

Mildred Van Blockland

5/27/04, T1, S1

CS: ...with Mildred Van Blockland and interviewed by Carol Summers. We're gonna start and... Mildred, when were you born?

MV: April 5, 1909.

CS: Wow. You've seen a lot of changes haven't ya?

MV: Quite a few.

CS: What's your full name?

MV: Mildred Catherine Spencer Van Blockland.

CS: How did... How long have your fa...your folks been in this valley?

MV: Gosh, I don't... They came... My grandparents came in 1862.

CS: How did they travel then?

MV: By wagon train with oxen.

CS: How many were in their family at that time?

MV: There was just three, just my...my grandmother and grandfather and their small son.

CS: And their name was?

MV: Gekeler.

CS: First name?

MV: George and Catherine Gekeler.

CS: Remember them saying what...what it was like on the train? When they first got to the valley?

MV: I remember they...them saying the valley was covered with tall grass as far as the eye could see. I think they came in September. And they didn't really plan to stop here. They intended to go on to the Willamette Valley, but it was...they were out of food and so they decided to stop for the winter.

CS: I wonder if any others stopped that helped settle the valley at that time. Do you remember?

MV: I think there was, but I don't know it. There were several, I think. I think... I don't know whether any of the train went on. I think they all... I don't know how big a train it was, though, either.

CS: They might've spent the winter, you think?

MV: Yes. I think so.

CS: Was there a town here at that time?

MV: Oh no. I don't think a town. There were some settlers, though, of course, up in what they call Old Town there.

CS: So where did they settle then?

MV: Just on the... Where Gekeler Lane is now.

CS: Okay. So there through Gekeler Lane and on across the Highway 30 on where Gekeler Lane goes clear through? All that area?

MV: I think so. I think that... I think they built a cabin... I think... Probably that winter they lived in a...probably just a make-shift tent. But I think in the spring they built a cabin then, I think.

CS: Your parents, then, were...your mother or your father was from...was a Gekeler?

MV: Mother.

CS: So tell me more about the Gekeler family that...when they build here. I mean how many...how many...

MV: I think this is down. [laugh]

CS: How many brothers and sisters did she...they have eventually?

MV: Turn it off. I'm not gonna do it. [tape paused] You know, that little...where you had the \_\_\_, you know, where you got everything now. Of course that...when we...upstairs, you know, it was just little, so, of course there were just two bedrooms for all of us. And so all of us kids were in that one bedroom, you know. But we had two big double beds and of course I... What I remember... And of course, the funny thing, I was eight years old and, gosh, an eight-year-old now knows everything about people, you know, where babies come from, you know, what kids now know. But anyway, when Bob was born, see, and they just moved up there... He was born... Bob was born in that house. You knew that, I bet.

CS: Yeah.

MV: And right in the bedroom where you guys are now. And we were in this other room. And so I...it was at night and I heard a lot of noises out there and Mother was a-groanin' or a screamin' or something, you know. And, gosh, I was scared! [laughs] I thought, "My gosh." I put my head under the covers and I think pretty soon Dad came in and - maybe I was yellin' or somethin', I don't know about that, I don't know why he came in - and so anyway, he said, "You go back to sleep. Everythign's alright." And so I tried to and I guess it must've quieted down. But in the morning then I found out, see, that Dr. Richard - or whoever it was, I don't think it was Dr. Richard - came and Bob had been born. And of course then they told kids that the doctor came...had a little black bag and had the baby with them...[laughs] I can't... Wasn't that the dumbest! I can't understand what people back then...people told lies.

CS: Did they not have a hospital then? Or did it cost too much?

MV: Yeah, there was... I think there was a hospital, but I guess... I don't know. Probably cost too much. But I don't know how it could, but I don't know. Whether maybe Mother just wanted it, I don't know.

CS: Home birthing was pretty...

MV: Pretty...yeah...

CS: ...common, I would guess.

MV: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CS: Then what did you do when you...when you played? You had that big yard and what'd you do for games and that sort of thing?

MV: Over there?

CS: Mm-hmm.

MV: Gosh. We did... I don't know.

CS: What kind of chores did you have?

MV: Have a what?

CS: Chores.

MV: Oh, chores.

CS: I mean, it was a farm. What did you have on the farm?

MV: When we first started... We didn't have a farm when we first got up there. It was just a place to live. We didn't have...

CS: Just a house?

MV: Yeah, to get us out of Grandma's way, you know. We were just runnin' her crazy, must've.

CS: Across the way in the old Gekeler place.

MV: Yeah.

CS: Grandma was the youngest, you said.

MV: Yeah. I told you that about how she'd given us acreage and all to...probably an acre was a big thing, or maybe half and acre, to buy...to build a house because we were just runnin' her crazy. That's how that happened...how they happened to do that.

CS: So then your dad was... What did he do to make a living, then?

MV: He was a carpenter, always been a carpenter.

CS: Was that... Was there a lot of apple trees? Did he do anything with the apple trees?

MV: There wasn't any... There wasn't any. It was just nothing there for a lot... We didn't have... He started... I can remember he started to plant, but there wasn't hardly any apples. There was little apple trees, but, you know, because I was... Well, yeah... But he didn't... He didn't... He had a garden all the time. He raised a garden. And then I think he did start to get a cow or two for the milk and he raised some chickens.

CS: So he built the barn and the house and the chicken house and built all these buildings?

MV: Yeah, but that barn, you see, wasn't built until...when... '26. For a long time there wasn't anything there. He probably didn't have any money. I don't think that, you know, he didn't have steady work because it was his job that he was doin'.

CS: What did the Gekelers do for a living? Did they... George Gekeler?

MV: They farmed.

CS: They were farms.

MV: Yeah. That's what. They had farms.

CS: What did they raise, then?

MV: Just like wheat and grain.

CS: Did they have animals?

MV: Yeah. Dad after he got started then he got a cow or two and some chickens. But it's a very, you know, slow to start because I'm sure he didn't have any money. We were just... We really were poor.

CS: Now, you mentioned the music thing. What did he do? He had his brother. He was...and they'd play dances. Tell me about that.

MV: Yeah. They were... They had... Yeah, he'd... Oh, he loved the violin!

CS: Did his parents play? Were they musicians?

MV: Not that I know of. Of course I didn't know his dad. I think he died. People died young a long time ago. I don't... Mother... I don't think... I don't know where they got...

CS: Where that music came from.

MV: I don't know. Probably their...maybe his dad because I don't know him.

CS: But he had brothers. How many brothers?

MV: Five. I guess there were five altogether.

CS: And they all played?

MV: They had a banjo, a mandolin and... I don't... Just old-time music, you know, dances at the...

CS: Then where did they play?

MV: Oh, just around for people. 'Cause they met... People met at people's homes. They'd put the rugs out – usually had these throw rugs – and they'd dance in people's homes.

CS: In people's homes?

MV: Uh-huh.

CS: Would any organizations have dances too, then?

MV: I don't... They probably did, but I don't know about 'em. Because we were just... I think you'd call us backwoodsey. [laughs]

CS: Now in those hard winters what did you do, for instance, in the evenings? I mean you had...

MV: Of course I read a lot, but we didn't have electricity, had just old lamps, you know. I don't know when electricity came. We had oil lamps. But we went to bed early.

CS: Where did you go to... Tell me about the school where you went to school.

MV: Liberty, you know.

CS: Which is... Where was that now?

MV: It was out by Blue Mountain Grange.

CS: And that's the one on McAlister and Gekeler?

MV: Yeah.

CS: How many rooms was there?

MV: It was... Rooms? Just one room. All eight grades in one room.

CS: When did they start school? In the fall and get out in the spring? Do you remember?

MV: When? Oh, they started us regular like ever, September. We went to school a whole year.

CS: So you just walked down Gekeler Lane to school?

MV: Mm-hmm. Usually in all our big snow drifts 'cause there wasn't...most...when we had more snow, of course, you just walked on the snow drift 'cause there wasn't any road there if the roads were...if it snowed.

CS: 'Cause nobody plowed roads at that time at all then?

MV: No.

CS: Would people park quite a ways away or how did they get to their house?

MV: In fact, that road was closed, you see, in '32 when we were married. The highway was through there, but they didn't...it wasn't in the city or anything so nobody plowed out that road. So we kept our...the car over across where the McCalls lived, you know. We'd walk over there and go and take the highway, 'cause the highway was there. There wasn't any way to get on the highway when that road across, you know, Gekeler Lane was...they never plowed that out so it was drifted and, of course, they had a lot of snow.

CS: Of course you probably...you didn't run to the grocery store because there probably weren't any. Or were there? Markets or did you grow your own?

MV: Oh no, there were markets. Not big chain markets, but yeah, they had...

CS: Now how did they put up there gardens to preserve that?

MV: How they what?

CS: Preserve their gardens? They'd do a lot of canning?

MV: Oh, a lot of canning.

CS: Or dry.

MV: Or dry. Dry, too.

CS: Was this outdoor dry? How did they dry?

MV: They had stands and string where they'd put...gosh, and the flies would get...[laugh] It isn't a pretty picture. We dried apples and corn, I remember. A lot of apples, they dried apples. It was... They were kind of good.

CS: So the rest of it were basically canned in jars and so forth?

MV: Yeah. They'd raise a garden and can beans. And of course they'd... They'd raise their own... They'd have hogs. Remember they had... Kill a lot of hogs and have...remember you go out to the \_\_\_, you know.

CS: Did the family gather together when they'd do the butchering, or everybody kind of do their own?

MV: Everybody kind of did their own. But...[tape interruption]...probably did have a great big vat that we did the lard soap. Sometimes people would bring their things over to their house to do it because we had... Gosh, I don't know where they got that big large thing. It was huge.

