

WREN CASE

July 13, 2005

Interviewed by April Curtis

Transcribed by Ryan Shearer

Transcription revised by Paula Helten (10/06/2011)

I: His home. It is July 13th, 2005. All right, so, could you state your full name for me?

WC: Yeah, I'm Wren Case, W-R-E-N C-A-S-E. And I was born in '17, 1917. And I was born here about half a mile from here-- about a half a mile up the road here on the Lower Cove Road. I've lived here all my life. Went to school here in La Grande and Cove, and then I went to school in Alicel. I started there, and then went to Cove one year, and then I went to La Grande High School.

I: When did your parents move here?

WC: My parents-- my dad moved here in-- when he was about, oh probably my dad was just a kid when he moved here.

I: What's his name?

WC: William. William Wren.

I: William Wren Case. And he was how old, just a kid?

WC: Yeah, he was just a-- I don't know-- when he came here he was a school teacher. He taught school here when he came here.

I: Oh. Where did he teach?

WC: He taught in-- he taught in the North. He taught in Imbler, or Elgin. Or, not Elgin, but he taught in Summerville. And he taught in Imbler I think too. And he taught in Ladd Canyon. I'm not sure where all he taught [chuckles], to be honest with you.

I: Where did he come here from?

WC: He came here from Missouri.

I: With his family, or by himself?

WC: No, by himself.

I: And he came to be a school teacher?

WC: Yeah, he came and was a school teacher.

I: What did he teach?

WC: He taught general, general _____. He taught-- at the time he was teaching to all four grades.

I: Oh, at a-- in a-- one room schoolhouse?

WC: In a one room school. And that's about all they had then in those days was one room schools. And he taught in a one room school. And he taught all four grades.

I: So first, second, third, fourth, or fourth, fifth, and sixth, or--?

WC: Oh, you might say first, second, third and fourth and fifth and sixth.

I: Uh-huh, so elementary school?

WC: Yeah, he had all four grades, and then _____ into high school. He taught high school

I: Where did he-- where was his first job?

WC: His first job? That I couldn't tell you, I don't know. You know, I know he taught in Ladd Canyon. He taught out there for awhile. And he taught in Summerville, I know. I know he taught in Summerville. And he taught in, out in Elgin somewhere out there. I really don't know just exactly where all he did teach.

I: So did he teach for awhile in one place and then go to the next place, or did he teach in all of those places?

WC: No, he taught in each-- he taught in each one. But uh-- then he

taught-- then he'd teach one year, or two or three years in one place then he'd go to another. And uh-- then on-- one of the uh, the man was, you know, their teacher.

I: Where did he live?

WC: Where did he live? Now that I can't answer, I don't know where he lived. When he got married he married a girl from, from uh, Holland.

I: Holland?

WC: Holland, yeah. _____.

I: Well, how did he meet a woman from Holland?

WC: Well, they moved here from back east.

I: Oh?

WC: And they were Van Blocklands.

I: Van Blockland?

WC: Van Blockland.

I: Oh, how can you-- can you spell that?

WC: V-A-N B-L-O-C-K-L-A-N-D.

I: Van Block-- Blockland, uh-huh. So that was your mother's family. Now when did they move to this area?

WC: She came here when she was just a girl.

I: From Holland.

WC: No, from back east.

I: Oh, uh-huh.

WC: Back in Missouri somewhere is where they came from. I'm not sure just where in the English part that she did come from. I'm not sure. Which part she came from, I'm not sure.

I: So where did she move to when she came?

WC: She moved to a place out here in Island-- Island City. Do you know where _____ lives out here in?

I: Mm-mm.

WC: _____, _____.

I: So they lived in Island--they moved to Island City?

WC: Just this side of Island City, yeah, a place out there. And then they had a homestead out there and he did-- his mother-- his family, the Van Blockland family had a homestead out there near Island City a ways. And the house I think is still there.

I: Do you know how they met?

WC: No, I don't have any idea how they met. That I couldn't answer. I don't know how they met.

I: So what--your father was living out here, or where was he living?

WC: My father, when he came here he lived one place and then another because he was teaching everywhere. And he was teaching in different places and so. But he ended up over here about a mile, and buying a place when he got married. I don't know how I met his-- my wife. I have no idea, never heard. But anyhow, he met her, and they were married and he had a place out here. He bought a farm here. He bought a hundred and sixty acres and then expanded that.

I: And was it in this area where you live?

WC: Yeah, it was over here about a mile. In fact the homestead is still here.

I: Really?

WC: Yeah you go down to this corner and take a left turn-- about a mile.

I: What road is that?

WC: It's Case Lane.

I: Case Lane Road? So the homestead's still there, huh?

WC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

I: Is that where you were born?

WC: That's where I was born, yeah.

I: So, did he homestead that or did he-- he bought-- he bought-- he bought that?

