

Lou Delashmutt

11/9/04, T1, S1

LD: ...Delashmutt.

SC: And where were you born?

LD: I was born in La Grande.

SC: Where at?

LD: In my grandmother's house.

SC: And where was your grandmother's house located?

LD: It was located on...let's see now...

O: Birch.

LD: Yeah. Birch Street.

SC: In what year? What was the date?

LD: 1924, February the 15<sup>th</sup>.

SC: Oh, you're just a young thing then!

LD: [laugh]

SC: And your parents... So your grandparents lived here. How far back does your family go in La Grande?

LD: My grandmother came across the plains.

SC: On a wagon train?

LD: Yeah, in a wagon train.

SC: From where?

LD: I think it was almost...well, in the 1870s or 1880 possibly. Anyway, I can figure it out better than that. She was born in 1867 and so she was sixteen...fifteen when they started across the plains. She was sixteen, I guess, by the time that they got settled out here. So that would've been around...'67, '77...it'd been '81, wouldn't it?

SC: So 1881.

LD: '81. She was born in '67 and so that would've been '81, wouldn't it?

SC: Yeah. That's a long time ago.

LD: I guess. But the older you get the less long the time feels. You see, I remember when I was just young, I don't know how old, probably seven or eight, my grandmother always decorated the graves on decoration day. That had to be done no matter what. You weren't so sick that you couldn't get out of bed, but you did that. She told me a little bit about the different ones we usually went. The ones that she was really concerned about was Mother. She told me just one time that her mother had been dead sixteen years and I said, "And you still remember her?" [laughs] I thought sixteen years was an awful long time when I was about seven years old.

SC: It does seem like a long time when you're seven years old. What did your grandparents do for work?

LD: My grandfather? The grandfather out in Imbler was \_\_\_\_\_. He was...remarried my grandmother because my dad's grandfather died when my mother was about ten years old. I immediately considered him as a \_\_\_\_\_ my grandfather because he was \_\_\_\_\_ and that's what counts.

SC: That's right. What did your father do for a living?  
LD: He was a farmer.  
SC: Farmer? And where did he farm at?  
LD: He farmed down the road there.  
SC: And did he grow wheat?  
LD: Yeah.  
SC: And how many siblings did you have, or do you have?  
LD: How many what?  
SC: How many brothers and sisters do you have?  
LD: I have one sister and one brother.  
SC: And they're still living?  
LD: Yes.  
SC: That's nice. Are they still in the area?  
LD: My sister is in Estacada and my brother is here.  
SC: That's not too bad.  
LD: No, it isn't too bad. I get to visit a lot with their family.  
SC: Where did you teach school at?  
LD: Willowdale.  
SC: And where is that at?  
LD: I think it's by Hot Lake, about a mile from Hot Lake.  
SC: And was it a one-room schoolroom?  
LD: Yes.  
SC: Did you attend school there also before you taught?  
LD: Yes. I attended the Island City grade school. I attended La Grande High School. I attended Eastern Oregon College.  
SC: And when did you graduate from the Normal School?  
LD: What year? Oh, my goodness! Ask me what year I graduated from high school, I can tell you that.  
SC: What year did you graduate from high school?  
LD: [laugh] 1941.  
SC: Then you went to college for how many years?  
LD: I went for...took the teachers' training course which was a two-year course. Then I went to one summer school because there were some things I wanted. I didn't finish that because I'd decided I'd gone through the teachers' training and he had...the war was over and he got out of the Navy and came back and so I got married.  
SC: So did you teach still after you were married?  
LD: No, because they quit the Willowdale school. They consolidated a lot of the schools after the war and Willowdale they closed it down.  
SC: What years did you teach out there?  
LD: '44 and '45.  
SC: So two school years?  
LD: No, one school year, it started in '44 and ended in '45.  
SC: How many kids?  
LD: I had seven.  
SC: That's not a bad group of kids.

LD: It wasn't bad. They were \_\_ kids.

SC: And what grades? Were they first through... How old were they?

LD: I had... They were all in different grades. I had seven grades. Actually, the oldest girl was in the eighth grade and I had one in the seventh and one, I guess, in the sixth grade I didn't have one in the fifth grade and then fourth grade was \_\_\_\_\_. In the third grade was Donald Martin. In the first grade was Bobby Martin. There were two \_\_'s kids there, but they weren't there the whole year. So what \_\_ here, I was thinking about that today, about which grades they were in and I'm just not absolutely sure.

SC: How did you teach all the different grades at one time? How did you organize your day?

LD: It wasn't as bad as you might think getting this done because the two older girls, the seventh- and eighth-graders, were \_\_ kids. They were interested in school, interested in learning, they were interested in books. About all I had to do was to tell 'em what to read and if I tested 'em on it, why, they \_\_\_\_\_. It was very easy testing because they were really capable kids. I don't suppose you know any people around here very much?

SC: No. I graduated from college in '99 from Eastern Oregon University and I moved back to town a year-and-a-half ago. I'm starting to know a lot of people just because of the jobs that I've held.

LD: The eighth grade girl was Ruth Courtright. There's probably a few of the Courtrights around. Her father...her brother had Courtright Irrigation up here for years. I just spoke to him \_\_\_\_\_

SC: The last name sounds familiar.