CS: To cook...to render the lard in?

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: There must've... There was a big family there on that side and tehn those girls, your aunts, married within the valley and stayed here pretty much. So do they have big family get-togethers then?

MV: Yeah.

CS: What kind of games did the kids play? There had to be a bunch of kids.

MV: I don't know. They just played among themselves. There wasn't any supervisors. [laughs] Problaby fought a lot, probably.

CS: When did you start taking piano? How old were you?

MV: I was ten years old.

CS: [tape interruption]...played music all those years, or he just did that for a while?

MV: You mean in that group?

CS: Mm-hmm.

MV: There was some plan, I think, then... Of course some of 'em got married and kind of moved away...moved not close. He still did it...gosh, I can't remember...just while I was in grade school, I think.

CS: What did they call themselves?

MV: They called 'em the Spencer Boys.

CS: The Spencer Boys. [laugh] I wonder if they ever took any pictures of 'em. I've never seen any.

MV: Gosh, I think... With their group, you mean?

CS: Mm-hmm.

MV: I don't... I don't know. There may have been some. Laureen might...might... - I don't know if she's still alive or not – but she might...she might know more about that than I do.

CS: I'm just curious 'cause the kids get out and play now and I just wondered what they...how they made up their games, did they play tag, or what?

MV: Oh yeah, they... But they...they played...they had...didn't have, you know...they had...I think they made kind of their own toys a lot, you know. And they had, well you know some of the... They had some old-fashioned toys, you know, like you saw around some that Bob had, you know. [tape interruption] ...cars certainly, some shape or another. [tape interruption] A livery stable. 'Cause people still had...

CS: Had horses then.

MV: Had horses, yeah. And so there on the...where the Goss' garage is down there there was a livery stable there. In fact, when I...first year or two...maybe, I think, yeah, I'm sure the first year...I would walk up to the corner and go to school Grandma would start in a horse and buggy. That's the way I went to school the first year in high school. And so I'd walk up to here and get in the little buggy of her's – she had a one-horse buggy – and then we would leave it at the livery stable and then walk up to the high school.

CS: So when did they get their first car? Do you remember their first car? Or truck?

MV: Yeah, I remember. It was a Ford. I remember it had no glass in it, you know, side curtains with little \_\_\_ glass windows that you could see through.

CS: Now was that... Was there a dealership here then?

MV: I think so. Yeah, there was. I probably... I remember there was a Piggly-Wiggly's grocery store that we went to. I never went to a grocery store and my mother made all my clothes and...but we sure bought shoes. I'm sure we had a shoe store someplace.

CS: I think maybe it was a general type store, maybe.

MV: Yeah, I think it was. But probably... It's probably in the history someplace in La Grande that probably tells about it.

CS: But La Grande was the place that you really grew up in and shopped in and that was the connection to La Grande.

MV: Oh yeah.

CS: I wonder how many doctors there were here at that time?

MV: I don't know. I think there was a Dr. Moliter that I remember.

CS: Were there any that wasn't... Did they have \_\_\_, anything like that here?

MV: Yeah, but I don't know how... I don't know...

CS: You mentioned dances, I was looking for any other kind of thing you would do for entertainment other than get together and...

MV: I can't remember when a...gosh, I don't remember...[tape interruption]...a theater. I think it was up there up at the other end of town.

CS: How about restaurants?

MV: Gosh, I don't know. There were restaurants, I know, but we never...we have never...I've never gone...I'd never went to a restaurant for...I must've been practically grown. I'm sure there were restaurants, but we just didn't...couldn't

afford it probably in the first place and just nobody did it. We were... I'm sure... we were backwoodsy, there isn't any question about it.

CS: So tell me about the music. You said you started when you were about eight.

MV: No, ten.

CS: Ten. Who'd you start with?

MV: Gladys Miller. She was the church organist so there...so there was...

CS: What church was that?

MV: I think Presbyterian church was built back then. It's kind of pretty old, I think, don't you?

CS: So you started taking lessons from her. At the church, or at her home, or did she have a studio?

MV: It was her home. She lived up on...up on...I'd walk to there, too. It was on...go straight up on the hill there. She lived up on the hill there where B Avenue now or C or someplace. Maybe that old house is still there, I don't know. But I only took from her for a year because she left to go back to study, Chicago or someplace. And so then...she and Lillian Wells were friends, I think, so she called up and...she wanted...she told me Gladys Miller had told her, you know, that I... I probably did okay [laugh] because she was so insistent that I keep on.

CS: So how long...was that when you were in school then?

MV: That was ten. That was ten when I started and then it was about eleven then when I started with Lillian, I think. Then I took... Then I took, you see, from her up until...

CS: How many students did Lillian Wells have then, do you think?

MV: Oh, she had a lot.

CS: She would be the only teacher in town.

MV: No, but that was \_\_\_ who went there too. She had a lot of students because people just...they still did that. People had pianos and...

CS: Then when did you start teaching yourself?

MV: That was in 1928, the year after I... I graduated in '27 and in '28 I started to teach.

CS: Were you still living at home then?

MV: Uh-huh. Drove Dad's car.

CS: You drove to all your students? Nobody came there?

MV: No, no.

CS: So how did you drum up business?

MV: I don't know. [laugh] I do know kind of because it was...it would start...people...it was startin' to get bad, you know, so...

CS: Economically.

MV: Yeah. And so some of the students that couldn't afford the other teachers would come to me 'cause I'm, you know, cheap, fifty cents a lesson or less, I can't remember. So that's... So then after I got started, of course...

CS: Now did you just do it primarily in La Grande and area or did you go other places?

MV: No, I went to Imbler, had one there at Imbler that...

CS: So you had several one day at Imbler and you'd have several lessons each day?

MV: Yeah.

CS: Where else would you go?  
MV: I guess just around here, I think. I don't think I went any other than Imbler.  
CS: Then you got married later on?  
MV: Yeah. I got married...that was what, in...did I say in '28 and then, you see, I got married... I was savin' up... See, I wanted to go to school. Of course I did buy the guy, I think, but of course Dad let me use his car. I was at about \$800, see. That was a lot of money 'cause you could go to school for a \$1000 that would pay for everything. So I was just lackin' about \$200, you see, so I could go...I wanted to the University of Oregon because I wanted a music department. There wasn't any music up here. See, in '29 the college...this college started, but it was just purely a normal...just for teachers, it was normal school. So I didn't want to just teach school, I wanted some music. There wasn't any music there at all. So that's why I didn't go there. So I tried to save my money.  
CS: That was a lot of fifty cent lessons for \$800. [laughs]  
MV: I had a lot of students.  
CS: So what happened then?  
MV: The bank closed. The money was gone.  
CS: That must've just devastated you.  
MV: And everything was like that. People, you know, now... You can see why it's called a Great Depression.  
CS: What else happened? I mean the bank closed, what else happened?  
MV: Just everything stopped. Milo was workin' for the railroad then and they had transferred him to Portland. I think he worked up here for a while till they lost the job. And of course there wasn't any... it wasn't like now, you know, they didn't get money for...  
CS: And so the mill wasn't here then?  
MV: No. There was a mill, an old...  
CS: At Starkey?  
MV: No. There was an old mill there, but it wasn't Boise Cascade. It was just a little mill. Palmer Mill, I think, or somethin' like that. So... And they... Milo lived in the Pierce house \_\_\_ for a while and he sold filler brushes. Everybody did everything they could think of to earn a living, you know. I don't think he was very successful with that either 'cause Filler brushes were always kind of expensive.  
CS: So what did you do after that then?  
MV: After what?  
CS: You lost the money and couldn't go to school?  
MV: Got married. [laughs] Yeah, that's the truth. You know, it was... I just thought, gosh...  
CS: Did you ever think you'd marry a farmer?  
MV: No, I didn't. I thought I would be lucky to marry anybody. [laughs] I was real... As I told you before, we were backwoods, Carol. I was just shy and, you know... And of course I met Pop in church. I guess I told you that. That's where I met him. He was playin' a clarinet in an orchestra, a little orchestra they had in church there. It wasn't that, it was an old building that they...  
CS: Was this the Prebysterian church again?

MV: No. It was the First Christian. I don't know how he... I think it's because he loved music, too, and they had this little orch...somebody invited him to go to that orchestra. Otherwise he wouldn't... 'Cause he was a...they were strong Methodist, you know. And he didn't like to go to church, but his mother made him, of course, anyway. But he did... And it was evening that they had...that's when they had church, I don't know, kind of where they had us sing in the evening. So that's where I met him.

CS: How long did you go together before you got married?

MV: Not very long. Probably a year, maybe a little over a year maybe.

CS: So were you married here?

MV: [tape interruption] ...it was...gosh...I don't know...we had a little old...had an awful old pickup, you know. We used to have pictures of it someplace. It was just a little old truck is what it was. It was awful, but that's what we...that's all the car we had for a long time was that little old pickup. And after we got married then I drove that little pickup to teach in.

CS: So where did you live then?

MV: Here. Upstairs for a month.

CS: And were you planning to build or just gonna stay here? What were your plans?

MV: We just had a little apartment upstairs 'cause, gosh, nobody had any money, Carol. There was absolutely no money, you know.

CS: What were they raising on this farm then?

MV: Mostly wheat and barley and they had cows, milk cows and had pigs and they had sheep. [tape interruption] They did have an old Caterpillar tractor that was old and they did part of the work in that then after, but they still used horses a lot. For hay...they'd raise hay and have hay in the barn out there, you know, where...

CS: You mentioned sometime about bringing some special bulls in the valley.

MV: What?

CS: Bulls.