WC: No, he bought that.

I: Do you know when that was?

WC: No I don't.

I: So it was before you were born?

WC: It was long before I was born, yeah.

I: Did you have any older brothers or sisters?

WC: Yeah, I had-- well, I had two older brothers. John and Elmer, both were older than I was, and my sister, Vera, the one girl. And then there was another brother just older than I am, Homer.

I: Now, Homer's place is right up the road, right?

WC: Yeah, _____. Then of course there would be _____. She's still older than _____, but I'm not sure how _____. He was _____.

I: Now, when you were born your father had bought the farm?

WC: No, after--

I: After he got married?

WC: Yeah, and then he got married _____.

I: Did he continue to teach, or did--?

WC: No, he quit teaching. After he bought the farm he quit teaching.

I: Do you have any remembrances of being a teacher that he told you about?

WC: No, I don't remember. I didn't know of anything. In fact, in fact he never-- he hadn't been teaching for years when I was born.

I: So, what do you remember about growing up on the farm?

WC: When I was growing up on the farm-- I grew up there. I went to school in Alicel. Went to school in Cove, and graduated in La Grande High School _____.

I: Did you-- what kind of crops did you raise on your farm?

WC: We raised wheat. There was basically full of grains, barley and _____.

I: Can you describe, when you were younger, some of the chores that you did around the farm?

WC: The chores-- oh yeah, we milked cows. We had like eight or ten head of cows. We milked cows and we had horses. In fact the barn is still there. And then-- oh, I've been doing chores. I milked cows _____ school. I spent my time-- I know I had to milk cows in the morning before I went to school. And afternoon and overnight _____.

I: How did you milk them, into a bucket?

WC: Yeah, a bucket _____.

I: [chuckles]. And what did you do with the milk? Did you sell it or was it just for your family?

WC: No, we sold it. We sold the cream. We had a separator, and we sold the cream and separated milk.

I: Now I don't know what a separator really is.

WC: A separator is an object-- well, let's see I can go get you one. Want one today?

I: [chuckles]. If you can just tell me about how that process is for making cream.

WC: The process is very simple. It's the separator is a-- the separator is when you want to separate _____.

I: Is it a box?

WC: _____ is. Well let's see-- no, you'd say-- oh, I'm trying to think of what I want to say.

I: Is this a handle? Was there a handle on it?

WC: Yeah, you had a handle on it, and you had once you wound it.

I: So you pour the milk in?

WC: You'd pour the milk in the top. You poured the milk up in the top of it, I think. And it went down through the separator. And it'd come into a bowl, and that bowl was spinnin'. And that's how it separated the milk from the cream. And uh, separated the cream from the milk, and you'd have the cream-- whatever need. We sold the cream, mostly.

I: Where did you sell it?

WC: Pardon?

I: Where did you sell it?

WC: Sell it?

I: Yeah, where did you sell usually?

WC: We sold it to an outfit in Union, _____ Creamers. I don't think there's any of them staying around anymore.

I: How did you get it to the Blue Mountain Creamery?

WC: They picked it up. _____. They had big trucks that'd come by, and they'd pick it up every week. _____.

I: What'd they use that cream for?

WC: Well, they used the cream for _____.

I: [chuckles.]. So was there a factory there?

WC: Yeah, oh yeah. They had a factory in there, a cream factory _____. There was one in La Grande for a long time. Then uh-- let's see-- then there was one _____ Union right over here. I don't know how come my folks changed in that they sold to La Grande for awhile, and then they sold to Union.

I: So the Union one was called the Blue Mountain Creamery?

WC: Blue Mountain Creamery was in La Grande.

I: La Grande, and do you remember the name of the one in Union?

WC: No, I don't remember the name of it. It was uh-- let's see-- let me think about it-- I can't remember the name of the one in Union. Union Creamery anyhow, _____.

I: Now when you walked into the creamery to get your cream you were a customer and went in there. What kind of experience would you have? Would you get a bottle of cream, or did they deliver cream? Do you know?

WC: Well, when we sold the milk-- I should say sold the cream-- sold the milk _____. We'd sell the cream and the milk both. They would milk the _____, and take the cream off. And if you want to buy it-- buy the cream-- by the quart, or by the gallon, or however you want to buy it, basically-- why basically, they sold it. And if you wanted cream, they sold the cream-- cream to the creamery. And that creamery would re-sell it.

I: Did they deliver cream then to people?

WC: Oh yeah. Not only would they deliver them, but they made cheese out of it.

I: Oh they were a cheese-making area too.

WC: _____.

I: Mm-hm, mm-hm, and they made cheese at that place, too? Did you make cheese at your place?

WC: Oh yeah, yeah.

I: How'd you make cheese?

WC: [chuckles].

I: [chuckles].

WC: She'd make it. She'd take the cream. That would be the sour-- that would be sour, and she'd mix it up. She'd make cheese that way.