LD: Pardon?

SC: The last name sounds familiar.

LD: They are a good family. She was an excellent student. Then Abigail Bates was the seventh-grader. She had a lot of family around, too. Abigail lives still on Bond Lane. Her last name now, though, is Brown, not Bates. Then the little boys, the Martin boys, they left this area after that school year was over. They're dad got a job somewhere – you see the war was just getting over and there was a lot of moving, a lot of this kind of thing. So I don't know for sure where they are now. At one time Abigail knew where they were and told me a little bit about this, but I don't even know if they're still at the same place. I've never contacted them. I think I was pretty busy then and just didn't get anything like that done I was interested enough.

SC: So most of your kids behaved pretty well? How did you discipline? Or did you have any discipline?

LD: I didn't have any discipline problems at all. Just everybody had a good attitude over there. It was completely different from the way it is now. There was none of this nonsense. [laughs]

SC: Yeah, 'cause you got in big trouble if there was nonsense.

LD: Yes.

SC: So when did you meet your husband?

LD: Get married?

SC: When did you meet him?

LD: I met him in high school.  
SC: So you're a local boy?  
LD: He was a local, yes.  
SC: When did you get married?  
LD: As soon as the war was over.  
SC: So what year was that?  
LD: That was '45.  
SC: So you've been married about the same as my grandparents have then.  
LD: Who are your grandparents? Are they here?  
SC: No. Iowa.  
LD: I thought maybe they'd come here, too.  
SC: So what did you do... So when you were married did you work at all outside the home?  
LD: Yes. I worked up at the college. They had a fellow up there that gave the veterans all aptitude tests and intelligence tests and so on, IQ tests and everything to try to help them go back to school or decide where they were...what they were going to do and then they gave them help and so forth. So I worked up there some. I liked that. He was a pleasant fellow, my boss. That was interesting, to say the least, because these fellows they all were happy to be back.  
SC: I'll bet they were.  
LD: Pretty eager as well to do something.  
SC: So how many children did you have?  
LD: Three.  
SC: Three. And are they still in the area?  
LD: Yes.  
SC: That's nice.  
LD: Yes, it is. They figured on going into some kind...I noticed there was an awful lot of stuff about you can't get a job in the area. But what they did was plan what they could do so they could get a job in the area. My older boy...well, my daughter was the oldest and she took the teacher training and did that though she was the one that really was gone the most. She was gone for a while 'cause she married a fellow from the Willamette Valley and she was down there for a while. But she taught around down there, too. Then my older boy decided that an electrician...electrical engineer was what he'd figured he'd be a pretty good deal for getting a job here. There was a couple of places that had to have an electrical engineer, one of them was the mill and one of 'em was the electric company, and so that's what he put in for when he got out of high school and started to college up here. So they had a meeting and they had called a bunch of boys in there who were interested in this field. The speaker told 'em to look around because out of this room full of boys there wouldn't be more of two of you who make it through the course. So he said you might think about which ones it's gonna be. I assumed that scared him and he said, no, not really because he thought it entails a lot of math and stuff like that and he can sure do that. So he went ahead and he finished, but it was true that most of them dropped out at some point. I thought that was kind of interesting. Of course he had to finish up down at Oregon State because he couldn't get here what he needed after the first year or two.

SC: Let's go back to your childhood a little bit. Where did you grow up in town? Did you grow up on a farm?

LD: On the farm.

SC: And where was... The farm was located where again?

LD: Where was it located? It's located about a quarter of a mile out. You go down here just past that house right there 'd been the farm where I was raised.

SC: Is it still in your family?

LD: Yes.

SC: Who owns it now?

LD: My brother lives on it now, my brother and my sister own it.

SC: So tell me about high school. Did you play any sports or...?

LD: It was the college that was mostly during the war. No, I didn't because we lived out there. At that time there was no electricity in this whole area. The people in town had electricity, but we didn't. We had a car then, but a farm is a demanding thing and there just wasn't facilities to stay after school...for part of the kids to stay after school – all three of us were in school by that time. She had to make the pick up, there were no school buses. It was six miles or so to town, too far for a kid to walk. \_\_ what there was from one family that lived down here where they did walk. I know that my father really...that was hard on him because he just thought that was terrible in some of the weather. He tried to find some ride so they could take them too, but that couldn't always be done and their father wasn't particularly cooperative on that, I guess thought it didn't hurt the kids. And then their oldest boy, who was probably older than I was, walked to college. That was really terrible. After he got out of college I didn't know what he did, there was no follow-up, his folks had moved away. A younger brother that was in my grade at school I had saw in later years and he said that this brother was killed when he was in his twenties in a car wreck. Somebody'd run into him and killed him. That was really bad after all that effort that fellow made.

SC: All that walking. What type of classes did you take at the high school?

LD: What kind of classes? Mostly office practice types of things, typing and shorthand and...

SC: That type of thing.

LD: Yes.

SC: And you attended that old high school that's no longer standing?

LD: The old high school, yeah.

SC: Where the middle school currently is, is that right?

LD: Yes. The building was not the middle school building, just the site.

