

PATRICK RANKIN
October 26-27, 2005
Interviewed by Micheal L Minthorn
Transcribed by Micheal L Minthorn

Side A

I: Can you tell me your full name and when and where were you born?

PR: Okay. Patrick Earl Rankin. I was born in this house, probably in that room (points toward a bedroom). That's what I have been told. I don't remember that day, but, uh, it's a pretty reliable source.

I: What was the date? When were you born?

PR: October the 20th, 1927.

I: So you just had a birthday?

PR: Yeah.

I: Who were your parents?

PR: My mother was Mary Thomas Rankin _____. Her maiden name was _____. Um, uh, my dad was Earl, uh Rankin. He had no official middle name. Just Earl Rankin.

I: Okay. What did your father do?

PR: He was a, a uh, logger. Uh, until he bought this farm. And then he farmed for the rest of his working life.

I: Did- was he born in Union county or did he come to Union county?

PR: He, he came to Union county from Ohio. The state of Ohio.

I: When he was young? When---?

PR: Uh, he was- he was twelve years old. Uh, you wanna' know how he came out here?

I: Well, yeah. Did his family relocate? Is that how he ended up here in Union county?

PR: Yes, they did. Um, they came here, um, because my grandfather. My dad's dad, uh, had, uh, had several land holdings right here in the Grande Ronde Valley. And, uh, oh when my dad was 12 years old the whole family came out here on a

train. And that was 1897 when they came to La Grande. All of the women, uh, and my grandfather were in a, uh, coach on the train. And uh, they brought animals and furniture. You know, household- all of that in a freight car. And my dad was elected to, uh, come back here, or come here fare-free in that freight car.

I: How come he was fare-free?

PR: Well, that was the third choosing 'cause they's a few bucks, and the railroad never ____, uh, um, uh he didn't especially enjoy that 'cause he was by himself. And never ____, ____, hours going across the United States and, 12 years old...

I: No windows...

PR: No windows...um, uh, my grandfather would go back there several times a day and take him food, and got a place fixed up for him to sleep. And...probably, probably grandfather would feel like shootin' me for tellin' these ____-

I: Oh- well he can get a hold of me later. Um, what, what did your father do first when he- I assume he went to school here then? And...

PR: <chuckle> He went to school, uh, for a very short period of time at ____ Schoolhouse and on is on ____ Hunter Lane. Uh, and the school was built on a 160 acres back by Uncle John Morrison- his Uncle John Morrison, too. Donated to the- to the school district. Uh, they- we didn't donate 160 acres, but, uh, I think it was 10 acres, right in the corner of, uh, on Hunter Lane.

I: And that's where your father went to school?

PR: And that's where he went to school at- he didn't go very far in uh, like possibly the fourth grade. Uh, he did not go to high school. I don't know just how far he- that grade school he did go.

I: Okay. So, what did he do before he became a farmer here on this homestead? (And for the information of the transcriber: this place we're talking about is their residence here at 10109 Wallowa Lake Highway. Island City outside of La Grande. And, we're talking about the same place.) So what did your father do then before he took on this farm?

PR: Well, uh, he went to work on the woods for, uh, well, later, uh, it was Grande Ronde Lumber Company. And like, I, I can't tell ya' who the geppo (?) (88) loggers were before Grande Ronde Lumber Company when he was, uh, like, oh, possibly 15 or 16 years old. That's when he started workin'. He was a faller. That what he always did and, when he worked in the woods.

I: A faller is the person who actually takes the logs down? Cuts the logs down?

PR: Cuts the trees down. Yeah. He was really good with an axe, boy. And he built several, several log cabins locally. And, and uh, some log cabins on the uh, uh, Crescent Lake. O'Dell- O'Dell Lake (101) in the Cascade Range. Uh-

I: Do any of those still exist?

PR: No. I do not know. Charlotte and I were at that lake about four or five years ago, and, uh, I wish we had taken the time to go around that lake and see if we could find some of those cabins. And get a picture of one of those cabins. It was a pretty good size cabin. Uh, he did that at the time that he worked for the layout engineer for the Southern Pacific Railroad when they built the- what they call the ____.
(115) It was a big savings for the route from between Seattle to Los Angeles and they re-routed the railroad for about, oh, 25 miles, uh, in the Cascade Range and to a tunnel. Uh, I don't know how long that tunnel is, but, it, it's a fairly long tunnel. Uh, so, the engineer he worked for would, uh, when the sun arrived, uh, he, my dad cleared the brush and trees so that he could run this other line ____.
(127)

I: Now, um, okay, so the Natron Network (130) was finished up when?

PR: Uh, I'd say 1920.

I: 'kay. Now how did your father come to own this- this farm?

PR: Uh, uh, he and my mother met in a logging camp called Camp J up the Grande Ronde River. In fact up the creek from the ranch we own, uh, that uh, there's a portrait of it right there. But uh, uh, they were married in 1925 and, uh, he had saved his money and wanted to get out of the logging business and start farming. So, uh, uh after they were married they bought this farm and built this house. Uh, that- the old house is right there (pointing out window). And Charlotte and I have all ____ to it. Uh...

I: But this is still the original house that you were born in?

PR: Yes.

I: How large is this farm and what grows here?

PR: Well, uh, we have sold most of the bottomland from this farm. Originally, when he bought it, it was, uh, 40 acres and then they- a short time later they bought another 25 acres- added to it. It was 65 acres, uh, up until 1992. And that's when Charlotte and I sold about 55 acres of it. We still have- in the shape of a triangle. We still have a triangle left.

I: What grows here?

PR: Uh, over the years, uh, all kinds of grains. Wheat, barley, oats, uh, then alfalfa, uh, that was when we had it. They grew those things. Oh. We used to grow strawberries and uh, oh those Marion berries, uh, uh, uh just this year the people who- or least ___ have had it in mint. Uh, has had one mint crop.

I: So, um, there- the maximum size of the area was 65 acres at one time that you owned over the years? And some of this is leased out, or you sold this out? When you reduced your, your property.

PR: Yeah, when we reduced the size of it we sold it to a, a corporation, really. And they farmed it for about 8 years and then they leased it. So- to another farmer. And another farmer leases it. Yet.

I: I see. What do you grow currently on the 10 acres that you still have?

PR: Uh, lawn and uh---

I: Did you say "lawn?"

PR: Lawn.

I: Oh, okay.

PR: Yeah. Lawn and trees. Uh, uh right there I have continuously grew- have grown one wheat crop. And then, uh, I've sort of fallowed it ever since. I haven't fallowed it to anything. Uh, kept it clean every year- kill any weeds that- no weeds about to seed out there. Oh no, since, uh we ____ (203) what it is now.

I: Well let's talk briefly about your mother. Now we know you dad met your mother at this, uh, uh, logging camp was it?

PR: Yeah.

I: On uh, and they got married in 1920?

PR: '25.

I: '25. And um, did your mother work? Did she have an occupation?

PR: Uh, in the logging camp she was a cook. Uh, that was her only, uh occupation, really. Besides, uh, bein' a housewife. That's of course when they were married. And then she was a housewife the rest of her life.

I: And what was your mother's name?

PR: Uh, Mary Thomas Finley Rankin.

I: And did she grow up here? Did she relocate here?

PR: Uh, she relocated here, uh, she was born in uh, far western Kentucky and her family, uh, came to a homestead in Wallowa county, um, in 1903. Um, and she, uh, uh, well, all her- they only stayed on that homestead for three years. Uh, and then they moved into the town of Wallowa. And she lived there until she started working in the logging camps.

I: Did she go to school or finish school in Wallowa?

PR: She, she finished high school in Wallowa. Yeah.

I: Uh, how many brothers and sister do you have?

PR: I had one sister. She passed away this year. In April. That's- that's the only...

I: So there ere only two of you then?

PR: Two. Two children.

I: Did your parents live out the rest of their lives here in Union county then?

PR: Yes they did.

I: Are they buried here?

PR: Uh, they are both buried here. Uh, in the cemetery, uh, in town.

I: Hillcrest Cemetery?

PR: Uh, yeah it is Hillcrest. Yeah. My dad family's cemetery plot, or they are both where both of them are.

I: There's like a Rankin section of the cemetery there? Rankin Family, or?

PR: Actually, no. The John Morrison that I mentioned awhile back?

I: Uh-huh. Yeah.

PR: Is the first one buried in that, in that cemetery plot.

I: Was that- did you say that was your dad's uncle?

PR: Uh, (Charlotte: your father's brother.) that's right.

I: Your dad's mother's brother, so it was your granduncle.

PR: My granduncle. You got it. You got it.

I: Okay.

PR: He came from Scotland.

I: Did he?

PR: Yep. And uh, uh, and my grandmother- his sister, uh, uh, yeah came from Ohio. And...yeah but she, but he brought her- she was born in Scotland, too. Uh, and this Uncle John brought her to the United States and uh, she married my, my grandfather in Ohio.

I: But all these people ended up out here in La Grande or Union county?

PR: Yes they did. Uh, several, uh, several family brothers all, uh, well, they were all boys. She had two girls, and the rest were boys. Uh, some of them did not stay here very long. They went into Washington. Uh, one of 'em went to Washington. That's all. The rest of them were here or in western Oregon.

I: I see. Where did you, uh- you grew up here, obviously? Have you always lived in this house then?

PR: Uh, I've always lived in this house, except for, um, 1945 until 1960. Uh, in those years I was first uh, in ____, uh, I was back here briefly. Then, I went to school- went to college- uh, down in Corvallis, or Oregon State. Then uh, I met Charlotte and uh, we were married in 1950. Uh, I graduated from Oregon State with Charlotte and uh, Charlotte had two of our children: Charlotte Marie and Paul were born before 1954. And then, after I graduated I worked briefly for a local power company, uh, less than six months. And then I went to, uh, we went to Ephrata, Washington where I worked for Washington State- it was College, then. Washington State University later. Uh, and I went through a year training program, uh, as a Irrigation Engineer of the Columbia Basin Irrigation project. Uh, in 1960, uh, I came back to this family ____, we all came back. ____, (327) uh, uh, uh, you talk about my dad, finally went into retirement. And he was, god, how old was he? He was 60- he was 76. Uh...

I: And that's what brought you back here to Union county?

PR: Yeah. Yeah.

I: Where did you go to school? Where did you go to grade school?

PR: Well, uh, I went all- I went to the first eight grades at the Island City School. It's the old Island City School now, the building itself. Over there. And then I was freshman through senior at La Grande High School. Uh, I actually- after I graduated from La Grande High School I went one term, uh, at Eastern, uh Eastern Oregon College of Education, it was then. In 1945. Actually, I really didn't- I got credits for the uh, uh, for that one- the fall term at that school. But, I got in- I was inducted into the Army before finals. Uh, it was, I don't know I was inducted on, no, December the 5th. Actually the term was not over but they gave me credit for all of it. And...

I: So, you went into the Army right, right from college. What year was that? What year was that?

PR: That's right. Now that was, uh, 1945.

I: I see. Do you, uh, have to- do you still see classmates or people you know from Island City Elementary? Are there still anybody around that you still interact with?

PR: Oh, yeah. Yeah. That's right. Not as many as there used to be here, that's so long ago, but...

I: Did you- did you walk to school from here? Was there a bus?

PR: No. No schools had busses then. No, I walked. Now that was walk to- uh, the grade school. High school, uh, uh, the folks got me a bicycle when I was a freshman. And I rode that bicycle the first year, except for weather. And, uh, in the wintertime I rode with a teacher who drove from Cove. I would walk over to the Island City Store and, he'd pick me up and take me to school. And then, vice versa, you know, coming back home. Uh, when I was a sophomore, uh, I was hoping to find somebody to ride, and I also couldn't ride that bicycle, so I got a student license to drive a uh, drive the car, uh to school and right straight back home from school. Uh...

I: And of course you DID that, right?

PR: Oh...

I: You never took a detour?

PR: No, that's kind of hard.

I: Did you ever take a detour with that student license?

PR: Uh, I prob'ly did, but you know it's been so long I just I couldn't go into any detail about that. There was gas rationing, too.

I: Because of the war?

PR: Because of the war. That and many other rationing. And, let's see- I got that- I was- I think I was 14 when I got that, that student license.

I: What did you drive?

PR: It was a 1925 Dodge car. Uh, yeah, it's a car that my dad bought new. Uh, right here in La Grande just before he was married. Uh, and bought that car in the spring and he and mother were married in August of that year. Uh, so he had an old time- the name's slippin' away from me- a well known car dealer right here in- in La Grande.

I: Did you drive anybody else to school when you had this license? Did others ride with you out here or back?

PR: After, uh, after I got, uh, after my sister was going to high school. I would take her. And then occasionally might be somebody else who...

I: Did you have to take a driver's test? Did you have to take a "behind-the-wheel" to get that special license?

PR: No. Uh, I did not. Uh, I did have to take a written test and I had to take a vision and a, another to see if I was colorblind. Uh, which was a kind of good then.

I: Yeah. I think they still do some of that. Uh, what kind of, uh, special things do you remember from going to school at Island City? What was it like to go to school at Island City when you were young?

PR: Uh, my first day was really, really traumatic. Uh, I was a very sheltered person. So I ___ and uh, my mother took me over there on the first day...

I: Are talking about first grade?

PR: I'm talkin' about first grade. Uh, oh, actually I started to school, uh, when I was five years old. And that was kind of a big debate whether I should be doin' it when I was five, or wait until I was six. And the teacher- uh, my mother brought that up to the teacher. And, uh, the teacher, uh, figured I could handle it. I don't know how she knew that, but, she figured I did, so mom and dad figured well, "If she says it's okay, why, you're gonna' go to school." And, uh, the next day, uh, I, I walked and I went to school but I never quite made it, uh, there. Uh, I came back home and I hid out down here on the river.

I: What's you do?

PR: Uh, that ___ is still there.

I: What did you do all day?---

I: ...who's telling us about hiding out all day by the river here, on his second day of first grade. And you got bored. What else?

PR: Uh, well I waited until I could see kids, uh, going back to Fruitdale. That way I knew what time it was. And then, I uh, I came out to the house, and, uh, they did not know that I had been there. But they knew something was going on.

I: How do you think they knew that?

