

Donna Sands

5/6/03, T1, S1

JS: ...with Donna Sands who was nominated for her early history of Cove \_\_\_\_\_. And to get started I just want to ask you...we're gonna start at the very beginning.

DS: Okay.

JS: So where and when were you born?

DS: I was born in January the 24<sup>th</sup>, 1931 and I was born in Wonderlick Hospital which is...I didn't know this until a few years ago...just up above the Tropicara downtown and Dr. Wonderlick had a couple of rooms up there, I guess, that he called the Wonderlick Hospital. I know it says on my birth certificate "Wonderlick Hospital", but I had no idea where that was until somebody told me.

JS: It's here in La Grande?

DS: Downtown above the...you know where the...well, it isn't the Tropicara anymore, it's the Elkhorn Steakhouse now. But the upstairs is still up there, but I haven't ever been up there so I don't... But anyway, that's where I was born, but my parents lived in Cove. I was just over here for my birth.

JS: And what did they do in Cove?

DS: They farmed.

JS: They farmed? Did they...how big was their farm?

DS: My dad ended up with two hundred acres from the homesteaded land that his...his grandfather had homesteaded so...

JS: And his grandfather was the first to come over here?

DS: His grandfather came in 18...I have this down here...in 1864 to Cove.

JS: And what was his name?

DS: His name was McDonna Bainbridge. And my dad's name was also the same, but he always went by Mac. And his...McDonna came...McDonna here is...this is the...this is the children, there were fifteen kids in this family, and this one came out early. He was one of the early pioneers who came in 1844, Millard Reese. And he settled in what's now Champooee Park south of Portland. And they call it the French Prairie and the little town was Butteville. And then this younger brother followed him out later. He...this one, my great-grandpa, walked across the Isthmus of Panama when he came over. Now this...Willard came over on the Oregon Trail in 1844. This one, my grandfather, McDonna Bainbridge, came over in 1854 and he and this younger brother walked across the Isthmus of Panama and then took a ship out to Portland and went to see his brother here. And then later took out a homestead in Cove and that's where I was born, grew up.

JS: And what did your mom do in Cove?

DS: My mother was a housewife.

JS: Did you like growing up on the farm?

DS: Yes and no. [laughs]

JS: What did you like about it?

DS: I liked the...we had a creek going through our yard and I liked...I liked the dirt and the creek and the outside and the doing the farm work, haying and harvesting.

And I didn't like the kind of tied down, we had milk cows and so we always had cows always had to be milked morning and night and the separator washed. So it was... And I had to ride the school bus to the school because we lived two-and-a-half miles out of town so I couldn't stay up in town and play with the kids after school. I always had to get on the bus and come home. But basically I liked the farm.

JS: Do you remember anything specific about what you didn't like about it?

DS: No, just the...I think just the...after I got older and wanted to be around other kids. We didn't have any kid neighbors.

JS: There was no farms close by to you?

DS: There was a couple of farms, but none...there weren't any children. They were a half-a-mile away.

JS: You had to ride the school bus for two-and-a-half miles to get to school?

DS: Mm-hmm.

JS: When did you first start going to school?

DS: I first went to Shanghai and that was in 193-...see, if I was six that'd be 1937 I started in Shanghai. And it...it was about a mile from home and I walked to school those two years that I went to Shanghai. And then that school was closed, that's the last...it's not had children in it since then, and we were bussed up to town.

JS: To Cove?

DS: To Cove.

JS: What do you remember about the Shanghai school? Do you remember who your teacher was?

DS: Yes, her name was Mrs. Miller. And we were about...all eight grades and maybe eight or so kids and sometimes there was one other child in the first grade with me and sometimes not, depending on who was moving around.

JS: Did you have separate desks or were they all...?

DS: You know, I think we were in those desks that were hooked together, you know, they had the little ink stand, the little hole up here for the ink stand. I think...I think they were in those hooked together desks.

JS: And what did you guys do for entertainment during...?

DS: Oh, the school had programs, holiday programs, and my sister and I started singing early, my dad played the piano, so we were in those programs. And of course we lived with my...my grandparents lived right across the road when I was little and then when I was about in the third grade or fourth grade we moved in with them so my grandparents were always around. And the other set of grandparents just lived up about on the hill a little ways. So life was kind...was centered around grandparents and picnics and potlucks. [laughs]

JS: And then when you started goin' to school in La Grande do you remember the bus ride?

DS: In Cove.

JS: Or, I mean, in Cove. How were...did you feel about having to ride the bus?