SC: So you worked on the farm during high school, you didn't have any jobs outside the farm?

LD: During high school, no I didn't because it'd been one thing \_\_ particular to get to town for it. You see, when I was born... I told you there was no electricity out here...

SC: How about running water?

LD: We had \_\_ no electricity, no running water. We pumped the water by the house. We had a gas engine that kind of...what they called a jack that they put on the pump to pump the water for the cattle and to water the garden. There was no

running water in the house. There wasn't any pipes in this neighborhood except in this house across the road from us here. A family name Bailey lived there and they had both worked and got...saved a little money apparently and got married in their later years, not young when they moved there. They bought a Delco plant and so they had a electricity. They had electric lights and they had running water and they had a bathroom. Nobody else had a bathroom. Everybody else had a tin bathtub that they'd haul out on Saturday nights. We were more fortunate because we had a grandmother that lived in town that had a bathroom. We went in there for our baths if possible. Now that doesn't mean we never used the tin one, but it was more fun at Grandma's.

SC: More fun to go to Grandma's and take a bath, I can see that.

LD: I remember the first car that we got when I was so young that I really shouldn't be able to remember it, but I do because my mother took my picture standing by that car. I can remember about that 'cause she told me she was gonna take my picture and she had not taken any pictures. I think she must've just got the camera. It was an old Kodak Brownie camera. I didn't know what "taking a picture" meant. I was pretty awful young. I was probably about two years old. She made some attempt to tell me, but not too much. I guess she decided that was hopeless. So I remember standing by that car and I was supposed to hold still and I had to be careful and not step in the mud because we were going to get in the car after she'd taken the picture and go to town and she didn't want any mud in the car. [laughs] So I remember that because this was most unusual and that car was new, of course. The only I got was an \_\_\_\_\_. It had side curtains.

SC: Did it have a punch transmission?

LD: A what?

SC: My grandma... My great-grandmother had an old Studebaker and my mom used to tell stories about the transmission being a punch one basically. You'd punch it into reverse. She tells the wildest stories of my grandma coming tearing out of that garage. [laughs]

LD: I don't know about that car. I wasn't much of a mechanic, I'll tell ya.

SC: It doesn't sound like my great-grandma was much of a driver. So what were your daily chores around the house, around the farm, as a child?

LD: My chores? Oh, my goodness! There were plenty of those. I helped...this was up towards during the war that we tried to help my dad with the haying. That's pretty tough work. He was not a slave driver because he figured that you didn't have your kids to do the work, but you had to get by and so we tried to load the wagon and so forth. I don't think we were very much help. I know I have a picture of my grandfather out there helping him during the war. My grandfather... That wasn't during the war, that was during the Depression when things were so bad that Granddad was out there and they took my picture. That was ahead of the war. He had a wooden leg because he'd worked on the railroad and they'd had some kind of a mishap on the railroad and it took his leg off at the knee about so he had this wooden leg that he wore. So he wasn't...he didn't have \_\_\_\_\_ or anything. It was different than now where you have such good legs go on. He was trying to help out. Of course he had more muscles than I did. But what we did, goodness, we cooked the meals for the combine crews and things like

that. I certainly helped with that. I was the official cake baker from the time I was about ten years old. I had that to do and \_\_\_ my mother she didn't have time to do all that by the time she needed to in the kind of conditions we did. To wash she'd 've had to done it with the washboard and so forth. My grandmother had a washing machine, electric washing machine. We'd go to Grandma's once a week and wash...and do the washing and that worked fine. Now I don't know how the other women in the neighborhood did. I presume that they did the hand kind. They may have had gas ones, I don't know. They could have. It seems like I would have seen 'em if they had 'em. I don't think there was very many of 'em that had 'em.

SC: So you were the chief cake maker?

LD: I was the chief cake maker. My sister and I herded the sheep. This was during the Depression, too. We herded them with horse and buggy because that was more fun. I guess we could've just used the saddle horses, but I liked playing with the horses. So we had a little mare that we hitched up to the buggy and we'd go down to the pasture with the sheep everyday. We took our books along and we read and guarded the sheep. This was a job we didn't mind at all because it'd give us a good chance to read and that didn't bother there was any chores at the house. It was kind of nice. I remember one day when we'd been reading and we had some pretty good books we were reading and we looked up and the sheep were gone, they'd disappeared. Now this was brushy around in that pasture, a lot of bushes. So we dashed around those bushes looking for those sheep and we couldn't find 'em for quite a little bit. We really were worried because over in the neighbors where the \_\_\_ up there were Pierces, some of 'em. There was a Pierce that was governor just ahead of that and it was his brother, I think, that had this land. He had a bunch of hogs and then he decided that he wasn't interested in that and he turned them out to fend for themselves. They turn into wild pigs is what it amounts to and there were some boars in there and so forth that if we saw any sign or heard of 'em we were supposed to head for the house because they would attack people. They really were a hazard. My dad didn't want us to have any confrontations with them because he figured that they had killed people on occasion. That was pretty serious us losing the sheep because they could've got in with them, we didn't know what. But what they'd done was I guess that they got their tummies full and they headed back to the barn. They were back at the barn so we raced in there and hoped that nobody had seen it. My dad was pretty reasonable about things. He kind of knew how things were and he didn't have anything to say about it except that we'd better keep our eyes open a little better.

