

Clifton Slack

8/24/02, T1, S1

RA: And what's your name?
CS: Clifton Slack.
RA: But they call you Duck.
CS: And they call me Duck for short.
RA: Why do they...where'd that come from?
CS: My dad hung that on me when I was just a little kid. He said I waddled around like a duck. [laughs] It's hung with me.
RA: I'll be darned.
CS: I had one school teacher call me that. She was a neighbor and she'd knowed me by that name and called me that in school.
RA: I'll be! I didn't know. I thought you'd gotten that nickname someplace along the way.
CS: No. My dad hung it on me.
RA: I'll be darned. How long have you lived...have you lived in Union County all your life?
CS: Yeah. Yeah. I've been...well, I've been away a few times, but this has always been home.
RA: Where did your...what's your mom and dad's name?
CS: My dad's name was Jim Slack and my mother's name was Rula Slack. Her maiden name was Tiffany.
RA: And have you had brothers and sisters?
CS: Yeah. I had a brother...I had two brothers that died before I was born. They died young. Bert and Lester. Then I had a brother Clifford. He was two years older than me. I had a sister, Lottie, and she was three years younger than me. They both died the same year. I can't remember what year it was. I think nineteen and seventy something. I'm the only one left.
RA: So where were you born?
CS: About four miles north of Summerville. Out there in the snow drift.
RA: Did they homestead?
CS: Pardon?
RA: Did your mom and dad homestead there?
CS: No. They bought a place up there from my granddad. He was always dealin' around in property. He got a hold of a piece of property up there. The forty acres is what we went on. We lived on that for quite a while and then Dad got another forty. He worked out in the sawmill quite a bit, some of those little sawmills around there. He was a sawyer. He worked there and run that little place too.
RA: Was that...I know my husband said that they used to take those little like portable sawmills up in the woods. Is that the kind of sawmills he worked in?
CS: These were a permanent mill. I mean they was all set up. You didn't...couldn't move them or anything. But they was run with a circle saw and everything.
RA: Did you live in...you much of lived on a ranch?

CS: Yeah. We lived on a ranch there until I was ten years...or twelve years old and then we moved to Elgin. We moved to Summerville first for a couple years and then moved to Elgin.

RA: Was Summerville the size it is now or was it bigger?

CS: There wasn't much difference. It was a little bigger than it is now. At that time they had a barbershop and a blacksmith shop. And they...there was a harness shop there too. That was about it.

RA: Was there a grocery...the grocery store's still there.

CS: Oh yeah. There's been a grocery store there forever.

RA: And what size was Elgin when you were a kid?

CS: It wasn't as big as it is now, but it wasn't...it wasn't a lot of difference. A lot of Elgin burned down along there on main street. That wasn't too many years ago that most of that burned out.

RA: Where'd you go to school?

CS: I went to Dry Creek school for six years, I guess.

RA: Dry Creek. Where's that?

CS: That's up north of Summerville there. The old schoolhouse still there.

RA: Oh, I didn't know that.

CS: Yeah. It's up on that road that goes up toward Sanderson springs and up in there.

RA: Is it a wooden building?

CS: Yeah.

RA: I'll be darned. I'll have to go up and look.

CS: It was just a little one room building that they eight grades in it. One teacher took care of all of 'em.

RA: I don't know how they did that.

CS: I don't either. Boy there was a bunch of awnry kids there, too!

RA: I bet. How many kids were there, do you remember about how many?

CS: Oh, probably run around twenty to thirty.

RA: And did the older kids help teach those younger ones or how'd the teacher do that?

CS: No. No. They wasn't much on that.

RA: Did the...so what did the...did the teacher give you your lessons...?

CS: Pardon?

RA: Did the teacher just give you the lessons that you were supposed to do and...?

CS: Yeah. And then they'd call the class each day we'd go in front of it and give it a little going over. See if we'd learned anything.

RA: Yeah. [laughs] Do you remember the name of your teacher?

CS: I can remember a couple of 'em. Fern McKinnis is one of 'em. She's the one that called me Duck. And then there was Bonita Peter. And that...___ [pause] I can't think of that one's name and I know her pretty well, too.

RA: Maybe you'll think of it later.

CS: I might. Probably will after you leave.

RA: Yeah, well, I'll be back. How'd you get to school?

CS: We walked part of the time and we rode horses a lot. It was three miles to school from where we lived. And, man, them days the snow got four or five feet deep!

Big snow drifts. Sometimes you'd get so many drifts in the road a horse couldn't get through it we'd have to walk over them drifts all the way to school.

RA: Oh man! So why was the school out there instead of in Summerville?

CS: In them days they had a little schools all over. They was so far to have to go to different schools. I went to Summerville for about a year and a half when we was livin' there. But most of the kids like out in the country they all had a little old school out there someplace. They had to walk plenty far then and if they'd have put it in Summerville they wouldn't have been able to got in there.

RA: Yeah. It's too far for the kids to ____.

CS: Once in while in the wintertime Dad he'd hook up the sled and haul us in, but most of the time we walked or rode a horse. We rode a horse quite a bit.

RA: What I like about what you know is that times have changed so much since when you were a kid.

CS: Yeah. You can't believe the way they've changed. When I was a kid up 'til I was ten years old we didn't have a car or anything. Dad he finally traded for an old 1917 model Ford...Model-T Ford. I can tell you pretty good and on it. Dad was out helpin' them thrash and hadn't been home for a day or two and Mom said if we knew how to run that car we'd drive to town. And I said, "I can drive that car," and I was ten years old.

RA: Oh no! [laugh]

CS: She said, "You think you can?" And I said, "I know I can." I've been a ridin' around with Dad and them old Model-Ts was pretty simple anyway. She said, "Let's take it out here in the field." They just done through thrashing the field off. "Let's take it out in the field and drive it around a little. If you can drive it we'll go to town." So we took it out there and run it around the field awhile and took off for Summerville. [laughs] Made it in there and back alright. But that was my first drivin'. I've been drivin' ever since.

RA: Boy! You reached the pedals and the steering wheel and off you went! I wish you had that...

CS: Them old Model-Ts had three pedals on 'em. One of 'em was low gear and the other one was reverse and the other was the brake. Then there was a lever that you threw it ahead that were high.

RA: I didn't know that. Do you remember...let me think. So after you grew up where did you live?

CS: Elgin.

RA: In Elgin?

CS: Yeah.

RA: And what'd you do?

CS: After I got growin' up I worked there at that mill there. That was before Boise Cascade got it. It used to be Ponderosa Pine, they called it.

RA: It was in the same place that the mill is now?

CS: They bought that but they built on up the road and dumped the old one.

RA: So how was the logging different then?

CS: Logs...they had logs that big around all the time. They didn't monkey with any of that little stuff. They really had big logs in them days.

RA: And they brought...and by then they had logging trucks that brought them in?

CS: Way back there when I was pretty young it was loggin' with horses and haulin' 'em in with horses. But then they finally started getting' trucks, but they wasn't much for trucks. Little old Model-As or something like that. Pull three or four logs.

RA: Now you talked about...the other day you said that you went to the Pendleton Round-Up on your horse. Can you tell me about that?

CS: Yeah. We done that two or three times. My uncle, he was an old cowboy, and he always took me to Pendleton Round-Up. So from the time I was about sixteen, why, him and I went together. We'd take off from Elgin with a couple of saddle horses and a pack horse and head right over the hill. And we'd make it to Bingham Springs the first day. We'd stay all night there...camp there and go on into Pendleton the next day, take it all in and then we'd come back.

RA: I'll be darned! How...so how long did it...so it took two days to go to Pendleton from here on a horse?

CS: Yeah. It per...if you road awful hard he might make it in a day, but it'd be an awful long ride so we'd make two days of it.

RA: So how'd you go? Where were the roads then?

CS: We went right straight west of Elgin there and it's an old trail that goes up through there and comes out clear up on the summit where the old summit is up there. And then we'd... the old Ruckle Road went down the canyon there.

RA: Oh, I remember that, yeah. It's closed off now.

CS: You couldn't use the road then, but there was a trail down it. It was road up to the summit and then from there on down it was just a trail where the old Ruckle Road used to be. But we'd go down it and it'd come right out there at Bingham Springs.

RA: How long did it take...did you ever ride to La Grande on horseback?

CS: No.

RA: How long did it take in a car to go from Elgin to La Grande?

CS: I rode from La Grande to Elgin one time. We made it in a day.

RA: It took all day?

CS: Yeah. That was one time we come back from the Pendleton Round-Up we come through La Grande here then we rode back to Elgin from there.

RA: Where were the roads then? Were they...

CS: Pretty much where they are now, but they were just dirt roads. And when you got down this side of Elgin...you remember where they had that big wash out in the highway this side of Elgin?

RA: Yeah.

CS: Just this side of there there's a road that took off and went down near the bridge across the river down there. The road went down around ____ the river from there on over.

RA: Yeah. You can still see that...that bank. When you're goin' down Hamburger Hill into Elgin and then you look off....

CS: Yeah. You can look off and see the old highway. There's some people live off over in there now. They used to have a water fountain right down there. When the kids were little...Vicky wouldn't let us drive past that without her getting a

drink. [laughs] Now they took it out of there 'cause they said the water wasn't good.

RA: Oh boy! Didn't kill you guys. Did you ever do any ranching?

CS: I worked on ranches a lot and I never did own one. I worked over at Heppner. Well, I run that ranch over to Heppner. It belonged to Dad's cousin and I'd worked for him before a few times. We got laid off the mill. We went union and the old boy that owned it shut her down. So I went over there and went to work for Hugh. And him and his wife they wanted to take a vacation and just turned it over to me. I run it for two years.

RA: When was that? What...do you remember around what year?

CS: Let's see. '45 or '46...no, '46 or '47.

RA: So that was right after the war.

CS: Yeah.

RA: Did the mill run during the war? Did the mill keep running during the war?

CS: Yeah. It ran. I was in the service. I didn't work.

RA: So did you go overseas?

CS: No. No, I never did get over there. I was an MP. I was down here at Camp Adair for the war.

RA: Where at?

CS: Camp Adair. That's down there out at Albany, Corvallis.

RA: Okay.

CS: I was there during the whole war.

RA: Were you in the army?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Did you have anything to do with rounding up the Japanese-Americans and ___?

CS: No. We had a few there that we watched...took care of, but we didn't have a thing to do with roundin' 'em up.

RA: So you were down there Albany during the Second World War?

CS: Yeah.

RA: How old were you around the First...

CS: Pardon?

RA: How old were you during the First World War?

CS: I was thirty-nine years old when I went in the army. I was in there twenty-six months, I think.

RA: Were you married then?

CS: Yeah. I was, but I wasn't when I got out. [laughs]

RA: And when did you marry Irene?

CS: 1940, I guess.

RA: So where did you live then?

CS: I lived up on the side of Pumpkin Ridge there above Elgin. Right after we got married, why, I moved up at La Grande and went to work for old man Tyler. He had a dairy and a creamery. He had a couple of ranches out there and I worked out there for him, but I couldn't get along with the old devil very good. Finally quit and after I quit him I finally went to work for ___ Brothers. They was construction outfit. Worked for them for four years then I went to work at the mill down there. I worked there 'til I retired.

RA: In Elgin?

