywhere.

I see, you'll leave that up to me and Phil to look for them.

Yeah. And the blossoms have this big . . . pouch like a moccasin. And it has purple veins, these leaves . . . these veins, these are parallel veins . . . leaves, that's how you describe a leaf like that.

Now this is still growing out at the Smith's now?

Yes, in their yard near a big maple tree, but not too heavily shaded by it.

So we could take and possibly reintroduce these back to Sulphur Springs if they've been removed?

Yes, but there's not much use.

Why not?

Well, they'll disappear by some vandal.

Oh. Do you recall other plants in the neighborhood that you looked at, that through time became scarce or disappeared?

Oh, yes. I can't remember their names. I was going to tell you this other orchids . . . but that is the best one, that is the most beautiful one they have in Oregon. There's one up in the . . . now here's what happens to things, up here on the little hill of the old cemetery.

Locke Cemetery?

Locke Cemetery Hill. There's an orchid that instead of having and being big like this and having a beautiful flower, it was a slender little stem about this high.

About a foot?

Yes. And it was put . . .the flowers were put on the stem so they looked like . . . see if I can find it, smell that . . .

Skunk cabbage.

Here we are, and here's the other orchid, I believe that's right side up, isn't it, Phil. Oh, see they're put on like cross stitch, that's interesting.

[PHIL] Habernaria elegans.

Yeah.

Habernaria elegans. That's one on my list, I think.

And anyway they grow up there, and they're not as fussy about where they grow as these and in the spring, early in the spring . . . early before decoration day, I've been up there and I saw one growing between an edge of a plot, but when I went back on decoration day, the caretaker had mowed if off.

Will that kill the plant?

Well, no it may not, but it's pretty hard on it to take all its leaves.

Do you recall the plot it was next to?

It was near my brother's. Well, you see they don't teach about nature to kids anymore, or even high schoolers. People ought to know more about these, they ought to be taught more.

Well, one thing we're trying to do with this information is take kids out in the forest and find some of these plants that you're going to describe, so I think they think the same thing as you, that they ought to teach them more.

But how can they make an intelligent decisions about anything that has to do with plants if they don't know anything?

You've got me. You're preaching to the choir.

Well, I'm kind of irked about some of those things.

Well, the three of us here . . . did they used to teach botany, did they used to teach . . .

Yes, I took it in high school.

And they took you out in the field and showed you the plants?

Yes, not very much of it.

How about when you went to college, did they do better?

Oh, yes, that was better. Doc [Helen M.] Gilkey was my teacher.

He would take you out on field trips?

Oh, yes, we went on field trips.

Where would the field trips be?

Most anywhere around.

Sulphur Springs?

Probably did go there once, I don't remember for sure.

Would you look mostly at flowers or trees or grasses?

It was mostly plants, and she took us on longer trips to sometimes[4].

Overnight?

No, not that way. There's the pink I've been talking about.

Oh, that's pretty. What's it called?

[PHIL] Silene hookeri.

I think I've got that one on my list too.

[PHIL] If you ever run across one you'd know it.

Are they . . .have you seen them . . .

[PHIL] I've never seen a picture that did justice.

No, I haven't either.

This is a red dot?

See the little red dot?

Yeah.

Where's my . . .

Mimulus alsinoides?

[Phil] This guy used to grow up on Dimple Hill [referring to Silene hookeri].

This is on the Dimple Hill.

[Phil] I don't know anymore now that they've put a road through there people running their trucks all over the top of it. I haven't seen it for a couple of seasons.

You see you hold this up to your eye and you bring this up and when it's just right, you can see real ..[referring to Mimulus alsinoides]

Where are these located at?

Where is that place . . .

[Phil] You took those out on Alsea Road.

Oh.

Are there any local here?

I'm not sure. I'm not sure.

Now, Phil was saying these used to be on Dimple Hill [referring to Silene hookeri].

No, not this. This is the one down here in the valley.

[Phil] It's [Silene hookeri] on the hill.

It is? Fine. This other one [Sisyrinchium douglasii] is about this high.

About a foot.

And the blossom hangs over like a bell. This [Silene hookeri] doesn't, this is up flat, its face is up to the light. Grows differently.

Is it pretty rare?

Yes. You bet it is.

Do you know where any plants are . . .

I used to when I was growing. .

[PHIL] Was the pink [Silene hookeri] real common down in the valley then?

Yeah, but not thick. But it was much more common than it is now.

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[4] We had flowers on the table as we talked.

What do you think caused it to be removed?

Well, part of it was the making fields out of the pastures, plowing it up, that's one thing. And another way's eliminating the place where it grows, I don't know what all.

If . . . so in areas where people are plowing, do you think certain areas should be maybe set aside to let some of these plants return or do you think they could return?

Well, it's very . . . do you want to see these Phil? This one here is a spring flower. And it's leaves are edible.

Is this a spring beauty?

Some of them call it that, but it isn't supposed to be. What do I call it?

What should I start calling it? Call it a Montia perfoliata.

Perfoliata.

Perfoliata?

Yes, it's a different family. The real spring beauties [Cardamine pulcherrima] that are in the mustard family . . . cabbage family and this is a different family, can't think what it is.

This grows in the west side fairly common, doesn't it?

Yes, it grows in my yard. It's easy.

[Phil] It's called miner's lettuce [Montia perfoliata.

Yeah, that's it. I was trying to think of it. Miner's lettuce and this is edible, leaves are very edible.

Are you familiar with any of the plants maybe that the Indians used for food?

You bet, you bet. That's one of my . . . oh, where's . . .

Where did you get the information that the Indians used them?

Mostly out of a book.

So if somebody had a good reference book as far as what the Indians used, they would have the same information you had?

Oh, yes.

Okay.

Here it is, there's the famous bitter root [Lewisia rediviva] of the Indians.

That's bitter root.

And it doesn't grow in this side of the mountains.

Just the east side?

Just where it's dry.

How about the soap plant that's in Southern Oregon, could Soap Creek have been named after the Soap plant? Are you familiar with that plant?

I've just heard of it.

But not around here?

No, do you know anything about it?

Did you ever study any of the grasses, the native grasses?

Yes.

Are they still fairly common?

Yes, there are some native grasses yet, but you see the farmers have brought in so many foreign crops of grasses -- just changed things like ever and they spread.

Do you think there's a way to keep those grasses from spreading or do you think it's all right that they're spreading?

No, might as well spread, they're good grasses.

Don't they create a lot of competition for the native grasses or the wild flowers?

Oh, yes. Yes, they do.

But you don't think that's a particular problem?

Well, you can't help it that I know of.

So you have just become resigned to their fate?

Yeah, that's the word.

Oh, how about some of the areas that they are managing for timber or they are using for pasturage, if they used different practices, maybe if they didn't plow or rotated crops would that be a way to encourage or retain some of these plants?

I suppose, I don't think they do much plowing, do they? I don't think they do.

I don't farm.

I don't believe they do much plowing.

So when they plowed before, it wasn't a real frequent thing, is was just enough to disturb the . . .

From the top of the ford was a field that was being put into crops.

So they're not growing so many crops anymore?

No. You know what's happened to the family farm, don't you?

Yeah.

Getting extinct.

Yeah.

And that's too bad.

You think that's a better living situation for people, the family farm?

Well, it was certainly better for poor people, than being on charity.

Yeah.

You had to work like a horse.

Would they do any poaching in this area to supplement their diet or would they . . . was it strictly growing crops and . . .

Well, you see there were seasons that you could shoot pheasants and grouse and deer and things and they were more plentiful and the wild geese and all of that. And they had some of that. But on a family farm, you had a great variety of crops including chickens, and geese, and lots of things to eat.

So you weren't dependent on wild game or fish to supplement your diet?

No, and you could raise things in the garden like beans and peas and corn for hominy and all those things that you could keep through the winter. And then can what you couldn't keep dry.

Do you think family farms . . . are there too many people today to have them, or do you think it would be good to have family farms maybe just so . . .

I certainly do, and have a sensible class to teach the children a little bit of agriculture and include a little botany.

So would you do that at high school level or college level?

Oh, high school if not eighth grade, the younger you catch them the better you can do.

Oh, after you got out of college, what did you do then?

Well, for a couple of years, I guess it was, I stayed on the farm and helped the folks and then I got married.

After you got married, where did you live?

Well, we lived first on Kiger Island and I guess we just . . . oh, I think my husband had his job then, worked at the post office.

Oh, your husband worked for the post office?

And he didn't have time to really farm, but we always had a garden.

So on Kiger Island . . .

That was good ground, wow!

Did you have any trouble with flooding?

Oh, not much then that I remember of. Of course, there were some times when there was too much water over the road.

Did you . . . no problem with your landlords or anything?

Not that I remember of.

How long did you live at Kiger Island?

Not more than two years I don't think.

And then where did you move?

Then we moved to . . . some property that my mother had, my grandfather had. That's where I ended up.

North of Corvallis?

Yes.

And then you remained your married life at that location?

Yes, my husband [Phillip G. Fleischman] died young though and then I had to go to work. And I went to work with something that I could with my botany. I went to work at the seed lab.

Did you have any children?

I had two daughters.

So you were raising two daughters by yourself?

Yes.

And working at the seed lab?

Yes.

What was your job there?

Test the seed samples that come in, you have to test them for what the weed seeds are in what other kinds of crops and the percentage of all of those.

So you had to identify the seeds and count the numbers and figure out percents.

Well, one of the workers did the percentages. My part was to just figure out what . . . identify all that was in the sample.

Did you ever notice any trends through time as you start getting more of certain types of weeds or cleaner grass seed?

Yes, yes, we got different stuff and that was something that would come in and hadn't been here naturally. But I don't remember any particular one.

Did anybody keep records of that, what years that certain types of seeds started . . .

Well, they may have, I don't know, they should have, but I don't know.

Do you know who would know? Do you still have contacts at the seed lab and they could look at old records?

Yes. I could. If I could do it I would.

I'm willing to do it, I'm young and I've got time.

All right.

You'd have to give me a name or two names.

Yes, I'll give you some names.

Okay, just don't want to do it for the record? Maybe somebody younger than me will listen to this tape and they'll get excited about it. Do you recall any names or Phil would you know who to check?

Well who ever . . .I don't go back and visit at the seed lab, I don't know what's going on now, but I know some of the older ones are getting older. I attest to that. But the . . . who

was the manager then is still living and she'd be a good one to ask.

What's her name?

She's Mrs. Jensen, Louise Jensen . . . Louisa Jensen. Can't think of her husband's first name.

Is she still here in town?

Yes. You can find her in the phone book.

Okay. When . . . you said when you were younger you used to go out to Sulphur Springs, what other places would you go with your horse?

Well, that's about far enough, but I have made longer trips out . . . like I'd go out south of town and visit some friends that were farther than that. I'd have to stay over night though.

Would you go around Dimple Hill or Coffin Butte?

I don't remember that I ever did, I suspect that the fences kind of hindered that. I don't know why I never did.

Do you call it Dimple Hill? I've heard it call it Mitzie Point[5], I think, and you called it Locke Hill.

Yes, you see he was the man who owned it when we first came here.

Locke?

Yes. And he bought a strip of land off of the south end of my father's place to have a road [Lester Ave.] in. So we had the little dillies with that.

[Phil] Now, is that the one that was also called IV[6] Hill?

Yes.

So it's had all kinds of names?

Yes.

[Phil] Chip Ross Park now.

Yeah, but that was Locke's Hill, that's all we knew it as when I was a child.

And now it's Chip Ross Park?

Yeah.

Do you recall any of the other hills around here that their names may have changed or . . .

Well, this biggest one out here was Vinyard's.

Vinyard's Hill or Vinyard's Mountain?

Just called hill then.

How about Bald Hill, did they call it another name other than Bald Hill, like old Baldy or . . . do you recall?

No, I don't recall. They were usually named for the person who owned the most property on them like that. That's why Locke's Hill is called that and Vinyard's Hill was called that after Mr. Vinyard, he was a professor at the college.

So it wasn't named after a crop it was named after a person?

Yeah.

How about Soap Creek, between Soap Creek and Berry Creek where they've got . . . called Smith

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[5] The current "Dimple Hill" was called "Jackson Hill" when Bessie was a child. What she calls "Locke Hill" was also called "Dimple Hill." It was called "IV Hill" later, and then became Chip Ross Peak. "Mitzie Point" is the old "Jackson Hill."

[6] It was called "IV Hill" because the two valleys on the face of the hill look like the letters "I" and "V" from Corvallis (from the south). the valleys also looked like "dimples."

Key or Smith Hill, Poison Oak Hill.

I don't know anything about it.

Do you know Forest Peak?

No.

So those hills two ridges back you're not familiar with?

No.

Did . . . when you went to Sulphur Springs on your horse, did you take a route from your family farm across some right of ways and you took the old grade on Lewisburg Saddle, do you recall any parts of that old grade that are still visible?

The original route over the hill as I hear has been changed. And I hadn't been over it in a long time. See, I can't drive anymore and hadn't any horse. So, I'm dehorsed.

How about routes to the coast? Would you go along the hills towards Philomath or would you follow pretty much the same route that's there now or would you go over Witham Hill if you were going to Philomath?

I'm trying to think. Pretty much like it is now, but I don't remember exactly. Well, it's pretty much like it is now. I've been out there on horse.

[Phil] South of Philomath out of Beaver Creek.

Oh, okay.

The dahlia farm out there.

There was a dahlia farm, it's not anymore is it?

Oh, yes. Mrs. Vida R. Bullis is running it.

How long has it been a dahlia farm?

Jiminy, must be twenty years or better.

And that route would be pretty much where Highway 20 is now?

I don't know it by it's numbers.

Did you have a name for that road then?

It was just Beaver Creek.

Beaver Creek Road?

Yeah.

From your place, was there a name for the road over to Beaver Creek Road?

Well, Highland Way as far as it went, but you see that's on the southwest corner of town and town didn't come out so far in those days.

So you'd take Highland Road into town and then from town you'd go out to Beaver Creek Road?

Yes.

Do you remember the name of the road from town to Beaver Creek Road?

Well, the Philomath Highway.

Philomath Highway, okay. And the college was out there. Was Philomath quite a bit different in those days?

It was smaller and the Corvallis wasn't nearly as wide.

So you could say pretty much rural farm country?

Yes, you know when my grandfather [Crees] was farming his two hundred acres it was in the middle of Corvallis [Today's Corvallis].

When he was farming it?

And he quit farming in . . . he began farming in '71.

Eighteen seventy-one?

Yes.

Was . . . do you know who's donation land claim he was on?

I don't think he took it up, no, I don't know the name of it.

How long did he farm that land?

Oh, until after . . . about the turn of the century and he moved to town just before the turn of the century and retired.

Do you know what crops he raised?

It was all level then, so I imagine he raised an awful lot of wheat. There's a while there where Oregon just raised wheat until it wore the ground out.

All the farmers raised wheat?

Yeah.

I've heard that it depleted the soil because they raised so much . . .

Yes.

Do you know when that started happening, when the soil started getting worn out?

Well, when . . . about the '70's because my other grandpa came here in '74 and he found it completely depleted.

So maybe from the 1850's to the 1870's, about twenty years in there they just wore the soil out?

Yes.

And then . . .what crop did they change to after they quit raising wheat?

I don't know. I know my father began raising rye grass for hay.

Did you raise that on . . .

And grandpa raised . . . his hay was Timothy.

So rye grass and Timothy would grow in poorer soil than the wheat?

Yes.

Did they deplete the soil with that after awhile or . . .

No, they didn't seem to have, they rotated more. Different field.

Do you recall any of the amounts that they used to get off the wheat, how many bushels an acre or some . . . how did they know they were depleting the soil? Could the weather have been changing for bad for a couple of years and they got excited and blamed it on the soil?

I don't think so, no. Because when grandpa [Gragg] came he rented a farm down by Amity, near his daughter, she'd come in '64. And he had very bad luck, very poor crops, so he rented a different farm and it was the same thing. He tried three of them and the same thing.

Worn out?

Worn out. So then he went to Clatsop County and took up a donation land claim and it was covered with big trees.

Timber and Stone Act or something like that? Would that have been about 1890 that he did that or 1895?

Before that. . . .Oh, '78.

When he went to Clatsop County?

Yes.

Then did he log that?

No, he was too old, he retired.

Retired among the trees?

Yes. No, they went out, you see, he was way back in and it was an awful job to get there and he and grandma went to a little town where they would have more conveniences. Little town of Mayer.

What kinds of crops did your father raise? I think you told me.

Yeah, he raised hay and he raised some wheats, and oats in the fields that way. Then he put

in the first walnut orchard in this area.

Do you remember what year, about?

Yeah, I was in high school, that was before 1914.

Are any of those walnuts still there?

Oh, yes.

Where are they?

On the old farm home.

So those walnuts they were put in about eighty years ago?

Yes. And they're kind of sad because nobody does anything for them anymore.

Who owns them now?

Floyd. . what's his name . . . Anderson, Floyd Anderson, used to be the assessor.

Would could be done to them to help them out?

Well, they should have been pruned and taken care of somewhat as they go along or they're pretty sad. Then after . . . you see, he got the English walnuts and planted them and then when they began to bear he found out that he had a poor variety. That they got the early frost . . . late frost. So he had to graft them to a more hardy strain and the next thing he did, he took walnut from the old walnut tree and raised seedlings and planted them and then grafted them to the English. And that's all there, but it has no care.

And that's the first walnut orchard in the area, so it's got some significance as far as local crops?

Yes.

And you'd like to see them fixed up and maintained?

Yes, he had the place just tip top. Never been taken care of since he died.

Are you familiar with other orchards in the area, or plantings or .. were there apple orchards, that you can remember when you were a kid?

Well, yes. All the farms had an apple orchard, that old orchard that's there now is over a hundred years old.

Do you know who planted it?

No. Some pioneer.

Which apple orchard are you talking about?

On my father's place.

So when your father got it, it already had an old apple orchard on it?

Yes, and he pruned it up and got the dead limbs out and all that and then he sprayed it for . . .at that time the coddling moth had been around and laid her eggs and ever apple had a worm, so he had to spray for that.

What did he spray on them?

The spray had sulphur in it, I don't know what it was called, but I do know that it had sulphur, you could smell it. There was an awful lot of work to farming by that time. An awful lot of vermits and insects and all kinds of things.

Do you think there's the same vermits and insects in the 1870's when they were raising wheat?

No, I don't think so.

Do you think they came in because of the crops or . . . ?

No, telling why, they just . . . they just getting around then by that time.

Do you recall any in particular . . . you said coddling moths, was that something just came in one or two years.. .

No, they came in to stay, they're still here.

Do you know when they first came in?

I don't know whether they came in my grandfather's era or not, they sure were in Papa's.

How about other insects or maybe small animals or birds?

Well, the animal that was the most destructive to crops was moles and gophers.

Were there more gophers then?

Yeah. My father had a line of traps out most of the time.

So gopher trapping was kind of one of the chores for subsistence farming?

Yeah.

What other kind of animal control .. would you have problems with skunks in the hen house?

Oh, you would if you left the door open at night; they shut the door.

How about coyotes or raccoons?

No, didn't see either one of them. They came in later.

Coyotes and raccoons?

Yeah.

Where did they come from?

I don't know.

But they weren't around this area, after awhile they started coming in?

I think maybe. .there may have been some in the hills, have you heard, but you know this winter I've heard coyotes yelling.

This winter?

Yes. Over that way somewhere, some faintly.

How about black bears?

No, no bears.

I was cutting timber on Misty Point and a black bear chewed on my chain saws just a few years ago. Three years ago they were right next to the valley. How about deer, has the deer population.

.

Yes.

. .got larger or smaller?

Well, I don't know, but . . .

Can you remember different kinds of deer, were there any white tailed deer here then?

I don't remember of it, of course at first I was too little to pay attention. I know my father didn't hunt much. He'd get a grouse once in awhile and during China pheasant season. They used to be thick. Then somebody brought in fox and he went to work and reproduced and they ruined the Chinese by getting their nests on the ground.

So there's foxes in here now that are wild?

There was for awhile, I don't know if they're still there.

And those are what you think killed off the ph. .

Yeah, you see the pheasants' nest is on the ground, just duck soup to the foxes.

Why did people bring in foxes?

They didn't have any more sense.

Just . . . for hunting or for pets.

I don't know why, but it was ridiculous to bring it into this area where it was getting more settled all the time and agricultural.

So somebody somewhere brought in foxes and for awhile there's a lot of them, do you remember about when that was?

