

MARJORIE JARVIS (Referred to as "MJ")

THELMA ROLLINS (Referred to as "TR")

JUNE 3, 2002

Interviewed by Dave Osmick (Referred to as "DO")

Transcribed by Unknown

Place: Marjorie's home in the North end of the Grande Ronde Valley

MJ: My sister, Inez. I'm the youngest girl in the family, her mother is my oldest sister, and she is the oldest daughter of her mother. Does that make sense?

DO: You had a farm North of Summerville?

MJ: Yes, with my husband, if that's the time period you are interested in. We bought timbered land, 80 acres to begin with in 1950. Cleared it, back in those days, they didn't have the stud mill in Elgin where the small trees could go yanno. So they pushed them up in windrows and burned them. In '52 we built a small cabin. Before my husband retired, about 1960 I guess probably or '61, we added onto the house and made it a big house. He retired in '72.

DO: From farming?

MJ: No, he was with the railroad. He was with Union Pacific in the Agricultural Department with headquarters in Omaha. That's why we had lived in Omaha for 30 years and then came back. Our son farmed there for 20 years.

DO: What kind of crops were they growing out there?

MJ: We grew mostly grass seed. Some grain, but mostly grass seed, because that soil was better suited for that than it was for the grain crop.

DO: So you had wheat, and grass seed?

MJ: Grass seed mostly, and a little wheat. But we had most of the farm in grass seed.

DO: Were there any orchard crops out there at the time?

MJ: No. I don't know, maybe we were a little too far North, cause up by the mountain they do, along the edge of the mountain they do, and they had a lot of orchards along the mountain. I don't remember any orchards over there do you? Any big ones, till you get over to Pumpkin Ridge, or Mt. Glenn?

TR: Goshorns had some cherries or something up there, but I don't think that it was a great amount.

DO: Out there, there was the old Grange Hall?

MJ: Mhm, Pleasant Grove Grange.

DO: Pleasant Grove Grange. I don't remember when that started, but I mean it was way back.

MJ: My yes, when I was a little girl about 8 years old. They had an affair. I don't remember if it was a Grange meeting, or if it was a dance, because they held dances on the weekends when they didn't have Grange. I got tired, and I lay down on the chairs, stretched out and went to sleep. I woke up and it was dark. The folks had missed me by that time and they were coming back, so I wasn't alone in the dark very long. Now I'm 84, so you know how many years ago that was.

DO: Did they have a band out there?

MJ: They had little local bands. People by the name of Johnston, and one brother played the piano and one played the violin. What did Martha do?

TR: She played the piano.

MJ: What did Ray do then? There was the 3 of them, and they played for dances, and then other local people would join. But they had good old time dances and all the young kids grew up going to the Pleasant Grove Grange Hall to dances.

DO: Square dance, round dance?

TR: Right on that same lot was the Pleasant Grove School. Everybody, when you pull in there, it was on the North side of that.

DO: Do you know when that was still in use?

MJ: When did I teach school at Pumpkin Ridge?

TR: I was in High School. I don't know if it went out before

MJ: I think Pumpkin Ridge was the first one that went into Imbler, and I don't know. I would guess that Pleasant Grove and Dry Creek were the same time. I don't know. I was gone at that time. Mikey was in the 5th grade, do you know what year that would have been?

TR: She was born in '35.

MJ: Well she would've been 10 or 11.

TR: It was about the end of the war. It was getting pretty close.

MJ: Then they closed Pumpkin Ridge School and bused them to Imbler.

DO: And there was one at Dry Creek?

MJ: Yes, the old school building is still there.

TR: One at Willow Creek. That building is still there too isn't it? Isn't it a shed behind the house?

MJ: Oh I didn't think so. I thought it was gone.

TR: When you come off the road from Highway 82 and round that corner over Willow Creek, right there on the hill.

DO: Right there on the right hand side?

MJ: Yes. That's where the Willow Creek School was.

DO: I can't remember if the building is there or not.

TR: I know Shirley Hibbert went there. She was a year or so older than I am.

MJ: You know Bill Landman?

DO: Yeah, I know the name.

TR: He probably could come up with a lot of stuff.

MJ: He just might. He went to school at Pumpkin Ridge.

DO: Now you taught at Pumpkin Ridge?

MJ: Yeah. How did you get that, did I just say so?

DO: Or Thelma did about when you taught at Pumpkin Ridge.

MJ: Oh, I taught one year.

DO: One year.

MJ: That was the last year. I said I closed it.

TR: You were so good, they couldn't get another teacher. She got married and left.

DO: Was that around the same time that they were getting rid of all the country schools?

MJ: I think it was about the first one that went. Maybe Willow Creek, I don't know. 1938, spring of '38, '37-'38 was the last school year. I was married in June and that was uh

DO: Well how many students did you have? You must remember that if you taught only one year.

MJ: I do, I had five.

TR: Oh, I thought there were 6, where did I get 6?

MJ: There was the two Barton girls, and Billy, and uh Arla and Buddy Coffert. They were 7th graders, and then the other 3 were singles; 1st, 2nd and 4th and two 7th graders.

DO: So you did it all.

MJ: Yeah, I was Janitor too.

TR: My mom did it all at Dry Creek, how many students did she have?

MJ: She must have been up in the 20's. I wish she was able to talk to ya. She's got a lot of stories, remembers a lot. She's 96, but she isn't able to do that. She lives next door.

TR: If there's any particular questions you had, we could probably ask her. Well when was it that the articles were in the little paper?