CS: No. The one down here. Boise Cascade.

RA: So you lived on Pumpkin Ridge for a while. Where was the dairy at?

CS: The dairy? Oh, it was on the old hillside road between Imbler and La Grande. Just out of there about a mile out of town. But where I lived was over there back of the truck stop. There's a big house sets back in there that...it used to be way high, but they cut it down. It's still two stories, but they cut it down to where it's not like it used to be. It sets back in there right back of the truck stop.

RA: Yeah. I know there's some old houses back there.

CS: Yeah. I worked there for...I went to work there the middle of the summer, I guess, and quit him in the middle of winter.

RA: What did you do?

CS: Huh?

RA: What did you do for him?

CS: I put up the hay and stuff like that. Fed stock in the wintertime. Done some buildin' on some of these buildings around there and stuff.

RA: Did he have a lot of cattle?

CS: He had a lot of milk cows. He run a big dairy over there. But I didn't work on that. He had another guy runnin' that.

RA: You didn't sound like you put up with him for too long!

CS: That old devil he...he'd never have your check ready for you. He's supposed to pay off once a month. I'd usually make three or four trips in there to get my check and that got kind of tiresome. And he'd come out there and tell ya do something he'd say, "Just to it temporarily." And I got fed up with it finally. And then...I don't know, he got a little peeved at me about something I guess and he...another guy that was a workin' with me there he asked him if he would take my place and he told me about it. I went in there and told that little...I went in I said, "I want my check." He said, "I haven't got it ready yet." I said, "By God, you better get it ready 'cause," I said, "I want it all right now." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I'm quittin'. I want it all." You know "You can't quit me." And I said, "I can. You just try to get another guy to take my place here and I know about it." I says, "I'm done." So I quit him in the middle of winter and we moved over here in Bill Carson's house. We was over there for about a year and a half I guess and then old Lynn Williams that owned this place... The house used to set down there.

RA: Oh, it did?

CS: Where my saddle room is. Anyway, it was all run down. It was a heck of a mess. The renters were coming and they were wanting me to buy it and I didn't have no money. I got to tell him I didn't have enough money to even make a down payment. So he kept at me and finally I said, "You let me cut some of them logs off of that hill up there and turn over...just turn the money over to you instead of a down payment, why, I might do it." Said, "Okay." I bought it that way and paid thirty-five dollars a month for the rest. Then this freeway come through here and they took quite a chunk off of it. And they paid me enough to pay off the whole place.

RA: Oh, well that's good. So where was the road before? Where did it go? 'Cause I know they moved things.

CS: This is the old road a comin' in here.

RA: Oh, just right in front of your house here.

CS: Yeah. Just went right out and right around the place there. It swung over there into that road that goes to ___ Hill. You made a corner and swung into it and then it went around...right around that road and next to the railroad all the way down to the...

RA: And I know Leroy Bushman said that they moved the river at one time. Were you here before they moved the river for the railroad tracks?

CS: No. That was a long time ago. That river years ago sometime come clear around through Madsen's. But I don't know how long ago it was. See, there was a mill over there in that flat and they had a pond over there, but the river was still comin' this way when that mill was there so that was a long time ago. But then my uncle...he left here one time...and he said, "Those changes down here right through my field, run down there through my field." And they filled it all in and run it around the hill there. So it's been changed a lot, I guess.

RA: Yeah. Every time they...

CS: There was a dam in ___ when that mill was there, you know. And they took it out. But I don't remember that because I wasn't here when that mill was there. I was in Elgin. I can remember a mill a bein' there, but I didn't know anything about it.

RA: So when did you say you moved to Perry? In 1940?

CS: Yeah. No. About '41, I guess.

RA: And you lived in Harold Carson's house.

CS: Yeah. Well, in Bill's house.

RA: Bill Carson.

CS: Yeah. That's before they remodeled it. They wasn't livin' here they were livin' in Elgin at that time. I rented it from him. And I had my horse and I was able to keep him there and everything.

RA: Yeah. This is quite a little chunk of land there.

CS: Yeah.

RA: To have a horse. And I don't know how much Perry has changed.

CS: It hasn't changed all that much.

RA: It hasn't?

CS: No. I can't see a lot of difference in it. Remodeled a few houses and whatnot and that's about it.

RA: So tell me about your...I know you won...you did some calf roping.

CS: No, it was team pinnin'.

RA: Team pinning.

CS: Yeah.

RA: And that...when did you will that buckle?

CS: That was in '91, I guess.

RA: How old were you then?

CS: About eighty.

RA: I know. [laugh] I think that's incredible. How long have been doin' the team pinning?

CS: I started about a year before that and I team pinned up until about two years ago. I finally had to quit. I couldn't get on my horse anymore. [laughs]

RA: I can't get on a horse now!

CS: But I done pretty good at it. Nothing big, but I stayed up with the best of 'em.

RA: Have you ever done any other rodeoing?

CS: Oh, years ago I used to ride a little bit. Never nothin' big. Just some of these little rodeos. But I broke horses all my life from the time I was ten years old. My granddad brought a two year old colt out there for us to keep one time. He said, "You can just break that horse for me." He always called me Tom. He had a nickname and I was Tom and my brother was John. He said, "You can break that horse for me, Tom." And I said, "Okay." And he didn't think I would. So I broke it for him. He had that horse for a long time after that. He road it back and forth to town. He lived out there a little ways of Elgin. Anyway, I've been at it a little ever since 'til now.

RA: You've been at it a long time to me. And you've always ridden horses, too. Always have horses.

CS: Monkeyed with 'em ever since I could get on one.

RA: So when did you buy all the land up on the hillside here at Perry across the freeway?

CS: Part of it come with this place. Fifty-some acres up there come with this place. And then L_ Paulson owned the old Pinecone down there. And that was a...do you remember it?

RA: No.

CS: It was a motel deal at that time. That's where those cabins come from right there.

RA: Oh. Where was that?

CS: It was right down there where the truck stop is. Just this side of the truck stop. And the highway took him out and he sued 'em. He didn't do much good. He only got a thousand dollars more than they offered him and then they wouldn't take that hill land. So he sold me that hill land up there for seven hundred dollars. A hundred and sixteen acres, I guess it is.

RA: I got that. So good. So let's see what else I can... I guess if you remember any memories from when you were a kid or a teenager growing up and what it was like?

CS: It was a lot different than it is now.

RA: What was your house like that you grew up in?

CS: It was just a...I think a four room shack in the mountain.

RA: Was it like a wooden framed house?

CS: It was one of them that come together up at the top three or four ways. It was just an old house is about what you can say.

RA: What type of thing did you have to do to help around the house? Help your Dad with it?

CS: We used to have to do an awful lot on the outside. Dad wasn't there half the time my brother and I put up hay. The two of us and I was just eight or ten years old I was helping. One time we was comin' in with a load of hay. Of course we had a

horse and a wagon. My brother was drivin' I was settin' up on top of that load of hay and we run over a little thump about that time. It throwed me and the hay. I fell off of there and broke both of my arms.

RA: Oh no!

CS: It didn't break 'em bad, but it was broken. And Dad was out on the trashing machine and Mom she loaded us up in that old Model-T Ford and took us out there to see Dad. And he looked my arms over and he wanted to know if I could wiggle my fingers and I could. He said, "They ain't broken." Wiggle your fingers and sent me home and I just put up with it.

RA: They just healed on their own, huh?

CS: Oh yeah. I couldn't use 'em. I think they had to feed me there for quite a while. But that's the way they did things then. They didn't rush you into the doctor.

RA: Didn't go to the emergency room or anything, yeah.

CS: We'd had a went clear to La Grande.

RA: Was there a hospital then when you were...or just a doctor?

CS: Yeah, the old Grande Ronde Hospital used to sit maybe...they got a rest home or somethin' up there now, I think.

RA: Yeah. Just as you come into La Grande.

CS: It used to sit there. But I was in that old hospital a long time. I got shot when I was twelve years old. That's when we...the same day we moved to Summerville.

RA: Oh really! Who shot you?

CS: Crazy kid. We went huntin'. We had a 410 shotgun. We got back to town, why,...just in the outskirts of town...there's another kid there that I knew well and he wanted me to go downtown with him. I said okay and this crazy Johnny he said, "No, you're going home with me." I said, "No. I told Rex that I'd go downtown with him." "But if you do I'll shoot you." He just hauled off and shot me.

RA: Oh my gosh!

CS: He shot me right in the arm with the thing that far away. It just...the whole thing hit that arm and I've got...I think there's nine of 'em here in my ribs.

RA: It's a wonder you didn't lose your __.

CS: I don't know how they ever saved that arm. That was just...that was bone was just broke off and turned around like that in there in them pictures. They didn't have penicillin or nothing else in them days, you know. They brought me out of it they was over a year that I couldn't use it at all. My dad...I went to the doctor for a long time there and they'd give me ether all the time and work that arm. And that damned ether was about to kill me. So I told Dad I wasn't goin' back up there no more. He said, "If you don't I'm gonna work it here at home." I said, "Okay." So he worked that arm for over a year there. He'd set me down and take that arm and ram it up here as far as he could and then pull it. And, man, I'll tell you! He made an arm of it. It's not right yet, I mean, now I can't move that hand sideways like that and that's as far up as it will go. And it's a little bit stiff. I've always used it and never had any trouble. But I went through and awful lot with that.

RA: I guess! Gee! For heaven's sake. And what they'd do to the boy that shot you? Nothing?

CS: They didn't do a thing with him. They never even investigated it. Now he'd of...they'd of arrested him quick. But then they didn't pay much attention to anything.

RA: How long were you in the hospital?

CS: I can't remember just how long I's in there, but I was in there quite a little while. And then after...when they let me out there was some people that we knew real well that they had lived out there on a ranch to the side of us. They'd moved in and they lived right there where that motel is now. That Greenwell.

RA: Oh yeah.

CS: There was a house right there and they lived in that. So they offered to let me stay there. I had to see the doctor every day __. So I stayed with them for a couple weeks there before I went home.

RA: I didn't know that. Kids are...

CS: I went to school one year there in Summerville and wrote left-handed. [laughs] I got to where I could do pretty good at it.

RA: Where'd you go to high school?

CS: I didn't go to high school.

RA: Oh, you didn't go? How many years did you go to school then?

CS: Just eight.

RA: Eight?

CS: Yeah.

RA: And so the school that you went to was like first grade to eighth grade?

CS: Yeah, but I went to Elgin after we left there. I went there for a year and a half at Summerville and then we went on to Elgin. I finished up down there about two years.

RA: Was there a high school there in Elgin?

CS: Oh yeah. I started to go to high school and Pendleton Round-Up come along and my uncle and I saddled our horses and went across the hill. I never went back.

RA: So what was the Pendleton Round-Up like in those days?

CS: It was quite a bit like it is now. Probably a little more modern now than it was. Well, it's quite a bit more modern. They've got chutes now for their horses that buck out of. They used to saddle 'em up right out in the middle of the arena and snug 'em up to another horse. They didn't have those chutes at all. And they had...had two different deals. They had a Northwest champion and a world champion.

RA: Oh, they had a world champion back then?

CS: Yeah, but they also had a Northwest.

RA: And did the Indians come in like they do now?

CS: Oh yeah. I think maybe more so.

RA: Probably.