MV: Oh, that's what the Van Blockland – they called it Blockland Brothers then, Andrew and \_\_\_\_ . Yeah, they had real high price Hereford cattle. And he would go...[end tape]

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CS: So how many acres did they have, do you think, roughly?

MV: Oh, I don't know, a lot though. It was a lot.

CS: [tape interruption]...you were here and then \_\_ did his \_\_ [tape interruption]

MV: See, that's the... We were married in February and he died in December. I had... We had a terrible year. We got... We probably shouldn't have got married in the first place...you're not tapin' this, are ya?

CS: Uh-uh.

MV: Now, of course, it's so different, but, gosh, especially me, of course, I mean people live together now, they don't have to get married. Of course that's...I think that's nice, in a way. It was so strict then, before, you know. Pop would get...he was gettin' older, you know, so he was anxious to get married. And then, of course, I was so shy and I was...in fact, there's a thing...an old sayin' that I

wrote up and it was...I thought I'd be an old...I didn't think I'd ever get married or have kids or anything.

CS: \_\_\_ [tape interruption]

MV: No. And so it was kind of sad. And so when Pop...he was cute as a \_\_\_ there, you know, when he was little. Drank a little too much, but he was. So I was so flattered that he had...[laugh]...had asked me. Do you see why? And so I thought, gosh, I want to get married, we'd better, better do it. I wasn't old, but I was twenty-two, I think, which is kind of old then, you know, because a lot of people got married younger, eighteen or so. And so we didn't have any money, of course, so we stick...I told you about that chair and davenport we bought, you know, that little old chair...or stove that we had up there. See, here's the thing, we had a stove up there and Dad made those cupboard, you know, that I showed you that you took over there now, for our dishes. Oh, people gave me...they have showers, I got a lot of nice things in the shower. And so, gee, it was nice up there. We'd cook...I wasn't very good at cookin' anyway, but I was learnin' to cook. Then...see, that was in February and then in March Grandmama got sick. And we thought, well, just the flu. She really...she didn't...gosh, it got worse and worse. They finally got a doctor and found out she had typhoid fever. They quarantined them, of course. They didn't take her to the hospital then either. People just...was kind of strange. When it... There was a hospital here. We didn't have money, I guess. Anyway, there was a nurse came out. She had Dr...I forget what his name is. So they had a nurse come out and take care of her. She was...it's a wonder she didn't die.

CS: Did she live here?

MV: Yeah.

CS: 'Cause she was quarantined.

MV: Yes. And so...remember the nurse, she was the biggest snorer. We could hear her the whole house. [laugh] But anyway, then I moved down here...we didn't move down, but then I had to...I started to cook...and Mother had, gosh, she didn't really teach me to cook or I didn't want to learn or something. So I had to cook for the nurse, she ate there too, and cook for Dad and of course Grandmama couldn't eat. They were just givin' her liquids or somethin'. She was really bad. She had, you know, twenty-four hour nursing. That was terrible. I just remember how...and Porter's dad he wanted a pie. I'd never made a pie in my life. [laughs] He laughed at me tryin' to roll out that pie crust. So then, you see, it was bad then, but I'm sure that they knew they were losin' the place, see. And then in December that same year he died. He was out takin' care of stock or something and it was colder, or my gosh, it was cold, one of those real cold Decembers. We used to have a big stove there and he came in and sat down by the stair and stove. I was teachin' 'cause I lessons in the morning, too. We were living on what I made and the fifty cents a lesson or whatever it was. So would go in the morning before school and then after school.

CS: So he was just sat by the...

MV: I didn't know about it until I come home there and found...people there, you know. [tape interruptions] On account of Grandmama otherway they would've lost everything.

CS: Garrett was one, Andrew was the other. What happened to him?

MV: They lost his place, too. I think they had a little place over to Island City they moved to.

CS: So then you've been...[tape interruption]

MV: ...didn't have hardly any equipment. [tape interruption] When they...you see, when they had grain they would hire...they had threshin' machines that go around and do...threshing crews that go around. So he didn't own too much. He had an old plow, you know, and some things he did by hand, you know. Nothing...no expensive equipment.

CS: So they didn't have the equipment that they needed to have. It was all pretty much... \_\_\_ that would come around in crews, then.

MV: Yeah.

CS: They did mow their hay, you know, with their old-fashioned mower, you know, and a rake.

MV: This was all horse power pretty much?

CS: Yeah. A lot of horses. They'd shock it and stack it, you know, in a big stack that had...they used to have a derrick. I don't know if you remember the derricks?

MV: I do.

CS: Now what did they do when they got these crews around? Like if they were here for several days did they take care...[tape interruption]...free? Or would you have to...even over here would you have to cook for them?

MV: Yeah. Feed 'em.

CS: And how many meals?

MV: I think there was just one meal that was just in the... I don't think...

CS: Were they local? Did they camp here sort of thing at the end of the day?

MV: Yeah, I think so. I think they had wagons, a thing that they kind of... I think I kind of saw...[tape interruption]...that they...I remember over there that I'd use to go out and...[tape interruption]

CS: ...really just camped where they...

MV: Yeah, sort of camped.

CS: Crew that would just go around and camp during harvesting season.

MV: They usually... Everybody sort of fed 'em...had dinner, one big meal a day, at noon probably.

CS: How many days would it take to thresh...[tape interruption]...wouldn't you, quite a bit?

MV: \_\_\_ Not then because it was right after that they lost it.

CS: So they were just kind of subsisting at that point then on, what, a garden and what was in the smokehouse and that sort of thing?

MV: You mean after they lost the...?

CS: Mm-hmm.

MV: Oh yeah.

CS: While Grandma was still sick.

MV: Oh yeah. They still had the cattle and milked cows and had chickens. Back then, you know, people lived on a farm they had...they just...they didn't buy an awful lot of stuff. Always made bread and had their own meat, you see, and milk and everything. You didn't go to the store very often.

CS: That's really changed. [laughs] That's completely...completely changed. And also the equipment that farmers have to have just to do their thing.

MV: Oh yeah. And that... And of course if they...if they \_\_\_ they'd probably still be farming up there if they didn't have all the expensive equipment.

CS: You're right. A lot of the family farms would still be family farms.

MV: Yeah. And now pretty soon there won't be any family farms in this area. [tape interruption]...sittin' there he said, "I can see..." Of course Pop said...he kept sayin' that it wouldn't...that this valley would be farmed by big corporation and some of it has. Curt said, "I used to think Pop didn't know what he was talkin' about." Curt...there's one big...and then some of the others...he said...I forget what the...I remember that it used to be...they had a lot of...and they've gone broke, too. You know, you have to really know what you're doin' now. He said that...I forget what they call it. I remember the name of 'em, but I can't remember now. But he said that they're...they're sellin' out a lot of their stuff, too.

CS: [tape interruption]...ever have a horse?

MV: I have a horse over there.

CS: When you were a kid?

MV: A horse over there. [tape interruption] ...you have to be kind of...I'm not...wasn't a horsewoman, that's for sure.

CS: You've done the music. Was there anytime that you did not teach? When you were married...[tape interruption]

MV: Uh-uh. I've quit when I was pregnant with \_\_\_ I quit. That was in '38. I taught a good ten years, '28 to '38.

CS: Okay.

MV: And then...so I quit when you were a baby. We were...it was startin'...you see, in '38 things were startin' to get better. Gosh, we got a pretty good price for wheat then. Yeah, I didn't have to teach anymore then. It was ten years, you see. I didn't miss it at all. [laugh]

CS: \_\_\_ keep you busy, then.

MV: I wasn't as crazy about it. I often think...I used to laugh at Mrs. Reynolds, she loved to teach, you know, \_\_\_. And I thought, my gosh, how in the world can she do that! But I look back now and I think, my gosh, it's an addiction. It really is an addiction, I think, because, you see, she got...she had...I think it was a form of Lou Gehrigs disease that she had because she began...she got \_\_\_ fingers first, you know, and she couldn't fasten a thing. But she would... They lived up there in that house and she would have that bed made up she taught while she was in bed.

CS: You're still standing up teaching. [laughs] Or sitting down. So now when did you go back to teaching?

MV: This is interesting because Florence Miller, you know, Marsha...you know...Florence...well, she called. She was a good friend of Mrs. Reynolds. They were...you know. And so...and she was...she went to University of Washington, Florence did, graduated, I think, because she taught...she taught voice, you know, and violin. She was a good violinist. She called one day and she said, "I was thinking maybe you...wouldn't you like to study piano again?" She had gone \_\_\_ and stuff \_\_\_ I gave a lot of those out.

CS: Oh you did?

MV: Yeah. When I was a...at the Sac and up at...you know they had the La Grande Hotel up there where Safeway was. In fact, I don't remember if I told you...

CS: No, you never told me about your recital.

MV: ...public recital and it \_\_ La Grande Hotel. I always remember this because [laugh] there was a woman there, she taught...she was a ballet teacher, I think, but she traveled around. And so she didn't have anything to do \_\_\_ or somebody sang or played the violin or something. So she went to that recital and after...she came to me afterward and she said, "have you ever thought of leaving here and study someplace." And I said, "well, no." [laugh] In fact, I think she gave me her card \_\_ little thing. And she said, "I think maybe you have possibilities that maybe..." and she was from Portland, I think, or Seattle or someplace. So she gave me her card and she said, "if you decide that you want to get...go away from here, just give me a ring and I think we can get together." So I thought, gosh, that's...but I showed it to Mother and my gosh...[laugh]...she said... I was just sort of ready to pack and leave. I always thought that was funny. She said, "of course you're not going to a big city." [laugh] I forgot what I was talkin' about.

CS: You did several recitals in hotels and so forth, so you were well known as a pianist...