Well, it was after I was grown, I know that.

So it was a scandal type thing?

Yeah.

Everybody's got pheasant hunting and suddenly everybody's got foxes.

Yes.

How did they control the foxes, what did they do with them?

I don't know. I imagine some of the farmers shot them.

How about opossum?

They came later, and I've had my times with them. They're very persistent and they got under my house and I had a whale of a time getting them out. I finally douched them out and into a big cage thing and then I used my little pistol on them.

Just killed them?

That's the only thing to do.

You don't like opossums?

Oh, they're too destructive. Eat everything and chew things. Very great nuisance.

Do you remember when they came into this area?

Well, I had my troubles after I came here and that's oh, twenty years ago.

So, were they here in the 1920's?

Not that I know of.

So you didn't notice them really until about twenty years ago?

I didn't have anything have any dealings with them then, you see, I wasn't . . . I was on the farm then and if there were any opossums around I didn't ever see them. Of course, we had dogs and the dogs would have scared the opossums.

How about beaver, were there beavers on any of these streams through here, beaver ponds -- were they common?

I don't remember of it, they're such little streams. I don't remember of it. Some of my friends in Alsea had beaver trouble and a few others have, but I never did.

How about did your father fish or are you familiar with fish in the streams around here?

Oh, there were trout, my brother and I fish, but there wasn't much for a grown up.

Just small fish?

Yeah, small trout, we thought it was fun.

Were you fishing Oak Creek, or . . .

No, the streams on his place, a little . . .two little streams.

Did they have names?

Yes, I named them.

Two little . . . what did you name them?

Well, one, the land it flowed through was kind of clay and gooey and I called it . . . what was it called now, it had to do with the ground, and the other on the north end was different soil and stuff and there are lots of periwinkles, so I called it Periwinkle Creek. Cave In, this one in this end kept caving in, kept washing.

Are they still there?

Yes.

Are they still called . . .

I don't know what they're called. I don't know what they're called anymore.

[Phil] Across from the high school.

Yes.

So do you think they still have fish in them?

They wouldn't have much, but they might have a few in them, I doubt if they're . . . we had some nine or ten inches when we're kids.

Those are worth . . . .

Oh, yes. We thought it was wonderful.

Did you notice many -- were there more ducks or geese in those days, wild ducks and geese?

There were . . . yes, flying over, but they didn't land here. But I saw enormous bands of geese migrating, you know, and then for the last few years you don't see hardly any or hear them. I heard some this winter, but they're not big bands like they used to be.

When did that start changing, do you remember?

I wasn't looking. I don't know just when they was -- just came to my attention and now it's just recent years.

On the way that the changes have come from wheat to hay, when they went to that what did they use for the taxes, how did they generate money to pay the taxes on these small farms?

Well, they fed the hay to the cows and milked the cows.

So it was milk, that's what a lot of farmers used for their income was milk, they were dairy farms?

Part of it, you see, they had a variety, a farmer just can't depend on one thing unless it's big.

Apples and eggs and hogs?

Yeah, a little bit of everything.

Did people raise sheep?

Yes. Papa had some sheep. Sheep and cattle and horses, goats.

Do you recall any of the other apple orchards, were there quite a few apple orchards, are there any cherry orchards in those days?

We had a cherry orchard and made some money selling that too. I don't remember whether big orchards, they all had orchards when I was a child, but I don't know whether they were removed or what. I don't get out among them where the old neighbors used to live.

Would there be pickers, like would Siletz Indians come across to pick or kids pick?

No, neighbor kids mostly, and me and my brother.

So, mostly the kids of the farms that did that the harvesting.

They were there to work.

Were there any hired hands to help out?

Oh, Papa always had a hired hand, he had too much to work by himself. I helped him out a little bit in . . . when he was planting crops, I would drive a three horse team to the rake, harrow I mean. To cover the grain after he sowed it.

Would that be sowed by machine or hand?

He usually sowed it by hand, but he had a little hand machine with some of the grains he would sow with that I remember, but I think most of it he threw it by hand. I noticed he had a sack on his left side and he'd throw this and bring his hand back and get another handful, he had a system you see.

He had a rhythm?

Yeah. And he had me rake, I mean harrow over to cover the grain because sometime there'd be a big flock of blackbirds or crows would descend and pick it up.

How would you keep them out of there?

Well, you don't.

You just have to let nature have . . .

Well, if you rake . . . harrow it over . . .

Oh, I see.

. . with the birds, you cover it up, they wouldn't get much of it. I've done all the different things on the farm.

Why do you think there's not so many farms anymore?

Well, I don't know why for sure, but I think it's too bad.

. . . . too many people?

Well, I imagine there are several reasons all put together.

You think it would be nice if . . .

It would be a whole lot better than hordes of people on charity.

Yeah, do you think it would be worth it to even have a couple family farms just so kids would know what family farms look like?

Yes, and some sort supervision and teaching. (end of tape 1)

An old Indian camp?

Yes, that's what we were told, and I have found broken pieces of Indian stone bowls.

In that area?

Yes. On my dad's farm.

What part of the farm were those broken bowls on?

As I remember it was in a field, but I'm not sure now. But I've got them out in my museum. No, I don't remember. He would . . . mainly he would dig them up with his farm tools, you see, and bring them in, because there are marks on some of them where he's hit them with his machine.

So, they were excavated on his farm just where he had the fields and you're not too sure where exactly . . .

No, somewhere on the farm.

Have you heard any stories about that village or what they may have done there or just . . .

No, no. Nobody seemed to know.

Just that Indians used to live there?

Yes.

Do you recall any other sites around here where you were told Indians used to live?

Well, I think I have but I don't remember now where it was.

Do you remember finding any arrowheads or . . .

Yes, yes, I have found a few arrowheads.

Do you recall where? Do you recall where the arrowheads were?

Oh, no, it's liable to be most anywhere on the farm.

Oh, on the farm?

Oh, yeah, just on the farm, but I didn't remember a particular place.

Are they in your museum too?

Yes.

Oh, and so you found those in the early 1900's?

Yes.

Is says here, too, that your father came up with your Gragg grandparents, is that how it was spelled or was it Gragg?

(Gragg), Scotch.

On the old Ajax ship, and then she doesn't say what the old Ajax ship is, do you know what that is?

Well, it was from San Francisco. My grandfather came by train to San Francisco when they moved in '78 . . . '74.

Where did he come from?

Missouri.

By railroad to San Francisco?

Yes. And then they came up the coast to Astoria on the old Ajax, which later sunk.

Oh, so that was the name of the boat?

Yes.

Oh, the Ajax?

Yes.

Where did it sink?

On the west coast here somewhere, I don't know.

Then from Astoria they moved down into this area?

Yes, no, they moved into a little . . . oh, first they went to Amity where my aunt lived who had come ten years before.

In 1864?

Yeah, they went there.

Was she from Missouri?

Yes.

Was there a reason she came right after the Civil War?

Yes.

What was the reason?

Well, a bunch of them were coming, a bunch of her relatives, her family and some of her relatives and neighbors and they came in a wagon trail with oxen.

Oxen wagon trail?

Yes.

Did they come by the south route or the north route?

Don't ask me, I wasn't there.

Nobody told you?

No, I wished I had known about those things. I would have asked her when I could.

She was still alive when you were young?

Oh, yes. My aunt Sophronia.

Sophronia. So you actually knew somebody that came across the Oregon trail by covered wagon?

Oh, yes. And I've known others too but I can't remember.

Was she the first one of your relatives that came here?

The first one that came. And when she came and her family, grandpa wanted to come, but grandma wouldn't. So ten years later the grasshoppers ate them out in . . . oh, Kansas . . . not Missouri, Kansas. The grasshoppers ate them out and grandma was willing to come then.

Had her fill of grasshoppers?

Yes. Just ruined them, had them two years.

Did she ever regret it? Did she like it out here when they came here?

Oh, yes.

Now that was your father's family, right.

Yes.

And then how did your mother's family come here?

Grandpa came . . . oh, Pennsylvania is where they lived. Mama was born in Pennsylvania. And they came out here in . . . goodness sakes, I can't think of the year. She was born back there in . . . oh, it was '71.

1871?

Yes. He came to this farm that was surrounded by town later.

So even when he was still farming the town grew up all the way around him?

Yes.

Wasn't he under pressure to develop it or sell it for money?

No. He didn't sell it money.

Did people offer to buy it?

I don't know, he didn't want to sell it. He rented it.

[Phil] Is that the one down on Grant?

Yes. And then you see,

[Phil] With the Crees house.

Yes. That big old house is still living, but it isn't white anymore. Painted it an icky color.

You'd like to see it white again?

Yes. And I'd like to see it have a decent setting, it's crowded in among houses.

So you think it should be moved?

It's been moved, you see.

Oh, I see.

In recent years a man bought it I suppose for speculation and he moved it to a place where it isn't fit for it.

It's out of context?

Yes.

[Phil] Where was it?

Sixteenth and . . . what's the other street?

So they moved it into a bad location and painted it an icky color?

Yeah.

Maybe because of it's age, maybe sometime in the future somebody can move and restore it.

I wish somebody could.

[Phil] Is that picture she's got on the wall in there, is that down on sixteenth?

Will you go get that.

That's one thing I want to ask you later on is do you have good photographs of the early days of the farms or of the local hills or your family in the early 1900's or late 1800's?

Some, just some. I'll hunt it up.

What I'm curious, is sometime at some later date would it be possible to borrow those and take photographs of them for slides?

Oh, yes.

Okay. Are they all pretty much in a single location or scattered around pretty much?

[Phil] This is it when it was on sixteenth.

Picture of the Cree house.

Crees.

Crees house and "God Bless Our House" sign was on Sixteenth, do you know what year this is, it doesn't have a . . . oh, wait . . . no it doesn't have a year. It was printed in Portland. 1878.

[Phil] I'm trying to figure out what those hills are, that's Timber Hill and that's IV Hill behind it, there's the ridge up in Dunn Forest.

There's an orchard there and fir starting to move in here, fir back up in there.

[Phil] But most of Vinyard Hill was pretty bare.

And so you made this her letterhead.

My kids think it's great.

So do I.

Now you see, my father's farm is in these hills back of the barn to the right up Highland Way.

So this is your Grandfather Crees and this is Highland Way up here and this would be your father's farm up through here.

[Phil] Kind of over by . . .

Over the hills, over the hills.

That's why we're not seeing any trees in that area?

Oh, that's trees.

But just up on the ridge there?

Yes.

Was that mostly oak?

Yes.

Were they young oak . . .

A fir or two.

Were they younger trees or . . .

Yes. Quite a bit younger.

This is beautiful. What I'd like to do with this at sometime is take a slide picture so it can be projected on a screen and enlarged, would that be possible?

I should think so.

If . . . is there . . . I understand there's somebody that's working with you now doing a story of your life and working on a history?

Yeah, I'm not sure what it is, I haven't read it.

Okay, you trust that's what she's doing?

Yes.

Would she be a good person to maybe help you gather some of your old photographs together?

Oh, yes.

Because if you could put them together it would be worth keeping a permanent record, maybe one that the Horner Museum or Oregon State could have access to . . . to see how things have changed in time.

Give me some time to hunt them up.

Okay. Well, if you're willing to do it, I would sure be willing to take the photographs and make duplicates for you.

I'll see if I want them.

Any pictures of your family and grandparents are just as interesting as farms or old buildings or early Corvallis.

Might be.

And she might be a good person to gauge which pictures are . . .

Yes, no doubt. Now that's grandpa's orchard.

So that's one that he inherited . . . or he planted that?

Yes.

Is this the walnut orchard we were talking about?

No, no, this is grandpa Crees'.

And he planted that orchard?

Yes.

Are any of those trees still standing?

I'm not sure. There's one stood for a long, long time but that was a Belflower Apple.

Belflower Apple?

That was an old timer.

And it still might be there?

Yes.

And it was planted?

Well, he . . .whenever he planted it, I don't know.

[Phil] You say that was down on Sixteenth and what was the cross street.

I'm trying to think of it, but I don't remember the cross street. Yeah, I may have it written down here, but . . . Well, yes he came there in '71, you see and he stayed until '78.

Oh, so this picture says 1878 on the background because these trees are older than six or seven years old. So this picture might be from 1890 or 1900.

Yeah, I'm not sure.

It's a nice picture. It would be nice if somebody bought the house and moved it back and painted it that color again. Is that one of the oldest homes still around here?

Oh, no.

There's quite a few older homes?

Yes. Some of them have renovated and preserved.

Other than riding your horse, did you play with other kids?

Oh, yes, but you see it's quite a ways between houses and not all houses people had children to play with. But there was one in particular and it was down on Highland Way down this way down the hill. And that was quite a little ways to walk, of course, I'd go on my pony if I went but they had to walk. They did come out to the cherry orchard. And they're the ones that gave me my first start of botany.

The girls in that family?

Yes.

How many were there?

Ten.

Ten girls?

No, ten children.

Oh, I see. And one or two of them were interested in botany?

Oh, yes. Several of them. Kings.

Oh, the Kings. Soloman Kings' family.

His grandchildren.

How did they get interested in botany?

I don't know, well, they had to make their own fun, most everybody did on the ranch. And they were great on reading books like Little Women, Little Men, Little Women and all those nice books of the times. And they got started on it and they made up their own names for them.

For the plants?

Yes.

So they started identifying the plants?

You bet.

And giving them . . . kind of like your naming creeks, and them naming plants?

Yeah. They were just wonderful. And the oldest one lived to be ninety-eight.

So, did they drink some of that water at Sulphur Springs?

Yes.

Well that's .. we might have a competitor for Pepsi Cola here pretty quick. When you got together with them did you play games like hide and seek or race horses or . . .

No, we never . . . not much like that, but the neighbors on the right of my father's place were the Murphys, a fellow related to my husband, just a cousin though. And they had a bunch of kids and they were my age and we would certainly play. In the evenings, lots of times we'd go over there into their barn lot and play their base and all those rough games. One time a little red headed boy, Roy and I collided and I had a black eye for a long time.

Just from rough housing?

Yes. Running, you know, we'd get so excited about the games.

Yeah, would you build tree houses or play catch with a baseball or . . .

Yes, a little later when my brother got old enough to play ball, we did a lot of that, but we never made any tree houses. But we climbed trees to beat the band especially the shorter trees.

So tree climbing and tag and rough housing and horse back riding those were . . .fishing, those were the things . . . and reading?

Oh, yes.

Do you remember any of the books you used to read?

Oh, yes. I used to get books out of the library and Mama and Papa and I took turns reading them out loud in the evening.

Can you remember some of those books?

Oh, yes and no. There were popular books of the day, popular authors, and I can't say them. I should write that down.

You could probably look it up too.

Little Men and Little Women were two of them.

That's Alcott?

Yes!

Would you go to movies or baseball games?

Wasn't any.

No reason to go to town?

Oh, yes, we had to go to take our produce in and buy what we couldn't raise. See every week we took milk and eggs or they'd perish and we had to drive the old black horse to the . . . surrey with a fringe on top.

That was your produce wagon then?

Yes.

And so about just once a week you'd go into town, until you started school?

Yes. Everything was different then.

You think a lot nicer?

I do.

Do you think people were nicer as a result or . . . ?

Oh, in general I guess not.

Same kind of people just nicer circumstances?

Yes. Some I read about are not nice. Some are very queer to me.

The way things are going?

Yes. I wonder why. One thing that they had to work and be sensible in those days. And there's too much leisure and pleasure now.

So you think what you did as recreation as a kid is just about the right amount, and now they do it too much?

Yes.

Do you think that . . . like welfare or something like that, or do you think it's just absence of family farms or just a bunch of reasons?

A bunch of reasons. Yes.

Is that something in the last ten years or something since World War II, or . . .

Well, in the last quite a few years but it's getting worse. It really is. Now there's poverty in my day too. There were certain families that never got anywhere, but they travelled

around and in season they had harvesting jobs. And they made enough to take them through the winter, but I never knew of them getting on a place and making a go of farming.

So there was a class of people that had trouble making it but still made it?

Yes. There wasn't near as much poverty . . . I mean you were asked for as much donations for poverty in those days as you are now.

Could that be because there is a lot more people now?

Yeah, that's part of it all right.

But you think there's a greater percentage of poor people now than when you were younger?

Yes, I think so. They don't have the chances to take up any free land or anything like that. And I don't know just why it is but there is more, I can see more.

Maybe it's just too many for the land that's left?

That's possible.

How about areas when you were young were open to farming like . . . Siuslaw National Forest, places like that they had farms in those hills, Alsea area, Lobster Valley. Do you think that helped or do you think that ground there is more appropriate for National Forest and growing trees like it's turned into?

Well, I don't know. Sure's different.

When you moved to town and you were working for the seed place would you come back out here?

I didn't move to town, . . . well, maybe I was. I was on Kings Road and that was just the edge of town. I was on a piece of my grandfather's farm.

Oh, I see so you're still on the family farm then.

Not here.

But your grandfather's farm?

Not here, it was down on Kings Road.

[Phil] About where along Kings was it.

I lived in two or three places, I'd sell off a hunk and move over.

So you were a subdivider?

You don't know the Cropsey[7] place on Kings Road? It's a great big house and it's near the creek.

[Phil] Dixon?

Yes. That was one of them, I think that's the house my husband renovated . . .fixed up and was living it when he died.

Is it still there?

Yes, Mr. Cropsey's living in it.

And your grandfather built that originally?

No.

But it was on his place?

Yes, it was on some of his farm that I inherited. My mother inherited and then I got it.

[Phil] Myron house . . .

They were nice neighbors.

Would families go out picnicking then or were there special occasions like 4th of July or . . .

Yes.

Where a lot of families would get together?

Yes.

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[7] Myron Cropsey lived in 2041 NW Arthur Pl., Corvallis.

Where would you go, did you have fireworks?

We had them in the evening, throwing firecrackers . . . yes . . .the kids were always using firecrackers all day long.

On the Fourth?

Yes.

Would there be some community celebration around here somewhere?

Lots of times, yes. That's . . .I don't know, I don't think they went to Sulphur Springs particularly. It was just on some place here in the area where there was room.

And they might have a fireworks display or something?

Yes.

Would your family . . . was it common for families to go picnicking. .

Yes.

. . on their own farms or would they go down by the river

Well, no, on their own farms and several . . . . some of their friends from other areas. . communities might come or something like that.

How about when they were gathering crops and stuff, would they take meals out to the fields and maybe have a family picnics or hired hands . . . set a place . . .

No, no, come to the house.

Come to the house and eat there?

Yes, more comfortable.

So they were looking for comfort rather than . . .

Yeah, they worked hard and had a meal and washed up and rested up a little.

How long did you work at the seed . . .

Just about fifteen years.

So you would have been forty or fifty years old when you quit working there?

No, I worked until I was sixty-two . . . maybe it was sixty-five, I'm not sure.

And then you retired?

Yes.

And since that time, you've been devoting most of your time to botanizing or a little bit of your time or . . . ?

Yes. I have a variety. Like him and some of the others we got together about it and call ourselves the "Botany Gang".

The Botany Gang, huh?

The Botany Bunch, I guess isn't it?

When did this happen?

Oh, several years ago, do you remember?

So it's like the Brady Bunch[8] or something?

Yeah.

Got thirty-two years there? What did you do between your retirement and the Botany Bunch?

Well, I was always busy .. an old hen with a dozen chickens.

Volunteer work or grandkids or . . .

No, stuff I cooked up myself. Before I moved here, I had a garden and I gardened. But I've been working at my yard here, to get it ready to plant in wild flowers and save some of them maybe. I finished that job this spring.

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[8] Brady Bunch was a popular television show in 1970s.

So you're going to put the lawn into wild flowers rather than grass?

I'm not going to try for grass.

Trying to keep it out?

Yeah, it'll be wild flowers, I've got twenty kinds now.

Twenty kinds?

Yes.

Are they fairly common around the area or some of them unusual?

Well, fairly common. You know what the trilliums are, don't you?

Yes.

I've got trilliums and I've got . . . well, it's that one . . . lamb's tongues [Erythronium oregonum].

Lamb tongue?

Yeah, been seeing it here, well, that's what I wanted.

Did you collect wild plants when you were working at the Seed Lab?

Oh, I went with my teacher on a few collecting trips. There, oh, here. See they're like that in my yard now, in the spring.

Oh. Did you ever go botanizing on Coffin Butte, that area?

No, that's down that way isn't it?

