

VEDA MAE HOUX MILLER
TAPE #1
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Interviewed by Eugene Smith
Transcribed by Micheal L. Minthorn

Side A

I: Give me your complete name would you? Your maiden name, and, all your names?

VM: Of my family?

I: No just yours.

VM: I was Veda Mae Houx Miller.

I: I see. And is that V-E-D-A?

VM: Uh-huh. M-A-E. Houx, H-O-U-X.

I: H-O-U, oh you are from the Houx family?

VM: And then I married Richard Miller.

I: I see. Was he also from Cove?

VM: Uh-huh. He was a farmer. Out in lower Cove. And.

I: And when were you born?

VM: I was born in 1914.

I: Where?

VM: Uh, at Cove.

I: In Cove?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: So you really know Cove?

VM: I'm one of the old-timers now.

I: You must be, yes. And then, you always lived in Cove or did you live a few other places?

VM: Well in the few winters we went over to College Place. But we always came back to Cove in the summer.

I: And why did you decide to go to College Place?

VM: To go to school.

I: Oh I see. At Walla Walla College?

VM: Yeah.

I: Yes. And that was in the summers you said?

VM: In the winters. And we came home- we had a 10 acre ranch. Or a little place a mile up from the schoolhouse. And we'd come back for summertime.

I: I see. So did you do that every winter, or just for a short term?

VM: No, just for a short- about five years.

I: Were you both going to school there?

VM: No. No. Richard went to La Grande High School up here. He went to grade school at Shanghai, out there at Cove.

I: I'll bet he knows John Mancino?

VM: I've known John all my life.

I: I've known him for a long time, too. So what school did you go to? The Cove School?

VN: I went to Cove school and then I went over to College Place to school. I graduated from Gem State Academy at Caldwell, Idaho. And then I came home.

I: What was your field of study there?

VM: I was just in high school. Yeah, I took a diploma from there.

I: And then at Walla Walla College what were you studying?

VM: Well, I was still in grade school then.

I: Oh. This was before you were married?

VM: Yes.

I: I see. Okay.

VM: Before I was married.

I: And then.

VM: And then.

I: When you've.

VM: My father passed away in 1930 and my mother with five of us kids. I had two sisters and two brothers. And it was really hard times, was very rough on my mother. I have uh; my older sister went to Loma Linda and went into nursing. Took the nurses training. And I went up here to- it was normal school then for, oh a year and a half and then I got married. And quit going to school.

I: I see. I see. Let's go back to the 1930's after your father had died. And of course it was Depression times. Can you remember at all vividly any of the uh, the, the events or what it was like to live during that period?

VM: Well it seemed like it was, it was really lonesome and very hard on my mother. We didn't have much income and that's one reason my sister went off to school. And when I went to Caldwell I worked for my room and board. And the boys they worked out what they could to the neighbors and made a little bit. They never paid very much but the Lord was with my mother and that's how we all survived.

I: How did the family get food?

VM: From the store.

I: Well, you didn't have much money.

VM: Well it seemed to- to do for us. We had a big garden and had a cow. And mother worked like a man. And us kids we picked berries and cherries and made all we could.

I: Did you ever need to get help from any other source?

VM: No.

I: You just did the best you could by yourselves?

VM: Mm-hm.

I: Uh-huh. What sort of a house did you have?

VM: We had this four-room house. It had a big kitchen and dining room and living room and two bedrooms.

I: How was it heated?

VM: Woodstoves.

I: Several woodstoves?

VM: Two.

I: One in the living room and one in the kitchen?

VM: Uh-huh. And we didn't have running water in the house.

I: So you had an outhouse?

VM: We had an outhouse.

I: And uh, what, a pump with a, a bucket that you brought the water in?

VM: We carried; we carried water for several years up from Musick's place right below us and their spring. We packed it up. And then my daddy bought some land up above us and it had a spring on it and he brought water down and piped it in onto the back porch and we had, uh, a sink out there one could get water from the house. And oh, we thought that was really something. And we finally got a telephone. We never had electricity until after I was married.