MJ: Two years ago, if you could get the little Elgin paper. That would be about August. They had a school, little country school reunion at Summerville. They started out as a Dry Creek School reunion. And they were, people were just appearing, just weren't able to come anymore. So they decided, let's just have all the country schools in the North end, so there's 5: Summerville, Dry Creek, Willow Creek, Pumpkin Ridge, and Pleasant Grove, the 5. We had a pretty good crowd now. I don't know. There must have been 30 or 40 at the last one.

TR: But they interviewed Mom and I learned stuff in that article.

MJ: And that would be two years ago I think.

DO: They still have the reunions?

MJ: Yeah, they have them every fall, in August I think. Because September they ran into that Pendleton roundup. But you'd be surprised. People come from; we've had them come from Idaho, Alaska. Her mother taught school at Dry Creek for 4 years.

TR: She substituted some besides that.

MJ: Yeah, she did that, but that was her school for 4 years. I was in school. I went to school to her, she taught the year that I was 8th grade.

TR: I graduated from the 8th grade at Dry Creek School.

MJ: _____ sister also taught at Summerville for 2 years. She went to Monmouth after she graduated high school in '24. She went to Monmouth to school for a year, and came back and taught at Summerville, 1st through 4th grades for two years, and then she went to Ashland and got her second year. In those days they only had to have two years to be able to teach.

DO: So she went to Southern Oregon.

MJ: She went to Southern Oregon, yeah.

TR: Western Oregon.

MJ: So she's pretty well known. She's got a lot of students left around; students that went to school to her that are getting up in years.

TR: Yeah that year, somebody came. She was so disgusted. She didn't get to visit with anybody because that person kept asking her questions. Spoiled her day, but she doesn't have much stamina, so she was worn out. There were 15 of her students at the reunion. She's the last person living in her high school class, isn't that right?

DO: What were the names of some of the families that lived out there?

MJ: I'll bet you've talked to Emery Oliver haven't you?

DO: No, this is my first interview.

MJ: Well, you'd better talk to Emery Oliver. He's got all kinds of stories.

TR: He and my dad collected stuff; daddy got all the stuff when they tore down the school over there at Pleasant Grove. He got all the old records and stuff over there and took them up to the college. Henry Freeze was my dad. He and Emery used to hash over history a whole bunch.

MJ: Emery went to Dry Creek School; he lived about a quarter of a mile.

TR: Did dad get the Willow Creek records too?

MJ: I don't know about that.

TR: He did Summerville's, because they were scattered in the old. Was that a Masonic Hall? The old Masonic Hall, when they went to tear it down, here were all these old school records. He gathered them all up and brought them up to the college.

DO: So the college has them?

MJ: They did have them.

TR: They were putting them on computers.

DO: Now where was the Masonic Hall?

MJ: In Summerville. You know where the church is in Summerville? It was on that corner. Now the church started over here, and there was this big building over here, and then the street. It was on that corner. Two story building. Summerville, in order to finance the cemetery, put on a huge Memorial Day dinner, and it was always served in the Masonic Hall. People would come from way off on Memorial Day. That's when they would come back to visit because of this wonderful meal.

TR: They would line up for dinner two blocks down the street.

MJ: Donations of food, you never saw such pie in your life. And ice cream, they always had the best ice cream.

TR: Homemade.

DO: So that financed the cemetery?

MJ: That financed the cemetery until they got on the tax rolls.

DO: That is a nice cemetery.

MJ: We have a lot of ancestors there. Both sets of my grandparents are there. So that would be her great grandparents. Who else have we got there; lots of ancestors.

TR: My husband.

MJ: Yeah, her husband is there.

TR: My dad, and his dad and mother.

MJ: They came from Luxemburg and Germany.

DO: That's a unique thing that would never happen in this day and age, where you finance a cemetery through a big dinner.

TR: They're still having those dinners, what's that go to?

MJ: It isn't very big I don't think anymore, just a way of getting some finances.

TR: Emery Oliver, he ran the cemetery for how many years?

MJ: I have no idea.

TR: I don't remember, oh, Maude McCray was there before.

MJ: Emery's getting old. He's 90, had his 90th birthday, but he still has his, he's still pretty bright as far as his mind is concerned. Boy he can tell stories. You'll have to get a hold of him. He's got a story about some guy that's buried out at the cemetery, buried with his whiskey or something, I don't know. He always has to tell that story. But yeah, Emery, he's the one that got all the records together.

TR: But he can't find our, your great grandpa's. There were no records.

MJ: My great-grandfather is buried out there.

TR: He said he wouldn't know it but we told him. When I was a kid there was a Union Star plaque type thing.

MJ: Medal.

TR: They took all those during the war and used them.

MJ: During World War II, you know, melted them for metal.

DO: For metal.

MJ: But there's no record, and no marker anymore. We know where the grave is, but

TR: He told me if I could find it, I could get a Veteran's plaque for it, you know. It's just something I haven't gotten done yet. Time's a-wastin'.

DO: Well what were some of the other families out there?

MJ: Well the Olivers, Emery's folks.

TR: Emery's dad and Margie's dad were best buddies growing up.

MJ: My home place, where I was born, where I was raised, not born. You know where the Dry Creek Schoolhouse is out there? It's a red building and it's got a little plaque on it at the top, says Dry Creek School.

DO: I haven't been out there in so long, I can't remember.

TR: But anyway, it's that road.

MJ: Yeah, and then, you go, Summerville road goes from Imbler, over to Phillips Creek. And you go by the Dry Creek Schoolhouse. There's a road that goes toward the mountain, now it's called Dry Creek Lane. The first house on the right hand side going up that way was the Woodall. Have you heard that name?

DO: Yes.