Yeah.

I used to see it, we used to drive by it but I've never got to go up on it.

How about . . .I understand that you've identified plants in the area of the Soap Creek School House?

Yes, they have a yard there and it's full of cat's ears [Calochortus tolmiei].

Cat ears?

Mariposa Lilies, local kind. And they have a committee to take care of that school house, you know it's a museum. And the one who's supposed to take care of the yard didn't . . . she's a Japanese girl and she didn't understand what to do, so she mowed it.

And they're trying to raise wild flowers there?

Well, it was just thick with them and you see, that takes all the seed pods and no more seeds and the bulbs will run out eventually. So they had to stop that and had her just mow a path.

So now they're not mowing it to encourage the wild flowers to come back?

Well, that discouraged it, see, that took the seed pods.

Is there still a fairly good variety of wild flowers there?

Well, it just this kind, the cat ear.

They were saying that recently they found a fairly rare lily towards the back of the house? Are you familiar with that?

I hadn't heard about that.

Just about two days . . .

That's interesting. I would like to know what kind of lily.

That's why I was asking you.

Well, you have to show me.

Well, we'll go find it. Lorna Grabe . . .

[Phil] She'll stand right there and say, well, that's not supposed to be there.

I think Lorna Grabe's the one you want to talk to, she's the one that told me about it, she said they just found it . . . I believe within the last year.

I know her, I'll have to call her and ask her.

In the notes here, in those days, there were lots of jack rabbits?

Oh, my, yes.

That was a real problem around here, jack rabbits?

Well, I don't know how much of a problem they were, for awhile they were quite thick. I don't know what happened to them. Sometimes they'd get a disease among rabbits or some other animal and it takes them off.

So in those days there were more gophers, more moles and more jack rabbits here?

Yeah.

Do you think all this asphalt that we're laying down is what's helping to control them or do you think it's just that they're not farming any more or do you think diseases maybe came in?

Any of those can help, any of those can be part reason, you see. Various things, no doubt. But there's plenty of moles, I don't know about gophers, but I . . . as I go along the road I see in the field piles of mole and gopher works. There's still plenty of them around.

It not so much a problem maybe because people aren't farming?

That's right. You don't want them on your lawn, sometimes they're on your lawn.

So they're still a problem some?

Oh, yes, they can be a problem.

How about the way the town's been developing, you got to watch it develop from dirt roads to concrete parking lots?

Dirt roads to gravel roads to concrete.

Do you think maybe they've put too much concrete down or do you think that's just one of the prices you pay for having so many people?

Oh, yes, you have to have it.

How about this plan to have a green way plan around the city, do you think something like that is a pretty reasonable idea or . . .

Yes, probably so, I haven't looked into it, I don't know what . . . don't know much about it yet.

Do you think it might be better off to turn it into family farms?

Well, the county all around has good land, now all this land over here that Camp Adair ruined. That could have just as well been made into farms.

The flat area, the area around where Wells Station is.

Yes, I've been seeing in the paper about the Camp Adair.

They said some of that land was ruined because of all the concrete and pipes of excavation.

Yes, probably so.

But you think that their using it for a game farm, do you think it might be better to raise pheasants there or put in a few family farms maybe as demonstrations?

I don't know. If it's got trash in it like cement and the pipes and things, they couldn't do much about farming it. Perhaps it's best this way.

Can you remember when CCC came in here?

Oh, yes.

Was that pretty popular with the people in your area?

No, we just stood for it.

Just happened so you lived with it?

Yes.

Did they create any problems?

Not where I was, but . . .I don't know.

Do you know any people that maybe came here with the CCC and that are still here, liked the area so much they stayed?

No, I don't particularly a person, no.

It was just kind of one of those troublesome things that kind of occurred and didn't pay it any mind?

Yeah.

How about Adair? Was that kind of the same reaction or did people . . . were people more concerned when Adair came in?

I didn't hear much about it. I guess it was the same way.

So, even though they had these big development out around Peavy and Camp Adair, they kind of kept to themselves and didn't attract a lot of people here locally or . . .

I don't think so.

Maybe they had more a tendency to go up to Portland or Salem when they went places than Corvallis or . . .

Probably.

Could it have been that you were just maybe . . . because of your kind of work or lifestyle that you just weren't too much associated with any changes around town?

I guess that's it.

As far as you were concerned, you knew what was going on but didn't really change things too much?

No.

How about either one of the Wars in general, World War I, can you remember any big changes because of that, a lot less men around or lot of community fundraisers for . . .

Oh, there was some of that, but I . . . in general it didn't upset our . . . or disrupt our lives much. Got along. . got life here fairly well.

Did you have any close relatives die or . . .

Oh, yes. I lost two cousins in one family.

So, that was the worst thing?

Yes.

Some of the boys would go off to war and not come back?

Yes.

Was there any local celebration after the War, or was there a lot of . . .

Yes, yes there was. I think there was. Everybody celebrating.

How about the Depression. Was that a real sudden thing that upset everybody or poor family farms anyhow and the people kept on as usual?

Yes, well, about as usual, I suppose affected some more than others.

Businesses in town, did some of the businesses close down or . . . not paying them for awhile or . . . sell out?

I imagine so, but I don't know.

So life was pretty stable, wars had come, depressions would come, CCC came in and as far as you went just something you read in the newspaper?

Yes. See, the farm . . . I don't know how to say it, but it can absorb a lot of trouble and bother and one thing or another.

Pretty insulated about world events . . . or even local events?

Yes. You had your work to do and you had to do in order to live.

Did you listen to the radio much?

No, can't be bothered.

Oh, do you think you're unusual or do you think that was maybe a lot of people?

Most people.

Didn't listen to the radio?

No, they like it, but I haven't got the habit.

Oh, I see.

I rather read a good book.

So, maybe a lot . . .

[END OF TAPE]

Did you talk to her and know that they used to live in Soap Creek Valley?

Yeah. You knew Neva?

I knew the whole family, but Neva was in my grade.

So you went to the same school?

Yes, but that's after they moved to town you see.

Oh, I see, so do you remember when they moved to town?

Oh, it was around the turn of the century.

About 1900 or 1901?

Yeah.

I see, so you knew them, the Moores, in town and went to school with them and the Kings?

Yes.

Did they ever talk or go back to the old place on Sulphur Springs?

I don't know. Laura [Moore] has lived the longest I believe and she corresponds with the people that are taking care of the little red school house. She helps them with memories.

And I've got some photographs of her but I haven't talked to her. Do you think she would be a good person to talk to about . . .as far as . . . or was she too young when they moved to remember much about Sulphur Springs?

No, because she is older than me.

Oh, I see and she's still alive?

She was just a few years ago.

And she had a good memory two years ago too?

Yes.

I may . . . did she move to Newport?

I think so. At the coast.

And one of her sisters was still alive, I think, maybe in Philomath? I'm not really . . .

It was Laura and Neva and there was a boy or two. Mr. Moore had, in Corvallis, had a chicken hatchery. Oh, I see so . . .

That was his business.

Sold the ranch and moved to town and opened up a chicken hatchery. Were they . . .did they do pretty good?

Yes. It was considered pretty good.

They lived in a house in town then?

Yes. They were living there when I started to school in 1901 or '02, whatever it was and Neva was in my grade. Integrated school, there was no grades in this country school.

So, did you like the school in town better or the country school better?

Well, I didn't go to the country school hardly two years. It was a better school in town, of course, I've got to admit that.

Got to ride your horse.

Yes.

Did you have a May pole or any kind of playground equipment, any slides or merry go round?

Yes, they had slides and things like that in town. Nothing out in the country one. We'd play just games we knew like Drop the Handkerchief and Pussy Wants a Corner and things

like that.

Do you think you got a pretty good education in the schools?

Oh, yes, they were good.

Got reading and writing of course, how about Oregon history, did they teach much history?

Yes, and I like history.

Oh, did they teach local history about Jessie Applegate or Jedidiah Smith or can you remember?

Well, I'm not sure, I've heard of them before so . . . I don't remember whether there was much of that mentioned or not.

Still a lot of pioneers alive at that time?

Yes.

Did they make a big deal out of them, did they have local celebrations for the original pioneers or . . .

No, I don't remember any of it. And it was 1905 before they began to urge to mark the Oregon Trail.

Do you remember the man responsible for that?

Yeah, Ezra Meeker.

Did you know him personally?

Yes, I saw him personally.

Saw him, so he was a big hit when he was marking the Oregon Trail?

No, he had to work hard at getting people interested.

He's kind of famous. I'm interested in trails and he's kind of a . . .

You see in 1905 when the Lewis and Clark Exposition . . .

Did you go to that?

Yes, in Portland.

Did you have Coca Cola there?

No. I don't think so. Anyway Ezra . . . we stayed at my aunt in Portland for a few days, we went and Ezra was camped with his oxen team and wagon on a vacant lot near her. And he was on his way back east to Washington to work for getting the trail marked.

Was he part of the exposition?

No, no. Just happened to be there, or maybe he did on it on purpose, I don't know.

Did you talk to him?

I don't think so, I was just a kid, but I saw him and I heard him talk a little.

[Phil] He went back East by wagon?

Yes. Took him a long time, but he finally got back to Washington D. C.

Was he famous then, did people know who he was?

Well, he began being famous, yes.

Did you take the train to the Lewis and Clark Exposition?

I think we did.

What do you remember about it?

Oh boy, plenty. The main thing that interested me was that pony that had been taught tricks.

Trick pony?

Yes. Trixie.

Can you remember the log house . . . the world's largest log cabin? Can you remember the big log cabin they built there?

Oh, yes, yes, I saw it, yes.

What other impressions, is that the first you can remember going to Portland?

No, because we'd go there and visit my grandmother and my aunt every so often.

Do you remember anything about Portland in those days?

Well, it wasn't as big as now of course. You could go on the train there. No, I can't remember much detail.

Could you take a boat there, did they still have boats . . .

Yes, we could have done that but it's a lot slower, you know and all that than the train.

It wasn't as modern? Would people still take the boat?

I don't know how much it was used. I think it was more for freight than passengers at that time. But when my mother and I came to Benton County from Clatsop County, I think . . . was it Portland, I can't remember, to visit somebody, we took the boat to Corvallis, the river boat. And I can't remember where it was a stern wheeler or a side wheeler. I wish to goodness I did.

But you remember taking the boat ride?

Yes, I remember.

[Phil] Other than you and your mother, were there very many passengers?

Well, it was passengers like us, you know, just passengers. Coming up here . . . See we was coming up here because we were moving up here.

Moving your freight up that way?

Not all of it. My dad came across the mountains. . Elsie where he lived with a wagon and horses and a herd of cattle. And he hit the road coming up . . . but he was supposed to come across part of the Military Road with that and he hit the road . . . the main road down here somewhere I think around Amity maybe . . . and it took him many days to get up here.

So your family was here waiting for him when he got here?

No, we didn't get here until after he had been here a few . . some days.

Did he come by himself?

No, he had two or three neighbors, he hired them . . . to help him come with his cattle and things. And he had to get . . . buy food. Oats and stuff for them along the way, and he found some people who weren't very accommodating.

What do you mean by that?

Well, they didn't want to sell him anything, this and that and the other . . . I don't know what all. It was one in particular I think, became our neighbor later on. Wasn't much accommodation between us.

Hard feelings on the road translated to hard feeling between neighbors?

Yes.

See ..

What?

I thought you were starting to say something and I . . .

No, but I've . . . then you see, I've seen my whole life from then on and what he did to this ranch . . . that old ranch and I'd say it would be a whole lot better if a lot of people now that are at loose ends and don't know what to do with themselves and can't get anywhere if they had a little farm they could work out. But they'd have to be taught something.

People don't have the knowledge or the tools to work on the farms anymore?

No, no! And . . .especially if you could find a boy that's out of high school or has quit high school or something, he's the one that needs help. Nothing's done.

How about the children's farm home here locally, do you think something like that . . . is that what you have in mind?

No, I . . . well, anything to get them started, yes. I don't know how . . . I remember when the farm home was started, but I've never gone over there and seen how it works.

Just not interested or just didn't have the opportunity?

Just didn't seem to have the opportunity. I always was busy.

On your father, when he moved into the farm, the soil had been depleted and it had been used for stock, is that common with a lot of the farms around here if they've been depleted, they just switched over to stock?

Yes, or if they .. I don't know why they left it, anyway it's gone back to nature. And it's very, very interesting.

In what ways?

For instance, there were two natural springs on the place, wonderful springs, that's where we got our water, one at both ends of the place and when papa finally got himself a little time to fix up another field, way down to the north end, I remember we all went down there with him that day and around that spring had grown up young ash trees, they were probably as high as this house then and in every one of those ash trees as near as I remember there was a nest that looked like a robin's nest. And there was a . . . I think was a deer mouse. Do you know anything about deer mice? They're pretty grey with a white belly and a long tail. And there was that mouse, I don't know what it was doing there.

Every one of those nests?

Yes. And when we went down there, and began to chop them trees, of course, they'd beat it. We ruined their environment and I feel bad about it.

Do you think the deer mice had more right to those trees than you did?

Well, it's a shame really. They weren't doing any harm and we were ogres to them. And . . .

[Phil] Are you sure it was a deer mouse or could it be something like tree voles?

Now what's a tree . . .

[Phil] Looks like a mouse, there are a bunch of them and live . . . they make nests in trees.

Well, it could have been, you see, I didn't know. Nobody knew to tell me. I'd like to know because I want to write this up about my father's place.

So you're working on a history of your father's making that transformation?

Yes. And things that happened as they appeared to me and . . . at all ages as I grew up.

[Phil] You say they were grey with a white belly?

Yes.

Have you noticed, when you were younger can you recall seeing eagles or more hawks?

No. Hawks, more hawks.

More than now?

Yes.

How about owls?

Yes, there were more owls too.

And lots more pheasants?

Oh, yes. You see the pheasants were brought in about the '90's. And they prospered and they got too thick, I'll say, for years. And now, they're just about gone.

I hunted pheasants around here in the 1950's and the '60's even, until 1960's, so it's been pretty recent that they've kind of died out.

Yes. Well, I don't see them, I know there's nothing like they used to be. Maybe some living yet, but nothing like it was.

Did the grass seed growers putting all these fallow farms back into production after World War II, could that have removed their habitat, been more problem than foxes?

I don't think so.

You think pretty much foxes was ..

Yeah, I think foxes were the big . . . a big factor in it. And then another little critter . . . I'd like to know somebody to ask that knows about these little critters. And this one as I remember was more like a field mouse, it was a little browner but it was about as big as a deer mouse and it had a short tail and it was a fat little thing, you know, shaped like a mole or a gopher but it was a mouse and it lived in this . . . swamp . . . this brush grass swamp.

And that's the place you saw it?

Yes. And the only place it could dig and do anything about living would be in the clumps of roots. I'd like to talk to somebody that would know.

I think I could probably find out for you.

I wish you would.

I've got a friend that's a wildlife biologist.

Oh, goodie.

Can probably help you out.

I would like to talk to somebody, about both those kinds of mice.

Okay.

And another thing about this swamp, I will never forget it, it was below the run off of the spring and always had water, as I remember it never went dry completely and but it was very, very thin scum of water and real fine soft dirt and in the summer time when it was warm that water was warm. And boy was that the most wonderful place to run in bare feet.

Oh. What happened to it?

Well, I riled it up.

No, I mean is it still there?

Oh, no, Papa . . . here's more Scotch thrift, he sunk a line of tile . . . that ruined that.

So he could plow over it?

Yes. I was interested in the aesthetic part of his farming. He was interested in profits.

Was it profitable to sink the tile and farm over that or . . .

Oh, yes. It wasn't doing any good except for me otherwise.

I see. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Oh, just one little brother.

How much younger than you?

Six years.

Six years younger?

Six or seven.

So you were by yourself quite a bit?

Yes, really.

So places that you would find and play with kind of by yourself and those are the areas that you became familiar with, places such as the spring, or the . . .

The creeks. Of course, he got big enough to play at the creek too.

So those would be kind of your destinations around the house there?

Yes.

And then the trees?

Yes.

Shorter trees than that?

Oh, yes. Oh, it was a heavenly place for kids if they were inclined that way. And I've got some real great granddaughters that aren't being taught a thing on earth about what grows. They're just little dolls, that's all.

Did you know you were in a nice place when you were growing up or did it take your growing up and looking back to realize it was a nice place?

No, I think both. Yeah, I realized it twice. As farms go, some people . . . if anything I don't like, it's a snob that makes fun of farms. But of course, farmers hung together, they were a social group and it was about the same, we didn't have any snobs.

How about when you went to college?

No, I didn't notice it, it was in a different environment. All in college and studying, didn't notice much like that.

Do you think the courses they taught in college at that time were similar to courses they teach now, I mean, take away computers and some of the modern technology, were the instructors and students . . . was it a similar level of education or similar . . .

Yes, I think so.

. . environment.

Yes. Of course, I enjoyed the botany the best of anything.

That wasn't your degree was it?

No, I graduated in home economics, the thing I didn't care for. There wasn't much else for a woman to do then.

The botany was that necessary for the job at the seed lab?

That helped like everything. I knew the names of things. I didn't have to ask.

Did you get more money because of that?

No, I don't think so.

Just helped to make get the job?

Yes it would have, but they took lots of that didn't have any at all. They had to learn it there. Those were good days, I enjoyed the job.

Before then you were just . . . pretty much between graduation and starting at the Seed Lab, though you got married and were raising kids, pretty much as a housewife?

Yes. Oh, yes, I didn't have any job, of course I was busy. . we had a garden and all that sort of thing.

Did you do any botanizing during that time of your life?

Yes. I always played with it.

Just go out and hike in the woods and look for things?

Yes. Where ever I was. I find there's something everywhere.

So, even in your lawn or in the garden or ..

Yes.

Oh. Constantly.

Yes.

How about your children?

Well, they like it, but they didn't go in for it big like I did.

Where are some of your favorite places around town? You mentioned Sulphur Springs. Are there other areas that you think are particularly good for botanizing?

Well, they're all good. Yes, I've been up on the face of these bare hills . . . I didn't think about it then but I don't imagine, do you Phil, that there'd be a heck of a lot there, because it would just be hot and dry up there.

[Phil] . . . early in the spring why it's still . . .

Yeah.

So you go more on the north side of the hills where it's cooler and moister looking for things?

No, I try to go on all different kinds of places, see, because different plants in different

places.

Did you ever map them or keep records?

No.

Or journals or anything?

No.

Just a good memory?

I don't know how good it is, but I don't remember keeping much of a record.

Are there any particular trails that you go on year after year to see certain plants at certain times?

Yes, Sulphur Springs was the best, they're so different over there.

So, I know they're thinking of developing it now and that's a good thing to know is that type of . . .that's locally a good area.

Yes, it is, I think it ought to be preserved and done something with. It's different.

When was the last time you were out there?

Two or three years ago, I think.

I'm trying to get Charlie Olson and Wanda Cook, it's the Cooks that bought the Moore place.

Oh. I didn't know any of them.

She's one of the Marcks ..

Oh!

And Charlie Olson up to Sulphur Springs in February and it maybe fun for you to go out at the same time, they're arguing over whether there was a building there or not, they don't know it yet. One says one thing and one says the other.

Well, I can't remember . . . I think there was a building there when we first came . . . because this man Mr. Baker owned it and he made a croquet grounds.

Permanent croquet?

Yes.

Oh.

For the customers there and I think there was a building . . .it was just used for storage and temporary camping and things like that, nobody lived there that I know of. There were other people around the Valley, but nobody there that I remember of.

So would people pay money to play croquet it was like . . .

No, he just had it for his guests.

Did anybody pay him to stay there?

No.

He was just kind of a . . .

He owned it.

. . just a nice guy and let everybody come and camp there that wanted to?

Yeah, I don't know whether the campers had to pay .. those that camped in a tent. I don't know if they had to pay him when they were camped there overnight or anything.

I see.

Oh, by the way there was a trail . . . Phil, maybe you know about this, we came in . . . went over west that way, we came in to the Sulphur Springs on a trail and I remember we'd come . . . several of us go horseback when Camp Adair was here and had built some tables and benches and things. And we'd come in on a trail.

To Sulphur Springs?

From the southwest corner . . .

From Oak Creek?

Yeah.

So you took . . . I think that trail is still there, from Oak Creek up and over to Sulphur Springs? [Phil] Describe to me again where the trail came from?