DS: I liked riding the bus. I was kind of a shy little girl so I didn't...I know my sister, who's younger than I, would sit with the older kids. She would go in and sit, but I

- wouldn't. I would try to find somebody my own age to sit with 'cause I was kind of a shy around the older kids.
- JS: And what type of a bus was it?
- DS: Oh, a regular yellow school bus. \_\_\_ [laughs] They don't look much different now than they did then.
- JS: Yeah, I don't imagine. [laughs] And once you started going to school in Cove did you get involved in anything? I know you said that you couldn't stay in town, but did you still do the programs and things?
- DS: Oh yes. We were...we all did 4-H and when there was something going on we did...my parents either took me back or we stayed and they came and picked us up later on. Yes, we did...we did everything that the kids did. It was just that every day I couldn't go out and play. [laughs] Mostly 4-H and as I got older I got into the youth group at church and we did parties and meetings.
- JS: How was going to school in Cove different from the...going to school in the Shanghai school?
- DS: Oh, in Shanghai there were maybe eleven kids in one room and covering eight grades. And when I went up to Cove there were the third and fourth graders...I was a fourth grader when I got to Cove...put third and fourth graders in the same room and there might be twenty-five or thirty of us. So that was a big change for me to have a lot...it seemed to me like a lot of kids.
- JS: Was the day different, a lot different?
- DS: I don't think so. I think...I don't know, I can't remember. But I do remember that Mrs. Miller...we were in one room and so we would watch her do the lessons with the eighth-grader or...if it happened to be a eighth-grader or the two sixth-graders, or whatever it was...and then she would come over and sit by my desk and I would read to her or do arithmetic or something and then she's over here doing sixth grade or something. So, of course, when we got to Cove school I had...the teacher was giving the same lessons to all fifteen of us, or twenty of us, however many there were in fourth grade.
- JS: And then did you have separate desks in Cove school?
- DS: I think we had the same kind of desks, those that were hooked together one right in front of the other with a little place for the inks.
- JS: And do you remember what you did during the day during at school? Did you start out with like saying the anthem?
- DS: We did the Pledge of Allegiance, yes, for sure. And I don't...I don't know exactly. But we did the Pledge of Allegiance I think probably every day. I think...there were a variety of classrooms...but they had one classroom at least had the picture of George Washington up on the wall with a great big frame around it and maybe Abraham Lincoln, I'm not sure on that. And we sang...I think most every day we had some kind of singing although we didn't have a music teacher, but if we had a...even if we didn't have a teacher that could play the piano I think we sang out of the songbooks. And they would be My Country 'Tis of Thee, those kind of...
- JS: And do you remember stuff about like when you had to catch the school bus was that fun waiting for the school bus on the road or was it...?

DS: Yes. Well, our house was a little bit off of the road like maybe a block and so we had to get out there and kind of stand and wait so they wouldn't have to wait for us. And, yeah, I think I thought that was fun. I was kind of worried because my sister, my younger sister, was oftentimes late. Maybe I shouldn't say oftentimes, but sometimes she was late. [laughs] She'd come running down the lane.

JS: I know. I remember those days. In the wintertime did you think it was fun, too, or was that...did you have...?

DS: When I was little I'm sure I didn't...

JS: Mind it.

DS: I think we had more snow then than we've had because I can remember walkin' in like a foot or so of snow and getting stuck a lot because cars...there wasn't...our road that went in front of the house was mud. They finally graveled it, but in the early years it was mud and we'd just get stuck a lot and couldn't get out and part of the time, maybe, if the snow was deep. But I like the snow then when I was younger.

JS: Yeah. And how long did you go to school in Cove? Did you finish?

DS: I finished high school there.

JS: Do you remember a change from grade school to middle school? Did you have a separate middle school?

DS: We didn't have a separate middle school. We went to the...seventh and eighth grade was the room that was closest to the high school...it's all the same building. So when you got out of the seventh and eighth grade you were...just went down the hall a ways and it was high school.

JS: Did you start doing more activities in junior high and high school?

DS: Yeah, although we didn't have junior high because it was just...

JS: Oh, the grade school.

DS: Oh yes, I think so. The older we got the more we...

JS: What kinds of activities?

DS: \_\_\_ dances and roller-skating. That was a very big thing. A couple in town, Mel and Vernona Rundle, volunteered their time every Saturday night, and maybe even Friday nights, for several years all winter long and they...I think it was the PTA had purchased roller-skates...indoor roller-skates and we...and so Mel and Vernona came...the same people all the time...and donated their time and supervised us and passed out the skates and supervised us. And we roller-skated every Saturday night for several years. It was great fun! It was great fun to do!