MV: Oh yeah.

CS: ...during that time then. So that's \_\_. So you were talking about Florence Miller had called you...

MV: Oh yeah. That's right.

CS: ...going back.

MV: So she said, she said, Lyle McMullin was...she had known him, see, from the music department there...she said that they're trying to get a music group started up here at school. She said, but they're short of money again, you know, like they usually are, but they said that if we could get enough people interested in piano for private lessons that they would hire Lyle McMullin. I said, well, maybe that would be kind of fun. I thought... I sort of liked the idea so I said...and besides, we were gettin' more money then, see, I could afford it. 'Cause I had...in fact, I think I bought that old secondhand piano. And so I said, yeah, I think that would... She said, "well, I'll call ya. I'll let you know. I think we can do something." And so then she called and said that in the fall it was...call it Normal School, maybe, I don't know then, but they were tryin' to get the music...a piano department. I think they had some choral things goin' by then, too.

CS: So how long did you study up there?

MV: That was in '58...'48 and...three years, I think, three and a half years. I forget how much. Three years, I think. [tape interruption] Yeah, so I studied, uh-huh. But then... So then Lyle...oh, I'd get, you know, he had college \_\_. In fact, that old pink dress up there that you looked at was one that I played in a recital at the school. And so then...I forget what...I think maybe I just...I don't know whether I got tired or somethin', but anyway, 'cause gosh, I was practicin' and then Curt was little, you know, too. I think I had problems with him, too. But Lyle suggested I teach. He said, "why don't you start...why don't you teach again?" So I did. In fact...

CS: So how did you get started teaching?  
MV: I don't know.  
CS: Did he help you?  
MV: He might've helped. I didn't have very many students at first, though. I think maybe he had sent somebody to me or something.  
CS: [tape interruption]...haven't had any other interruptions in teaching, you taught all those years.  
MV: I done that ten years. 'Cause I started then in, what, '59, '59 I guess it was, or '49? No...I'm all...no, no, I didn't teach while I took up there, but from '51 or '2.  
CS: And you've been teaching all...  
MV: Ever...[tape interruption]...  
CS: Did you always have it here? People came to your house? [tape interruption]  
MV: ...then I get \_\_\_ it. \_\_\_ again, see.  
CS: \_\_\_ ?  
MV: Starting to teach again. Gosh...[tape interruption]...Helen...Helen Hanson was teaching. Yeah.  
CS: But the population hasn't increased that much, has it?  
MV: No, but people didn't...they didn't study music as much as they do now. [tape interruption] ...they did, uh-huh. They had...last night...they had \_\_\_, you know...  
CS: But it wasn't school.  
MV: Oh no.  
CS: ...community events. Did they have community things for adults? A baseball team...for adults...community games?  
MV: I think they did 'cause Pop played softball, you know. Do you remember him playing?  
CS: No.  
MV: I was tryin' to think...[tape interruption]  
CS: ...back just a minute. What was it like during the Depression when everybody was scrapping? Was that the time when people would come by and stop and...[tape interruption]...would be families passing through or were they men...[tape interruption]  
MV: ...thing. People, of course people...they did...they called 'em tramps, you know, but they weren't really tramps. But there were people that go around and get food from people.  
CS: Were they just asking for it or were they asking to work for it?  
MV: Sometimes people would ask to work...  
CS: Sometimes they were just begging then?  
MV: Mm-hmm, just begging.  
CS: They were just sort of like living out of their car and would just go from here...one community to the other?  
MV: Most of the time they were walking.  
CS: Oh, they were walking.

MV: \_\_\_ had cars. [tape interruption] No, I don't. I think some of 'em were local, but I think...I think they would travel. You'd see people walk on the railroad tracks. I think they just, you know, went from place to place, I guess.

CS: Homeless people stealing or anything like that during that time? It's pretty close to the highway.

MV: Oh yeah. They stole all the time. See, they'd...they had this smokehouse back there, you know, they smoked...they'd come and steal your meat out of the smokehouse. [tape interruption] ...they didn't.

CS: Yeah.

MV: They'd try... Sometimes they'd even break locks, you know, but they never had...

CS: So what did you have in the smokehouse then?

MV: All the cured meat.

CS: Which would be like hams...

MV: Bacon and hams and shoulders.

CS: What did you do with the beef that you would butcher?

MV: We didn't have freezers. I think people did it as families sort of, you know, they'd share it, I think, so you'd eat it fresh. [tape interruption]...cold cellars that...those cellars were pretty cold.

CS: Would they have ice?

MV: Yeah, they would have...people would buy ice. They had old...not electric \_\_\_ they called it ice boxes. Do you remember what they were?

CS: They put...yeah, where they would put the meat and...

MV: Put the ice, uh-huh.

CS: Things there that they didn't want to lose. [tape interruption]...so close here. Have you had anybody stop by recently? I know they used to stop by and run out of gas?

MV: [tape interruption] \_\_\_ They don't stop too much anymore.

CS: Do you think cell phones have stopped that?

MV: It could've been. That could be.

CS: It seemed like people would stop in here all the time run out of gas. They've always done that, haven't they?

MV: Yeah. But I'll bet that way they would be.

CS: Tell about the gas can.

MV: The what?

CS: The gas can that you keep in the garage.

MV: Oh, that people... Yeah, they had...we have a gas...one time people tried to pack it off, you mean?

CS: Mm-hmm.

MV: That's the only time that I know that they ever did that.

CS: [tape interruption]...always kept it full, a gas can full, in the garage?

MV: Oh yeah. Certainly. So they packed it down off the highway.

CS: And then when would they bring it back? Or would they?

MV: Well, these people didn't, the one that stole... Most... That was a big gas can. \_\_\_ came in and taken that off. They really \_\_\_. But people... We'd have a gas tank, just a gallon gas can \_\_\_ all the time 'cause people would stop. And some of

it would fill it...bring it back full, but some of them wouldn't, they'd just take the whole thing.

CS: Most of 'em would bring it back, or...[tape interruption]

MV: ...bring it back, but not too many, no. Most of 'em would...and they'd fill it and bring it back. So they were really...evidently, they did...I don't know why they...because they thought they could make it over to Island City, I think, is why they did that and they just fell short.

CS: [tape interruption]...anything other than teach?

MV: Oh...

CS: You regret... I mean you talk about...you've gone back to school off and on and that, but do you have anything that you...[tape interruption]

MV: Not really.

CS: [tape interruption]...some.

MV: I wish I'd traveled more. Pop used to tell me, go ahead and just do it. I don't...he didn't want to travel, but he said, you can go anyplace you want to.

CS: With a group?

MV: People travel more, it seems.

CS: Were there groups early on that would go travel here and there and you could...?

MV: None... Of course... And I was even gone over there if it hadn't been for Donna Sands that's almost insistent that I do it.

CS: That was what? The Middle East? Where was that?

MV: That was... Yeah. It was... Yeah. We went to Jerusalem and Egypt and then we went over to...we were in Austria and Germany, too.

CS: How long was that trip?

MV: I think it was two weeks. So we didn't get too much, you know. Maybe seven... I don't know how long.

CS: What do you notice different about the kids when you first started teaching?

MV: Of course there's always some...but I haven't had too many kids that were, you know, not cooperative.

CS: So you really haven't noticed any change in kids from the early, let's say, the '30s and '40s and now? Trends, general trends? Or even with their parents?

MV: I haven't noticed a great...not a great...I wouldn't say a great change. [tape interruption]...now and they didn't, you know, they didn't used to do that. They had it...a long time ago everybody had a manure spreader and they'd go out...[laugh] And they raised... Now it's more expensive...

CS: I think it's almost a trend to go back to organic and I'm sure that would be the organic way of doing things.

MV: [tape interruption]...women.

CS: How does that affect people of how they live? They have more leisure time, obviously, but what else did that cause or help or whatever?

MV: Gosh...[tape interruption]

CS: ...are more cohesive then because they had to work and work together than they are now?

MV: [tape interruption] It was just more simple. You know, just was...just...people do more things and have more advantage. In fact, you used to...people did more simple things and...gosh... It used to be if people were divorced it was kind of an

oddity, I mean, there wasn't... Now, of course...I don't know what, fifty... what is it percent of people that...

CS: Five.

MV: And before, you know, people...but, gosh, I'm sure people were unhappy and maybe wished they could get a divorce, after all, human beings haven't changed that...actually human being hasn't changed that much. It's just...they're just so much more advantages now. Television, for instance, gosh...

CS: I guess what I'm asking, do you think that's a good thing for the family unit in a farming community like this or not?

MV: [tape interruption]...community.

CS: It would just...

MV: Different... It's just a bit... I think it's a different lifestyle. It was hard physically, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. [laugh]

CS: Just in thinking.

MV: Gosh, I think kids are smarter now 'cause they, you know, they have more advantages. It's bound to be, I think, a plus, I think.

CS: Do you take your driver's license \_\_ driving \_\_\_?

MV: Eight.

CS: Eight.

MV: [laugh] Like Curt says, "I want you to quit worrying about it because you have to think, you know, positive, or you're...[end tape]

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CS: ...get to school? What time did they start in the morning, for instance? And how did they get there?

MV: I think at the regular time, eight o'clock, and of course most people walked, some people rode their horses. \_\_ place there...a hitching post...a hitching post that they can tie their horses. But most...a lot of 'em walked, mostly walked, I think. We did, of course.

CS: What happened in the wintertime when you had some heavy snow?

MV: We walked over the snow drifts.

CS: Did they ever stop school early because of storms and send you home?

MV: If it was a blizzard, yes, in the day. If it was bad sometimes they let school out early so we could get home before dark. I think that's happened sometimes when we had bad storms.