PR: Uh, I don't think they knew because they had gone over there, either. To the school. To see if I was there. But, just by, maybe by the condition of my clothes. Or, my lunch. Uh, I, I remember that I did not eat all the lunch. And, for some reason. And they asked me a couple of kind of pointed questions until I couldn't, uh, hold on any longer! <chuckle> You know? I was, I was ____, that's all (21). So, I had to admit it. Uh, uh, well, I think it was dad that went over to the school the next morning and talked to the teacher, and, also took me. And uh... <laugh>

I: Did you, uh, were you truant anymore after that?

PR: Nope. No, I knew the jig was up, so I was gonna' have to face it, that's all there was to it. Gonna' have to go to school.

I: That's quite a story.

PR: You never heard anybody tell you a story like that?

I: Oh sure. I'm hearing, I'm hearing stories. (tape stops) What other kinds of things, uh (wife adding something to the conversation, but cannot make it out). That might have been it. Uh, what other—

PR: Everybody was bigger than I was. And uh, uh, those were the days where, um, you, you stood by a lot of your ___ (39) yourself. If there was any, uh, uh, if there was any antagonistic things goin' on, why, you took care of it. And I was gonna' come out the loser, I knew that.

I: Did you say a lot of these kids ere bigger than you?

PR: Oh yeah, a lot of those kids were bigger than I was.

I: Did you- were you bullied by others in the first grade?

PR: No, only one. Uh, yeah, only one and that just lasted only a short period of time. And then, we got busted, uh, it wasn't because of me, but, there was, the rest of 'em- uh, one fella ____ (49) made it pretty clear to the bully that he was gonna' be in dead trouble. <laugh>

I: You went there for eight grades?

PR: Uh-huh. Now that was when- uh, it was eight grades.

I: So you brought your own lunch? There was no- there were no cafeteria services, or?

PR: Yeah, in the wintertime. Yep. Uh, in the wintertime there was a school lunch and all of the families of the kids would participate. Mother's turn was about- I think about once a month. Uh, only in the winter. You know? Cold weather. Uh, they were responsible for feeding about 80 to 90 kids. Uh, that- you know the families...

I: You mean they would actually come to school and cook lunch for students on---

PR: ---They would make it at home and bring it. Yeah.

I: Oh, they'd make it at home and bring it in and serve?

PR: Yep. Yep.

I: And so, each- each person would- they were responsible for buying and putting the ingredients together and all of that and they would just bring it in?

PR: Yep. The school would not pay for the school lunches.

I: Did other parents chip in to subsidize for this? Or each of these parents were responsible one day or more a month for the entire student body?

PR: Uh, each, each parent was- each family was responsible for the whole thing, including serving it. A lot of them brought their own eating utensils to school. Had their own eating utensils, and they had a kitchen, too. Of course the ____ whatever (78).

I: Did the teachers eat?

PR: Uh, yes. They ate, too.

I: What kinds of things would show up on that menu?

PR: Uh...

I: Was it good?

PR: It was- it was always good! Uh, I mean they- uh; nobody was goin' to bring anything that was not good. Because they never would live that down, if that happened. It would just- uh, good wholesome food. Lots of uh, probably 50% of the kids there were off of farms. In those days, there were a lot more farmers then, than there are now. And, it was mostly farm-raised food, too. Preserved. Uh, well if mom took a notion that it would be chicken, why, she had lots of canned chicken downstairs in jars. Or, if it was ham or, uh, let's see if they had ham, it was smoked and cured. You know there was a butcher session every fall about this time of year, was butcherin' time.

I: So, there were- hogs were raised out here, also?

PR: Yeah. I forgot to mention that that- that's how dad utilized the wheat was to feed it to hogs. And, he'd fatten, uh, was it, oh 200- 250 hogs every year. Yeah, right there in that barn.

I: So the- the grain was used to fatten the hogs, or keep the hogs fed? And he really was kind of in the business of hogs?

PR: That's, that's, that's right. That's right.

I: So, the- that's an interesting thing that the parents kicked in and cooked lunches for school. What other kinds of things can you tell me about the grade school experience in your time? What kinds of fun things did you do?

PR: Well, uh, another fun thing always that everybody put a lot of work into and, that everybody participated in was a Christmas program. Oh, it was always that evening, usually it was Christmas Eve where they would do it. And ours, uh, we didn't have a room in our school for uh, plays, uh like you know, a Christmas program. And also Santa Claus. Santa Claus was always there, too. So, we used to do it in what is a- was the Farm Bureau Hall right over here, uh, across from PGG. Uh, at that time it was a church and, uh, and that's where they- and it had a stage. Uh, oh, my dad was, uh, Santa Claus several times! Uh, four or five. In fact, there's the jingle bell (pointing at bell) that were- they were used on horses that were- my dad farmed (132) with horses first. Uh, and, but those- but those bells came from Ohio, too. They kind of, oh, personal ___ (136).

I: And so, he would use those bells when it was time to play Santa Claus?

PR: Yep. Yeah, he'd uh, come in there jinglin' those bells and, like that. Santa Claus, of course, was on the sleigh with the sleigh bells. And...

I: What else- what was it like to go to school there? What was, uh what was a routine day like to go to school at Island City?

PR: Uh, actually we- I think we had a wonderful opportunity to learn, uh, uh, first of all there were never very many kids in each grade. You now? Like there might be 10 in the third grade. And that teacher might have three grades, though. But one of 'em two grades. But uh, they could just give you a lot of- a lot of personal attention. They could really keep track of ya'.

I: How many people were- uh, how many students were in this first grade class then? And did your teacher teach another grade besides that?

PR: Yes. The teacher taught first, second, and third. And uh, there were- was probably an average of about ten in each of those grades.

I: Were you all in one room?

PR: And we were all in one room.

I: Do you remember that teacher's name?

PR: _____. (159) Amelia _____. Yep. She, and of course, kept track of her and her sister until they passed away, uh...

I: Her sister? Was her sister also a teacher?

PR: Uh, Margaret. Margaret was never a sister- uh, never a teacher. No, it just Amelia who was a-

I: She was the workingwoman in that family?

PR: Uh, yeah. Yes. Yes. Uh, she was also never married. In fact, either of those gals were ever married. They were- they were born and raised on a farm right out here. And...

I: Now, uh, this uh, Miss Mickelson (sp)? Did you have her for first, second, and third grade then?

PR: No. Uh, I had her for the first grade only. Then she quit teaching and uh, Theresa Geitlehuber, uh taught first, second, and third grade. Uh, and she was a great gal, too. Uh, she- uh, apparently had a speaking contest every year. There were lots of categories in it, and, she, uh, required everybody to learn a poem- by heart, of course, and, and to uh, oh, practice speaking it for, uh, prob'ly about six weeks. And then they would have a contest within Island City School and, uh, the winners would participate in a county- a public declamatory contest? Uh, and there would compete on an evening and they give a first, second, and third place

medals for however you placed. They had a large group, like 12 teachers would score, right there, just as soon as you finished your uh presentation of your poem why they would score it. Uh, you were- after it was all over with, they would have all the medals out. And I won a- I got first place for uh, "My Shadow." That was the favorite of all of 'em.

I: Your poem was "My Shadow?"

PR: Yep. That was a serious- I think it was serious and humorous...

I: And what grade was that that you won that?

PR: That was three grade. I was in the third grade.

I: And this was a second teacher that you had, you talked about?

PR: Yeah. Um-hm. Yeah.

I: So how does, um- how does it work? While, let's say whether you are in first, second, or third grade. How does the routine actually work that this teacher gets around to all of those students and all of those different activities? How would you deal- what was a day like? You know, to do that 'cause she can't be giving you attention all day, you know...

PR: Well, she couldn't you personally, but, she, uh, was, well there would be a lot of time for each subject. She was _____. (225) And uh, she would actually go from- well, she may present the material as kind of an overlay and then we would be expected to either read a book, or, look at the board. She may put that stuff on the board, a lot of it- board, chalkboard. And we were expected to digest it and come back to work- prob'ly a, uh, whatever that she would collect so she could tell what we were going to do- but she was always there. Right down the line. Looking and maybe asking. Maybe saying something.

I: Right. So she'd work with these grades were separated in the, in the room that you were in? She'd work a little bit with this grade? And then with this grade, and move around like that? 'Cause each grade knew what they ere supposed to be working on? It wasn't spelling 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade at the same time? Would it be spelling in the 1st grade? And maybe English in the 2nd? And math in the 3rd? Or? Were you all working on the exact same topic? I'm just wondering.

PR: Well, that. <chuckle> No, I cannot think of that.

I: Well, it's important to know, I guess that you were in a multi-grade classroom and the teacher had to move constantly to address all of the grades that she taught?

PR: That's- that's true.

- I: Did your, uh did your teachers teach extra-curricular subjects, too, like say, music, or, art, or?
- PR: Uh, music, yes. Uh, but that was a while later. Uh, singing, yes. Uh, I suppose that we sang from the time we were in first grade. Uh, the principal, who had the seventh and eighth grade, uh, organized a band. And, uh, oh, they uh, I played a trumpet. Uh, folks bought me a trumpet and I learned how to play a trumpet. He also was a violin, uh, player. And quite a few kids played the violin. Uh, uh, both young. They, they ___ (280) teach piano.
- I: So, you didn't have a music teacher in the classroom? It was taught by regular teachers teaching there?
- PR: No. That- music teachers ____. (284) The whole school had no teacher of music. That's right. Though there wasn't any such thing.
- I: How about sports?
- PR: Uh, well, we did have some sports, but, they weren't a heck of a lot at Island City because we didn't have- we had a playground. Uh, we could play baseball. But, we didn't have a gym or basketball, well...
- I: There wasn't organized sports. Did you have- did you- were you required to- did anybody teach physical education?
- PR: Uh, well, we had a- a recess- but we had an organized PE. Where you- oh, that was mostly running. So that you did different exercises. ____. (310) In those days, most kids had the PE all waitin' for 'em when they got home. <laugh>
- I: Ah. Farming chores and...and other things like that?
- PR: Yep. Yep.
- I: Did you have those chores, also?
- PR: Uh, oh yeah. Oh yeah.
- PR: What were your chores? What were your main duties?
- PR: Uh, I- well I had to make sure that the wood box for the cook stove, which was right over there (points). In fact, the wood box is, is the bathroom now. My father's wood room. But the old wood box is in there. Uh, I had to make sure that- mother had plenty of wood. Uh, for cooking- the cook stove which was over against that wall. And all the wood was stored, not out here, oh, you know about seven, eight feet from the house. So, wheel barrow- I'd tow it in a wheelbarrow.

I'd split it, put it in the wheelbarrow, bring it through the back door right here (points). Put it in the wood box. Then I had a-oh, we had a pitcher pump.

I: A what>

PR: A pitcher pump. Water. And it was located right there. They had a big galvanized tub that my dad made. And that was on top of the cook stove. And it had a hydrant on it- a faucet. And uh, so, when there was a fire in the cook stove, which was most of the time, why it was heating up water. And that was- that was the dishwasher. Uh, also laundry water, too.

I: So there was not running water in this house? Is that what you're saying?

PR: This house did not have electricity until 1947. In fact, I was gone. I was in the Army. And uh, they finally were able to get electricity. None of these- these pipes just didn't have---

I: Was it just that it was too far out and they hadn't gotten out here? Is that why?

PR: Uh, electricity was right over at that house, about a thousand feet away (points) across the river always had electricity. Uh, for- in Island City. Uh, but the electric company would not extend those lines without, uh, signing a contract that you paid so much for that line extension. Uh, it was, uh, what was- they were over a thousand dollars that they started out with in the- when they built this house. To put electricity over here, to extend it. Well, boy, a thousand bucks is...a lot of money.

I: So you didn't have electricity or running water? What does that leave, electric, running water...when did you get a phone out here?

PR: Uhh, the first phone was in this house when Charlotte and I moved back here from Washington. In 1960.

I: Was it a crank phone or was it an electric telephone?

PR: No, it was a ___ (387) dial, uh, dial phone with the, you know, that uh... You never. Well, it ___. (393)

I: Right.

PR: At that ranch, uh, we, yeah- Charlotte and I lived there for 13 years that we were married. It had a crank telephone 6that was- it was a lot- we were, uh, it was 12 miles from home to a station right by there ___. (405) Uh, but the participants- the ones who built that line, uh, had to maintain it. And that was put in there- I'm not sure. I think after 1920 is when they built that phone line.

I: So that- the phone that you had here- it was a regular telephone? It wasn't a crank phone by then? Did you have to have assistance to make a call? Or could you call direct?

PR: (discussion ensues with wife) It was our phone. Yeah! One- two, thought I'd remember that. Uh, it's a dial. Before, yeah- uh, you called the operator first and give her a number and-

I: My great-grandmother's house still had a crank phone...oh, well she died in 1965, and she didn't have a dial telephone for very long before that. You know, I remember it on the wall there at the time. Did you know what your- you say there was a crank phone at the other place? This other house.

PR: Yeah, at the ranch house.

I: And was a dial tone here.

PR: Yep. Yep.

I: How did people- how did people bathe out here?

PR: Well, that room in there had a big old cast iron bathtub in it. Uh, and there was a lot better ___ (445) than out here. Outside. But, yeah, mom and dad did put up a bathroom here. Fact we still got that bathroom. Uh, oh, and took the water- hot water right out of that tank I was talkin' to you about. Filled it to the ____. (456) That bath tub, well it- the bathtub and the partition sink had a common drain system. Yeah. So all you gotta' do is pull the plug out of the- ___ (465) and it all run out. Same thing for the- for kitchen sink, too.

I: I thought you were talking about the laundry. Was that a ringer washer? Was that a- it doesn't sound like it was electric to begin with then?

PR: Yeah. It was a ringer washer. Fact, it was a- old gasoline engine. And, dad would have to wheel that out of the corridor, uh, over and set up the tubs of- the- it had a flexible exhaust with a kind of ___ on the end of it. (481) She's put that out the door and so all the exhaust wouldn't get in the house. Uh, fuel it and add oil in the crankcase. Uh, and she would take the water out of that same- hot water thingy and put in there. Put it in the, the washing machine. It was a good washing machine. A ringer. Maytag. And uh, aluminum, uh, what you call it- mold, uh, tub. Okay, now that was- I wish I could think of that- I could remember what they call that- washing machine, it was ___ (504) Uh, 1933-34, right in there someplace. The Depression. Right during the Depression. That they got that. Otherwise, she had to do- she did washing in wash tubs and a washboard---

I: ...And we're talking about, uh, utilities. Getting the laundry done. And, uh, you said that your mother used a washboard? And that she went to the wringer washer from that. And that it was a gas or diesel-operated machine? What- do you know what day she did laundry?