JS: And where did you...

DS: In the gym.

JS: In the gym.

DS: In the gym.

JS: At the high school?

DS: Uh-huh.

JS: And...

DS: And there were dances. The Odd Fellows hall, which is up from the school maybe a half-a-mile. And they...it was another couple who came and donated their time and supervised...was there for us and there was a great, big, old, pot-bellied stove that they piled wood in. And my dad was one of 'em who would

come and play the piano for us to dance. And sometimes we would just have records. And the girls would bring sandwiches and the boys would bring pop and we'd have a little snack after we dances a while and then we'd usually... So those dances went on...I don't know how they quite fit in whether it was after the roller-skating stopped and the dances started...but there's a lot of dancing and a lot of dancing...this was just kids, but there was also a lot of dances put on by the community in which...when we were in high school we went to those, too. Maybe like Mt. Fanny Grange would put on dances.

JS: Your dances were at the Odd Fellows Hall you said?

DS: Odd Fellows Hall.

JS: And what...is that still in Cove?

DS: No, it isn't. The building's torn down, but it was up...if you've been to Cove it was right on the corner just before you went down to the swimming pool. It was a...I think the Odd Fellows was a lodge and I don't...I think they weren't hardly...I don't think a lodge was in existence anymore, but... And maybe the people that came and donated their time were Odd Fellows, but I don't think they had any actual lodge business there anymore.

JS: And that was for the high school those dances?

DS: Those were high school.

JS: Did you like going to the dances?

DS: Oh, they were great fun! Yes \_\_.

JS: Did you mix a lot with the boys?

DS: Yes. The high school there were only forty of us in the high school and so, yes, we did a lot of things that were all of us together, going to dances and parties and ballgames.

JS: Yeah.

DS: Yeah, sports were big, baseball and basketball.

JS: Did you play volleyball then?

DS: We played volleyball.

JS: I know I just talked to Retha Bowman and she told me that girls weren't allowed to run when she was in high school.

DS: Oh, well, that wouldn't 've been...wouldn't be true for me. We ran. We ran.

JS: You ran. And did you do basketball, too?

DS: Uh-huh. We had a girls' basketball team.

JS: Did you like playing sports?

DS: Uh-huh, although I was...that was really not my favorite. I was more...I did it because everybody did, but I like the dances and the \_\_.

JS: Yeah. And the adult dances you said were at the Mt. Fanny Grange?

DS: Some of 'em were at the Mt. Fanny Grange and sometimes they were in the school gym, those two places.

JS: And were just the high schoolers allowed to go, or was it like a whole community thing?

DS: Many of the Grange dances the parents would bring their little kids and they'd just put 'em down on a bench.

JS: Did they have live music for that, too?

DS: Oftentimes. Not always, but oftentimes. My dad was one of 'em who played the piano often.

JS: Did they have other people who played other instruments?

DS: Yes. Bob Laird played the violin. Those are the two that I remember the most. Another thing that we did was the...this is the Mt. Fanny Grange put on minstrel shows for several years in a row and we had all kinds of music and jokes, you know how they...

JS: Yeah.

DS: ...did the minstrel shows.

JS: I'm not sure if I know what you mean by a minstrel show. Is that kind of like a talent show would be today?

DS: Kind of like a talent show would be today except it was...it was kind of a take-off from vaudeville, I think, and vaudeville was kind of over by the time I came along, but it would be similar to that. We would sit on the stage and there would be a master of ceremonies, they called him the interlocketer, I think. And they would tell jokes with each other and then they'd introduce a number and people would dance and sing and the whole group would sing and then there'd be solos and dance duets and all.

JS: Did the community members perform at these or was it brought in?

DS: No, this was all community.

JS: All community.

DS: Yes.

JS: That's neat.

DS: Everybody just did what they could do. And there was a lot of talent. There were good dancers and singers.

JS: I guess we're...after high school do you remember your graduation ceremony?

DS: Kind of. The bigger thing that I remember is every year we had what we called a May Day, which was in the first...would've been right about now. And we'd fill the gym with lilacs and I can still smell those lilacs. Big banks...big banks of lilacs. And that was...we were out of school all day and we had the May queen and the...and the certain...each grade put on part of the program and the community came to the program. I think the third and fourth-graders did the May Pole most. And then some other grade would have a song or a dance or... And then we had a play day in the afternoon where we would track stuff and baseball. And some of those programs they put...and I don't know whether they were done at May Day, but the whole school would put on a program like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. And everybody was in it from the first grade on through high school in those programs. Of course the community all came.