Well, you see, I didn't pay much attention and some others in the group knew where to go and I just followed, but it came in somewhere from the southwest but I don't know where we got onto it or anything more about it.

And it was during . . . when Camp Adair was there?

Yes, or after.

I think I've got a map of that trail. I've got some maps of the trails in the 1930's in that area right up through 1945.

Well, that . . . that must be it.

So, just go from Sulphur Springs head across the creek right across from where that little slab was, that concrete marker that says Sulphur Springs.

Oh, yes.

That's where it came in?

Close there. I don't know exactly.

Do you remember when that marker went in there, was it from . . .

Yes, I remember that.

Do you know when they put that there?

No, not exact dates.

Was it Camp Adair or the CCC's or was it there when you were a little girl?

No, it wasn't. It probably was the CCC's or some thing.

[Phil] Out there on the . . . .

Can't think about where was I. Down there on Kings Road very likely is where I lived longest after I was married, and then when the girls got big enough, we got them . . . got another horse, you see.

[Phil] So that day you went on over the pass.

No.

[Phil] You went back out west somewhere?

Yeah, we must have come from Kings Road . . . I must have been living on Kings Road then, and went on out Kings Road, I don't remember how we went, but we came out at Sulphur Springs.

Do you remember any old roads or trails that might have fallen down . . . California mines road or the Umpqua State Road or Applegate Trail or anything like that?

I've heard of the Applegate Trail.

Did you think it went through here?

Yes.

Did anybody tell you where?

No, that's the trouble.

Oh, but you did know . . . you did have an understanding that it came through here somewhere?

Yes.

Did anybody . . .can you remember anybody that might have told you that, one of the old timers that told you or . . .

Yes, and they're all gone.

Do you remember any of the people that said anything about it?

I think . . . one special one was my uncle, gave me that.

Magnifying glass.

Goes everywhere with me.

Oh, but he knew that the Applegate Trail came through?

Yes, you see he was about my father's age, he knew a lot of these old time things.

So he was interested in the local history here then?

Yes, because he grew up around . . . he grew up partly in Alsea and partly here. He knew a lot of people. Well, he was . . . gosh, he's been dead for . . . well, now, my husband died when my oldest child was seventeen, late was in the early twenties and I think Uncle gave me that.

[Phil] Did he use that . . .

Yes, he used that lots, you see, he did some prospecting. He never made a strike.

Gold prospecting glass?

Yes, he used it.

Do you remember any of the stories that he told other than mentioning the Applegate Trail, did he mention anything about Indians around here or mention any thing about Civil War days around here or anything of that nature?

No, I don't remember particularly, I wish I'd had sense enough to ask him. You see . . .

Why don't we . . . we've put on . . .

(end of tape)

Part V.
September 29, 1990 Interview

[Interview conducted by Bob Zybach and Phil Hays at the home of Bessie Murphy, Valley View Drive, Corvallis.]

Okay, I think we're recording Bessie, so why don't we start with why you are doing this.

Let's see, how did I say it in the first place? I want to keep the history of this straight.

You were talking about the reason you were making your comments, why you thought this was important to get all the details in.

Oh yes, I like history as it is. I don't want history distorted. So I may ask to make explanations so you'll understand what all this is. It isn't as now, it was as then, and it's different.

Why is it important to you that we understand what it was like then?

Did I say that?

Not yet.

Well, important is that I say that I want it right as it was. I don't want it distorted in the telling or anything. Because I can see it as it was, I knew it and I can see it as it was as I look back over my life.

You made some comments too about how it's important to you that people not make fun of farmers.

Well I know that was a shortcoming of society. They had those who "had" plenty of this world's good and could have things as they want them, and they got the idea that they were a little better than those who didn't. And that isn't fair. We can't all be rich. We may just as worthy as anybody else. But it was the custom to make fun of something that was not quite as good as what you think you had. It just was that way.

So people made fun of farmers back when you were a little girl too?

Oh, yes. If they could possibly get anything better they wouldn't live as next to nature as the farmers had to. But that don't make them any better. They thought it did, you see?

[PHIL] Did this show up when you were in grade school, between town kids and farmers kids?

Yeah, a little bit. But I didn't stick around after school long enough to hear many comments. I got on my pony and came home.

That was Belle, wasn't it? No, that was . . .

Yes.

Belle was your pony?

Doris was George's.

So one thing I've found out about this. People can't remember the names of their grandparents or their cousins but everybody knows the name of their pony and their work horses.

Yes, you bet! A horse was very important to them in those days. Because it was its motive power on the farm until the tractors came in. And it's the inventions of labor saving devices that made the most change in the ways of life.

What's the biggest change you've seen in your life?

Automobile from horses.

That's what everybody says that's lived through that.

You bet.

[PHIL] What were some other things that came up on the farm?

Well, there were tractors, gasoline tractors, see that could push the horse out of reach.

You said . . . we were talking about Lady Bird Johnson putting all these wildflowers along the Texas highways. And you said it was important that people understand management.

Yes. If they don't manage those plantings and keep them from being overpowered by the undesirable weeds, they won't have anything.

Do you think it's good to use chemicals in management?

No, I don't think so. That will kill too many things. I don't know. I think that they will have to organize organizations and do a lot of hand weeding. That's my opinion. But they may figure out some other way.

So you think that putting these native plants back is good.

Um hmm.

But the native plants . . .

They're a big price.

And that's gonna be a lot of man power.

You bet. That's what I'm doing around here.

Now you also said that the farmers had to manage and had to pay attention, that they needed more respect, but one of the problems was, like with your own dad, that they got too focused. That they didn't pay attention to aesthetics.

Yes, they lost track of some things that they shouldn't have. In the life. Because there was all the, there was the whole family to do something for. We didn't all just want to work our little heads off. We wanted to make a go of the farm and help him and all that, but that wasn't our sole interest. And my father's type, if you had time after you did all this work, you could do something about aesthetics. And I insist that they're important in the education.

Now you also said what you thought was the worst mistake he made. Or the worst thing he did.

Yeah. Not considerate enough.

You mentioned the one thing he did was what, draining that swamp?

Oh, well, I suppose it was foolish of me to think that because that was good farming. But oh, it spoiled it awful. Oh, that was a heavenly place, I tell you, for kids to play!

So, was he being inconsiderate to you, or inconsiderate to the plants?

No, no, it was a necessity.

[PHIL] That was part of why it was a poor farm, right, it hadn't been developed?

Or it had been allowed to go back to nature. It wasn't managed good. The springs, for instance, they were allowed to run and spread out and make swamps instead of being made into little streams to run off or something like that.

So on one hand there's a problem where you think we've got to learn how to manage everything a lot better to take care of everybody, but on the other hand the price to pay is that we lose nature.

Yes, that's right. Yes, you can't have everything.

What's the balance?

I haven't got a word for it.

You think we need nature, but with so many people we've gotta maybe manage real intensely, to . . .?

Yes, I think so. I think you do have to.

That we just can't let nature take her course then?

No, because it takes too big a toll. And those swamps, I can't think of anything those swamps produce economically.

How about wildflowers?

Well I mean that would have anything to do with the economy. A very very limited kind of spread of wildflowers because of the environment, it's too wet, only for just certain things. But, oh, but to wade in barefoot! Especially on a hot day! I can feel it yet! [Delighted laughter]

[PHIL] How old were you when . . .

I have an idea I was about 10 or 11.

[PHIL] When they drained that swamp.

Yeah.

[PHIL] So you had about five years to walk in it.

Yes, that was it.

Do you think we ought to have a certain amount of swamps, just for kids to play in? Maybe we can . . .

That's the trouble, life's too luxurious.

Too expensive.

Yeah.

Well, it's not too fair that you got to play in them and that me and Phil don't get them.

No, I was two generations back, you see.

Oh, I see. I guess you never got computers.

No, you bet we didn't.

Well, I think we covered the main points we wanted to cover in the general thing. We could maybe go back real briefly . . . we looked at the photographs and talked about your grandfather's wives. Maybe if you'd like to talk a little bit about them, or were they in our previous conversation?

[PHIL] Just briefly.

Very briefly. I'd rather they be brief.

Okay.

Because it was the only one that was bad, and I don't like to dwell on the bad any more than I have to.

Well, Phil made the point though, the comment about the Masons. I think that's a good one. Could you tell that story?

Yeah, that's record.

Could you talk about that a little bit then?

Well, as I said, the Mason's got onto it, when the, some of the Masonic carpenters worked on building grandfather's house in 1878.

[PHIL] The Crees house.

The Crees house.

So, he was living with his third wife.

Yes, but all of his children, you see, from each wife, and . . . well, that was it, they learned first hand what was going on and they could not tolerate it as good citizens. Allow it to happen, to mistreat the children. There were laws against it. And so they told the authorities. I don't know just which branch of the law it would be. If you were to go to report that, I really don't know what you'd call.

[PHIL] Were they living in the house while it was being built?

No.

[PHIL] Or in another house, next door?

The house next door, yes.

[PHIL] And that was torn down afterwards.

And that's the same house that's there now.

[PHIL] The one that they were building, yes.

What kinds of things was she doing that they would take it to the law?

Well, for instance she tied my aunt Irene up to the bed post, naked, and beat her.

Oh.

Things like that.

Child abuse.

Yes, decidedly! And she was so mean to my uncle that he left home at 16. And I can't understand grandpa being quite so meek.

Maybe she tied him up to the bed post and beat him while he was naked.

[PHIL] That's a little speculation there. [laughter]

Grandpa was a wonderful man! Maybe he didn't have enough spunk, I don't know.

Can you remember him?

Oh my yes. He didn't die until 1911.

Oh. How about his third wife, can you remember her?

Oh yes. She outlived him. Oh yes. But all the girls hated her.

How about the grandkids. Did that hate get passed on to the . . .

No, they either weren't born or too little.

Oh, I see. But now, that orchard, that walnut orchard [on Highland Ave. south of Lester Ave.] there? That was the Gragg walnut orchard.

Yeah, don't get the Gragg and the Crees mixed.

Yeah, and that's what I was trying to do. Was make sure I didn't mix them.

When you are ready for the walnut orchard I can tell you that.

Okay, and I think we'll cover that in this. So now maybe is a good time to start going through the transcript from the previous recording. We were just . . . we talked first about George Witham?

Oliver.

Oliver Witham, okay.

Well, his family was pioneers. And it might be that it often happens a successful man can't raise sensible kids. Businesslike kids. They just don't amount to a thing. They give them too much luxury. Let them escape real work, let them. . . so they know what they're doing. Because that's the way he acted. I know, some of the other Withams and the old man, his father, were respected by their neighbors. Oliver wasn't much. And let's see now.

Why didn't the neighbors respect him? Oliver, what kinds of things would . . .

Well, for one thing, he was kind of a clown. And he'd a make a fool of you if he could. And he didn't work hard, like most of them.

So, at that time, people didn't respect you if you didn't work hard, or if you tried to . . . they made fun of you.

Yeah, or if you needed to work hard and didn't. He just didn't have an attitude that was likeable. Let's see now.

Now you mentioned that his wife was part Indian.

Yeah, but it was never mentioned.

People didn't talk about it?

No. But anybody could see that she was. But she was a nice woman.

Was there any shame involved in that, that his wife was part Indian?

Well, in a way, yes. At that time there was. It was something that you usually wasn't proud of. And it shouldn't have been! Indians were there first, it was their land! And, give them some education and training, they can turn out to be very good citizens.

So without education and training, which they didn't have before the whites came here, then . . .

That's right, didn't have the white-type education and training.

So, by citizens you mean citizens by white standards, then.

Yeah. Yeah that's it. Now they thought it was pretty smart to be able to live off the land. Phil and I just think it's fun sometimes.

Well, sometimes it's smart to have fun, maybe.

Oh, yes! We think so don't we. [Laughter]. No, I had no complaint with Mrs. Witham. But in those days they had funny notions about what was commendable and what was looked down on, so, and being part Indian wasn't part of being good, great. But that's neither here nor there. There's a lot in your private opinion.

Did you know any other Indians in the neighborhood, other than Mrs. Witham?

Oh, yes. I can't think of anyone in particular. But there were others too that were part Indian. It was quite common in those days.

Uh huh. How about blacks, do you recall any black people at all?

I don't . . . hardly even saw one. Just practically nothing. Some in the city.

By that you mean Corvallis?

I'm not sure, but I think I've seen one or two here. But it would be mostly bigger ones like Portland.

Can you remember when you saw your first black people? Was it like a curiosity, or . . .

Yes, as I remember it was.

Can you remember where?

Well, I think it was around Corvallis. I think it's probably in Corvallis. But I . . . they was very very scarce and I just really don't remember much about it.

How about Oriental people?

Chinese?

Yeah.

That's all I know of was Chinese. Of them.

Were there very many in Corvallis in those days?

Not very many, but some. And they mostly worked in I believe in restaurants. What's that story somebody told me? Somebody . . . I don't remember the circumstances, I think a story was told. That there was black man in the crew of workers. It may have been farmers, I don't know. Anyway, they came in to lunch and had to wash up at the old pitcher pump. And the little boy of the family had never seen a black man. All eyes! And that guy noticed it. And when he got through scrubbing, he turned to the little boy, "Am I any whitah?" Scared him!

So this was around Corvallis when you were a little girl?

Yes, and somebody told that. You see, I never saw it happen, or didn't know who it happened to, but I heard that told. And it surprised the little boy so he jumped. And, let's see, about other . . . Oh, any other form of colored skin, negro and Chinese, I can't think of any others.

Just a few Indians.

Yeah, but they were . . .

Mostly . . .

They were, what do you call it, they belonged here. They weren't foreign. And let's see. Now what was this dumb thing? Oh, we had lots of foreign people. I mean from other countries. That came here and settled. For instance, in Clatsop County where I was born there was just oodles and oodles of Finns and Swedes and Norwegians. Lots and lots of

them.

One thing I've noticed in doing these oral histories, is the Tortoras were from Italy, the Rohners were from Switzerland, there seems to have been a lot of German, Swiss, Italian people that came around the turn of the century.

Yes, yes, they were coming in pretty good.

Do you know the reason for that?

To better their financial condition. Their economic condition.

Well we were having a major depression here in the 1890's, but a lot of these people seem to have come about that time.

Hmm. I don't know about that.

Do you remember the Tortoras?

Yes.

What can you remember about them?

That they were Italian. And I can't remember whether I saw any children my age, I remember middle life -- Tortoras in middle life. And they seemed to be nice, decent people.

How about the Rohners? Do you recall them.

Well, I knew of them, of course. They were in business. What was that business? That wasn't the veterinarian, was it? Gosh, I'm not sure. But they were in some kind of business. People patronized them. We assimilated them anyhow.

Were the foreign people that spoke with different accents or different languages were they treated any different?

No, except some people laughed at the funny way they pronounced things. They had to have their jokes about them, but they accepted them.

Let's see, let's . . . why don't we go back to . . .

What do you want to do here?

Yep, we're on to . . . see you've got up here, you've got Mitzie Point . . .

[PHIL] I put that on there.

Okay. And Dimple Hill. That was a question I had. I talked with Edna Weise, and she says that Dimple Hill, what they call Dimple Hill now, used to be called Jackson Hill.

No, Locke's.

It was called Locke's Hill?

[PHIL] No, no. Careful. Locke's Hill was where Chip Ross park is now, right? IV Hill?

She said Locke's Hill became, was Dimple Hill, and that became IV Hill.

Yeah, cause see you, you've gotta be careful on using Dimple Hill. Because that's . . . she remembers Locke's Hill, which is IV Hill, which is Chip Ross Park.

Yeah, I can't keep up with all the modern names and changes!

Well, right around 1940 I went through the maps and I found all these changes happened. And Edna Weise, I had the long talk with her, and she said the same.

Now, she'd be more likely to get it right because I am getting forgetful. And she has a much younger brain than I have.

But you can remember Dimple Hill being called Locke's Hill?

Yes, because he's the one that owned it!

Okay, and Chip Ross Park, is that Locke's Hill?

Chip Ross Park goes clear around me, and I never did get caught up with it's history.

[PHIL] We went out there, you and Francis and I went up there one day to have lunch or something, and there were signs all over the place . . . in fact a couple of years ago when it was so dry? And there were signs that we couldn't go in there because it was posted by the forest

department. Do you recall that? Because all we could do was go to the parking lot there.

Hmm.

[PHIL] It was up behind, it was up the hill behind where your father's farm was though. That was Locke's Hill. Did you ever hear the name Jackson Hill?

Oh, sure. That's a different one.

Do you know where that was?

Let's see. And that was up Jackson Creek, the one that runs south of the High School, where is it, over here some where. And the Jackson's had left the community as citizens, as neighbors. Before we came.

So you don't remember the Jacksons?

Yes, there was a couple, I think they were old bachelors. And they came out, they walked out from town. They'd moved to town, and they'd walk out of town almost every day to the farm. And it was just not far from that Ol Witham place. Up the street a little. But I never met the . . . oh, yeah, I knew Mildred Jackson, she was in my grade. But I never met her parents.

Do you know which hill is called Jackson Hill?

Yeah, I think I do. But I have to be where I could point it out.

Okay. Was it somewhere around Jackson Creek?

Yes, off to the southwest, I think. Not very far.

[PHIL] Did you ever go up there on your horse?

Yeah. And we had one neighbor on up the creek. But they, but the creek stayed in the ravine and the neighbor was on the side of the hill; that was Mr. Stoneback.

[PHIL] Which side of the hill?

North.

[PHIL] Yeah, there's a lot of open land up in that Jackson valley.

Yeah. It isn't good farm land at all. Mr. Stoneback didn't get to first base farming.

What nationality was he?

Oh, he was just a mixture American.

Uh huh. Stoneback, though.

Yeah.

Do you recall a family named Robinson in that area?

Well, that was earlier generation. Yes. I never met the person. Now, my mother knew a lot of these old timers in the generation before me. Robinson and them.

[PHIL] What did Stoneback farm up there?

Oh, he didn't have a very big farm and he didn't have much open ground, it was mostly trees. And it was not rich at all. And he just existed.

Was he on the Robinson's old place?

I really don't know. That one has to be looked up in the County courthouse.

[PHIL] When you went up to Jackson Hill, how did you go from the farm?

Well, I don't remember if I could go on my pony or not. And if I didn't, I walked.

[PHIL] Do you remember anything about it back when you were a kid?

No, I don't. It didn't seem to leave an impression.

Okay. That was about half my questions, right there. I was going to ask about the Knott's too, but I think we're in here, so as we go through the pages here we can probably get the Knotts and the Owens a little bit.

Now, we gotta be awful careful about the Knotts. Remember, this man has descendants still living.

Now, that goes back to the first settlers, the Knotts. They were at the same time as the Robinsons. Do you recall any of the older Knotts then?

I don't know whether that was the Knotts we knew, that was there when we came, or whether it was his father. I don't know.

What can you remember about that family?

Well, he was an awful nice man. But he didn't have family help or any other kind of help. And he didn't get much of anywhere with his farming. And his wife made a little silly sissy of his boy instead of teaching him to be a rugged little helper. For heaven's sake, everybody was talking about it.

When you say making him a sissy, was it kind of like some of these pictures we've been looking at . . .

Yeah!! Lotta hair and girl clothes and all that rot. And just making him . . . his attitudes and everything sissy instead of making him rugged. And a helper for his father on the farm.

We looked at a picture of one of your uncles or cousins that was dressed up in girl's clothes?

No, that was my aunt's neighbor.

Oh, it was a neighbor.

And I used to play with him when I'd go to visit her.

Now, did that hurt him when he got older? When he got older, did that hurt him?

I don't know what became of him. But I don't think so. I never heard of it. I don't know whether they moved away or not. But anyway his father had a bakery at that time, in Corvallis.

Now, we were talking about Dear Abby, how she had a column in the paper about a woman who was ruining her boy by . . .

Yeah!

But you said it was pretty common when you were a little girl.

Yes! My land, it was the style! Crazy style. [Laughter]

How many families do you think raised their little boys as girls at that time?

Well, those that I knew wasn't more than two or three, but I heard of others and I've heard of lots of . . . I heard it commented about, it was just done.

Would people that didn't raise their little boys as girls think that that was a bad thing?

Yeah, very much.

[PHIL] Where did they get the idea?

I don't know.

Did they do it before the 1890's?

I don't know how far back it went.

Do you remember when they stopped doing it?

Well, it don't sound like they've stopped yet. [Laughter] Well, my little brother didn't get raised that way. He got to be taught to work. And I did too. I didn't mind working. But I wanted some other thing along with it.