PR: I don't know if it was always on Monday or not.

I: Well, I wouldn't be surprised, because everybody else in this county has told me that laundry day was Monday. But I- I'm just verifying as I go along from person to person. Um, sounds like it was Monday?

PR: Uh, I think it prob'ly was. Uh, now in the summer it might have- might even have been more often. Uh, uh, I just, uh, yeah, oh, she washed some dirty clothes! And, uh, so she might have done it even more often than that. A lot- I don't know how she did all of those things that she did. Um, like- you know, she could- well she cooked in those- in those logging camps and so she was an excellent cook, and she was fast. Um...

I: --sounds like she could cook for large groups, too.

PR: Yeah. Some of those logging camps, they cut for, oh, maybe 80, uh, 80 people per meal. And three meals a day. Uh, uh, she could- like for a breakfast? She could, she could whip up a platter of biscuits. I don't think it would take her 10 minutes. Um, to put the biscuits together- shove in 'em in the, uh, in the oven. Uh, and then, oh, would always ___ (36) and some kind of pork and eggs and- and there could be hotcakes and- that was just in the morning.

I: And this was out of her wood stove? Her wood oven?

PR: It was a wood stove. Yes, sir.

I: And your job was to keep the wood for that stove going? Did you have to empty the ashes out of it, too?

PR: No, sir. Uh, she, she took care of those ashes. Yeah. I don't know why that was. Uh, maybe the safety of it. Uh, would have to be some planning to uh, you know- have to be at a time when there were no live ashes that could go- but it would have to be between meal cooking. Uh, maybe on a day when- maybe that even was Sunday. And, uh, there were maybe only two meals. And uh, uh, there was long enough there when that stove was uh, not on fire but the ashes would not be hot.

I: Uh-huh. Did you have any other chores? You said, you, uh, had to make sure the wood was uh, going. What other chores did you maybe have to do?

PR: Well, uh, from the time, uh, planting ___ in the spring (57) 'til harvest was over in the fall I did- not all the work by any means, because- they both worked in the garden. But I- I, you know, hoe weeds, I was- I was usually just one of the- did the weed hoein'. Uh, and then, uh, uh, dad always was- I don't know what time- I know he had this ___ (64) in alfalfa. Uh, and that was a- oh, that was a big job. Puttin' that much alfalfa because it was all done strictly by hand except mowing it and raking it. That was machine, but, uh, it was all ___, (69) it was loaded off to a- to a wagon. It was unloaded with a derrick and a ___, (72) either into a stack or into a barn. And, it was quite a project there.

I: What does it mean when you say it was all “___?” (74)

PR: Uh, it was- ___. (75) You ride over the bulk hay after it had cured with a ___ rake, (76) and that would just gather it up and then when there was enough hay in the ___, (77) ya' put a hook-lever and that would bring the ___ (79) and it'd dump the hay right in. And then, you'd ___ long ___, (81) you watch off to one side. And when you were even with it at the right point, you put- ___ (foot pedal?) (82) So it pulled up ___. (83) Then you would go along with a pitchfork and pile it into ___, (85) uh, and then it would finish curing. Moisture- uh, moisture would leave 'em down to a certain point. Then, uh, you, uh, a pitcher would stab a pitchfork into it and lift it up and ___ wagon- a hay wagon. (90) Hay rack (?) wagon. Uh, and then there'd be somebody to haul the wagon, too, to place it, you know get it ___ (93) all together. I also put up a ___ (stomp it down?) so you could get- you could get quite a bit on a- you could get, prob'ly a ton of hay on the wagon.

I: Who were your friends and playmates? Did you have any out here? When you were growing up?

PR: Oh, yeah. Uh, there was a- a pretty large family, uh, ___ (100) lived right across the river from us. And, uh, I was in- I started school with ___, (102) one of those boys. Uh, uh, started grade school. Uh, oh, uh, it was- there was- John ___, (107) and uh ___ (107) and uh, Bob ___ (108).

I: These are some of your playmates?

PR: Yeah. Yeah.

I: That lived around here?

PR: Yeah they all lived locally. We didn't get a chance to get together much when we were- oh, like up- up through the grade school. Uh, uh, we all had things to do or went home. And, so, it wasn't like you were right next door to play. Uh, on a- like a- Saturday, it- you wouldn't have somethin' to do on the farm, well, you might be able to go to their place for- you know- two or three hours. And then come home, or, vice versa.

I: What- what things did you do?

PR: Uh, oh, we'd play baseball. Uh, we would, uh, uh, fish. That was a big deal to fish. Uh, for, hunt birds. Uh, in the wintertime ice skate.

I: Where?

PR: Oh, on the sloughs, yeah, where it was still water, uh, that it would freeze over. You know, kind of smooth. And that's where we would go ice-skating. Uh, uh, I never did- we were right by this Grande Ronde River and I never did- my folks wouldn't let me skate on that river much because- uh, uh, you never knew when you might be a soft spot, or a spot where it really wasn't frozen over good. Yeah. So, it wasn't really all that safe. But on the sloughs it was. And we'd have a great time on those sloughs. Even at night- uh, in high school I- we'd have skate parties. That was- you know there were a lot of good skaters, too?

I: How about- did- did you go to church? Did you have church services out here when you were young? Where did you go to church?

PR: Yeah. Uh, we did have some. It was like traveling ministers. ____ (147) we have a church right over here. But my dad was not a churchgoer. Uh, my mother- always was a devout Christian, really. Uh, and she knew her Bible, too. But, uh, after, after she left ____ (155) really, where she was raised, uh, she never was a regular churchgoer. Uh, it, uh, she could unless she walked. Uh, my dad would ____ (160) take her ____ (161). Uh, there were ____ (162) when we were in high school, there were public (164) (?). Now that was the first, first uh, any related church rather than schools. And uh, I don't know. We did go some but...

I: Let's move into high school then. Um, what year did you graduate from high school?

PR: Uh, 1945.

I: And, you went all, all through nine to twelve at La Grande High?

PR: Yeah.

I: Was it a 9 to 12 high school then?

PR: Yep. Yep. Wait a minute.

I: Was it 10, 11, and 12? Seems like they had a junior high here then?

PR: Yeah. Uh, there was a junior high, but, uh, uh, we had gone- uh we didn't get- Island City did not have a junior high. So we went there the first eight grades

here, and then we went directly into high school. But that was four. When- we had four years.

I: At La Grande High?

PR: Yeah.

I: Okay so we're gonna' finish off today by talking about high school. So you entered high school- no school bus then?

PR: Nope.

I: Nope. So how'd you get there?

PR: Well, in fact there were no school busses to grade school or high school up to 1945. And I don't know what they- well; I know it was after that. The first school busses. Uh, and how'd I get there? Well, it was either the bicycle or riding with, uh, with uh, a teacher who lived in Cove and taught in the high school at La Grande. Or, uh, uh, uh, I got a student permit to drive the car. In there.

I: Now you said that happened- you were 14 at that time.

PR: Yeah. I was 14.

I: So then, did you drive?

PR: It might be now that I was 13 that fall because, uh, uh, (calculating) ...the last. Yeah, 12 the first of the year because we ____ (205). Uh...

I: Are we talking about the freshman year now?

PR: Yeah. Well, no. My sophomore. Yeah, it was three years.

I: Then you drove from that point on?

PR: Yeah.

I: Um, and you told us where you drove. So, um, what about high school? What kinds of things did you do?

PR: Uh, well, as I recall they pretty- in fact in those days they pretty much laid it all out for ya', what you were going to take. There were the requireds and there weren't many electives. In fact, did we have any electives at all then? (thinking) I think when it came- yeah- I think that- yeah, I had to take stuff now, but you didn't have to take all of it. Like, uh, oh, uh, I took math every year through my senior year, and I know that most did not. Uh, or-

I: Band or music or sports, or?

PR: Uh, I was on the ____ (228). Now that was _____. (230) Uh, uh, that- music I didn't pursue music at all. Uh, although I still have that trumpet. Now they had an organized band and, you know, high school band. I did _____ (236) good band teacher.

I: How about language? Did you study a foreign language?

PR: Uh, I did not. Uh, no, I never did but some kids did. Uh, that was, um, uh, German or Latin used to be- or, or French used to be a popular languages until World War Two started. And, oh the Germany-

I: -the German disappeared, huh?

PR: Yep.

I: But you didn't study a language?

PR: I didn't study a language. Nope.

I: What kinds of, uh- what was a- what was a class day like? Going to La Grande in your time? What- what was the routine?

PR: Uh, well, you, uh, at like grade school where you stay in one room the whole day long, uh, we would move. Every about- possibly once an hour we would move to a different room. And of course a different subject. And then there was a- the old study hall that was just a- in the school library. Or it was right beside the school library. Uh, I, they had FFA there. Uh, it was in a- they had a separate building for it. But you know, I had all the farming that I wanted in those days right here! And I- I didn't pursue FFA in any shape or form. <Chuckle>

I: What did you do instead?

PR: Uh, I think- I took those science courses and, and I had one- as I recall I had one study hall. The rest of it- oh, uh, well maybe I had to take English. <thinking> Yeah. And I just loved English. Uh, I didn't mind the reading part of it- uh, I liked that. But uh, gosh, I hated that grammar stuff, and uh. I didn't like it. I just, just, uh, I ran into that very same hang-up yeah when I got down to Oregon State. If they were gonna' give me a degree...I had to have so many hours of English. Part of that was writing, part of it was grammar, and, I didn't have time.

I: Why?

- PR: Well, because I was also taking chemistry and math, and they were just- and besides that I wasn't interested in it. And, uh...
- I: Did ya' belong to any clubs or any other school organizations?
- PR: Uh, I was a- yeah, they had a TIGHER HIGHLIFE. Other? Let's see. That was _____. (Side discussion with wife, unintelligible)
- I: The school paper?
- PR: Oh yeah, I was on the school paper. Yeah I chose to do that. Yeah, I- I could do that. But, journalism? That part, I liked that, and I also, uh, because of doing okay with that at the high school. Why, at Oregon State I took a- I don't remember if that was a 2-hour or 3-hour journalism. And, that was a cinch, got good grades, too.
- I: How about, uh, social activities? What kinds of things did you do when you were in high school?
- PR: Uh, well, I, I did not go to- I think the first dance I ever went to was at the Senior Prom, or- ____ (325) it was at the Junior Prom. I- I didn't go much for that. You know? Dating the gals. Uh, oh, they were okay. Didn't have a real problem but I just couldn't get all enthusiastic. I'd rather hunt or fish.
- I: Is that what you did instead in the early days? Of high school?
- PR: Oh yeah. Yeah. And I would go... (Getting whispered hints from his wife) ...oh, yeah. Oh! Yeah! ____ (341) and I- the day school was out we usually get out in the morning, but you have to go in for a couple hours. And then we would, uh just ____ (347) and myself already had all of our fishing gear and camping equipment together we would go- we had a - a train depot. Like, right over here in Island City. Steam engine- steam engine, uh, a regular passenger ride. Uh, it- ____ (354) and above, in, in one day. And we would go to Joseph and go to a place called Goldie's and have somethin' to eat. And- in, in Joseph. And then we would walk up to the lower end of the lake, where there was a- actually, it was a log cabin. It was a ____ (there was a roof? 363). Uh, uh, we would fish for ____ (365) for three days. Uh, we'd eat everything, uh, that we caught the first two days. Uh, and then the third days' catch, which, by the way was like 60 fish. Uh, they were in those days. Uh, and then we would bring those 60 fish back home on the train. We'd have to- we'd walk back to Joseph and get on the train and get in here in the evening.
- I: And you did that every year at the end of the school year?
- PR: Yep. Every- every year for four years. We did that. Yeah.

I: Just you and your friend Bob?

PR: Uh, yeah. Yeah. Just those two. Later, he, uh, uh, he became- well, he's kind of a long ways up. And it was called the, Oregon, uh, Oregon Game Commission then. ODFW it was- was the Oregon Game Commission. And then there was the Oregon Fish Commission. Uh, he got that- well, not quite _____ (394) uh, in Oregon. Uh, before- uh before he retired.

I: How long did it take you? Was it a day trip to get from Joseph from here on the scenic route?

PR: Uh...that would take about...I think it was about six hours. Like, uh, like we would go on that train maybe eight o'clock in the morning, ____ (408). Uh, and it'd be just after noon, maybe right before...I can't believe we got up there in four hours though. It was pretty fast until you got to Elgin, and then from Elgin on it was pretty slow 'til you got to Wallowa and then Wallowa to Joseph was a little faster.

I: Did it go directly to Joseph or did it go through Enterprise?

PR: It went through Enterprise. Yeah.

I: Did it stop in Enterprise for a while?

PR: Yeah. Yeah, uh, if you wanted to get off or get on, uh, also uh, uh- let's see...mail. That train got the mail, too, hauled from the rail. Uh freight- there were regular freight trains that, uh, oh there were two or three freight trains a day. That's when there was- mills, lots of mills. Uh, sheep. Uh, cattle. Uh, they used to have- they used to have (436) trains and sheep trains, too.

I: In addition to these passenger trains?

PR: Yeah.

I: Was it; uh- was it expensive to take this train?

PR: I can't tell ya' in dollars and cents, but, uh, it wasn't bad. At all bad. It might have been...it might have a dollar and-a-half.

I: Would that be round-trip?

PR: -for a roundtrip ticket. Yeah. Uh, it was a lot of fun. Ridin' that- uh, ridin' that train.

I: Then what happened to the fish when you get 'em back to- back to Island City here?

PR: Uh, they'd cook 'em, cook 'em right away.

I: Your family would consume these?

PR: Mom would cook 'em. We would salt 'em up there, as a, well- we'd uh, it's prob'ly ___(459) we'd get up- we'd get up- we were, uh, catch those fish. Salted 'em down. Clean 'em, salt 'em, and then get down to that train station. And that, uh, it- they would let us put the fish back- oh, where you get on the car? It wasn't heated and those old conductors were- uh...

I: You mean they were helpful to you?

PR: Uh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah they understood. Uh, but they would let us get the fish home.