CS: Yeah, they had a big deal.

RA: Probably got pretty wild. [laughs]

CS: Yeah.

RA: Did you ever ride in the Pendleton Round-Up or do anything in Pendleton Round-Up?

CS: Yeah. I just rode bareback. I tried a couple of them brammer bulls and I changed my mind about them pretty quick.

RA: Yeah, I guess. [laughs] Did they have the...was the Pendleton Round-Up in the same place it is now?

CS: Yeah it's the same place. They've changed Happy Canyon. It used to be up toward town more and now it's right there by the rodeo ground. I worked in that Happy Canyon on one deal and old Ben Jury from over at Union he put that on for several years over there. I had a big grey horse, heck, I'd broke him myself and when I's a kid and he never bucked in his life. He wanted to know if I could...if I'd let the Calvary ride that horse. The Calvary was in there and a bunch of Indians come through a shootin'. I told him, "Yeah, go ahead." He had me help hold a big team of horses. A guy with that on a covered wagon there. When they done that shootin' he wanted me to help home 'em. I was out there holdin' them horses and that old grey horse come through there. He let a bawl out of him like a bull and he throwed that guy clear across that arena. [laughs]

RA: Oh no!

CS: Old Ben he was kind of mad about that. What the hell I was givin' a horse like that for. And I said, "Hell Ben, I broke that horse when I was ten years old!" [laughs] But he sure bucked that guy on there.

RA: Oh boy! He didn't like the rider, didn't like all the commotion.

CS: That shootin' and...

RA: The noise, yeah.

CS: They was just shootin' the devil out of one another and he didn't like it too good.

RA: So let me think. So after you lived at Pumpkin Ridge and moved in to Perry when...

CS: I moved out there on that ranch out there back of the truck stop. Then I moved from there up here.

RA: Oh. And you've lived here since 1940.

CS: Yeah.

RA: I'll be darned! I didn't realize that. And when did you move the house from where it was to where it is now?

CS: That was in '59, I guess. That's when they put the freeway through here. They was getting' within sixteen feet of my front door out there and I told 'em I wasn't gonna put up with it. So they finally decided...they said they wouldn't move it, but they'd pay to have it moved. So they paid a guy to move it.

RA: So we'll talk about...when did you say you married Irene? In 1940.

CS: Yeah. I think it was '40. '40 or '41, one of 'em. '40 I think.

RA: And how many kids did you have?

CS: We had a set of twins to start with and we lost 'em. Then it was just...I had some step-kids, had three step-kids. One of 'em died a few years ago. Donna. Those twins only just lived two or three days and I lost 'em. And then Vicky and Perry, that was all.

RA: I know...of course I know Perry and I know Vicky a little bit, but I...and I kind of know your step-kids, but you know, haven't been around them too much.

CS: Donna she hadn't been here for a long time and she went up to Seattle. She died here a few years ago. Then Frank he moved to Utah someplace. He got married

again here a while back and moved up there. And Lenore she's been over in Idaho for a long time. Her husband died here just about a month ago, I guess.

RA: ____

CS: She had kind of bad luck with her husband. She was married to Reen Myers for a long time and had a couple kids by him and he got that uncurable kidney disease. His mother died with it, I guess, and he got it. And they had him on a kidney machine there for a year or two and then they took him down to the vet center in Portland gonna give him a transplant. They give him the transplant and we was down there the next day after they give it to him and he was just feelin' fine and they said it...claimed the kidney was workin' already. He was just tickled to death. The next morning he was dead. He got pneumonia right quick. Lost him and then she married this other guy. He was a rancher over there. He was a real nice guy. They both were real swell guys. Married him and darned if he didn't die here a while back.

RA: So when you moved to La Grande what did you do for a living then?

CS: When I moved to La Grande?

RA: Uh-huh.

CS: I went to work out there on the...back of the truck stop in that old dairy out there. I worked for him for a few months and then we moved to Perry and I got a hold of Becker Brothers. They was startin' up this construction outfit and they said yeah they'd give me a job. It'd be a month ____ So I just drawed unemployed until they stared up and I went to work for them.

RA: What'd you do?

CS: I drove ____ and tractor. They had a tractor that they...they'd done their own cement mixing and I'd fill that cement mixer with that factory stuff. And then when we wasn't doin' that they had me carpenter. I never was a carpenter, but worked at it.

RA: And so this is right after you got out of the army?

CS: Yeah.

RA: A little while after you got out of the army.

CS: Well, no, let's see. That was before I went to the army.

RA: Yeah. Because that was in '40.

CS: Yeah, that was... I was workin' for Boise Cascade when I went to the army.

RA: In Elgin.

CS: No, up here.

RA: Oh, here. Was the mill where it is now?

CS: Yeah.

RA: That's been there a long time.

CS: Oh yeah. The older Stang built that mill there. And he retired and Boise Cascade took it over. I went to work for them just the same time they took it over. I worked for 'em for twenty-two years, I guess it was.

RA: What'd you do at the mill?

CS: I was a fireman in the boiler room.

RA: And what did you have to do when...?

CS: They had eleven boilers in there, big boilers. They fired 'em with sawdust, ____.
And it kept you busy walkin' up and down that deck checkin' all them fires all the time.

RA: Did somebody have to shovel that into 'em?

CS: Yeah, you had a helper that done the shovelin'.

RA: Boy.

CS: When the mill was runnin' you'd just run straight into the mill, but at night you had to have a helper. And if you had to fill up a noon or something like that you had ____ a helper out there. And then...the last two years I was there they had a...some steam turbans back in there that made electricity. And the guy that was runnin' that he retired and I got his job and I run that for two years. All I had to do then is just set there and listen to them turbans a whinin'. I'd have to get up once an hour and write down all the kilowatts and stuff like that. If the mill broke down or somethin' you'd have to shut somethin' down. Most of the time I just set there listen to them whine. That's why I can't hear good today.

RA: Oh yeah, I bet that would.

CS: I didn't have sense enough to wear earplugs like they do now.

RA: Oh, I know. They didn't even think of those things back then.

CS: No. Old Jeff he wears earplugs everyplace he goes practically.

RA: Yeah, I know. Round that machinery.

CS: He can hear and I can't. [laughs]

RA: So the mill had the boilers...first the boiler?

CS: Yeah.

RA: And it made steam power for the machinery and...?

CS: Yeah and also for the kiln. They had four...

RA: Oh, the kilns.

CS: ...whole bunch of them big kilns over there and we kept them with steam. And at one time the whole mill run on that steam before I went in there when Stang owned it. They had a great big engine there that run the whole thing. Then they went to electricity with Boise Cascade took over.

RA: And they had their own electricity...electric mill then. Electric power plant.

CS: They made some of it, but they never did make enough to run it. It was times, though, that they would sell a little of it. Most of the time it took all that they made and a little more.

RA: It probably wasn't as big as it is now, though.

CS: They've improved it a lot.

RA: What kind of machinery put the logs on the...on the belt and put 'em into the mill and get 'em cut?

CS: They had a chain run down to the pond and there was a guy worked on the pond there. And he had a long pole with a hook on it and he'd jab them logs and pull 'em up into that chute.

RA: Did they dump all the logs into a pond then?

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: And they didn't have a mill yard like they do now.

CS: I think they still use that pond.

RA: Yeah. It's still there.

CS: Yeah, I think they still use it. That one thing that pond washes the logs in it. I don't know. I'm sure they still use it. But then in them days they had two head rigs __ and they just practically done away with them now. They use 'em I guess to square a log up and then the rest they just run it through the gang saws one time there and there's all come out pieces.

RA: Yeah and everything's computers now. So after the army...after you came back from the army what did you do? Was that when you worked in construction? No, you worked in construction before.

CS: When I first come back...run out of tape?

RA: Yeah.

CS: When I first come back I went to work at the mill for a while and then we got...that's when they shut it down there and I went over to Heppner and I run that ranch over there for a couple years. Then I come back over here and I went back to work for 'em.

RA: At the mill?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Can you remember what it was like during the Depression?

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: How old were you then?

CS: I wasn't very old, but I can remember.

RA: Did it hit pretty hard around here? Did people grow their own food and.....?

CS: We was on that little ranch there and they raise an awful lot of stuff to eat. And Dad worked out a little bit in them sawmills and whatnot and make a few dollars. But it was pretty tough. I can...[end tape]

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RA: ...old were you then? During the Depression?

CS: Pardon.

RA: About how old where you?

CS: When?

RA: During the Depression.

CS: Oh.

RA: I might have already asked you that, I don't know.

CS: I don't know. Nine or ten years old, I guess. I know people had an awful time makin' a livin'. Even after I got a little older, why, I can remember a lot of 'em. It was still pretty bad. My dad finally got a job on the section down there in Elgin. And I think he was gettin' three dollars and four cents a day. Of course, that was pretty good money them days.

RA: That's the railroad?

CS: Yeah. He worked there for quite a little while 'til things got a lot better. He finally...he went to work in the boiler room over there at the mill. That was a land, boy. He'd had a pretty rough time of makin' it.

RA: Yeah.

CS: But people didn't seem to mind it so much. They never had had anything to start with. If it'd hit now, something like that now, it'd be terrible. But people wasn't used to havin' a whole lot and they got along with what they had and what they could get a hold of.

RA: Did you grow...I suppose you had a garden?

CS: They always had a big garden and they had fruit trees. Raise your own spuds and had our own beef and all that kind of stuff. We got by alright.

RA: And the hunting. Did you go hunting?

CS: No. I never started huntin' 'til I was probably twenty years old or so to amount to anything. I hunted birds and stuff when I was a kid. I had an old black dog that...used to be an awful lot of these little rough grouse. And a big grove of trees in there back of our barn. That old dog'd go out there and I'd hear him barkin' and I'd go out there and he'd have a bunch of 'em treed up there. I had a little...was a 44 shotgun. I never saw another one. It was about like a 410, but they did a little different. I'd take it out there and knock one or two of them out and that's about all the huntin' I'd done in them days. I might shoot a few squirrels and stuff.

RA: I suppose you'd have to go out...it's not like it is now that you can jump in your rig and go up in the mountains. All you had was a horse.

CS: No, you'd had a went it horseback.

RA: I think there's a lot more game here now than there used to be, too.

CS: Yeah there is. Hell, when I was a kid my dad would milk quite a few cows and he just run 'em out on the range up there. He just opened the gate and let 'em go. And us kids would have to go out and hunt them cows if they didn't come in at night. As I walked all over them hills a lookin' for them cows and never see a deer, elk either. I never saw an elk them days at all. Very few deer. You go up there now you'd see 'em every night someplace.

RA: So your mom and dad where did they come from?

CS: Dad was...he was born down in Crawfordville down the valley. Mom come from Utah. She was a Mormon, but she didn't follow it. She was in here with that bunch about the time that they come in here and started that sugar beet factory. Then...oh, the little Mormon settlement out at...down there...what is it? Mt. Glen.

RA: Oh, I didn't know that.

CS: Yeah, that was started by the Mormons.

RA: Did the sugar beet factory...did the Mormons start that?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Is that theirs?

CS: Yeah.

RA: I've heard about that, but I didn't know that.