CS: Was the school year pretty much like it is now, September through May?

MV: I think so, yes. I think it was about the same.

CS: Did they have ceremonies for moving from one grade to the next of any kind?

MV: Oh no. I don't remember of any. Of course the eighth grade of course we had to take a state exam, you know, to see if we learned enough, I guess.

CS: To go into high school?

MV: To go into high school, yes.

CS: What did they do for grading? Were there report cards?

MV: Oh yeah, they had report cards, uh-huh.

CS: They using \_\_ lettering like they do, or...?

MV: In that book I gave you my eighth grade report card was there. I saved it. I totally forgot what it was, but it's in that memory book that I gave you. I think they were similar grades...grades were similar.

CS: Now if there's one teacher for eight grades what was...if she was working with one group what were the other kids doing?

MV: Studying, usually.

CS: And were they being good or were they causing problems?

MV: Well...[laugh]...that depends.

CS: What kind of problems were they doing? What were they doing behind the teacher's back?

MV: I don't... I think most of 'em were writing or... I think she would give things for them to do, to read... We had lots... We had library books. I don't know where they came from, but we did have reading things that we could do, you know.

CS: Did you have pamphlets and pencils or did you have slates?

MV: We had...well, I think some people did have slates, but most of the time it was paper and pencil. But, yes, I'm sure...when I first started to school I think there were slates.

CS: How did they sharpen the writing implements? Did they break easily? What were they made of?

MV: I don't know what they... I don't know... I don't know what they were made of, but they were gray kind of gritty thing.

CS: Then how did you clean the slate?

MV: Oh yeah...oh, how'd you clean 'em? I don't remember that. I think we just probably... I don't know for sure.

CS: \_\_\_ or did they have rags or...

MV: I think they had rags. Of course no papers towels or like we do now.

CS: Did they have blackboards?

MV: Oh yes, blackboards and chalk, up in the front of the school, of course. That was, you know, that was the thing. She's write instructions and...down on the blackboard.

CS: So the hours were about the same. At lunchtime did you have a recess time morning and afternoon or just lunch?

MV: Yes. No, we had recesses and we'd go out and play...play Tag and Hide and Seek and, you know, old-fashioned games.

CS: Did you have any kind of equipment, swings or anything like that?

MV: Swings, we had swings. There might have been something for boys, I don't know. But I remember the...we liked to swing, of course.

CS: How about restrooms? Were they restrooms inside the school?

MV: Oh no. Oh no. Just old outhouses.

CS: Did they have one for girls and boys?

MV: One for each. They were separate, uh-huh.

CS: Did they have balls and did they play baseball or anything like that?

MV: They played baseball. I think they had...yeah. Mostly boys played that at that time, I think.

CS: What was your favorite subject?

MV: Probably reading.

CS: So what were the subjects? Just real basic things like reading and...?

MV: Oh yeah. It was reading and arithmetic. We had regular up into the, you know, the upper grades.

CS: Was there penmanship? Did you practice handwriting?

MV: Oh yes.

CS: Did you have a special book that you looked at, or were there...just the stuff from off the board?

MV: No, we had...I think we had...I think we had special books. I remember the illustration someplace so it must've been...

CS: Now did you have anything that went along with it like crafts or did you do plays or recitations or did you memorize poems, for instance? What kind of other things did you do?

MV: Oh yeah, we memorized poems. We'd have a Christmas program, probably, you know. It wasn't very elaborate, but we did.

CS: So that would consist of what maybe?

MV: What?

CS: In the Christmas what would that be of?

MV: Oh, just probably a pageant or something like, you know, not elaborate, but something...something to do.

CS: Did you have any music associated with that?

MV: I think we had a... I think we had an old organ that somebody would play maybe. I don't remember.

CS: The class would sing or the audience and everybody?

MV: Oh, everybody would, uh-huh. We'd sing. The community sang. Usually the parents would come.

CS: Now the clothes that the kids wore...for instance, today everybody has to change every day, or, you know, have several outfits. What would you wear? Would you wear the same thing more than once a week? Or was there one dress that you would wear all week? What did the kids wear?

MV: They wore anything, [laugh] I think. There wasn't anything to chose from and I'm sure that...yes, I know that kids usually when they came from school change their clothes so they could wear 'em the next day 'cause I don't think they had that many...that much...many to chose from so they had to...

CS: How many outfits would a girl have, for instance?

MV: ...going to school, seven or eight... How many?

CS: How many outfits would they have?

MV: Oh, gee, I don't know.

CS: Something maybe she'd wear to school \_\_\_ and something she'd change into after school and maybe she had more?

MV: No, I don't think so. They didn't many...many different clothes, I think.

CS: Were any of the store bought?

MV: Shoes probably, but...

CS: Oh, shoes.

MV: Well, I think the boys maybe had, you know...but the girls they wore homemade things, I think. And of course usually they didn't wear jeans, girls, then as much. We'd usually just wear...I think homemade dresses...

CS: What'd you wear to keep your legs warm?  
MV: We had long stockings. They were like...they were hot. Oh, it was awful!  
[laugh] And we had garters, you know, that would hold up the stockings and of course they were old, black, cotton stockings.  
CS: How far did they go up? Past your knees.  
MV: Just above...yeah, just up above the knee and the garter would fasten on, you see. And of course we didn't...the girls didn't wear short dresses. They wore quite a bit below the knee, the dresses were, you know.  
CS: Did they ever wear aprons over these dresses to keep them clean or not?  
MV: I don't think so.  
CS: When it was really bad weather outside what did you do at lunch time then, or recess time, when you couldn't go out?  
MV: We'd probably draw or color or do some, you know, thing.  
CS: Did you ever do any round dancing or anything like that? Or was there any room for that?  
MV: No. No, there wasn't any room for that.  
CS: Tell me about the heat. What kind of heat did they have?  
MV: This old woodstove, I think. It was pretty nice, though, especially when it was cold and we'd walk we'd be glad to have that big old woodstove to get warm.  
CS: Now where did you put your clothes...your outer clothes were wet or something where did you hang those? Did you have hooks or did you...?  
MV: Oh, we had hooks. There's a little room in the...you know, where you got into the room with hooks and everybody hung their clothes up and took their galoshes off or rubbers or whatever we had.  
CS: Kind of like a mudroom, then, in a way?  
MV: Uh-huh. It was right in the front, though.  
CS: Did you have little desks, or little tables and chairs, or what did you have to...?  
MV: Desks, uh-huh.  
CS: Desks, okay. Tell me about the teacher. How would the teacher \_\_, for instance? You mentioned it was a woman. Were they usually women?  
MV: Usually, I think, uh-huh. I don't remember...  
CS: Single?  
MV: What?  
CS: Single? Were they single women?  
MV: Depends. I think...no, I don't think all of 'em were \_\_ actually single. This one, I think I told you about, was a young, real young, probably her first school. The eighth grade boys, of course, were not young so this one particular woman I remember she would sit on a different desk and flirt with them.  
CS: On the desktop?  
MV: On the desktop, yes. I remember... I think that was my first year so I was sort of impressed and didn't learn anything. [laugh]  
CS: But the boys liked that. They liked all that attention?  
MV: Oh sure.  
CS: Walking and coming home from school were there any...oh, for instance, a concern with bullies? Did you have any picking on people or were they more

protective and getting along better, do you think, outside in the playground and to and from school?

MV: There were probably some. I don't remember a particular...you know, any problems, but there were just boys who \_\_\_\_.

CS: Now if you arrived home, let's say, and somebody'd been picking on you all the way home, would you tell your parents about it?

MV: Probably. I don't know.

CS: And what would they say about that?

MV: I don't know. They might... I don't know. They might complain. But I don't...I've never had anything...that experience, so I don't know.

CS: I was just wondering how involved parents were in the kids' education matters \_\_\_\_.

MV: Probably not too much. I think you were kind of on your own.

CS: And if you were sick and didn't go, you just...you didn't have to let anybody know, you just didn't go \_\_ pretty much or not?

MV: I think probably if they missed a day or so that nobody would've \_\_ longer I think maybe somebody would...

CS: Was it the teacher's responsibility maybe to contact that parents? What were some of the things the...I mean other than teaching, disciplining the kids and \_\_, you know. I mean who brought the wood in...in there for the stove? Did the big eighth grade boys do that?

MV: Usually, uh-huh.

CS: Who split the wood? Would parents take care of that?

MV: I don't know. I think it was split. Whoever...somebody would take care of that. But I remember the boys would usually have a big pile of wood in the back, you know, that they...

CS: Was there a sink or was there indoor water, you know, when you wash your hands?

MV: There was a pump outside.

CS: Outside.

MV: But you had a bucket of water and dipper that everybody drank...I think everybody drank out of that dipper. So it wasn't...[laugh]...I'm sure it wasn't very sanitary.

CS: Now if you wanted hot water, or water for \_\_ or whatever you had to bring it in and how'd you get that? In a bucket?

MV: I don't remember any hot water.

CS: Or even any water that you would need in there?

MV: \_\_\_\_ I don't think so.

CS: Or even just water to get...to clean brushes out or anything like that. Did you just bring it in?

MV: I think so.

CS: Tell me about pens. Did you have ink wells or anything at that school? Did you hear about ink wells?

MV: I don't think... I think... No, I don't think we had ink wells.

CS: They had that for upper grades, maybe, at the high school?

MV: No, I think we just had...

CS: You dip your pen in...

MV: Yeah.

CS: You had pencils and paper more then?

MV: Yeah. I don't think younger grades used ink hardly at all.

CS: Now most people...how did they eat lunch? Most people brought their own?

MV: Mm-hmm. Yeah, everybody had a lunch box.

CS: Did you ever treat them with anything?