I: We were talking about, uh, high school days and, uh you- you were telling me about you and your friend headed over to Wallowa Lake at the end of the- at the end of each school year. What other kind of memories do you have about high school? You said you weren't- you didn't date much.

PR: Uh, that's true. Uh, something I did forget was the roller skating, uh- there were several of us that were just really crazy about roller skating and- him uh, actually fall, winter and spring, uh, we used to roller skate at the high school gym in Cove. And prob'ly every Saturday night. Uh, not every Saturday but boy- very often. Uh, at least during the school year. And then, uh, finally they got a skating rink here in town. It was- well, it used to be, uh, a dance hall called the Zuber Hall on Washington- on Washington Street. Now really close to the----

I: Okay, so you were telling us that you used to skate and they opened a rink at the Zuber Dance Hall? Go ahead.

PR: Okay, and, uh, then, uh, then uh, their covered wagon was a, on the west side of Baker City. Baker, uh, then. Wasn't Baker City. They also had a skating rink in there.

I: What was the Covered Wagon?

PR: Uh, it was, oh, uh, it was a municipal- I'll call it- meeting place. Uh, a lot like the armory in La Grande, only as far as I know it was never an armory. Uh, it had a wood floor which was good for skating. They wouldn't- uh, none of the schools that had a gymnasium would allow roller-skating on those, uh, basketball floors. Uh, they were- they were rough on those, uh, uh...

I: How was it that you were able to, um, skate in the Cove gym then? Was it a basketball gym?

PR: It was- uh, they did play basketball in there. But that school district, uh, held still. It was, uh, well, it was a, it was looked at as a sport and something for the kids to do if they- you know, didn't play⁶ basketball, or volleyball, or something like that. So, there were a lot of kids. Boy, they used to have so many of them on that floor, you could hardly get around.

I: Was that an expensive hobby to undertake?

PR: No, no.

I: Was it cheap?

PR: Uh, I can't remember now. But it was like twenty-five cents for, uh, seven o'clock in the evening 'til ten-thirty, eleven o'clock at night. Uh, and, everyone, or a lot of us- at Cove they did not have a skate rental. Uh, shoe-shoe skate rental, so you had to furnish your own- your own shoe skates, but nearly everyone right from around here who liked to skate had a – had a pair of good shoe skates themselves. With the improved wheels all of it. Uh...

I: And so then, uh, uh, you made the rounds of these skating places? Is that-

PR: -yeah we did.

I: That what you used to do on your weekends?

PR: Uh, yeah. We used to go to the one at the Covered Wagon in Baker, or in the summertime. Uh, you know? It was the- there was no freeway to Baker City. It was the old highway, up Piles (?) Canyon and through North Powder. Haines. And it took a lot- prob'ly it took about two hours to drive to Baker.

I: How did you get there?

PR: Uh, I got a car. Well, you mean the route?

I: No. Yeah, by car, did you carpool or were you driving by then?

PR: Uh, it would usually be- yes, I, I was driving. Uh, we went up there after high school, too. In fact, we roller skated even after...

I: Into your adulthood?

PR: Uh, yeah. I would, yeah. I haven't been on roller skates now for twenty-five years, probably. But up 'til then, uh, I think the last time I did roller skate was up at the Lodge- I don't think they call it the Lodge- at Wallowa Lake? Uh, there's

the Lodge and then there was another public building up there that had a pretty good floor.

I: Yeah, I can't remember the name of it, either, but I- I can see it. I know what you mean.

PR: It's right at the- where the- uh,

I: Where the gondola is now- the tram.

PR: The tram. Yeah.

I: I was up there recently, but I don't remember what it's called. Um did your wife roller skate?

PR: Uh, Charlotte did roller skate a little bit. But, uh, uh, not much. Uh—

I: -that wasn't her hobby?

PR: She- eh, it was not her hobby. She, uh, she ice-skated several times in Portland when she lived in Portland. And the last time she ice-skated she broke her wrist and that was the end of skating for her.

I: She didn't skate anymore after that?

PR: Uh, no.

I: So what other things did you do in your high school days as you were getting' ready to go to college? What- what kinds of other social things- activities, or, even not really an activity. What kinds of things did you do?

PR: Oh, I- I...can't think of any, Micheal. Besides what I was told.

I: Okay, well, how about drive-in movies? Were there any of those around? Did you do that?

PR: Oh, yes. I forgot about drive-in movies. Oh yeah. We used to, uh, used to go- I can't remember when they built the first drive-in movie. But, uh, my cousin and myself, Jerry- Jerry Bigner is my cousin and, uh, I used to stay at his place every chance I got. And, uh, on Saturday afternoon when we were- oh, like eight years old through, oh, probably through high school- we used to go to the Saturday movie when we could get away with it, uh, Saturday afternoon. There's a lot of theatres had the western movies then. Uh...

I: What do you mean when you say, "When we could get away with it?"

PR: Well, uh, his mom and dad owned a grocery store in La Grande. And uh, uh, we'd have to, uh, oh stock shelves and sack potatoes and apples and pears and, uh, uh, uh do some chores or go with the deliveryman and take groceries into the homes of people with- a lot of groceries were sold by phone order. And, okay- on Saturday there were two deliveries a day. One on the morning and one on the afternoon. And, uh, sometimes there were so many orders that you couldn't do it in one delivery in the afternoon, so there'd be a couple of 'em. Well, that afternoon we prob'ly couldn't go to the movie. Uh, but, uh, we'd get real busy and do our part before, say, movie time. Then we- come down to the theatre and see the movie. Get back in time to go with the driver- delivery wagon driver to deliver the last- the last round. And it would be anywhere in La Grande that we would take those groceries.

I: What was the name of this grocery store?

PR: Joel's. Joel's Grocery.

I: Joel?

PR: Yeah. J-O-E-L. Uh...

I: And where was it located?

PR: On the corner of, uh, Washington and Cedar Street. Uh, well, the last operator of it was my cousin Jerry Bigner. Uh, the name Joel was my dad's sister's married name. And that's where the Joel's-

I: -uh, you mean their last name was Joel.

PR: Yes. That was her-Cora- Cora Joel. Uh, and her daughter Carolyn Joel Bigner operated that store, oh, well it would take me...they opened that store in uh, sometime after 1910. And, uh, the last operator, Jerry- it was probably about 1975 when, uh, it really began rough to compete with super markets.

I: And, uh, what's there now? Do you know what's in- uh, in the location now?

PR: Uh, it's a dwelling. They in fact- Joel's- uh, Bigner's lived on all the top story of it. Then all of the first floor and the basement was the store.

I: Now did you get- did you get paid to help him? Or, were you just helping him out so you could get to the movies?

PR: I- no, I didn't get paid. But, oh, I got paid in lots of ways, really.

I: Such as?

PR: Such as, uh, well, pay for the movie. I- and, also, uh, it was limited. Uh, they had a good candy counter and they sold ice cream, and...

I: So you might get paid in, uh, trade then rather than cash?

PR: Yeah. But it wasn't an agreement, though, that it was- well, usually when- or almost always when I would go there. Uh, it would be on Saturday. No school. Dad- well, and sometimes Mom would go to town, uh for groceries. Uh- you know, the things that they needed. Uh, they raised most of their stuff. But there was some things that they did buy. And uh, so they would go to the store. And, of course, visited with all the relatives and get the groceries they wanted and then if Jerry and I could talk MY mom and dad into letting me stay that night. Why, nine times out of ten, Vera would bring me home the next day. That Sunday. But---

I: Vera? Vera was your aunt?

PR: Uh, she was my- my cousin, too. Uh, she was- uh, Vera was my first cousin, and Jerry was my second cousin of- Jerry is still is- uh, only boy.

I: Was that considered- uh; when your parents went to town- was that a trip in those days? I mean, you know- it's only a five-minute drive now, but-

PR: It was a- it was a prob'ly- that day only that that car even went to town. Uh, and, it might be spread out over- it might be three weeks between that car- you know, going to town. Uh, or even over to Island City. Uh, uh, but yes, it was a- oh, once in a great while we had- mother had a sister, uh, and her family- uh, lived in Ponderosa. Uh, they worked in the Collins Mill out there during the Depression. And I can remember goin' up there, but that was- that was an undertaking in a way. You know, it was a long ways out of town.

I: Was it an all day trip?

PR: Oh yeah. Yeah. Well, it would take like- maybe uh, oh I'd say it would take at least two hours to drive up there. Maybe a little longer. Uh, so, yeah- when we went up there, it was for the day. Uh, maybe once in a great while, mother and I and my sister would stay up there. Uh, say overnight, or for a day or two. And then, dad would come up again and, and bring us home.

I: Did- uh, does that mean your mother didn't drive?

PR: She did not drive. Nope. She never did get a license to drive, and uh, uh, and my dad, uh, he didn't have a license to drive, either, until- I don't know when that was. Maybe, maybe during the 30's. Uh, you could drive a car without a license then. Uh, I know it was that way in the 20's. I also remembered another relative who lived in Wallowa County. His name is Scott. Uh, that name might be familiar to you. Uh, he had a lifetime driver's license that he acquired from Oregon in the

late 20s. Uh, a uh, uh, a policeman- uh, I don't know exactly when this was. I'm gonna' guess it was right after World War Two, though. Uh, stopped Virgil for some reason- nothing _____. (?) (232) And, uh, of course wanted to see his driver's license. And Virgil showed it to him and uh, uh, the uh, state policeman told him that his license was no good. _____ (?) (237) And uh, uh, uh, Virgil of course pursued it with the- the Secretary of State. It was Earl Snell was the Governor at that time. Anyway- oh! He was Secretary of State at that time. And uh, they, uh the state wrote a letter to the judge in Wallowa county, and the policeman, that this man did have a valid driver's license and those- uh, that he did not have to renew, and there was nothing that anybody could do about it.

I: Amazing.

PR: And he held that license, uh, 'til the day he died. Uh, and they never- they never questioned him again about not having it. Or, not keeping- they didn't send him a renewal. His daughter lives in Hermiston now. And has for a long while. She could tell you all about it.

I: So, what other places did you, uh- as you got older maybe got ready to go out of high school. Did, did you do any other social things? Uh, did you go to town and do any other things? We've talked about the skating rink and the drive-ins and the grocery, and...

PR: Well, uh, Micheal, uh, we- I told you a little bit different yesterday. I didn't tell you the complete story. We used to go to the First Christian Church, uh, at the old church building on Penn and 7th Street. Uh, that's before they built the new church on Penn and 7th. No! Penn and, uh, well it's 4th.

I: It's between, uh, 3rd and 4th because it's right behind my house.

PR: Oh, you live right there?

I: Yeah, I live about a block and a half away from it.

PR: Okay.

I: And that's- you were saying, though, that's the church you attended.

PR: Yes. Then when, oh, uh, I was prob'ly...man...prob'ly the first time that mom took us there, my sister and myself was...when I was like six years old. Just right after I started to school. And we might go, uh, oh, eight or ten times during a year, uh, to that particular church. Uh, mother had been a lifetime member of First Christina Church in Wallowa. And of course she was really an advocate of that church. And then, I was baptized in the present day church in 1978. Uh, and then Charlotte had joined the First Christian Church in about 1975 and our youngest5 daughter, too. Had joined that church.

- I: And you've been a member ever since?
- PR: Oh yeah. Yes. Yep. We sure have.
- I: Um, this is a popular church in town. A lot of people I've interviewed belong to that church. Um, what, what, what things have you done in that church? What-have you held office, or...?
- PR: Uh, I held, uh the office of Elder for uh, two terms. And uh, I don't know how many terms that I've been uh, a deacon. Uh, boy, prob'ly...well, six or seven terms at least as a deacon.
- I: What does an Elder do?
- PR: Well, uh, it is to be concerned about and to look after the needs of anyone, really, uh, in the church, uh, especially those who, you know have a real need. For widows, uh, you know, people who have run into, uh circumstances where they are just not capable of taking care of themselves completely. Uh, they need help and that's primarily what a- an Elder- also, responsible for the spiritual nourishment of, of any people in the church. Those that are housebound. Uh, an Elder takes them Communion. Uh, we observe Communion at least once a week in our church, and have- there's- almost always several people Communion is taken to their home. Uh, if not their home a nursing facility. Uh, or, even the hospital.
- I: How about the job of deacon? What does a deacon do?
- PR: Uh, well, uh, okay, uh, there's lots of church functions that, uh, we are directly involved with. Uh, uh, one of them would be, uh church dinners where we help, uh set up the tables, work with prob'ly everything but the food. Uh, the gals- some of the guys, too, uh, help, help prepare the food. And, uh, uh, and every Sunday, um, well, it, it's a uh, it's an honor, really, to serve to the congregation that's there the Communion. Uh, and there's usually a team of eight, uh deacons served the congregation. And they also collect the uh, the tithes and the offerings that same service. They, they usher people, and they need an usher for seating. Oh, there's- there's always a need...
- I: Were you around- uh, were you present when they built the new church in its new location?
- PR: Uh, Charlotte and I were not, uh, uh, uh, I was- when they started building that present located church, uh, I was in college and had just got out of the Army. And uh, uh, so I wasn't here very much. And then when they built the sanctuary itself, uh, they finished it when- they finished it the year that Charlotte and I moved to Washington. Uh, and so, we were- well, we were just gone. Yeah. This particular

church, uh after we came back from Washington. But, gee, we, of course have known people in that church for a long while.

I: Who are some of the, uh- who are some of the pastors that you can remember since you've been a member of that church in the 70's?

PR: Uh, okay. Oh, since the 70's?

I: Well, during your affiliation. You can remember any of them if you'd like.

PR: Uh, I would like to go back to-

I: -sure!

PR: -uh, Gene Robinson.

I: Do you remember him?

PR: Uh, yes, I sure do. Uh, he was a great person. Uh, everybody loved Gene. Uh, not that they didn't love the subsequent pastors, too. But he was very, very special. Uh, and uh, then there were a couple pastors that I didn't know very well after-after Gene. And uh, then came Jack Hart. And uh, Jack and Phyllis and their two girls. And they, they were very special to us, too. To me! They were just very special. Uh, and, uh, then of course, uh, oh, there was- there were several interim pastors that- three of them before Scott Fleisher came and uh, then after Scott, uh, came our present, uh, uh, after a couple of interim ministers. Then came our present minister Bart Schlessman and uh, uh, uh, they have three, uh, children. Uh, and they've been real special, too. We've been blessed with a lot of really good pastors. Ministers.