MJ: Well, I was a Woodall. That house that's standing there, not as it is now because it's had lots of improvements and changes and so forth. But the house originally was built by my grandfather when my dad was two years old.

TR: Before that, they had a place on the little knob right across the creek yanno. But mother sold it in 1975 and it had been in the family 102 years.

DO: Now in Oregon, is there a Centennial farm?

MJ: Yes, they call it Century Farms. We weren't able to do that, because her brother had it, and then he rented it to somebody else, and so it wasn't farmed one of those years.

TR: He went full time National Guard because it was the years that farming was really bad.

MJ: But because of that one year of renting, of having rented out. That's what your mom told me, they weren't able to get the Century Farm. She still owned it but they didn't farm it.

TR: Three or four young men in the area had to leave farming at that time that had intended on farming the family places.

MJ: You wanted to know about other names. The Royce's, now they lived on up the road. George, well, G. Royce; do you know G. Royce?

DO: Mhm, G and Val?

MJ: G and Val, all right. G's grandfather, he lived up there.

TR: And his other grandfather was on Brooks Lane. She was a Brooks, right?

MJ: Who was?

TR: Anna and Stella?

MJ: Yeah, Anna and Stella were Brooks.

DO: So at the Royce's, was that the original farm where G and Val are now?

MJ: No, this is up on the same road as the Dry Creek Schoolhouse a half a mile beyond where I was raised. The other house there didn't have a permanent family residence, it changed a lot.

TR: It was part of the original Woodall place so was Royce's actually.

MJ: Then you go on up the hill a little way; bout another quarter of a mile, and it was McKinnis's. A lot of McKinnis's in this valley.

TR: That lady that writes for the Elgin paper, she's done some wonderful Century Farm stories, yanno with the families telling what they know about. The last two years, how many has she done, probably 20 or 30, I don't know.

DO: I'll have to be sure and dig those up.

MJ: She's done a real good job on it. Craig's lived there. They lived on a road, back of our house, and Choate.

DO: Was there ever a mill or anything like that out there?

MJ: Oh, Dry Creek; right behind the Schoolhouse there was one.

TR: There was a millpond back there, is all that was left. It burned, didn't it? I think it burned at some point in time; was before my time.

MJ: Now Summerville had

TR: They had three mills at one time. How many pubs did they have; taverns, six or something, a whole bunch at one time. But if you can talk to my sister in law and her husband, he's got a lot of information. Mary's got a lot of pictures she doesn't know what to do with.

DO: Before I go, I'll get those names and write them down. When you were growing up there, was there still a mill around there anywhere?

MJ: Well, there was some remnants of the mill.

TR: _____ came home from Korea and worked at Sylvan-Hewitt's Mill. Sylvan is still alive, he lives at Richland.

MJ: But no, the mill at the Dry Creek Schoolhouse, it was just a shell. We knew where it had been, and there was a lot of remnants left, you know. But it wasn't a mill at that time.

DO: So you had the dancing at the hall?

MJ: Ok now, we'll go back a little in history and I'll get this in. My father was the rural mail carrier out at Summerville for 38, 39 years, I guess. And he, horse and buggy,

TR: He started in 1910? Yeah, 1910 to 1948.

DO: What was his first name?

MJ: Miles. Miles Woodall. He lived on the farm, and he farmed and he carried the mail. And our farm was halfway on his route. He'd leave Summerville and go around and get home in time he could go in and get a bite to eat. Then he'd get in his rig. Well as I say, he did horse and buggy. Um, then in the wintertime he had a mail cart, only it was on runners, all enclosed and everything.

TR: The ones you see in pictures. In fact, Barney had that. He was going to restore it.

DO: Boy that'd be something to have.

MJ: Yeah and um, and then um, did Ruth take over it?

TR: _____ worked it for two years as an interim. That was back when they were still. Your representatives appointed the mail carriers. So Ruthie changed her uh, she changed to a Democrat so she'd be in the right party to get it. Then she ran it from, oh, that would've been '50 till, gosh, I don't know when Howard

MJ: I don't either; he was only there about what, three or four years?

TR: Yeah, he moved off to La Grande, the La Grande route.

MJ: This Ruthie she mentioned was her mother in law. And then they brought one in from La Grande, and he carried about three or four years.

TR: And I substituted for him.

MJ: Yeah, he was about ready to retire. And then she was appointed

TR: I got it automatically.

MJ: Yeah, because you were the substitute.

TR: Back in those days, that's how that was set up.

MJ: How long did you carry the mail out there?

TR: I had 31 years, 7 months and 12 days with the Postal Service. But it was actually 17 years.

MJ: So that's sorta in the family. And then her substitute was my son. And then he got a Rural Route down in Willamette Valley. So he's still down there, he's still carrying mail.

TR: He's another one that had to leave the ranch to make it.

DO: Well I wonder with all that snow out there, that he didn't use that sleigh for quite a few years.

MJ: Oh, always in the winter. Course the roads were not good like they are now. They were not built up for the snow to go across, you know.

TR: I had one guy tell me he remembered they all talked about how grandpa always got there. But he had a 20-foot drift in front of his house and grandpa and the horses went over that drift. It was packed so solid.

MJ: In Summerville they had this one, is that the one you're talking about?

TR: No, this was up at John Lewis's you know how bad that road used to be.

MJ: Oh yeah. In Summerville they had uh, I can't think of the guy's name, Shaw. The Shaw drift. We always had a drift at Shaw's. And that was because the house, it's a big old-fashioned type house, white house, on the north side of town on the west side of the street. And it was uh, owned by McDonalds for a while, I mean it still is. But she doesn't live there now.

DO: From McDonald road, is that the same family?