CS: Dad worked for 'em a while. He was a foreman in it and he got hurt in there real bad. There was a guy...a drunk guy come in there and raisin' the devil and Dad told him to get out of there. And he left and he come back after a while and Dad was down in the boiler room a doin' somethin'. And that guy jumped him and he had a knife and he cut my dad awful bad in the leg. Dad kept kicking him back and he cut him and cut the artery in leg and everything else. Another guy run in

there about that time and jerked that guy off of him. Darn near lost him he lost so much blood, but he finally come out of it. So he didn't work there anymore.

RA: Do you know why he came up here?

CS: Why what?

RA: Why your dad came up here from the valley?

CS: His dad moved up here when Dad was just a little kid. He'd been up here ever since.

RA: I suppose they had to come up in a...like a buckboard or something.

CS: Yeah, some kind of a wagon.

RA: I wonder how long it would take 'em.

CS: I don't know.

RA: From...

CS: Take quite a little while.

RA: And where was the road like from La Grande to Pendleton?

CS: It went right up by here. It went up through Hilgard and up over the mountain there.

RA: Oh, I didn't know that. I wondered why Hilgard was there. So it turned off there at Hilgard and went through Hilgard and up?

CS: Yeah. It went right through Hilgard. There's still an old road up through there, I think. It's an old dirt road. It'd come out on top there this side of Meacham. And I think it went around through Camilla. I know it did. And then up through Meacham.

RA: Meacham. Oh yeah! That's why Meacham is there, too. That's part of the old road.

CS: Yeah.

RA: So...yeah. 'Cause I've wondered how people got across those hills, you know, where the highway is now. It's just, you know, mountain after mountain, but it must have been smoother up there, not as many draws.

CS: Just a gradual grade the had around a goin' up through there. It's pretty steep. That time we went to Pendleton in that old Model-T truck took us two days a goin' over and two days a comin' back. We come back by Tollgate that way.

RA: So where did you stop and spend the night?

CS: That first night we spent it up there at the Dead Man's Pass. We had a lot of fun a gettin' up there. Up here around Hilgard someplace...if I remember right, I was only six years old, but I can remember it well...run the fan into the radiator an that old Model-T and started leakin' water pretty bad. There was another old boy...that was Pat McKinnis with us...that I told you that was a teacher, her dad...now he was pretty handy with fixin' things. He whittled out a bunch of wooden plugs and plugged as best he could. And Mom had a box, or sack, or somethin' of rolled oats...regular oats you eat...they pored a bunch of that in the radiator and plugged them holes. And we cooked them all the way over the hill. You could smell that a cookin'.

RA: I bet!

CS: Them old Model-T...any other car they'd of burned up in a little bit, but them old Model-Ts they just keep goin' and it don't matter how hot they got. We went across there...I think they got it fixed up over there in Pendleton.

RA: Quite a trip, huh!

CS: I've got a picture of that someplace if I can find it. I was a workin' with a guy that was...he was with them other people in that other little car. Him and I was a workin' together when I was workin' for Beckers down here one time. I was talkin' about that and he says, "You know," he said, "I think I was on that trip." And I said, "Oh. I didn't remember it." He said, "Yeah." He said, "I think I got some pictures of it." He brought me a picture the next day of my mother and dad and I and the old guy that took us over there on that old Ford truck. It didn't have no cab or anything on it. It was just flat and hard rubber tires behind. Anyway, he gave me a picture of it and I've got it in there someplace.

RA: That would be great!

CS: Find it one of these days I'll show it to you.

RA: Okay. So people didn't travel very far unless they had to.

CS: No. It was...not at all...dirt road all they had. I'll tell you if I remember right we had to ford the river a time or two goin' up through here.

RA: Oh yeah, I bet. The way it winds around there. Do you remember when they paved the road?

CS: Yeah I can remember it. I didn't live up here at that time, but I can remember.

RA: Was it in the about the '40s?

CS: Yeah, I imagine. I can't remember just when it was. That road that goes to Tollgate my dad worked on that one. He was usin' a team and a scraper on that road that buildin' a rightaway. He worked there quite a while.

RA: So the scraper would work like a grader does now?

CS: Yeah. ___ dirt with it. Pull it over and dump it someplace.

RA: I wonder...I've never seen one of those. I wonder if...

CS: I've helped run 'em. They're hard work.

RA: Oh yeah!

CS: One...they had a handle on the back of them. The guy that was helpin' he had to hold onto that handle. Boy, once in a while they'd hit something solid and that handle...flip you right over if you didn't turn leave it.

RA: So did you have to walk behind it and hold the handle?

CS: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

RA: Oh my gosh!

CS: When you got wherever they wanted you just flip up on it and it'd dump.

RA: Did one guy handle the horses?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Walk beside the horses?

CS: Yeah. One guy drove the horses and he had a helper on that thing.

RA: And I suppose they...did they use dynamite to dynamite the big rocks and stuff they had?

CS: Yeah. They had to. Now they go up there with them big Cats and rippers and stuff and they don't have to dynamite a lot.

RA: I suppose that's why the roads curve like they used to because they didn't have the equipment.

CS: They just went the easiest way.

RA: That's quite a steep climb up over Tollgate, too.

CS: Oh yeah. But that...see, there'd been an old road up over there for years, that old Ruckle Road. I know...let's see, that went...no, that wasn't Ruckle Road. There's an old dirt road up over there 'cause that's where we come back from Pendleton. It wasn't much of a road if I remember right.

RA: Probably just a trail. 'Cause isn't the Ruckle Road kind of take off, you know, Tollgate goes straight and Ruckle Road takes off to the left a little bit.

CS: Yeah.

RA: So when you worked in construction what kind of things did you build?

CS: We built a lot of stuff. We built two of them schools up there. One of 'em was the high school. We built Lynch's garage. We built that where Arrow is, we built that. We built an awful lot of houses. Up there on that street that goes to the hospital up there. Put nearly all them houses on that side of the road.

RA: Was the high school where it is now?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Yeah. 'Cause I can...yeah. They had the old high school there and then they built onto it.

CS: Yeah. And then that school up there just below the hospital there. We pored all the cement in that. There was somebody else runnin' the building. We pored all the cement.

RA: There used to be an old...wasn't there like a one-room schoolhouse there?

CS: Yeah I think there was. I can't remember.

RA: That was...even when I was there I think they had that...they had moved the old schoolhouse up kind of by where the hospital is now and then they must have taken that off from there to build houses.

CS: I guess.

RA: Okay. We'll quit there. If you remember anything else you want to talk to me about let me know.

CS: Okay.

RA: Now how old are you? I forgot to ask you that.

CS: I'm eighty-nine.

RA: Okay.

CS: I'll be ninety the first of the year.

RA: I'll be darned!

CS: If I get that far.

RA: I'm sure you will. You'll probably outlive us all! [laughs]

CS: I don't know.

RA: Okay. Thanks a lot.

CS: Well you bet. [tape stopped]

RA: So the Pinecone. We're talkin' about the Pinecone and you said there was a whole bunch of cabins?

CS: Yeah.

RA: And you have two of 'em here on your property.

CS: Yeah. And Glen Green has got the other ones. His garage...

RA: I'll be darned! Well you know where I live in Perry they said that there was a house there that burned down. And the house that we live in now was put

together with two...they called 'em sheds. Now I'm wondering if it wasn't two of those little cabins from the Pinecone.

CS: No, I don't hardly think so. They was all just alike. Just like these out here.

RA: So what was the Pinecone like?

CS: It'd been a...they didn't call 'em, oh...these places where they...

RA: Motels?

CS: Motels. They called 'em something else. But they had those cabins and they...people could go in there and stay all night. Then they had a swimmin' hole there. That run for a long time. I can remember when it was runnin'.

RA: Was there a gas station or a store there or anything?

CS: I don't believe they had a gas station or store. I'm sure they didn't. They had a big house there.

RA: It's so odd to think that something like that was there because it's gone now.

CS: Right next to them it was a little farm and they had a big barn and house there and they farmed that land down in there where the weigh station is.

RA: I'll be! So where was the road?

CS: [cough] Darn it, I can't talk good.

RA: Where was the road?

CS: The road was just between there and the railroad track, but it wasn't very wide.

RA: I'll be darned. So that...I'm tryin' think...

CS: This road here it used to go out here and right there by the shop it turned and it went over into that Robs Hill road and followed the hill clear around. I lost two or three acres of land here when they put the freeway in.

RA: And on the other side of the Pinecone on the other side of the railroad tracks up on the hill what was up there back then?

CS: Years ago there was a golf course there. And then that guy that owned that other little place there by Pinecone he bought that land and he run a few stock up in there and whatnot. But at one time it was a golf course.

RA: Did people have to go up Robs Hill Road to get to it?

CS: No. No. They went right from the main highway. In them days you just turned off the highway anyplace.

RA: Yeah. Did you go across the tracks?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Boy. Yeah. I don't think there were any houses up there at any time, do you think?

CS: No. No, I don't think so. Not in my memory anyway.

RA: So, it seems...I guess it was just a little vacation spot the Pinecone. Someplace to stay along the road.

CS: Yeah, more or less.

RA: Do you remember about how many cabins there were?

CS: There were six or seven at least. I can't remember just how many. I got two of 'em and Glen got one. There was some more.

RA: How'd you get 'em over to your place?

CS: That was quite a deal. They told us we'd have to tear 'em down and Glen tore his down and put it back together. But that guy that was buildin' the freeway there he had a bunch of his equipment in there. He said, "If you let me use them two of

'em here to store stuff in," he said, "I'll move 'em for you when I get that grade put in there." He said, "Till that grade's finished it's mine." He said, "I'll just pull 'em right up there. You put some skids under 'em." After he told me that he got to thinking he couldn't get under this bridge over here on his new deal. So he come up here one day and he said, "If you'll come down there and flag for me," he said, "I'll bring one of them cabins up here." He had some great big...oh, their like a dump truck, but they call 'em payhaulers. And he hooked one of them on to one of them cabins and started up that road and he never give me time to get up here to stop the traffic. He come right up that old highway with that thing on skids and there was cars comin' and, man, it's a wonder he didn't wreck somebody! But he pulled around there and them skids was on fire when he come in there 'cause he was really goin'.

RA: He didn't put any wheels or anything under it.

CS: No, it was just on skids. So then quite a while later he said, "Well," he come down and he said, "I'll bring that other cabin up, but," he says, "I'm gonna let you get up there this time." He let me get up here and I stopped the traffic and he wheeled that one up here with that thing. If they'd of caught him they'd of hung him. 'Cause he was right on the old highway. He wasn't on that new road he built. He was figurin' on skiddin' ____ wouldn't never thought about having to come back under the bridge that were here.

RA: Yeah. Oh gosh! That's a hard way to get 'em over here.

CS: Oh yeah. It was easy, for that matter, but it scared the devil out of me. I thought sure he was gonna have a wreck.

RA: And 'cause a wreck, too, yeah. Gosh. I don't know why I've written down something about freeway 59. I don't know where that was.

CS: Where's freeway 59?

RA: I don't know. But something else I wanted to ask you about. A lot of people talked about stopping at Dead Man's Pass. Was there something there?

CS: No, there wasn't anything there. Kind of a campground. In them days...the areas now, you know, they've got a rest stop there. But them days there wasn't anything only just kind of a campground there. But that was...some guy got killed there years and years ago and that's why they called it Dead Man's Pass. I never did get the straight of all of it.