I: Um, I guess it's time to move on to college here. Uh, okay so you graduated from high school in 1945?

PR: Yep.

I: And then you did one term at Eastern Oregon College of Education then. It was still a teacher's college. Uh, how was it that you only did one term here and then transferred to OSU?

PR: Well, uh, I went, uh, at before the term was actually over I was inducted into the Army. And, uh, two years later, uh, is when I went back to college again. But then, I went to OSU instead of Eastern Oregon.

I: Was there a particular reason for that?

PR: Well, I wanted a- by then I made up my mind that I wanted to get a degree in agriculture. Or one of the Ag schools is where I wanted to get a degree. And, of course, uh, Eastern at that time was a teacher certification school only. That's the only degree you could get. In 1948 the only degree you could get was in education---

I: So continuing on, the question before our previous tape ended was: when you went to Eastern for that one term, were you on track to become a teacher at that time?

PR: No, uh, I really was not. Uh, uh, yeah, lots of, of uh schools, uh, besides Eastern would accept junior college, uh...well all of the credit that you earned from a junior college. And it was, it was, uh, considered also to be a junior college. A two-year. Uh, and that was my- before I even started the first term at Eastern, uh, I knew that it was going to be for only two years. Uh, however, I- after- in the back of my head, uh, and also in choosing the uh courses that I took that first term. I was going to enter a school of engineering at Oregon State. That's what I, what I figured I would do after two years. So in other words I was gonna' take the essentials the one year and then transfer to Oregon State to finish.

I: Complete the major. This was your original plan then?

PR: That was my original plan.

I: Okay. Then, you got drafted.

PR: Yeah. Actually, I did not get drafted.

I: Were you a volunteer?

PR: Well I DID get drafted. Uh, uh, I don't know if you even want me to waste time talkin' about that.

I: It happened here in Union county didn't it?

PR: (grins) Well. Well.

I: Well, let's hear it then. How'd you get drafted?

PR: Okay, uh, on October the 20th, I- I was 18 years old. Um, classified, uh 4- let's see 4S or something. I think. Because I was a student. The day I became 18 I was notified two days later by the draft board that I was 4A. And eligible for conscription. Uh, for the draft. And, uh, uh, about a week later, uh, I was on a train with several other guys headed t Portland where I took a physical. Uh, oh, a regular old physical exam for induction. And, I passed that. Uh, and they sent me back home. And uh, uh, with a notice that they did not know exactly when- the

day that I would be drafted. But that I would receiving soon a “Dear John” <chuckle> greetings! And uh, I forgot the date that I got the greetings, but it was like the very last part of November and I have the greetings for the 11th day of December. Uh, to report to Portland. And uh, I went down one day early and enlisted in the regular Army.

I: By doing that, did that give you a choice in the matter?

PR: Yep. Yep.

I: Otherwise would they have picked the service that you were gonna’ be in?

PR: Yep. Yep.

I: Okay.

PR: Yeah they would have. Plus, there was another- I had another reason, too.

I: Okay.

PR: Uh, it- if I joined the regular Army I could not only pick the service, within limits, that I could go into. But, I would be under a uh, 18 month enlistment. Which was a brand new thing that had just happened. Oh, like a month before. And, uh, uh, anyone who had been I the army- a draftee- who was a draftee since about- since Pearl Harbor. The only way they could get out was on points. Uh, you had to have so many points to get out. And of course, time in service was one way you accumulated points. And if you were in a combat zone, uh, or if in combat you accumulated a few more points then. If you were not. Uh, so, most of those guys that were getting out had accumulated time, on average, about four years, uh, that they had been in there. Some of ‘em had been in there for about five-and-a-half years. Uh...

I: Before they had- to- you mean- in other words they were kinda’ stuck there because they had to accumulate these points to get out?

PR: That’s the only way. That’s the only way.

I: Okay. And when you enlisted in this eighteen-month deal, that was completely different from the point system.

PR: Uh, yes it was because it made- uh, 18 months later I was eligible for a, uh, for an honorable discharge. Uh, uh, well, uh, well, about the only string on it was, uh, with, uh, something called _____. ____ In service. (84) You, you couldn’t be in the brig and get out with an honorable discharge.

I: Oh! Yeah. Ya’ still had to be good.

PR: That's right. Yeah.

I: Who um- so- so you knew about this before you went to take this physical exam?

PR: Before I enlisted.

I: So you knew about this new program? How did you know about it?

PR: Well, uh...you know I- I'm not sure that I knew about it before I took that physical. But I did- I did find out about it, uh, by the time I got the greetings. I knew I had that option.

I: So, between the time you took the physical and the time you got the letter inviting you to participate you found out about this new program? If you had just taken the draft notice and gone in you would have been stuck on this point system with everyone else to get out?

PR: Yep. Yep. The way the law read at that time- um, just kinda' on a round number basis and this is not true- prob'ly not true for all the other facilities in the United States. But I was inducted in, uh, Ft. Lewis. And we went into a War Department Separation Center. And there were, on average there were 3,000 of us in that Separation Center. And all but, but uh, but there were about 110 who were new enlistees. The rest of them were, uh, uh, men who had been in there and were getting out on points. Took three days to go through that separation Center. And we were both billeted right together. Uh...

I: How long did you ultimately serve?

PR: Uh, about a year-and-a-half.

I: About 18 months then.

PR: Yeah.

I: And you got out about- basically right on time.

PR: I did.

I: Who, uh- go ahead-

PR: One, uh, I- I, uh, served with a fella' back- he was one of my, my roommates in a barracks. He thought about doing the same thing. He was from California. And, he decided "to heck with that" 18-month thing. He said, "I'm gonna' take my chances." So, he uh- and there was more to him, too. He let 'em draft him. And uh, uh, he, uh, oh maybe- maybe about a year- less than a year they changed the

law again. Where they would consider, uh, turning draftees loose after 12 months service. By the time his 12 months came along they let him out! <chuckle>

I: Oh really?

PR: Yeah. <chuckling> Yeah. Uh- course, you know the only- the only thing they need was Korea, and Japan, and Germany occupation forces. In fact, that's what I did was train occupation forces for Korea. And um...

I: Did you serve overseas?

PR: Nope. Nope. Uh, my- the whole outfit that I went through basic with- all but two of us- one of us was the guy who got out in 12 months. Uh, found out when we got back from leave that they were ALL goin' to Korea. Except me and Harry (?) (140) And we didn't know- well; it was like a couple days later that we found out finally what- that we were going to stay right in the basic training company as Cadre men. And, oh, I tell ya' it was...

I: So you didn't get to go anywhere then?

PR: No. I didn't get to go anywhere. And I had to go through that basic training, uh, uh, they made me a Platoon Sergeant. And, uh, I got 3rd Platoon, and I went through, uh, three more of those basic training cycles. Uh, and then, they kinda' did me a favor. But it was really no favor. They had these training inspectors? And they were all out of Regiment Headquarters. They weren't- they didn't stay in the companies at all. So, I went up to this Regimental Headquarters. Me and one other guy. Then we'd go around over all the battalions and check on the way they were, uh, conducting these basic training classes. And the physical side of it. And of course if they were foulin' up, why, we had to write 'em up. Turn it all the way up to a Regiment and then it filtered down. Somebody got lined up for it. They- uh, straightened out whatever was missing.

I: Uh, who uh, who else do you know that went into the service with you from La Grande? Or Union county? Did you know anyone else? Did anyone go with you at that time or...?

PR: Uh, yes they did, but I did not know them. There were three other guys, uh, and they did not end up at- they ended up at Ft. Lewis all right, but, then, they left Ft. Lewis and went to- I don't know where.

I: Okay. But you didn't know- you didn't know them personally then? Just that three others went with you around the same time?

PR: Yeah. Yeah.

I: Okay.

PR: I did run on to a couple guys I knew from La Grande, but they were, uh, they called- uh, guys who went in after- right after I did- like two or three months after.

I: Who were they?

PR: One of 'em's name was Loveless. Uh...

I: So you knew who they were but they weren't friends or associates of yours?

PR: Uh, I knew- I can't think of what was his first name?

I: That's okay.

PR: But uh, I went to school with him. He was- he was, uh, he was in my high school class. But I didn't know him very well.

I: Okay, so you got back out. You lived in Washington for a time. When did you come back to La Grande?

PR: 1960.

I: And, uh, what did you do then? What, what was your main occupation at first?

PR: Uh- okay, it was the, uh---

I: Oh! We gotta' back up! Where did you meet your wife?

PR: Uh, well I met here right here. Uh, and, we went on a double date at or arranged to- by, uh, Willy Hammond and it was ___ Moorehead, uh, Willy's eventual wife. Uh, uh, and, Charlotte was- let's see now, she had gone one term at Oregon. Uh, let's see now...

I: Do you mean University of Oregon?

PR: She- yeah. She had gone two terms at Eastern. I- I think it was one term- I, I mean one year at, at Eastern. Uh, and was here for the summer like I was. I met her. That fall she went to Oregon and I went back to Oregon State.

I: So, you're talking University of Oregon she went to?

PR: Yes. Uh-huh.

I: Okay. Okay.

PR: In Eugene.

I: Right.

PR: Yep. Uh, and we- we only dated like two or three times before school started in September. And then we kind of- oh, put it together that we would try to get together down there. Uh, and it was- of course it was only about 50 miles. Apart. And I had- I had relatives in Eugene- who lived in Eugene. And uh, oh, uh, I would go down there once in a while to see them. Uh, but right away I went down there to see Charlotte and the first thing to do. It was- well that year, uh, uh, we- I think she came home some other way. But I took her back down to Oregon. Uh, then in 1950, New year's Eve 1950- well, I- well we were engaged. We were engaged the summer before. Uh, and then we were married December 31st, 1950. Uh...

I: Where?

PR: Uh, right here in La Grande, We got married in Charlotte's folks' home. We didn't get married in a church. Uh, her, uh, she was a regular member of the Presbyterian Church and it was her pastor who married us.

I: Where did, uh, Charlotte's parents live?

PR: They lived, uh, in La Grande. Uh, they had, uh, been here since, uh, 1944. Uh, he uh, Carl, owned and operated a cream collecting station. He, he'd buy cream from farmers all over, uh, Union, Wallowa, and Baker county. Uh, test it for butterfat. Uh, pay them for the total pounds of cream. Uh, uh, then he would, uh, reship it or he would package and ship it to usually another creamery in Portland where most of it would go into, uh, making butter or cheese. And he operated that for, oh, another darn near 20 years after- after we were married.

I: So you um, you got married on New Year's Eve of 1950. Were you both still in college?

PR: Uh, we- we were. However, uh, we, uh, came back and moved to the family, uh, my family owned uh, this ranch. Up the river. And, uh, and that fall- the fall of 1950, the Army uh, threatened to yank me back in there because even though I had not served- uh, I had not joined the active reserve, they uh, they- the threat was North Korea. And uh, of course the war started, uh, right there at that time. And they were really short on training cadre for combat engineers and that's what I had done. Uh, for bridge companies, and uh, uh, they wrote me a letter that fall term while I was down there and told me to get my- my things in order. That, uh, maybe by the end of that term I was gonna' be on active duty. I could get out of it then by claiming a 4F, for farming for my dad. Uh, because he- <chuckle> he really did wanna' retire. And so we came home. And, and we waited two years before we started school again. I never went back into the Army.

I: So, um, did you get that 4F status? Getting married didn't have anything to do with it?

PR: Uh, no it- no, uh no. It, it didn't.

I: Did you have to file---

PR: ---It, it used to be that you did, uh, if you were married you did get a different status all right. Which didn't do you any good in the early 40's. You were married; you were still in there.

I: Uh, right. Um, so, did you have to file paperwork with Selective Service here in Union county to establish that you were needed to help with the farm?

PR: Uh, yeah. Well, I, I let them know that that's what I was gonna' do. And- the Board. The local board. And so they gave it up. Uh, now they- 'cause see they were gonna' have to fight it, so, they---

I: They went on to easier bait?

PR: Yeah, that's- I think that's probably just some other for- either that, or they- they made do with what they had. I don't know, but, but the Army, uh, really increased then. You know they had, they had cut the Army to bare- whatever. They discharged- what, they had about 60 million in, in the Armed Forces in 1945. And they had that reduced down to about two million. Uh, and were pretty short ___ with that.

I: So when the next conflict came up they were kinda' caught short? In terms of what their needs were.

PR: When the North Koreans invaded, uh, well the _____. (350)

I: Mm-hm. Okay, so it was two more years before you got back to college. You eventually completed a degree in- a bachelor's degree in... agriculture? Was it?

PR: That's right. Yes it was. Uh-huh. It was 1954.

I: Was it a general degree?

PR: And Charlotte- Charlotte was uh, with me all the way through the last part of it. Uh, the last- the last four terms of- of being able to graduate. And she was with me, and, Charlotte Marie, our oldest girl, and Paul, uh our oldest boy were right down there. Paul was born right between- in the summer session. Between Oregon State spring and fall session.

I: Did your wife graduate from Oregon State also?

PR: No. She, she did not go to, to Oregon State. And she did not go back to Ore- uh, University of Oregon. However, in 19... (Calling out to wife) "70, mama?" (Charlotte: "What?") "1970 or '72? You graduated?" (Charlotte: "1970! ___!" Tape #377). Yep. She got a- she got a teaching degree from Eastern. Yep. And got her- her certificate. Yep.

I: Where did she teach?

PR: Her first job was at, uh Elgin. Uh, she had a- she was a good teacher. A good teacher, but, she had a problem with it. She, uh, just couldn't leave it up there when she- come home at night she'd bring that job home with her. And, by the time her three year contract was up, she just- she ____, but, (394) uh, I wanted her to quit. And uh, our kid's were- they were, you know, the youngest one was in high school before she ever started getting degreed. In fact, she went to Eastern at the same time that our oldest girl Charlotte Marie went up there.

I: Oh.

PR: And mama and daughter up there at Eastern. Uh, however, uh, she signed up as a substitute teacher in several districts. Mostly, uh, right here in La Grande District. And it was a, oh, uh the first year they just gave her all the teaching she wanted. All the substitute teaching she wanted. And that really worked out well for her and- I'm sure for them, too.

I: So she didn't go back to a regular classroom after that then?

PR: No.

I: She stayed on the substitute list?

PR: Yep.