JS: And so you remember that more than your graduation, or do you remember...?

DS: I seem to because I can't quite remember exactly. I'm sure... I'm sure we gave...each gave our little talks and...

JS: And you had a valedictorian and everything.

DS: Uh-huh. And we had a baccalaureate, which was in two programs, one was kind of religious or spiritual in nature. I don't think they have baccalaureates anymore.

JS: I don't think so. I'd never heard of it till the other day we were talking to Retha and she mentioned it and I'd never heard of it.

DS: And our church...our church youth group the women in...everybody in the church \_\_ the graduation. I know we had a graduation breakfast at one the parents' homes, a beautiful breakfast, sit-down breakfast with nice china and silver and tablecloths. They did a good job of marking the passage.

JS: And what year did you graduate?

DS: 1948.

JS: 1948. So that was after the war, wasn't it?

DS: After the war. The war was...

JS: Do you... Do you remember how that impacted the community? Do you remember any...?

DS: Oh yes. We had... We would save our quarters to by liberty stamps, which the money went to the war effort. We...there was a certain amount of rationing of gas and so farmers could get gas a little easier than others, but...so we didn't, you know, we were careful about where you drove because of the gas rationing. And there was sugar rationing and I don't know exactly why, but I remember my mother had a great big five-gallon can of honey and when we got sugar we thought it was really something special. You know, it didn't last very long because...maybe a year or two, I don't...the rationing. And we listened...we would listen to the news around the supper table. My dad was particularly interested in paying attention to what was going on during the war. And at the school we had...there were three pieces...there were pieces of plywood about this big, one of had Hitler's face drawn on it and one of 'em had Heilohito's face, the Japanese, face drawn on it and one of 'em had Mussolini's, he's the Italian, face drawn on it and we would throw darts at their faces! [laughs] 'Cause they were the enemy. So that...that was...

JS: And those were made by high school students?

DS: I don't have any idea who made those faces, how they got there, or anything.

JS: You just had fun with them.

DS: There they were.

JS: Did they have little like tokens that you could buy food with for the rationing? Do you remember? Or was that...

DS: I don't know. It's possible, but I don't...I don't remember that.

JS: And so...

DS: And we saved things like toothpaste tubes that were made out of aluminum for the war effort and the farmers around they would have scrap iron drives and so people would kind of scour their barns for old pieces of iron that were scrap and that was sent to the war effort.

JS: Do you remember how you felt about that?

DS: You know, it just...it was just...it was just the way it was and I don't...I don't have any... Everybody was... Everybody was for the war because we all had heard about Hitler and what he was doing and so there wasn't any...there wasn't any dialog about whether we should be doing it or not. It was just taken for granted that we needed to help the British, for one thing, and then after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor then that was also automatic that we would go to war.

JS: So you didn't really have any discussions or anything about it in school or anything?

DS: No. Now we might have had discussion about what was happening, but not...not like we do nowadays, whether it was a good idea or not.

JS: And did you hear about the war through the newspaper, or...?

DS: Mostly the radio although we did take the newspaper. But what I remembered most is...is having the news on while we ate supper.

JS: Did you always have the news on while you ate supper?

DS: I don't think always, but...

JS: And did you always usually have a radio?

DS: We had a little radio about this size, one, radio for the whole house. And, you know, I don't know when we got that. I kind of always remember having a radio. It was my grandpa who would talk to me about when radios first came in and cars for him. Radio and cars and airplanes all this was...he grew up in with horses.

JS: Now is he the one that came over and homesteaded?

DS: It was his father that came over and homesteaded.

JS: Did he ever talk about that to you?

DS: Yes. In fact, I have here a little article that somebody...and this is the Walla Walla Union Bulletin...interviewed him when he was...let's see he was probably eighty when...and this is a picture of him...and I see they've asked him to just...I don't know what questions they asked, but this is the...he's talking about the Indians and he's talking about his father telling him about the early days in Cove.

JS: Do you remember him telling you specific things, though?

DS: Yes. He was... I spent a lot of time with him and he told me a lot and I'm sorry I don't remember. You know, I was a kid and I didn't write it down. But he talked to me a lot about the early history of Cove.

JS: Do you remember some specific things that...?