RA: No, I haven't either. I figured somethin' like that had happened. And then you talked about when you went over to Pendleton you stopped at...I can't remember the name of it. A springs.

CS: A what?

RA: Springs?

CS: Spring?

RA: Mm-hmm. You spent the night. Where'd you spend the night?

CS: I think that was when we was comin' back. That was up on Tollgate where the lake is up there now. That used to be a meadow, a big meadow. And they dammed it up and made a lake in there. But we stayed right on that meadow. It took us two days to get back, too, just like it did goin' over. It was all dirt road, you know. There wasn't no pavement anyplace. And that old wreck of a car. That was a 1914 model I think.

RA: I'll be darned. When you went to the Pendleton Round-Up where would you stay? Spend the night?

CS: We camped right outside the grounds there?

RA: You said it took you two days to get there.

CS: We stayed at Dead Man's Pass the first night, or the one night, and then went in the next day.

RA: Man, I don't see how you rode for two days, but then a cowboy [laughs] rode clear across the country sometimes. I wanted to go back and ask you about...some more about the mill because for one thing you said that there was a strike at one time. And I can't remember if you said your dad worked there at the time or you did?

CS: That was the mill in Elgin. I think I told you wrong on that. It was there at the mill in Elgin. Belonged to old Bill Mower. He finally...he went of business and they sold it to Boise Cascade. But I was workin' there when they had that strike. We didn't have one here at this mill. It was down there.

RA: Yeah, it must've been Elgin. Do you remember about what time...when that was?

CS: It was about...let's see '40...I was back from the army. It was about '46, I think. '46 or '47.

RA: Did you guys have a union?

CS: Yeah. But old Bill Mower owned that and he said if they struck he's gonna shut it down and he did.

RA: Why did ya strike? Why was there a big strike?

CS: Wasn't a gettin' enough money and whatnot. Some guys were gettin' more and others were doing the same thing.

RA: Did the union come in and help you set up the strike and things like that?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Boy, that would...

CS: But when that shut down then I went over to Heppner and went run a ranch over there for my dad's cousin for two years. Then I come back and went back to work there and then moved up to La Grande after that and went to work here.

RA: And your dad worked at the mill, too, at one time.

CS: Yeah.

RA: Do you remember anything about that mill? About how it was run at that time?

CS: Down in Elgin. You know that's the one Dad worked at.

RA: About the machinery or anything.

CS: They didn't have the high class machinery they got now, but they had pretty good machinery. And then they...that wasn't really a saw mill it was a box factory. They took that lumber in there and planed it and cut into pieces and made boxes and stuff. At one time they coffins in there at one time. Or coffin handles it was. And they made Venetian blinds, too.

RA: Venetian blind?

CS: Yeah.

RA: So they had... They sawed the logs there into the...and then they had a factory, little factory, there too, huh?

CS: See, Hanford Reed had a little sawmill there and he cut the logs most of 'em. And then he'd sell 'em to that outfit.

RA: And they made wooden boxes... Nowadays everything's cardboard so I couldn't understand what they...but back then they used wooded boxes for everything.

CS: Yeah. All your fruit and everything was put in wooden boxes.

RA: I'll be darned. I wonder about how many...what'd your dad do?

CS: He worked in the boiler room. He night watched there for a while then he got in the boiler room.

RA: And what did he do?

CS: Fired the boilers. They just had two of 'em there. I fired these down here and there was eleven of 'em.

RA: So did the machinery work with great big belts from the steam engine to the...

CS: Yeah, all belt.

RA: And I suppose the belts ran...turned the saws?

CS: Mm-hmm.

RA: They had engine...steam engines and...

CS: This mill down here had all those steam boilers and they run that whole mill and part of the planer on that. It had a great big engine in there and a belt that wide.

RA: Boy. About three feet wide?

CS: Yeah. And then it had a lot of little belts out in the middle, you know. It run the whole works.

RA: I bet that was loud.

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: No wonder you can't hear! [laughs] You said you couldn't hear you were runnin' those things.

CS: That boiler room alone just about ruined my hearing. Then I run those turbans the last two years I was there and they just whined all the time.

RA: What were the turbans fueled with?

CS: Steam.

RA: Steam?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Oh. I'll be darned. Do you remember how big the saws were that cut 'em? What kind of saws cut...?

CS: They had band saws for...they cut the logs up with. And I don't know just how big they was. Glen Green could tell ya. He run one of 'em.

RA: Oh. Yeah. I'll talk to him about that too. I forgot he works in the mill...he worked in the mill.

CS: Yeah, he sawed there for quite a while.

RA: All his life. Did your Dad ever talk about any of the logging? How they brought the logs into the mill way back then when he was working there?

CS: At the time he worked there they was usin' trucks.

RA: Oh, they were already?

CS: Yeah. That was in later years. He must have been close to sixty when he was in there firin' the boilers. But I can remember when they brought 'em in with bobsleds and wagons, horses.

RA: And they actually were sleds?

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: Oh.

CS: They was set of runners in front and a set behind just like a wagon with wheels, but they was runners. They'd use them in the wintertime and haul 'em in. One winter they was a couple loggers stayed at our place up north of Summerville there and decked a whole big bunch of logs there and that's the way they'd have 'em.

RA: How'd they get 'em on the sleds?

CS: They had a...they'd fix 'em and A-frame up like this with a cable and pulley on it. Then they had a kind of regular derrick carot that deck one when they'd put 'em in the deck. And they'd stick hooks...they had hooks that you'd stick in the end of the log and then up to the cable to pick 'em up.

RA: I'll be darned. I never knew 'cause I can't imagine how they got 'em on there or the wagons or the trucks, anything. 'Cause I bet back then you could only put maybe one or two logs on a sled.

CS: Yeah, they was big logs. Couldn't put very many on.

RA: Is it...did they do pretty much the same thing when they started loading trucks with logs?

CS: Yeah. They just had what they called little jammers that picked the logs up. They didn't have stuff like they got now.

RA: How did that work?

CS: It worked. They had a big A-frame out deal with a block and tackle on it and pick 'em up and set 'em on the truck. I'd have to usually use a cant hook or something to turn 'em over where they wanted 'em.

RA: That was a lot of hard work! [laughs] We think we have it hard now.

CS: They unloaded 'em by using a pv or a cant hook. You know what they are, don't you?

RA: No. I don't. What are they?

CS: I've got one out here someplace. They got a long handle in 'em, wooden handle, and they got a hook deal and they hook that in then they could turn the log.

RA: I...I remember those. I've seen those. I didn't...

CS: I've got a couple old pieces of 'em hanging up out here on the patio. But I've got a good one out there in the shop someplace.

RA: I saw those at...I've seen those and I thought they used 'em to hook logs like on the pond. But they probably did that, too, but I didn't really know what they were used for.

CS: They had two kind of 'em. One of 'em they called a pv. It was just same as a cant hook, but it had a spike in the end of that they could jab them logs with. That old cant hook it just...it had a little metal deal on there that hooked into the log. It was all the difference it was.

RA: So the men would use those to help move the logs onto and off of the rigs.

CS: Years ago they used to float logs down this river and into this old mill that was over here. Now I don't remember that, but I've talked to several guys that did. And them guys'd get on them logs and ride 'em down that river. [laughs] Them big logs, you know, but boy, they'll roll. They'd get on them and ride 'em right down the river.

RA: Oh man! That's crazy! Yeah, see, I'd like to learn...know more about Perry because I guess there was a great big dam there and a lake.

CS: The dam was right here on the river right up here by the bridge.

RA: Oh.

CS: And they had that dammed up and that's where their logs come to there and then they...I never did know just how they got 'em over to the mill in there. They had a pond over there by the mill.

RA: So the dam was on the river and the river was where it is now?

CS: Yeah.

RA: See, I thought they...I thought the dam was up near...closer to the...to the mountain up there

CS: At one time I guess the river, years and years ago, must've run around through there. But when that mill was there I had...I did have a picture of it. I don't know what I ever done with it. That I picked up someplace and they showed the dam and part of Perry, upper Perry there. I mean the mill part. And the dam was right up there just the other side of them bluffs.

RA: Oh. Just up...right up above lower Perry?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Oh. Yeah, that would be pretty much in line with that mill part.

CS: Right straight across from there. They used to have what they called middle Perry. And it was a section house there and I don't know what all. There was still a section house there, I think, when we moved here. They tore it down.

RA: Yeah, I...I...you can just see a few foundations, but I've seen pictures of Perry, middle Perry, and there was a little town there. And that's just so hard to believe 'cause there's nothing there now. But I suppose when people started moving out they did the same thing they did with the cabins up at the Pinecone. People would use the wood and tear the places down and move 'em so nothin' was left of the whole place. You talked about the kilns on the...that some of the heat was used for the kilns?

CS: Mm-hmm.

RA: What are the kilns do? I know what they do, but maybe some other people don't.

CS: They stacked all this lumber on wheels and they had stickers and so there was air space in between 'em. And they'd back 'em into those kills and turn 'em on for so long and they'd dry 'em. The heat.

RA: I wonder how they do it now 'cause they don't need kilned.

CS: Same way.

RA: Oh, they still use kilns?

CS: As far as I know they still usin' kills. I guess that's the way they get 'em in.

RA: Yeah. What was I gonna say?

CS: Years ago they didn't they just air dried all their lumber. But those kilns are so much faster.

RA: Yeah they are. Oh, you talked about a head rig. Talk about equipment. Do you...what is a head rig?

CS: That's your main saw. It saws the logs.

RA: And that sawed the logs into boards?

CS: Mm-hmm.

RA: So the guy that had the mill did he go ahead and saw the lumber...when they had the box factory...he went ahead and chopped it up into the piece the sizes that they needed?

CS: He just sawed the lumber and then it was planed. And then they'd send it over to that place and they'd plane it and then they sawed it up. It was just rough lumber when it went over there.

RA: Where was this place? The factory, the box factory.

CS: In Elgin?

RA: Mm-hmm.

CS: You know where that little restaurant just before you get into Elgin?

RA: Uh-huh.

CS: It was back over in that big open space back in there. I think there might be some old buildings and stuff like that. I think they turned it into a cannery or somethin' there at one time.

RA: I'll be darned. Yeah, I know where that is.

CS: It used to be over in there along the railroad track.

RA: And they made Venetian blinds there, too, huh?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Did the mill then plane the lumber, those little wooden slats that small?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Okay. I'm kinda goin' down the list here. You talked about Happy Canyon Days and you said somebody ran it and I didn't quite catch who that was. You said somebody from Union used to run...

CS: Ben Jury.

RA: Ben Jury?

CS: Mm-hmm. There was a write-up...some magazine I was readin' about Ben Jury a while back. I don't remember what it was now.

RA: Because it seems odd to me. I always...see, I'd never been to a Happy Canyon. But Bev has and she...what it sounds like to me was the Indians over there had kind of a show and a pageant or something and it was all...I thought it was all about the Indiana, the Umatilla Indians. But it seems kind of odd that somebody from Union would be running it, so...

CS: He just contracted...he furnished stuff for the rodeo there doing all that stuff. But the Happy Canyon it was...back in the early days when the settlers come across and they had these covered wagons in there and the Indians come in and they got in a fight. And the Calvary come in and run the Indians off and all that stuff. Man, they'd turn the lights off for a few minutes and they could turn some of that stuff over and there'd be a little store and saloon and all that stuff. They'd put a show on in that.