I: Well that works for a lot of people. Um, okay, so, let's take---okay, we're gonna' run out of tape again soon. Um, so you came back to La Grande. Did you say that you briefly worked the power company?

PR: Yeah.

I: Was that the first thing you did when you returned to La Grande in the 60's?

PR: Yeah. Uh, I- actually, I finished, uh, my coursework in December. Uh, and, I already had a job with Washington State College. But it was not going to start until July. Uh...

I: And so...?

PR: And so, uh, uh, let's see I can't remember... Well, I wanted a job 'cause we needed money. And uh, we came back and we lived right here, uh, in, in this house. (To wife) "Where were mom and dad?" (Charlotte: In La Grande, of course.) Yeah. And uh, uh...well, I'm so blank here.

I: We were tryin' to pin down the power company job---

PR: ---Oh yeah! Uh, okay, they needed a uh, they needed a meter reader. And uh, so, Elmer Miller taught me all the routes. It was everything except the rural. Uh, and I read meters until uh, about the last of June. And uh, then, uh, we reported to Pullman first, and then _____. (474) We moved up to _____. (474)

I: Now what was the name of the power company at that time?

PR: It was Eastern Oregon Light & Power? (Looking at wife) Eastern Oregon Electric? (Charlotte: _____) (481)

I: Hm. Okay.

PR: It might have been California Pacific, but, uh, I think that's- in that- in those years, I think it's when they became California Pacific. And they changed then...

I: So, um, then you went to Washington State. And then when did you come back t La Grande again?

PR: Uh, in 1960. In March.

I: And what did you do? What did you do when you...?

PR: Back here?

I: Um-hm.

PR: We moved right here into this house and started farming right here and running that ranch up there (referring to out of town property).

I: Well, now, the other ranch that you're talking about. Where is that located?

PR: Uh, it's located on Jordan Creek. Uh, about a mile and-a-half south of, uh, the gun club. Uh, rifle range. Uh, up the- up Highway 244, uh, toward Ukiah. Uh...

I: How big is that place?

PR: Well, at that time it was a- we had about, uh---

I: You're telling me about how big the ranch was at the time?

PR: It was 1280 acres. All looking to north on Jordan Creek.

I: And what's the current size of that ranch now?

PR: Well, we sold some of it, so that it is now, actually, or, or, um, our granddaughter and uh, and her uncle own 480 acres of it. And then we've still got the rest of it.

I: About 800-and some?

PR: Yeah.

I: What- what-what do you grow there? What does the ranch do or produce?

PR: Uh, well- alfalfa. Alfalfa. Grass. Mixture of- there's timber on it. And native grasses.

I: And how long has that ranch been in your family? Your parents had that ranch, too?

PR: Well... What?

I: Did your parents have that ranch, too?

PR: Yep. Yep. Uh, well, my uh, well, my grandfather and uh, my grandfather acquired it. And then, uh, uh, my dad's dad. And then, he acquired it from the Homestead. That, that, that is part of it. He acquired from the Homesteader itself. Himself. Then, um, two uncles, uh, acquired the rest of it. But eventually it all ended up in him- uh, once uncle _____. (27) Uh, and then, when that uncle died. He uh, he gave it, uh, to my dad.

I: This was your dad's brother?

PR: Yeah.

I: Um-hm. And so then it's been in your particular line of the family ever since.

PR: Yeah. Yeah.

I: Um---

PR: ---The house was built- the house was finished in 1917. Uh, actually it's a good ole house, and, we done a lot of work on it and our youngest girl Kay, uh, lived there, uh, had- well, actually pretty well raised both of children there. Until, um,

well it's been four years since she moved to the Willamette Valley to stay- well, her husband, uh, uh, uh, went to work down there. That was sort of a headquarters down there. So, it was either a lot of traveling him, or, or, traveling for her. So...

I: I see. So when you- when you came home to help- or take over the work of the farm, that included the ranch as well as this main place?

PR: Yeah.

I: 'Cause *that* sounds like the main place to me and this is the smaller end. But, which one was more, more work? 'Course you did have the hogs here, so...

PR: Yeah, but uh, that was uh, it was more time required up there. Because, we raised hay on about 120 acres of that and uh, uh, and then there was a lot of fence to take care of. And, and also feeding your cattle. And in uh, always had 'em up there. Never, never did bring the cattle down here to feed them. Lots better feeding conditions up there than, than down here.

I: Now how did- how did a person manage a farm at that time? I imagine it's different today than it was then?

PR: Oh-h-h-h-h-h-h...

I: Tell me a little bit about doing that? How do you plan to manage a farm? There must have been a routine.

PR: Oh yeah, there was a routine. All dictated by the season of the year. Uh, 'course you always had to- you know, deadlines, because of the, of the season. And, in those days it didn't take quite nearly as many acres, or, nearly as many cattle, or, nearly as many hogs to make a comfortable living for a family. Or, you know, to sustain a business. And that's really what, what got us, uh, was, uh, you had to get bigger and bigger and bigger, and they still wanted, uh, in order just to stay in business. And, of course, there's a lot of economic reasons why that it has turned out that way. We uh, in 1973, uh, in addition to this place and that ranch, uh, I leased a, uh, a 900 acre place that was in two different- no, it was in three different locations, really. Uh, out here in the valley. And uh, 580 acres of that was irrigated. And uh, uh, with help I- I operated that in addition to these with machinery. No (?) without machinery to do it. I couldn't do it. One, one person couldn't do it. Couldn't manage it. Uh...

I: You seem to have done well enough to have raised and provided for your family?

PR: We, uh, as far as I'm concerned we have always had just a comfortable living. We sure never got rich at it. Uh, we did- in the 1970's we really like all the rest of the farmers had a- had three bad crop years in a row. And uh, that really...well I wouldn't still be at it; I'm now too old for that, but, uh, I would have stuck with

that operation a lot longer if it hadn't been for those particular years. They cost so much money that I- I- I just came up tryin' to keep it _____. (98) I couldn't. I couldn't dig out. We had a bad freeze in uh, uh, the 28th of June 1975 and---

I: ---Was that the first year- the first of the three bad years?

PR: ---Uh, that was the- that was the third year. Uh, after I started it. And uh, uh, some parts of it was a total loss. There never got any return. And uh, uh, some of it like this was fertile right here and I had some of this in wheat. And that wheat uh, was about a 80%. Well, of what it should have had. Uh, but, then there were several hundred acres of it out there that didn't get anything. And it was a futile cause irrigating _____. (112) I had a lot of money in it and I didn't get anything out of it. Uh, that was also leased. All of that was leased. And of course---

I: ---He couldn't pay the- he couldn't pay the lease then?

PR: That's (my coughing cancels remainder of this phrase.). Well, uh, it was a share crop. So, the landlord didn't, the landlord didn't make anything, well then we didn't either.

I: I have some land like that on the reservation.

PR: Is that right?

I: Wheat. Yeah. So I'm familiar a little bit with the share- with the shared lease business.

PR: You guys have never had an actual failure on that reservation. And it- well, you might have had a dry year or two, but---

I: ---uh, several dry years but I don't know about a failure. O r a- at least I haven't heard of one. Uh, and I- I'm not long-term familiar with this because I only picked up this land a few years ago, but, um, I'd say it's been pretty popular because it's- uh, farming is actually- was the main enterprise on the reservation before we had gaming and, you know other things come in there. So that was really, farming and fishing were top of the list. Um, well let's talk about these seasons. You said a lot of what you did around the year were dictated by the seasons, so, let's talk about the...where do you begin on the seasons? Uh, let's start with the fall: what happens in the fall? What's, what's dictated on your...?

PR: Well, that's always our re-seeding time. Now, there's exceptions to that, too. But winter wheat of course. Uh, uh, September if you've got the moisture, uh, October prob'ly if you don't have uh...---

I: Is when you plant seeds?

PR: Yeah.

I: Uh-huh.

PR: Uh, for winter wheat. Uh, uh, that's the only thing in the fall that- on this leased land I grew potatoes and uh, uh, grass seed, uh fescues and, and blue grass seed. Uh, wheat. Uh, that was it out there.

I: Would you reseed those crops in the fall? As well?

PR: Uh, uh, nothing but, but the grains were- were seeded, re-seeded. Fall. Yeah in the fall. Potatoes, of course was, in, in the spring.

I: 'kay. What do you do in the winter?

PR: I fed cattle and that's what I- how I utilized my- my wintertime was feeding cattle and taking care of them.

I: But with the crops there's very little or nothing to do during that timeframe?

PR: Not in the- not in the wintertime. Work on machinery. You know maintain machinery of...

I: What do you do in the spring?

PR: Uh, well that could be seeding time, too, again if uh- alfalfa is always seeded in the spring. Uh, uh, spread wheat or spread barley. Uh, we grow a little bit of winter barley, but, not all that much. And, gee we didn't, never did grow a lot of spring barley, either. Just didn't make enough on that.

I: But major planting goes on in the spring?

PR: Uh, like alfalfa. Yeah. Yeah. Right. And the potatoes, that was always in the spring. Uh, if we were starting a new, uh, seed, uh, variety, why that was spring seeded. But then that would be it for at least three years of- after that additional, uh, crop, uh, from that seeding year.

I: How about the summer?

PR: Uh, well, harvest. Harvest would begin when- alfalfa- in uh, prob'ly the early part of June. And, that would last- well. We always would get three cuttings out right here, or out in the valley. Uh, or, one cutting up at the ranch. It would only- it wouldn't recover cause it was always later up there, too. Like- oh, wouldn't cut that 'til about the first of July.

I: Now, when you talk about cutting, uh, you do three cuttings here. That means after you've cut it the first time it will grow again? You can cut it again and it will grow again? You can get three cutting? (He is nodding head yes.) Okay. All right. But only one up at the ranch. What else in the summer? That's alfalfa.

PR: Uh, okay, alfalfa. Then uh, wheat harvest. Uh, grass seed harvest. Uh, potato harvest in, oh, uh, it was always a Russet Burbank (?) potato so it came due- it be September. Or, oh, would dig those. That was always, uh, in conjunction with a potato grower, uh, fella' who came up here out of southern Idaho. And, he actually was the spud grower. Uh, he was Jack _____. (?) (205) A real good fella', but he had the equipment and uh, and, we furnished the irrigation for him. But, uh, the irrigation labor. And, uh, we always uh, put it down with a cover crop after, after it was done. After spuds were done. _____. (212)

I: Then where did those potatoes go?

PR: Uh, well, 99% of those, uh, would end up with a processor, uh, who would mostly process 'em- a few of 'em would go into a _____ (219) market depending upon who they were, who they were uh, going to. Uh, they- the first crop was entirely not contracted at all. That was right in the days when, uh, people like J. R. Simplot and Carnation were getting all the contracted things they could get. Uh, for, well, they're what about twelve or fourteen (thinking out loud), that's the potato processing processes. All the way from French fries to, well, potato flakes to make out of those fresh potatoes. One crop- one crop we sold to McDonald's for, uh, French-fries. They- they bought- they were stored- it was always stored in, uh, sheds, uh, right out here. And uh, and, well, well two years in a row McDonald's bought all of our potatoes.

I: So when your potatoes then, uh, are you saying that you might not know who was going to buy those potatoes when they were harvested?

PR: Uh, the first uh- yeah. That's right. That first year we had no contract with anybody. It was open market.

I: So you stored these potatoes? So your stored these potatoes until they were bought?

PR: Yeah. Yep. Yep.

I: And then you said, one or two years in a row McDonald's bought 'em?

PR: Uh, well, in fact that, that uh, I think it was the second that McDonald's bought the whole thing. And then that must the next year after that, they bought the whole crop again. So, we didn't have to- didn't have to contract 'em. But, but the fourth year and the fifth year, uh, we had a contract with uh, Carnation. And then another contract with J.R>, uh...

I: Was it to your advantage to have a contract, rather than the open market?

PR: Uh, about the only advantage is, was, it was an assurance that probably you were gonna' be able to recover your- your expenses with that contract. They wrote those contracts for a, you know, a supposedly a reasonable profit. Uh, but...

I: But that was, that was uh, according to them, not you.

PR: Yeah.

I: Okay, so, uh, how about the grass seed? Now, first of all, first of all I'm- I'm unfamiliar with this. I didn't know that you- that grass was grown and harvested. So let's talk about that first a little bit. What's that all about?

PR: _____?

I: What goes on with grass seed? I've- I don't understand it as a crop. What does that mean?

PR: Okay. Uh, I grew two different, uh, uh, families of grass seeds. And one of them were the bluegrasses, and the other were the fescue. Then they are entirely different looking grass. Uh, there's, uh, um, another category that uh, are used for pastures. Uh, uh, all over the world, really. The markets are all over the world, and, uh, the bluegrasses are primarily turf grasses. Uh, golf courses, football fields, whatever. The fescues are also just another turf grass. Uh, they, they grow differently, but, but they're still a turf grass. Uh, and all – all the other grasses are, are a pasture grass, or, a mixture with alfalfa. Uh, there's, there's big seed companies which uh, actually are warehouse, holders of, of a stock of a year's crop and they, um, they make payment, uh, get-test germination, uh purity of- and then package it. But they may blend it- you know blend a- blend different turf grasses together. They may blend a, an annual. The ones I named are perennials that- there's also annual grasses, too. Turf grasses. And uh, uh, they may put those into blends. Sell 'em at a nursery in one-pound bags. Or, they may sell 'em for planting um, 300 acres of, of pasture. That would be a, in a 90-pound bag. Uh...

I: So, how do you- you just grow grass? How do you get the seeds? Is that what you're harvesting are the seeds from the grass?

PR: Yeah, all you get is that little seed out of that, all that grass planting. Uh, well, um, the whole thing changed- the method of harvesting changed drastically in about, uh, 1950. Uh, before 1950, uh, they had to- binders. Uh, and they date back to about the turn of the century where they were cut off the ground, rolled up into a bundle and tied so- do you know what a binder is? What, what the binders...?

I: No I don't. But that's

PR: Well, all the wheat on that reservation was harvested that way up until, uh, well; over there- in big wheat areas it was actually during the Depression. Uh, in the late 20's is when the combine finally took over from the binders. Uh, but anyway the grass sound was bound. And then it was- they were fed- the bundles were fed into a stationary combine. A combine that was---

I: ---It didn't move around?