DS: He mentions in there that the town was called Dixie early on and then they changed it to Forest Cove and then that was too close to Forest Grove and the post offices were getting things mixed up so then they just shortened it to Cove. So that's how then...how we got the name. He told me that story. And he told me about dances that he went to in what he called the Macabee home, which wasn't there by the time I came along. But now I've been to the...you know Cove has a history sessions in the wintertime, about three or four a winter, and they go there and I'll hear them talking about the Macabee Hall and the dances they had in there and I remember my grandpa telling me those same... And my...my...his wife also grew up in Cove so I have all kind of...

JS: And what was her name?

DS: Her name was Mary Jones.

JS: And did her family homestead in Cove, too?

DS: Uh-huh. Her family... I kind of drew this out here. I have...see, these...all these great-grandparents, all eight of 'em, were in Oregon between 1864 and this last one before 1900. So all of these were early, early pioneers, all these eight great-grandparents. And all the grandparents were born in Oregon except one was born in Iowa, but she came to Oregon when she was little. So my roots are very, very deep in Oregon from 1854. And then there was a great-uncle who was here in 1844. But all of these...all of these were in Oregon before 1900.



JS: And they just your great-grandparent...your great-grandfather came to Cove or did he have other family that came?

DS: Just my great-grandfather. He left his brother in Butteville south of Portland and the rest of the family...this big crew of people...all the rest of these...well, one of them went to Walla Walla. In fact, he started what's now the Walla Walla Union Bulletin over there. It wasn't called that then, but he started a newspaper there. But all the rest of these stayed in the East. So these three brothers came out. One of his brothers was killed in the Civil War. There's a story, of course, about all of these.

JS: Yeah.

DS: And that's just one of these. That's just this one. But there's a story for all of these, really.

JS: Did... Did you ever remember hearing about why they...why he decided to come to Cove?

DS: No, I never heard that. You know, I just sort of took a...I didn't ask...I didn't...you know, a child you don't ask questions, I just kind of heard what somebody told me. But of course he...my great-grandfather came following his older brother. And his older brother was in that very early...you know, the big migration that came across the Oregon Trail. The biggest group was 1843, my great-grandfather was 1844. So that was very, very early and I'm sure that...that he wrote letters back to...and this younger brother got the idea from him that he could go out. And of course they...when he came it was before the Home...[end tape]

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DS: ...similar to the Homestead Act where you could take up land and you had improve upon it in order to keep it. And then by the time this grandfather, my great-grandfather came there was the Homestead Act and so you could claim land and you also had to improve it, had to put a building on it and take care of it and farm it.

JS: So this would be your great-great-uncle?

DS: Great-great-uncle, the older brother of my great-great-grandfather, this one. And then this one married a woman named America and she became the first...she and one other friend became the first white women to go to Wallowa County. I just saw that in this little paper here. "Mr. and Mrs. Reese of Cove on a camping trip into the Wallowa County and it developed that she and her friend, a Mrs. America Reese, were the first white women to see the Wallowa Valley." [laughs] So that just...I'm just kind of letting you know how deep my roots are here in Oregon, how long ago...how early they all came. And this...my grandma married...she came...her mother and father came in 1864, too, so that's very early.

JS: And where did they come to? They came to Cove?

DS: They came to Cove also and they came from Tennessee.

JS: Did she ever talk about why they came to Cove?

DS: No. She was born here. She was the youngest of her...of the children that they had. And some of 'em...most of 'em...three or four of 'em were born in

Tennessee and Missouri before they came here. But, no, in fact, I never did even know that...that her parents were from Tennessee until I grew up and until after she was dead. Although my sister remembers her saying...calling herself a hillbilly. [laughs] I don't know remember that, but we...my sister and I went back to Tennessee a few years ago to a Jones family...there's still lots of Joneses back there. It's another family with about fifteen kids and one of 'em came West which was him. So the rest of 'em, their descendents, are still back in Tennessee. So we had a wonderful time. We went back onto the original family farm that was still there then, stayed in the house. And, you know, they...it was just those years when the country was moving West and the energetic ones, the adventuresome ones, wanted to come West. He came on the Oregon Trail also.

JS: And Mary was born in Cove?

DS: Mary was born in Cove \_\_.

JS: Did she ever talk about her childhood to you?

DS: Oh yes. She talked about a lot. These were the grandparents, Mary and Tobe, who we lived right with \_\_ or just across the street the rest of the... Yes, she told me a lot. She would tell me about... You know they had...everybody had outhouses and that...we did too, for that matter...that...and she was the youngest of about five or six kids and her next...the next two kids up were brothers and she said, "When I would go out at the outhouse they would throw a snake in my path scaring me when I was trying to get back to the house." She told me a lot of those kinds of kind of family stories.