MV: Ever what?

CS: Ever make something, a treat, for students or celebrate a birthday or anything like that in school?

MV: I don't remember of it. I don't... I don't know. I don't remember.

CS: It was pretty much down to business most of the time.

MV: Yes. A lot of... We didn't have time for much else, you know.

CS: Now would you work with other students when she was busy or have groups working separately if she was busy working with somebody else?

MV: I don't remember. You mean students helping each other?

CS: Yes. Working together.

MV: I don't remember.

CS: During that time...now that was probably during before the Depression.

MV: Oh yes.

CS: Way before Depression. So a lot of people were farming and didn't have a whole lot, but didn't expect a whole lot. Money...even before the Depression was money such an important thing as it seems to be today?

MV: Oh no.

CS: You mentioned you'd go to the store for food. What kind of food would you have to go out and purchase?

MV: I don't... You mean...

CS: Did you grind your own flour, for instance?

MV: Oh no. Maybe some did, we didn't.

CS: The flour came in flour sacks. Were those the printed kind?

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: And what did do you with those printed flour sacks when the flour was gone?

MV: Oh, we'd save 'em and use 'em for dish towels, other things. Some people'd use 'em for, you know, to sew things. Oh, nothing was wasted, no.

CS: It's different from today, nothing wasted. What, for instance, in the family life during that time, for instance birthday, what happened at birthdays for the kids? Or even the adults? Were those celebrated and made such a big deal? What... Where they acknowledged?

MV: Oh yes. We had birthday cakes.

CS: Did you have birthday parties?

MV: Not much, no. Just, you know...not really. With other kids, no.

CS: It was kind of a family celebration?

MV: Yeah.

CS: And then whatever... You had Christmas and birthdays and maybe...what other celebrations did you have at home that was kind of a special day?

MV: I don't remember. I don't... My memory's kind of vague, I think.

CS: What did they do in Fourth of July, for instance, if the family wasn't too busy to do anything?

MV: At that period you mean?

CS: Mm-hmm. When you were, you know, anywhere between nine and fourteen or something like that?

MV: I don't remember doing much.

CS: Picnics or did they have a town celebration Fourth of July? Maybe a parade?

MV: I don't... I don't know. I can't... I don't remember. They may have had it, but I don't think... I don't know, but it's possible. I just don't know.

CS: Now you lived on a farm, did you have a big garden? They just got the flour and sugar and probably, what, dried beans or did you do your own dried beans?

MV: You mean...

CS: For food.

MV: Oh. No, you could buy beans usually, sacks of beans.

CS: So then what did they grow? What was in the garden, for instance, in the summertime?

MV: Oh, everything. All kinds of vegetables and potatoes and all...we grew everything.

CS: So you ate a lot of fresh vegetables. Lettuce, for instance? Were salads like lettuce?

MV: Yeah, we had lettuce, but leaf lettuce, you know, not... Yeah, we had lettuce.

CS: So and with the surplus, what did you do with the surplus? You planted quite a bit, I guess. You ate fresh and then what did you do with it?

MV: For instance, lettuce they'd plant it at different times so that, you know, it'd come on... But other corn and beans and everything of course you canned that. Did a lot of canning and drying...and drying, too. You could dry 'em out in the hydrator \_\_\_ out in the sun on a big screen.

CS: So you'd do fruit that way. You had apples, apple trees, what other kind of fruit would you put out there.

MV: We had prunes, I think.

CS: Prunes, okay.

MV: That's about it, I think.

CS: Cherries?

MV: We didn't dry cherries.

CS: You didn't have cherries.

MV: Yeah, we had cherries, but we canned cherries.

CS: You canned the vegetables, the corn and beans. What other vegetables did you have?

MV: Oh, we had tomatoes, beets... We didn't have as much tomatoes as they do now. They have such nice tomato plants now. I don't think they raised too many tomatoes.

CS: Did you help with the canning?

MV: No, I watched. I didn't... No, not really. The only thing I hated about...they didn't have pressure cookers, you know, and so they had a big boiler that they put jars in and it was hot and it made the kitchen terrifically hot so nobody wanted to

be in the kitchen. 'Cause you had to take three to four hours to can those jars so that, you know, so you wouldn't get botchalism.

CS: From the beans.

MV: From the beans and corn.

CS: Oh, corn, too.

MV: Mostly beans.

CS: So how many... So in these big kettles how many quart jars would go in this kettle, the big kettle?

MV: We didn't have big kettles, but what I remember is the big...what do they call it...big...

CS: An open kettle kind of thing?

MV: Yeah...what was it? There used to be one here, copper.

CS: Oh, a boiler.

MV: Yes. Boiler.

CS: They put on the woodstove?

MV: On a woodstove, uh-huh. It would sit on the woodstove. It would hold a lot of jars.

CS: And a lot of water.

MV: Oh yes.

CS: Oh, that's how they canned those.

MV: Yeah. I think you'd do about a dozen jars at a time, see, which was nice.

CS: What kind of lids did they have?

MV: Mostly... The one I remember mostly was those zinc lids, I think they were zinc, with rubber rings, you know, you put the rubber around and then screw the top on.

CS: They were not the vacuum seals that we have, they were different. How long... Would those be eaten... You had the fruit and you canned fruit also. You canned... What kind of fruit would you can?

MV: Anything we could get, peaches and apricots...

CS: Pears?

MV: Pears, uh-huh.

CS: Cherries, you mentioned.

MV: And cherries, uh-huh.

CS: And did you do plums?

MV: Yeah, we did.

CS: Now where did you keep all those? That must've been a lot of jarred fruit...or food.

MV: Yeah. We had the cellar.

CS: Put in the cellar. Now you mentioned the curing of meats and so forth and some of the butchering. Now did you raise hogs or calves for meat?

MV: Oh yeah. We did.

CS: And chickens?

MV: Yeah, we had chickens.

CS: Did you always eat those fresh, or did you...how did you...what did you...if you wanted to save any of the meat, if it wasn't smoked, how did you do that?

MV: Some people had put them down lard, the pork, but Mother didn't do that.

CS: Is that cooked and then put into lard?

MV: Yeah. \_\_\_[laugh]  
CS: So how did...how did your mother do that?  
MV: I don't think she did much of the meat, no.  
CS: Mince meat, people would make mince meat that actually had meat in it at that time.  
MV: Oh yeah.  
CS: That was...would be part of that...  
MV: They canned that.  
CS: What kind of meat'd they put in that?  
MV: Mostly beef.  
CS: Now where did you...if you had your hams and bacon and that sort of thing you smoked, where were those kept?  
MV: In the smokehouse.  
CS: That was a separate building?  
MV: Oh yeah, the smokehouse.  
CS: And that was to last you all...  
MV: Yeah, that...  
CS: You usually didn't have to buy any meat, per say.  
MV: Practically none.  
CS: How did you preserve the beef? Or you just didn't have beef toward the end of the...?  
MV: No. Beef was a treat 'cause there was no freezers there.  
CS: So you just ate...butchered it and ate it and when it was gone it was gone?  
MV: Uh-huh.  
CS: So you had real seasons of lots of beef here and lots of fresh pork and the rest of it was smoked?  
MV: Yeah, and we had chickens, of course, all the time.  
CS: All the time. What...how did people usually fix chicken, do you remember?  
MV: Same as they do now...later.  
CS: Who's job was it to get the chicken and kill it and strip it and so forth?  
MV: Oh yeah, got...had the chicken and wring it's neck. A lot of women did that, but Mother...I think she was too...she couldn't...Dad had to kill the chickens. But some women did, they could do it.  
CS: And then what...what was the next step after that with the chicken?  
MV: We had to pluck 'em, of course, get the...usually they get in hot water...  
CS: Hot water.  
MV: ...hot water and they...the feathers would come off.  
CS: And what was the step after that?  
MV: Ready to... I think they... They wouldn't do it right away, they let them cool, you know. They didn't want to eat too fresh of chicken. We put 'em in the cellar.  
CS: Oh, let it hang there first. Yeah, that'd be more...  
MV: We didn't. I think, you know, they didn't want to eat too...just wanted things killed right immediately. I don't...  
CS: Was there a reason for that?  
MV: What?  
CS: For the flavor, probably.

MV: I think so.  
CS: And, of course, you had eggs from the chickens.  
MV: Uh-huh.  
CS: Now what is it... Did they sell anything to help make... What did they do... You mentioned your dad was a carpenter a little bit, but did they make any other things for money...do any other things to make money?  
MV: Yeah, sold eggs. We had chickens, we had... They had big crates that they'd usually take to the store once a week.  
CS: A little market store?  
MV: Trade it for the groceries.  
CS: Then they would trade.  
MV: Uh-huh. If we needed like flour or sugar...  
CS: What did you do about milk? Did you have a cow, milk cow?  
MV: We had cows, uh-huh.  
CS: How many?  
MV: I don't know, different, you know...I don't know. Over the years...  
CS: Did you do the same thing with the milk and separate it out from the cream?  
MV: Oh yeah, separate it. And if we had several cows of course we sold the cream, too.  
CS: And you put those in big...  
MV: Pans.  
CS: Cream pans.  
MV: Cream pans, yeah.  
CS: Now tell me about the...how they...the process of doing that. The milked the cow...they'd go out and milk the cow...and how many times a day would they milk the cows?  
MV: Twice, in the morning and the evening.  
CS: And then where would they put the milk?  
MV: In the cellar.  
CS: Did they have any way to separate the cream from the milk?  
MV: The separator...the separator did.  
CS: So they used those? And then they put it in the cellar to keep it cool then they would...when they got the cream cans full they'd take that in?  
MV: Yes, they'd take it to the... Sometimes they...there was somebody would come around and collect it, a truck or something. I don't know what...you know, when, but sometimes they did that some. I don't know...  
CS: If they sold it to somebody like to make butter or...  
MV: Sold to the creamery.  
CS: Oh, the creamery. There was a creamery here?  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: Okay. What was the name of the creamery?  
MV: I don't remember.  
CS: But they would make... What'd they make at the creamery?  
MV: Butter.  
CS: Was that... Now was that a lunch counter, too, where they sold things?  
MV: No. It was just butter. They may have made ice cream, too, I don't know.