I: Did you make butter, too?

WC: Oh yeah, she made butter, you bet.

I: And was she churnin' the butter, or--?

WC: Yeah, yeah, she'd take the butter and-- she made butter out of most of the milk we didn't drink. Milk the cow, _____ dairy.

I: Did she use a butter churn?

WC: Oh yeah. Yeah, she used a butter churn.

I: Did she make the kids do that too or--?

WC: Oh yeah, you bet.

I: [chuckles].

WC: You bet. I did that.

I: How long did it take for churning? How long did it take to make butter probably?

WC: Oh, I don't know, probably an hour or so, or something like that.

I: Was that one of your chores?

WC: Oh yeah, that was one of the chores we had to do.

I: So, can you tell me about your experiences at school at Alicel?

WC: Yeah. I went to Alicel School when I started _____, in first grade or second grade. _____. I had teachers there. _____. My mind isn't as clear as it used to be.

I: Oh, you're doing very well.

WC: I want you to know that I-- I'm still-- I haven't-- I have a lapse of memory, and I not only have a lapse of memory, but I just don't remember things that I used to. That's the reason I never go out here _____.

I: So you're walking into school, into Alicel School, what do you see?

WC: Yeah, I walked to Alicel in about a mile. I'd walk across the field.

I: So where was the Alicel School?

WC: It was right in the middle of town, right in the middle of Alicel. The building's still there. It uh-- no, I started in the second grade _____. _____. I didn't start well. I was a year behind what I should have started, see. I started school when I was eight or nine. At that age, why then I picked up _____.

I: Oh, uh-huh. It was a one room schoolhouse, then? Do you remember your teacher's name?

WC: Yeah, Mrs.-- Mrs.-- I'm just trying to think of it. I'll think of it in a minute.

I: Ok, can you describe what she looked like?

WC: Oh yeah. Mrs.-- oh gosh _____. It's especially when you can't think of someone's name when you thought they were wonderful.

I: That's ok. Can you just describe her to me? What did she look like?

WC: She was a heavy woman. She was a large lady. She was a very good teacher.

I: Was she strict?

WC: Very strict, you bet.

I: Did anyone get paddled?

WC: Oh yeah, kids got paddled all the time.

I: What did she use?

WC: She used her hand _____. She made-- she had-- she was strict. She taught all four grades.

I: How did she do that?

WC: Well, it was in a one room school, and she just had class. Whenever she'd have a sixth grade class, why, she'd have them all come up front. She had the seventh grade, and then she had the sixth _____,

fourth graders or whatever she had. And they'd go back to their seats. And she had a sixth grade _____, and the next grade come up, and she'd _____.

I: What would you be doing if you weren't up at the front?

WC: If you were not in front you were sitting at your desk, and you would be busy. You was doin' your homework. [chuckles] You better believe it! She was quite strict that way. That was good. It didn't hurt any of us.

I: So what kind of lessons were you learning?

WC: Well that was-- you'd start out learning English. And then you'd be getting Geography_____.

I: Did older kids teach younger kids?

WC: _____.

I: Up through eighth grade there, huh?

WC: In the eighth grade they would _____. Up to the eighth grade, why, they _____.

I: So what-- but what did the inside of the school look like?

WC: Well, it was just a plain four room, four-room building. And then we had, of course, rows of seats in there. She had her desk at the head _____.

I: And how was it heated?

WC: Oh, the seats were in rows. The seats were just in rows.

I: What did you use for heating, for warmth?

WC: Well, we had a furnace--a big ole stove. And it was a big one--it was about _____. So, _____.

I: About three or four feet?

WC: Yeah, four feet across. And it had a-- she'd come in the morning there. They had a _____-- they had a janitor. He'd come down in the morning and do our fires. Keep it so it warmed up. _____.

I: Where did she live?

WC: She lived in La Grande.

I: So she had to--

WC: She drove back and forth.

I: She drove back and forth.

WC: Drove a Model T Ford.

I: [chuckles]. Uh-huh. Was she a single lady, or did she marry?

WC: Oh no, she didn't marry. Graham was her name, Mrs. Graham. I knew I'd think of it in a minute [chuckles]. And Mrs. Graham, her husband, he worked for the county_____. _____. Well, I don't know what he did. He worked in the office there in the county _____.

I: Now, while you were at school and your father was probably working on the farm, what--what was your mom doing? What would your mother do during the day?

WC: What was she doing during the day?

I: Mm-hm.

WC: Well, to be honest with you, I don't know. She had four kids to take care of. She was usually sewing or doing something of that nature. She-- I know they used to do an awful lot of quilting. There used to be a lot of women come to our house and quilt. Sit around in a quilting bee and quilt, and this and that.

I: So when you got home from school, you milked again, milked the

cows again. Did you also help on the farm?