MJ: No. McDonald road is in the middle of the valley. No, this is out at Summerville. The original owner of that big square old fashioned house was Shaw. And there was a drift and it went up, and down. I think that was probably a big a thrill as they get from skiing on a mountain. Go up with the horses and they'd go down and you'd just see their tails.

DO: Is that because of the house?

TR: Must have been '49. Was that the year that we had the terrible winter? It drifted the height of the house clear across the street to the east yanno, and out into the field. And they took down the fences on both sides so people could drive around that drift. And it was that way for a long time that year.

MJ: We used to have a lot of fences, you know. The fields weren't open like they are now. And uh, the telephone lines were not buried, and they had the posts and the wires. Many the times I've seen my dad drive his horses and his sleigh over the fences. And the horse's ears would flick the telephone wires. But as I say, the fences were there, and they stopped, with brush in them and the like. And they'd stop a lot of snow and pile it up.

DO: Yeah, hm.

MJ: But yeah,

Second half transcribed by Paula Helten (August 17, 2011)
(Both women will be referred to as "XX")

XX: those were (chuckles).

And that road from Imbler to Teeter's used to be, uh, they might still have problems when there's a blizzard. But we don't seem to have the winters we used to. But we've got a picture some place. Dad, after the war, in '47, he got, um, '47 Ford. I think everybody did (laughs) about that time.

DO: Yeah, yeah.

XX: But, um, the, that year we had the bad winter, they finally went through it with a rotary plow, and he took a picture of his car in that drift. And it was about three times higher than that Ford, you know. And it was a long ways. It was half the, it went, it started out of town a little ways, but I mean, um, it went clear to Teeter's corner and around.

DO: Mm. You know, I've always wondered why it was called Summerville with all the snow out there.

(All laughing)

DO: All that,

XX: I guess a man was named Summerville (laughs).

DO: Must have been.

XX: There was uh, a contest or something, uh, some way they had uh.

It had to be whether to call it Winter.

Oh, Winterville?

Not Summerville (chuckles).

DO: Oh, mm-hm, and

XX: But there was a summer man, I think.

Yeah, summer, Summerville that they had.

DO: This thing, it'd had to, had to be uh, a name.

XX: Yeah, mm-hm.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: And uh,

When I was hauling mail, they told me this was a state, that I had the worst route for drifting snow than any in Oregon.

DO: Oh? This was in the 70's, was this you did?

XX: I, I quit in '93.

DO: Oh.

XX: It would be about the 80's then probably _____.

DO: Mm.

XX: In that, the 70's and 80's.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: The 70's. I, I started in '75 full time. I was substituting before that a long time, but

DO: Oh, I don't know if it was like '89 or

XX: I used to swear

DO: something like that there was pretty good snow.

XX: we could come out here and there wouldn't be any snow at the airport.

DO: No.

XX: You know that Ladd Canyon wind just took all that snow right up the hill.

DO: And dumped it right up at Summerville.

(All agreeing)

XX: My dad uh, I started to say that he started with horse and buggy, you know, and that, drove a Model T Ford.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: Carry the mail, an Model A, and then he had, when he went to the Model A Ford.

DO: Uh-huh.

XX: And then he had one of the first V-8's.

Mm-hm.

DO: Yeah!

XX: And then it went

DO: That was the Model B then. That was a 32,

XX: Model B, uh

DO: 32, something like that, yeah.

XX: Well um, they uh, he carried over Pumpkin Ridge, and of course, that was roads just filled full. And he hired, well uh, Thelma's dad, uh, did helped him a lot. And, and then he had uh, after that then another hired man,

He always

Virgil Sanderson. And he had,

There was Albert Kremlin too.

And Albert Kremlin, that's right. And they, he would send them on skis. They would, I don't know if he sent them, but anyhow, they took, they would take their skis. And they'd go up on Pumpkin Ridge and deliver mail up there so the people could get their mail.

DO: Oh.

XX: Now I don't, I cannot tell you that every person got their mail every day, but they didn't go very long without having mail, you know so. But uh, yeah they don't do it. They don't have to do that now.

DO: And mail was more important then?

XX: It was, very so. No, not

DO: You know, not as important today.

XX: No, nuh-uh. That's our ____.

Me too (chuckles).

We don't, we don't have computers! We can't email anybody (laughs)!

DO: Well, to most people though, to a lot of people it just doesn't seem to be important then.

XX: I know.

DO: People have forgotten how to write.

XX: Yeah, that's true. Yeah.

My grandson left for Singapore this morning. He said, "Well, when the folks get home, they're gone, they'll be back Wednesday." He said, "If there's anything you need to get in touch, just have them email me."

DO: Yeah (chuckles).

XX: (laughs).

DO: Uh-huh, yeah, different world.

XX: But he knows that grandma can't do it, so he has to (laughs) have somebody else do it.

DO: Mm.

XX: But uh, yeah, it's uh, it's a different world.

DO: Hm.

XX: It really is. We've seen so many changes, and

Her grandson is Chris Hatton that did the movies here.

DO: Oh really?

XX: "Sierra Leone" ____ John Stewart.

DO: Oh really, no kidding?

XX: He and his wife.

DO: Huh?

XX: Well,

DO: You know I've never seen that movie.

XX: You haven't?

DO: I have not. I, I missed it when it was, when they had that screening here.

XX: Here they are.

DO: Oh boy.

XX: They're still doing movies, and

DO: I'll be darned.

XX: They got one they just finished doing, what, last summer?

Yeah, last
 ____?
 ____ '04.

But uh, they're gettin' ready for

Yeah, they're working on it now, and getting it. They're in the last stages of financing.