I: Did you use kerosene lamps?

VM: Uh-huh. Studied at night by kerosene lamps.

I: Now would this have been about 1935 or so?

VM: No it was earlier than that. I was married in 1935.

I: I see. Did you say your father died in 1930?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: So, so it was.

VM: He died at Hot Lake Sanitarium. Dr. Fife. He had a brain tumor. And Dr. Fife was operating and he died on the operating table. Then my sister Laverne had an appendectomy and Dr. Fife operated on her in 1931 there at Hot Lake. So I was around Hot Lake when, little when it was a going thing.

I: Uh-huh. What images do you have of that of how it looked?

VM: Oh it was really spacious. It was really a nice place and it was- it was real depressing to see it run down and get in the shape it's in.

I: It certainly is.

VM: They tried a nursing home and that didn't work out. They tried investment out there and that's too far out of town, really, to be a success. And now it's just going to pieces.

I: Worse and worse everyday.

VM: Worse and worse.

I: Yes it is.

VM: And it's too bad that someone couldn't have got it and really- they could have made money off of that. If they rent it right.

I: What, what do you think it should have been?

VM: Well they had hot water, uh, they could give treatments and therapy that- but young Dr. Fife, he didn't take care of things and lost it.

I: Oh. You think he let it run down?

VM: I'm sure.

I: I thought maybe that had happened after the Fife's had left.

VM: No I think that he kind of let it go.

I: Um, did you say- well, you went to elementary school in College Place, did you?

VM: Uh-huh. That latter years but my first I went to Cove to about the seventh grade. And then I went- we moved over to Milton-Freewater first and I went to the eighth grade over there. And then we moved to College Place and my older sister graduated from over there.

I: Now, let's- let's focus for a minute on the years when you were going to the Cove school. Do you remember those years?

VM: Oh yes.

I: Um, can you tell me anything about the teachers?

VM: Well they were all real sweet and saw that we studied and if anyone misbehaved they got after them.

I: They were strict?

VM: They were strict. Very strict. And they saw that we had our work done.

I: Do you remember learning to read?

VM: I was kind of fortunate. My older sister was just a grade ahead of me in school. I got to skip a grade because she'd come home from school and teach me what she learned. And I knew the second grade in that by heart, so I got to skip the second grade and went into the third grade. So it made it kind of bad for my sister, for her to be three years older and I was just one grade behind her. And uh, but that's the way it turned out.

I: You enjoyed school then?

VM: Uh-huh I liked school.

I: Uh-huh. Was there any particular thing about school you really liked?

VM: Oh I enjoyed all of, all of it. I liked history and English and, well I wasn't real good at geometry. That was the hardest thing for me.

I: You probably studied that over at Gem State, didn't you?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: That's a high school subject.

VM: And I took Spanish in the 12th grade over at Gem State.

I: So do you consider that you were pretty successful in school?

VM: Well I passed. (chuckles)

I: And you went to college for a while?

VM: I went up here. I went to Long Beach, California for a few months. I lived with my mother's sister and aunt to kind of help mother out and get out of- so she didn't have a need to be responsible for her, too. And I stayed there for a while and then came back home.

I: So if you went to Eastern Oregon Normal School for about a year and a half, um, and you met the man you fell in love with and decided that was more important than going to school?

VM: I guess. Well, I'll tell ya' I didn't have any way to go back and forth from Cove to school. And we didn't have a car and it was real difficult. I even started into Draper's Business College to ride with someone and then they quit so, I didn't get to, to go anymore. And when you don't have transportation you're just out of luck. And so I got married. Married a real good boy and mother thought the world of him and she- he thought the world of my mother and helped her out a lot. And she had- had 10 acres of land, he would help- he took care of that.

I: Do you remember when he asked you to marry him?

VM: Yes.

I: Tell me about it. Do you want to tell me?

VM: We, we didn't tell anybody we were gonna' get married but his uncle and aunt. Uncle John Miller and Aunt Marjorie. And uh, we went to Walla Walla and got married.