SC: So when it came to buying what you needed in town, did you go to a grocery store a dry goods store that you went to?

LD: We went to Piggly-Wiggly's grocery store.

SC: I didn't know you had a Piggly-Wiggly's.

LD: Yeah, we did. We had it where...right across from Goss's garage. What is in there now? I'm not real sure what's in there.

O: Used cars.

LD: Used cars \_\_\_. That's the same building that Piggly-Wiggly's was in. Anderson and \_\_\_ were the two fellows that owned that store and ran it. Anderson's son was

ultimately the DA in La Grande and DA for a long time. That's where we did our grocery shopping. I don't really know why my mother went there all the time, but that was her choice of a store.

SC: Did you do a lot canning and raising your own meat, that type of thing?

LD: We raised all of our own meat and that kind of thing.

SC: And you canned?

LD: Yes. Oh yes, we canned. Definitely.

SC: So then you just bought dry goods and that type of thing at the grocery store?

LD: The dry goods... The grocery store was groceries only. The dry goods store were...they had Faulk's and they had Stephen's. For some reason we did a lot of buying at Stephen's, I think. I remember...well, at Faulk's, too, but Faulk's was there later. Stephen's finally closed out. I don't even know why. \_\_\_ that's for sure.

SC: How has grocery shopping changed over the years?

LD: I notice when we get one of these nice big stores like Safeway \_\_\_ old one and built this one the grocery part is \_\_\_. [laughs]

SC: Definitely the prices have gone up.

LD: They definitely have gone up, yes.

SC: Were you involved with a church at all?

LD: Yes. We went to Sunday school. My sister and I stayed all night with my grandmother every Saturday night and she took us to Sunday school on Sundays.

SC: Which church did you attend?

LD: Methodist.

SC: Is it the same one that's on Fourth Street? That big one?

LD: Yes. We went there... We went... The railroad... She would've lived on the other side of the tracks and we went over what they call the viadock, which was a big wooden structure with steps up one side and down the other. But you couldn't know anything about that because that's been gone for years. We just loved walking over that. My grandmother wasn't so crazy about it with all those steps, you know, and for an older person that was a lot of steps. We really enjoyed that. We had plenty to do at home, too, during the week, you know, asking about what we did with the work. The Blue Mountain Creamery when they made butter they sold the buttermilk then, there was a market for it, I guess. People did drink buttermilk then, but I don't believe they had it in the stores then, but I won't swear to that. But they'd sell it in ten-gallon cans for not very much at all. My mother would go in on the days that they churned and bring home a pickup load of that buttermilk for the hogs. My dad raised pigs and that buttermilk was a great asset for their diet.

SC: A great fattener.

LD: Yeah. It was good for 'em and worked fine.

SC: So when you were raising your family did you attend a church in town?

LD: They did not go to church. Life was hard on the farm in those days and those men worked a long hard day, and let me tell you, the women did, too. You pumped your water and you had kerosene lamps to keep up and so forth. Mothers couldn't get it all done, the kids have to help and we helped. Things like going in after that buttermilk would take an entire morning. I remember when the harvest men were



there starting the dinners when I was eleven, twelve years old having dinner started when Mom got back from the creamery. Looking back on it, I don't know how she managed when she had a crew to cook for. It wasn't easy, I'm sure of that. But I'd have some of it done, the potatoes peeled and that.

SC: The cake made.

LD: The cake made, that's right. Then when I was five by that time I was doing a lot of fooling around with the horses...[end tape]

11/9/04, T1, S2

LD: We talked about how we lived there. The farm was heated with a wood stove. I wrote a bunch of things that... You don't really think of all this and you sit down and you have to write it down when you think about it. In the living room and then of course we had the cook stove in the kitchen. One time some town boy in the wintertime got stuck in the snow and so he came in. We had a telephone at that time. We had telephones, but no other conveniences. He called his folks to come get him. He was... He absolutely was flabbergasted this wood stove...we heated the house with a wood stove. It was really funny. Then the cook stove we had the reservoir on one side for hot water. Do you know what those are?

SC: Yes.

LD: Anyway, he'd never seen anything like this. Of course what he didn't know were things like we heated the iron on that stove in the wintertime and wrapped them and warmed the bed with 'em, put 'em at our feet when we went to bed because the bedrooms weren't heated. Then in the winter in the mornings when it was cold you dressed by the stove.

SC: And did you wear dresses or were you in pants?

LD: We wore dresses.

SC: Did you wear the petticoats and everything underneath 'em?

LD: No. I missed that just by a few years. They were just wearing dressing by the time that I got there and not the long petticoats. I have some pictures of Island City School when my aunt was going there when she was and when they had the petticoats and so forth. But that change came along in there. There's been an awful of rather tremendous changes.

SC: A lot of changes.

LD: I have some pictures, too, of the kids in Island City School that are kind of interesting. Now I wrote down some of those changes, I thought about that, too. This highway out here has changed from a dirt road to a gravel road and now pavement.