WC: Well, at that time, yeah. After I graduated from school, then I started doing work on the farm.

I: When you were in school did you help on the farm, too?

WC: Oh yeah, milkin' the cows, _____.

I: Would you be helping with the harvesting and that kind of thing?

WC: No I didn't harvest. I was too young to harvest. I didn't harvest the wheat. I didn't use _____. Harvesting _____.

I: Did you have people around the place that would help with the chores and harvesting and--?

WC: Oh yeah, yeah. He had to hire- yeah, dad had to hire one or two _____. We used to have people who would come there and spend the summer, workin' there all summer long.

I: Were they people from the valley?

WC: Yeah, there was people-- most of them was from Elgin. _____. They'd come and stay for the summer and _____. _____. She'd help do the cookin' in the summer.

I: Now when did the rest of your family move to this area? Was your father the first one to come out here?

WC: Yeah, he was the first.

I: Then who came next?

WC: There wasn't any of the rest of the family _____. They'd come out and visit, but they'd go back. _____.

I: So after you got done with school at Alicel, where did you go to school after that?

WC: I went to _____.

I: To La Grande High School?

WC: No, I went to Cove for one year.

I: Oh you did?

WC: Well the teacher-- my sis taught-- my sis taught in Cove. So I went with her for one year-- to her over in Cove_____ in Lower Cove_____. She taught in a school in Cove. I never went to that school. I went to Lower Cove School. That was the grade school.

I: Oh you did! Was this after Alicel?

WC: Yeah, after I was _____.

I: So you would just-- how many grades did you go to-- in Alicel?

WC: I think I went six grades in Alicel.

I: And then--so you went to the Lower Cove after that.

WC: _____.

I: And was that a one room school also?

WC: Yes.

I: And your sister was the teacher.

WC: Yes, she was the teacher down--

I: What was her name?

WC: Vera.

I: Vera? Was she as strict as Mrs. Graham?

WC: _____. Well, she was-- when I say she was strict, she wasn't really,

but she was _____. But I had to toe the line _____.

I: How much older than you is she?

WC: She was-- let's see-- _____.

I: Did she go to school in La Grande?

WC: She was-- she graduated in La Grande.

I: The Normal School?

WC: _____.

I: Eugene, you said.

WC: Yeah, she spent the first year in Eugene, and she went to La Grande for a couple of years. _____.

I: Well, she was fairly young when she started teaching out there.

WC: Yes, she was.

I: And then you went to high school.

WC: Yeah, I went to high school in La Grande.

I: Can you describe some of your experiences in high school?

WC: Well, I had to come home to do chores every night. So I was not involved much in any athletics of any kind.

I: How did you get to school?

WC: _____ had a Model-A Ford. She taught in the Hilgard for awhile over the years, my sis did. She stayed in there _____. She'd stay all year-- all week, and then come home _____.

I: Did she live in a house next door or something?

WC: Yeah, she lived in a rental. She stayed in it. She taught up every year,

and she taught up there two or three years. And we'd drive from here. I'd take her on up to school, then I'd come back to high school. I'd pick her up, and then weekends I'd go get her.

I: So what were your weekends like? What did you do during the weekends when you were in high school?

WC: What-- what I did in high school? Well my weekend, most of them were right here on the farm.

I: What did you do?

WC: Oh I was either-- depending on what we was _____. Harvest time _____, milkin' cows, feeding cows, _____. _____.

I: What were your duties as far as the farm?

WC: What were my duties?

I: Mm-hmm, when you were in high school. When you weren't milkin' cows, what were you doing on the farm?

WC: On the farm when I was not milkin' cows, [chuckles]-- well, what it amounted to was this: I 'd get up in the mornings. We'd milk the cows. After the milking, we had to separate the milk, separate the cheese, separate the milk from the cream. When I got that done, then I'd usually go out and feed the chickens. We had a bunch of chickens. I'd feed the chickens and gather the eggs. I had chores to do. I'd gather the eggs _____. Basically, that's about the size of it.

I: What about the wheat farming? What did you do to help with that?

WC: I didn't have anything to do with it because _____.

I: Mm-hm. So, most _____ was with the animals. What about your older brothers? What were they doin'?

WC: _____. My older brothers _____.

I: And what would-- what would that-- what were those chores like that

they was doing?

WC: Well, you see my dad had a crippled hand, and he _____.

I: Blood poisoning?

WC: Blood poisoning _____.

I: Oh, how did that happen?

WC: I don't know-- something. But I know he got blood poisoning in his hand while I was little, so he always kept one hand _____. He more or less, kinda overseen things. The boys, of course, would work.

I: Now you're talkin' to a city girl, so tell me how-- how you-- how you plant. How does this happen?

WC: Well, we'd start in the Spring. You plow, and then uh--

I: What did you use for a plow when you were younger?

WC: They used a-- let's see my dad started out with a foot burner. You know what a foot burner is?