I: You eloped?

VM: We eloped. And we decided we wouldn't tell anyone we were married but the second day I went down to the neighbor's and called him up and told him to come and get me. I was- thought we oughta' be living together. So he came and got me, but my mother had an idea that- what was going on.

I: Well, why did you elope?

VM: I don't know.

I: Was it was his idea?

VM: It was his idea.

I: It was his idea.

VM: That we do that.

I: Would you have preferred to have a formal wedding in a church?

VM: No because couldn't afford it.

I: Oh. I see.

VM: I couldn't have afforded to have a nice wedding dress. I tried to do things. I was 21. And Richard was 21 and we lived with his folks. I lived with his folks for 13 years. They had a ranch out on lower Cove- that road going out from Cove. And I got a long good with my mother in-law. I can't remember that we ever had a dispute or words or anything. And I could have but I figured I was in her home and someday we'd have ours. And we finally got a chance to buy a place out in lower Cove and we moved.

I: Did it- were you saving money during that time so you could buy a place?

VM: Trying to.

I: Were you earning money in any way?

VM: No. I, I just stayed there and did housework and cooked and all. And Richard did the farm work for his dad and all and we borrowed money to buy a place. My sister, older sister got out of nurses training and she had married a doctor. And uh, they sent us the money to buy us a car and gave us the car and that was in 1948. We got the first car that came in to here to La Grande. A black Chrysler.

I: Now why didn't your husband go into the military during the Second World War?

VM: Uh, because of farming.

I: He, he was exempt?

VM: He got, he was exempt from.

I: I see. And what were the main crops that he was growing?

VM: Well it was diversified. We had peas, we had alfalfa at times. Mainly wheat, oats. We tried a year or two with peas. We had some cattle and we had some hogs, tried raising them. And then we had a hundred head of sheep and ewes. And Richard got sick in 1961. He had an ulcer operation and he got staph infection and he almost died. We were- we went to Texas- my brother in-law had built a hospital right out of El Paso. And we went down there and was there six months in El Paso. They didn't have any- no medicine to treat staph infection at that time. And Richard was- we were there six months.

I: And he recovered?

VM: Not fully.

I: It sounds as though he was a very hard worker?

VM: Richard was.

I: And maybe that gave him the ulcer?

VM: Coulda' been.

I: Now did you have children?

VM: No we didn't have any children. Seemed like we had- we had nieces and nephews there at Cove and then all of a sudden they all moved to Texas. And my brother, one of 'em was signed up in the National Guard and had just- well mother had to go and consent because he went and signed up and he wasn't old enough. And it wasn't long 'til the war broke out and he was in World War Two.

I: Did he survive?

VM: Hu-huh. But he's passed away now. I'm the only one of us kids that's living now.

I: You're fortunate.

VM: I know it.

I: Well after your husband had died, you continued to live in Cove, did you?

VM: No, uh, in 1976 Richard got so he couldn't run the farm at all. And we moved into town. We lived over here at the Country West Apartments. And we moved there in 1976 and Richard died in 1979. February. And I was sick in the hospital up here when he passed away. And they had to send me to Walla Walla to go through the cat-scan and I never saw Richard or got to go to the funeral or anything. And I was in the hospital over to Walla Walla, over two months. I had an aneurysm. And I had other difficulties and I was lucky to be alive.

I: That was a close call?

VM: Yes.

I: I'd like to go back to the name Houx. There were a number of Houx's living in Cove, weren't there?

VM: Well not too many.

I: No? I've been up to the, the cemetery. I've seen some of the gravestones marked Houx in the course of- well the name I know best is Kate Houx who was principal of the Ackerman School.

VM: Yeah. Kate was my first cousin.

I: I see. How well did you know her?

VM: Real well.

I: Tell me about her. What sort of person was she?

VM: Well she was too smart for one thing. (chuckles) And I think that's one reason why I just really continued to go on to school. She was teaching up there and I think they thought I was a Houx; I should be as smart as Kate.