RA: I'll be darned! So it was kind of a little history of...

CS: Oh yeah. And they had a pool of water there and a kind of a makeshift looked like a bluff. And an Indian used to stand up on that and they'd shoot him off there and he'd just fall off over in that water.

RA: Oh boy! [laughs] So kind of a wild west show.

CS: He wasn't an Indian, it was a white man.

RA: So that's what he...this guy from Union used to do. He used to put on that show and...

CS: He put that on and he furnished all the stuff for the Pendleton Round-Up, too.

RA: I didn't know that. But then I bet it's changed a lot now. You can't be shooting Indians off of bluffs now. [laughs]

CS: Oh no.

RA: I just wanted to record that...because we talk about it we know what we're talkin' about, but he said to be sure and tell where your house is because other people won't know about it. And I'll just say that it's...that your house is across from lower Perry.

CS: Yeah, across the freeway from lower Perry on the river.

RA: Yeah. I wonder if before the freeway was there...you probably...I know you don't remember this, but I just wonder if there were any houses. If lower Perry had more houses out this way toward you?

CS: No. I don't think so. See, they're right up against the railroad and there wasn't anything on this side of the railroad. At one time years ago there was a sawmill right up by the swimmin' hole. I don't remember it, but...I can't think of his name...guy that lived up there at Hilgard told me about it and showed me some pictures of it. I forget how run it. Anyway, it was right up there by the swimmin' hole.

RA: Just right above your house here?

CS: Mm-hmm.

RA: Oh. I'll be darned. I didn't know about that.

CS: That was years ago.

RA: I'd like to see that picture.

CS: I believe them Robs is that had it. Robs Hill was named after I think he said. Cantrill up there is the one that showed me the picture of that.

RA: Is he still alive?

CS: No. He died. His wife's still alive and she was gonna give me one of them pictures and she never did do it.

RA: That's too bad. See, that's what happens is you and...you remember a lot of things and you have pictures and then your kids they don't mean anything to your kids and they throw 'em away. And that picture probably got thrown away too. That's too bad. You talked about a ranch being in the back of a truck...the dairy that you worked at was behind the truck stop.

CS: Yeah.

RA: And that's over near Ladd Canyon, isn't it? Is that what...

CS: It was right square behind the truck stop there. It's toward Ladd Canyon, but it's right there by the back of the truck stop. There's still a house there.

RA: I just wanted to make sure that...

CS: I forget who the guy is that owned that.

RA: You talked about breaking broncs since you were ten years old and I just can't hardly...people were so tough back then! [laughs] They won't even let kids ride bicycle without a helmet nowadays. But what would you do? Just get on the horse?

CS: I'd just keep foolin' with him and get on him. Got dumped a few times.

RA: About how long would it take usually to break 'em?
CS: If you keep ridin' 'em it don't take too long.
RA: Did you ride bareback?
CS: Most of the time, yeah.
RA: You said...you have some really good pictures with horses. When you were a teenager did you work with horses?
CS: Oh yeah.
RA: On a ranch, or...?
CS: We had a little ranch up there when I was a kid and I worked for other guys on ranches after I got big enough. And I went over to Heppner I worked over there quite a bit on ranches.
RA: When you were about sixteen, seventeen what'd you do on the ranches?
CS: Helped 'em hay and take care of their stock and whatnot.
RA: When I was talking to this man that's running this project we were talking about putting up hay. And see, since I don't know what...don't know anything about it he said there was pretty big like a block and tackle rigging to put hay up into the loft.
CS: Yeah, the derrick.
RA: There weren't hay bales, were there?
CS: Oh no, everything was put up loose. And they used Jackson forks. I've got one out there along the road a sittin' there. A great big fork about that wide with big long teeth on it.
RA: So about three or four feet wide.
CS: Yeah. And if you have a load of hay on a wagon and you take that Jackson fork and jab it down in there and then the derrick could lift it up. A lot of 'em put it in the barn. Had a track up there and run it up into the barn. They had what they called a Mormon derrick 'cause a lot of 'em used. And it put it up in big stacks outside. I've stacked a lot of that hay when I was just a kid myself.
RA: Wouldn't the wind blow it away or anything when you piled it?
CS: No. You keep trampin' it down and movin' it around and get it so it all laid pretty flat. Once in a great while the wind'd blow a top off of one, but very seldom. I had a stack down here in the lower end of the field one time and just put up by hand and a windstorm come and just rolled half of it over like that.
RA: So when it's packed down it stays pretty good, huh?
CS: Yeah.
RA: And what would you use...in the first place, what would you use...how did you gather the hay?
CS: They cut it with a mowin' machine and then raked it up with a rake. I've got one of them old dump rakes here, too.
RA: Oh, I've seen those. With a ... [end tape]

RA: Okay, we were talkin' about Jackson forks and haying. And you said that they put the...you guys would pitch the hay onto the wagon and then, of course, drive the wagon to either the barn or stack it.

CS: There was a guy on the wagon and he'd keep it loaded to it. Move it around where you...he'd get a good load on. Then their grain when I was a kid they used to bind that and made bundles. It'd be about that big around.

RA: That must've taken a lot of people, didn't it?

CS: No. They had a binder, they called it. It'd go and cut it and the stuff would through it and it'd tie a loop around it and kick it out to side. Then he'd have to go along and pick 'em up and stack 'em. Leave 'em 'til they hauled 'em in.

RA: Do you remember...so how did they get the wheat off of the shaft?

CS: They had what they called a thrashin' machine.

RA: Oh, that was the thrashin' machine.

CS: That's what they'd put them...throw them bundles into that machine and they'd run through it and it'd tear 'em up and the wheat'd come out. Worked like a combine but only they were stationary. Run with a...them big steam engine tractor.

RA: So did that trashing...did you have to bring 'em into town to do that or did they take the trashing machine out?

CS: No, they'd just take the rig out. They'd stack those bundles in a big stack and then them rigs would pull in there and back into that stack. And a couple guys get up on the stack and start throwin' them bundles into it.

RA: Where did the stuff come out? Did somebody have to hold a bag to...?

CS: Yeah, for the grain. They had deals you could hook your sack onto and it had a sack sewer there. And usually have guy jiggen 'em so they get 'em good and full. And then he'd sew 'em up. And then the straw it'd blow out into a big pile.

RA: What did they do with the straw?

CS: They used to feed a lot of it. They just turned stock into it and let 'em eat it. My dad's cousin lost some cattle one time. They ate under it and it caved in on 'em. They smothered to death.

RA: Oh for heaven sakes! Was it...there quite a few farmers that had wheat fields?

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: Even back then. This is a good country.

CS: All the Grande Ronde Valley pretty near was wheat fields. And all the little guys they'd raise some wheat anyway.

RA: So then what happened to the grain? Did they take it to a mill?

CS: I had to haul it to Imbler.

RA: Oh, there was a flour mill in Imbler?

CS: Yeah. No, there wasn't...there was a flour mill in Elgin and there was one in Island City. But it seems like they...I was thinkin' they hauled that wheat to Imbler. I'm pretty sure they did. Maybe they hauled it there and then shipped it out, I don't...

RA: They could have.

CS: Yeah.

RA: I think that flour mill, come to think of it, was right near the railroad tracks there in Elgin.

CS: Yeah.

RA: And some kid burned it down.

CS: Yeah. It burned up here just a year or two ago.

RA: Yeah. That's too bad.

CS: And then there was a big flour mill there in Island City right there.

RA: Right...is that what that was? Right there. It's still there.

CS: Yeah.

RA: By the crossroads where you turn up to go to Elgin.

CS: That's...just a warehouse is there now, I think, but that's where the flour mill was. I think right in behind that. And it run off of water.

RA: Oh.

CS: Yeah. They had a ditch a goin' down through there and they had a big water wheel.

RA: Oh they did?

CS: Yeah.

RA: I'll be darned. And they had a big grinding machine in there?

CS: Mm-hmm.

RA: Do you remember what that was like? Did you ever see that?

CS: No. I was just a little kid at the time and I didn't pay much attention to it.

RA: That was a good place for it with the river right there.

CS: Yeah.

RA: Well that's neat. And those Mormon haystacks that you were telling me about I don't think you got finished telling me about it. How big were they?

CS: It was a big derrick, but they had a boom clear across the top of 'em. And it would turn. You could turn it one way or the other. And you used a team of horses on it to pull the load up. And then you could turn that so that you could get on one end of the stack or the other.

RA: What was underneath it?

CS: Just a big set of skids like sled deal.

RA: So...and you'd pile the on top of that sled.

CS: No.

RA: Because I'm picturing there's two...or people...

CS: You'd have your hay on a wagon.

RA: Uh-huh.

CS: Or we used slips, too. On one of them slips they used slings instead of fork. Just big sling and it picked the whole thing up. It'd take it off of the wagon or slip or whatever you had and pull it up on that derrick and turn it around and onto a stack.

RA: Oh. And then did somebody have to unload the sling like with a pitch fork or something up there?

CS: Had a rope on 'em and you give it a jerk and it opened up and the fork tripped, whichever he's using.

RA: And then the hay just fell out?

CS: Yeah. And the guy up there he had to move it around and stack it.

RA: When you say stack it I see...I see it as just all this loose hay.

CS: If you just dump it out of there you got a big pile of hay here and a big pile of hay here. You've gotta level that all out or water'll run down through it. If you stack it good the water'll run off of the top of it.

RA: So there was...you had to know what you were doin'.

CS: Yeah. I've stacked a lot of it when I was just a kid.

RA: And the Mormon haystacks that you were talkin' about. I thought you were saying that they were just left outside.

CS: Yeah. They'd just leave 'em out.

RA: About how big were they?

CS: They were big. I don't know. There was poles on top I imagine was thirty feet long or somethin' like that.

RA: I suppose if you had a lot of hay like we did in the Grande Ronde Valley you couldn't get it all in the barn. You had to...

CS: Oh no.

RA: ...something with it.

CS: They usually just put enough hay in the barn for their milk cows and stuff like that and stack all the rest of it out.

RA: Did they stack it pretty near the barn, though?

CS: No, not always.

RA: Just out in the field?

CS: A lot of it out the field. They'd feed their stock out in there.

RA: And did they look like...I've seen pictures, paintings, of haystacks and they were just like kind of rounded mounds of hay. So that was what it was like?

CS: Yeah. You have to keep 'em high in the middle and that way the water gets away and don't ruin the whole stack.

RA: So that's what I was wondering, too, about the water and the snow ruining the hay. 'Cause I know they...you know, you have to be careful with that or it'll get moldy.

CS: You'd always have an...oh, maybe that much on top that you'd have to throw off. But after that got wet and soaked up good it'd turn water pretty good that the rest of it didn't get wet. It kept pretty good in those stacks.

RA: Yeah.

CS: It don't...these bale stacks they get wet, you know, too and I think they waste as much of them bales as they did when it was put up loose.

RA: They probably did.

CS: Yeah.

RA: 'Cause it drips down in there between the bales and things like that. That's interesting. I never knew how they got...especially how they got the hay up into the barn.

