

Bonnie Graham, Narrator  
Brenda Lawson, Interviewer

BL: Today is February 16 and I am here with Bonnie Graham and I will have you state again your full name.

BG: Bonnie McCant Graham.

BL: And what is your date of birth?

BG: 10/15/30

BL: Okay. Can you tell me about when you were born?

BG: I was born on October 15, 1930 in the old Grande Ronde Hospital in La Grande, Oregon. Lived in Union County except for when I was in college all my life.

BL: Okay. Were you told anything about the circumstances of your birth?

BG: Well yes, [my mother] my mother was a really neat lady and so was my dad, but my dad elk hunted every fall with some of mother's brothers and some friends from the Willamette Valley, and I wasn't due yet. And then mother was getting them ready to go hunting and then she decided that she had to go to the hospital and she said she kept trying to hurry them off cause she didn't want to ruin dad's hunting trip, but she knew she didn't have much time, so she finally got them off and her brother brought me down and I was born, well and I was about six weeks premature; the only time in my life I've been under weight. [Laughing]

BL: So what was it like to grow up here, had your parents come from this area?

BG: No my dad came here in 1920 and my mother had been a school teacher but she was quite poor and so she would teach a year and then would work a year and then they could teach a year so they could get; and she had taught in Wallowa County, in Zumalt (?), and at Riverside, and in Gainesville, Idaho and then [or uh] not Ramo Flat Union County, maybe it was Ramo Flat in Union County; and then she, when she got her degree, why she started teaching at [uh] Greenwood in La Grande, but the people who she had lived with when she first taught in Union County up in Ramo Flat why they, their son was a friend of my dad's and they just thought he should get to meet this school marm, [they were] kept telling him how neat this school marm was, and so they finally both agreed and so, mother went up and they had this boy that was dad's friend, why they dressed him all up as her and sat around the davenport and dad came in and sat down and he said; he kept thinking "what a dud, why would they think I would like her", and then finally they brought mother out. [Laughing] So, they have been married over 50 years when they passed away, and had always lived [after] in Union County after I was born, and dad I think had been here since 1920, and mother since probably about 1925.

BL: Where had your father come from?

BG: Um, his dad was entrepreneur; I guess you would call it now; he'd buy land fix it up and sell it, [he averaged 18 months] living 18 months in each place in his life time until he got married and had, and lived on the ranch, and [he had] they had bought the ranch here and he was here and then he met mother, but he was all over Washington and Idaho and Oregon and California and even into Nevada, so his folks, his dad bought a place to fix it up, sell it and go on so he has been all over the West.

BL: So once they married they sort of settled into marriage and?

BG: Yeah, and they have been in Union County ever since from the time all their married life.

BL: You had mentioned on the ranch, is that the place you live on now?

BG: No, we lived [uh] our place was seven miles North of North Powder off towards, right under Shaw Mountain [and uh] then they started out poor and broke and then they were doing pretty good until the depression hit and so many of the farmers, their neighbors would [uh] get in trouble with the bank, [and uh] so one of the neighbors finally came down and told dad, he said "we just bought my place", and dad said "I don't have any money to buy your place", and he said "well if you ever get it you can pay for it then", he said "because I don't want the bank to have it

and I'd rather give it to you than let the bank take it back", [so he] well then he ended getting several places that way, and then the bank asked if he would farm some places and he said "if anybody, if they foreclosed on anybody he wouldn't touch it; that if a person walked out of it why then he would farm it for them". And one year the times were so hard, they were doing, like I say pretty good until the depression, and one year he had this good contract to harvest all the grain and he was so excited because he could make payments on a Combine, of course they were paying for it first, he did the rental Combining first and when he got through the fella went broke and he lost the Combine, didn't get his own crop in either, [laughing] so, [but uh] they just gradually accumulated more land through different circumstances so they had quite a large place when they sold in 1964, I think was when they sold out. [and uh] my brother and my sister and her husband and my husband had gone back and worked on the ranch too, so it had become sort of a family partnership for several years before, probably 20-years before it sold.

BL: So were they raising cattle on the land?

BG: We started out mainly crops, and some cattle, and they always had crops, and then about early 1940's dad went into sheep and I loved the sheep and the [and the uh] growing them and tailing and tending camp and that, [and so] but we always had some kind of livestock because he would go over the crops and go through and crop it off, and then we always had quite a little bit of pasture around, so uh I can remember a lot more about sheep than I can about the cattle, although I can remember having cattle, but sheep was what, most of the time when I was growing up was what we had and liked working with them and then we had three bands, and a band is about twelve hundred ewes, if you had a single lamb, and about eight hundred if you had twin lambs, [and so uh] and we had about three bands that, and sheep herders that followed them.

BL: Bands?

BG: B A N D S, that what they call a range herd. And my husband and I and Tom and Ruth Boyd, who just passed away two days ago, [uh] had the last range band, where you take a herder and you follow the sheep in Union County. We sold it in, I can't tell you when, probably about 1970 something, I can't remember, but that was the last range band and there used to be an awful lot of range sheep all through Union County, [people with] and Baker County too, and that herded them. And some really big ones over on the Snake River and so, but it just [uh] economics and stuff got to where that just wasn't here anymore, but it was, like I say I loved working with the sheep, I liked that really well.

BL: So what was it like for you to grow up on the ranch?

BG: Well we were so busy and worked so hard [and uh, uh] we always had enough to eat [and uh] I can remember when some kids made fun of me for wearing hand-me-down clothes and my mother told that she, that they wanted more for us than just clothes on our backs, they wanted us to have an education and stuff and they just couldn't do it, and you know it never bothered me and being poor didn't bother me, we always had food to eat, we had love, we had a good family [and uh] I just loved it, we had the horses and of course we all used to ride horses and there was so much to do and then in World War 11, why where you couldn't get any men, why all of us went to work so when I was twelve I started cooking for the crew because I was too young to work on the machines, and we had smart enough men that they would just rave about my cooking, so I really worked hard, they were really talented, [laughing] but I would make the meal and then they would come in about 11:30 and wrap in newspapers and take it out and the men would eat in the field and they would bring it back to do the dishes about 3:00 in the afternoon.

BL: Can you tell me a little bit more about a typical meal?

BG: Oh we almost always had, we always had meat, and we usually had potatoes and gravy of some sort, [and uh] mother was very frugal, very very hard working woman, and she came from a very poor family, and she canned everything and now I walk into groceries stores and I am just awed at all the selections, because she would go over to Milton and buy peaches, pears and apricots and we canned those and then we would go huckleberrying and we had raspberry patches, even eggs were put down in eyes and glass (?), if they we had a big crack and they had

to, what they called eyes and glass (?) they weren't good for frying or that, but you could bake with them because your hens didn't lay as good in the winter. [and uh] we butchered our own meat, raised everything, I can remember we had a smoke house like most farmers did so when you killed a pig why then you had the ham and the bacon out holding in the smokehouse, they would go for several weeks and they just keep it a smoldering fire in there, [and uh] you ate good, you ate awfully plain, but we certainly didn't have, mother would can peaches and pears and apricots and we would huckleberry and put those up, so we had canned food. But fresh fruit we would have an apple, fresh orange at Christmas and that was such a treat you know you have a, we really favored that I guess.

BL: So on these days that you were cooking a meal, how many people were you cooking for?

BG: Well let me see, there were two Combines and big Combines at that time we had four, there were four people on the Combine and then you had one or two drivers, four, five, six, probably ten or twelve.

BL: Uh um. And then you said that you wrapped the food in newspaper?

BG: Yeah, you would take newspaper, [you put it in] put in jars because we didn't have thermoses and that type of thing so we take the glass jars and put the food in the jars and some of the honey used to come there if you bought honey it would come in a big wide mouthed jar, probably about a quart or quart and a half and then you put newspaper around and pack it in the box so that it would stay half way warm until they got to town, or to the work.

BL: So this was um, primarily then during the harvest season?

BG: Uh um, yeah during harvest right uh uh.

BL: So this would be in the summer time when \_\_\_? \_\_\_

BG: Yeah right.

BL: Okay. Now during the rest of the year where did you attend school?

BG: Okay, we had to stay at Clover Creek, which is now gone and it's at North Powder when you come down from La Grande down towards North Powder when you come right off the hill there is a place off on the left and a place on the right, and then when we got out in the flat why there is a house off to the East and our school was just right where the highway is now under there, and it was just about a mile and it was pretty flat, but we walked to school or rode horseback if they didn't throw us or something, but uh.

BL: If they didn't what?

BG: Throw us. Well we had one horse [tape interruption, scuffling] didn't think that we should ride \_\_\_? \_\_\_. We would ride him to school and he would be okay and then sometimes going home why we would all go off like a waterfall and he would go on home. [laughing]

BL: Oh no.

BG: God, we would get so mad at him, [but uh]

BL: So where did you keep the horse during school.

BG: They had in the school, we had a one room school with a little vestibule where you put your boots and stuff, and then we had a play room that had [uh] part dirt floor and part wood floor, and then I think almost all the schools did have a barn, and there was a barn there with a haymow in it. [and uh so] and our horses would be there, you would tie them up in the barn and then when you were ready to go, and the school teacher had to go out and, my mother like I said taught, and when school was over why they had to haul water and all this and so she had one little boy and he would keep saying "I have wrote" and so after school one day mother made me stay in and she had "I have written", just do 50 times on the board or something and she was out getting wood when he left and when she came back there was little note on the desk that said "dear Ms. I have written 50 times and I have went home", and she said that she never tried repetition as a way to teach after that. [Laughing] We had only about eight kids in our [uh] school.

BL: What were the ages of the kids?

BG: I was the youngest, [uh] [there never was anyone] I only went their until third grade broke

out, [but we went from] we actually probably had some kids that were 17 or 18 years old because some of the kids were 18 from extremely poor families that were just their folks working for labor, and [uh but] kids would work when there was work for them and then they would go to school, [then they could go to school] so there was quite a few. I thought it was ideal and I talked with some friends that had poor teachers and we had happened to have a very good teacher and for me, and I think my sister and my brother, we loved it because anytime you needed help there was always somebody older that would help you. You never waited with your hand up waiting to get help and you could just as fast as you wanted. And so when you went to town [they didn't] when you were in the third grade the school broke up and we moved to town and they didn't know what to do with us and so the first day we went ahead a grade, and then about two weeks later we all went ahead another grade. And so I graduated from high school at 16.

BL: So there was quite a difference then in the education you were receiving?

BG: Yeah. And we had a really good education because, like I say, you always had immediate back up, immediate help, there was; you never waited for; you know and you never sat there on a lesson that you didn't understand because if you didn't understand it you questioned it. So if you had a good teacher I think it was as good an education system as you could possibly get because you just went; and the classes that you were getting you went real fast and the other classes you took time to really learn.

BL: Were your brother and sister able to advance also?

BG: Yes [uh uh, my] the three girls [laughing] my brother didn't, my brother was plenty smart but he wasn't exactly motivated that way, and so all three of the girls ended up advancing, [but uh] he didn't, so then I ended up in the same grade as him, which that wasn't exactly ideal but, when we went to town yeah.

BL: So he was older than you?

BG: Yeah uh uh. [But uh] all three of us did yeah. I don't think it was very uncommon at that time to [uh] instead of giving you extra challenging work, which I think works a lot better because socially you are so much better adjusted. At that time why they just pushed you ahead.

BL: What was it like to go from such a small class into these larger classes?

BG: Scary. Really scary because people who live in towns don't realize that the way we grew up we didn't know a stranger, we had never, never known a stranger. All of our neighbors we knew and we knew their families and we knew them and we didn't know there was such a thing as to go into school and see all these people that you didn't know and you didn't even know their names and you didn't know them, and it was really scary because you were raised with the neighbors and we used to have a lot of; not a lot but; several times a year they would have socials and they had dances and the kids would lay out on the floor or on a bench or in the back, move over the coats in the bedroom and the folks would have a potluck and then they would dance or play cards or something in the evening. They had quite a little bit of social life really, you know our community. But it really, now I can remember getting in the sled when it was real cold and having the folks put us down blankets, placing us in the back of the wagon and putting blankets over us and mother would heat bricks in the oven and wrap them in newspaper and put them on our feet and we would go with the horses and sleigh bells and go across to the neighbors house for a party or something. It was really fun.

BL: So when you started going to school in town had you moved?

BG: No. we still lived out on the ranch.

BL: Okay.

BG: I lived there [uh]

BL: How did you get to school then?