____ Singapore. She did, she did a movie over there.

That was uh, TV, wasn't it?

I don't know if, I don't know if they used that for a TV movie or not.

DO: So that,

XX: She got some kind of an award for ____ one.

She was uh,

Her dad wrote it, and she directed the movie.

DO: I'll be darned.

XX: And uh, but there uh, there only, they had more things in the fire, something going all the time.

Mm-hm.

But-uh,

DO: Well, I know why now, I mean in this "Sammyville," when I could have seen it in the theater, now I don't know how to, if there's any videos

XX: Well yeah,

DO: available to see it,
 XX: officially.

DO: or what.

XX: Oh, D____ sold out. He sold out.

Thursday? I went down, um, what day ____ Thursday. I went down Thursday. He sold his last one on Wednesday, so he'll be callin'.

He'll be callin', uh, callin' me or emailing Chris.

____, why don't you get ____?

Um,

DO: Well,

XX: Uh, Sunflower Books might have some.

DO: Hm.

XX: They had them at Christmastime, and after Christmas they asked for a few more.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: So, um, but uh, yeah. And D____ has kept them all the time.

DO: Did you ever have any contact with Sammy?

XX: Oh yes!

(All chuckling)

XX: Sammy's one of a kind (laughing)!

DO: I guess he is. I don't know.

XX: Yeah, oh yes, I've been out there. And, we went out and fed the crew out there, the movie crew, one day.

At his place.

DO: Oh!

XX: At his place when they were filming out there. And uh, we've been out there several times and visited with him. And, I've seen him. We only go when Chris is here because uh, Chris is the contact. We don't have any uh,

DO: Well, how did Chris get on this idea to film Sammyville?

XX: There was this story in the Observer about Sammyville. And it was written by um, Arie Farnum. Is that her name?

Oh, okay.

Now, and she wrote
She just got married last weekend.

You told me then. Uh, she wrote this story about Sammyville, and it was one of those features, you know, like they do in the Observer. This was, what, must have been six, seven years ago.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: And Chris read that, and it intrigued him. And, the more he thought about it, the more he thought that sounds like uh, it would make a movie. You know, be a story. So, he and his wife went out there one day, drove out there. (chuckles) They got just so far, and they decided to come back. They didn't go on. And uh, so he called the sheriff and talked to him. And he says, "I don't think there's any problem." He said uh, "Oh, would you like me to go out with you?" And Chris said, "Yes, I would." So they, he went with the sheriff, and they went out and saw, met Sammy and talked. And Sammy seemed, I don't know, he just liked Chris and Chris liked him.

DO: Hm.

XX: And he, when they decided they, uh, when he wrote the, the movie, then he went out and talked to him and asked him if they could film out there. And he just gave them carte blanche. They could just do whatever they wanted to do and film.

DO: All right!

XX: Chris, Chris told me that there was no way Holly, Hollywood could replicate the

DO: Oh no, uh no, no they couldn't.

XX: Because he's got everything sorted. All of his lawn mowers are in one place, and all these refrigerators are someplace else (chuckles).

DO: No, no, they couldn't, that's right.

XX: When, when Sammy was hurt, and was in the hospital in uh, Portland for a couple of months, it was right at Christmastime. And Chris was down there for, oh I guess, between the times that he came up here for Christmas and all, he uh, was there probably about a week in the Portland area. And every day he went to the hospital to see Sammy.

DO: Mm, right. Now, Chris is your grandson?

XX: Yes.

DO: Yeah.

XX: Yes, he was raised at Imbler, and graduated from Imbler High School and from Eastern Oregon. And uh,

DO: Well how about, do you have any tales of Joe and the railroad?

XX: (laughs).

DO: You probably have a lot (chuckles).

XX: Well, I don't know if you'd call them tales. We just know what he did, and he did a lot of travelling. And he was a, he was a school teacher. He taught school two years in Imbler as, as Agricultural Teacher. And then he, well he had one year at Amity before he came here, then two years at Imbler. And then he taught one year at uh, Union. However, he left uh, couple, three months before the term was up because Union Pacific had hired him. And so, they let him go so he could go. And he went to Boise as a, an Agricultural Agent. They had uh, a supervisor in Omaha, and then they had. He was the first Agricultural Agent. Years before the war, before they uh, I don't know, maybe even before the Depression they had uh, agricultural people on the railroad. And then, and then they,

DO: Now is that uh, for the right of way?

XX: No, no!

No uh, _____

_____ farm products.

Yeah, to promote farm products.

DO: Oh, oh, oh, I see, I gotcha.

XX: Back in those days, the railroads carried livestock. They carried vegetables, (chuckles), and all that stuff.

DO: Yeah.

XX: Nowadays they don't. You know,

DO: Right, okay.

XX: but anyhow. And then he was uh, in Boise four years. And then uh, they uh, promoted the supervisor to uh, supervisor of livestock, and so they took Joe back to Omaha as Supervisor of Agriculture. And then before he finished up, he had been Supervisor of Livestock and Agriculture. They had the two of them combined at one time after the other guy retired. And uh, he had six men under him, six agents out through the, through the state, uh the, the west.

The whole Union Pacific _____.

Yeah, yeah, you know. Of course, it wasn't near as big as it is now, the, the area, you know. But he had one in Portland, and one in Boise, one in Salt Lake City, one in Denver, one in Omaha. Did I say six?

Yeah.

Where's the, where's the other one (chuckles)? Maybe there was only five. But they were all under him, and that's what they did. They promoted agriculture, and uh, helped in the developing of new products in the areas, or a new one.

He, he got the grass here and took it back to the Midwest and had grass plots around, growing to see

DO: Oh?