CS: Those barns all of 'em used to...they used to be a...what do they call 'em...doghouse stuck out in front here and there was a track from there clear to the back of the barn. When that Jackson fork went up there it'd had a deal that they hooked into a roller and it'd roll down through the barn. And the guy in the barn is movin' the hay out he'd holler when he wanted 'em to trip it. And they got outside. He had a rope on that and he'd give it a jerk to trip it.

RA: And down it went, huh? That's neat. Let's see what else. What else did you do on ranches?

CS: Milk cows. Little bit of everything. Plowed, harrowed.

RA: How did you plow? Did they have tractors?

CS: No, horses. Horses and they'd have a ridin' plow. And I've plowed 'em with them footburners, they called 'em. Not a big ___ 'cause I've done a lot of plowin' with it.

RA: And I was wondering, too, about, you know, what it was like when you were a kid inside of the house, but I suppose you did much with your, you know, your mom as far as like women's work, but do you remember anything that she did?

CS: Yeah. I can remember back when she washed by hand. Had an old washboard. And Dad he finally got a hold of a washin' machine that you run with a lever. That was us kids' job most of the time.

RA: Oh man! I bet you hated wash day! [laughs]

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: Did you have like a...did you have fruit cellar where you put up...?

CS: Yeah. It was dug out into the ground and then built up. It was always full of stuff to eat, too.

RA: I bet.

CS: That's how we lived them days.

RA: Just put everything in the fruit cellar and...

CS: They used to dig out...out in the garden there someplace and put their potatoes in it and put straw on it. And then they'd cover that all up with dirt. And they could dig back in there in the wintertime and get a bunch of spuds out and it wouldn't freeze.

RA: I know...although I'd heard that, that potatoes could stay in the ground, but I thought they...I didn't believe who was tellin' me that 'cause I thought they froze. But that's how they did it, huh?

CS: They'd cover 'em good with straw before they put all that dirt over 'em. And they'd stand an awful lot of cold weather.

RA: People knew...figured things out on how to live back then.

CS: They had to.

RA: Nowadays we think we couldn't live out a refrigerator.

CS: Yeah. And we canned a lot of meat and stuff like that. Dallas was talkin' about that the other day. He said his folks used to can it and I told him we did too.

RA: That's the only way you had to preserve the meat. Or was...did you have a smokehouse?

CS: Yeah and we smoked all the pork. You didn't the beef. Yeah, they'd make bacon and hams and all that.

RA: Gosh there was a lot of work back then. Let's see. And of course you had a wood cook stove. So how did you get your wood in?

CS: It skidded in with horses and sawed it up by hand.

RA: With one of those crosscut saws?

CS: Yeah. Dad got a hold of an old horse powered saw like them old gas saws used to be, but it run with a horse power. Hook the horse on a rig and he'd goin' around

and around and that turned that deal and he could saw it up with that pretty good. It had a crosscut deal on it.

RA: Oh wow! I bet he thought that was a great thing! That's a lot of work to cut one of those logs with a crosscut saw.

CS: Yeah.

RA: People came up with stuff all the time that...you know, kept thinkin'. Oh, I was gonna...Dallas was telling me about a dance hall that they had at the Minam. He was talkin' to somebody about it. Talked about how everybody was down there.

CS: Oh yeah. I was there a lot of time.

RA: So what was that like?

CS: It was...it was just up over the store there. It was a pretty good sized hall and they'd have dance in there every now and then. It'd get kind of wild sometimes. [laughs]

RA: Oh I bet! Do you remember any other dances or dance halls around La Grande or Elgin?

CS: Elgin they used to...that grange hall out there. They used to have dances in it all the time. Then there was another one up over the...I can't remember what they called it. It was a lodge building and it was...it'd been just about up over Brunswick there, I think. They used to have dances in that a lot.

RA: And did the...some of the locals come and play for it? Just people got together and played music?

CS: Oh yeah. My brother used to play an awful lot and my dad too.

RA: What'd they play?

CS: Dad played the violin and my brother played violin and guitar and piano and, I don't know, two or three other instruments.

RA: You said it got pretty wild at that dance hall at Minam.

CS: Old Minam Fisher used to own it.

RA: And it was just a dance hall, just for...?

CS: It was up over head. They gotta had a store underneath it.

RA: Oh, that's what he was talkin' about. 'Cause he said it was upstairs and he said once in a while somebody'd knock somebody over the rail [laughs] down.

CS: Yeah. It used to get pretty wild. I'd been to several of 'em down there.

RA: Did they have special dances or celebrations for the Fourth of July or things like that around here?

CS: They'd have a little celebrations and I guess we had dances. They used to have a celebration out there at the old Pleasant Road grange there out back at Summerville area. They used to have get-togethers there and games and play ball and whatnot.

RA: For the Fourth of July, or what was it?

CS: Yeah.

RA: The dances...I suppose there was a lot of drinking and whoopin' and hollerin'.

CS: Oh yeah. But they usually had some guy that kind of bein' the cop for it and he'd kind of keep it down a little bit.

RA: Do you remember anything particular about any of 'em?

CS: No, not really.

RA: Oh, I think it's...Dallas was talkin' about his granddad met his grandmother at one of those dances at the Minam. That's what he was talkin' about.

CS: Did I tell you about the time that went over to Flora when that guy lit the match to see if the gas tank was full?

RA: No.

CS: Dallas knows...knewed the Whinton guy. His name was Nedrow.

RA: Oh yeah, I think I've heard of the name.

CS: That young Nedrow used to be an auctioneer. It was his dad. I was just a kid and so was he. And Willard Ford, that's my cousin, they lived over there at Flora. Lived down over the hill from Flora on a ranch. We went over to see 'em one time and we decided to go to a dance at the old Camp Ten. That used to be an old loggin' town there. So they decided to get a couple of jugs of whiskey and sell part of it and drink the rest. This kid has his dad's new old Chevy. It was a '30 model, I think, or '31. And they used to have...the gas register was on the tank on the back. They had a tank right on the back of it...the bumper. They got a deal in there that told you how much gas you had. We pulled in there to Flora and was gasin' that up and Willard Ford, he's my cousin, he had a hold of the gas. So he put it in there and he said, "I wonder if it's about full?" William Nedrow said, "Wait a minute and I'll look." And he lit a match and boy that went just "whoof" like that. Willard pulled that hose out there and the fire was a flyin' out of it just like a blow torch. [laughs] And that old board sidewalk there and there was fire there was a fire all over it. And that crazy William Nedrow jumped into that car and just floored like that and he run right out from under that fire.

RA: Oh for heaven sake!

CS: He had that whiskey in there and the didn't want to get caught with it. [laughs]

RA: Oh, that's why he...!

CS: He wheeled that thing out of there like that and he run right out from under that fire. I couldn't believe it.

RA: That's amazing because you'd think he just be a streak of lightning.

CS: I looked for it to blow up any second.

RA: Yeah.

CS: But then we had fire all over that old board sidewalk and Willard...of course when he shut that pump off it wasn't very long 'til it died down. He had fire all over. He had a big black Stetson hat and he had fire all over it. [laughs] There was fire all over everything.

RA: Well that wasn't very smart to light a match! [laughs]

CS: Stupid __ I don't know what he was thinkin' about.

RA: He'd probably had a little bit too much of his whiskey.

CS: Oh yeah. He'd been a drinkin' on that booze.

RA: Let's see. What else? You said your dad had worked for the section.

CS: Yeah he worked there in Elgin.

RA: And what did he do?

CS: He was just section hand.

RA: What did they do? I don't know what they do.

CS: Build tracks and such.

RA: Build track?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Let's see. I think I'm about at the end of it because...oh, I wanted to ask you more about what La Grande was like. 'Cause I remember when I first came here where the ODS building is now, used to be a telephone building, there was a really big hotel there. And I remember there was...

CS: That was the Foley.

RA: The Foley?

CS: Yeah.

RA: It was only a couple years after that that they tore it down. But I imagine there was a lot of places that were...a lot of businesses that were there when you lived here that aren't there now.

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: Like what was where Safeway is now?

CS: You mean where Safeway used to be?

RA: Yeah. The old Safeway.

CS: That was the old La Grande Hotel there. Is that what it was? Yeah. I think there was a big hotel there at one time years ago.

RA: There as a lot more hotels than there are now, but I guess nowadays there'd motels instead of hotels.

CS: Yeah. I can remember when the old Sac...hotel that used to be there where the bank is. It was runnin' full blast.

RA: And that was next to U. S. Bank. I remember that, too, and they tore that down.

CS: It's right there where the U. S. Bank is. The old...part of the old other building that was attached to it is still there, you know that?

RA: Mm-hmm.

CS: Sacagawea Annex.

RA: Yeah. And I remember at the Sacagawea that they tore down they had a dining room there too. Leroy said...talked about the Summer Hotel, too, but I didn't ____ there.

CS: Yeah, there was an old Summer Hotel. I can't remember just where that was located.

RA: I think it was across from the post office.

CS: Yeah, in there someplace.

RA: So where was the post office when you were...?

CS: The post office used to be there where the...what is it...that building just as you make the turn there on Adams on the right. It got a bunch of city offices in there or something. It was in there.

RA: I think that's the city hall.

CS: Yeah, city hall.

RA: And I remember, too, that down from there a little ways...I can't remember...it was a drugstore.

CS: A what?

RA: A drugstore.

CS: Yeah.

RA: It was...can't...I don't know what's in there now. If it was that jewelry store or someplace in there.

CS: Yeah, there's a jewelry store right there. I think it's still there, but I don't think that guy's runnin' it anymore. It used to be Moon Drugstore down there. It'd be across from the U. S. Bank there. And they used to have the best soda fountain you ever saw. We used to go in there for ice cream and stuff.

RA: I really liked it when I went in there because that was...again it closed down just a couple of years after I was here...but it looked just like an old soda...they still had the soda fountain and I think they had marble floors. And I can remember all the drawers in the...like behind the counter. I guess they put medicine in there and stuff like that.

CS: Yeah, I guess.

RA: So I was just amazed that somethin' like that was still around. Where were the grocery stores, do you remember that?

CS: There was one there it was about midway down through Adams there...I can't remember...It was on this side of the street. And I can't remember what kind of a store it was. Red and White or somethin' like that. And then Safeway I think they had a little store down in there someplace before they built the big one. See, they've been here ever since 1930, I think, or somethin'.

RA: I didn't know that. 'Cause I thought it was...Safeway probably started maybe in the '50s or '40s.

CS: No. I think...I think there's a sign in that new store there that said "servin' La Grande since 1930."

RA: Oh.

CS: I'm pretty sure they had a little store there. I can't remember just where it was located.

RA: I'll have to...maybe somebody else remembers more about it.

CS: Yeah.

RA: And the store at Summerville when you were a kid, what was that like?

CS: Just an old country store. It had a big old pot bellied stove in it and all the guys go in there and set around and shoot the bull.

RA: The old men.

CS: They had everything...a lot of stuff was in barrels and whatnot. You'd go in there and he'd dip it out for you.

RA: I'll be darned. Did they sell quite a variety of things? A little bit of everything?

CS: Yeah. They had pretty good variety of stuff, for them days. It didn't have a lot varieties.

RA: Did they sell like hardware, too, in there?