CS: \_\_\_ but you would go and buy ice cream.  
MV: They may have done later, but first...sold your cream.  
CS: Now you lived on a farm later on, who took care of the separator? I would think it would be rather messy after doing all that milk and cream.  
MV: It had to be washed everyday.  
CS: In the barn?  
MV: No. They'd bring it in the house.  
CS: And the separator was made of what?  
MV: Metal, some kind of metal.  
CS: And it came apart in pieces?  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: Big bowls that caught this...you know, big \_\_\_...you put the...that's what you'd wash and then a thing that wherever they were that...[end tape]

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CS: ...and then who was expected to wash it and have it all ready to go for the next milking?  
MV: Mother.  
CS: Your mother.  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: That sounds like a lovely job. [laughs] Great big pieces.  
MV: We had... We had it here at the ranch.  
CS: So that was how many years later they were still doing it the same way?  
MV: It was a lot of years that they did that.  
CS: Now when did pasteurizing...on the ranch...in town they had bottled milk delivered and the milkman...what happened on the ranch? When was pasteurization in, do you remember? And what that was like? Milk?  
MV: They did that at the creamery, I guess.  
CS: But you drank raw milk here.  
MV: Oh yeah.  
CS: And had your own cream, of course. People have so many things now that they throw away, you know, disposable things for food and so forth...and no dishwashers in your day, I would imagine, except for people. What kind of things did you have in your kitchen that, you know, that you used over and over, kitchen utensils and cookware?  
MV: Everything's different...  
CS: But ceramic dishes and things.  
MV: But what?  
CS: And ceramic dishes, tin plates or anything like to use or cups?  
MV: Oh no, we had...had dishes.  
CS: Napkins. We have so many paper things that you throw away all the time. Did you have things like that, like paper towels and paper napkins?  
MV: No.  
CS: So everything was washed?

MV: Yes. We had big...yeah. Big... Remember I told you about flour towels? Flour sacks that made towels?

CS: Mm-hmm.

MV: Of course they had to be...had to be washed.

CS: Especially your dish towels that you would wipe the dishes...

MV: Yeah.

CS: And would you use cloth napkins, or did people use napkins?

MV: Just for company, I think. [laugh]

CS: How about tablecloths?

MV: Oh, yeah, we had tablecloths.

CS: What kind? Washable tablecloths?

MV: Oh yeah.

CS: For company.

MV: Oh yeah. Oh no.

CS: What about everyday?

MV: We had oilcloth. Do you remember...

CS: Oh, oilcloth.

MV: ...oilcloth that had a funny backing, you know. Everybody had oilcloth.

CS: Where did you get the oilcloth?

MV: In big rolls at the store.

CS: It made several... How did... Lots of different patterns that you would chose?

MV: Different patterns. Of course you would get...for your different size tables you could buy another yard and they would be, you know, wider sometimes, but usually quite wide. Everybody had... You remember the \_\_? [laugh]

CS: Now...and you wiped those off? And when did you get...decide it was time to get a new one?

MV: When it wore out.

CS: The pattern would get...

MV: It would get...yes, after we'd wash 'em a lot they would get kind of cracks in...

CS: But you didn't wash those in the washer?

MV: No.

CS: Just washed them by hand.

MV: No, they had to be washed off with a dishcloth and some soap and water.

CS: So that was... That's interesting 'cause that's certainly different from what we have now.

MV: Oh yes.

CS: What else can you think of in the kitchen that was just, you know, just something that you don't see anymore? Maybe potholders, how about stove? We have electric and gas stoves now so what was the stove like that you were...

MV: We had...first of all a woodstove, you know.

CS: So who would gather...bring the wood in to keep the stove goin'?

MV: Everybody. If there were boys in the family that kind of was their job. We had a wood box, great big wood box, someplace and so the wood would go in that. We'd feed that into the stove.

CS: So they knew how to handle an axe, I would take it, to get...

MV: Oh yes.

CS: ...the right the size.

MV: Had a big block of wood that you'd put the wood on and chop it with an axe, you know.

CS: I would think that cooking...now did you use that woodstove for heating the kitchen, too? For heating? For heating? Did that heat the kitchen up when it was really going all the time except maybe...I mean the wintertime.

MV: In the wintertime it was.

CS: How did you have heating in the other part of the house?

MV: Sometimes a woodstove in there, too. They used a lot of wood. They had...all these big truckloads of... You know how our wood...our woodshed, you know, I was just full of wood, stacked high of wood. They'd go through that all in one winter.

CS: In one winter.

MV: Winter would, uh-huh.

CS: When did they transfer over to oil? Oil stoves? Was that a big thing? Or was that available at that time?

MV: It might've been, I don't know. I don't know, you know, it just depends on where you were. I'm sure they were available someplace.

CS: And coal, you didn't have coal.

MV: Oh yeah. Some people...yeah. Some people burned coal.

CS: But you primarily did wood?

MV: Uh-huh.

CS: And they would go out...who? The \_\_\_ would go out together and get the logs and get the wood and bring it in? How would that happen?

MV: They would... Yeah, they would, sometimes. In the mountains...sometimes they would haul it down in big trucks.

CS: Would they do this as a group? I mean some of the relatives get together? They wouldn't do this by themselves, would they?

MV: Sometimes they would, yeah. Depends.

CS: Crisco, for instance, we use Crisco and olive oil and all those kind of things. What did you use for rendering to cook with and the fry things with and so forth?

MV: Usually lard, you see, from the pork.

CS: Pigs, yes.

MV: When they rendered the lard they had huge big vats that they would render this lard, boil the fat out and make lard. So we had several big gallon buckets of lard that we put in the cellar, it would keep, and so we would that.

CS: Tell me...breakfast is such an interesting thing. I was going to ask you about on the farm what the meals were like. I mean, what did you usually...kind of usually have for breakfast as a kid and a young woman on the farm? Now we're so into box cereals these days. What did you guys have?

MV: We often had cooked cereal, you know, oatmeal and wheat...still have cream of wheat, I think.

CS: Okay. Did you have more than just cereal?

MV: Oh yes. It depends, yeah. Sometimes they'd even have potatoes and usually bacon and eggs or ham and eggs. They usually had big breakfast because people worked so much harder, they needed...

CS: What time did they roll out to go milk the cows? Before light?  
MV: In the winter, yes.  
CS: And then they'd come back in and have a big breakfast?  
MV: Big breakfast, uh-huh. But they milked the cows first, uh-huh.  
CS: Now bread. Did they make their own bread all the time?  
MV: I didn't, but \_\_\_ mother did, of course. She always made huge...sometimes a big pan of loaves that they had three or four at a time.  
CS: Did she do that more than once a week?  
MV: Oh, probably twice a week.  
CS: And they'd slice that for...they had bread pretty much with every meal?  
MV: Oh yes. Everybody liked bread and there was a lot of bread.  
CS: I know that during...you talked about the hay...the haying crews and wheat crews and so forth in the summertime when you cooked these big meals. What would you generally cook at that time for these haying crews and these harvesting crews?  
MV: Well...  
CS: They didn't bring a lunch.  
MV: Oh no.  
CS: Part of the deal was that they got to eat a good big meal.  
MV: Oh yes.  
CS: So what did you fix?  
MV: Oh, beef roast or chickens or...just a regular meal.  
CS: Did you have vegetables?  
MV: Uh-huh.  
CS: Vegetables and dessert?  
MV: Oh yeah. Always...usually pies or cake.  
CS: And they'd have...what'd they have to drink?  
MV: Coffee, usually.  
CS: Not water or milk?  
MV: They drank... They had water, but most of 'em wanted coffee.  
CS: Now they had that big meal at noontime in the winter, too, when farmers weren't, you know, when they were...bad weather? What would they usually have then?  
MV: You mean just regular times?  
CS: Mm-hmm.  
MV: Not for harvest...there wasn't \_\_\_\_.  
CS: Right. They still had their big meal at noontime?  
MV: Generally. They usually had three meals a day.  
CS: So there were three big meals a day?  
MV: Not big meals, but substantial meals.  
CS: Certainly not a sandwich and...  
MV: No, not like...because they worked...they got up early and worked 'til late at night usually.  
CS: How did they do the wash, for instance? You said you had lots and lots of washing to do. What kind of washing machines did they have? Or did they have any?  
MV: At first, of course, they didn't. You washed on a washboard.