SC: And how long ago was it paved? Do you remember?

LD: It was paved when I was relatively young. I remember one time before I started to school, well before, so probably I was about four years old, riding into Island City with the wagon and a load of grain with my dad. He had a team pulling it and it was a dirt road then because it was a little bit muddy when he came to a place where there was a little water he was a little nervous about it 'cause he had his good team on the wagon and he thought they'd make it alright through it, but it was quite a load for 'em. So he chose the best team to pull it in there and we

made it alright. It was not probably too long after that that they finally graveled it and that was a big deal. Then, of course, when they paved it this was getting in the late-40s, it must've been, when they paved it.

O: It must've been. It was paved after the war was over.

LD: You think it was after...it was paved when the war was over.

O: Before the war.

LD: Yeah, it was before the war was over, but I don't know just what year. It wasn't during the war, I'm sure of that because there wasn't much of that going on. We really...things were...you were back to essentials during the war. There was no kidding that. Things were rationed and you did without. I know it didn't compare with some of those countries what they went through when they were occupied, but nonetheless, you really watched all your p's and q's.

SC: How did the Great Depression affect your family?

LD: The way it affected our family and a good many of my friends that I talked to is that the focus of things the whole year was to save enough money to pay the taxes because if you got behind on your taxes, the property taxes, then the sheriff would sell your farm. This was a nightmare that the farmers all had and all of 'em had this problem to a great extent. I know I heard some stories...well, Burr was telling us about how...what was his name over here by Hot Lake that his father-in-law had all these horses and he just quit farming and put up enough hay to feed the horses, was the story that Burr was telling this long after the Depression. That there wasn't enough money in wheat, they weren't paying anything for it so go ahead and do it. If he did this I don't know how he could've paid his taxes. That's the only thing I don't understand about it. I know that so many of 'em – Walter said that was with his folks that was the focus. These families that are actually well-to-do farmers around here now a lot of 'em grew up with that was the thing. Because the first time I ever said anything about that I figured my folks were the only ones that worried about that. I found out that that was everybody's concern. I know that along toward the...it must've been maybe the war had started, I'm not sure, but along in the very late '30s a banker came out one day and wanted to see my dad. We didn't... This was quite a thing, it really set you up as to what'd the banker come out to see him about. What he'd come to see him about was if he would be interested in buying this farm across the road here from us. Bailey was in trouble. Those are the ones that had the Delco.

SC: And electricity.

LD: And electricity from the Delco. However, that Delco – I'm diverting myself a little bit here – but that was...my dad wouldn't've considered the Delco even if he had the money for it because that Delco was broke down about half the time. [laughs] He figured that he wasn't going to saddle himself ever with a mess like that. They had an awful time with that Delco. But anyway, by that time they were about to lose their farm. Plenty of people around had lost their farm, but the banker thought that since it joined my dad that he probably would like to buy it. So he says, "Does Sam know that you're selling it?" And he said, "No." And he says, "He doesn't want to sell it?" The banker said, "No." And he said, "Then I'm not gonna buy anything out from under my neighbor." So he said, "Just forget it." So he never bought the farm. But here later – I'm not sure what year –

the kids...the old folks had died and the kids inherited the farm and by that time – Mrs. Bailey had died ahead of that and Mr. Bailey got married again. The Bailey's had two kids and then the new wife had two kids that were of a similar age. So the farm went to those four kids. They called us up and asked us if we wanted to buy the farm. We knew all the kids, of course. So we said yes, that we'd be interested in buying the farm. So we made the deal that day and bought the farm. Actually, we didn't buy it, our two kids, our daughter and our oldest son bought it. They went together on it because land was quite a lot more expensive by that time than it was during the Depression. That was along...let's see, when did Fae die? It was much later than that. I could look that up 'cause I have her funeral deal yet.

SC: Who's farm was this originally? Was it your... Who's farm are we sitting on right now originally?

LD: It was originally John Schroeder's. You heard of him?

SC: The Schroeder sounds familiar. So did you buy the farm together then? Did you purchase the farm?

LD: My father purchased the farm. When we got married he was getting older then and he did not want to farm it. We lived for the first year that we were married over on Pierce. We rented a house there from Holman and lived there. My dad had ahead of this bought a farm that Arnoldus has now across Pierce toward the river. So John Schroeder bought this...the land joining that. So he kind of wanted all his land together. My dad... There was a house on the land that my dad had bought and John Schroeder wanted that farm, but my dad wouldn't let go of it because it had the house on it and he figured that he'd get us moved into that house because Bill thought he wanted to farm and he figured then he'd be in a place where he had a chance to get started. So when Schroeder wanted to trade with him then... Just before he traded, why, a farmer had set some stubble on fire and the wind came up and it took that fire and burned out quite an area, a lot of fields around, and it burned that house that my dad was gonna...thought that we could live in. So anyway, they traded farms because both had different reasons for wanting to trade, because it joined John's and he wanted that one and my dad wanted this one because it had the house again. [laugh] They traded and we moved here. My dad, like I said, he farmed this place then. Ultimately, why, part of it belongs to my sister and part of it belongs to us. When they died they left it to us. Since then we bought some other land around, quite a bit. Actually, we were in a good era, I guess, born in the right time to come along to do this. Except that nobody there after the war wanted to part with land. There was very little land marketed because nobody wanted to sell. Eventually, why, for one reason or another, we acquired several other farms around.