CS: Yeah, some, but not too much. Most of the hardware you had to go to La Grande or someplace to get.

RA: I was thinkin' too that they had soap or anything like that, but your mom probably made her own soap, didn't she?

CS: Yeah she used to make some, but they sold it in the store, too.

RA: How did she make the soap?

CS: I don't know just...they used lye in it and I can't remember how they made it. I think they used some hog fat and stuff or somethin' like that in it.

RA: Kind old Ned was telling me about what it was like during the war here, but you were...you were in the army. She was talking about the rations and things like

this that they had to give out. So you probably couldn't tell me too much about that as far as what it was like here.

CS: Yeah. They had a lot of stuff rationed. Gas was rationed. You had...you'd only buy a few gallons at a time.

RA: Yeah. Where were the gas stations? Were there any gas stations in La Grande?

CS: Oh yeah, these little service stations around. There wasn't near as many cars on the road as there is now. Before the war...I was livin' in Elgin when the war took off. And you could drive from Elgin to La Grande you wouldn't meet over three or four cars all the way.

RA: Oh I bet. Were the roads paved then?

CS: Yeah.

RA: Oh they were? Yeah.

CS: But they just wasn't no traffic.

RA: No. People didn't go like they do now because they just...they couldn't. They didn't have a...I suppose it took a whole day to get to Elgin...from Elgin to La Grande, or how long did it take?

CS: It did when you had horses, but when they finally got cars you could drive up there in an hour. Even old Model-T Ford'd make it up in about an hour.

RA: They would've? Yeah. Then I suppose they had gas stations like in Summerville

CS: Yeah. They's have a gas station in all them little towns.

RA: And Alicel was bigger than it is now, wasn't it?

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: Did they have a store there at one time?

CS: I believe they did, but I can't remember for sure. They used to ship a lot of grain and stuff into Alicel there. They had those big warehouses and stuff.

RA: Yeah, I suppose there were so many small towns because you couldn't haul the hay clear across or whatever.

CS: Yeah.

RA: Clear across the valley. So there were these small towns where they had to...the silos and the things the farmers needed. And I always figured that there were small towns about the distance that it would took...that it would take you to ride a horse during the day. Is that what it was like?

CS: Yeah. That was...one reason there was so many little towns is was...they was too far apart and too hard to get to 'em. And people had to go by horses or a foot. Had to have a little store of some kind. Summerville at one time it was a lot bigger than it is. They had a brewery there in Summerville.

RA: Oh they did?

CS: I can remember when the old building was still there. They finally tore it down. A old guy by the name of Ott put that brewery in there and he made beer there. And they had a saloon or two there and I don't know what all. Had a hotel.

RA: Oh.

CS: And had...it was really a big lodge buildings in there.

RA: I'll be! I didn't know that. Did they put the beer in kegs or in bottles?

CS: I imagine in kegs them days. That was before my time. I'm pretty sure it was just in kegs. But they was...at one time there was a little Chinytown in Summerville.

RA: Oh there was!

CS: Yeah. That was back to the north there. Right where that road turns and goes through to...goes down to Elgin. Was just on the other side of that along in there was... Chinese used to live in there.

RA: I'll be! I wonder why they settled there?

CS: I don't know.

RA: Were there any Chinese in this area when you were a kid or do you remember 'em or growin' up?

CS: It was just a few here and there that...there used to be a Chinese restaurant there on Adams called the Chiny Mary's. It would have...served noodles and stuff like that. And that was there for years. There wasn't very many. I guess when Dad was young I guess around La Grande there was quite a few Chinese.

RA: That's what I heard. That there was a Chinatown there where the old Safeway is...used to be.

CS: Yeah. That old Chinytown around there.

RA: That's good to know about the Chinatown in Summerville because maybe somebody else remembers more about it. I didn't...that seems like an odd place for them to...

CS: That was before my time. I don't remember 'em, but I remember talkin' about it. I read about it one time.

RA: I think they worked buildin' the railroads, didn't they?

CS: Yeah, I imagine.

RA: And when you were in school...that's the last thing I want to ask you about. When you were in school do you remember like what you would do during the day?

CS: In school?

RA: Mm-hmm.

CS: Studied most of the time.

RA: Yeah. [laughs] Did you have to pack your own lunch?

CS: Oh yeah. We lived so far away from...see, we lived about three miles away from the schoolhouse and we always carried our own lunch.

RA: What'd you carry it in?

CS: A lot of...they used to have a Dixie Queen tobacco and they had them little square boxes with handles on it. It was about the best ones, but they had some others. Prince Albert and some more of 'em had different, but they wasn't near as nice as those little... That's what we usually used.

RA: And what'd you usually take for lunch? What kind of stuff?

CS: Sandwiches, cake or whatever Mom had to send.

RA: Did you have desks or tables?

CS: Oh yeah. Yeah, we had big long rows of desks. Had a little seat and then your desk in front of you all hooked together. And usually they had each grade in one of them rows. That way the teacher could come back there and set there and have...hear your class while you was just settin' in your desk.

RA: I know when I would substitute and substitute teacher and everything it's just pretty hard to control those kids so what'd the teacher do to control you guys?

CS: Knocked the devil out of us.

RA: Did they?
CS: Oh yeah. Yeah, they'd whip ya them days.
RA: Yeah. Were the...were the older kids awnrier than the little ones?
CS: I guess they probably was. Some of them little ones just kind of awnry, too. I was one of 'em. We had a teacher keep us in one night, me and Zach Pew, kept us in there 'til nine o'clock at night and whipped us four times.
RA: Wow! [laughs] What'd you do? Do you remember to get that punishment?
CS: Yeah. What happened she was back there a hearin' a class like right across from me and had her arm up like that and I kept lookin' at her watch and it was stopped. So I held up my hand and told her her watch was stopped. She told me I had enough to do, to get my lesson not to worry about that watch. That was before the last recess. So us boys we decided recess when four o'clock come...you stayed in there 'til four o'clock some days. One of them kids had a watch and we was gonna get up and walk out. We started to and she met us at the door with her poker...or her pointer and made us sit down. So she said we had to set there 'til we studied. Me and old Zach set there 'til nine o'clock and we never did study. Man my dad was mad! He was on the school board, too. I met my brother comin' down a lookin' for me. It was in the wintertime with snow on and I had to walk three miles. Met him a comin' down lookin' for me. Dad, he was as mad as the devil. Could see he would be.
RA: Yeah.
CS: Anyway, he went down there the next day and he told that teacher if she couldn't handle me he would, but he didn't want her keepin' me in there that late anymore.
RA: So that was ridiculous keeping you in there that long all night. Looks like she would be wantin' to get home, too.
CS: Yeah. Bird Oliver she stayed at their place about a half a mile above there. We didn't have no lights. So he come down there with a gas lantern for us and he give us a little extra... Yeah, we had it comin'.
RA: Yeah. What did you guys write on?
CS: Write on?
RA: Yeah.
CS: We had tablets and of course they had the blackboard.
RA: Was it...were the schools heated with a wood stove?
CS: Oh yeah. Yeah it had a great big old stove. It had a big shield around it. Just a big, old, pot-bellied, wood stove in the middle of it.
RA: I wish I had some of the books you guys had that you read out of. And did you study...what...did you study just kind of the basic things, math and reading...?
CS: Reading and writing and math about all we... Geography.
RA: When you went out to play at recess what kind of stuff was there in the playground to play on?
CS: Very little. They just get out there and play games. We played a lot of ball in the summertime and stuff like that.
RA: Baseball?
CS: Yeah.
RA: What other kind of games did you guys play?

CS: Oh, just them little foolish games kids used to play. Ring Around the Rosie and...I can't think of all of 'em.

RA: You know nowadays the kids...one of the things the teachers have problems with is kids bringing toys to school, but I don't think you had very many toys back then. What were your toys like?

CS: We didn't have many. We didn't take 'em to school.

RA: Yeah, 'cause you didn't have any probably.

CS: No. If we got one toy for Christmas we was happy as we could be. And now they get a dozens of 'em.

RA: What was your Christmases like? Do you remember any Christmas in particular?

CS: It was just Christmas, that's all. They'd have a big feed and have a little Christmas tree with a few presents on it. That was about it.

RA: So you did have Christmas trees?

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: And do you remember any of the decorations? Were they store bought?

CS: Used to make 'em out of popcorn and string it and I don't know what all. We used to have a programs at school for winter...for Christmas. And they had some pretty good ones. One year [cough] darn it...this school teacher she was goin' with a guy and her name was Bonita and his name was Charles. Old Zach Pew and Emery Oliver they was two of the awnriest ones we had. Anyway, they was puttin' on a little show there that was...I think old Zach he was proposin' to Emery. He was dressed like a girl. And the night of that play they used that schoolteacher's name and his name.

RA: Oh boy!

CS: "Oh, Bonita, do you love me?" She says, "Yes, Charles." And man I'll tell you the house just went wild.

RA: Oh, I bet! [laughs]

CS: Poor old Bonita I'll tell ya she...

RA: She probably turned beet red.

CS: Oh yeah.

RA: Do you remember her last name?

CS: Peter.

RA: Bonita Peter?

CS: Yeah.

RA: So the little plays and shows you put on were they [phone ring] about Christmas and...?

CS: Some of 'em were. Some of 'em were... [phone conversation] That was my granddaughter. She said this was Grandfather's Day...or Grandparents' Day or somethin'.

RA: Huh. I've never heard of that one.

CS: Told her it was the first one I knew of.

RA: [tape interruption] ...about Christmas. And they used to for a while...when my kids were little they put on a play about the birth of Christ and...because that's what Christmas is all about...and now they won't let 'em do that. But what...?

CS: Yeah. We did some of that. Other things we just...plays that didn't have anything to do with Christmas.

RA: And I suppose that was a chance for everybody...the parents would come and... Did you have anything to eat? Did people bring things to eat?

CS: They'd give away popcorn balls and stuff like that was about all. There at school.

RA: I remember my mom sayin' that they gave, I think it was oranges or something. That was the biggest thing.

CS: Yeah. It seems to me like there was some oranges and stuff, too.

RA: [tape interruption] ...because he asked me what team pinning was. And I thought I knew, but when I tried to explain it to him I didn't know what it was. So what is it?

CS: There's three of ya in each group. And they've got thirty head of steers or calves, whatever they got, penned up in the far end of the arena. And down at the lower end there's just a little pen about the size of this room and that's where you start from. You take off in a dead run up through the arena and you get up there. Those steers are all numbered. It'd be three of 'em with one, three of 'em with two and so on. And just for you get to 'em they holler a number and you got to go in there and cut them three steers out and put 'em in that pen down there quicker than anybody else. And you've only got two seconds...or two minutes to do it in. If you'd go over two minutes you're done. So it's fast.

RA: Well, yeah. See, I didn't think. I thought it was where somebody jumps off their horse and ties up a calf.

CS: No.

RA: See, I didn't even know what team pinning was.

CS: No.

RA: I'll glad you told me.

CS: You just...you go in there and cut them out. And sometimes their kind of hard to find when there thirty of 'em. You know, you go in there... And you need a good horse because he get...bring 'em down there in a hurry.

RA: That's neat. I bet that was fun.

CS: Oh yeah. I hated to give it up and I got so I couldn't even get on my horse.

RA: Okay. [tape stopped]