BG: The folks had to take us in. When we were 14 we were aloud to get [uh] school drivers licenses and [uh you] we were under fear of death if we ever broke our rules, but they told you exactly who you could take in and we went to school and we had to stop and get; because we didn't have rural mail delivery, we had to stop and get the mail and we had to walk to the post

office and pick up the mail because that was not on our route. But you could go exactly to there and then up here and over here and go to school and park and then when driving you went back and you couldn't; you had no variance, you couldn't. And if we were to lose our license our dad would have killed us because he didn't have time to run us to school and back. [Laughing] So [uh] you got licenses. And I don't know of any kid that had [uh] early permit, I don't know if any of them had ever got in a wreck? I'm sure some happened, [but uh] I can't remember of any that I knew.

BL: Where had you learned to drive?

BG: Oh just my mom. When, oh like they would be pulling; we had some sweet clover seed that we raised that was for certified and so you would have to go down and hand pick it and I would learn to drive the car, they would let me drive the car down and keep it moving you know behind them, and of course it was really, really slow, and I can remember when our kids learned to drive the tractor for feeding and they were too little to drive, one of them steered and one of them worked the brake and got out here going around the field, because if anything happened then you would have to turn off the key and they had plenty of room and they just [you know] \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ and that's how I learned in the field and you try to drive the rows and follow them and the worst you could do was when you get in trouble just turn off the key and wait for them to come and get you [laughing]

BL: What school were you attending when you moved into town?

BG: We went to North Powder; just the school there in North Powder. It was a just a one, it was a [uh] K through high school, just the one school, yeah. I think it had; there were 17 kids in my graduating class there.

BL: So you really hadn't gone, it hadn't increased that much?

BG: No [uh uh] no.

BL: As far as class size.

BG: Right, no it was [uh] and then my Junior year in High School my mother decided that they didn't have any college prep courses in North Powder and we should go La Grande, and that was really a cultural shock, I was the youngest kid in our class and I was not socially adept.

Anyhow having been raised always with people I knew and never having to reach out or interact or anything and so it was real hard, I didn't enjoy La Grande at all.

BL: In those younger years did you ever travel to La Grande or North Powder?

BG: Yeah we would go down for parts and stuff; North Powder store we would go for shopping [but] you didn't go to town very often, maybe once or twice a month at the most.

BL: What kind of shopping did they have in North Powder?

BG: We had [uh] a city market and you had the Meat Market and the Grocery Store was together and we just had one little store and we had a gas station; I think we had two gas stations, and they actually had a motel up on the other end of town but I had never been to it. [and uh] they had a Black Smith Shop and they had a Drug Store and so we just the very basic rudimentary; but most of it you could take of what, you know, most of it you had to, sometimes you would have to go to Baker or La Grande for parts and when we went to La Grande we went down other (?). Of course you wouldn't in the winter; but in the summer we went down over the Ladd Canyon and it was just a real twisty, windy dirt road down there, and we would go down there and get our parts and come back or go to Baker [but uh]

BL: What \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ did you do for recreation?

BG: Actually we really just didn't have much, it was just mainly I this [uh] cousin, my dad's brother and his wife, [uh] I was in the area from the time I was born and worked with them and they had nine children [and uh] each of us had our ones, I had two or three in my age range and we played with them all the time [and so uh] and then we played a little bit with some of the other neighbors, one of the other neighbors had a girl my age but then they moved to town about the time we used to go ride horse back quite a bit together, but they moved when they went to high school why they moved into North Powder, [and so uh] but there was really much social, [I just]

you know you would go on picnics and you would go on hikes and even when we, and go huckleberrying, and when mother [uh] would go up to the head of the ditch to change the water why we would walk up her and we would have real nice visits and huckleberrying and all those things, things that you worked. I can remember some of my fondest memories with my mom were picking berries and huckleberries and then berries, and then the garden, blackberries and raspberries and things and canning, and putting them up and you took a picnic lunch and there was a lot of camaraderie, just doing things; but you really didn't have time for; and we didn't have the money to drive to go to town. I think my first show I went to I was about eight years old, [and uh] we went, and the first outing I went to was we went to the carnival at Union for the Union Livestock Show, and I must have been eight or nine my dad got sick on the road over trail or something. [Laughing] [But uh]

BL: Do you remember anything about that day? What that was like?

BG: Oh it was real thrilling. I was sort of scared; I kept looking over my shoulder to see who was around and what was going on. [But uh] We rode the Farris Wheel [and uh] the Merry-Go-Round [and uh] it was quite a splurged day for us. There was all the lights and the music and it was really pretty [you know] as far as like the kid was now going to the world fair, it was pretty awe inspiring cause [when you] and the rototils and all those, you would never, ever, ever, and of course there wasn't television, now kids even though they don't experience they have the ability to see and have an idea of what it was, of course and with us why, you knew nothing about them; you were just totally; your world was just like; it was just like bringing somebody from Cambodia or something and sitting them down. It was very thrilling; I sure remember back in, [it was]

BL: It made a big impression on you?

BG: Oh yes it was quite a spectacular day, it sure was.

BL: So a lot of your fun activities were really revolved around doing chores?

BG: Uh um.

BL: What sorts of other chores did you do? You talked about picking berries and canning and picking.

BG: Well of course we all; everybody did what we had; of course my kids did too, so it wasn't just me. But we had chores like mowing the lawn and stuff and then when I was I think a Sophomore in High School my folks made me a deal, we had four milk cows and if I would milk the cows and finish milk for the family, why I could have the milk checks. After you would milk we would come up and we had a separator and we would separate the cream and then we would take it into the Railroad Station in North Powder and the railroad fellow would put out a flag and the train would stop if the flag was out and then they put the cream on and then a couple of days later you would get your can and your check. And I could have the; save the money if I did that.

If I wanted to, we had one cow that was sort of awnry to milk, and so I could put some calves, some of the other cows calves on her and not milk her and then I had to pay I think \$30 for the calve and then I could keep it just as long I needed to and then sell it and then I could get that money. So I had saved over \$2000 after I graduated from High School, which was an awful lot of money in those days. So it was really

BL: Were you saving that for College?

BG: Uh um, yeah.

BL: That's great. Now do you remember any kind of a division of labor between your brother and your sisters? Male, female sort of thing?

BG: No. It's sort of funny because my sister, I don't know why thank heavens, but she always ended up it seemed like doing the summer fallow (?) and the cat work and I was more with the horses and the work where you had a team, and oh it was, you didn't have any air conditioning and that cat work was so dirty and so hot and so rough, [but uh]

BL: Cat work, you're referring to a Caterpillar Tractor?

BG: Yeah Caterpillar Tractor. [and uh] my brother I know worked but I never seemed to work

in the same group and the same area with him, I can't remember [Bill was talking to me about it] and I can't remember for sure what, really what he did, what his primary, and maybe he was more with stock or building fences and things like that, [I just] I hate to say it but I just can't really place that. I can remember Margie, and it seemed like she was always on a Cat or Tractor somewhere doing something. She was a really good worker. [And uh]

BL: You mentioned that you were working with teams of horses, what were the teams being used for?

BG: Uh, I was pretty little when we started again because of during the war and we had this old Kate and Nell who were just as gentle as a kitten and I wasn't big enough that I could put the harness on, and so dad had the harness had pegs by the horses and I would take them in and pull them towards the, next to the wall and then I would walk under them, climb under them and take the harness and get the string or the leather strap and pull and stick over their side, get those and get on the other side and then pull it on and then harness that, and when I got two \_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_ why I would pull it back in by the pits and I would get off and take the harness and it on the pegs, but they were just a totally gentle team and it was really no danger in using [you know] just like dogs or cats, they were just totally friendly [but]. I Buck Rake (?) ,where when you had mowed the hay why it was just laid flat with the size, you would go through the mower and it laid flat and then they would come back and then they had a side delivery rake that would go and it would go around and around and it would sow the hay into wind rows, and then I would take the Buck Rake and go down the wind row and you would get, the rake would roll up a big bunch of hay and then you would kick the release lever and it would make piles in the, and then with the, we'd come pick it up with the tractors with the big teeth on front and pick it up and take it for the hay; and that kind of thing. And then on feeding, why of course, you just, we had the sheep why you would just go down through the middle of the, you have a dog, [a good dog] and just use them and the gate, you didn't have to shut it all the time you would go in and you would throw the hay off to them and go down and

BL: So that it was an apparatus then that the team was pulling?

BG: Uh um, yeah. And you sat up on top of it and it had a big curve rake you sat up on top of this great big curved rake and you go so far and then when it got, this part got full, why then you hit the release and then the rake would come up like that and the hay would dump out behind and you would do this pile that was easy for them to pick up. And then you go on.

BL: Uh um. And then you said after that then you were feeding from the same apparatus?

BG: Yeah from the same. No, uh uh no, we just

BL: You just take the team and trade

BG: Yeah, well lets see, we would be putting up the hay in the summer and then feeding it in the winter, so it is different.

BL: So it was a different season?

BG: Yeah this was different season. So it was [it was] it was interesting. My husband had never seen the beaver slides up in Montana so a couple of years ago we went up and watched them, because they still do the old [ some of the old] ways of putting up the hay and so it was real interesting, people were really nice.

BL: So how many horses were [are] would pull this equipment?

BG: Okay, what I had I just had two, old Kate and Nell, but they had on some of the [they on the] on the big tractors and hauling the wool on the wagons and stuff, I think they had 16 or 18; I know the folks had; they took a fourth of your land to raise pasture for your horses, to raise feed for your horses, and so horses were not an inexpensive item because they eat an awful lot of food, but they were very very important and very necessary.

BL: Can you tell me more about [uh] raising the sheep; the process that was involved in raising sheep?

BG: Oh okay. [Uh we had range bands, which is] we had range bands, which is different than a flock, a farm flock where their in fences. We would get started in the spring, why we would

bring the sheep into what we called the sheep shed hill, and they had to use several different compounds, and then you would [uh] they would be in there and fed and then you had walker (?) if all the Drop Band, [and that was]. I used to just love working with the sheep, I would run home from school, I didn't have to, and change my clothes so I could go out and work with those silly lambs.

BL: A Drop Band was where the ewes that hadn't had lambs yet were held and then as they dropped a lamb, why you picked up the lamb and if it was an old ewe she would follow you in and we had an old building with a stove in it and we would put them in there, we called it "The Hot House" to get them warmed up and make the lamb [and to make sure the lamb] was nursing and then you would progressively move them to a pen with maybe four ewes and then a pen of maybe eight ewes, and then a pen with 16 ewes and then, I would move them so they got used to identifying their lamb and in different situations. And where you ran about [uh] I think about, let me see 12, about 2,800 ewes [why it was a real] it was a real job, and the sheep herders of course helped with that too, and range why they were the main ones. And then

BL: So it is not natural for a sheep to identify their lamb?

BG: Oh they do, but they just sometimes if they get in too fast with too big a group, why they get; this way they would be in an individual pen for; depending on how; if at the height of the season it would be less than at the start of the season, but it gave them a chance to get used to the smell and the lamb to get used to them and everything. And then we would move them gradually into larger pens, and they weren't in each size very long, but enough that they first learned to identify theirs and among the others and such and so. And some of them raise them and there is still one outfit that we visited in Nevada and they still just drop them on the range and move the lambs and the ewes and move them to pasture to pasture and do that, but we gave ours sort of special care I guess [laughing] enjoyed them a lot.

BL: You were talking about the special care that was given to the ewes and the lambing process. What would happen if there was not a ewe, if something happened to the ewe during the birthing?

BG: Uh the, usually you rarely ever lost a ewe in birth. Sometimes you would later from different things, I don't know and such, [and so what], and some land usually you would find a dead ewe and you would go into the pen and could find a lamb that was sort of hunkered up and sort of [you know] you take them and then dad would take them in and then a ewe that had lost her lamb would be, he would graft the new, adopt I guess would be the legally form, put the new lamb on them, and some of them would take it right away, usually if you would skin the lamb that had died and put the skin over the new lamb so that it got the smell of that ewes smell on the lamb, and uh put them in, and sometimes you would have to tie them up to the side of then pen so that they would let the lamb nurse and harder for them to, [uh] but sometimes you would have a ewe that would lose a lamb and you couldn't find the lamb, they would be such smart enough that when the real lamb nursed they would go in the back door and take another tit and they would drink on it while the lamb was nursing the ewe would turn around and smell and that smelled like her lamb and she was happy and some of them wouldn't even know which lamb it was cause they would do so well by just being bummers. And then we would always have a few bummers that we would, if you didn't have perspective parents why we would bottle feed.

BL: So "bummer" is the term for a

BG: Lamb without a mother, uh uh, yeah. This is on the side, but my daughter was adopted, we had two adopted daughters [and uh] she just wanted to know where babies came from and I talked, I must have talked an hour and I got out the book and showed her the process and everything and we got through and I said "Molly what do you want to know" and she said "well I know where born's babies come from, but I don't know where adopted babies come from", and I said "well they are born to" [well it wasn't] so finally I said "your mother loved you very much but she couldn't take care of you for some reason and she so, she had to give you up and she



knew we wanted you very badly and", she wanted to know why her mother gave her up, and we said that she loved you and we don't know why, but she couldn't take of her. So we had one ewe that had lost a lamb and were grafting another lamb on to the ewe and she wanted to know what was happening and we told her, and so oh, maybe a couple of months later somebody saw her in the store and they said "well Molly your adopted aren't you" and she said "yep my momma didn't have enough milk for me". [Laughing] so she had figured it out. And she was happy from then on.