SC: Where are your parents buried at? Which cemetery?

LD: What's that?

SC: Where are your folks buried?

LD: At Island City.

SC: Island City Cemetery?

LD: Yes.

SC: Is that where all your family is? Your great-grandparents?

LD: My great-grandmother is there and I have an uncle that is there, I have two uncles that are there and an aunt.

O: Lou Sneider there?

LD: Yeah. My grandfather's there. That was my blood grandfather is there. My grandmother and the folks are there. Then my other grandfather he's in the cemetery uptown, that one... What's the name of it? It isn't Grandview. That one clear up on the hill?

SC: The one kind of by the end of the city?

LD: The one across from the college.

SC: Oh, okay.

LD: Is that Grandview?

SC: I don't know what it's called.

LD: I think Grandview is the one up on the hills further. My grandfather is the one that is on 12<sup>th</sup> Street, I believe it is. The one I call grandfather. He had a daughter that was buried there and so they buried him with her 'cause they had the lot and I think the other daughter wanted to have 'em together so that's what they did.

SC: You've had quite the life.

LD: Well, yes, quite a life I have.

SC: Seen a lot of changes, haven't you?

LD: A lot of changes, I'll say.

SC: How much has the town changed? How much has La Grande changed since you were a child?

LD: Oh my goodness!

SC: Where do we start?

LD: Yeah, where do we start?

O: Turned into a jungle of such.

LD: Yes. And Island City, too. It's changed so much. We knew everybody in Island City a few years ago, but not anymore.

O: Between Island City and La Grande is a jungle now and there wasn't anything but old cheat grass and cow pastures. Three dollars an acre you'd buy land for.

SC: Wow! Do you know what it's worth... I wonder what it's worth now!

O: I don't know, but it's \$100,000 for those businesses \_\_.

LD: We were talking about the Depression and the things that went on then. Another thing that went on during the Depression was the Dust Bowl back in the Midwest. There were a lot of those people came to Island City for some reason. Now, maybe more of 'em came to La Grande than what I knew about. They were quite a lot of the kids at Island City School that were Dust Bowler kids. This was quite a thing, too. It was a palpable thing, they really did come out in those old cars and they had nothing except for what was in that car. You knows there was...couldn't be much more than a change of clothes for all of 'em in the car. Those men in those families were farmers and they didn't have any particular training in anything else and they came out and wanted jobs on the farm. I know my dad hired some of 'em in haying and so forth. I remember hearing him tell this one fellow that was...came out and wanted a job that he would be glad to hire him, but he could not afford to pay him more than a dollar a day. He said I'm ashamed to offer a man that has two boys – he had two kids at home – a wage like

that. It's not a livable wage. What Mr. Brown said was he'd be happy to have that dollar a day, that they could have something to eat on that and it was a lot better than the way they were getting along. So he worked for my dad that summer. This really bothered my dad so his two boys – I knew them then and their kids went to school with our kids, some of 'em. One of 'em had a set of twin boys. I know one of 'em... Our boys came home one day and said they'd gone to get their drivers – Lyle and...let's see...what was the other one's name...Lyle and...it wasn't Leal. Anyway, they went down to take the driver's test and one of 'em passed and one of 'em didn't. I thought that was such a pity, those boys, you know, they were twins and... I don't know. My son that was feeling bad about it because he said the one that failed needed...he needed the boost, the ego builder. He didn't need to be turned down like that. He thought that the other one was a lot more sure of himself, the one that got it. Probably that's why he passed, probably. Things like that aren't too nice. I would think teachers and all these people like the driver testing fellow ought to take some of these things into consideration a little bit. I think if the teachers would try to teach a little tolerance among the kids...I always try to teach mine a little tolerance for the kid that had had a bad time.

SC: Or the misfortunate.

LD: Yes. I think that would make a lot of difference in the world. I do know a few teachers that do do that, but they're in the minority. They don't teach 'em this at school. They never said anything about anything like that in my teacher training and I don't think that they've improved any in that department since.

SC: I've been out of school for a long time it seems like. Do you remember Chinatown down at the end where the old Safeway was?

LD: Yes.

SC: What do you remember about it?

LD: I remember the buildings were kind of ramshackle looking. I remember that you knew very well when you went to town you didn't go down around that because my mother didn't exactly trust the area. I don't know whether this was justified or not. I tend to doubt if it was very dangerous because the way the Chinese were treated. I don't think that they would've got very far out of line. But of course they did smoke some of this stuff that maybe would cause a little trouble, I just don't know. But I know that people really were terribly inconsiderate of... And of course I do know a little just stories about the dreadful...they killed those Chinamen rather than payin' 'em when they got through with 'em.

SC: That happened here in town?

LD: No, up toward Enterprise, the stories that I know about are.

O: The river was a gold mine. They were gonna shut the gold mine so when the Chinamen went to work they blasted the shaft shut.

LD: It's just beyond belief that... It's completely uncivilized.