I: Oh I see.

VM: I was. I was! (chuckles) But Kate was full of fun and uh, she was smart.

I: What were some of the ways she showed other people that she was smart?

VM: Well, I think she was a- one of the main ones to start Ackerman School up.

I: Yes she was.

VM: And uh, I can't understand- of all the buildings they have built and named after teachers that they haven't named a building after, after Kate.

I: Uh-huh.

VM: And she started the march down the steps, you know, that?

I: Evensong?

VM: Evensong.

I: Did she really start that?

VM: That's what I understand. She did. But, she was strict. She had a very good education.

I: And, um, you didn't ever take a class with her or see her in a classroom, did you?

VM: No I never did have a subject under her.

I: And she was older than you?

VM: Oh yes.

I: Quite a bit?

VM: Yeah.

I: Did she seem like an older woman to you at the time? Or at least be middle age when you were younger?

VM: Yes, middle age.

I: What did she look like?

VM: She was tall and slim and.

I: Did she smile a lot?

VM: Yes.

I: Even though she was strict?

VM: I don't know that she smiled a whole lot.

I: You said she was a lot of fun.

VM: She was very friendly and full of fun.

I: Do you know- do you know whether she wrote very many things? Did she write about her life?

VM: You know that I don't know.

I: Mm-hm. Do you have any photographs of her?

VM: I'm sure I do.

I: Do you think you have them here? I'd like to see them. Do you have any other photographs of the area in, in say the earlier years? The 30's, 40's, 50's.

VM: I- you know I gave some of those things away to Harold Blank.

I: Oh you did? They're lost for good then.

VM: Harold is a cousin of mine. But Harold gets a little mixed up on some of these. ____ details. [423]

I: I've interviewed him.

VM: And uh. He, he kinda' of stays away from me.

I: But you- you think you gave most of your photographs to him?

VM: I gave some to him. I think if I get out some of my pictures. You'll be around here for a while, won't you?

I: Oh yes. I live in La Grande.

VM: Yeah.

I: I'd really appreciate seeing them. Especially if they have labels on them so you could tell what the date was when they were taken. Do you think many of them do?

VM: I don't know if they do or not. I think I have a picture of Kate and her two sisters. Together, the three of them.

I: Did you keep track of her during the latter part of her life?

VM: No not really.

I: Harold said she went to Santa Barbara, California but she's buried in Cove.

VM: Yeah, uh, my grandpa Houx and my daddy bought, oh up there at Cove in the cemetery. And I forgot how many graves. I think about 14 people could be buried on them. And I know Kate's father and mother are buried up there. And her sister Leona Taylor.

I: Do you think you're the last surviving Houx.

VM: No, uh, there's my brother have a son and he has two boys that are Houx's. And I have another nephew- no, now he would be a Houx. No the Houx seems about to run out.

I: Harold said it was originally, "Lehoux." L-E-H-O-U-X and in French it would be "hoo," pronounced "hoo." Is that correct?

VM: I have heard that.

I: You have. I think he said that the family came from Wisconsin.

VM: They did. He hasn't been in Cove all of his life.

I: No. No. But he said, uh, the Houx's.

VM: They came from Texas.

I: The Houx's did?

VM: Grandpa Houx did.

I: Well, there's a little mix up there, I guess.

VM: No they came from Texas and I know we had a chest built for clothes that he sent from Texas to Cove. And it's written on the back of it. Even though it was sent from, I'll never get it because my brother's wife won't give it up.

I: Now do you think, do you think over your life various kinds of experiences you've had, uh.

End of Side A

Side B

VM: I liked to go with him and every summer we try right before harvest. We'd pack up and go back and be in Minam for a week before time you start harvest.

I: Uh-huh. Live in a tent?

VM: If it rained, he's get the tent up. But uh.

I: Otherwise would you just lie on the ground under the stars at night?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: Uh-huh. And uh, during those times did you feel especially alive or cheerful or?

VM: Oh yes. Cooked over the bonfire. Once in a while a couple would go with us and things. Had a good time.