BL: What was the process to take care of a bummer then?

BG: Oh you just brought them over kept them warm and you get a bottle with a long nipple, [but uh] you would use this pop bottle type of bottle, old liniment bottles or anything, and just about every three hours you went out and fed them. [And uh]

BL: Through the night then?

BG: Uh uh, to start with when they were little. And they learned in oh, very very short time why they were conditioned that the minute you walked in through that gate boy they were right there ready for, it didn't take a lot lessons for them to realize where the milk was coming from.

BL: Did you have a large amount of bummies?

BG: No uh uh. We would have some but not, I would guess oh maybe eight or ten. And sometimes why they would give them to us kids and we would raise them [and uh] and sometimes we had at that time there quite a few bands of sheep in the county [and uh] oh some of the neighbors [uh oh] Bowman's and different ones would sometimes have ewes that had lost lambs and so they would need a lamb and so they would come over and get yours or then you would need theirs or vice versa, and the Jacobson's and, oh there were several families, people that had sheep and a lot of times you would trade between the other sheep herders if you had access

BL: Kind of like a foster care facility?

BG: Uh uh, yeah uh uh, yeah uh uh. If they needed them than we did \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_. And you would just gave them to them, I'm sure there was never any money, they would give them to you and you gave them to them and stuff, but we didn't never have, oh I don't think we probably ever had more five or six at a time and

BL: So were you raising sheep to produce wool or meat?

BG: usually you figured that the wool at that time, now the wool has gone down so much because they imported so much, but you figured the wool should pay for the cost of running the sheep and that the lambs you sold should be profit. And that was the formula they raised, used in those days was that the

BL: So if a lamb was being sold that was for meat?

BG: Meat, uh uh. And they all went east; usually you put them on a train. You usually weaned them off in about three bunches. You would take the, about 80 or 90 pounds was when we used to take them off, and that would probably start the last of July when you take the top ones, almost all singles, and you would tag them and then you would bring them down in trucks cause we used to have a lot of pasture up in the hills and we would take them down the North Powder and they had a loading yard there and they would load them on to cars on the railroad and then they went back to Omaha or back East and somebody would ride in the Caboose with the sheep so that you could make sure that they got watered and got off the train, how often, cause sometimes if you would send it with the train why they might forget to unload them and give them their 12 hours rest or whatever they did with them. And so [and then] most of the farmers wanted to be there anyhow when they sold them to be [you know to be] there to actually conduct the sale and see what was going on with the market and such.

BL: So the farmer would actually go back east as well?

BG: Uh um yeah. [There were very seldom] there were very few sheep sold I think on the West Coast, I think almost every thing was East. Because people on the West Coast did not eat mutton like the people in the East do.

BL: Why do you think that is?

BG: I think it is just culture, ethnic, the people were raised with it why that was the natural thing and most of the people in the West were raised with beef because beef were free ranging and to start with why we, back East they got into smaller groups and fenced pastures and stuff why they could raise sheep much faster than they did in the West. I think it is probably just the strictly taste and ethnic and history and habit, I don't know. But that's what I would guess.

BL: you were talking about the sort of the rules and guidelines for shipping the live sheep? Where were those rules coming down from, was it the farmers who were asking for that?

BG: Yeah, uh um. The farmers wanted to make sure, because if you put [a, a] lambs on there, fat lambs and they are on there for 48-hours and they don't have any water or drinking or exercising or anything there are not going to get there looking in very good shape for the buyer. So yeah, it was the rancher [you know] and I'm sure the laws they had talked with the railroad and I'm sure the railroad had agreed to the basic rules and so, but they were there so they sure to make the crew did it. And there used to be real nice stock yards, ever North Powder had very, very nice big stock yards with good watering troughs and good hay troughs and stuff, and all these little towns had good conditions for holding and selling.

BL: So when you say a stock yard that's just something that would be at each of the train stations?

BG: And they were made with really big, with railroad ties and really solid and most of them were quite good. And a place to load and unload cattle and then sometimes you would take them there to sort them even if you had sold them to somebody else you would take them because you could sort them there and then load them on. And then more and more farmers got their own individual corrals, but for awhile why the stock yards used to be sort of the center for most of the livestock activity.

BL: So was the uh, shipping done only by train or was it done by truck as well?

BG: Yeah, I don't think, I think trucks were so slow then and such, I can't remember ever shipping by truck until when we, Neal and I, but no on the ranch, but Neal and I when we sold our sheep the last time they went by truck but they were just going to Idaho, a fellow had bought them from there. But I cant remember ever, and questions asked I don't know what we had, we had a band and it had a thousand, eight hundred thousand head of sheep and we didn't have near as many as they did.

BL: Tell me more about the process of harvesting the wool?

BG: Uh, sheep shearing is probably the hardest job ever known to man or beast. [uh] they had to be dry and you usually do it, you do it before they start shedding it themselves, but after it was warm enough that they are not going to get a shock because it if gets really cold after taking all that wool off you can lose ewes. And so we had two big barns on this one place that we bought, and one barn we used to hold the sheep that were going to be sheered so they would be dry and then we had the other big barn you the men and ran them through the sheep shears were in stations on one side and you ran the sheep through and back and then they would just grab a ewe and get, and they would set it up on her rump and shear, and once they set her on her rump they never fell. I don't know why. They would bend over and have her two front feet out up under their arms and then they would, and they knew just exactly, and the faster a sheered went the better job they did. The one that sheered the most sheep had the least cuts and then dad would \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ all of them and then you put tar brand on the brand, you know instead of heat brand, why it was a tar that you put on and then he would check and if one of them had a bad cut, why then he cared, but they usually a good, a good sheerer didn't really cut them very much at all.

BL: What would happen if they were cut?

BG: Well they put this pine tar and stuff on them to disinfect it and then they would keep them sort of separate from the others, but it is hard because the lambs have all been put, cut off and put in one group and so if you have a ewe that is hurt you have to put her back with the herd to get

her lamb and to try, and you know get them separated, so it is sort of, but they didn't very seldom did you really got one hurt very badly, I think it was people that were doing own sheering and that weren't used to, [it was] the man that sheered was sitting there bending over holding this ewe bending over and with those clippers all day long, I think it must as hard a work as a person can ever do.

BL: So the shearers were hired out?

BG: Yeah, they just went, they do still do that. Now they come from New Zealand and there are just crews and they go from one place to the other and you tell them about when you want them and they line for them and they just have a rotation and they work for three or four months and they shear from the warmest spots and work to the cooler spots and work around. And it is just a sheering gang, and that's what they do, they just go around and shear.

BL: How many sheep do you suppose they could shear in during their shift?

BG: I don't know, I cant remember [uh] a good sheerer would go through a lot of ewes, [um] I cant remember, I would hate to say because I would probably way off. This friend of ours that just passed away a few days ago, why he bought wool all of the time and was there all the time and he could have told, but, I just can't remember, but I know a good sheerer would go through quite a few ewes.

BL: Uh um. And how frequently were they sheered?

BG: Once a year, just every spring uh um.

BL: So when they would come they would be there more than a few days, this took quite awhile to do the herd?

BG: Yeah, uh um. Probably, I would guess a week and they [uh uh] the number brand them and they put them back in the bands and made sure they were you know back with their ewes and their lambs and separated, and then usually we start heading them for the higher country, up until then they had been on lower pasture and lower deals and then we would go up. We had uh really good, we owned Trout Meadows, uh which was back up behind Anthony at the base but then we had at that time you could forest permits that you could range, [and uh] so then you would range and keep moving the sheep so that they always were just taking the top grass and the top pasture.

It never hurt the land because they just moved through and topped it off [and uh] and you wanted and a good herder could tell you within two days if his lands were gaining or losing, you know, they would, when you would go up and sheep, we would tend camp about once a week where we would take food up and stuff, and they could tell you immediately if they needed to move or not and if they could why they would go ahead, but they had these little rounded trailer wagon tents that you walked in the door and on one side with a bench with wood under it and on the other side was the stove and then there was the table that bent down and the supplies were up on the shelf and then the tent was up, or the bed was across the back, very efficient, very small, [and uh]

BL: And the herder was just one person?

BG: Uh uh, the herder and his dogs, don't forget his dogs.

BL: How many dogs?

BG: {laughing} we had one fellow called his dog Leland Hofland and he, he had a whole slew of dogs and they were all absolutely worthless, just, and when he, when we sold the sheep and he left and he asked dad if he could take some dogs and dad said "yeah how many you want", "well I don't know", dad said "take all you want" and he took all of them and I think we had eight or nine.

BL: Wow.

BG: And we, a good sheep dog its bred in them and its, my dad one time ordered this sheep dog I think he paid \$250, which at that was just an enormous, and it was guaranteed to be a working sheep dog, and they are worth their weight in gold, and Garnet had never seen a sheep, but uh, and anyhow this one herder who was a real character and I always liked him, I went up and he was bald as bald and he was sunburned and I said "Ezra (?) Did you use your hat", he was always drunk, No! And I said "well, do you want me to buy your hat? No!, and I said "well is

everything okay” Yes!, you know and just very curse, and as I drove out here he was and this dog at the house and he said “oh he is gonna be okay, he’s okay”, you know just like well I’ll put up with him, there was Ezra holding and carrying the dog and holding his hat over it because it was so hot he was afraid the hot dog was gonna too much, but he was mean, rough [laughing]

BL: So they were pretty crazy about their dogs?

BG: Oh yeah, and their dogs were, were just fantastic. You know they, some would have whistles, some would have signals, hand signals, and they would, if you know you’d say, show them the herd and you’d say bring them in or you’d move to go clear around them and they would start going, you’d go and then you’d push back and they would back off, and they would get down low and they just get up behind the sheep [and uh] they could just, and the sheep once they got used to them realized the dog was in control and they just responded to them. Those dogs just loved to work, they just so proud of themselves, you know their little olds butts, they didn’t have tails because they get too many cockleburs stuff, but they would sit there and wag their little butts and just be so happy afterwards, they had done what they should do, they were really good herders. They were really herder’s family, they slept in a cabin and they were.

BL: How many herders did you have?

BG: We had had three wagons, three different bands and so each one has one herder.

BL: Uh um. So that’s quite a lot of work for one person.

BG: Oh yeah and they are with them all the time. And they have to get up early because the ewes go out early and [uh] [I uh] our son one time, we got a herder with this band we had, we had a lot to fill up so my son and one of his buddies was given a job to watch them for awhile because he was gonna sell them anyhow, and when he got through he said “one thing about it, he said I know what I’m not going to do the rest of my life” [laughing] but it is very boring and very, you know your just there and that is your whole life.

BL: And they would be serviced for food like once a week?

BG: Uh uh, usually that’s what we did. Uh uh, yeah.

BL: And then when it was time for them to move did they require help to move or?

BG: Yeah, usually a lot of time we had good pasture and my dad [with uh] my folks were very, very much in managing range, I mean you didn’t ever over do anything, and my dad was there at one of the first State Conservation men for the year for the whole state because they were so into taking care of their land and taking care of their animals and everything, [but uh] the sheep [we would] you never left them on long. We would graze off the wheat in the spring when it got up so high and they would go over it and then we would go over to the pastures at home and they would top it off and then you would put the cattle in and then we would go up to these high pastures, [but uh] if, I don’t know, my dads idea was that if you cant make money doing right you cant do it. And I really, you know, if your going to have animals feed them right and if your gonna care for them right because if you don’t do it right your not gonna make any money anyhow and short cuts aren’t going to do it and so they always took really good care, [but uh]

BL: You’ve talked a lot about the ewes and the lambs but I haven’t heard anything about, I’m assuming it would be called a “Ram”?

BG: A buck or a ram. We called them a buck; I think ram is probably the term. They were kept separately except just for the breeding season, they weren’t turned in except just in the fall, probably October after we brought them out of the mountains, [and uh] we always had what we called the “Buck Pasture”, [and uh] they would get up there and sometimes they would fight and sometimes they would kill each other and they would fight so they would break it open at the back of their head they would hit so hard, and you could hear them up there and you could hear them ramming and hitting, most of the times they didn’t, I guess hurt anything, but oh boy they sure, I guess getting prepared for, but they were just in for about a month [and uh]

BL: Just mixed right in with the ewes for a month?