XX: what grew, _____ would work best, and that type of thing.

DO: And that kind of thing.

XX: Mm-hm, yeah.

There back in uh, in Kansas, uh, they developed uh, watermelons back there. Uh, called uh, it was a seedless watermelon. And uh, it's grown back there, and they, it was good. He got the seed and brought it to a grower in Hermiston.

DO: (chuckles) Oh!

XX: Those are these little, round,

DO: Oh no!

XX: seedless watermelon.

DO: No kidding!

XX: And they're grown all over now. That was developed in Kansas, and he had contact with those people.

DO: Oh, that's interesting.

XX: And the,

He, he had lots to do with the State Colleges, you know, the agricultural colleges.

DO: The agricultural colleges.

XX: Mm-hm.

One of his duties was um, uh, handling the scholarships that the Union Pacific gave to farm, well, I guess farm youth. Um, for, they gave a 4-H Club Scholarship and a FFA Scholarship in every county in the states that they served. So they gave uh, a lot, and they had to go to the State Agriculture College.

DO: Huh.

XX: But they, that is gone by the wayside. After he,

DO: Oh yeah.

XX: after he retired, they wiped that one out, and now they give only to the

You may have heard that from him.

Yeah.

People aren't doing things like they used to (laughs)!

DO: Oh, from Joe! From Joe, yeah!

XX: From Joe, yeah! That, they don't do things like they used to!

DO: But by golly, I've got the answer here.

XX: (laughing)

But he was, he did uh, do a lot of

_____?

DO: A _____, that's interesting.

XX: He retired after thirty-five years with the railroad.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: And he's been retired thirty years. I told him this morning,

DO: Oh!

XX: I said, "You've been retired almost as long as you worked for the railroad."

DO: Boy, I bet he's, saw a lot there. I mean, well, you

XX: He travelled a lot. He was gone a lot. He'd uh, and he travelled by train.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: Because uh, that's the way we did it

DO: Yeah.

XX: back in those days.

DO: Yeah.

XX: We sort of

We ____ Margie and the kids would come out every summer and stay.

Oh yeah, we spent, we spent the summers here.

She's been like my big sister.

(chuckling). Oh yeah, a sister instead of an aunt!

DO: Uh-huh.

XX: This is like my little sister!

(chuckling).

DO: Oh, that's good.

XX: And it's been that way all these years, you know.

DO: That's, that's good.

XX: Well, actually mom was twenty-four when I was born, and you were twelve or something.

I was eleven.

She's about half way between us anyways.

DO: Hm.

XX: Um, there is more, there's one year, one more year of age difference in, in my sister and I than Thelma and I.

(chuckles).

I'm twelve years younger than she is, and, and eleven years older than ____.

DO: ____.

XX: But uh, yeah we've been around quite a lot.

DO: Yeah.

XX: But as soon as he retired and came back, well, we actually came back first. My kids, the kids, my two children graduated from high school in Omaha, and came out here and went to school in the west. (chuckles) They didn't want to go back there.

DO: They didn't want any more of that Omaha.

XX: Nope, they, they didn't want anything of that, no.

DO: Well, I can understand that

XX: They, they liked it.

DO: once you come out here.

XX: Yeah, this is great.

DO: Yeah.

XX: Where are you from?

DO: I'm from Mich., Michigan originally.

XX: Michigan.

Oh, Michigan, yeah!

DO: I've lived a lot of places too.

XX: Yeah?

Oh (chuckles)!

DO: Yeah (chuckles). Yeah. One thing we did in Michigan, well, was a lot of skating. Was there any places around, like ponds here, that people did ice skating?

XX: A lake?

DO: Was that ever popular here?

XX: There used to be. There used to be.

Sloughs.

A sloughs.

DO: Because there's nothing that people ever do any more. I just wondered if it was ever, ever happened here.

XX: Well, it quite frequent

[recording interruption – several seconds]

XX: what, what you wanted, and

DO: Okay, we're talking about ice skating.

XX: Yes.

DO: And ice skating on the sloughs.

XX: And uh, on the river, I don't know that they ever skated on the river, but the, along the edge of the river. You know, where the water'd come in and be. They used to do that all the time.

DO: Now were you here, when was the State Ditch dug? The main State Ditch where the

XX: I don't know.

DO: cut the river off. That was way before?

XX: Yeah.

DO: Yeah.

XX: My son has uh, a stock certificate for something. I don't remember what it is. It belonged to the Rollins's.

Oh.

DO: Like a stock certificate from the ditch company, or something?

XX: Yeah, somethin'.

DO: Huh, mm-hm. So, were you, were you really serious farmers then? Or was that you were, you know, you and Joe? Yeah.

XX: You bet we were serious!

DO: You were serious.

XX: (laughs). Joe was never anything but serious!

DO: Yeah? Okay, alright.

XX: Yeah, we did. Um, yeah, that was always what he wanted to do,

DO: Oh.

XX: you know, and that was his, and that. So we bought that land up there, and uh, it was mountain land. That's why it was so, grew grass so well.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: And uh, then we bought some other, other than the original eighty acres, we bought more. So we ended up with a hundred and twenty, two hundred, about three hundred and twenty acres

DO: Oh.

XX: or something like that, maybe more than that. Uh, that's what Joe Dell had I guess, was three hundred and twenty. So we had uh, we just had our eighty. We just kept it in our name. And um, but yeah, we had

There, there was a job. It was a full time job!

DO: Mm-hm. The only reason I said that is because of other careers, you know,

XX: Yeah, yeah.

DO: like, you teaching, Joe at the railroad.