So when the Knotts or the families that did raise their boys as girls, you think that they did that, they didn't teach the kids to work enough, was one of the problems.

Oh yes, it was one of the problems. Most definitely. And a farmer, most farmers, and any other poor people, can't afford to make sissies of their children and give them money like a rich person, luxuries. It just can't be done. They haven't got it. So they better teach him how to live without it.

So it wasn't just that they . . .

[END OF TAPE]

I don't know if we got that in there, but I hope we did.

Now there's the Kings. Nobody could be poorer. But nobody could have been more wonderful than the family.

Now that's the Sol King family.

His grandchildren.

They were fairly poor then?

Oh yes. Hard to have 10 kids. Cost something to feed 10 kids. But they were just wonderful kids. They were the ones that got me started on botany.

[PHIL] Well, how did they get started?

They had to make their own fun. And those kids would go out and make a game of it. And it just worked great, just worked great.

So a lot of the interest you got in nature was from the Kings and a lot of the interest they got in nature was strictly because they didn't have money.

That's right. They had to make their own fun and they had the brains to do it. And, now, I could have lived there 100 years and my folks would never have taught me anything about botany. They didn't know much in the first place in botany. But you see when they were so busy and had such problems of their own, business problems, that isn't the right word, what is it, economic problems. So busy with that they don't think much of wasting time on aesthetic things. They think it's wasting time.

How important do you think aesthetics are?

They are very important in the right amounts. Can't go all that way, of course. But there ought to be an introduction to it, some introduction. Some kids have natural ability. And when they get a little introduction to something they can get onto it and go on from there.

How about college, is that too late?

No. It'd be fine if they had the money to get to it.

Do you think people taking, like I took forestry, do you think I should be taking classes in aesthetics, do you think that would be a good thing for kids?

No, no. You can mix it in.

Just with other classes, not . . .

Yeah.

I see.

But, people like my dad just thought it was nonsense. But see there was 19 kids in his family. Of course some of them died in infancy. And they didn't have much money for aesthetics. So you've got to teach them that it is important but they have to get mostly for themselves. And so the King kids did. And they turned out something wonderful. Every last one of them. Of course the oldest boy, he had to go to the first world war. And he didn't come back till late in life. He'd had enough work on the farm.

Ah ha! He got a chance to get out.

And the oldest girl she got to be a teacher when she was in her late teens, and she felt so sorry for her mother and the rest of the family, she spent her whole life helping them. Just stayed single and was a teacher. She was just wonderful. She lived to be 98.

Wow.

The rest of them married, I don't think there was any more bachelors or maids. One of them just my age, we were great pals. And they did not have time to run around and play much. They made education or some use of it out of the play. Like the botany. They learned from things and they didn't have any books, they couldn't get the scientific names so they made them up. You bet your life.

Well, I think we talked about it before, but I want to make sure we got that in there. We were talking about ethno-botany, and you were talking about making up names, and we were talking about a plant called "wooly britches, Hydrophyllum capitatum."

Yeah.

Was that a made up name?

Yeah, I guess so. It started as far as I know with my paternal grandmother. She learned that it was good to eat, so she used it instead of chard. She didn't have any, I suppose she had some chard in her garden sometimes, but this was free and there to pick. And good to eat, so she used it.

How important were wild plants to the pioneers?

Well, pretty important. Because at first they didn't have the place to make a good garden, and they could use these wild things. But they didn't know how lucky they were, that they had it. And then later on, when things were more easy, everybody had as much as everybody else, they looked down on the wild ones. That makes me mad.

It was kind of like looking down on farmers maybe, looking down on the poorer life style?

All those things have their proper place and they ought to be appreciated.

So when they got enough money then they stopped eating . . .

Oh, yeah.

Wild plants.

And here we eat it just for fun. Just to show we can pick the right ones!

[PHIL] I have some yampah [Perideridia oregana] at home I was gonna bring you and forgot it.

Oh? Where did you find it?

[PHIL] Oh, it grows all over the hills out here, and there's a lot of it this year.

Really.

[PHIL] Yeah. A lot of it.

What do you know.

Do you like yampah?

Oh, you bet. I had the most wonderful steak dinner once, over in eastern Oregon with some friends, relatives of my son-in-law. He got the steak and he cooked it. He cooked the whole works in fact. And I dug the yampah. And they liked it! It is one of the best one, wild plants, don't you think so? More to it!

How about camas [Camassia leichtlinii]?

Oh, yeah. That's fine too. But we don't have much of that.

What do you think we . . . do you think we should grow it for people to eat, so they know what it tastes like?

Well, not necessarily. But if we insist on eating it, we ought to also raise it, because it would soon deplete the whole country of it.

Can you think of any good camas patches?

Not in this valley.

Are they mostly gone?

Yeah. In eastern Oregon there's patches of them. Lots.

How about the orchards? We were talking about those, and we mentioned the Gragg walnut orchard. You wanted to talk some more about that.

Do you want to get that now?

Well, let's maybe go through this . . .

[PHIL] Yeah, you keep distracting her . . .

Okay, yeah, let's go on with the transcript here, and we'll come back up on it.

[PHIL] Go through those and see if there was anything there you want to.
Yeah.

Well. This hasn't many corrections.

[PHIL] Page 2.

[Reading from transcript] "There were several different ones that ended up with the Holbrooks. And my brother George bought it from them. By that time we children were grown, and we bought that from, and he bought that from Mrs. Holbrook. Her husband had died, and she had six kids." "How big were these farms?" "Papa's was 200 and the Holbrooks was 50. The Withams was probably 200 or more, and Stoneback was probably 100." . . . "Do you recall any families in the Soap Creek Area?" "No, I don't, except Sam Moore who soon moved to Corvallis." At the turn of the century, yeah. And I didn't know the Marcks or the Olsons, but I'd heard of them. And Neva was in my grade.

That would be Neva Olson?

Neva Moore.

Neva Moore? Okay. Was that Neva Lauridson?

No, she never married.

Oh, okay.

The Wildes. Yes I knew Francis Wildes. And I think she was in my grade. I knew she came from out north here somewhere. I heard of Carters, wouldn't know the Carters, but that name is familiar.

Do you remember a Grandma Carter?

No. All I remember is Grandma Frazier.

Oh, that Frazier Creek is named after?

Oh, yes.

Now can you tell me about Grandma Frazier?

You bet. Shall we do it now or later?

Sure, might as well do it. I don't think we've got her in the transcript, I don't think we mentioned her before.

Well now, before we came here, the Fraziers, when Mr. Frazier was living, lived in this area, farmed in this area. I don't know where his farm was but I presume it was up there off Tomlin loop on Frazier Creek. I presume that's where it was. Anyway, I didn't know him. But after we came here, Mr. Frazier was dead. And Grandma was living with her single son, Jim, and Sam was married and living with his family, and they both lived back in, along Frazier Creek, on what is called Tomlin Loop now. And I would go riding around sometimes on my pony and stop in. And she got to telling me pioneer stories. And she sure told me a dilly. And I'd heard of it in history. She had come out in '57 in a wagon train, ox teams. And her girlfriend and her family were along. When they came to Utah, the girlfriend and some more people divided the train, and went south to California. And the Fraziers came on to Oregon. And they got in to the Mountain Meadow Massacre in Utah. And you know that thing tried to be; an awful lot of people tried to keep it hush hush. Not let it get out, and all the facts known. But it was, that kind of fixed it. Because the people who fought the whites were dressed as Indians and fixed up as Indians, and they weren't, they were Mormons!

The Mountain Meadow Massacre was Mormons dressed as Indians?

You bet.

[PHIL] And it was the girlfriend's part that got into it.

Yeah. And she was, her whole family was killed.

Her girlfriend's family was killed during that?

Yeah.

Now, this is Mrs. Frazier? Grandma Frazier's girlfriend.

Yeah.

And can you remember any details that she described from that massacre?

Well, like the one's that killed them were dressed as Indians, and they weren't. And evidently somebody lived to tell some of them, because she said that the baby was shot from her mother's arms, things like that.

[PHIL] Grandma Frazier wasn't there. They came north.

They came north.

So she must have come by way of the Applegate Trail.

Well, I'm mixed up on those trails. I don't know the route.

[PHIL] Did she give any, did Grandma Frazier tell anything about the trip from Utah here?

Not particularly. Evidently it was nothing spectacular. But I don't know about the trails. I wish I did.

Did she talk about Klamath Falls at all, or southern Oregon, or Eugene?

No.

So you're not sure what route she took?

No.

[PHIL] Remember any other tales she told?

Have I told you any? [To Phil]

[PHIL] I remember that one, but I don't remember others.

That was the main one.

What was the reason that the Mormons dressed as Indians? What was the reason they were attacking the wagon train?

To blame it on the Indians!!

Why did they want to do that?

Why shouldn't they? They didn't want the world to think they did it!

Oh, so they were just simple thieves, and they were just covering their tracks.

Yeah! [very emphatic]

They weren't trying to get anything politically going against Indians or anything.

No, no, no. You couldn't get much political going with Indians in those days! They didn't take to politics!

Can you recall any of her other stories, about maybe when she first got here?

No, I wish I did. But that was before and right at 18 -- 1905. Yes, if I'd have been a little more historically minded, I would have had her tell me about when they lived there, you know. How life was and all that. But I didn't. I missed a lot things.

Did you know any other pioneers that have crossed on the Oregon Trail? Have you talked to any others?

Who have I talked to? Not right now I don't.

Okay. So Grandma Frazier is the only actual . . .

One that I'm sure of. And her two sons were two of the men that helped put in Highland Way. That had to be done free by the citizens. But in a year or two, they moved on. I don't know where they went or anything. Never heard of them again.

The Fraziers.

Yeah.

And so, there are no Fraziers around anymore?

Uh uh.

So they helped build Highland Way and then shortly after that . . .

Then they beat it.

So it was about 1907 or 1908.

No, more like 1906. Yeah, I'd like to have kept track of all of them.

Did Grandma Frazier leave with them?

Yes.

I see. So you are one of the last people around to know the Fraziers. At least while they were here.

Um hmm.

Okay, I've got you digressing again here. On page 2 . . .

Well anyway, that's about all of page 2.

Okay.

Hummm. [Reading transcript] "The Witham girl was older than I. Then on the south toward town was the King family from the King's Valley family of Solomon King." I wonder if I ought . . . where's my pen. Thank you. Hadn't I better say this through their son Abe?

Through Abe King? Well, one thing we can check on the genealogy, or like you say, we can check on land ownership patterns.

I know that Abe was their father, and Abe was Solomon's son.

Oh, I see, so that Abe King . . . well that's one . . .

[PHIL] Abe King's farm down there near where you lived.

That's the advantage of having this tape recorder going, too. You don't have to write it, you can just say you want to make that point.

Okay.

So Sol King was on Abe King's . . . his father was Abe King from the King's Valley Kings, and then he named one of his sons Abe King also.

Yeah. Well, the one from King's Valley was Solomon, and Abe was his son.

Oh, I see.

[PHIL] And then it was Abe's children you played with.

Yeah, it was Abe's children, Solomon's grandchildren.

Do you know anything about the politics then? I'm assuming if his name was Abe, he was named after Abraham Lincoln.

No, I don't know who he was named after. I don't know.

Did you know anything about the Mount Union people being . . . any civil war stories from around?

No, I don't remember any civil war stories.

Okay. Page 4.

[Long pause as she reads] Now why didn't I put what it is? "Just a little one room building. Don't know when it was first built." The school.

Here's page 5.

This seems to be all pretty good.

You've been pretty thorough in your comments here, too.

"You had to go where the owners said you had to go." "If somebody made a diagonal across their field, they made you follow a fence line." That was naughty.

What's that? The diagonal across the field?

Yes.

[PHIL] Did you ever happen to get chided for that?

No. Because I couldn't go with my horse, I had to walk, and I didn't do any harm. And there were no crops in that pasture where I went.

Now that's . . . we were talking about the field, the road that come off by the [Good Samaritan] hospital. Is that the right-of-way?

Yeah

[PHIL] Now, when you went to school in Corvallis, you went right over the ridge into town, didn't you? Or did you go out to Highway 99 and down?

I went 99.

[PHIL] You did?

Yeah. It sort of parallels the road that goes in.

So you took that route out.

Yeah, just walking. But sometimes, quite a lot of times, we diagonaled out into the pasture instead of keeping along Mr. Knott's fence. Because here came the King kids down this way. We met them.

Oh, I see, so you'd meet with the King kids.

Yeah.

[PHIL] So they would come down then the north side of the hill to join that same route to go down to the highway?

Yeah.

[PHIL] Okay. Well, why didn't you just go across where their place was and on down into town and to the south?

No, we didn't go to town. We went to that little school.

[PHIL] Oh that's right, that little school. Okay.

And when we did go to town, at that time, you see the road was put through that papa and Tressure and all of them made.

[PHIL] Oh that one.

Do you recall anybody named "Drum" or "Stout" that was in that area?

No, I've heard of them.

Okay. I think they're back with the Robinsons.

Probably.

Yeah, they're earlier. Let's see, we're on page 6 here. So, "Yes. Four years." You've added, before you went to college, okay. I think people will be fairly clear.

Yes, well I hope so. I thought I had them fixed so they made sense.

Now where you've crossed out things, like here we're on page 7, and you've put in other words, is that a correction or you just don't want these printed?

Yeah, that's a correction.

Okay.

Here, for instance: "Mr. William Knotts," and it has two t's, "was the owner and resident there. And Tom Owens was one of his grandchildren. And owns the place now." Because his mother inherited it or got it somehow. And he inherited it from her.

Now, when we come across these crossed out areas, would it be all right just to put your comments in parentheses, so somebody reading it knows that that's been pencilled in later?

Well, unless you just . . .

Oh would you prefer having it just look like a book? We'll do it however you want.

Yeah. Well, you do whatever you think's best there.

Okay, we'll just use . . .

"And we . . . he let us have a route through his place for a while on a certain place and he

changed it." See we went through his woods back of the Holbrook place. Then he changed that and it was clear over out by Berry Hill toward the Hospital.

So the landowner could tell people . . . he couldn't keep you off the land but he could tell you which route to take through it?

[PHIL] Do you know why he did it?

No, he couldn't keep us from going through if we couldn't get through otherwise.

[PHIL] Why did he change it? Do you know?

I don't know. For one thing, the surrey wheels were cutting quite good ruts. And it come out right close to his house and used his driveway up and down the hill. And it might be we was cutting it up too much. I don't know.

Did it create any animosity or ill feelings when he changed it?

I don't think so.

Okay. It just was his right to tell you which way to go on it.

Yeah.

Okay.

"Where the opposite the property." I don't know whether that "the" needs to come out or not. "Where opposite the property where the hospital is on the south side of it."

I'll circle that one right there. That could just be a typo on the part of the person doing the transcription.

Well, might be something else should have been written, I don't know. "As you go out ninth street a little way, I mean the highway here" down here, "as you go out there and come to that ridge." Now, what's that?

[PHIL] Where the hospital is.

Yeah, I think we're talking about going out to Ninth street to the ridge on the hospital there.

"Yes, the other side of the hospital, along the line of the fence, of the Knotts place." Some of them goes east on the top of the hill on my father's place, Owens now. "You can still see the tracks going east along the fence and turning to the right or south."

So, those tracks are still there?

Yeah.

And that would be Knotts' first route that he put through the property?

The second route.

The second route. Okay, that would be . . .

I want a piece of paper. I want to make a drawing.

Okay. Now we're drawing on the back of page 7 here.

Now, on this I'm gonna put a dot. And that's at the top of the hill above the old farm where my dad's place comes. And then here's Locke's Lane. He sold off of his place to Locke.

Okay, so from the top of the hill at your dad's place, Locke's Lane is going due east.

Yeah.

Okay.

Now, Locke's Lane follows Mr. Knott's line fence.

Okay. Then that would be going west.

Highland Way, there's Highland Way coming along there. And here's . . . I'm making awful faint lines. And on this side of the fence is where I went down. See, I walked along the fence. But when Mr. Knotts didn't want us to go in his woodsy place anymore, and we had this road, oh no, before we got this road, he let us go down along his fence where I walked. But there had to be a gate here.

[PHIL] Where was the school?

Down here on the highway, edge of the road.

[PHIL] So it was off in the direction toward where the hospital was.

It was on the south side of the road going to the hospital.

[PHIL] Before you came to the ridge or over the ridge?

Well, the ridge was . . . where am I?

Okay, here's the top of your dad's hill, and here's . . .

Oh yeah, here we are. The ridge I'm talking about comes out to the road and abruptly stops. But we were here to where we're going. Now these were the lines where I used to walk, it's the track that we went. And when we come to this ridge we had to turn like this, on the west side of the road, you see. And it's right around this turn where you can see those tracks yet.

Now, where would the hospital be now, compared to those tracks?

Back up here somewhere.

Okay, so this is right before you get to the road, where this turn is?

Yeah, the road goes by here.

[PHIL] Highway 99.

Yeah. And that's where you see the tracks. And then this ridge abruptly stops here somewhere, I guess it's just down to the level, I forget how it is. But that's where we had to go, around that turn.

When did he make you start going this way?

Not very long . . . sometime between 1902 and 1905.

So these tracks then would be from 1902 to 1905 when these were put in there?

[PHIL] Starting then.

Yeah, about that time. And they've been there ever since.

[PHIL] Is this because of the . . . you were saying the surrey cut into the ground.

Yeah, but somehow this track . . . I guess when they made the highway wider they cut off the end of it or something. It stops abruptly, you look at it next time you go by.

Do you know where those tracks are, Phil?

[PHIL] No, they should be just right south of the fence line there, though, right?

Mr. Knotts's.

[PHIL] Yeah, you went along Mr. Knotts's fence line, but . . .

When we . . . yes, yes.

[PHIL] On the north side or south side?

It would be the south side.

[PHIL] Oh, okay. Yeah.

But, I think when you can see it, you can see how that little ridge, it's a ridge here, it's a little hill, it soon disappears into thin air.

Is that fence line still there?

[PHIL] Well that's along the north side of the farm, right?

No, this is Mr. Knotts's . . .

[PHIL] I mean the south side of the . . .

Yeah, this is Mr. Knotts's. This is Highland Way.

Okay.

And we could not go to our school with horses or, well . . . because there were gates, and they're usually big heavy miserable things and I couldn't open them. But when I went to town, you see, I could go on the highway. No gates. Then we had no need to go this way.

Did people just stop using that, then?

Yeah.

[PHIL] Highland went in . . .

1905.

[PHIL] So you only used that for a few years down there, then.

Not more than two I don't think. Something like two.

This might be the last . . . we found ruts going back probably to the Applegate Trail days, but these might be the only ruts that were for surreys and only from surreys that are still left in the County. I can't think of any others.

Well, there may be of course. I couldn't make that statement. But I still look every time I go by!

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[PHIL] . . . since the last surrey went through those ruts, right, and you can see what happens. But there's still a sign there, then it shows the wagon track will hang around a century. I mean it wasn't wagon track even, it was just a surrey.

It was a real steep little pull. Just a real steep little pull.

[PHIL] So you had to come down in there and then turn and go up over the steep pull.

There was no . . . after we got around that turn we were down on the highway level.

Do you think that wagon, that two years of surrey travel through that one little area had a permanent impact on the vegetation?

Just where the track is. But you see the weeds are coming up the track. I used to be able to see it a lot plainer. I'm trying to remember . . . if my father went over that ridge with his wagon. See we didn't use it many years, then Highland Way was opened. And that was a devil for the horses, just an awful pull.

Highland Way was.

No, the tracks. Highland Way had some pretty good pulls, but not as bad as that. Now I can't remember, when it was, or which way we went, but I think it was after Highland Way was put in. But it may have been before it. That Papa used to sell wood in town to the people for their stoves and things. And I tell you that's a slow job. You can't go out of the walk. And it takes you all day to take a load of wood to town and come back. And so he used fill up two wagons, and put the old team on the second wagon, and I drove it. Because you see those horses were trustworthy. And he took the young frisky ones. And I don't know whether we went around those tracks or Highland Way, which it was.

Now, the route that was older, the one that Knott had you stop using, are there any traces of that track?

Oh, I imagine there are, but I haven't been in there since.

Do you know which way that goes?

Oh, sure.

Can you describe it?

[Laughter] Well, you see the Holbrook place. It belongs to my nephew now; we had to go through it. And then we came to Mr. Knotts's oak woods, which his house was surrounded with in the back. And go through that. Out to the driveway that he used for his home.