I: It was, was quite different I suppose from the rest of your days during the year?

VM: Oh yes.

I: Yes. And so is it.

VM: It's hard work on a ranch.

I: I'm sure it was. Every day hard work.

VM: Uh-huh. Got up early and went to bed early. People asked me if I don't read in bed. You know I never did read in bed when I went to bed I was tired and I went to sleep. And so, I, I never read in bed. And I never took naps in the day time.

I: Do you remember any periods when you were discouraged?

VM: Well, I get kinda' discouraged now. I don't have any- I don't have any family around, you know. But they're awful good to me; they call two and three times a week. And when I was sick a while back. Why my niece came up from Texas and stayed with me four to five days. And they call real often. And I shouldn't get depressed, but you get to thinkin' about being alone. And I don't want to leave here. The kids said, "Why don't ya' come down to Texas, Aunt Veda?" Well, you know, I wouldn't know a soul down there. And they work. They wouldn't have time for- I wouldn't want to live with any of them. And, why I, I wouldn't like it at all.

I: You'd be more lonely than you are here.

VM: Yeah and I really don't get real lonely here because I know so many people. And I have lots of friends and they call me. And I shouldn't worry- I shouldn't worry. Unless I run out of money. If I live too long! (chuckles)

I: (chuckles) That's a worry we all have. So it sounds as though you maybe have the best possible life here. It's comfortable.

VM: It's the only thing I shoulda' done was to come here. And not wait 'til so many of my friends, that were my good friends out in the valley. They have become ill. One of them has Alzheimer's before she came in here. Now her house is sitting out there with everything in it that she left but people have gone in and taken things. And uh, it doesn't worry her; it doesn't bother her one bit. Now I have my other good friend is moving in here today because she broke her hip. And it's the second time she's broken her hip. And she's gonna' have to sell her place and all. And I feel like I was smart to do it while I had my good senses and knew what I was doing.

I: And you still have your good senses, too, I can tell.

VM: Yes I hope I do.

I: Yes, you do.

VM: And have things planned. I have my funeral arrangements all made. Well, my niece, my closest family is all in Texas and I just figured I should have everything ready. And it'd take ____ [066] to get up here and I even took my clothes up to Daniel's. And.

I: It sounds as though you have learned to be independent?

VM: I'm very independent. And I, I gave my car to this niece that came up from Texas last year. I told her when I found out she had went up and see me, I told Diane, I said, "Diane, when you come up just buy a one-way ticket. Because I'm gonna' give you my car." And oh she didn't think that I should. I said, "Diane, I have glaucoma in my eyes and I know they were- I knew they were fading. And I was just a little bit uneasy like. And I thought before I have an accident and they tell me I have to quit driving, I'm gonna' quit. So, 'course it thrilled her and I really haven't missed my car. But it's real hard for me to ask somebody that I need to go to town and so would you take me? It's real hard for me. And they all say, "Let me know now." But I've never had to do it and it is difficult.

I: Are you afraid of imposing on somebody?

VM: I guess that would be it. If I know they're going to town and then I don't feel so badly. But to just ask somebody, "Now I've got to get to town, would you take me?" It's just hard to do.

I: What are some of the reasons you think you need to get to town?

VM: Well there for a while I was doing my own breakfasts. I didn't want to get up as early as they do to come down here for breakfast at 7:30. And uh, I decided that it'd do me good to get up now and since I don't have a car to go get my milk or what I need for breakfast I'm getting up and going down to breakfast. And I actually feel better by getting' up earlier. Because I stay in bed 'til eight or nine o'clock. And when you do that your, your mind starts to thinking too much. Now I get up I don't have time to.

I: How do you spend most of your time during the day?

VM: Well I- there's quite a few of 'em around here and uh.

I: Go to their rooms, you mean?

VM: Uh-huh and come down and sit and I visit with people and sit with them. I watch the news on TV. I'm- I don't watch any soap operas. But it seems like there's always something. I need to clean out a drawer or go through something that I keep busy.