XX: Yeah.

DO: You know.

XX: Yeah. But uh, oh I was a farm girl.

Yeah,

DO: Oh.

XX: you know we are. I, I wouldn't a said for everybody, but as far as I was concerned, once a farm girl always a farm girl (chuckles)!

(laughs).

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: There's a lot of people that can't wait to leave, but I love the farm.

DO: Mm. Well, that's how my wife is. She loves the farm, and so she has it now.

XX: (laughs).

DO: I don't.

XX: (still laughing) She's got it!

DO: I was tired of it.

XX: Yeah.

DO: But anyway. Let's see, hmm, was there, well there must have been a, they just had the Joseph line out there in, near Centerville,

XX: Mm.

DO: or, near that area?

XX: Well, at Rinehart.

DO: It was at Rinehart?

XX: Yeah, at Rinehart, mm-hm.

Well, Rine, they'd go to Rinehart or Imbler, you know. But mother tells that she was sick when she was supposed to take her examinations for eighth grade. And so sometime that summer the, the county school superintendent lived in Elgin. Some time that summer her dad took her over to Rinehart and put her on the train, and she went down and took her test, and she came back on the train (chuckles). And Grandpa picked her up at Rinehart and took her home.

DO: Mm.

XX: At Imbler, now the mail came in on the train to Imbler, and there was a, they called it a Star Route. And there was a man that lived at Summerville. He'd go to Imbler every morning, pick up the mail. Anybody uh, between Imbler and Summerville was on the road; he'd drop their mail off. And then he'd get the mail to Summerville. And then they'd uh, distribute it so they'd get it ready to take out on the route. And those, those men, I can still see them on their kegs in front of the store.

DO: Sorting the mail?

XX: _____.

Pullin' a sled, pullin' a sled, hiking, and pulling sleds too.

DO: Oh.

XX: Uh, no, just sitting there talking.

DO: Oh.

XX: You know, they'd _____, how the old fellows did.

DO: Or do (chuckles).

XX: Yeah, I guess they still do, yes.

DO: Now around, around Hamburger Hill there, there was, there's uh, a slide that has uh, covered the railroad tracks there for awhile. Did it ever, did it ever happen in the past that you know of?

XX: Hm-mm.

DO: Oh, okay. It looked, because it looks like it'd been there forever.

XX: Well, I think, didn't they, oh not the railroad track. It was the highway that they pushed the

Yeah, but it, it went down over.

DO: It, it's where the, it's down near the old highway.

XX: Yeah, yeah.

Yeah.

DO: It's down in there. In, there's a slide that keeps covering

XX: Well, I think there's always been slides with the, just a _____. They could shove them aside, or remove them, or like you know lots of places. But I, that's the first time the whole mountain there moved, I think. And I, I was going to Elgin one day, and I saw a semi-truck and trailer go into that dip, and it went clear out of sight! I was down the hill

DO: Oh yeah, yeah.

XX: a little ways, you know.

Because the dip was that deep there.

Yeah.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: Well, there's uh people that knew that that was there, and that there was that possibility. The, the gentleman I'm speaking of has since died, but he told the State Highway that there'd be slides in that area.

DO: Hm. Well, there is.

XX: Another one is where Grande Ronde Hospital is sitting.

Yeah.

DO: That's a slide area? Hm?

XX: That,

Mm-hm.

I had a friend that was a Cat-Scanner, and he was up there shoving stuff around for them. And he told them it wasn't safe. They shouldn't build there. And um, so they fired him. Got somebody else to shove the dirt and rock around, and built the hospital there. So, one of these days (chuckles)

DO: Hm.

XX: Maybe we won't live to see it.

Maybe not.

DO: _____.

XX: Maybe it won't be that soon, that soon. (coughing) I guess, fella', the same fella', his name, I don't know, you may know him, Dick Hibberd?

DO: Yeah.

XX: Well, it was Dick that told the State Highway that was a slide

Oh, down there?

Yeah.

Well, this was Nicky Doherty.

I, I know

Oh, yeah.

down here, but down there. And then uh, when they built that highway through, and they put all that rock and stuff on the, the nor., uh, west side of the road, you know.

DO: Yeah.

XX: He, Dick Hibberd stood down there because he owned the property. And he told them how to (chuckles) how to do it.

DO: (chuckles).

XX: And what needed to be done to protect it. And they, they put uh, what'd they do, put uh, something under the highway to run some water under it

Yeah.

some way, I think.

DO: Yeah.

XX: Because he said they'd have trouble.

They put, they called them French uh,

DO: French Drains.

XX: Drains, yeah. So, it was something different than they'd done in this part of the country anyway.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: Because everybody was

But, you know the uh, I don't know now, but I, always before if you talked to the old-timers you'd get better information than with all the gadgets they use.

DO: I think you're right, you're right.

XX: (laughs).

Yeah, both of my, uh, both of my grandfathers came over on a covered wagon from Iowa. And uh, were you around when they dedicated this tree up on the mount, up on the campus here last, uh, April, six weeks ago?

DO: No.

XX: Yeah, April.

DO: No, I don't remember them doing that, no.

XX: Yeah. They have a big old um, elm,
Yeah.
elm tree up there. And um, it's over a hundred years old. And they put a plaque on it
Mm-hm.
during Arbor Day celebration.

DO: Mm.

XX: And it was my great-grandfather that uh, planted that tree.

DO: Oh yeah?

XX: And there was quite a story in the paper about it. It's an interesting story, but it was pretty well publicized this year. Um,

DO: I don't get the paper, so I didn't

XX: (chuckles).

Oh! Oh my, you don't know what you're missing!

DO: (chuckles).