That's still there now?

Yes. As you get acquainted with . . .

[PHIL] That route is still there. When we went out there a couple of years ago, and Frances [Stilwell] and I walked back there. That old road comes through. It goes from the gate, it would be Holbrook now, it makes a bit of a gentle S turn before it comes up where the house was.

Uh huh. You saw it then?

[PHIL] Yes.

Well, I haven't been back to see it.

And that's the old . . .

Yeah, that was the old route.

I think that's the one the pioneers used when they hit Jackson-Frazier wetlands and went up and connected to the Highland Road.

[PHIL] That's going back to 1850's. Well Highland Road wasn't there then.

Hilltop Road was about in there in 1853.

[PHIL] But it wasn't a road, per se.

Not in our sense, no.

What have I got to say about that?

If you've got anything to say, now is the time.

Well, I don't quite understand what the question is.

Okay, what I was trying to explain is the 1853 maps show Hilltop Road where Highland Way is now. And then it showed a route going out around what we call the Jackson Frazier wetlands, back in 1853. So people traveling out of Corvallis that hit those wetlands, went up the route we've been talking about, and connected to a road that was called Hilltop Road. In 1853. And that's what became Highland Way in 1905.

[PHIL] So what did they do, they went up sort of like up where Highway 99 is now till they got to sort of the ridge the hospital is on and then turned west to go around that marshy area down there?

Yep.

[PHIL] And so then they would go out off toward where her father's farm was?

And through Robinsons. And then, the routes we're talking about are really old routes.

[PHIL] Back up towards Lewisburg then?

What was that about Lewisburg?

[PHIL] He's saying that when the wetlands down there got too wet, they would turn off up the ridge there where the hospital is now and head out toward your father's farm, just loop around the whole thing to the west. And then come back to Lewisburg and go on.

The old route in there, where all those old marshes were, were described as lakes and slews and marshes, that was back when the Stouts and the Robinsons and the Cooks lived there, and so that route that you were taking before Knotts changed your route, that was the first wagon road through that area, back to the 18 . . . You were saying you wish you knew where those old routes were, you were on them according to the old maps.

[PHIL] But that would only have been used when it was wet, and everything was flooded, right?

Yeah, as a connector road. But the upper road would have been used all the time.

Well, I would have thought they would use Lewisburg Road. That's the one that goes to Sulphur Springs.

Yeah, they would have used that, and they would have gone through Mulkeys and Withams property, and part of Walnut, but then people coming north of town from Corvallis along what became 9th Street, if it got too wet they'd have to cut over to that road. So that's how they would cut back up on that.

They couldn't come out 9th Street and hit Lewisburg Road at Mountain View then.

Only when it was too wet. Otherwise they could. That's an old route through there. But when it's too wet they'd have to cut up the same route that you were taking to come to school. They would have to take that up to go to . . .

They'd have a job; they'd have some gates to open.

Yeah. [Pause]

Oh, let's see.

Page 8.

What do you want to talk about?

Anything you see in there that you want to change or add or subtract, or . . .?

"Did you have a name to it, that right of way, or just called it the . . ." Answer is "you just called it by the name of the owner of the property, Knotts, or Griggs, or whatever." "And those tracks are still there." That's what we were talking about. "And they predate 1905. Yes."

And I think you've added a lot of good detail to it.

"It probably was 1905 but the road didn't get through so it could . . . it was usable that first year." Oh, that's Highland Way. ". . . that they made it, only in spots. Little sections. Yes, probably 1906 until that old right of way was dumped." "Was that the remains of that right of way, that you know?" "Yes."

Okay, and page 9?

"That's all you can see, yes." "Did you pay much attention to how when they stopped using a road how maybe the vegetation filled in, what types of plants began growing in the old road or . . ." "Yes, I was more or less observant of it because I was interested in botany." "Can you kind of describe what you noticed with that?" "Well, weeds and grass came pretty soon. And the nice flowers like spring beauties that he has a picture of, they didn't . . . they were a little more delicate and harder to do anything . . . I mean they are more liable to be not able to compete with the bad stuff, weeds and things." "Are you calling weeds, exotic plants brought into the area?" "No, really. Weeds, some of the wild mustards, and things in the daisy family and buttercups and dandelions and those thistle things. They are very prolific and they take over." "When you went to Sulphur Springs, was that just a destination, a place to turn around and come back or did you do things when you got there?" "For a while in earlier days, families camped there and picnicked on weekends. You see, that was a public picnic ground because of the springs. Public used it quite a bit in those days. Went there and camped. In later years it fell prey to modern vandals."

Phil, you had a question there on Sulphur Springs. The, calling a plant "ladyslipper"?

[PHIL] Mountain ladyslippers. Like out at the Smith place.

One of the rarest things we had.

[PHIL] <u>Cypripedium</u> <u>montanum</u>.

But that's a different . . . because I've talked to quite a few people since I talked to you last, and they said, well, the ladyslippers grow in with the old growth and the ladyslippers are real important and they talked about ladyslippers that are still off the side of the road on the way to Mary's Peak, but that's a different flower isn't it?

I think those are the little pink one's aren't they?

But so, okay, is there some clarification on this?

[PHIL] Yeah, you remember the big white ones from up at Sulphur Springs, though, don't you?

I have transplanted a few to my mother's yard, and they all died, and I'm sorry.

Sorry for transplanting them or sorry that they died?

Yes, because I didn't know that they wouldn't live then. "Are there any soda springs around here?" "No, not that I've heard of this side of Sodaville."

Okay, here's page 10.

"Not right around here. There's one at Cascadia. It's just where they were, but people did camp there. When we came here in 1900, that summer I remember my grandfather and his family was out there camping at Sulphur Springs, and we went over there and visited one

Sunday with horses and surrey of course." "How long would people camp, for a day or two or a week?" "Oh, they'd camp for a week sometimes." "Would they do anything besides drink the water?" "I don't know what they did. I explored of course, explored for wildflowers. There were special ones in that area. And I did drink the water because I thought if I came that far I should drink some of it. It was supposed to be good for one's health. Didn't care for the taste too well." "It must have helped you, you're pretty healthy several years later. That's what they always claimed would happen." "Maybe that's the secret of it, I don't know." "Maybe we'll get more people going there to drink the water now." "Grandpa had a tent and was camping there and of course, when we went there was no such a thing as a car at that time so we had to go with a surrey with a fringe on top and two horses and that was quite a trip over that Sulphur Springs Hill, it's pretty rugged, pretty rough." "Had that road been in for quite a while?" "Yes." "Could people take bicycles over the road or would they hike in without buggies?"

[PHIL] When you were going up there, did you start early in the morning, or how long did it take you to go over to Sulphur Springs.

Oh, I didn't go till after breakfast.

[PHIL] Yeah, but that's a farmer's breakfast. How early is breakfast?

Kinda early! And that'd take all day.

Now, Charlie Olson said that when that road came out over Lewisburg Saddle there; he's 95 and Wanda Cook is 95, and they both lived out in that area and I've talked with both of them. And there's some contention about when that road went in there. But he said that the road angled out, it came through Sol King's place, and went out past the walnut orchard. Would that be the Gragg walnut orchard that he was talking about? The old road that . . .

Gragg walnut orchard didn't go in until 1914.

1914. Was there another walnut orchard out in that area?

No, no papa's was the first.

Okay. Now there's a walnut orchard on Soap Creek Road, on the Govier's place. Do you know anything . . .

Goviers, yeah I know the Goviers. Not well, but I know of them.

Uh huh. Do you know anything about why people were putting walnut orchards in or what earlier orchards there could have been?

Well, because there weren't enough to supply the market here then. It would have been a good cash crop you see.

So it was a cash crop. But the home orchards that people had, apples and pears . . .

There was no . . . this was english walnuts. All the walnuts in those orchards were the old fashioned black walnut, and the butter nut. But they never had a big orchard, just one or two trees.

So that was the difference between a commercial orchard and a family orchard.

Uh huh. In those days a family orchard was just one or two trees and black walnut.

How about, we found a chestnut tree in one of the old orchards.

Yes, somebody would bring in a chestnut tree. We never had one.

[PHIL] Back to the idea that you were coming in from Soap Creek, after you went over the pass and came down then, it would come out by your father's orchard.

Not until 1905. It went on down to Mountain View and the highway.

[PHIL] At Lewisburg Road, yeah.

At Lewisburg Road.

[PHIL] But then after . . . now one of the things that you mentioned once before that I'm not clear

on, after Highland went in, how would the route from the pass, coming down the hill, was Highland pretty much where it is now?

Oh yes.

[PHIL] Okay. So they would come right down off of the hills and angle over to where Highland is. Or would they take the Lewisburg Road out and turn down Highland.

No, it was no connection between Lewisburg Road, north of the high school, and Highland. At that time, there wasn't a road.

[PHIL] So Highland, really then, went off up toward the pass?

Yeah, angled northwest.

[PHIL] Yeah. Across where the high school is now. Or north of there?

Oh, no on papa's road, on the way it is now, yeah.

Well, there's a question I have on that then, too. Where did it cross the creek, Jackson Creek? And where did it cross Frazier Creek, and how did it cross?

Yeah. Map.

Okay, we're gonna draw a map on page 11.

Let's see. Jackson Creek comes out of the little Jackson valley. Wiggles around, I won't wiggle it. And . . .

On the upper left hand side of the page.

Mr. Stoneback's place was up here. And the creek was down here in the valley. And let's see. My distances won't be right. But anyway, north of the Witham place it turns south, almost right corner, and a bridge.

Right there at Withams?

Yeah. And Withams house is up here.

Okay, so this is Stonebacks in the upper left hand corner? And Withams is south?

Wait a minute, wait a minute, I should put that in first. He was back up here.

Oh, so Withams off the page here?

No, Witham is on the page and Stoneback is off.

Okay.

[PHIL] But he was north of the creek?

Yes. He was north of the creek yes.

Okay now, where the creek turns real sharp and this bridge is in there, was that an old bridge?

Uh uh! They hadn't put that in yet.

Did people . . . could people cross there before they put the bridge in? Was there a natural crossing or anything there?

As I remember the banks were pretty high. Be a devil of a job to cross.

[PHIL] Was that just to get into Withams place or on up to Stonebacks as well?

Well, this turned here.

Okay, so when people came up before the bridge was built, they would have to come up past Withams and towards Stonebacks, come way back up the valley there to get across the creek?

Let's see now. Humm. I don't know. Huh. To go to Stonebacks you had to go straight up from the bridge, and then you turned this way to go to Tollmans. And Fraziers.

Tollmans and Fraziers were north of Stonebacks.

Oh yes. Huh. I didn't leave enough room on my paper.

But we could say the old route maybe went by Withams, came up the creek to Stonebacks . . .

No, it never followed the creek. Oh it did follow the creek in a way. But it was quite a little ways from the creek up here.

So it'd follow up along the base of the hill then, above the creek?

Yes.

Okay. And then it went to Tollmans?

Yes, but the road went to Tollmans, yes.

Okay.

I wish I'd have started down here.

Well, we can start over.

I'd better. Yes. Going in front of my dad's place the road [Crescent Valley Drive] went straight west.

Okay.

Then it made a turn around the little pasture where Mrs. Witham picked strawberries in. Then it turned to the left and went through the gate and ended at Withams. And up Jackson Creek.

[PHIL] So that's the road.

Yes. And it has to go farther west and turn to the north and go up a hill and to Withams.

Okay.

And then, now this is the . . . Jackson Creek should be right along in here.

So it crossed Jackson Creek right by her strawberry patch in here somewhere?

Yes. There's the bridge.

Now was that a real old crossing in there, or did they just build that crossing?

I can't remember about it. Because there's no highway, this wasn't used . . . they all went up Lewisburg Road to get anywhere up there.

Okay.

[PHIL] Okay now, where . . . put your father's farm there, and then where did the new Highland Road go?

Oh [mumbling] then down here a ways and then north to Tollman's lane, and Frazier Creek.

Was the new route?

Uh huh.

Okay, but the old route went way on back to Withams and stuff first.

No, that one was just private. Stoneback and Witham.

I see, so Stoneback and Witham were the only ones that used that, other people didn't go that way.

Okay.

[PHIL] Now when they built Highland, that's what I was wondering about, when they . . .

Yeah, down here the roads. . .

[PHIL] Okay, now where did the road come down from Sulphur Springs from the pass? How did that connect?

Well, that just went straight through to Mountain View. As Lewisburg Road.

[PHIL] Okay.

Just the way it does now.

Yes.

[PHIL] Then when they . . . how did they connect it with Highland?

Well, they couldn't do it here, there was no road there for years and years. Well, a road came off of it to come down past Tollmans. [This sounds like the current Crescent Valley Drive.] Well, I guess ours went up to it, yes, Highland Way. It was very crooked, you see. Yeah, Lewisburg's close up here, and this crooked road runs into it. Then when this road was put through from Lewisburg, I mean Lewisburg Road, it hit Highland. Then they was pretty well fixed for roads.

[PHIL] When did they do that?

I can't remember what year. It was quite a bit after this one.

[PHIL] So when you went up to Sulphur Springs then, you went off up this road and then up past Tollman's place? That's what I was getting at.

No, I had to hit Lewisburg Road to get to Sulphur Springs.

So you went all the way out to the highway? Then up to Lewisburg?

No, no, I got in here somehow. Because there's a Mr. Morse lived here on the corner of Lewisburg and . . . and what would be. Oh, Highland Way. There was a private road, or some kind of road, you see. The neighbors could get in and out.

Their name was Morris?

Morse, M-o-r-s-e.

Oh, okay.

And she was Mrs. Tollman's sister. And Tollman's were the ones that had the 17 or 18 year old girl that got killed with a Model T. She didn't treat it quite right, and it jumped around and fell over.

When she was only 17 or 18?

Yeah.

So there's the Tollmans, the Morses, the Stonebacks, the Withams, and the Graggs?

Yes.

Okay.

And you see Papa's farm took up a lot of it down in here when they had houses, I don't know if they are yet or not. And over here on this side. All along Lewisburg Road there was a few houses.

Were the Fullers still in there then?

What?

Fullers?

Don't remember them.

Okay.

[PHIL] So when you rode out and you were going toward . . . you were gonna go out to Sulphur Springs and you got up to Highland Road, where you joined on Highland, okay? No, not Highland, Lewisburg,

Lewisburg road, yes.

[PHIL] Don't pay any attention to what I say, just what I mean. Okay, when you got up to Lewisburg Road then, would you have to turn left or right?

Left.

[PHIL] Okay, and then you'd go back up toward Fraziers, where Grandma Frazier lived, for a ways?

Well, she lived, I left her on the left in the valley, little gully or whatever you call it.

[PHIL] You go to the left and then you hit . . .

But I don't go left there, you see, I go farther up.

[PHIL] And then you would sort of follow the road that goes up over Sulphur pass now.

Oh yes, I followed that Lewisburg Road, which took you over the pass to Sulphur Springs.

Okay. I think that's pretty clear then, too. A lot of those routes you were taking are real old routes of course. That's why I'm trying to get these sorted out.

Yes. Well I guess I wandered around quite a bit. Now, when we came to Frazier Creek, another bridge had to go across that.

Is that in the same location where it is now?

I think it is [on Crescent Valley Drive].

Okay. And you don't recall any older crossing there, or any old wagon crossings on Frazier Creek or anything like that?

No, because there weren't any public roads of course. There wasn't much of anything.

So those bridges were built by the landowners?

I suppose there was some built. But, when they put Highland Way through, they were County.

Okay, so the County built the bridges at that time.

I'm not sure. I think they did, but the people may have had to, because you see the County was busted. Far as having any money to help us at all. They told us we had to do it ourselves.

[PHIL] When they built Highland Road, you've got it drawn coming up here, now your father's farm was right here, house was right here, wasn't it?

No, it's . . . Oh yeah! This road.

[PHIL] Okay, so when they built Highland Road they came up that far. How much further did they go, or did they go past your farm? When they built it?

Yeah. Down the hill, turn left . . . some of this was then used partly, I think.

So Highland Road was taking at least sections of private road and then improving it.

Um hum. Yeah, it did some of that.

[PHIL] But it did turn left at the farm?

Yeah, down here at the corner.

[PHIL] Okay.

This is . . .

[PHIL] Oh, okay. Now I understand.

That's that same old road that's in there. Where I took you off to the side there and showed you that camas.

Did I do this one? [Referring to transcript pages]

Yeah, I think so. Now we're on to page 12 here.

[PHIL] Yeah, unless, I would say unless there is something on the page you can glance at there, and that you really wanted to comment on, you probably should just leaf through the pages.

All right. "I studied botany in high school and the Sulphur Springs area was a good place to study rare species." We may have to have one session of catch-ups.

Okay. Well, we want to make sure that we've got a real good thorough . . . like you say, the history has got all the details in there, so it's gotta satisfy you first that it's got everything in there and in the right order.

"I just wouldn't know, because" . . . oh, you ask if . . . evidently you asked about not exposing delicate species to too much public pressure. " . . . have people look at them or do you think it's better just to avoid those areas and try to keep that information privileged?" I do, cause they just ruin it.

So you think that because there are rare and endangered species, that those areas should just be a few people know about them, just kind of monitor them . . .

***

You said the people that should know about these rare plants or endangered plants should be friends, you mean friends of . . .

Friends of the plants.

The plants. Not necessarily friends with each other. Okay. Can you define friends of the plants? What would be your definition of that?

You'll have to help on that. Conservationists.

Conservationist, do you think that's different from a preservationist?

Well, no, not really. I think they mean the same thing, wouldn't you?

[PHIL] Well, in this case, yeah. The idea is to prevent the species from being exterminated.

Yeah.

Let's see, we're still on page 13.

"I am also . . nowadays they're are protective reserves for native plants and even state laws to protect them."

I think when you don't have many comments we did good.

Yeah.

Let's see, page 15? 16?

I noticed there were several places that there wasn't much change.

This might be a good point to make a comment. What was your overall impression of this earlier interview? Do you think everything was covered fairly well and pretty thoroughly?

Yes, just a few places that had to be smoothed up a bit.

So your impression would be that somebody reading this would get a pretty accurate idea of what you felt was an accurate presentation of the history?

I believe so.

Good.

"Saw it go under the plowshares." Now this, here's something I should tell. This place where I saw the second Sisyrinchium, on the face of that hill . . .

Coffin Butte?

"except the one on the hill saddle", now that doesn't identify it very well.

[PHIL] Yeah, that's why we've been trying to figure out where that hill is.

I think it's one that lived there on the mountain Sulphur Springs Road goes over. Probably has a name, but I don't know.

[PHIL] It was . . . now there is a, as you are going up Sulphur Springs Road, there is essentially that long ridge that goes east and west. You go up and over the pass and back down the other side. But there is a little nob of a hill that sits off the side of the main ridge there.

As you are going that way, would it be on your left?

[PHIL] Right.

Well, I don't know. I imagine it is. That sounds like the position it is in, and I could go with my horse.

[PHIL] Yeah, you'd be able to . . . in going up the road when you got almost to the pass, now, there is a road that goes off back down to the back side of that hill. Now when you went up there you just went up straight to the hill though, didn't you?

Yes. I had to make my own trail.

Now there's an old wagon road in there that I found the route of the old wagon road over Lewisburg Saddle. But it's different from the new road. When you went over with your horse though, that would be different from the old wagon road. Is that correct?

Yeah.

[PHIL] But when they went up with the horse and surrey, though?

That's the road that I know of.

[PHIL] And that wasn't in the same position as it is now?

Nope.

They changed the Sulphur Springs Road from when I used to go.

[PHIL] So do you remember . . . how did they change it, how is it different?

Well I don't know just how it's different, but it's different.

[PHIL] Could it be that you started up the hill a little bit further west than you do now? Because you know we're looking at the road a minute ago that you were showing, that comes up to the west of where Sulphur Springs Road comes in now, and joins Lewisburg Saddle. So that's what I was trying to get at, because see in the back of my mind I've been thinking this road has moved. And that's the reason I was asking you questions to see if you could remember how it was different then from the way it is now.

No. I couldn't.

The older road was to the west?

[PHIL] Yeah.

And at the base of the hill is maybe even a quarter mile.

[PHIL] See that's the thing, that little nob hill that I was talking about, the old road used to go back down to the west side of that and loop around it I think. Now there was a skid road or something down there, maybe, I don't know. But just, I've wondered, I've tried to figure out how you went from your house up over to Sulphur Springs, you know, simply for this reason, to try to figure out where it went up.