I: You're never bored?

VM: No I don't think- if I feel like I am I get up and get out here.

I: Are you able to do any kind of exercise?

VM: I went to the exercise class but I had a carpal tunnel operation about three weeks ago on this hand. And I just took the bandage off of it. And I have to have it done on this one. And I couldn't- my hands and fingers were in real bad shape at Christmastime. I couldn't write not one Christmas card this year. And now I'm writing a few little notes and lettin' 'em know I am not dead. (chuckles)

I: Are you right-handed?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: Yes. So did that, did- you haven't had the surgery on that one yet?

VM: I haven't had, no.

I: Did it improve by itself a little bit?

VM: I thought it did 'til last night. Now it- that hand just ached like everything. But doctor did the surgery. Dr. Warren did my surgery,

I: And I noticed you have oxygen.

VM: Yes I started- I had to start using this last June. Now I don't know how long I- well, he's never told me I had emphysema or.

I: But you were having, you were having trouble breathing?

VM: I didn't have enough oxygen in my blood.

I: Yeah. That can be serious.,

VM: I know I- I didn't feel good and my legs swelled up quite a bit. And the people here saw it and the called the doctor and the said we'll need to get right to a doctor immediately.

I: And I guess it's helped?

VM: Anyway I drove myself up to the- to his office. They all said they were too busy to take me. And I said, "Well, I'll tell ya' I don't feel very good. But I guess I can wait." And I'm kinda' _____. [158] But anyway I made it up there and went into the doctor and he looked down at me and looked at my. He says, "You're going to the hospital." And I said, "No I can't. I drove my car up here. Didn't bring a thing with me. Can't I wait and I'll go in the morning?" He says, "Nope. Won't admit ya' in the morning. You're goin' now." So by that time his nurse had come and had oxygen and put it on me and took me out to her car and took me right up to ICU and put me to bed. And the drained about 16 pounds of fluid out of my legs and around my heart and some in my lungs. And I've used oxygen ever since.

I: And does it keep you stable?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: Is it annoying to have that little cart to pull around all the time?

VM: It is when you have to have a cane. I need three hands.

I: I know. You could get a backpack.

VM: That's right.

I: That would fit into a backpack very nice. Wouldn't that be easier?

VM: It's real hard to go shopping.

I: Yes. I've seen many people who do, though. Almost everyday I see somebody with one of those.

VM: Oh there's lots of people have to use them. But I don't cough or, you know he's never told me that I had anything- well he told me I have a congestive heart. And I'm needing to use it. So I use it night and day.

I: Is it all right when you sleep and doesn't keep you awake?

VM: Has never bothered me at all.

I: What with the remaining years of your life, um, what would, what would be the best thing that could happen to you?

VM: Get rid of this. (chuckles)

I: To get rid of that and stay well, too, I suppose you mean.

VM: Stay well.

I: Yes, yes. Well suppose that that would happen. Then what would be the best thing?

VM: Well, I'd like to go see all m family around. And I'd like to go back to Meridian, Mississippi. That's where m sisters buried. And I'd do some traveling.

I: If you could do that would you come back satisfied do you think?

VM: It helps. I know when I go to Texas and go out to the cemetery where my two brothers are, it helps. I had to go to their funerals. They're buried in Ft. Bliss military cemetery.

I: Mm-hm. How does it help?

VM: Well it just seemed like I saw 'em did like a good deed.

I: Of course you have them in your memory. And in that sense you have them with you all the time, don't you?

VM: Yeah.

I: Yeah.

VM: Now I feel like, uh, when I lost Richard, my husband- not getting to see him or to go to the funeral.

I: I understand that.

VM: It uh, it has never seemed real yet. It's a different feeling.

I: Yes. Something unfinished there.

VM: But I don't know how to finish it.

I: Well it may be like a number of other things in life that never get finished. Uh, life consists of a lot of loose ends, I've found.

VM: That's true. But I've gotten along good.

I: I'd say you've gotten along very well. Is there any other memory you'd like to share?