JS: Did she tell you anything about the work she had to do and if she went to school?

DS: She went to school. You know I...no...I think these two, Tobe and Mary, my...I don't think Shanghai was even started. See, Shanghai started in 1889. Do you know where Shanghai is?

JS: No.

DS: It's on...if you go to Cove just before you make the turn to go down to the town the road comes up like this, Shanghai sits right here and it has a sign on it, the school, says 1889. So if these were born in 1870 and '72 they were clear before Shanghai even started. And I...somebody did tell me once that there was another Love schoolhouse that...not too far from there where they just had sawed...a log sawed in half for a seat and just a hole in the wall for a window and that there was an earlier school before Shanghai. So I suppose they both went there, but I don't...I never heard them talk about...

JS: About school.

DS: About school.

JS: Maybe it wasn't a good experience for them.

DS: I don't know. And I would...you know, I would guess they maybe went to maybe the eighth grade or something and that was it.

JS: Did Mary grow up on her parents' ranch in Cove.

DS: Uh-huh.

JS: Did she have a lot of chores?

DS: Yes. Another story she would tell me is that when it was her turn to wash the mush pan...make the breakfast mush...you know, that was...that was when you cooked the oatmeal and if it got hard in the pan it was terribly hard to clean out, to

wash. And she said she would take the mush pan out in the creek and let the crawdads clean it, which her mother didn't appreciate. [laughs] So, yes, they had...you know, they butchered hogs and...they had to do...they had to provide all their food and had the garden and butchering, raising the animals and milking the cows. I mean that was their life.

JS: Was Cove a large town then? Were there stores and things?

DS: You know, I think it was bigger then than it is now. It was bigger until...my grandpa says in this article about the automobile, when everybody got cars then the town went downhill because people would come to La Grande to shop. But there used to be...Grandpa would tell me there was a bank and a cheese factory and stores and a newspaper and a bigger town than there is there now.

JS: Do you think it was normal for a town to like have their own cheese factories and bakers and stuff before \_\_\_?

DS: I think so because people didn't have transportation except for horses and you couldn't just take off and go.

JS: Yeah. And you couldn't transport that 'cause that wasn't...

DS: I would imagine most towns had those.

JS: 'Cause I was just reading a Union history, 'cause I'm doing something in there, and they had a cheese factory there, too. So I just thought that was interesting.

DS: And they grew a lot of fruit in Cove, they still do, like cherries and prunes. And they had the packing sheds, they called 'em, and the young people...now this...

JS: Is this when you were little?

DS: They were still there, but not as big, I think, as when my grandparents were growing up.

JS: And did they export the fruit out?

DS: They exported the fruit out, I think they did. Now Grandpa just says in this article that when the railroad came through in the 1880s through La Grande that then there was a way to get your produce to market and so people would...you know, wheat...they started planting wheat and they could sell it and so it wouldn't just be ground up into flour...there was also a flour mill...that you would use locally. They could put it on the railroad and transport it.

JS: Is that the crop that your grandparents grew?

DS: We raised wheat...yes, mostly that was what they... We had wheat, also barley and when I was little we had pigs and sheep. And in the early days, now this is before my time, my grandpa...this great-grandpa...of course everybody had horses and they would have horse races out in one of the fields. But that was before my time. In 1930...you know cars came in about 1905 and by the time in 1930 most everybody had a car. But my grandpa's day...

JS: Yeah, they had horses. And your grandparents, Tobe and Mary, what was their last name?

DS: Rees.

JS: Rees.

DS: r-double e-s

JS: And Mary was a Jones?

DS: She was a Jones.

JS: Jones.

DS: And they both...these families came from Wales, Rees, Joneses. And in Wales...we spell our name r-double e-s...in Wales it was Rhys, but when they came to America they spelled it... So that...the Welsh way would be... And then the other...my other...my mother's grandparents came from Germany and England. But this side, my father's side, was all Wales. They came over... And some of the family had traced them clear back to the 1600s in Wales.

JS: That's really neat.

DS: I got to go to Wales, too. It was very... It was very special to be there.

JS: My family's from Scotland. I really want to go back there.

DS: Oh yes, you must!

JS: It's kind of close. So...what was I going to ask? Your great-grandparents that first came and homesteaded what did they do before the railroad came in for...did they just subsistence farm, or...?

DS: They... He brought...this one brought cattle from over by Portland where his brother was, where the older brother was, so they raised cattle and I suppose they just sold more locally before the railroad came, but...