It went up to the left of where Highland Way goes into Lewisburg Road.

[PHIL] Now that's the old Highland Way, the way it was before they built that extension out to Lewisburg Road that's there now, right?

That's right.

[PHIL] Well that's what I'm trying to find . . .

Yeah, let's see.

Is this plant here then that's kind of in relation to that route, is this a fairly rare plant?

[PHIL] This is what this is all about, see, we're trying to figure out . . . I'm looking for a piece of paper to draw on myself.

Oh, I could get you a piece?

Let's see, you're drawing on the back of page 89.

[PHIL] I'll draw on the back of page 89. What I wanted to do was . . .

Excuse me a minute.

[PHIL] Okay

***

I'm gonna turn this back on.

[PHIL] This is . . . your dad's farm was right here, and the original Highland came up and then turned there and then went off out here, right?

Um hmm, um hmm.

[PHIL] And then this is Lewisburg Road. And so they put in this new piece sometime after that.

Well, Lewisburg Road's down here a ways, it isn't too close. It comes from Mountain View, straight through.

[PHIL] Right. Okay, so the old Highland sort of went off here somewhere, but it didn't go all the way up to Lewisburg Road originally, right? There was some kind of . . .

Yes!

[PHIL] Oh, it did?

Oh yes. Because there was a farm or two.

[PHIL] Okay, so that was the reason. That was the idea, they came up here and then came out and crossed Jackson Creek. This is where the strawberries were?

Um hmm.

[PHIL] Okay.

Then this would be where the school is now.

No. Over here to the right a little.

Yeah, it was out west was where the school was.

Yeah, north of the creek.

[PHIL] Okay, so now. You came up and you joined Lewisburg Road. So, from that junction, which way did you go if you were going off over to Sulphur Springs, which was off out here? This is where the road is today.

Is it?

[PHIL] Yeah, but it . . .

Well, it went from here.

[PHIL] Yeah.

From this junction?

Yeah.

And then it just started heading straight up the hill?

Well, it went on to Sulphur Springs Road, wherever it is.

[PHIL] Yeah, well, that's why we're trying to decide where Sulphur Springs Road was back then.

Well, it was left of where I got into there.

[PHIL] So you went to the left.

Yeah.

[PHIL] Okay. Now, you don't remember any details?

I don't remember the details and the turns and things.

[PHIL] Any of the scenery? Well, the question is now, where you found that little Sisyrinchium douglasii, do you remember generally where it was?

Oh, well I'd got to get up to the highest part of Sulphur Springs, the pass, I'd got to get up there. And then I've got to go around the left of the big hill.

Big hill to the left of the highest point of the pass?

Yeah, the one you can see from out there somewhere. That's fairly open on the front.

Um hmm. On the south.

Um hmm.

[PHIL] How far . . . about how . . . any idea of distance?

Oh yeah, not too far.

[PHIL] Not too far, as in a mile, half a mile?

It was probably a mile, but I'm not sure.

But when you are saying the highest point, are you talking about the pass or the highest point going towards the pass, or the highest point past the pass?

[Laughs] Let's see now. The highest point in the road. Is that what you mean?

[PHIL] Well, you said something about the highest point when you were headed up. You would go up to the pass, and then go around to the west around the highest point, or something like that, to get to where the Sisyrinchium were.

Well, the open face of the thing where the Sisyrinchium was, was probably not particularly much more climb for the horse, than the road. And when they put in the new road to Sulphur Springs, I'm just wondering if it includes them, if it eliminates them, the high part, or what. I didn't like it when they changed it because it balled me all up.

[PHIL] Well I wonder if it's just that that place, the meadow, where that was, is just overgrown with trees now. I mean you've been around a long time and that was a while back and the trees have moved in on so much of that.

Yeah, I suppose.

[PHIL] Maybe that's just why I can't find it.
Okay. Just to clarify one point though, when you're going, you say you went up to the highest point,

What I meant, I went to the open face of that south open face of that hill.

Okay, that you're crossing over to go to Sulphur Springs.

No. I followed the regular road that goes to Sulphur Springs and then went to the right, but this I had to come back to the south.

You had to come back to the south?

Yeah, and then go back again.

[PHIL] Did you go down hill any on the way, do you remember, or just kind of wander along the ridge?

It seems fairly parallel.

[PHIL] And you weren't following a road or anything were you, you were just riding along . . .

No, I was just riding along where I could ride.

So you were riding parallel on the south side of the ridge from Lewisburg Saddle.

Um hmm. And I'm not sure what you call Lewisburg Saddle.

Well, the pass.
[PHIL] You used the term the pass, when you'd go over the hill on to Sulphur Springs?
Charlie Olson lived there, and he called it the pass. And the Cooks called it the pass. I don't think it had a name back in those days.

I don't think it did.

[PHIL] But it was just sort of, what you call the high point when you are going up the road and went over and started back down?

Yes.

[PHIL] Yeah. So you'd get to there and then ride out west. Cross country out west to the meadow. Or wherever you could get to.

Yeah, it wasn't very far.

[PHIL] Okay.

Now I remember Charlie Olson, you say he was 95 when?

I'm not sure of his birthday, but he was born in 1895.

Well, he's a year older than me. No, a year younger. And who's the other one who was 90 something?

Wanda Cook, she was a Marcks. And she's 95, too.

I remember the Marcks a little bit. The name, and we'd see them go by on the road and all that. But I never lived near them. Just never got really acquainted.

Let's see, we're on to page 18 here.

Looks pretty decent.

You want . . . I see you've got a "yeah" changed to "yes". On the transcript would you just as soon have it say "yes"?

I'd rather say "yes". And we mustn't say "well" so many times.

Cross out some of the "wells." Wanda Cook made the exact same remark. She said, "I didn't realize I said 'yeah' so much, and I know you said it too, I want those changed to 'yes'es."

Good! I'd like to talk to those people myself.

One interesting thing you might be interested in is how amazingly close some of these things are. People about your age want to say "yes" instead of "yeah." They always remembered their horse, and they think the biggest change was the automobile.

You bet your life! [laughter] It really was.

Okay, page 19. Looks like you've got some changes down there on the bottom.
[Pause]
One point, that marsh that your dad filled in, and now this plant we're talking about up on the hill at Sulphur Springs, those are both Sisyrinchiums.
[PHIL] Sisyrinchiums. Well, wait a minute, she didn't find the one on the farm in the marsh.
No, I didn't find any flowers.
[PHIL] No, it was on, up under a tree on the hill, right? The first one you saw?
What about the tree?
[PHIL] The first little Sisyrinchium, it was on the farm?
Oh! Yeah. It was in the little section of oak grubs. Not this thick, dense shade, but not out in the field.
[PHIL] Hmm. That's what Helen Gilkey said about the one she found out on Coffin Butte. Same thing, it was growing right on the edge of, in real open small oak trees.
So that was . . .
[PHIL] Maybe that's why I never can find them. I keep looking out in the meadows, maybe I ought to be poking my nose in under an oak tree.
Yeah, you ought to look in both places!
That's what Bill Atkinson noticed about Carson Prairie, he said, well, we're worried about all this encroachment of the trees, but it looks like most of the flowers are growing underneath the oaks.
[PHIL] Well, he got there at the wrong time of year.
I think they were hanging on for dear life as those oaks were coming in.
[PHIL] I think it's the other way around. Doug fir that's coming in up there, not oaks.
Yeah? Well we noticed all the chukar mallow and all those, that oak was just filling in that last portion of prairie there.
I've got a planting of a . . . oh, what's this thing called? Trientalis. What's that's common name? Starflower. Out here in my yard and I didn't know it for a long time. There was a quite a growth of snowberries. And I cut the dang things down and there was my planting of those. And then the fir trees all around they made high shade. And they seemed to be existing all right on the high shade.
[PHIL] How did you get the starflowers?
I don't know! They were there!
[PHIL] Because the seeds are so small.
I'll say they are.
[PHIL] They don't make very many seeds per plant per year, you know.
No! But there's a planting. Hmm. This Habernaria, it was put on like cross-stitching. [Sighs] Well, that's all there is to that.
Okay, now page 21.
"Hookers pink" is "Strawberry pink." Now that's one thing that . . .
Okay, ready to go over to 22 here?
Yeah. That was much more common, much more. That's another thing I've noticed. The disappearance of some things. Or the scarcity of them. They were fairly plentiful when I was a kid.
Which was?
Well, several things. One was the strawberry pink.
Strawberry pink was a lot more common?
Oh yes.
[PHIL] Did you call it strawberry pink when you were a kid?

Um hmm.

[PHIL] Okay.

I suppose the King kids told me.

And now it's called, what's it called now?

Well, it's called by its scientific name more, and that's . . . can you say it, I can't think of it.

[PHIL] Yes. If you hadn't asked me. [Laughter] Silene hookeri.

And that's what you were calling Hookers pink now?

[PHIL] It's called Hookers pink, strawberry pink, indian pink, let's see.

There's quite a patch of it up on one meadow, and the person I work for has taken steps to follow essentially Phil's recommendation that we create a better environment for it, and start preserving this.

Good, good, good! [Delighted]

A lot of the work that we're doing with you is aimed directly for that, is identifying these older plants so that we can preserve them and maintain the colonies.

[PHIL] You once said that you remember a lot more of them in the valley when you were a kid.

Oh yeah.

[PHIL] Of Hookers pink.

Um hmm.

[PHIL] There's another one I haven't been able to cultivate.

That's it, we . . . it hasn't ever been studied, about the idiosyncracies of some of these things, and we need to know.

Why do you think we need to know the idiosyncracies of these plants?

Well, for instance, this big Cypripedium, this big ladyslipper, there is something about that, something about its growth, that I didn't know a thing about, and that's why it died when I moved it to the wrong place. You see, we need to know those things or we'll ruin all of them!

So you think that if we don't know about how to maintain or grow certain plants, that by not understanding that, that we run the threat of destroying a lot of plants.

Oh yes. All of that kind, at least.

Not trying to put words in your mouth so much as clarify in my own head what point you're making.

Now, another thing that we're noticing is the animal life, a lot of it is scarcer. See when we first came in here there weren't so many people, whereas there's hunting. And I don't suppose there's very strict laws about not hunting. But we soon made certain things scarcer by not conserving, or being careful with them. And one of them was the native grouse. But I've got some of his feathers!

So most of the native grouse are . . . there's not so many now.

Oh, my, no. And they've gone farther back in the woods. And when we came they were roosting in our orchard.

[PHIL] So they were down in the valleys then.

Yeah, bet your life.

What did they call them?

Well that was the common name. I don't know any other name. Do you?

Just grouse?

Yeah. But it wasn't the Russ grouse. It was a different kind, smaller. A little smaller.

Did you ever hear them called pheasant?

No, we left that for the China pheasants.

Okay, just the China pheasant was the only thing you called pheasant.

Um hmm. And they at one time were thick. And then some fool brought in foxes. And that was the end of the pheasants. Because the fox got their nests on the ground. They didn't know half what they thought they knew or they'd never have brought a fox around.

[PHIL] Do you remember blackberries?

Do I!! You bet!

[PHIL] What kind of blackberries?

Well they were just the little ones, I don't know any other names, just the small type of wild blackberry [Rubus uvsinus]. That was the good one.

[PHIL] The native one.

Yeah. That was one. And then people brought in himalayas [Rubus procerus], and what's that other big one?

Evergreen?

Yes. Oh, no no. That was native

[PHIL] Himalaya and the lance leaf, the real divided leaf one [Rubus laciniatus].

Yes, and they got . . .

[PHIL] When did that happen?

Well, I think at that time I was a young married . . . I wasn't a kid anymore. And it got loose from civilization. It . . .

[PHIL] Would have been in the teens, then, right?

Yeah.

So people brought that in around maybe World War I?

You know, I didn't know I was gonna have to talk about the times. [Laughter] I don't remember the dates. But it runs in my head that I was about . . . the kids were little, you know.

[PHIL] So how old were you then?

That was . . . between 30 and 40 I imagine.

[PHIL] That's when the blackberries were brought in?

Well, not the ones that are here now. I mean the good ones.

[PHIL] The himalayas, you know.

Those kind, yes.

[PHIL] When you were between 30 and 40.

Yeah!

[PHIL] Well they've made a lot of headway in a short time.

You bet. Oh, blackberries, well mercy. I have to go out all the time and cut those little ones, you know, the good ones. They come out and they just take over here. I betcha they make runners thirty feet long.

[PHIL] The native ones you're talking about?

Yeah.

How about poison oak [Rhus diversiloba]? Can you remember so much poison oak when you were a kid?

Oh, yeah. It was in our oak woods.

So there's always been a lot of poison oak then.

Oh yes. And I don't get it enough to really matter. But boy, some of my neighbors . . .

[PHIL] There was a fellow wrote a letter to the Gazette Times about the blackberries, and he was an old timer, he'd be in his mid-80's now I guess, but he said when he was a kid growing up, he said, he was talking mainly about rivers, the Alsea river, and management along the river, and he

said when he was a kid they let the cattle graze right down to the water's edges and we didn't have blackberries all over the place. Talking about these himalayan blackberries. And I happened to think well that's because when he was a kid there weren't any himalayan blackberries around here.

No, no, they got loose from cultivation, you see. And if you let them go, they're just terrible.

How about bachelor buttons [Centaurea cyanus]? We didn't talk about that before.

Well, bachelor . . . well weren't they brought in as a garden flower?

[PHIL] Yeah, as a flower garden thing.

Yeah. A yard flower

[PHIL] You told a story about one of the neighbor's wives that put in bachelor buttons, or something. You can repeat that if you want to.

Was that in here?

[PHIL] I don't know whether it's in there or not.

Well, it was brought in as a yard flower. And I don't know what year, but I think before the turn of the century.

I think maybe even back to the 1840's. It was one of the first ornamental flowers brought in I think.

Umm. And it is a pretty flower, but. It's the kind that makes itself into a weed. And it's in the daisy family and that's still worse. And . . . now we lived in Clatsop County at first, that was very primitive and unsettled. And one of our neighbors, woman, had some of those flowers in her yard. And my dad saw, and he told her that out in the valley here that was a terrible pest in the crops. And he advised her to destroy it.

[PHIL] Did she?

I don't know. I believe she was peeved at papa.

Do you recall how they began controlling it in the valley?

Well, they couldn't control it very well because it reseeded itself so nicely, and it was mostly in the grain. Now, in a garden you could control it. But not in a grain field! You couldn't go in there and pull every last one of them, you couldn't take machinery to do anything, you'd ruin the grain. So there you were.

Well, they don't have a problem now. How did they . . .

Well, I didn't know now. You see, I've lost all track of it.

Could it be the quality of seed, or could it be farming methods, or could it be herbicides, or . . .

Well, herbicides could they use it on the grain that's so close to those things, do you know?

[PHIL] Yeah, since it's not a grass. There are herbicides that would take out everything but the grass.

Oh, well then, it's herbicides that's done it I guess. I didn't know how that was.

How about the quality of the seed that the farmers are using now? Or would that have been mixed in with seed because it was growing in with wheat before, would it keep replicating?

Well, it ought to clean out of wheat. It's smaller than wheat, but it isn't any shorter. It might be. Yeah, I think it'd clean out of wheat pretty well. Because they're different.

Okay. We're starting to digress a little here. Okay, we're on page 23 and 24.

Did I finish this? I guess so.

This is about the most thorough, and kind of a long slow process doing it this way, but I think we're going to end up with a really excellent result.

I hope so.

I think we've got a good start and this is gonna . . .

Let's see. Question, "Are you familiar with any of the plants maybe that the Indians used for food." "You bet." [Laughter] Quite sure of myself, wasn't I?

But you were younger then.

Yeah. Well, you see my botany group has been playing with these Indian food plants. We've had contact with them.

Who would you recommend as, if you had to point to individuals that know a lot about these plants as Indian food, who, what types of individuals would . . . ?

Well, that wouldn't be easy, because it all depends on . . . they had to make a special study of it you see, and I just don't know them well enough.

How about books, what books do you think . . .?

Yes, there are some books that you can find some, quite a bit of that information in.

And do you think most of the books are pretty accurate?

Oh yes. Yes.

Okay. Do you know anybody in the Corvallis area that specialized in Indian food plants?

No, not particularly.

Okay.

But there are some. See, when my botany teacher was living, I could get my questions answered!

That's why we're asking you, of course, too!

I didn't learn the answers to all of them! [Pause] Now what were we looking at when I said "that's bitterroot"?

I think we were looking at some photographs of some plants you had.

[PHIL] Yeah, that's right, you had some pictures.

I found one in eastern Oregon. That I recognized. But I found quite a plenty of yampah. See there aren't so awfully many . . .

I think that most of your corrections with some of these older people and with some of the plants we discussed . . .

***

You were saying, you didn't understand why the, or you didn't think the Indians had very many good plants.

No, you would have thought, really, that they would have seen some worth having, or using, and cultivated them themselves. They just didn't get very far along the trail of civilization at all, did they?

Well, they didn't have metal. Do you think that maybe by using fire, that that was a method of cultivation that we're just not used to looking at?

Yes, I guess. That's right, it isn't. And some of the tribes, I suppose, didn't have good ground.

Now those in the Willamette Valley, you mentioned off the tape, that they might have had access to animals. But the ones in the Willamette Valley, from what we know, did exist mostly on vegetation and they did have good ground.

Yeah, they could have done something. But they weren't interested in being civilized.

Well, but they didn't have metal or domestic animals, or alcohol. So maybe they . . . it depends on what you are calling civilized.

Yeah, that's right.

Now, they had camas, and oak, and blackberries and strawberries, and onions, can you think of other plants that they might have needed in addition to that or plants that they could have cultivated better?

Well, it's just too bad that they didn't get contact with the South American Indians and get potatoes and corn. You see, what they had, it took an awful lot of it to make much bulk.

So you think that if certain species of plants had been introduced in the Willamette Valley then they could have done better?

Yes, or anybody kind of help them get started on raising some good stuff.

Do you think a limitation could have been that they didn't have metal?

Well, I presume that that has something to do with it, because it was awfully hard to work with a stick.

Yeah. Page 28 here.

[Pause]

29?

And you see the Indians had always done it this way, and I have great respect for their ancestors. They didn't want to change it so much. What's this? "Yeah, different stuff, and that was something that would come in and hadn't been here naturally. But I don't remember any particular one." Then I thought, "Oh, yes, Tansy ragwort [Senecio jacobaea]." It was a stinker! Oh, about this, oh what we talked about. That papa told the woman to tear it up.

Oh, oh . . .

[PHIL] That's right. Bachelor button.

Yeah. That's a bad one. And there was one other one that he thought he could fight it by digging it up. And that it wasn't so thick. And that was the old man in the ground [Marah oreganus], a wild gourd. And that storage root, it had a storage root you see, big as a wild muskmelon. And he'd dig them up. He kept them pretty well down. [Pause] And that's another thing that was a difference between my dad and some of the other farmers. They didn't bother with these things.

As far as controlling the weeds.

Yeah, that's right. Of course he worked himself to death.

Now, you know that Rohner said that and Marcks said that too, they said the other farmers didn't take care of their land as good as dad. Of course, he never lived to see . . .

Yeah! [Laughter]

And both of them said the exact same thing, that their father really knew how to take care of the land, and their father died young.

Um hmm. My father didn't reach 70.

I think they meant younger than that.

"More like 50 years as her [Vida R. Bullis] husband was living when they moved out there." [Reading from page 32] I was just out there the other day and she's got more dahlias than ever.

Do you like dahlias?

Well, as a landscape flower. But it's a nuisance. You have to dig it up every fall and store the roots and plant it again in the spring.

[PHIL] I've got some in front of my house I haven't dug up and this is the third year they've come up.

Well, you can be lucky on the weather, but you see sometimes it gets you.

[PHIL] Well they're next to the foundation of the house and it probably keeps them a little warmer than they would out there. She couldn't do that.

No.

[PHIL] It gets colder out there anyway.

Probably.

Page 34.

Let's see. "There's a while there, when Oregon just raised wheat until it wore the ground out." "All the farmers raised wheat?" And that affected my paternal grandparents movements. They got eaten out by grasshoppers in Kansas, and came out here in their older age, expecting to start over again. They never got started to start! They came out here when the ground was just plum depleted with wheat. After several years they just wheated it to death. And he tried three different rented farms and it all depleted. Then he went out to Clatsop County and found it covered with trees. He couldn't win for losing.