BG: Yeah, uh uh. Just brought in for the ewes during the breeding season. And for one thing when you lamb them like we did where you don’t lamb them on the range where you have to

have them in to lamb them, you don't want to have a huge long season, you know you want to be able to get it done and get it over it with so they would put them in [and uh] I think we started the middle of February and wanted to be through by the end of March. And so they are left in for that time and then pulled out and then pulled out and then they go back just to their individual life.

BL: And so where did that individual life take place, [both talking, did not catch the end here]

BG: Yeah, no they were just on farm pasture. We had what we called "Buck Pasture" up above the ranch that was so, it was large area and they just ate up there most of the year and they were up there and they followed their water and they

BL: And could they be together when they weren't in their mating season, or did they still fight?

BG: No, and we had, oh they fought, yeah they were together but they fought, the males were always together and they did fight, but you did keep them together because you just couldn't [and uh] we had uh one fellow that said, told he was friends of ours that you could let the bucks run in with the ewes and they wouldn't breed until its breeding season, well we started getting lambs at all times of the year and they decided that this wasn't very good advice. [Laughing] so they went back to more controlled conditions.

BL: What would be the ratio of buck to ewe?

BG: Uh. Cattle I think is 30, what is it with the ewe? I would guess it is something like that, I was thinking about four bucks per hundred.

BL: Four bucks per hundred?

BG: I think so; I think that was about it. And it depends on whether you have tried rams or not, because if you would get a sterile buck in and you don't know, you know they can do fertility testing, and some people did and some people didn't, but if you weren't fertility testing why think you would rank more than that, in case you got one that was sterile.

BL: So tried just meant that they had already produced for you.

BG: Well no you can just preg test them, I mean fertility test them like you can other animals. They take a sperm sample and see if there is live sperm in it.

BL: Uh um.

BG: And if there is well you know it is a viable buck and if it isn't why, it goes to market.

BL: Did the buck require any special care during its off season?

BG: Uh uh, no. Just keep them from fighting. No they were just pretty much turned out to pasture and you give them salt and water and pasture them.

BL: and were they sheered as well when it was time?

BG: Yeah uh um, yeah.

BL: Uh, it there only one kind of sheep that you had or is there a variety?

BG: Oh no there is a real variety, and we had a mix on our ewes and we had Suffolk mix ram.

BL: Suffolk's?

BG: Suffolk's, S-U-F-F-O-L-K I think it is, and they have a black clear face, and where we ran in a lot of brushy pastures and pastures in the mountains and the hills, why it was important not to have the, a lot of wool over the face that would get [uh] cheat grass and stuff in it and maybe work on the eyes and stuff, and so uh, but you had some that had better, and I cant remember, I know we had mixes, but there is Grambale and there is Suffolk and there is Hampshire and there are all kinds of different ones, and different people would have different mixes if they like either for their land or for what they were doing. And our ewes were always a cross mix, but I think that a lot of the bucks were purebred Suffolk that was what we used.

BL: Did it matter than for breeding purposes if their ewes were from a mix back ground and the bucks were not.

BG: Oh no, no, well because we didn't never sell pure bred, we just sold you know for meat, that is all we ever sold for and so, it would if you were making breeder stock or something that, why then of course you would have to really watch it, but where you are just having the range band why, where it was just mainly meat so you are producing meat and wool why, and then of

course wool if part of it, part of the combination that you take in with the bucks, is the kind of wool that they have. Some have the old \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ and some have heavier coats and some lighter coats. There is [a lot of] a lot of area on

BL: So how long would a sheep produce wool?

BG: You would shear them every year, once a year all their life. Ever, as long as they live uh.

BL: And then what happens when they get too old, or do they just die?

BG: No they are shipped as coals.

BL: As coals?

BG: Coals, if they don't have a lamb why then they. When you have, when or you had a lamb you put a number brand on it, when you put a brand on the lamb it is done with, oh like tar, its not tar but its black like a black paint and you stamp the number on the lamb and a number on the ewe, and then you put your brand on the ewe too, but it is done with a tar like black stuff. And so uh, if you have a ewe through with no lamb, why, and you can tell when they are dry because they have no utter stuff and so then they are just coals and sold for meat. And they are more used for, what they call catter and canner for dog food and that type of thing, they are not used for, because

BL: What was that called?

BG: Catter and canner, it is not like beef or, I mean like steaks or that type it is more processed, put into processed meat and that type of thing when you have to, and the older ewes, the ones when they quite lambing or if they quite having lambs or quite

BL: Did many of them just die on their own?

BG: No. surprisingly we had quite a, we had Toles Bear (?) and there were coyotes and predators, [but uh] they don't seem to have a lot of illness or they don't tend to have a lot of problems, they are a pretty hardy, and again I'm sure that some of their breeding and cross breeding they chose for our area but no you didn't, rarely had a ewe that just laid down and died. You know it happened some, but if you're raising, you know close to two thousand ewes or whatever it is why, that is going to happen just, but I cant remember more than, losing more than three or four or five during the months when we would be lambing and that would be the time they'd have the most threats. So you didn't [you didn't] lose very many, but you did coal pretty well, and now which I would, my sister and her husband have run quite a few cattle and every, well we always did ours but we didn't run that many when Neal and I had them, but you tagged the cow and the calf when the calf is born, and then each calf is weighed off individually and you keep records of how much they weigh, and you increase the cows that you know, the type of, the parties that were producing good calves and then you would decrease the others, and it is getting very, very productive, you have to really keep records, she has spent hours and hours and hours putting numbers of calves in the computer so that they have the dates so they know which ones and which breeding program is working and which isn't and stuff, it is pretty high tech anymore.

BL: You said [uh] a few times how you just love to work with sheep, and I wonder did you have any pets?

BG: A yeah we did occasionally. [um] bummer lamb, [and uh] they were fun but they get really rambunctious when they get a little bigger and when you go out to feed them they just about knock you down and you almost have to tie them up and put them on one end of the rope and you on the other end because they get so rambunctious. My daughter one time had two lambs and Neal told her you could have, the bummer lambs, but he had to sell them when he we sold the sheep, or when we sold the lambs, and she did not, oh yes she would do it, she would do it, well the first time they got them, Hershel, Matthew and Kitty and they got the lambs in, they got them in the truck and she started crying, and Neal said "Nancy you knew this was gonna happen" well this poor old guy felt so sorry for her they got in the truck and took Matthew and Kitty out and put them back, and the next time they went and Neal said "Nancy you know they have to go, we've talked about this, we've made this agreement", so they put them in again, tears

are rolling down her face. This guy is so calm [laughing] he just took not take a little blonde girl with these big tears and he said “Nancy I always keep a couple of sheep around my house and I have a place out in front by the road, that I’ve got this pen and Matthew and Kitty will stay in there as long as they live”, and my dad went by about three years later and he said Matthew and Kitty were in the pen out by the road [laughing]. Oh, isn’t that sweet? Isn’t, you really just, some people you just love, you think gosh, because most men you know just, you know they are a little pain, get them out of here, and he just couldn’t handle it.

BL: Were you ever involved in a 4-H program with the sheep?

BG: Oh yeah. Uh uh. We had \_\_\_?\_\_\_. I had to start with and I had a market lamb, and then when you showed it and I found out we had to sell it, and I found out they were going to kill it, and after that I always had breeder stuff, I never had another market lamb, I just, you get so, and a lot of these kids just do it and it doesn’t bother them, but you’ve trained them and you’ve washed them you’ve shined them and you, all this stuff, I just don’t see how they can do it, it was too tender hearted, I still couldn’t, I just, so then after that I went into breeding stock, I didn’t have any more market lambs. But they do make the kids, you know a lot of them it really helps them with their college and everything else, if they are 4-H. and it is wonderful if the parents make them do the responsibility, it is a wonderful character builder, and you have to take care of them and you have to do day in and day out and they learn real, I think a good 4-H program is wonderful, I hate it when the parents do all the work or the hired man and the kid shows them, but I think it has an awful lot of value.

BL: Did you stay involved with that program for many years?

BG: About ten years I think I was in 4-H, [I did] other than sheep I did, oh I cant remember what all, all of us were in 4-H and you know that was just part of the culture and then you got to, if you, I don’t know what the criteria was, but you go to Oregon State in the summer for, I think it was ten days of summer school and some of that was just really fun so it was a real social deal. [And uh] they had 4-H picnics [and uh] it was just part of the culture pretty much for most of the farm kids

BL: It was a social \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_

BG: Uh uh, it really was for most of the farm kids it was pretty well accepted as one of the things you did. Uh um, you know you sort, you look forward to it and your poor old parents that were caught in as leaders and [laughing] thank heavens for them because they sure, there was sure a lot of learning went on and a lot of responsibility and that’s so often, now where the kids don’t have way of life there is no way can have an animal that they have to take care and have to be sort of responsible for that, I think it is really a wonderful life lesson. I am all for it.

BL: Today is February 24, 2005 and here again is Bonnie Graham and we were discussing growing up in Union County. Bonnie can you tell what the next step was for you after graduation?

BG: Okay after I graduated from High School I went to Oregon State University and it was at that time OSC, and majored in Early Childhood Education. And then I was sick quite a bit and we didn’t realize why, and I thought, we didn’t find out until years later that I had Lupus. But I stayed home then the next year and fortunately or unfortunately my husband had been in the Service and [uh] was behind, and so he had, and we started going together and he had [uh] State Aid for one year and GI Bill for three years so he decided to take the State Aid, which was least first, so that he wouldn’t be tempted to drop out when he became a senior. And so we started dating and then the middle of the next year, between my junior year and his sophomore year we got married, [and uh].

BL: And what is your husband’s name?

BG: Neal Graham, and he was adopted when he was a year or two years old, and lived in La Grande all his life so he is a native, really, [and, and] native Eastern Oregonian, and he, other than being the Service and College, he also had never lived anywhere outside Union County.

[Laughing] so, we both sort are entrenched in this area. And then uh, after I graduated from College, why I was offered a real good job in California in Nursery School, but our folks had a ranch at North Powder and they wanted to us to come home, and we talked it over and we decided that to raise our kids we would rather have the ranch life than the California life, and so we decided to go back there, and so after we graduated we went back and were on the ranch then until it sold, I think about 17 or 18 years later.

BL: So that where your kids were born?

BG: Yeah, uh uh. They were all four, well two of them were born in Tillamook and one in Portland, but that's what we acquired when we lived there [laughing].

BL: So growing up [um] yourself on a ranch, then did you raise your kids in the same fashion that you had been raised?

BG: Yes very much. And they all four just loved it, they loved the horses, they loved being out, and [uh] all of our kids had their chores list that we put out each week and we had one boy and three girls, but we did not go by gender, and so you had your chore for a week that had to be done because you were part of the family, and then we also put chores, extra like shoveling off the walks or something that you could do and if you did it and then you signed your name and then we okayed it and you could get paid for that. But we had a milk cow and our oldest daughter could go out there, she could get the water go out and wash the cow down, milk the cow and be back in the house by ten minutes and do a great job, and she loved it and the other kids hated it and so she had terrific bargaining rights cause she would bargain off from their chores to her chore, [laughing] she sort of took advantage of it, but we always had a milk cow and we always had horses, and we had a little pond out behind the house, [and uh] and little creek that runs till about July and then all of them after they got married and had left home, all come back when they can and help us in Christmas Tree Season and stuff. And they all, they just all have really loved it here and we have too.

BL: So tell more about the children you had adopted?

BG: We had one son and then I miscarried and miscarried, and then my husband [was uh] oh it was the Oregon, I think 150 Anniversary went to a big, they had a big community celebration, and then the next day he was driving; we were moving cattle [and uh] had trouble getting him out of the field and when he finally got him out of the field why he was running down to get with the kid that was ahead to hold up the bunch because we were strung all over everything, and his horse caught in wire in the ditch and then there was gravel on the road on top and the concrete for the ditch below and the horse went end over end and he hit him right square in the middle of his stomach with the saddle horn, [and uh] so he was laid up for a long time, and so other than mine, I had numerous miscarriages and they told me I would never carry one, and then they told him that he would never father one, so ten years later I was on a refreshment committee and I called this girl and I said "Jean, I can't help you, I've got the flu and I can't get rid of it", and I hung up and my husband just laughed, and I said "well what could it be?", he just laughed again and I said "Neal it couldn't be", but it was. And so ten years after our first one, why our second one was born. [Laughing] after we adopted the children between.

BL: Can you tell me a little more about the adoption process for the ones in between?

BG: Yeah I

BL: And how that works in a rural area, what your options were?