PR: It did not go around the fields in, set- the bundles were pitched into it. The straw would all blow into one pile. Uh, okay uh, then, uh, they- then the self-propelled combine came along. Uh, during the- in the 30's whereby, you know, the header is always ahead of the assembly. So, it does not swathe any of the _____. (366) Uh, so they started harvesting grass seed the very same way. They had to let it get more mature so that it, uh, seed would fall out of the grass _____. (371) Whereas with the binder it had to be cut greener; but still mature seed to keep that seed from shattering. Uh, okay then uh, the combine _____ (376) into a bunker. (?) It was, uh, _____ (378) into a truck and taken to a, to a warehouse to, you know, store it.

I: And is that how they do that now?

PR: And that's exactly how they do it now?

I: This is- this is the modern way of doing that now?

PR: Yep. Yep.

I: Okay so we've covered the...we covered the potatoes and we covered the grass. Um, I know about wheat and I, and I've gotten wheat harvest from a lot of other... Now let's talk about this for a minute: uh, did you say that your father, your parents were doing this harvesting without machinery when they first took it on?

PR: Uh, to this extent they were- they were doing it with horses. Uh, uh, they did have a, a, uh, mowing machine that would cut it off. They didn't- uh, before the mowing machine we used to take a scythe, you know, to cut it off of the ground.

I: Yes. So were they part of some of these collective areas, uh, around the county that used to come and work neighbor-to-neighbor harvesting the wheat and things like that? Like the threshing machines, and, things that people didn't own. Were they part of some of this?

PR: Oh. Those stationary combines. That- boy, that was a cooperative effort. They had- yeah, harvest- harvest days. And usually, uh, every farmer did not have a stationary, uh, but they would, uh, somebody did. And they'd get their own crop

taken care of, and move to a neighbor and, and the neighbors would all follow it around.

I: Were you part of this? Did you- do you remember this or was this done?

PR: I might- uh, yes it was done. Except, I was too little to- uh, this is when I was like, uh, well, one to seven or eight years old. But my dad did. Uh, he uh, uh, he used to regularly work for another farmer on a stationary, uh right off here on- on the sand ridge (?). That, uh, farmer also owned a place near a Hunter Lake. Uh, Bill Moss. Uh, was his name and dad would always help, and uh, and uh, uh, uh, well he bought a team from Bill. Uh, of horses. And, that's the way he paid for it was for that team. Or at least, part of the money- you know, for him, the team- it just worked out. Uh...

I: So it was a real cooperative effort? Your- your neighbors that, as well.

PR: Yeah. It sure was. After- after that, uh, when the machine age came in, which was- oh, really, really got into high gear after World War Two. Why then it was much less of a cooperative thing. Very, very much less. Uh- I, I, well always put up a lot of hay for Willy. But that was a share thing. This was in addition to- of several things that I had going. Was putting up the hay that Willy grew and he had a few head of cattle and- he wanted enough hay for his consumption and I could use it for mine. So, but I harvested all of the hay. Uh, like it was- usually had about _____. (470)

I: Let's talk about cattle then. Cattle and- in general. Let's talk about the hogs first. What did that involve? How do you do that?

PR: Uh, well- they- they were not grown in confinement. Uh, they could get inside of that barn to feeding stanchions. But they weren't on, uh, concrete floor for their whole life. Uh, uh, there- dad had a prob'ly a couple of acres fenced out there for those hogs. Uh, and they got water there and their old mud holes and...uh...

I: Did you buy hogs or did you raise the young as they were born?

PR: Uh, he, he had a - he usually had four or five sows, uh, and he would raise his- he- uh, he'd raise his own from, um- from little pigs. You know? Through- and would fatten 'em. That run to about- in those days it used to hit about 225 pounds. Uh, for a, you know, a hog that was raised to butcher.

I: And how long would that take?

PR: Uh, they could get 'em up to there in, uh, six months.

I: From birth?----

I: So we, uh- we're talking about the hogs now. So the life of a hog that went to market is really less than a year?

PR: Well, yep.

I: Do you still have hogs today?

PR: No.

I: Okay, so, um how many hogs did you have when- what was your average when you took over from your father?

PR: Uh, okay now, uh, Micheal, I never did- me and Charlotte never did raise hogs.

I: Oh, okay.

PR: Dad is- he's the only one who did that. And, do you wanna' know about a year when he finally quit raising hogs?

I: No, I guess that's not really important, I- I was just trying to catch on to the, the production aspect of it. So, um---

PR: ---He would market, uh, usually about 250 of 'em a year. Uh, there was- they- all of 'em would go into Portland. Just were not- 'course, we, uh, he'd always butcher- all the way from two to maybe they'd butcher six, but that'd be goin' to somebody else. Maybe a relative, or, a friend. Uh...

I: Did he slaughter or butcher himself? Those that- that stayed in the family?

PR: Yep. Yep. Yeah the old scalding pads are out in that barn.

I: The old what?

PR: The scalding pads is out there in that barn. Scalding pads for---

I: ---Um, that's where they went after they were slaughtered?

PR: Well, that's where they uh, cut the hair off.

I: Yeah.

PR: Uh, yeah, they were, yeah they were slaughtered and then- then into that hot water. Uh, which was- that vat was placed right over a pit with a- uh, it was pretty darn hot to get that water up to boiling. Uh, a lot of water, probably- oh, prob'ly two hundred gallons of water. In that.

I: Did ya' take that water from a pump or from the river?

PR: From a pump. Uh yeah there was a- another pitcher pump out up there close to that vat. Uh---

I: ---What happens after you get the hair of 'em then? What do you do then?

PR: Uh, uh, then- well, they had a tripod they could heist 'em out. And uh, and uh, uh, with a uh, gaff. They'd take and put it across the hind legs. They'd hang 'em and then that's the time of year when uh, better be cool. So they would cool rapidly, uh, over- overnight. Uh, at least as cold as it was last night.

I: So they might do this in the fall then?

PR: Always in the fall.

I: Late fall?

PR: Yeah. Yeah. Right. October-November was butcherin' time. Yeah, uh...

I: Then, um, then what? Then you just...?

PR: Uh, then uh, uh, I don't know how many days they took, but it wasn't very long, though, because there was no, no- there was refrigeration, yeah, but they didn't have refrigeration. So, they'd let 'em hang like a couple days and then they would salt and cure them. Uh, oh my, in a, a, a tri-solution that was, uh, hand rubbed all over the outside. And then, oh, like Morton's came out with a- with a gun that was really a syringe. And they could inject this salt solution inside of the ham. And two or three locations. And then, dad had a smokehouse that was built right out here. And, he can hang about four hogs up in that barn at the same time. Use apple wood to, uh, keep a smoky fire going out on the ground. And he might smoke those for, uh a week. Uh, and then take 'em out of there and put 'em in a, in a cool, dry atmosphere. Uh, and that's how they were used. You know...

I: Then were they packaged up for, for family use? Or, how were they- how were they uh, how were they stored?

PR: Uh, well the smoking- yeah, the smoking thing, uh, uh they were all up in hams. Or, bacon. Uh, you know- they were slabs of bacon then. They weren't- they weren't all sliced. Uh, but the- well the bacon was still on the ribs. Uh, and then, uh, uh, well, they had- they had a pantry that was outside. Not in the sun that they'd take one ham out of it and each day if they wanted, or ham was on the menu, uh, or bacon was on the menu why they'd slice off what they needed. Uh, put it back in that- in that storage spot. They, uh, preferably that was where it never got above, oh, say 45 degrees. About- what a- what a refrigerator is set for. Well, refrigerators are prob'ly 41, 42, right in there.

I: So it could last or stay preserved in that atmosphere a long time?

PR: It would last as long as the ham lasted, or, it was gone by the time uh, _____. (91)

I: But they would- traditionally they would slaughter in the late fall and use that meat all through the winter and, and 'til the next year?

PR: It would through, through uh, uh, spring. Uh, if they were goin' to like have it in the summer, uh, they would have to can it. And uh, they didn't do a lot of that. I don't know how they did- I think hotback. What they called hotback. They'd have to get it- they'd have to get it hot enough to kill any organisms and then exclude the air to get a seal, oh, in the jars. Uh...

I: So but basically the hog business was done when you took over the farm? Or, how did that wrap up?

PR: Uh World War two is sort of what put an end to the, the raising of hogs.

I: You mean small farmers raising...?

PR: Yeah. Yep. Uh, uh, that's when the big hog raisers started going to the confined hogs. You know? Um, where they're born and raised on country (114)...

I: I've heard there's some movement of, uh, cooperative re-establishments again to get 'em out of that atmosphere and- some people think that's uh, that's cruel.

PR: Very inhumane. Yep. Yep. They, oh I wouldn't be surprised at when that happens sooner or later whether we will become a society that doesn't eat as much pork, I don't know. It still is very popular.

I: Um-hm. It is. It is. Now, let's see, what are we... I think we've pretty much covered the major aspects of your life from birth until... Let me just ask a few things at random. Do you know why you were born in this house, instead of a hospital?

PR: Uh...it was a- I can't give ya' the stats. But, it was really customary that, uh, babies were born someplace besides in a hospital. Uh, you know. A lot of them really were attended by a- what they call- (thinking)---

I: A midwife?

PR: Uh, a midwife. Yeah. Yeah. Uh, and I was attended to by a doctor. And so was my sister. And lot- lot of kids were born under the supervision of a doctor. Mine was- they tell me it was a very, very difficult birth and my mother- it took her

about- I think it was three days. But uh, uh, and my, uh, my- well I know they eventually had to pull me. Uh, and---

I: ---And they did it here?

PR: Yeah, and they did it here. Yeah. Dr. Biggers (?) was the doctor's name. Uh, my, my aunt- the one who, um, the one who owned and operated Joel's Grocery? Was- she and- and my aunt Minnie and Auntie Joel's sister were both trained nurses. And uh, and they ran a- they ran a hospital in here before the Grande Ronde Hospital came into existence. This was before the store. The grocery store. But, uh, she was here. All the time. Uh...

I: Was your sister born here, too? Was your sister born here, too?

PR: Well, she was born, uh, in a home up in Wallowa County. In the town of Wallowa.

I: But she was- she was born at home? Not a hospital?

PR: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

I: Uh, what were the hospitals in town? In your day?

PR: In La Grande, uh, the old Grande Ronde Hospital was on Adams off on the west end of town. Uh, do you know- are you familiar with the---

I: ---Actually, I remember it. I think it was there still in the early 70's when I first came over here as an adult.

PR: Okay.

I: But not for very long. I don't think it was there for very long.

PR: Okay. I can remember, uh, well, they built the new hospital- they were in the process of building the new hospital in 1960. When we moved back here they were collecting donations to build the new hospital where it is now. Uh, so the old Grande Ronde was still there and uh, uh, the St Joseph Hospital- the Catholic hospital, uh, well, uh, Paul and Charlie (?) were born in that hospital. In the Catholic hospital. Yep. 'Cause that's where the doctor, uh, was- he worked there. Or, he---

I: ---That's where his practice was?

PR: Yeah, it's where his practice was. Yeah. Yep.

I: What other theatres were in town beside the Granada at the time you were growing up?

PR: Uh, okay there- there was the Liberty Theatre. That was where the better- better movies went to was the Liberty. And right beside what is the City Hall now, uh. Then there was the Granada Theatre. Uh, uh, where the Granada is- is still called Granada, isn't it?

I: Um-hm.

PR: Uh, that's where all the cowboy movies were. And then there another theatre about three buildings down south of the Liberty Theatre that was, uh, at the time I was- it was called The Arcade. And I saw *Gone With The Wind* in that theatre. Uh, it was the first color movie ever. Uh, and it was also a lot longer. It was about like 4-hour movie...

I: Yeah. And you saw that at that- it was called The Arcade Theatre.

PR: Yep. Yeah.

I: Was that a special event when that movie came out?

PR: Yeah. Oh, yeah, boy I'll say it was. Because of the Technicolor and, uh, I think also maybe that was the most expensive movie that had ever been made. Uh, yeah, it was- it was one of those days.

I: Now, when you said the, uh, the Liberty Theatre had the better movies, or the better quality movies. What do you mean by that?

PR: Okay, uh, uh, the cowboy- we- we called it cowboy movies- westerns is, is the only thing that they ever showed at the Granada. And like, uh, uh, at the Liberty it was movies like, um, well the animated *Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs* was there. Uh, uh, me and those movies. I can't- I can't remember the names of some of them that I saw there, but they were- they were story movies. Uh...

I: Were you a movie buff? Did you like going to the theatre?

PR: Uh, I- yes, uh, I did. Uh, oh yeah I went to all of 'em. I went to a lot of movies when I was in- well, the westerns- Jerry and I went- and then later on, in high school I went to a lot of movies in, uh- at the Liberty. Uh, and over in Union. Uh, they had a pretty nice- I'll tell ya' where I saw the most movies.

I: 'kay.

PR: Was at Ft. Lewis. They had- they had- now I forgot- I know they had four theatres there. And they had at least- I think there was more than that. Because there was theatre in Camp Murray, too. On North fort.

I: Yeah, I think there's still four or five, maybe even six theatres.

PR: Uh, there still is?

I: I think so.

PR: Okay. All right. The Armed Forces got those movies before ANYBODY got 'em. And, and they changed those movies every day at- at, uh, Ft. Lewis. Uh, you could go to theatres tonight and see one movie. Go there the next night and see that same movie. So, _____. (254) And the, and the latest, you know. The latest productions. And me and this fella' that I told you about who got out of the Army sooner than I did? Uh, I think we saw darn nearly ever' movie that was made in Hollywood. Right, right there at Ft. Lewis.

I: During your time in the...so, were there any live performances in town here, or around, uh...

PR: Not in town. I, I never saw a live performance. But I did, in uh- in Seattle when I was in the Army. I saw some live performances. And also, uh, music- uh, like a, oh *Sons of the Pioneers*. Uh...

I: Now, did any of these, uh, performers come through La Grande, or ever stop in La Grande, or? You have any memory or knowledge of that?

PR: No. The big timers- boy, I've forgotten if they ever faded before- well, even after, right after World War two. Uh, say in the beginning of about the 1960's occasionally there was. Uh, you know like the one I can remember best, or at all was Ferrante & Teicher. You remember them?

I: Yeah, I do. They came to town here?

PR: They, they came to the college. It was usually the college that, you know, sponsored them. Yeah.

I: Did you see that performance?