I: What was that?

WC: That was one-- one-- one plow, and _____.

I: What that horse drawn?

WC: Two horses.

I: Two horses. And one blade?

WC: _____. Now that's how he started out. But then that didn't last very long because it was too much for him. He then bought a tractor, _____.

I: A what?

WC: A _____.

I: _____?

WC: And it was _____.

I: _____? Uh-huh.

WC: And that was his tractor, and it had-- it had two or three bottom _____.

I: Now when you talk about bottoms, what do you mean by that?

WC: The bottom was two or three _____.

I: Oh, ok.

WC: Two bottom or three bottom _____.

I: Oh, ok. It would roll it in as _____, as you pulled it, uh-huh.

WC: Yeah.

I: So that's what you did first. Then what?

WC: _____. Then they had to _____, and he had horses. He'd have the horses _____ harrow, and then _____.

I: What's a harrow?

WC: A harrow-- a harrow-- well, put it this way, it drags. The thing they dragged over the ground to smooth it out.

I: Oh, ok. And you did that with horse-drawn. With two horses or one horse?

WC: Four.

I: Four horses.

WC: Four horses, yeah, four horses. And then we used six horses sometimes.

I: Oh?

WC: Harrying it down with that _____. Down the harrow _____. And in the Fall, you'd have to do that _____. In the Fall when you were doing the seeding.

I: How did you do the seeding?

WC: We had to do it all _____. _____ putting it through a seeder.

I: And was that an electric seeder or--?

WC: No, it was by hand. It was a horse-drawn seeder.

I: Oh, uh-huh. So did you put the seed in something to--?

WC: You put the seed in the top of the box. It went down into these cups. These cups would hoe it into the ground. That's how it was seeded.

I: What other kinds of machines did you use when you were growing up?

O: _____ farm.

WC: That's about the size of working-- seeded _____.

I: How did you water?

WC: We didn't water. There was no water. We never irrigated either. _____ . Back then _____ today. We don't have any irrigation here.

I: So it's all dry land farming out here.

WC: All dry land farming.

I: Was the weather good to you?

WC: Oh yeah, it was good as can be expected, you know. We had good years, and we had bad years.

I: Did you have some tough winters? [phone rings] Let me shut this off while that rings. [recording interruption] So did--can you remember any tough winters?

WC: Any tough winters?

I: Yeah.

WC: Oh yeah, you bet your arse I walked to school! I walked about four miles to school. And we had to walk-- I can remember through snow, and whatever. _____. We had a lot of snow, much more than we do now. _____.

I: So what did you wear when it was that cold?

WC: What did you wear?

I: Mm-hmm, when you walked to school. What kinds of clothes would you wear when you walked to school?

WC: Just like they wear today, you might say.

I: But when it was that cold did you have mittens or hats?

WC: Oh yeah, _____ coats, _____, and we had boots.

I: Now when it was winter time, you couldn't farm, so what did the family do in the winter?

WC: Well, the kids in the winter went to school.

I: Did you have-- what did you do for fun?

WC: For fun? [laughs].

I: [laughs].

WC: Well, the only thing we ever did for fun was, maybe on weekends we might-- my dad, he was great for playin'-- playin' checkers or chess. You ever play chess?

I: Oh yeah.

WC: Do you ever play chess? He taught me how to play chess. And that's all we did mostly in the winter time. That, and then of course we had the--we had an uncle that always came out every winter. It was a-- I had two different uncles. _____. And they'd come out and spend the summer with us, and the winter with us. They liked to play-- they liked to play _____ games _____. _____.

I: When you graduated from high school, did you go directly into farming?

WC: Yeah.

I: And had the-- had the tools changed quite a bit by the time you got out of high school?

WC: No, the tools-- the tools was basically the same. They had-- well, we had tractors. We had tractors.

I: Without horses?

WC: Yeah, and the horses _____.

I: What kind of tractors did you first buy that were-- were electric rather than, or gas? Were they gas driven tractors?

WC: Yeah, They'd be gas driven tractors. _____ tractors, _____, and they were gas.

I: What kind did you use?

WC: Let's see, it was Alex Chalmers.

I: Alex Chalmers?

WC: Alex Chalmers.

I: Where'd you buy your farming equipment from?

WC: Over here in _____.

I: In La Grande, or--? And how-- would you just go and drive into town and pick up one and drive it out?

WC: Well, they'd usually bring it out. [chuckles] They had salesmen that was working to try and sell-- sell them all the time. _____.

I: What was the Alex Chalmers one, was it a harvester, or what was it?

WC: It was a four-wheel drive tractor.

I: _____ four-wheel drive tractor. Why would a four-wheel drive tractor be a good kind?

WC: Well, you had four-wheel drive because you had to pull when you was plowin' or anything. Why uh, you would have to worry about anything pullin'.