BG: Okay. When we, the doctor we went to just was terribly against any adoption but that was totally, totally legal, and so we wrote to the State and there were three licensed agencies and we wrote to all of those and the one we liked best was Boys and Girls Aid, which was also where my husband and his twin brother had been adopted. And so we went down to Portland and we had a group meeting and told you, everybody that was interested in adopting, and they told you basically what there specifications and what the process was. I think there were eighty or ninety people there and they said they had about 15 children to place, so I went home just totally despondent, because we didn't have much money, we didn't have \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_



[tape shuffling?] you know sort of country girl, but our case worker liked us and always did [and uh] so when Neal got hurt he had told us that we would get a child, I think was in January of the year Neal got hurt, [they uh ] I think he told us that we would get a child, why then when Neal got hurt he said “well I’m pulling it off the table because I know that they will never okay it until they know that he will be able to live a \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_.” And so after he finally got better, I think it was in, must have been September, why there was a pro football game in Portland and my little sister was in College and she was broke so she told that she was going to baby-sit for the weekend with our son so that we could [take it] do anything we wanted and have a weekend off and that would be her Christmas present to us. So we went to Portland and he said he was going to call the case worker and I said “well don’t sound so eager” and he said “I am eager!” And so I went shopping and then came home and he said “do you want to wait until Monday?”, and I said “no, why would I want to wait until Monday?” and he said “So you can bring our daughter home with us”. [Tearful] So we waited until Monday, and

BL: That is a nice story.

BG: That was really neat. And so, then we got our papers clear, why this \_\_\_?\_\_\_ Garrison who liked so well, and he said “sell aren’t you happy?” and I said “well I hate to think of the size of my family and I’m certainly not going to have anymore miscarriages and we can’t adopt anyone,” and he said “oh” cause they had told us when we went in that two to a family or a group, a family group was the most you could have, he said “that’s just a general rule”, and I said “you mean if you were us you would file again?”. And he said “nothing ventured, nothing gained”. And we applied in September and so we went back and Rand who had gone through us with the program and we went to Portland and before we left he asked Grant (?), he said “how would like to have a new little brother or sister by Christmas?”, and we all thought that Rand (?) thought that was great, and then we didn’t hear anything, and so the twenty-first of December Neal said “well your not going to hear about your baby”, and I said “Yes, if he would have said it to me he might have forgot, but I said, he was so child centered that he said to Randal here. So he bet me a new shirt against a new blouse, but we wouldn’t hear, and he hadn’t hardly got out the door when he called, and he said “we know you can’t come get it before Christmas, but we have another little girl for you.” So, when Brian (?) came home from school I told him he had a little sister. I said “of course we won’t get her until after Christmas”. And he said “why not?” I said “you have your church program, you’ve got your school program, you’ve got your school party and”, he said “who cares about dumb old parties”. And so he had us totally unprepared [laughing]. [and uh, so uh] on the way down we didn’t know if we would get a child, we didn’t know if it would be a boy or a girl, and we talked about names and what ever I liked they didn’t, and finally I said, I knew in my son loved my sister Margie, but he didn’t like her name and I said “well what about Margie?”, oh Margie, and I said “well you like aunt Margie”, and he said “yeah but I don’t like her name”, and I said “well what’s wrong with it”, and he said “Mar G”, and I said “well lets just drop the G and have it Maury” and he said “okay” and we said “okay”, and I finally said “okay”. And so when we got there he asked us what we had named her, I said “named her, it took us all the way to Portland to; how we spelled it, and I said, it took us all the Portland to pick the name” [laughing] So we said we got one now, [and uh] she has never run into another Maury, but she liked the, I guess it is [ah] sir name in Mexico, but it is spelled differently; but anyhow; and fourth one, like I said I got the flu and ended up with the next one, so we ended with all four for our family, which was what we had always wanted was four children and which we ended up with. So it worked out pretty good.

BL: So tell me about the people in the community when you were going through the adoption process, was there a lot of support?

BG: Yes, very much. Some people, you know there are always these people, but ya know blood will tell, blood will tell, or this and that, but when Neal was adopted and well it was totally normal for him [and uh] I, after we had, had Rand, and then when this came up and I told Neal when he started talking adoption, I said “Neal I just don’t know if I would love an adopted baby

as much as one born to me”, and so my sister and her husband lived close by and we traded babysitting when we went on trips, [and uh] so I had her two children for ten days or something, and when it came time to get them oh I missed them so, and Neal said “well if you would, if they would have got killed on your trip what would you have done, would you have taken them? And I said “yes” and he said “well would you have loved Randy more?” and I said “well no” and he said “well this is not \_\_\_?\_\_\_” so then I got to thinking about it and I thought “well of course, you know if they come and put their arms up and they call you momma and they need you and, and it wasn’t going to make any difference”, and it didn’t, so. But he was so comfortable with it because he and I had never been around anyone besides him that had ever been adopted. It wasn’t real, it might have been common, but it was more hush hush, or they just raised an aunts kid or something you know, it wasn’t just, it wasn’t, it was just beginning to get popular I think at the time we got Nancy in 19 [uh] 59, and Roy (?) in 1961, and that was just the time when it was really getting to be, [but uh] our doctor just insisted that you go through [uh] licensed agency because they said there too many, he knew of people where people had raised a child for six years and then kids mother would come back and said well I didn’t really let you have it, and I said, he said “you just, you cant do that to yourself, when you have them you have to know they are yours so”.

BL: So it was really the local doctor who was able to connect you to the different agencies?

BG: Yeah uh um. Well we just wrote to the State, and yeah he told how, he told just to write the State Department of Human Services and asked them what their licensed agents were, and then we wrote to all three of those and, and so we liked Boys and Girls the best and so we thought we try there and if we didn’t get one there, which we didn’t think, well I didn’t think, I thought they would just, we lived in a two bedroom house and got a third child and it was still only two bedroom house and I was really amazed that; I asked the case worker about it and he said “I know someone said bedroom for every child and stuff be he said you know I’m more interested in how you feel about children than the home”, and he said “if your interested and feel about children the way I want you to and that’s important you will take care of it”, and he said “we have had people that rented nice homes to try to impress us and stuff and this and that, and he said I just, it turns me completely off because that’s not what I think is important in a parent.” And so uh, [they, and he, he really] we were really lucky because he really liked Eastern Oregon, he would come over and borrow the bathroom and go in and change from his suit to his jeans and he was happy the rest of the time he was over here. [Laughing] So we just lucked out that we just had a terrifically good fit, and that we liked him and he liked us, and it was an interesting process, and I surely recommend it for anyone that, but I would again recommend, I know they have these open adoptions and I know they have families, but I can just see so many, I mean when they are yours their yours and you don’t want somebody coming in and if your doing best to tell you how to raise them and stuff.

BL: When did you make the decision to go to work?

BG: Oh we had a family ranch and uh my dad wanted real badly to take his money out and go to Canada, and my oldest sister wanted her, wanted to go to Canada too, and so they decided to sell the ranch [and uh] so we were out voted, we didn’t want to but we didn’t have the resources to buy it out and we couldn’t run that much anyhow. And so, we had our share of it and we moved down here to La Grande and then we got the place on Hunter where we live now and then, then the, we, the others had more of the money there so they could take it and re-buy places, and what we were going to be here why we got on the contract, the part that they didn’t pay cash on.

Well about two years down the road why he went bankrupt, [and so uh] we had second mortgage on the place of, and the early mortgage Neal took care of that, on the place with uh money that he owed us [and uh] the other people just wanted to sell it, I don’t the banker who ever was the other person, I don’t understand all the legal, but anyhow, why uh Neal told me he said “if you go to school and teach, if you can make enough for us to live off of I think I can hold the place together, you know if I could devote my whole time and effort.” And he was able to, and he was

able to get it off the lien's and be able to sell it and \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ [tape interruption, wind?]  
I wasn't bank \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_, well in fact I never really attended, I just thought you needed an education and insurance. And so uh, I was really lucky because it was hard to get jobs at that time, but I happen to hit off real well at the interview and while I was qualified at that time I had gone back to school and got qualified from preschool through grade school and high school, and he said well if you will take a job I cant guarantee what job it will be, but he said I will find you a job. And it ended up I got a four sevenths job, which was just perfect because Susie had just started Kindergarten and we had a wonderful friend in La Grande who little child was in the same kindergarten as Susie, and so after she got out at 11:30 why she went down to play with this girl, boy and then Neal picked them up at noon, [and uh] if I had picked them up at noon because I just worked four sevens at one [tape interruption] otherwise Neal picked them up. We had a wonderful bus driver and if I had a faculty meeting why she would just pick up Susie and drive her around on the route and then when she came back for the high school route why she would drop her off for me at the middle school and it worked out. So it worked out real well.

BL: When you say four-sevens you just mean every four

BG: I worked four periods out of a seven period day.

BL: Okay, four periods?

BG: Uh uh, which was just perfect, because I could still have time because I had four kids and I had a large garden and did all the planting and made all their clothes and everything and, in fact when we had started talking about me going to work, we jot down and figured out with the extra car and the extra clothes and buying food and babysitters and stuff that we actually were ahead for me to stay home and I like to sew and so I did all those things and so it worked out well, and when the kids got older they were so involved in everything why, it was, I was hooked and so [laughing] I taught at La Grande for uh, I think seven years so something, and then I got attacked by a dog when I was riding my bicycle [and uh] got a bad staph infection and I missed the rest of the year. And so then I decided maybe I wouldn't go back because they had changed the program a lot. And I started subbing and I thought well that was good because I could pick my days and so when I went the Elgin why, subbed there and at the end of the year he said would you like to come work full-time and I said 'well I'm not sure, I sort of like subbing', and he said "well we would like you to come full-time", so I said "well I would talk to my family." I talked to my family and they said "mom you've taught up there". So I went out and I did, and so then I taught there \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_[tape interference] I did like where I think raised in smaller schools and smaller classes and stuff, why I liked the small classes, especially when I taught out there. Well I took early retirement because Neal worked for the Federal Bank and bank as a Farm Loan Appraiser [and uh] they called the, they consolidate their farm loan appraisers and so that you didn't have the job, you would have had to move or else you had to go clear over the Lewiston or clear down into Burns and stuff and he said he had a family to have a family and not be on the road all the time. And so uh, [uh] when he retired, why he took an early retirement and I thought well I'm not going to let him do running around where I'm not, so I took an early retirement too, [laughing].

BL: So that first job where you were teaching at the Middle School?

BG: Right [uh uh] Home Ec.

BL: Can you tell me more about that?

BG: I really enjoyed, I don't know why, I don't know, well of course in high school why you just have the classes you had and there was one other Home Ec teacher and I don't why it was split like it was, [but uh] there in the old high school, over what, they still had the gym open in the hold building where the high school was and it's up right past the gym and it's a storage room now over the shop and that's where we had our room, we were sort of isolated, which was sort of nice, we had two rooms, the sewing and that kind of lab, and then the cooking lab on the other room and we changed back and forth between the two.

BL: So what did you curriculum include?

BG: Well everything uh, we had cooking and sewing and food purchasing [and uh] nutrition and child care and you name we had, I was really sad to see Home Ec go out because one of the things I did a lot of was food purchasing, and the freshman didn't have to, but after they were freshman why on each foods unit they had a budget and I would give them a list that would sugar and flour and salt and pepper and those, and then they had to, they made their, because they didn't, we were doing pastry, they didn't all make an apple pie and all a cherry pie, we, they each made a pie, but they chose their own ingredients and so then they made their, had to budget their food and figure out how much, if they were having bananas and that wasn't on the list then they have to go pricing and stuff. And they really complained about it' I had more kids come back after they graduated and said oh don't ever stop food purchasing, I'm only spending \$140 a month and my friend is spending \$320 and it was a, [but uh] so we did a lot of that.

BL: Did you teach any sort of canning techniques or anything?

BG: Yeah, uh uh. Food preservation, yeah. And then the teacher who I taught with when I first there was very set in her ways and she was good to me and taught me a lot and helped me a lot. And you know I'm not putting her down, but she was set and I sort of wanted to bring in boys and she absolutely wouldn't hear of it and she would say that it was the department and so that was the answer and so then when she retired I went to the principal and asked about having boys in the class, and he said oh it would never fly. And so I went to the Superintendent and he said oh I don't think you would ever get enough, and I said "well if I take a survey and I can get enough kids that are interested with like just start with seventh graders and we will take a survey of sixth graders and see how many boys would be interested, would you give me a class?". And he said well he would think about it. So I did a survey and I had about 70% that were interested. And so I started, and then to start with it was not mixed, it was just a Bachelor Survival; I didn't call it Home Ec that doesn't sound very cool. And so we had this Bachelor Survival Class, and it was great.

BL: Can you recall what year?

BG: No I don't. Let's see, probably about 64 or 65 I think.

BL: That's interesting that there had been no boys before that.

BG: Uh uh. And she was just really against it, and they were just great, I was just really enjoyed them. They were noisier and they were more rambunctious but they were really, really interested and did real good job.

BL: So then the next year you began a co-ed class?