XX: Well, you can pick up those little Elgin papers, and, and you know every once in awhile.
But anyway, this tree uh, his wife had very poor health and died. And my grandfather was the youngest in the family. And uh, her mother can remember them talking about the lady that took care of the baby. Well, I don't know if he was a baby, but he was the youngest in the family when they came. And uh, but the wife died. Uh, that would be my great-grandmother, and she wanted to be buried on that hill. They lived below the hill, but she wanted to be buried up on that hill. So, he buried her there. And oh, locust, that's what it is!
Oh, the black locust!
Is it?

DO: Oh!

XX: I think it's a black locust, locust. And they planted, he planted a tree. I don't know if it was at the head or the foot of the grave. And for ten years he watered that tree. He'd run a bucket of water, and water that tree. That lasted for ten years until he died. And that tree is still standing on campus up here.

DO: I'll be darned.

XX: And there's, they put a nice little plaque on it. So they, we all went up and (chuckles) watched this ceremony.

DO: Now was this part of the campus then?

XX: No.
No, no, they didn't have

DO: Was this?

XX: any campus. No, no.

DO: No campus?

XX: This was back in 18

DO: Oh! Oh, oh!

XX: 65!

1865.

DO: Uh-huh, of course.

XX: 1880's, they uh,

No.

Oh?

60! She was in the sixties.

She died that soon?

Well, I think so because grandpa was, he came over uh, he was on the covered wagon. But I don't know how old he was. I'd have some place I'm gonna have to find out. But uh,

But we haven't had our walk up to the cemetery, have we?

No, we gotta do that.

(chuckles).

But anyway that's uh, and the, then the Woodall's. There, they were pretty common in the valley because there were, there were um, how many brothers, five?

I don't, I don't remember, and one sister?

And one sister.

Yeah.

The Wallsingers.

Yeah.

Now, I don't know if you know that name.

DO: I know the name, yes, I do.

XX: The, the one sister of the Woodall's that came out, uh, was married. She had married a Wallsinger, and they came with them. And uh, then there were uh, I think there were five. But my grandpa, uh, my grandfather was nineteen when he came out. And there was one that was twenty-one.

Now, he was born in England, wasn't he?

Grandpa Bake, err, Woodall?

Uh-huh. Oh no, Grandpa Baker.

DO: It amazes me that anybody came out here in a covered wagon.

XX: Me too!

(laughs).

DO: I mean, really.

XX: (laughs).

Me too! Just think of the hardship.

DO: I know.

XX: I just, I just can't fathom it. Here we, we can't go fast enough

DO: Mm, mm yeah.

XX: to get across these old_____ parts of the country.

DO: Yeah. We get mad when we can't

XX: Yeah.

DO: turn at an intersection within three seconds.

XX: Mm-hm. You know, that's right.

No time anymore!

DO: Oh, when did you leave the farm out there?

XX: Uh, with Joe _____?

DO: Yeah.

XX: Nine years ago. Nine years ago, the first day of June we moved into this new apartment.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: Um, somebody said, "Why did you move? Why did you leave?" And I said, "When you get up in the morning and see all the work that has to be done, and you aren't able to do it. It's time to get out." And that's where Joe was at that time.

DO: Mm-hm.

XX: He wasn't able to do it anymore, and uh, so. And he never, never really was happy about it. Oh, I wouldn't say he wasn't happy here. But as long as he was able he drove out to that farm every day

DO: Oh.

XX: after we came here. And I kept, uh, I would tell him that he was moving things from one side of a shed to the other side. And then when he got through he'd move them back. You know because he, there really wasn't anything to do out there, but he just, that's where he, his heart was

DO: Sure.

XX: was out there.

He worked, he worked really hard, well, from growing up. How old was he when they took those horses through from?

Fourteen.

He was fourteen. They took horses from

From uh, San., well uh, near Lemhi, Idaho. Salmon, Idaho?

DO: Yeah, mm-hm.

XX: Uh, Lemhi.

To Burns.

To Burns. He and uh, another young fella' in, I guess. I don't know if there was, I think maybe the other one was a year or two older than he was. But they trailed those horses from clear across the country to Burns.

DO: Wow.

XX: And he was fourteen at the time.

DO: That's a long ways.

XX: And then uh, yeah, it's a long ways.

DO: Man!

XX: Yeah.

He worked his way through um, Oregon State College.

He uh, when he was in high school he worked all the time as uh, he worked in a grocery store. And he did, he did everything, you know. He butchered, he (chuckles) did all this stuff. And then he uh, raised chickens on his own, and uh, sold eggs, and butchered the chickens and sold the chickens. And, and he never had any time but work.

DO: Hm.

XX: And um, then he went to Oregon State. And, I don't know.

DO: Was there any, was there ever anything around here, like you said chickens, was there ever any big poultry operation? Or was there ever,

XX: _____.

DO: was there ever any _____?

XX: We had some dairy.

DO: _____?

XX: We had dairies.

We had some good sized dairies.

We had dairies.

DO: More dairies.

XX: Yeah. There was a dairy back up, back up here some place. I don't know just where it was. And then there was one out in the middle of the valley.

DO: Going over to Cove.

XX: And, but there were

DO: Another in Cove.

XX: but there were quite a few dairies, yeah.

DO: Oh, okay.

XX: And,

Grandma, her mom lived, they lived up here when she was growing up. And she could remember her mom sending her for eggs or milk or something. And going by the old, uh stable, and having, you know stopping to look in because people would dash out on their horses or with their carts or whatever (laughs). You know, she can remember being scared of, of that.

(coughs).

DO: Hm.

[recording ends.]