I: That's your little buddy, huh?

O: Yeah, my buddy.

WC: _____. Well, we had the-- we had the-- we had Chalmers, and later on we bought the Caterpillar.

I: What kind of Caterpillar?

WC: John Deere.

I: Was there a John Deere dealership in La Grande?

WC: Oh yeah, there was a John Deere dealership in La Grande. Yeah, they was-- they had _____. Anything that you kind of put that you might want.

I: What did you do with your old equipment when you started?

WC: _____.

I: Oh, you did?

WC: _____.

I: Do you remember other kinds of equipment that you started buying after you got out of high school?

WC: Oh yeah, we bought tractors, and we bought harrows, and we bought rod-weeders.

I: What's a rod-weeder?

WC: A rod-weeder is a thing that goes through the ground. It tills and turns the soil over. It's a rotary drive, driven by the ends, and it had big wheels. And uh, they still use 'em today. They _____ and lower them down into the ground, _____ into the ground, and then they would turn. That's the way _____.

I: Why did your family decide to plant wheat?

WC: Well, that was the only thing you could raise in the ground, raise wheat, raise barley, and corn. With corn you couldn't raise much more than _____. _____. Sell it, as far as the grain. There was a ready market for the wheat. That's really the only reason.

I: Did you have problems with pests, a pest problem or bugs ever? Like a kind of pest that would eat wheat that you had to take care of?

WC: No, we had uh-- the only thing we ever did was treated _____. And that would take care of anything that was trying to get us.

I: What did you treat it with?

WC: _____. I can't remember now.

I: That's a lot of things to have to do just, you know, to make something grow. A lot of different pieces of machinery and--

WC: Oh yeah. There was-- there were a lot of farms around that was doing farming. They's all basically doing their work in the same way.

Basically _____.

I: Now how much land do you own?

WC: Here now?

I: Mm-hmm.

WC: Right now we're cut clear down to two-hundred and forty acres.

I: And when you were in high school how much did you guys have?

WC: Oh, about sixteen hundred. We had about fifteen, sixteen hundred acres that we used to farm.

I: So was all the brothers together-- any other?

WC: _____. And we sold two hundred and forty down here. We had _____. My nephew is farming part of the old _____. _____. We had eight hundred and twenty acres down there before. And we farmed over to Cove. _____.

I: How do you keep track of all of the things that you need to do on a farm?

WC: [chuckles] Oh, I just manage. _____.

I: Now how did you decide which brother got which piece of land?

WC: Well, I really didn't-- [chuckles] I don't know how to tell you this. I ended up with the piece of land on this side of the road-- a hundred and forty acres on this side of the road. _____. The same way that my brothers--

I: Are they all farming still?

WC: Uh, no. One of them is up here by Island City. He and a partner had some _____ up there, and _____. _____. That's basically _____.

I: Do you remember any of your neighbors when you were growing up

that were farmers around _____?

WC: Yeah, I knew most-- I knew all of the neighbors _____. The neighbors _____.

I: Did you have a Grange that you belonged to?

WC: Yeah, there was a Grange my dad belonged to _____, I know.

I: When you were younger what did they do at the Grange?

WC: I really don't know [chuckles].

I: [chuckles].

WC: I really never went to Grange. My dad belonged to it, I know, but I never _____.

I: Now, when did you get married?

WC: I got married in 1960-- 1960-- I forget. I got married in, oh let's see-- I got married in '60-- '60-- '62 or '64.

I: And who did you marry?

WC: _____.

I: Who did you marry?

WC: I married-- I married Lavine Morse. She was _____.

I: Did you go to school together?

WC: We did one year. We went to high school together.

I: Did she come from a farm family also?

WC: Yeah.

I: Morse, M-O-R-S-E?

WC: M-O-R-S-E.

I: Maureen?

WC: Yeah, Lavine.

I: Lavine? Lavine. Lavine Morse. What was her family? What kind of farming did they do?

WC: They had _____. They lived on _____ clear over there. _____. One of the boys-- one of the boys is still alive. _____.

I: Her brother?

WC: The brothers, yeah, _____. _____ brother-in-law.

I: Brother- in-law. So after you got married did you move to this place?

WC: We built here in 1918. _____ moved the house here in _____. _____ got married.

I: That's alright. So, how did you-- when you started your farm-- how-- what kind of differences did you have between how you farmed and how your father farmed?

WC: Well, actually it was kind of a gradual, gradual change. See, when my dad started farming, he farmed with horses. And then he went to tractors. When I started farming my dad had basically quit the farm. He retired. This change was so gradual. The same as this day, you had gradual changing. And you can tell out here with watering, you know, the way people use the water.

I: And you don't now on your farm?

WC: No, we don't water. We still don't use water.

I: What's the advantage of watering?

WC: Why, you _____ crops, and _____. _____.