BG: Well the third year I think because the other teachers are two years and then, no four years actually, because, and then I had to get the okay and I did, and then we just had it for one year [and uh] I had first starting off I thought I'd better not push this more and so one of the mothers came and talked to me and she said don't our kids have a right to chose (?) this, and I said "well I don't really understand what the rules are" so she wrote the superintendent of education and they said he could be in that class if wanted to. And so they petitioned and got a ruling that he could be in class and so then they did, and so then when I asked about having a whole, [uh uh um] all the way through, and so then he didn't have just Bachelor Survival, then they could just go right into regular Home Ec Classes for the rest of the time. And I always had a good percentage of boys in my classes. And they need it more than the girls.

BL: That's great that you were able to implement those kinds of changes.

BG: But they do need it, because the girls learn a lot from their mothers and stuff and the boys have no idea on how to budget or how to cook or how to clean, or childcare. And when we first start childcare they would sit there like they had five hands you know, sort of look. I had one big kid and he was so funny and he just wasn't really participating, he sat there and he watched and he watched, and nobody asked him cause at first why he was so against it and finally he said Mrs. Graham when do I get to powder and hole one, and you know some of it was the first time he had ever held a little baby, or, and then when.

BL: Did you have a live model?

BG: Oh yeah I always kids come in. and then I had a real good relationship with the, or the grade school in Elgin and so I would work with different teachers and I would do part of my, over there we would have a like a weeks unit and then we would go over and prepare a day we would go over to the kindergarten or whatever grade we did for a day and the kids would actually do the class and work with the kids and see the discipline and see the things and then we would come back and talk about what went good or what went wrong and then they would plan for the next day, and so you were over there about three days a week and then we would have about two days of planning. And so that

BL: You made that move to Elgin you were still teaching Home Ec?

BG: Yeah I did. And I, I really enjoyed teaching Home Ec. I liked it because there was so many aspects and it never got boring because you had so many different units and areas, and then the one thing I missed was that the Home Ec teachers, in most schools there is just one Home Ec teacher and you don't have the input like you do in most of the other classes, you know like the English have a department and the Math has a department, and so uh our principal at Elgin wanted us to have one main goal or one big thing we wanted to implement, and I said I would like to start having a Tri-County monthly meeting of Home Ec teachers, and it worked out very well, usually we would come after school and we just got to be real good buddies and we'd trade ideas and plans and trade problems, well what do you do about them knocking the iron off and oh just what I've done, and

BL: Knocking the iron off?

BG: Well, oh the boys with the ironing board, you just can't imagine how often they hit the floor [laughing] I mean just little things. And the hobbies you do this, or [uh] I have trouble making personal finance interesting, and that was when I started doing the budgeting, you know where they had to do their individually and do their budgeting and work it in, I think anything you can combine as many disciplines together as you can the less the kids realize their learning it and [laughing] and enjoy it because they are getting it without really knowing there are being taught this or taught that, but there

BL: And they were probably getting a lot of hands on experience?

BG: Almost all, yeah.

BL: No just being lectured from a book.

BG: Yeah cause I don't like to lecture [laughing]

BL: What were some of the high lights in your teaching career?

BG: Oh.

BL: Well you have mentioned a couple of

BG: Well, I don't know, just I enjoyed teaching and I just enjoyed relationship with the teachers and the staff, [and uh] kids [and uh] I just really did enjoy teaching, my mother had been a teacher, my mother-in-law had been a teacher, and I have a daughter that is a teacher and I think it's just something that if you really, but it's one of those occupations that a lot of times just calls you, but it's just something you decide you want to do [and um]

BL: Did you notice any sort of a change in behavior or students or

BG: Yes definitely, after, when I was teaching I had a good principal and I had a good, I had pretty much a real good situation and then the last year when Neal retired, and if I would have had the principal and superintendent I did before I would have probably kept going, but I, we had a principal that was terrible, he had no discipline, you couldn't do anything with the kids, you couldn't even sit them in the hall. You were suppose to take of them, when you get your large classes and he wouldn't back you up and he, anyhow I decided when Neal asked to me take early retirement because he was going to retire and I thought that sounded pretty good and so I did, and then the next year they canned him, but [laughing] but anyhow I wasn't sorry, because well we like to do things together and you know, I don't regret that, and then I subbed and I got to sub when ever I wanted so.

BL: After you retired?

BG: Yeah, uh um. And subbing is a nice way to go. I finally quite when they, there was no discipline and I will not have a class without any discipline. I just, just, I cannot have a child talk back to me, you know I am going to treat you with respect and expect to be treated with respect and I decided why that was when I was through, and I went over the middle school, [and uh] the kids were just, they were mouthy and they were rude and they obviously, the principal or the superintendent hadn't backed up what the teacher was telling him and it was just a sad situation and I thought it's just not worth it. When you do it and it's fun, it's fun; and when you do it and it's stressful why you might as well quite, so

BL: What do you attribute to those changes in behaviors and.

BG: I think it's a lot in our law. Our laws that, well I, see I'm a rebel because I think that education should be a privilege. I do not think we should have to go to school until you're eighteen, I think you should have the right to go to school until you're eighteen if you're doing the work and following the rules and behaving yourself. I don't think there should be a requirement I think it should be a privilege to be pleased to have a proud to have, and you had to honor it when you had it. And they got this idea that you had to let anybody in and you couldn't do this and couldn't do that, and the legislature just got to the point where; I come from the old line, I'm not [laughing]

BL: Where you involved in the legislature in any way?

BG: Just through, just that I worked with the State Divider when I was on Cabry (?) Well I worked with the State Department, they were my, the people that schedule State Meetings and that would [uh] you know set our summer retreats and that. And then we would come they would come and talk to us and tell us the new rules and regulations and ideas and pass out literature [and uh]

BL: Can you tell me what Cabry means?

BG: Cabry was just, I don't even know what it stands for it was just a group, like a say every five or six counties elected one person to represent them at this group that was a go between, between the class room teacher and the State. [And uh] We had a lady that just was uh, I cant remember what her title was, but was our over seer who was very, very nice and very, very intelligent and very capable, and so that was the only, but we could make inputs there on things we'd like to see and that, but we couldn't, you know we couldn't as far as having any grift (?), say I had a grift (?) \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ [speaking very low here]

BL: Can you tell me how your experience with the parents changed over time if at all?

BG: Well I'm, I don't know, I'm not real into horoscope, but everybody says I'm a Libra and I'm all for everything being totally fair and I did try to be extremely fair with kids, and I would put a list by the door every weekend and it took some time to do, for anybody that had an assignment out and I would just say their name, had this chart and if it had one, two, three or four that was on an assignment, and so every time they went out the door they could see, I had this one boy that was not turning anything and so I ask for a chart conference and he came in, well he didn't know they were outside the room, and I said "well what's that list there by the door and how come your name has these marks on it?", Oh I didn't know it was there, but that why his mother was very much on the defensive and she was, I was picking on him and this and that, anyhow, then she got ready to leave she said "well I should've known that you would flunk him, she said you flunked me too", I didn't realize who it was so I found what her maiden was and she had been in Home Ec and Sewing, they had to make the garment in class, you know you cant do it at home, and if they got so far and they got behind I would lay out what they could and how far they could go at home and the steps and how I wanted it done, and she said "well I guess I should have known you flunked me to" and it dawned on who she was, and she had not done a days work in class and had got a garment in at the last, which I know she didn't make and was mad because I wouldn't give her credit for it. [laughing] and that's the real, real exception, but the sad part is, is I love teachers conferences, but almost with odd exception the people that came to

teachers conferences with joys and they were people that were there because they cared about their kids, [because they cared about their kids] there kids were doing well and you kept hoping you would see some of these other parents and you didn't, [and uh] but oh, as a whole why ah, most the parents are really, really supportive, really good, want what's best for their kids, want their kids to do well, and I would say 95% of my interaction with parents was very positive, but again you get the interaction with the parents that do care, and that's sad. You really feel sad for kids when; I had one little boy that came in one time and we were talking about television, and I asked if they had limits on their television, and anyhow he said "well do your kids?" and I said "Yes, they had an hour a day, and if they want to watch Monday Night Football they have to save up for it", he says "you mean you only let your kids watch a hour a day" and I said "yes, do you think that is unfair?" and he said "no, he said I come home and I say hi mom and she says why aren't you watching television and I say hi dad and he says why don't you go watch television, and he said my parents don't want me around to be in the way, he said I just thought it was funny that somebody would not want their kids because that was the babysitter".

BL: Today with privacy issues and all of these other rules and regulations and laws we have within our school district it makes it very difficult to approach a child who maybe you suspect is being abused or whatever, [um] did you have those restrictions when you were teaching?

BG: Well we were, [we were] required by law to turn it in, and I did get two children taken away from their home, and its very, very, very hard. On one of them I was the only one, that county lady knew it and she backed me up, but the only teacher they will talk about but when it gets how bad it is, but when it gets down to going to court they don't. The other one there were two of us and so that, but they will get on the stand and they call you liars and one of them the little girl would be running around the streets until eight o'clock and she would be where with our other classmates so then when they went to bed she went down and of course her mom was out drinking with this fellow that she was living with, but you couldn't prove that anything was going on, you could prove there was no one there, you could prove that anything could happen to her, and no one came down, and you get into court and they call you all these names and they, you know what at liar you are and this and that; both of them we were successful in getting them taken out of the home. [Uh] the little girl the father wanted and was willing to, and he came over and so he helped with the case and stuff, and they did, the court did give it to her. And the other went to live with an aunt and uncle, and he was horribly, horribly mad at me for quite a while for interfering, and it wasn't until four or five years later that saw him at a track meet and he came over and he said "I just didn't realize what life could be, he said the way I'd been raised I thought that was normal, and I thought that was how all kids were raised." [and uh] so but uh, you do have, you have kids it just breaks heart, and you have kids from divorced parents that they are so eager or worried about themselves or their lives or something that they, there are very few kids that don't have some scars from divorce. I had one girl in home room family relations (?) I asked her beforehand if she would mind talking about her, because she was so well adjusted, and she said her folks came in before they got the divorce, sat her down and told them that were are splitting and these are the reasons, you kids have nothing to do with it and in no way will be involved, we will neither ever ask you about the other person or what is going on and stuff [and uh] she just, hers was just, she was as well adjusted as she could possibly be, but so many kids are put in the middle, and a lot of them, I've had kids tell me, well my folks wouldn't have gotten a divorce if wasn't for us kids. You know, isn't that nice? To lay it on your kids. You just sometime when you get so torn up you just, you know its really hard, and, but you still think well if you didn't care and you weren't there they wouldn't be better off, so you just have to go home and pull weeds, and [laughing] work in the yard, and work it out.

BL: Tell me about the differences between teaching in the La Grande and then coming out Elgin?

BG: One of the big differences was in La Grande, and La Grande is not snobbish, but it still has a class, subtle class system, and in La Grande it would get noisy, and I would say "hey you

guys” because a lot of classes do I would say “hey you guys its getting too loud in here”, but so and so, but so and so, but so and so, you know I said “I don’t care I just want you to quite down”, and out in Elgin I would go out and say “hey you guys its getting to noisy”, okay Mrs. Graham and that was the end of the question, I mean they were, they didn’t play politics, they were so much more open, [uh] a lot of them were from poorer families, but they sort of understood what the rules were and what the regulations were and I really enjoyed teaching them more than I did in La Grande, I liked the; and as I say we had a really good principal and superintendent, and obviously school board and so, and I’m sure that made a difference, I think I was there at an extremely good time because the first time went to sub I had heard some real horror stories about Elgin, but I decided that I wanted to teach, the year I subbed after my dog bite I thought I wanted to teach in every school in the county, sub in every school in the county and find out what I think of them. So one day I told Neal I said “well here goes nothing, I’m going to Elgin” [laughing] came and said “you know what, I liked it” I’m going back tomorrow [laughing] and I started subbing out there more than all the others put together. And so you just can’ go in with preconceived ideas, but I had heard these stories for, and I think the principal and the superintendent hadn’t been there very long but they worked so well together, and the thing liked so well about, it was child centered. When you had faculty meetings they talked different kids, different problems, how people who were having success with them were handling them, what things they knew worked or what things they knew turned them on to getting depressed or angry or whatever, and you would go to the ones in the La Grande, and well they talked about doctoring and they talked about this and they talked about politics and they talked about this and in Elgin it was pretty much just, it was concern about kids, and in smaller schools it easier, because everybody knows all the kids. Otherwise in the bigger school why people who never had that kid would be bored while you were sitting there talking about their problems and they had a more community there, and we had an awful, and I mean La Grande too, we had an awful lot of really, really good people who helped with the school. There was a Lee Smith there that was always there at the school helping and doing things and such. We had I think a very easy open door policy for parents, I think they were comfortable, I don’t think that they felt they were being grilled or anything when they came to see us, I think they were comfortable coming in because in small schools the school is such a center of the community, you know the sports hold them together and the potlucks and the different programs and the carnivals and stuff, and because that’s the one basic thing that they all share, where in big towns why they have so many different things that they share, and so I think the small school has a real advantage.