Now, one thing I'm curious about, how far south did the wheat crops get grown in the Willamette Valley?

Well, just all over.

Were they as far south as Eugene?

Oh, I think so. Everywhere there's reasonably level land you know, not so good in the hills.

[PHIL] Wonder if that's why the farmers around here claim now that you can't grow much in a lot of these places. You hear that a lot. Particularly in terms of the grass seed industry. They say the only thing you can grow out there is grass. I wonder if it's because of past farming practices.

Well, if they haven't done anything to make the land richer, I expect as they may feel the effects of that wheating.

I was told by one of my professors that wheat was grown no further south than Crescent Valley. We were on your family's farm, and he said "This is as far south as wheat was grown."

I can't feature that.

So you don't think that's true.

I doubt it very much.

Good.

But I couldn't stake my life on it. Now, what you call him, Van Smith [a old friend of Bessie], you ought to talk to about that. Because his father and his grandfather farmed.

[PHIL] At Smith Loop, out south of town.

Yep.

[PHIL] That's right, he would know, wouldn't he.

Everybody keeps telling me I should talk to him.

[PHIL] Well you should

Yeah, you better do that.

[PHIL] And you better do it quick.

And he's interesting to talk to.

Okay.

And I remember seeing vetch come in.

When did vetch come in?

I was grown I think, but I was still home. I hadn't got married yet I don't think. Just around that time.

How old were you when you got married?

Twenty. Twenty-four, I think.

[PHIL] Which vetch was it?

Common. Sativa.

[PHIL] Oh, okay. <u>Vicia Sativa</u>. When did hairy vetch [<u>Vicia villosa</u>] come in?

Well, it was later. I don't know how much later. And sativa seemed to be the best one.

Page 37.

[Pause] All these farms that had been established at any time at, at least, practically all of them had an old orchard. Now you see that one out there is rubbing 200 years.

Now this is kind of interesting. We've talked about virtually everything I wanted to talk about except special trees and orchards.

[PHIL] That one out there, you mean the one on your papa's place.

Papa's place, yeah.

Now, the walnut orchard, are we talking about that?

No, that was put in after 1914. Well, no, I think that's the one he planted and when it bore he found out it was the wrong variety because it nearly always got frosted.

Oh!

And he had to graft it, and made it later, much later getting it going.

Now, you say all the old places had orchards?

Yeah.

Those were just . . .

Family orchard of fruit, pears and apples, and everything the family would use.

Now the orchard that the . . . so that's different from the walnut orchard?

Oh, yes.

Now the walnut orchard we've been calling the Gragg walnut orchard. But the family orchard, would that be?

Where you turn the corner to the left, that's the orchard between the house and the road.

Okay. Does that orchard have a name, or was that associated with the family?

That was just our family orchard.

[PHIL] It was there when you moved.

Yeah, it was there you see. And it was an old orchard then, so I figure it's about 200 years old!

Well, the first person that moved there, only went there 150 years ago so . . . but it was an old orchard . . .

[PHIL] But it would have been planted then, probably with the first people that moved in.

Yes, give or take 50 years!

[PHIL] Yeah, you couldn't go to Freds and buy apples back then.

Do you recall any of the varieties in that orchard there?

Yes. There was a lot of them that were not good at all. But there were some humdingers! There was winesaps, they're wonderful winter apples. And belflowers would come on a little earlier. They're a long, yellow apple. And, what were some more of those?

A 20 ounce?

No.

Or a blue pied?

No.

How about the pears? Was there bartletts?

Yes, and winter nellus, and . . . oh, what was that other pear? I used to know it. Shucks. Well, I'll think of it, but it was a thick, chubby pear. And the winter nellus was longer. And they were good. And then the summer apples, of course, the best one was a gravenstein. And those little red june, solid color red. And it wasn't a big apple, but it was good. And very white meat.

Called red june? Do you remember what you used the red junes for?

Well, they came rather early. Just to eat raw.

Did you make them into salads?

Salads?!

Never had apple salad, huh? Ok.

Yee gods, you couldn't get those old timers to eat a salad! [Laughter]

[PHIL] So when was the first salad you remember?

Well, after I was married, probably.

Never had salad until you were an adult?

Not as a salad. But we had some raw stuff you see, fruit or lettuce. Sliced cabbage . . . what do you call that?

Slaw?

No, we made kraut. Yes, slaw, that would be our main salad. Yeah.

[PHIL] What did you do with lettuce?

I don't know. I don't remember cutting it up. I don't think we used it very much. I have an idea the slaw was better for us. I'm sure it had vitamin C in it. What was I trying to think of?

Trying to think of the name of an old thick-skinned pear? That was real good?

[PHIL] Or thick, not long and thin, but round.

Oh, okay. Okay. Thick shaped pear.

Yes. What was the name of it? Oh, shoot.

Oh well.

Go on to the next thing.

Okay. We're on . . .

I have noticed that the older people they were not brought up on salads as you are today. And they didn't want to eat it.

Page 39 there. Another thing that's coming out of this. We've got Cecil Compton. We've got 75 old pear and apple trees on 8 different orchards on school properties, and he's telling use what the varieties are. We're trying to preserve these old orchards.

Good. Have ever met old Mr. . . .

[PHIL] Smith.

Yes!

Morris X?

Yes! Boy, he knows the varieties. And there's some, there's another old man, I can't think of now.

Okay, page 40.

[Pause] Papa didn't have time to hunt. But he did some. He didn't have time to go on rugged trips and deer hunt. If a deer come along and got in his way, why he might shoot it. But he did hunt pheasants. Cause they were so thick. And he didn't do it particularly for pleasure. He was too busy.

[PHIL] Well did you have problems with deer getting into stuff around the house?

No. I think one reason is dogs. We always had dogs.

Did you ever see very many deer?

No, not many.

How about beaver?

No, none at all. The little streams out there are too little. [Pause] What's this? [Laughs] I sure explained why those people brought those foxes in!

You've got it covered.

[Pause] Yeah, another silly thing to allow. Bringing the dang possums.

Let's see, that's 41? Page 42.

Yep, my kid brother and I had fun catching little trout. Nine was a big one.

Nine inches?

Nine inches.

Guarantee two things, this is one of the best histories that we've got with the school, and it has caused us to go out and talk with a lot of other people, but I think it's gonna be one of the most thorough, too.

I hope so.

Yeah, I think so.

Papa wasn't averse to hunting, but he hated to take so much time. From his work. So when they became a nuisance in the orchard, he just had to shoot them.

Would they, in those days would they say that he was a "meat hunter," rather than a "sport hunter," or are you familiar with those terms?

Yes, he was a . . . well how did they say that? Oh dear, that isn't right. Food on the table or something of the sort.

Oh, I think I know the phrase you are looking for. He hunted basically for the family table . . .

Yeah!!

Yeah.

And when they come near, and got right in your way like roosting in the orchard, why he couldn't help himself. Let's see, "They were dairy farms?" "No, they were general farmers, and also good managers." [Bottom of page 43]

Okay, we're on 44.

We're just going to town, aren't we?

Well, the last 15 or 20 pages, you have mostly "Yeah" and "Yes", but you have a few comments.

Boy, this is a bad one. You know, they had a little bit of everything at one time or another, and a good farmer will have many . . . let's see, what's that . . . many irons in the fire, that's another expression. And if you just have one or two things that you've got to specialize in it very much to get anywhere financially. And he didn't miss any tricks having some of this and some of that.

Well, they say things like "You don't put all your eggs in one basket", or . .

Yeah, uh huh.

Or would they just practice that?

Practice, what do you mean?

Or would they actually have expressions saying to diversify, to have a lot of different crops, and expressions like "Don't put all your eggs in one basket" or would they just, you could tell by the way that they lived that they practiced those things. Or would they actually have phrases that they kind of followed or expressed their beliefs like that.

Well, I don't know too much about that. [Pause] Yeah, that cherry orchard was a little cash crop, but it give us kids, we kids a chance to make a little penny money, too, because people . . . there weren't many orchards and people came and got them. And they would hire us to pick them sometimes, or they would, as I said before, they would ask us to pick them ourselves and ship them on the train to the . . . and they come to the . . . oh, now what am I trying to say? Where the . . . isn't that maddening?

Sort of like fruit stands, or something like that?

No. Stations! Train stations! And get their boxes of cherries. We'd ship them that for. And boy we had to get up early that morning! We had to pick them, and we had to go in there with a horse, rig -- slow business -- and put them on the train.

Where would they ship them to by train?

To whatever station they wanted! Nearly always out toward the coast, like Kings Valley, and what are some of those? Chitwood, and various stations along there.

[PHIL] So, would a store owner come through then and buy them from you and have you ship them, or . . .

No, no! Private citizens!

[PHIL] Oh really?

Yes, we'd get a letter in the mail.

So somebody, like, say at Nortons. Or one of those places, Marvel. They'd say, send us a case of cherries, and away you'd go.

Yeah.

That's interesting

But we had to pick them. We had to get up early to do that. We had . . . the transportation you see was so slow, to get them into the station in time to go. They're a perishable crop, you see. And we couldn't do it one day and send them the next, we had to do it all in one day.

That's interesting. They'd go by horse and buggy to train to right to somebody's doorstep!

Well, not exactly.

Or to the station, yeah.

Because they had to come to the train station.

[PHIL] How would they find out that you had cherries?

I don't know. Well I suppose . . .

[PHIL] Word of mouth.

I suppose some of the older citizens that knew that, you see, right along, I don't know for certain. [Pause] Now what was this about the Indians? I guess this is the question, "Would there be pickers, like would Siletz Indians come across to pick or kids pick?" "Not Indians, but me and my brother."

Well, the Indians used to come out to the valley to pick hops.

Later on. Later on, for hops and not much else. That would be a pretty big deal. Then they'd come and camp, you see.

Can you remember any Indian camping places around town? Do you know why Squaw Creek is called Squaw Creek, going through . . .

No I don't know why. Where does it go?

By the County fairgrounds.

No. Hmm. No, there probably were several places, because we would dig up Indian relics.

That's the last question I had for you here that we haven't covered yet. You talked about digging up Indian relics before. And you told me that it was on your family, your home.

Yeah, and I never thought about it, though, particularly, so I didn't mark the spot.

Okay. So you're not exactly sure where on the family farm.

No. But it's some place where it's plowed up or dug up or something, you see. So it was particularly deep.

Would that be on the Gragg farm?

Oh, yeah.

[PHIL] And just sort of scattered all over the farm, or just in a particular place?

Well, all over the valley, yes.

[PHIL] But there wasn't a particular concentration of them in one place, was there?

There may have been, but I didn't know of it.

But it would be in an area that you plowed though, too. It wouldn't be up like in the orchard, or it wouldn't be in oak woods. It'd be in areas where you plowed.

No, I don't think they would want to camp there. The trees are in the way.

[PHIL] But, now, I've found arrowheads where roads been bulldozed through. Just because the ground was turned up there, not because the Indians were there in any particular numbers. For a lot of farmers that I've talked to, and I've talked to the ones that were real interested in arrowheads, they can isolate a spot. The alfalfa field, and there are real concentrated spots. Edna Weise told me about a spot that's close to that camas prairie relict, and it's also real close to the Dixon Creek crossing on Applegate Trail, and that's a point of contact between the first people into the, the first Europeans, Euroamericans, and the Indian village. That's where disease got hit. Arrowheads and camas. It's all, they all started in that time.

Let's see now. "Because there are marks on some of them . . ." Oh yes, marks on some of them . . .

***

Well, see, he was very religious.

Oh, you didn't want it in here?

[PHIL] Do you want it recorded or not?

Well, it's part of the beliefs of the times.

I'm real interested in that. We've been talking about the 2 by 2's and the different religious things, with some of the other . . .

[PHIL] Go ahead.

Well, anyway, she had one child born tongue tied, you know what that is? His tongue underneath the end was grown to his mouth. And he couldn't talk. And because he was born that way, she said the Lord made it, and she wouldn't change it. And that child had to grow up and earn the money to get it fixed. And he was pretty mad at his folks.

Do you recall what kind of religion she had that taught her that?

No, it was just ordinary Christian religion, I don't know what church. It wasn't any crazy, what do you call it? Well, not any different. But some people do crazy things.

Can you recall any of the religions coming through, or any tent meetings, or any unusual religious groups in this area?

Well, there was the holy rollers.

[PHIL] Around here?

In Corvallis.

Did you ever go to any of their meetings?

Oh, you bet. [Laughter]

Did you become a holy roller?

No.

Why did you go to the meeting?

I didn't!

Oh, I thought you said, "Oh, you bet!" Did you hear any stories about what went on at the meetings?

Well, I've heard something about the principles of the holy rollers. I don't think much of it. I didn't waste much time on it.

On any religion or just that religion?

I went to the Christian church. That's what my mother belonged to. I didn't understand it and I don't think most others do.

We can turn this off if you want, but would you consider yourself a Christian?

Yes.

Do you see a difference between Christianity and religion?

Yes, there is a difference. Well, anybody's religion is religion, but it isn't all Christianity.

So I consider myself a Christian. So anyway . . . now, what was I going to tell about? Oh, now you see we didn't know, keep up with Aunt Troni's family very well. She's the one that came with an ox team, wagons and ox team, in 1864. And settled down by Amity. And she was lots . . . she was the oldest one in the family. She was quite a bit older than my father. And her kids were all grown and married and moved, and we didn't move to where we were close enough to visit much. And anyway, about this boy, when he got old enough that he could get away from home and earned enough money so he could get his mouth fixed he did it. And now, my nephew is taking over the genealogy of the family. And before he got so busy, they bought them this house so he could move in. They did quite a bit of work on it. And he found this fellow that had fixed . . . He was 84 years old then, I expect he's dead now. That was several years ago. And he went and hunted him up, he was up in Washington.

So there's an interview with this uncle, then.

Yeah.

And that's with your nephew.

Yeah.

What's his name, so, your nephew's name?

Same as my dad. Gragg. Lee Gragg. He lived with mamma. And I think that was fairly common, in those days. I don't know how it is yet. That what is, is and the Lord made it. And they don't do much about it. Nowadays, most anybody would have that simple operation and make life easier for anybody. And I think it's idiotic not to do it. Well, so, so it goes.

Okay. Want to go to page 49 and call it a day?

I noticed how one thing leads to another. Somewhere here I told you about the going to the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905. And meeting up with Ezra Meeker. Now do either one of you know about Ezra Meeker?

Um hmm.

I saw the old fellow and his oxen.

You did?

Yeah. And there's another thing that was a custom of the times. People drew away from, now how would I say that? Well anyway, they didn't like to be pushed into this and that and the other thing there. Some very good worthwhile things, it took a lot of pushing and prodding to get them to do it. And they objected to even marking the Oregon Trail.

There was objections to marking the Oregon Trail?

It couldn't get interest too much, for a long time.

Were they against it, or just . . .

Yeah, against it.

[PHIL] What, just against change?

I guess so.

So they thought what Ezra Meeker was doing was not only boring, but it was wrong?

I don't know if they thought it was wrong or not, but they didn't, didn't get hep with it.

What did you think?

I thought it was a fine thing.

Were there people that saw Ezra Meeker as kind of a hero?

Yes, he became a hero later, too.

[PHIL] Let's see, how old were you then?

I was about, in 1905 I was about 11.

[PHIL] I'm right.

Can you remember the forestry building?

Yes.

What about that building sticks in your memory?

Well, it was talked about much, and pointed out that there was lots of big timbers in there from our forest, you know. Made a fuss about it.

Was it a big highlight?

Yeah, yeah. Let's see, what's this question here? "He kept it and rented it, and his children inherited it whole, and eventually I inherited some. Not much in those days as there was no shortage of land to buy then." Let's see. Might be I'm talking about Grandpa Crees? Yeah. He came in '71. And I read in the paper somewhere, not too long ago, that 1872 was the end of the period that you could be considered a pioneer.

1872?

Yes. If you come later you're not. So he was a pioneer, but he's only just under the line.

[PHIL] The last of the pioneers.

Yeah. [Laughter]

Well, now you can say you've got pioneer ancestry for sure then.

Yes, and the other grandpa didn't come to Oregon till '74, so he isn't. But this Aunt Troni did.

Ah. Early pioneer.

Now, it's funny. What did I do with that? Oh.

[PHIL] The pictures.

Now that you've heard about Aunt Troni, maybe you . . . now this was Aunt Lessi's book. And I haven't read any of this. Here's Aunt Lessi.

[PHIL] Oh, okay. I think I understand now, it's a fairly fancy book. More her style.

And this is the old family album, everybody had. Well here, that's Aunt Troni.

The one on the left?

Yeah.

But you said the one on the right was . . .

Aunt Susan?

Your favorite.

You betcha.

What was so nice about Aunt Susan?

Oh, her disposition. She was kindness personified. And she never married, you see the both of them, it ran in their family, they had poor eyes. And she couldn't go to school extensively at all. And couldn't really . . . well of course in those days, women stayed home. But she had, when she could she would go and do housework, or home nursing, or anything she could do, you see, without an education. And her late years she lived with that_____ the family. And I could look back and see where I could have done more for her, and it makes me mad I didn't. And that's what you can see, looking back.

This is your . . .

Now this is grandpa.

Okay, Gragg.

And his brother and two sisters, and the old devil.

I thought you said she was the grandmother of the devil?

No, was the devil herself! [Laughter]

So this is two brothers and two sisters and the other one.

Yeah, that's what I understand. And the generation I hadn't seen any of them but grandpa. They came from Pennsylvania.

Oh, so he was married the third time before he even came out here?

No, he came out here and then when his second wife died, about two years later he farmed his children out with his friends and neighbors and went back and married her. And that's something else funny, that hitches up with a custom of the times. He farmed that Lessi out with Hamen Lewis. Hamen Lewis, it's not Hayman, it's Hamen.

Hamen? Good. Because I've got it as Herman, too.

Hamen. And she came home with body lice. That was not very common in those times!

Body lice?

Lice!! Yes!! Horrible. Now that is looked down.

They was looking down on it in those days?

Yes.

I see.

Now it wouldn't be as horrified to get them. And I think this is one of grandpa's sisters, but I don't know for sure. Those are cousins, I don't know what degree of cousins.

Now who, now this, . . .

And this is little Arthur Hall. Who was raised like a girl.

How old was he raised like a girl, till?

Well, I don't think much longer. Because five years was about the limit.

Okay, about five or six, and then they'd . . .

Yeah, before they went to school they . . .

That was a local family, wasn't it, the Halls? Down in Corvallis, didn't you say?

Yes. They had the bakery at that time. I don't know who this guy is. That's Mary Francis somebody, a cousin. I've heard of her. See, I acquired this in late life. And that's the little dress I showed you. Well anyway, . . .

APPENDIX

[From the April 9, 1991 Corvallis Gazette Times]

Bessie Gragg Murphy
Nov. 6, 1894 - April 6, 1991

Bessie Gragg Murphy, 96, died at Corvallis Manor of natural causes Saturday.

She was born in Elsie, Ore., to Stephen Alexander and Kate Crees Gragg. She moved with her family in 1900 to the Crescent Valley area near Corvallis, where she grew up on a farm.

She graduated from Oregon Agricultural College in 1922 with a bachelor of science degree in home economics.

On Aug. 6, 1922, she married Phillip G. Fleischman. He died in 1941.

In 1952 she married Harry Murphy in Portland; he preceded her death.

Mrs. Murphy discovered an unnamed clover in 1962, which was named "Trifolium owyheense" by the botany department at Oregon State University.

She was a member of the Pythian Sisters, Camp Fire Girls Leaders and the Corvallis Button Club, and was a volunteer on the election board of the Benton County Historical Society.

Mrs. Murphy enjoyed horse-back riding, botany, camping, genealogy, local history, button collecting and needlecraft. She was a member of the Handweavers and Spinners Guild.

Survivors include two daughters, Marjory Fitzwater of Lebanon and Phyllis Dentel of Oakridge; four grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and one nephew.

She was preceded in death by one brother, George Gragg.

Visitation will be today from 1 to 5 p.m., Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at McHenry Funeral Home, 206 N.W. Fifth St., Corvallis.

Graveside services will be Thursday at 2 p.m. at Crystal Lake Cemetery in Corvallis. Memorial services will follow at 4:30 p.m. at the Benton County Historical Museum in Philomath.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Benton County Historical Society and Museum in care of McHenry Funeral Home.

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