I: So it wouldn't be an advantage to you to water the wheat?

WC: Yeah, it would be if we had the well. _____.

I: Oh, uh-huh. You have to-- so, if you're on a well you can water, but otherwise--

WC: Yeah, that's right.

I: Did you have gardens, as well, here?

WC: Oh yeah.

I: What'd you make?

WC: My son is the one who has the garden, and you'd have to take _____.
I don't know [chuckles].

I: _____ some questions about after you got married, and you came to this place. When you and your wife were first married, did you have-- were there dances or activities that you-- that the two of you did, or was workin' on the farm so much work that that's pretty much what you did, or--?

WC: Basically, that's what we did, yeah.

I: And what did you guys do, the two of you, after you got married?

WC: _____?

I: Well after you got married, what did you do for fun? Did you-- were there times when you could enjoy yourself, or was the farm so much work that it was difficult to do that?

WC: Really, it was difficult to do too much of anything, except work.

I: Yeah. So, what was her job on the farm, your wife's job?

WC: Well, she had _____.

I: Canning.

WC: _____.

I: So, would she do the vegetable garden?

WC: Oh yeah, yeah she did the vegetable garden. And uh, my son here, he has to take you and show you what he's raising now in the garden. I really don't know.

I: I have a question about field burning, just because there's a lot-- there's a lot of people in town that have problems with field burning. What-- why do you burn the field?

WC: All right, now you burn the field to get rid of the straw and the excess stuff growin' on _____ stuff _____. You burn to get rid of that. It's burnin' mostly-- there isn't very-- too much of a burning because

I: Really?

WC: the only times you burn any more is _____.

I: So, if you don't burn it then how do you-- how do you get rid of the straw?

WC: Plow it under. _____. That's the way you get rid of most of the straw.

I: I see. So, you don't burn, _____ burning at all?

WC: Oh yeah, we burn it once in awhile. See, most of the time-- see, most of the farming-- you farm to raise the crops one year to buy wheat. _____. Until another day _____ meant for you. And that's-- and that's-- round and round. You order in Spring, and then you work all Summer, and _____ that Fall. A lot of this now, the plowing, planting in the Spring, and then watering it, water _____ crop.

I: So, did you ever let the field rest and not plant it at all for a year, or were you always-- did every field get planted every year?

WC: Oh no, we planted _____. _____.

I: Where do you do your-- how do you plant your barley, and how do you plant your wheat? How is that different?

WC: Barley and wheat are both planted about the same way, and at the same time. _____, about six _____. _____.

I: You're doing very well. Are you getting tired?

WC: Am I tired?

I: Are you getting tired of questions, or?

WC: No.

I: Ok.

WC: _____-- I just-- my mind isn't functioning like it used to.

I: I have a question about who your father sold his grain to. Who did your father sell his grain to?

WC: The local granary.

I: Where was that?

WC: It used to be in Island City, used to be in Alicel. And then there's still a granary in Alicel. There still buys _____.

I: Pendleton? So, you just drive it over to Pendleton?

WC: No, they haul it.

I: Oh, they haul it, uh-huh.

WC: Yeah, they haul it.

I: So, when you were-- when you were at your father's-- when your father was alive and you were working the farm, you took it over to

Alicel to the granary there?

WC: Yeah.

I: And what would they do with it?

WC: They'd store it there until-- until they'd ship it out by rail. Ship it out by rail-- ship it to _____. It had a _____ on it there. _____. The only way to ship it now is _____.

I: So, you took it over to Alicel. When your father was alive and you were working the farm you took it over to Alicel, and they'd store it. And then they took it on the truck, say over to Pendleton. How did you figure out how much money, how much-- how much grain you had? How did they weigh it?

WC: Oh, they had scales, and he would wait a little weigh.

I: Did the whole truck get weighed, or--?

WC: Yeah the whole truck got weighed. And he had a loaded truck, and they'd tell him how much the weight total was.

I: Oh, then you'd weigh the truck again.

WC: Yeah, you'd weigh the truck again. _____.

I: And would they pay you each time you came, or did you have an account there? How'd that work?

WC: Oh, you'd just wait until _____. Go for a year-- a year before selling-- for a year because there'd be such a bad _____.

I: So, you decided when you wanted to sell it?

WC: Yes. Oh yeah, you decided.

I: Did you ever have a time when people didn't want to buy it?

WC: Oh, no. Well, I shouldn't say no. There is a time when the market's

down, people won't sell, but other than that, why it's ____.

I: So, when you were-- when you were younger, how did you keep track of the market when there was no television? It was in radio?

WC: Oh yeah, you could turn on the radio, or at least call your local-- your local ____ down over here. See, it used to be here years ago we had everything local. We used to have ____.

I: When did that start to change?

WC: _____. See, what happened ____ years ago, ____ had a manager. And he ____ the company. He ran the company into the hole-- broke the company is what he did. So, when he broke the company, why they _____. That's how come _____. And then there's an old dealer out in Island City _____.