BL: The teachers that were in Elgin, were they local?

BG: Yes almost all. Uh um. There was um, uh another gal that lived in La Grande that drove out and some times we rode together and then there were two others that were sort of on down from me and I could have car pooled with them but I decided I liked that 45 minutes to get myself together and go over my classes and just to relax after getting the kids off and stuff. But most of them were [uh] were local.

BL: Do you think that made a difference in the education they were providing for the students?

BG: Not really. I think people that like teaching like teaching and they like their kids where ever they are, and [uh] it might, if I could think of anything it might be negative because they might want to have more preconceived notions about a family or about children where when you go in and where you don’t know them you are maybe more objective. I don’t know, the first year I taught why they told me to go down to the office and look up the records and find out what kids had problems and what kids didn’t have problems and all this, and so I did and I had my little list and after about three days I thought, this is silly you know every kid reacts to different teachers and different classes and they can come in my class and all find out what I think about them and I never did after that check a child before they came into my class, I thought what a waste of time. So, but I do think that some.



BL: Isn't setting the child up for failure if you

BG: Yes, why sure it is, definitely.

BL: Had you identified them before hand of potential problems?

BG: Right, you know if you go in and you think I'll keep him in line or, you know, oh yeah, I thought to heck with this. But I think that actually in little towns where people live there and know of a lot you could tend to be more prejudice than in the big town, but I don't know, I think it depends on the person probably more than anything else.

BL: What grades were you teaching in Elgin?

BG: In Elgin I taught High School.

BL: High school?

BG: And in La Grande I taught Junior High school. So.

BL: What was the difference in the students between those age groups?

BG: Uh, they both have their challenge, [uh] I, a lot of teachers don't like Junior High and all the time I taught in Junior High in La Grande I liked it. The kids were going through a lot of changing and growing up and mixed signals and stuff and a lot of them are getting so that they are sort of cross with their parents but they hate to admit it that they still like to have an adult to sort of go to or sort of bond with, and I think it gave you sort of an edge that way, and the other way the kids in high school are much more serious about what they are doing. In junior high its more still, well they are making me do this and in High School they can start saying well I want to do this and I want to learn this and, so there both good, but I always liked Junior High and people say your crazy to like Junior High and I always liked it when I got there, so, and you do have the advantage of the kids going through, their not as sure of themselves yet and that they are more, probably more lead able or direct able, [but uh] I feel kids just amaze you with their, oh I think they were so much ahead of where I was when I was in High School, I was just amazed at some their abilities and all the things that they do and the extra curricular things that they did and the different organizations they were involved in, really a lot of the high school kids are extremely outstanding young people that really, really interest me.

BL: Did you have a list per say of things and topics you couldn't address when you were in Elgin?

BG: Well, [clearing throat] you're sure getting over your head; I decided that I always did a class on sex education. This one I decided that we should talk because we had a real problem of unwanted pregnancies in Elgin. And so I decided I should talk about contraceptives, so I went to the principal, I went to the superintendent, and I got the County Health Nurse to come out present it so it would be presented in a new, the correct way, and so I went up did a couple; I did several; I did I think oh ten days, nine or ten days on relationships and marriage and child raising and responsibilities and you know the whole personal relations, family relations deal. And this one day why then we had the contraception and every bodies child had to have a signed slip that was okay to do that, well one of the ones whose folks wouldn't sign, but they had, they were, [I uh] discriminating against her because they wouldn't let her go, but I shouldn't have had something that, that went against what they thought, and he just raised cain, and he came in afterwards and was just ranting and raving, so I took him down to the office, I said "well you know I'm not getting anywhere with you, and lets go down" and so the principal got the superintendent there, and they finally told to go on home Bonnie, they said we'll take care of this, because they knew and agreed and knew it was done correctly. They just really gave me a bad time, I was just amazed about six years later the wife came to me and apologized and she said "I had no idea how many unwanted pregnancies, pregnancies out of wed lock there were, or what a problem it was" she said "we had just sort of gone to our church and stuck our head in the sand and we had no idea what was really going on" and then finally, or something happened that she broke out, but it can be, you know and I had done everything right, I had got certified person to present it, I had gone through the principal, I had gone through the superintendent, I'd contacted all the parents, but you can still [laughing] get put over the coals, but I did think it was important and I still think

it is important for them to, if your in a situation where that's, because an unwanted pregnancy and then they drop out of school and there lives are wrecked and there.

BL: Looking back on your teaching career was there anything that you would have done differently?

BG: Well I would have been smarter and I would have been; had more energy [laughing]. Oh, not really, I really enjoyed it. I wasn't unhappy when I had a daughter that told me she was going to be a teacher, I certainly didn't try to talk her out of it. And she is a very good teacher, she has the Resource Room Class in Baker and just loves and does a real good job. [she's got uh] well she coaches and she is a first woman coach in Baker to ever win a State Team Championship, and that was from her Cross Country Team. [But] and so she coaches too \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_ [couldn't hear] so it was [it was] it was just interesting, it's different [laughing]

BL: Do you suppose it would have any different had you [had you uh] lived outside of Union County?

BG: I imagine, I imagine in the big towns why its [uh a lot] I really enjoyed Elgin, I loved the staff and I liked the interaction, and I liked the cohesiveness, and I think the larger the school the less your going to know people other than just in your area, [and uh] La Grande had the Junior High did one year; well a couple of years when I was there at the end; [had uh] a real good plan because we had about 40 people on the staff and the faculty meetings were sort of a, oh were hard to run and run efficiently, and so they had each area [uh] the people in each area elected a representative and I don't what in the world; maybe eight of us; and I represented [uh] the electives, the Music and Shop, and Band and Home Ec, and I was the representative for all of those. And so we got together and would discuss the things and then we would go to faculty meeting and then we would bring it back and have the meeting with out people. And it was really nice in that way because we had one teacher that really had a shock, and we really needed new equipment, but the way it went in, it wasn't efficient to put this in this year, and this is this year, and this in year, and have them still work well together. So we decided as a group to give most of our funds; anything extra funds we possibly had; to him that year so that he could get his up and in shape the way it should be; and then the rest of us would; and he would go without for awhile while we recouped. [And uh] that type of thing, which you can do. When you have the cohesiveness of a small group, and our groups did work, I think people in electives are a little more laidback than maybe some of the ones in the straight subjects, I don't know, but we worked really well together and it did work real well that way. And I think in a large school you did because faculty meetings up until then were just [you know] caustic as everybody was banging up things and you'd have it almost fixed and then somebody would back up with it again and they would just beat the same horse to death, and they were always working about contracts and this and that, which I don't think should be brought up in faculty meeting, I think it should be student concerns and that. But there were pros and cons, and that was nice because we had enough people that could work together so we became sort of our subgroup within the, within the major group, and I'm sure the English Teachers, and the Lit Teachers were in one, and the Science Teachers, you know and \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_, so I guess you can get subgroup in a big school, and small school why you are all together because there is just one, so you probably work it out each year. You know just how it works for you.

BL: Were you involved in any kinds of other activities?

BG: Well I [I had] oh, oh yeah, I taught 4-H for a long time, [and uh] different things. In school I had FHA kids, Future Home Makers of America; they've changed it now to; the name of it; but it was a lot of fun. We took the kids to the; so many delegates got to go to State Convention every year and then [uh] I had one girl, Vicky Webster, who lives here in La Grande, is Vicky Brogotti now, [and uh] she was a State Office and she was nominated in the State to run for a National Office and so I got to go back to Washington, DC, to the National Convention with her when she ran and won the National Office. [And uh, it was] it was really neat. [But uh]

[LB1] <#\_msocom\_1> All elective classes almost have; you know different ones; like you have

the Future Business Leaders, and you have the Future Farmers and this type, and [and it] they are a lot of fun and you get a lot of extra interest where you don't have time in the classroom and stuff, [that uh] a lot of projects and stuff. And, like I said I had 4-H, and oh, I belonged to Soroptomist and different organizations and such, yeah I enjoy that type. I go to Tops [but uh] in 4-H I taught, yeah I taught 4-H and I taught different things like that, and [tape noise]

This goes back to when I went to the one-room school at Clover Creek, and we had a family of skunks that moved in under the school house, and the kids, being kids, realized not long that if you made enough noise you could stir up the skunks and they would smell and then we would have to be let out of school. So, neighbors all put out quite an effort and got the skunks and got them out of the school [laughing] [but uh] The one-room school, it was sort of sad to have, I think to have those gone, they were a lot of fun [but uh]. I think I told you the time my mother; sure I did; this little boy wrote, would always have I wrote and so she made him stay [and uh] One of the things when I was going to school in the one-room school house, the kids, a lot of times the boys would have to work and so they would only be there, and that's, we have the same thing with our migrant workers now, that the kids have to work and it's a real, real problem, it's a real challenge to, when the absolutely need it for assistance for the family and what you do.

BL: What other challenges do you see in the education system now?

BG: Oh, lots, and lots, and lots of them. I can see that education is becoming a requirement instead of a privilege and so we look at it different. I can see no tax deals, and it's, so much of it is getting run by Government that it's not in touch, that so much money goes for; well like testing; I am terrifically, terrifically against these Standardized Tests because a poor teacher can spend the whole year, and there is some that almost do, they know what's on the Standardized Tests, they go over, and over, and over that material, there is no thinking involved. You know you write a page, a paper about this for so many and you have these English Tests and you have these Math Tests, and you have these; and any teacher if she spends the whole teaching nothing else can, and there are a few teachers that do that, but there is no room in it for thinking, there is no room for application of skills, it's all wrote and I do not believe that wrote is learning. Some people can memorize anything. I have had, one of the girls I had in class was a straight "A" student and could get any class, she could not apply anything. She could memorize it and she could put it on paper, but she had no common sense as far as applying it, and it was sad because she had this terrific mind that was just like a computer, but she was like a computer, she started, but she didn't know what to do with it, she couldn't apply it. [And uh] I think that we need to get back to education being a privilege and if you don't do what you are suppose to do you don't come to school and [that uh] the teacher is accredited and knows that they are doing and knows what they are doing and they are allowed to not just teach exactly the same thing to the same kids at the same age, because kids are not the same and I think we are taking away a lot of our spontaneity and lot of the creativity of the teachers in trying to limit so carefully, and of course people are afraid we will teach this, or afraid; well like birth control; they are afraid we will teach these terrible, terrible ideas and totally ruin our children's lives because they were exposed to something other than what they want them to exposed to. And to me education that you should be exposed and I didn't, but I think if you go to College you should go to one that is; if you're liberal that you should go to one that is more conservative, and if you're conservative you should go to one that is more liberal so that you learn how other people think and how other people believe, and you don't have to agree with them, but at least understand where the people are coming from, and I think that's what education is about. It is not just learning, but what you say and do is right, but to learn that there are others and why they say and do what they do. So, [I mean] I'm unhappy with the legalization of the, or the compartmentalizing of education and being; and they have so many of these special teacher things that are not benefiting, they are taking an awful lot of money, and like the Standardized Testing, look how much money it takes. And like I said, a poor teacher can teach to that because they memorize that much, but a good teacher her wings are clipped because she doesn't have the chance to; and you can't tell me

putting something down on a paper and answering a paper right or writing a story that you have written 57 times and had corrected over, and over, and over is telling me how much you know about how well educated you are. So I am sort of a rebel.

BL: That is interesting because you have seen education in so many different processes.

BG: Yeah, and you have [uh um]

BL: Like one-room schools \_?\_

BG: To North Powder, small school to La Grande to large school to a large College and yeah, uh uh. And it's, I guess we always; I think that is something about being older, you always worry a little bit about the things of the past, not all of them were better, so, but sometimes we tend to be nostalgic and think they were whether they were or not [laughing] I notice it with my kids, our daughters, that their kids are in so many activities, they go to Soccer and they go to Football and they go Gymnastics, and they go to Basketball, and they go to these things; and I said something about them because our son had Cerebral Palsy, or Muscular Dystrophy, and our Granddaughter had Cerebral Palsy, [but uh] my sister-in-law wanted us one year to have him go in Little League with her boy, which they were good friends, and so when we took him down to the specialist where we took him to Portland, and I asked him I said "well, he is having some pressure to go into Little League and he really doesn't want to" and he said "well what will do instead" and I said "oh probably wade in the creek until and throw rocks in it" and he says "that's a good alternative" he said "I'll go for that". And he just thought it was important for kids to have time just to; but my daughters when I asked them about it, they said mom we can't let out kids walk to the park, we can't let out kids do, go down and go skate boarding, and so she said "one of us coaches one thing and one of us coaches another, and one of us oversees this and one of us oversees this, because our kids cannot be unsupervised" and I think that is a terribly sad thing that they cant just go down to the park and meet the kids and go roller blading and come back, and I think that is extremely worrisome that we have some of the unstable people in our society and I don't know what you do about it, I guess nothing, but, and that is a big change that has happened since when we were growing up. You know we walked to school the mileage way, and like I said some kids walked probably a lot farther than we did and nobody ever thought about anything happening to you. It wasn't even in the deal. And when I was in school we would walk downtown or go here and there and such, and [and] you didn't even think about it, you would go to the show at night and stuff and now kids just, you worry about them even when you know where they are and who they are with. So, those are some of the things I've seen that worry and you know, and there is some things that are better and some things that are worse.