JS: Was it a smaller operation?

DS: They had more... He had more acres than we did. When he died the land got divided among the brothers and so we ended up... He had more than a thousand acres and we...he had two hundred \_\_\_. So they must've raised wheat. Well, they raised wheat because they had their own flour mill in Cove. I think it was just when the railroad came you could sell it farther away, but they were raising wheat before then, too.

JS: And your grandmother's family, did they raise wheat also?

DS: They lived up on the hillside and we lived down where the land was flat. The Joneses were up on the hillside and I think theirs is mostly cows and hay and pigs. She talked a lot butchering pigs.

JS: Did she talk about that? Did she like the butchering pigs, or did she ever say?

DS: I don't know. And chickens, they all had chickens, of course. There's lots of chickens. I think she did. She was an outdoor woman and she had chickens when I knew her. And I can remember this...she would buy the baby chicks in the spring, little tiny little things, and put 'em in the brooder house, keep 'em warm so they didn't freeze to death. And then when they got to be \_\_\_, about three months old, you'd have like always a hundred chickens and they would build a fire in a big pot outside and you just...after you killed 'em you'd scald 'em and get the...so that the feathers would come off, take the feathers off, clean 'em, take the insides out, clean 'em and then... And they had to...I don't know, they probably took 'em to La Grande to sell 'em I would guess. But oh my goodness, that's a big operation! You got the bathtub clear full of chickens! [laughs]

JS: Oh no! Did they get the chicks from mail order?

DS: I think from mail order probably, yeah.

JS: Like out of the Sears Roebuck or something?

DS: Out of the Sears Roebuck catalog or the Montgomery Ward, one of the two.

JS: And they... Do you remember ordering stuff out of there?

DS: Oh yes, yes. Everybody... Everybody had a Sears Roebuck catalog and a Monkey Ward...we called it Monkey Ward catalog.

JS: I'm sure...

DS: And they got...after we...after we ordered out of 'em they went out to the outhouse.

JS: Oh. [laughs] When the new ones came?

DS: So we spent many hours looking through the catalogs when you're in the outhouse.

JS: Did... I'm sure that you ordered a lot of things that can just go and buy now, probably.

DS: I remember getting a pair of shoes in the mail and how exciting that was and I was maybe in the third or fourth grade. Although we could've come to La Grande and bought shoes, but we didn't...we didn't come to La Grande. We didn't have the money to come to La Grande and so they did use the mail order more than... We maybe came to La Grande once a month or maybe twice a month or something, but you didn't go up and run to the store all the time like we do.

JS: Do you mean you didn't have the money for like gas?

DS: For gas.

JS: Was it really expensive?

DS: I don't think it was so expensive, it's just that...of course I was born right in the middle of the Big Depression and my dad worked for a dollar a day as a farm laborer for the neighbor farm. Just...you just didn't spend money.

JS: Yeah.

DS: And my mother made our clothes. Now shoes that's the one thing we would buy would be shoes. And we raised a garden, we always had a big garden. And they would...my mother...we would buy flour and you'd buy sugar. But most...you know, the big amount of food we ate was what we raised with the animals. And we always ate well, I think, we did have big gardens. Many people were hungry in the Depression, but we weren't hungry.

JS: Do you remember that time?

DS: You know, I just...I more remember my father talking about it. I remember him saying we raised chickens and we had eggs, but we didn't eat eggs because that was the only thing we had to sell to get money to pay our taxes. And they almost did lose the farm. They didn't, but they came close to losing it because they couldn't...people couldn't pay their taxes. But they could, you know, they could get along because you had a place to raise things. So, yes, I...my childhood was full of Daddy's memories. I was the baby so by the time I was five, when you begin to kind of remember, I think times were a little better by then.

JS: And better by there was more money to pay the taxes?

DS: I think so. I think you could sell...maybe you could sell the wheat for a little better price and the country was doing better.

JS: And then do you remember any change like when World War II started? It was World War II, wasn't it?

DS: Uh-huh.

JS: I get mixed up with my dates.

DS: Of course.

JS: Do you remember any change?

DS: It was... Before the war it was... Before the war we were still kind of recovering from the Depression. Of course the war started in about 1940. And then after the war times got quite a lot better and I don't know exactly why, but prices were better and most everybody...I mean not most everybody, but a lot of people took out their wood stoves...we all heated with wood...and got oil stoves, which was easier, of course. And the women...many of the women got electric stoves right after the war. That's when they became available and evidently people had a little more money. And that's when we got our electric stove was at the end of the war.