I: But which-- who is it that went broke? Was it the dealership here?

WC: Yeah, the Union County Grain Growers.

I: Union County Grain Growers had a bad manager.

WC: Yeah, they had a bad manager.

I: That's too bad.

WC: _____.

I: So, when-- when you were young, was it called the Union County Grain Growers then, too?

WC: Yeah, the Union County Grain Growers. It was always called ____ until _____.

I: Um, I'm trying to think of some other questions for you. Um, you've got a lot of equipment around the farm. I notice that people drive the three-wheelers to get around. How did you-- how did you-- when you were young and your dad was still running the farm, how did you get around from field to field? Was there-- did you just drive trucks, or

were you on horseback, or--?

WC: Oh no, you either used tractors, or you _____.

I: But if you had to go say something to your father, and he was way out in, on the field, how did you reach-- how did you get to him to talk to him? How did you--?

WC: You'd-- back then, either horseback or by tractor or car.

I: How many horses did you have?

WC: _____.

I: What kind-- were there a specific kind of horse that you would use for plowing and that kind of thing?

WC: Oh yeah, you'd use a work horse.

I: So, what's the difference between a work horse and a horse that you ride?

WC: Well you-- the saddle horse, most of them that people ride anymore, well, they're lighter, lighter horses. They're smaller and younger. They're just a smaller horse, and the work horses are heavier built. And they're-- they're just heavier built.

I: Where did you get your horses when you were growing up?

WC: Oh, people traded horses all the time. [chuckles] Yeah!

I: So, you'd just find them at someone else's place, or--?

WC: Yeah. You'd buy horses. You'd trade horses. [chuckles] Yeah, usually you never-- never could get much concerned about the horses.

I: So, were there-- did you raise horses too, or--?

WC: Oh yeah, yeah you did. A lot of people raised horses.

I: So where'd you keep 'em?

WC: _____.

I: So you uh, _____-- you raised horses so they could become work horses, is that mostly what you did?

WC: That's right, yeah. Yeah, yeah, you raised horses for work horses, and you raised saddle horses for saddle horses. That's basically-- that's basically how you _____. _____.

I: Did you buy cattle or horses at the fair at all?

WC: Oh yeah, you'd buy some, yeah. Mostly you raised your own.

I: Did you ever take anything to the fair? Were you in 4-H?

WC: Oh, yeah. Yeah I was in 4H.

I: What'd you raise?

WC: Hogs.

I: Oh you had hogs, too?

WC: Oh yeah. We had pigs, too.

I: Where did you keep the pigs?

WC: Here in a pen in the backyard.

I: So, did-- you raised your own food, pretty much. You didn't have to go to the grocery store very often?

WC: Oh no, we made our own food.

I: So, you ate from your garden and canned food in the winter and?

WC: Oh yeah.

I: So, there probably wasn't any real reason to go and buy food because

you raised it yourself.

WC: Yeah, you just _____.

I: So are-- what about your children? Are they farming also now?

WC: Well, the one boy here-- has two boys here _____. And my daughter is-- her husband is-- he's-- he's retired. She lived down there in the next house. And I got the one boy who's here _____.

I: Oh, so your family's all here.

WC: Yeah.

I: And your brother's over there, and do you have another brother in the same valley?

WC: No, my other brother died.

I: So you just have the one brother?

WC: I don't even have a _____.

I: Oh, are you? Uh-huh.

WC: Yeah, I _____, yeah.

I: And is this the Century Farm also? Are both of these Century Farms?

WC: Well, in this part in the corner here, right in here.

I: Oh, ok. So, the Homer Case Farm is a Century Farm.

WC: Yeah, yeah that's Homer Case's Farm.

I: Right. And is that-- are his children running that farm?

WC: Yeah. Yeah, he had his kids _____.

I: So, almost everybody went into farming.

WC: Yeah.

I: Why do you suppose that is?

WC: What?

I: Why do you suppose everyone goes into farming into such hard work? What makes you stay in farming when it's such hard work?

WC: Oh, [chuckles] I don't know what to tell you there. You farm because you like it. As far as doing anything else, well--

I: No, you told me the answer. You farm because you like it. What do you like about it? What is it--what is it that has kept you--?

WC: What's kept me on the farm?

I: Yeah!

WC: The reason it's kept me on the farm is because _____. _____. Of course, you have to hire _____. _____ my brothers _____. _____?

I: Not yet, no.

WC: Not yet? [chuckles] Well, she farms the whole place. _____. I used to sit around here-- I got out of it. I mean, _____.

I: So now you just go out and see what they're doing every once in awhile?

WC: I don't even _____.

I: [chuckles]. Uh-huh.

WC: _____.

I: You did it for a lot of years.

WC: A lot of years. _____.