PR: Yes. Yep. And, uh we were record and tape buffs. Really, Charlotte and I both. Uh, I've got a- a seven and-a-half tape player. Uh, that is the old _____. (291) And we got a lot of those tapes. Uh, I wish one of these days I can get a new tape deck, uh, that's all a- you know, uh, not those tubes, the electronics in it.

I: State of the art? Or an updated version?

PR: Yeah. Yeah. 'Cause the amplifier- uh, the amplifier is shot and the tape deck is okay. Uh, except it does the, uh, the tubes. So I had to get those tubes, and...

I: Yeah. Pretty hard I bet. To get tubes. Ever go- did you and your wife ever go dancing in that Zuber Dance Hall? When they were holding dances?

PR: Uh, no. The two of us never did go there. To a, to a dance. But, we went to probably at least seven or eight of the big time band, uh, like Tommy Dorsey and- this was at Oregon State. And also we went to one or two up at Oregon. Uh, they- they've got a nice big old ballroom down at Oregon State. Have you ever been to that?

I: I haven't been the ballroom at Oregon State but I have at Oregon. Uh-huh.

PR: Okay. Okay. Uh, oh, Bob Monroe. Tex _____. (325) Uh, and that- that was the big band there one, too. Like it---

I: Did anybody come through here?

PR: Those- they didn't come here. They didn't come here that I can remember. Nope. Uh, they- they did a lot of touring, too. But, uh, just too many places to go. Uh, really took- it was big bucks then, too. Uh, to go to those- Fred Waring. Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. Uh, do you really know who those people are?

I: I DO really know who Fred Waring was. And I- and I, I uh, yeah because of my, my former background in music. You know, he was an arranger of choral music as well, and I came from vocal studies. So I REALLY DO KNOW who you mean.

PR: Okay.

I: I don't- I couldn't say that I'd ever seen them. I think that I saw him and his choir once on TV. When I was very young.

PR: Well, yeah they had a, uh, they had a regular TV show for awhile. I can't remember, it was a network. Yeah. But they were good. He was good.

I: Did you have radio out here when you were young?

PR: Yes. But that's the only entertainment we had. A battery operated- we uh, didn't have to have electricity, but we had a battery-operated radio, a console radio. RCA. (Using hands to describe the size of the radio.)

I: He's demonstrating that the radio's prob'ly about four feet tall. And operated on a, on a battery? So how did that work?

PR: That was- it was about, uh, six batteries. Uh, that it took to operate that. Prob'ly weigh fifty, sixty pounds.

I: What kind of battery are we talking about?

PR: Well, a one- one cell battery, and I think it was 6-volt. And then it took about four or five dry cell batteries. All hooked up in, I don't what series, but... By the way, that radio is right down, well, I'll stand right over the top of it. (Up and moving to portion of room about where radio would be located one floor below where we are.) Beneath this house I built a concrete floor on this new part. I built a concrete floor, and then the floor joints are about that far above, uh, the concrete floor ____.
(382) And there's, uh, all kinds of junk down there.

I: So he's saying he still has that radio. So, I may have to bring my camera back and take a picture of it. But, how long would those batteries last? Did ya' have to replace them, or recharge them, or, what did you do?

PR: Yeah. Yeah. You have to recharge the wet cell- it was an automotive battery is what it was. A one cell- I think it's a 6-volt uh, wet cell. Uh, and you have to recharge- depending on what- how much you used it. But, uh, they- the wet cell would- have to be charged like, oh, once every couple of months. And the dry cells, when they were- when they stopped working they were done for. And, uh, they- they would last all winter and that's, uh, that's how long the radio worked was, uh, a winter. And then during the summer there wasn't time to listen to that radio. So---

I: ---Because of all the farm chores, and?

PR: Yeah. Oh yeah.

I: So what did you listen to on that radio?

PR: Uh, well, that's where I got started on Jack Armstrong. Uh...

I: Who was Jack Armstrong?

PR: Uh, he was a uh, a uh, kid's person. Uh, *The Adventures of Jack Armstrong*. It, it, uh- that's one thing I did when I- when I got home from school. When I got my wood in quick enough I got it done in time to come in and flip the radio on. I couldn't flip that radio on, you know, without those chores pretty well taken care of. Uh...

I: I bet you were good at getting' those chores down then?

PR: Yeah. ____.(423)

I: So, was he on everyday?

PR: Five days a week. Yeah, I think it was five days. It wasn't everyday.

I: You call it *The Adventures of Jack Armstrong*?

PR: Yeah, that was the name of the, of the episode. Uh...

I: Well who- what was he about? What kinds of adventures did he get into?

PR: Oh, he, uh, he was a world traveler and it was always young people. And uh, he'd be in Africa seein' the elephants and the tigers. Uh, if it was very much a – well, you had to visualize. They were good, you know. And, and uh, telling a story or talking in a conversation back and forth.

I: So, it was like a little radio play that was geared for- it was geared for young people?

PR: It was a play. Oh, yes, it was. It was made for, for teenagers, or, or younger. Uh, I suppose that- oh, some kid like four years old would start listening to Jack Armstrong, and but prob'ly stick with that, maybe even through high school.

I: So your friends- your friends at school were listening to this show as well?

PR: If they had access to a radio, they knew what was goin' on with Jack Armstrong.

I: So you'd trade Armstrong- Jack Armstrong stories when you get to...

PR: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

I: What other kind of- what other programs did you listen to?

PR: Uh, well, there was *Amos & Andy*, and, 'course that was a _____. (467) Uh...

I: Now there was a lot of controversy about the *Amos & Andy* program.

PR: Well, later on, but not---

I: ---but not in the day when you were listening to it?

PR: No. Discrimination was probably just as high then as it ever had been. Yep. And didn't- didn't even, uh, didn't even think about that. Well, dad didn't think about it.

I: Was La Grande, uh, was La Grande separated? Or, was there color separation?

PR: Well, uh, well, uh, not do it was easy to tell. But, La Grande did have a few Negroes. Now I'm talkin' about maybe a half a dozen. I went to school with, with two Negro boys. The Torrence (?) kids. Uh, Fred and Jimmy was two years older than I am. Uh, an athlete, a really good athlete. Good football player. And so was, uh, Terry was a year younger. Uh, they both- they were both born and raised in Oregon. They were a lot better off than they are in the south. In the south.

I: Did, uh, did they associate- socialize with everybody the same as everyone else around here, or? Were there were any aspects of it that...?

PR: Yeah. They were just more careful about who, uh, and- oh, like the social events, you know. High school. Well, Jimmy- he had cousins, uh, that---

I: So, uh, to finish off what we were saying before we had to turn the tape around, um, their dating opportunities were limited. And so, in spite of the fact that they could move around kind of at will. There still were limitations? Were there...?---

PR: --- But they were growing up.

I: Do you recall any segregated facilities? Theatres? Bus stations? Anything like that, train stations?

PR: Uh, uh. I- or, restaurants. Uh, I, I just don't think that that was ever _____. (11) I just, sure can't remember that.

I: That's all right. It's all right. Just exploring topics. How about, um, Asian community? I understand there was a Chinatown, uh, area in there. What do you know about that?

PR: Yeah, but, well there was but that was before---

I: ---Was it before you?

PR: ---my time, yeah. Uh, there was one family that I can remember, a Asian family. And they ran a restaurant. Uh, actually it was, uh, the lady was good with that. And they, they- it was a very popular restaurant. Good, good restaurant. But that family stayed pretty much to themselves. They were industrious and they- far as I know they just made good money for themselves. But there was a Chinatown, uh, well about a block, a city block, or, maybe two blocks in La Grande that was known...had Chinese proprietors, or---

I: Or businesses?

PR: ---uh, there were was never. I don't think it was ever a big thing. Unless it was way before my time.

I: How about, um...how about eating establishments and businesses and things like that? What, what places did you like to go to maybe that aren't around anymore in La Grande?

PR: That aren't around...

I: Yeah, I, I- well

PR: Well-l-l-l-l-l...

I: Well, I know that people have talked to me about burger joints and things that used to be along, or, around uh, Adams. And did you have places like that you and your wife like to go?

PR: Yeah. There was a place that served- was called Wendy's, and---

I: ---Where was it?

PR: ---It was right across from the Sacagawea Annex, and uh, uh, they, they served great hamburgers. They were, they were a big hamburger and they were really a good price.

I: Was that a local establishment, or was that part of a chain?

PR: Uh, I don't think there was such a thing as a hamburger chain then. Anywhere. No, it was, it was strictly local. Yeah.

I: Any other places you liked, or uh, that maybe aren't around anymore that you can recall?

PR: I guess not, uh---

I: Did you go anywhere- did you go anywhere for lunch in high school instead of eat there?

PR: Ya' know I, I really didn't. Uh, I either packed a lunch to high school, or, uh, they had a cafeteria over in the old- uh the grade school that any of the students could go to that cafeteria. Uh, that's- I just couldn't go to restaurants to get anything to eat. And there weren't any vending- no such thing as a vending machine. Uh, you know, in the hallways or anywhere in the building. Or buildings. You couldn't even buy- you couldn't even buy a bottle of pop. Uh, oh without going away from the school to...

I: ---to go to an actual grocery store to get it then.

PR: ---Yeah. Yes, uh, which there was a little mom and pop grocery store about a block from the high school. And, but there were, there were eight or ten mom or pop grocery stores around _____. (65) But going- we- we didn't go to restaurants to eat much, uh, in the 30's, 40's, or the 50's. Uh, uh, the- the fast food restaurants, there weren't any until- I think the Dairy Queen. Either the Dairy Queen or the Artic Circle was the very first fast food places ever in, in La Grande.

I: Were they here before, uh, that Nell's 'N Out?

PR: Nell's 'N Out I knew, uh, the fellow that the- that the parents- of the people who, who ran- well, I think it's still in that family, though. Uh, Nell's In and Out. And uh, that was, yeah, it was the 60's when that was established, when that- can't tell you which one of the 60's but I'll say '64, '65 that Nell's In and Out was established. Uh, guy by the name of George Larison (sp?), uh, is, was the parent of the lady who started. He- he built that mobile- he did all the work in that mobile home to- it was a- you know, a singlewide. Oh, about singlewide by maybe 50, 60-feet long. And he built all of the, uh, facilities. The dishwasher and all that stuff. Uh, well...the Artic Circle. Gosh, that must have been, uh, in the- prob'ly the mid-50's when- and it was on Adams. Uh, and out of business a long, long time. And then I think the Dairy Queen was about next. Uh...

I: Where was that originally?

PR: Right where it is now.

I: Oh, is it?

PR: That, that was the first one. And that was right- they built that Dairy Queen right after they finished the freeway. And that was like...was it 1965? (thinking) No McDonalds. No what's the one right next to McDonald's there?

I: Wendy's.

PR: Wendy's, yeah. Yeah those weren't there. Uh...

I: How about um- how about cruising down Adams Avenue? You ever do any of that?

PR: Well, there were a lot of kids did. Uh, yep, but, I- uh, was never really into that all that much. Uh, in the first place I wasn't close to it so we live out here, and uh, and I didn't have the wheels that- of my own. Uh, until, uh, actually I didn't, I didn't own a car of my own until I got out of the Army. I, I never owned an auto of my own. So, it was too late for me to---

I: ---You were already past that phase by then?

PR: ---I suppose that was- yeah. Yeah.

I: Well you've given me a lot of material here to go on. We're gonna' be busy transcribing your interview. That's for sure.

PR: Somebody is going to, I guess.

I: Are we forgetting anything? I think we've covered every major gamut it looks like. Any thing you can think of we're forgetting to talk about? Or, I'm forgetting to ask you about?

PR: There's only one thing that I can---

I: ---What's that?

PR: ---That I can think of, and, I don't know if you would wanna' know that at all. Uh, is, uh, those seven years in Washington. Uh, what I did, uh, uh, besides Charlotte and our last- Peter, or our last boy and Kay, our last girl. The third and the fourth were born in Washington. Peter was born in Ephrata in 1955, and Kay was born in Pasco in 1957, and...

I: How many children do you have total then?

PR: So we have four.

I: Uh-huh. And who were the- who were the other two? The oldest two?

PR: The oldest one is Charle-Marie and uh, the oldest boy is Paul. Paul Marsh.

I: Right. Right. Now do they all live close by?

PR: Now? Uh, now they don't live really close by, but uh, uh, Paul, uh, uh, of course lives in La Grande now. He lived at the ranch for a long, long time. And uh, uh, uh, Peter has- well pretty much lived here ever since we came back from Washington. But uh, uh, he, he was, he worked for the railroad for quite a while. Then, uh, then he went to school. He, uh, he got a degree, uh, in, from Eastern. And uh, he's been working for, uh, the last job is his fifth year over at- at McNary Dam. He works for the Corps at McNary Dam.

I: Corps of Engineers?

PR: Yeah.

- I: Um-hm. And uh, uh, that has either been a yearlong job, or a six-month job. Uh, and he usually comes back here for most of the winter. And, oh the last three or four years he- last ____ (166) at McNary, he's- in fact I then headed for right here! He's got a bed in there. But this is home.
- I: This is where he comes. Any of your other children go to Eastern?
- PR: Uh, Kay has- Kay has a accounting, uh, business degree from uh Eastern. Yeah. She got that, uh, about- uh, let's see, she got that about ten years after she first, uh, left home. She didn't start right in with it when she got out of high school.
- I: And then you say your son Peter graduated from Eastern also?
- PR: Yeah. He, he graduated- went to Eastern- (turning, calling to wife) "She go there two years, mama?" (No, just one. Then down to Oregon State." Turns back toward me.) Okay. She went---
- I: ---Peter graduated from there?
- PR: ---uh, she didn't graduate from
- I: ---your so Peter?
- PR: Uh, and Peter graduated. Yeah. Yeah, uh, (to wife) "you graduated from there in 1970? And so...
- I: Yes and we got that one on tape. (Charlotte hollering back to Patrick, knowing that he can't hear but that I can. I say: "Uh-huh. Yeah.") (Me repeating what Charlotte said because Patrick did not hear her.) Um, she wasn't a hundred when she got her degree...
- PR: (quick comeback) No, she was about 98.
- I: (stifling my urge to laugh) Okay. Okay.
- PR: Yeah. Oh, she was 40, uh, in 1970. She was exactly 40 when she got her degree. Yup. She did a good job, too. She got good grades.
- I: Well somebody needs to. Um---