JS: Did you have electricity before then?

DS: We had electricity, but a light...light bulbs and not much else, you know, the radio.

JS: Do you remember about what time electricity came to Cove?

DS: Electricity came in the early 1900s. I don't know.

JS: You always had it?

DS: We always had it. But usually it was just a single light bulb in the middle of the room. And in the first house... Another thing was running water in the kitchen. One of our houses, when Daddy was working as a farm laborer, it was a pump and you had cold water from the pump. And then later when we moved over to our grandparents house they had a faucet of cold water...at least a cold water faucet. And I think the hot water...I think there was a hot water faucet, too, but we had...you had to start a fire in the stove and then the pipes ran through the side of the stove to heat up the hot water. So, oh, to take a bath you had to make sure you got a fire going and wait till it got hot and then you never had very much. [laughs] And I...that's another thing, right after the war we got an electric hot water heater. That was a big...it just seemed like a huge luxury just to have all the hot water you wanted.

JS: So you said that you thought things got better after the war and...

DS: After the war times were...people had more money.

JS: And then after high school what did you do?

DS: I came over to Eastern to go to college. And it was...I think the student body was about three hundred kids then. But it was a big world to me 'cause I had just come out of a high school of forty.

JS: And what kind of programs did they have then?

DS: I wanted to be a school teacher so I took education. And they had a secretarial program and they had...it was most education although they took...people took math and calculus and physics, but I think if you wanted to get an engineering degree you'd have to transfer to Oregon State or someplace. But if you stayed here for four years you either came out with secretarial science or education \_\_\_.

JS: Did you enjoy school there?

DS: I loved it. I loved every bit of it.

JS: What did you love most about it?

DS: Oh, we had...we knew everybody, we went on field trips, we went up on the Wallowa Mountains on camping trips in the summer time, we had many dances. And whenever they had anything everybody, the whole student body, participated. And just most weekends it seemed like there was something going, a dance or play or musical. We had choirs and programs and...

JS: Did they have... Where did they have the dances?  
DS: In the...you probably don't remember, but Ackerman used to be a lab school and there's a gym there. It was in that Ackerman gym were a lot of our dances.  
JS: Oh yeah. I know where that is.  
DS: And then the old Hoke Hall...you know it's not the same one...it was a leftover barracks from the end of the war and I think they moved it in from somewhere over by Boardman or someplace where the servicemen had been in it during the war and that was Hoke Hall and we had many dances in there, too, many, many dances.  
JS: I've heard that that was a lot bigger. Was it a really big...?  
DS: It was a big room, yeah, it was. And there was a little coffee shop in one end and classrooms, a basement with classrooms in it and classrooms at the end with a great big hall that we had the dances in.  
JS: Was it just one level and the basement?  
DS: Yeah. It wasn't a tall...you know, it was a...kind of like you call a pre-fab building, I guess. It was a military building so it wasn't very well built, but it was very usable.  
JS: And how long did you go to school there?  
DS: I graduated.  
JS: You graduated?  
DS: In '52.  
JS: As a teacher?  
DS: Mm-hmm.  
JS: And what grades did you teach?  
DS: I taught third grade. I taught school in Salem, Oregon and then got married and then taught school in Corvallis...third grade also...and then the children started coming so I quit.  
JS: And so after school did you just get the job over in Salem right away?  
DS: Yes, yes. The principal from Salem came and interviewed us as seniors and we had a job before we graduated even, I think. It was very easy. There was nothing to it.  
JS: Comparable to now.  
DS: Yes. That's certainly different. But we didn't make much money. I think my first job was twenty...was \$2,000 a year...for the year. Maybe \$2,100.  
JS: Was that a lot for a single woman?  
DS: It was...I...what would it compare to now? Maybe...what does a teacher get now, I wonder.  
JS: I think starting's like \$23,000.  
DS: It's probably...was similar as far as buying power. I'm...maybe not quite as much. I lived with a roommate and our rent was \$65 so we each paid \$30 rent. But our checks were about \$200 for a month, so if you take \$30 out of it for...you can kind of see how much we had left and it's probably kind of similar.  
JS: Yeah. And after you got married...when did you finally move back here?  
DS: We moved back here after...after Don graduate from OIT and we'd worked a couple of other places. My mother was sick and so we came back here in 1960.  
JS: And was it a lot different when you came back in 1960?

DS: No. It soon got different, I think. It was kind of the middle '60s when things started being quite different, when rock and roll came in... But before...when we first came back it was very much the same.

JS: Let's just stop right there.

DS: Okay.