SC: Times have changed a little bit for the better there at least. So were there a lot of Negros in town? Do you remember any African Americans?

LD: There were very few. There were none that went to school with me. My sister was four years younger than I was and there really was a neat boy that went to school when she did. In fact, he's such a neat guy that here they had a reunion –

oh, gosh, it's been probably ten years ago now – of her class, but she couldn't make it. Who was it came out and was telling us about that? Terry had made a picturebook of the class of then and he got pictures of all of 'em that he could now. I thought, oh, she would so love to have that. And I said, "Are you going to see him again? Find out how much it is and order one for me because I'll get it for Fern." So he told him that and, you know, the boy said, "Here, I'm gonna give her one" and to take it out to her. You see, by that time I think they were being quite a bit better maybe for 'em, but anyway, he was a fine fellow, I'll say that. He was a teacher. He became a teacher himself and I really can't give you a history of what all he did. Fern would know more about that than I do. He was a real good guy. I think that with my kids by the time they were there I don't think there was very much discrimination based on that. There were some here that were like the Trice kid. The Trice kids, I should say, because this Trice seemed to have a kid every year. That part, you know, that 'causes a certain amount of discrimination because you get kind of tired of that. Really, you shouldn't have all those kids unless you're going to support 'em decently and give 'em a chance. If you...as long as you got money enough to take care 'em, why, I guess it's your own business – although I think the population thing is a thing eventually it's gonna bog everybody down. This one boy was our youngest son's age and he was just as fine as kid as you'd ever find anyplace. He was a good friend of my son's. [laugh] He said to Steve one time, he said, "I'll help you in football if you'll help me in math." [laughs]

SC: That was fair.

LD: That just tickled me. I never told it very much because somebody'd take from that that this kid was dumb and I don't think he was dumb at all.

SC: Just needed a little help in math.

LD: But he just would like a little help in math and I can sympathize with that. Math never inspired me particularly.

SC: So when you went to the...it Eastern Oregon Normal School when you went there?

LD: What?

SC: It was Eastern Oregon Normal School when you went to the college?

LD: Yes.

SC: And was your class mostly women or were there men in there also?

LD: It was mostly women. There were two men, one of 'em wasn't there too long and I can't even remember what his name was. The other one was Sherarski, Lloyd Sherarski. He ended up a teacher and he taught. I think... I would suspect he was an excellent teacher. He left La Grande. I don't know much about it. He has a brother that is a carpenter that's still in La Grande and works for Miller's, except Miller's changed their name to something else now. Ace Hardware is what they call themselves, but they're still Miller's and they build...they work...if you want something cosmetically done on your house. They fill windows and hardware and all that stuff.

SC: So when you went to the university which buildings were up? Inlow.

LD: I did my practice teaching in Ackerman.

SC: That's right, 'cause that elementary school was open.

LD: Yes. Then the office building, which is the office building, main building now...

SC: Inlow.

LD: Was where the classrooms mostly were.

SC: So just the two buildings on campus then?

LD: Yes.

SC: How many students attended school?

LD: Were in my class? You know, I really couldn't tell you. Let me think if I have an approximation. You know, I really don't know because we didn't all take the same classes, of course. It was certainly smaller than it is now. I should remember how many graduated with me, but I don't. I guess we didn't really consider that a big deal. There were a couple of 'em had dropped out I considered quite a big deal like one of my best friends got married. She started to college with me and then she was going with a boy from Wallowa and she decided to get married after a couple of terms. She didn't really care too much for the college and she wanted to get married and so forth so they got married. I took that kind of hard. That was Anna Rose. She did go ahead and get to be a nurse then later. Then my other best friend in college I'll be danged if she didn't...her husband was in the Navy, that was Dora, so she went to Pensacola. I guess he came up here and they got married. Anyway, she went to Pensacola, Florida with him. I really felt kind of abandoned.

SC: So during the era you went to college it was during World War II?

LD: Yes.

SC: So it was mostly women you were in school with?

LD: Yes.

SC: Most of the men were off...

LD: Floyd that was there, the man that was going, was...I don't know what he had, but he had something wrong with his hip, whether he'd been in an accident or something, and he had a limp. It was quite a decided limp and so I'm sure that they Army wouldn't...

SC: So were your teachers mostly men or women?

LD: Mostly men, but the educational classes there was women...oh yes. I remember Lit class was Zable. There's Zable Hall up there now. I'll tell you something if you just want gossip...well, not gossip because it's a fact, but she was a lesbian.

SC: I think I knew that. I think I learned that in college.

LD: It was quite a surprise to some of the townspeople. I know that any discrimination isn't acceptable now, but I think it's really too bad when things get to the place where two women that maybe are divorced and have a child a piece or something and if they wanted to live together and try to keep things going for those kids people wonder if they're lesbians. Now that's really terrible. Then the other thing that I am appalled about is that if your daughter – now this didn't happen with my daughter, she had girls out here \_\_ jumped on the bed and...[laughs] That was a slumber party that happened out. But they will not sleep in the same bed. Now that is stupid.

SC: I still sleep in the same bed when my girlfriend comes from Boise. If my best friend comes from Boise we've been best friends for, I don't know, twenty-five years, we sleep in the same bed.