BL: Well it certainly sounds to me like you have enjoyed your time in Union County, and probably wouldn't do it all different if you had the chance.

BG: No I don't think so. I don't think my husband would either. It is just [uh] it just uh, if you're small town people I guess your small town people.

BL: Uh um.

BG: I know people that [uh] well uh, older people, people our age that retire and they go live by where their kids are or something, and I would just hate that because I go down the street in La Grande and I see somebody and even if I don't them I smile and half the time I speak, and in the store you will see somebody and you will speak to them, [and uh] if you went to Lewiston or Portland or Salem or something and retired, and in the first place you wouldn't know, you wouldn't even have a core and it's hard to meet people after you're older and then to not, to not know them to start with and then to have strangers not even look at you, you know their afraid to make eye contact because sometimes that it suppose to challenging, and its not to live in a small town where you know people and you speak to people, and if somebody has trouble, we've had two fires; one with [uh] spontaneous combustion in a tractor and we were gone and the neighbor was overseeing the place for us and he, like my husband he is long on common sense, and we had taken our grandkids and gone River Rafting and when we got back to the Hotel

BL: I am here again with Bonnie Graham. I wanted to ask you Bonnie about your Christmas Tree Farm. Can you tell me where the idea came from?

BG: when we were first married why we lived in Corvallis and we were both in College and we got an apartment over this [uh] family [uh] one room with a kitchen apartment and they were really nice people and we got to know them real well. [And uh] So after we got out of College we kept, we still are friends with them and see them, [but uh] we kept in touch with them and they first major Christmas Tree growers in [uh] the West, and I think in the United States, and they know are one of the either three or four largest Christmas Tree growers in the World, they grow, sell over a million Christmas Trees a year. But anyhow when we got [uh] oh, after we got out on the ranch and, I think it was in 19 about 70, in the 70's anyhow, why they came up and visited one time and had decided that we should start growing some Christmas Trees because he loved Con \_\_\_?\_\_\_ Fir but they can't grow them well in the Willamette Valley. So he decided that we should put in some Con Collar Firs (?) for them. So we put in some, and got hooked on it, so then we just kept adding different varieties and different sizes and getting more and we were going to just sell for chose and cut where people came out and went out and picked their three and cut them. Well then, we got into commercial and so we sold commercial for several years [and uh] most of ours went to [uh] Salt Lake City, Utah. And our most, we have a lot of varieties, our most popular because the Hal wanted to started was the Con Collar fir (?), which is still our most popular with all, because it doesn't drop needles and it lasts a long time and it is a very pretty tree. But we also have Grand Fir and Doug Fir, and [uh, um] Blue Spruce, and [uh] oh several other varieties, so we have had quite a lot, and all, as we got older is a lot of work, it's a lot of fun, and all of our kids loved it, and all of our kids worked in it all of the time. And so ours knew where they were and what they were doing, but when we [uh] oh, I don't know, a couple, about ten years ago Neal said we are going to stop planting them because we are not going to be able to take care of them, and I really hated to, but as I get down the line I can see what he, what he means. And so now we are selling out the end, we are on the end cycle of selling of Christmas Trees and we are making our place just into a valley floor forest and we have been cleaning up and, and we have deer and elk that stay in here and, it's a good place for the kids and we ride the horses and we love to walk, and it's just so \_\_\_?\_\_\_. But Christmas Trees [uh] take a lot of care. You have to go, you plant them [uh] usually in April and we got our seedlings either out by Hood River or up [uh] Orofino River in Idaho. You have to get your stock, has to be from a higher altitude than you grow. [You can't]

BL: Why is that?

BG: They just don't do good otherwise. These Con Color Firs are very unique and the only place you find them is on the Kybab Plateau (?) on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, the seed source that they take and culture for the Christmas Trees. They are not a wide spread like the others tree are. [And uh]

BL: So once you have planted in April what is the next step?

BG: Okay and then you plant them and then we go through, oh probably May or June depending on how much rain you have and stake them if we need to, to put a stake in and tie them up, and then for a couple of years their pretty much left alone except you walk them, and if any things has a double why you take it out, or if a top it

BL: What do you mean by walking them?

BG: You just walk up and down through the, the field; it's all done by foot, which is good exercise. [and uh] when they [uh, uh] if they have a double why you take it out or if the top's taken off why you get a new one and work, and you do pretty general, and they, the first year or two it shocks them to get started, and then they start growing quite rapidly and you will get anywhere from, oh ten to fourteen or fifteen inches of growth a year.

BL: Uh um. How may seedlings would you plant at one time then?

BG: Oh gosh, I think, I'm not sure; I think the most we planted was about twenty five hundred, as we uh

BL: And that's all by hand?

BG: Yes, uh uh. It's, it goes pretty fast, you have a regular spade and you stick the spade in and pull it forward, and I don't do it I watch and then you stick the spade in, pull it forward, stick the tree in, push the spade back and, and do it. You have to be sure that the roots are straight. Some people tend to not want to dig hard enough and then, it becomes a J root, the roots come up, and if you have a J root it looks fine for about four years then it dies and you pull it out and there's this J root, so planting is really important, it is really important the same time. And then after they get up why then you do a lot of hand work, and I always did the tops, which was my specialty, and you, we did take some classes, we went down to Forest Grove for some uh, major growers and Hal and Paul both helped us a lot with different things. But uh, you

BL: What did you do to the tops?

BG: Okay, the tree you want it to be you know in a nice conical shape and you want the top to be in proportion to the other because where do people put the star? And so you [uh] prune it if it's not straight why you put a stake up and you put four ties, two ties to the top, and two ties to the original tree and straighten it up. And uh, if it, it's really interesting if you like trees, but if you branches the leader, we call at the top, is broken out if you take a side branch and tie it up within six weeks you can go and take the stake off and it will be straight and it will have taken; and Grand Firs have the [uh] needles on the top of the, of the Fir, it is a flat deal, and then the needle on the top, and you take one of those up and tie it up and of course it where this flat one on one side and you go back and within six weeks it will have needles all the way around. Now, how do trees realize that it has gone from being a side branch to the leader just fascinates me. It fascinates me all of the time, I work with them all the time and I'm still fascinated by it.

[Laughing] And you tie, and we have birds and we encourage birds and we encourage the deer and things, so we get some damage, but that's the price you pay. And so we have quite a few tops that we have to put new tops up.

BL: Do the deer eat the tops?

BG: No, uh uh. It's just breaking them off when they are little and rubbing on them and, oh the horns are really, can be pretty disastrous. We try to sort of discourage them about the time they are taking velvet off the horns. [Laughing] because they can do a lot of damage. We do have a spray we can put on but, it works pretty good that deters them, it's not cheap but it does deter them. But then, and so you go through and you tie all those up and then that fits the basic shape, and then [uh] my daughters and my husband have, and my sons, they are very good at it, all do side shaping and that's later, and different trees have to be done at different times, like the Pines have to be done when the new needles are more than half as long as the old needles, but not more than two thirds as long as the old needles, and the Con Color and Grand Fir have to be done after the needles are completely elongated, and so they work, you cant just out and go up and down the field and do all the trees at once you have to do them according to their season and according to the deal. And they just shear them, and they have [uh, uh] and electric chair, which some use and like and it is a back pack with a little motor on it and then it has a side like a mowing machine and they go around the tree and you have to know what your doing, you have to get the angle right and they go around the tree, and it makes it more uniform, but my husband has done that but he prefers just a knife and I know Doty's, and I don't know about Knotten's, but I know Doty's use a knife, and we just have long knife and they go around and they learn how to get the swath, they come down from the top and trim it so that it \_\_?\_\_. And that has to be done at the right time so that it, some of the boughten ones if you look at them why they are sheared after their cut, or right before they are cut and for a quality tree you want it sheared so that all the hills and so you cant see where there has been a cut, where it still has a totally nature look. But if you buy in for \$12.00 at Wal-Mart why you can guarantee that the ends will be, they will cut them and then they just put them through these machines and, you know [uh]

BL: \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ [tape noise]

BG: They used to all be done by hand and they used have these Mexicans, they still have

Mexicans Crews that work it, but they used to have Mexicans Crews that came up and each year, it was all summer long, because you would go from the start. And they quite bit a of time. When we first started we irrigated some, but then we started we were going to rotate and put this one area into trees and then when they were all gone why then we started it, well we found that some grew some worse, faster and some needed more culturing and so we just decided that when we took trees out we just interplanted and just kept them so we had a variety of sizes and species in different places at different times. And so it was easier for us just to walk it and do them several times and we liked walking it and being out there you know, and so we shear them. And then at Christmas Tree time why [uh] you cut them and then if you ship them, and some our, we have a lot of customers from Wallowa County and Baker County and, even we will do it for La Grande, we have what we call a bailer and you put the tree through it and it wraps it like the pictures in the, on the trailer. [and uh] that way they can get a lot of, a lot of trees on a deal, and for people that are going along way they are a lot easier to tie on and there is a lot less chance for them to come off and so.

BL: How far before Christmas would they be cut?

BG: Oh, ours are cut, we cut ours, we start in cutting them the Friday after Thanksgiving. Uh, some shipped ones, we had been in Montana in October when they are cutting them, and so you know that just about the time you put them in the kitchen or the living room or; the needles start to fall off, you know. So, but [uh] we guarantee ours to hold their needles till after the first of the year. And the Con Color Fir I would guarantee until the last of February. I have had people that have had them way longer than that. [they just] we have ours in from Thanksgiving until after New Years and I will put it out and put stuff for birds on it and it will still be green in the last of March, they just [uh] you know if they are handled right why they are really, really. They need to be, when you cut them you need to cut them, when you put them in water they have to be cut again right before, because they seal the sap drops down and it seals across the bottom, so if you put them in water without cutting again why there is no way for that tree to get, so you need to put a fine cut, and

BL: I always wondered why you had to cut it again.

BG: Because that is why, because the sap has dropped and has shield it. It's natural, I think probably a natural instinct for it to heal a wound, I don't know, but I have a feeling it is sort of like a scar tissue for people. So but, that's sort of how we got into the Christmas Tree Business and we just enjoyed it, and like I said we just going to start with a little and we just kept adding, and adding, and adding [laughing]

BL: What was the average range of size in this business?

BG: Um, probably most of them are, that are sold are sold between six and half and eight feet. [Uh] we have some real large ones; we have some families that come out every year and buy, oh quite tall ones [uh] seventeen, eighteen feet ones.

BL: So how many years does it take then to get the average tree and then the taller tree?

BG: In this area it takes quite a long time. In the Willamette Valley I think they can turn over, especially Doug Fir which grow the fastest, I think they can [uh] sell them in about eight years, seven or eight years. The \_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_ take ten, and the Con Colors and Grand's and the more fancier trees, I would guess we average between twelve and fourteen years on them. And different trees are kids in the family, yeah you know, in my family they go from 5'8" to 5'2", and you know with the same parents, and trees are the same way, even though you have the same seed sack why you don't always have the same, you don't have the same tree.

BL: Uh um.

BG: And some would just fill out beautifully and if we have a tree that is really scrawny why then you keep cutting the top back until it fills out and so then that takes it a lot longer, depends a lot on the, the form of the tree.

BL: So you have to be very patient in this business.

BG: Yeah you do, uh uh yeah. And it has to be something, you have to like flowers and like

plants and, of course you can look in my yard and know that I like flowers and plants, and you, it's a nurturing type of thing you know you have to enjoy that type of thing, and you have to have patience, I mean its not something you just go through and whack your through and to through, you have to treat sort of each one as an individual.

BL: How much land did that require to have that many trees?

BG: Well we just have forty acres here, and we have had a little over half of it in trees because we always some pasture cause we have a horse always, and then of course we have the farm stead for the buildings and the barn so far. For awhile we had, I guess everything except just the horse pasture and the house were into trees, and [uh] it is still pretty much now too, you know because were not just taking them out were just going to let them grow [and uh] and have a pretty place to ride horses and stuff and when were gone and somebody wants to buy it they will have a nice place to raise a family why there will be a nice place to raise a family, and they will probably take all the trees, but [laughing]

BL: I hope not.

BG: You know how that goes. I don't want to.

BL: Well thank you for sharing about that, I appreciate it.