VM: Oh I've got lots of memories of going camping and deer hunting and fishing. I rode horseback a lot. I- when Richard and I first got married we didn't have a car. His folks did but they didn't want me to drive it- their car. And Richard was a horse lover; he had some real good saddle horses. And I learned to- he helped me and I learned to ride a horse real well. And I would ride from there where I lived up to see my mother real often. And that was about, maybe five miles roundtrip. But I, I enjoyed the outdoors. I helped- I drove wheat truck when we harvested lots of times. I tried a little bit of everything.

I: Mm-hm. It sounds as though your mother gave you a good example. You said she did man's work and so she showed you how to do it. And apparently enjoyed doing it.

VM: Uh-huh. Yep I did.

I: It's honorable work and necessary work.

VM: And I think I tried ever craft that came along. I made candles, I did ceramics, I did embroidery work, knitting.

I: Quilts?

VM: I didn't quilt. My mother in-law told me my stitches were too big! But, a person would catch their toenails on those kind of stitches. (chuckles) So she didn't let me quilt on her quilts.

I: I would think if you had done embroidery you should have made small stitches?

VM: Uh-huh. Well she made awfully small stitches. And that was fine, I could do something else.

I: Were you proud, though, of your craft work?

VM: Oh yeah.

I: And you displayed it, I suppose?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: Is it all gone now?

VM: Oh I've given away almost everything I made, you know? When you move ya' - and even when I moved from over there I had to give away a lot to get in here. So I know my niece- one of my nieces here in El Paso said when I was gonna' go down there. She says, "Aunt Veda, when you come to see me and come to my kitchen we'll be right at home because you'll think you're in your kitchen. I've got so many of your things." And that was true. And if it's done really good and I think it's real good to- if you're gonna' give something, give it to 'em and let 'em enjoy it if you aren't using it. And know that they really liked it. And you get double pleasure. And so I- I have done that.

I: And how many years have you lived here?

VM: Let's see, I moved here in '96. October of '96.

I: So about six years?

VM: Uh-huh.

I: I'm sure it was the right thing to do.

VM: Yeah I- I wasn't eating right. It's real easy to get in the habit to not cook like you should when you're all alone. And then I was getting older and it bothered me to vacuum and everything. And I did a lot of figuring and it seemed like that when I moved over here it- the rents come up a hundred dollars every year that I've been here. But I can swing it. But if they keep goin' up, I'll- I'll figure something out.

I: Mm-hm. Well there are various forms of assistance for people whose money runs out.

VM: Yeah that's right. I know my lawyer told me, he says, "Well if ya' ever come to that and have to don't be ashamed. You and your husband paid enough taxes all of your life that you've got it coming." So and they do help ya' on the other side. Is it Medicaid or?

I: Mm-hm.

VM: I guess I wouldn't be too proud to take it because you have to live.

I: That's right. And you don't wanna' be out on the street.

VM: No. No.

I: I think that will serve the purpose for our interview here. I thank you very much.

VM: I didn't tell a' very much but I kinda' - I've had a real good happy life.

I: I, I, you told me that. I understand that.

VM: M family's been good to me. I've got to go back to New York with 'em. My brother in-law went back to Atlantic City to a doctor's AMA thing and they called me and wanted to know if I would like to go with 'em. They'd pay for all the expenses because I keep their two kitties in the summertime and let them come out to the farm. And they said that will be your pay for keepin' our kids. So we- I, my husband says, "You can't turn down a chance like that because you'll never get- get that chance." So I went to Texas and we took in Washington, D.C. and New York and Atlantic City. Had a wonderful time.

I: Good. And you were still well enough to enjoy at that time?

VM: Yeah, I was- that was back in the 50's. Well I'd have never- now Richard was a home boy. He- he liked Grande Ronde Valley. And it was hard to get him, get him away.

I: So he said, "You go instead."

VM: Uh-huh.

I: Well good.

End of Side B

End of Tape #1

Transcription completed on Wednesday, October 31, 2007