LD: Yeah. But, you know, the girls now don't want to sleep in the same bed with their overnight friends. There's something wrong with a society that promotes that kind of an attitude in the kids. That was more fun than anything if you could stay overnight with your friend or they could stay with you. Then you'd talk until you went to sleep. You just talked about everything in the world and it was wonderful! They've ruined all that for these kids. I have a niece that she's gonna have a friend over and she was telling her mother about where she was gonna sleep and was so worried about this. When it came to it that was what it was about, "We couldn't sleep in the same bed, Mother." She was too little to really know the reasons why you couldn't, but you couldn't. That's society. I get kind of discouraged when I think about things like that.

SC: I have a couple other questions about the university when you went. Were your books provided for you or did you buy them?

LD: We bought them.

SC: You bought them? Do you remember how much a trip to the bookstore cost?

LD: They weren't as expensive as they are now because now I think...[end tape]

11/9/04, T2, S1

LD: You know very well what most of the people are gonna be.

SC: Yes. \_\_\_\_

LD: Yes.

SC: So your books weren't that expensive?

LD: Of course you have to realize that there was a difference, but there wasn't that much difference. A pair of shoes was two dollars. A four dollar pair of shoes I can remember when that was outrageous. Then I remember the first twenty dollar pair of shoes that I bought were for my daughter because, let's see, that must've been the formal her senior year. She wanted shoes to match the formal. They were twenty dollars and I thought that was the most scandalous thing I ever heard. But we bought 'em. I don't know if she still has 'em. I'll have to ask her. I hope to heavens she still has them. [laugh]

SC: I have the dress that cost my parents a lot of money for my senior formal. I have it hanging in the back of a closet just because of the mere fact what it cost my father. Do you remember how much tuition was at Eastern?

LD: Yes. I know part of the time there was some of it that was \$35. [laugh] I won't say that it didn't get higher than that toward the end, I don't know. But I do remember something about that \$35. I don't know how come I remember that.

SC: How did you pay for school?

LD: How'd I what?

SC: How did you pay for school?

LD: It was here and so my folks had the idea, now, I'll tell you if you are going to have the family and you're worried about them going to college the way you get 'em to go ahead and go to college is to just...not even particularly talk about it, just assume "when you go to college" and so forth. They just grow up thinking they're going to. My dad had the idea that his kids they were going to have a way to earn a living. If farming wasn't their thing he didn't think they had to be



farmers. I think this is the best way to do it. This is the way we raised ours and they all went through college. My youngest son is a doctor, my older son is an electrical engineer, my daughter was a school teacher. Now this was all their...what their choices were. We never asked 'em if they wanted to or anything.

SC: Just assumed.

LD: We just assumed it. Now, maybe your folks did the same thing with you. It's the only sensible thing to do.

SC: I went to college and my baby sister went to college. My older brother didn't go to college, but he's managing okay. That was just... I never thought about not going to college.

LD: That, I think, is the most sensible way. I know one fellow over here, Creston Shaw, that is a pretty good friend of ours and he told me one time about his kids. He wanted his... He had daughters, is what he had. He told them that they were going to learn something where they could earn their own way if they needed to. The fact is that they're both married, but they both became nurses – both of them went to nursing school. They work at the hospital and they worked some even when they had their kids at home. They each have two kids, I think, yeah. He wanted them to be able to take care of themselves. He says, "In this world you need to be able to look out for yourself." They need to be able to. His idea was if they got a no-good for a husband that they could still survive. You have to be able to survive. I just suggest that basically we felt that way, too, but I never put it in words until Creston said that. I said, "Well, Creston, that's hitting it right on."

SC: So your folks paid for college then?

LD: Yes, they paid for it.

SC: And then your brother and sister went to college?

LD: Yes.

SC: And did they go here also?

LD: Yes.

SC: So were they teachers?

LD: My sister was a teacher and she's taught for years. She has one child and she took some time off – I don't remember just exactly how many years, but a few years off when Ann was born until she had her up a little size and I guess probably until Ann started to school. Donald also went to college. Teacher training's what he took because that was what was here. Then also this war in...

SC: Korea.

O: Germany.

LD: No, the war Donald was involved in was the 1957 war in...

SC: The Korean War?

O: Korea.

LD: Korea, yeah. So when he got out...when he graduated he got in the Army for Korea, but he spent his...he was drafted, of course, they were drafting 'em then. He spent his time in Germany in the intelligence service there. That was...they just... He had graduated from college and so that's where they put him. I guess he could type and do all that and I don't know just why they put him there. And

of course his IQ was pretty good and that probably had something to do with it. So he was in there. So he had... It's pretty interesting, he has some ideas about some of the intelligence stuff.

SC: I'll bet he does.

LD: But anyway, he was very fortunate because those boys that went to Korea that had some bad experiences. That was a dreadful place. It was a real worry. You never knew whether he was going to stay in Germany, but I guess they liked him in Germany, they kept him there the whole time.

SC: Probably the safest place to be.

LD: Yeah, it was a good place to be by that time. It gave him a chance to see quite a bit of Europe and oh, we have...[recording stopped]