CS: Did you ever do that?  
MV: No, I didn't. We had an old washer that...  
CS: How did... Did you have electricity? How did it make it go?  
MV: Up here. At home, of course, when I was a girl, you know, we washed 'em just on a washboard, yeah.  
CS: Did you do that indoors? Of course in the winter you'd have to.  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: In big tubs?  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: And then you rinsed 'em and then how did you dry them in the wintertime? A big clothesline for summer, but in the wintertime...  
MV: Yeah, just hung 'em around where you could, by the stove and...  
CS: Over chair backs and...  
MV: Yeah, everything.  
CS: Did you have a clothesline in the house at all that you'd string up just on wash days?  
MV: I think maybe if you had room I think that they did have things that you could...yeah, I think they did.  
CS: So they used up those...used up those calories just working.  
MV: Oh yes.  
CS: Doing floors and...  
MV: Everybody... Everybody... Everybody worked hard at that...when they do that.  
CS: And everybody had chores?  
MV: The kids, you mean?  
CS: Mm-hmm.  
MV: Usually, uh-huh.  
CS: Now what did you generally have at night, for instance? What was leftover from what...the big meal or...?  
MV: If we...yeah, we had leftovers, if there were any. You know, usually they'd cook bigger vegetables...lots of vegetables.  
CS: Did they ever do homemade soup?  
MV: Oh yes.  
CS: Always have...  
MV: Oh, we had...yeah, there was lots of soup.  
CS: How about coffee and tea? Is that easily available?  
MV: Oh yeah.  
CS: Of course you had milk and you had your own... Did you churn your own butter, or did you get it at the creamery? Did you keep some back and churn your own?  
MV: Mother churned our own butter, yeah.  
CS: And they'd drink buttermilk? Or milk?  
MV: I loved buttermilk, uh-huh. And then they...they'd make cottage cheese sometimes, too.  
CS: Did they make any other kind of cheese?  
MV: No. That's all I remember, cottage cheese.

CS: Can you think of anything else that was different in the food preparation or food eating that was... Ice cream, did you ever have...did you ever make ice cream? Or was that ever a treat?

MV: Yes, I think we made ice cream.

CS: The hand-cranked kind, I'm sure.

MV: Yeah. It was good, too.

CS: Now this is a little off, but the girls, how did they take care of their hair? I mean, did they wash it once a week? And bathing, was that kind of once a week sort of thing where it wasn't this run in and take a shower that we do now? And how did they get their curls? Did they have permanents? How did they get their hair curly? I've seen pictures of 'em.

MV: I don't... When permanents first... I remember when permanents...it was wonderful! You put... So you bought...we had kid curlers. Mother would...I don't...

CS: Were they made out of leather?

MV: Yes.

CS: Kid leather? Soft leather?

MV: And it was so... And they must've had wire in 'em so you could wrap your hair around these curlers and...

CS: The leather part.

MV: Yeah.

CS: And then bring the wire around...

MV: Uh-huh.

CS: Now I heard somebody sayin' about rag curlers.

MV: Oh yes, they did.

CS: What are those?

MV: I don't... Mother never did use that. We always had kid curlers. But I don't... Yeah, they had... If you didn't have...you just wrapped your hair around the rags and tie 'em, I guess. But Mother never did that with me. We always had kid curlers.

CS: Oh, you were a step up there.

MV: Yes. [laugh]

CS: You didn't have rags in your hair. And they just were damp and then you slept in those, I would guess.

MV: Oh yeah. They were kind of soft.

CS: How often would you use it? Just when you...

MV: Oh, just when we wanted the...

CS: Just when you washed your hair or in special occasions or whatever?

MV: Yeah.

CS: How about jewelry or makeup or...was that around with all...even your mother, did she have a little jewelry? Did they ever use makeup at all?

MV: Oh yes. She had...uh-huh. And she had... Yeah, she had talcum powder and...no rouge or lipstick.

CS: That wasn't considered too...

MV: No. That was...

CS: ...cheap. [laughs]

MV: Just for certain...you know. They didn't use much painting up.  
CS: Did they have pierces ears then?  
MV: I don't know. I think they must've. Mother did...never did, but they probably did.  
CS: And how about when they started to turn grey would they color their hair? What would they color it with?  
MV: Oh, I don't know. Nobody I ever knew had color... You were a...  
CS: Painted lady...  
MV: ...painted lady. [laughs] \_\_ yeah, I think you were supposed to let your hair go natural.  
CS: Would your mother use the kid curlers on her hair or did she use something else?  
MV: She didn't...she just... She had long... She never had her cut. She never...and so it was long so she would braid it and wrap the braids around her head, you know. She had hair pins, too, that usually...  
CS: So a lot of people braided their hair and let their hair get long and didn't cut it?  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: Bob, or whatever. That came into being when? That is was smart to have your hair short?  
MV: Yeah, it was... When I was little I don't remember hardly anybody having cut hair.  
CS: Did boys wear their hair short? Who cut that?  
MV: Usually whoever was handy at it. They had barber shears and somebody cut their hair.  
CS: Somebody in the family would cut their hair?  
MV: Yeah. I think they had... I'm sure they had shops...barber shops, but we didn't of course, because, we, you know, did everything yourself.  
CS: That would do that.  
MV: That' when... Of course after we got into high school it was different. These were just when you were young, yeah.  
CS: What did your mother do for...I mean, we have television, we have...you had radio, I assume?  
MV: No.  
CS: Didn't have radio?  
MV: No.  
CS: Okay, now what did they do in the evenings? Or just when it got dark they went to bed or did they do anything for...or even during the day for...when they sat down and did things? Had magazines? Did you do reading?  
MV: Yeah, we had...  
CS: Did handiwork?  
MV: Everybody read, uh-huh. Of course usually women were so tired at night...they really went to bed early, I think, kind of early.  
CS: Did they do lots of crocheting and that sort of thing?  
MV: Mother did, a lot of... And quilting. Some people did quilting.  
CS: But not as they do now for display and hobby. They actually used those for...  
MV: For beds, uh-huh. Yes, \_\_ quilt.  
CS: And what about knitting for sweaters and so forth? Did they do a lot of that?

MV: Some people did, but not...Mother never did.

CS: We had... The boys, I wonder why she didn't do that. I should think that maybe she... She liked to crochet and make pretty things.

MV: Uh-huh.

CS: And she sewed.

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: The machine...what kind of a...what...treadle?

MV: Oh yeah. Machine...old treadle machine.

CS: Did everything on that. Would they make their own curtains? What did you have to decorate the windows?

MV: Oh yeah. Made their own curtains, probably, sometimes, most of the time.

CS: Now did they make doilies and so forth for...to really protect the chairs or just to decorate them?

MV: I don't know. Maybe both. I don't know. Mostly decoration, I think, it was.

CS: 'Cause they're certainly around now. I wanted to ask you if you thought anymore about one of the regrets you have that you did not get more traveling in during your lifetime and why...why would you feel that you wished you had? What would you gain from travel... 'cause you did some?

MV: I just... I just thought it was interesting, yeah, to see different people and different things. I thought it...yes. I'm just sorry I didn't...

CS: 'Cause you went to where? The Middle East?

MV: We went...yeah. We went to... We went to Europe and...

CS: And how old were you then?

MV: I must've been seventy-five.

CS: Now was that your first real trip out of the country?

MV: No. We went to Alaska.

CS: Before it was a state?

MV: No, afterwards. And we went to Hawaii.

CS: But this is really...really different, different languages and so forth where you really felt like you were out there.

MV: That was the only trip I had, yeah.

CS: That's what... That's what I wanted to ask you, is that was the one that really whetted your appetite?

MV: Oh yeah.

CS: And is that because of...

MV: Oh, I just thought it was wonderful to see other people and other country...

CS: And it was very different from what you had here? Was that the draw, do you think? 'Cause it was so different?

MV: I didn't think it was that different. The people were...no. No, I didn't think it was different. I think it was just nice. People were nice and fun.

CS: 'Cause often once you start traveling you do want to do more of it, sort of addicting in a way.

MV: Yeah.

CS: \_\_\_ about things like that. During the Depression, when you were married and...or almost married during that time, you was a young woman certainly, and had great aspirations of going to school and so when all of that happened and

everyone was in a bad way, how was the attitude of people? I mean did they talk about it or did they bemoan it or did...what did they do? How did people really act on a day to day basis when they were in the throws of that?

MV: In the Depression, you mean?

CS: Yeah. In the farming I realize that you grew a lot of stuff, but I mean the community, what was the...what did it feel like?

MV: Everybody... It's possible... They tried to help everybody. It was always...

CS: How did the banks treat people, for instance, after they, you know, I mean...it wasn't obviously their fault, but, I mean, I mean, they were part of the community. How did that go?

MV: There wasn't anything they could do. I mean, they just closed up and there was no money.

CS: How did people react to them? I assume they lived in the community.

MV: Who? The bank?

CS: Mm-hmm. The bankers. The people who worked at the bank. Were they ostracized?

MV: Oh no, I don't think... I think they...they tried to help everybody. During the Depression everybody tried to help everybody else.

CS: Can you think of any specifics that come to mind that people did to help others?

MV: If they had anything to share they did it. It was just a... But a lot of times, of course, there wasn't anything to share.

CS: You mean food or... Did you have a lot of homeless here at that time, do you think?

MV: A lot of what?

CS: Homeless people. That couldn't afford a place to rent or lost their homes or whatever?

MV: Oh, I'm sure, yeah.

CS: Where did they live? Did they have a...did the churches have places? How did they take care of them?

MV: I don't... I don't know whether the... I don't know.

CS: I don't think they had any agencies that would help them.

MV: No. It's just that people just tried to help people. I'm sure if they needed...they probably shared their houses if they didn't need...

CS: If they had an extra bedroom they would take people in, you mean?

MV: Yeah.

CS: Families in or...

MV: Yeah. If they, you know, if it was necessary. I don't know what cities did, but, you know, this area... I don't know. Of course they...you'd see pictures of big soup lines, you know, people...

CS: Was that here or more in the city?

MV: In the cities, uh-huh.

CS: What did they do here, I wonder, for people who were...were there people come...the railroad was here, did they have hobos would come in and were hungry?

MV: Oh yes.

CS: Where were they?

MV: Where were they?  
CS: I mean did they have camps, hobo camps, in this area?  
MV: They may have, but here they would just come to the door and sometimes they would ask for work, if they could work. Sometimes, of course, they just were hungry and they had to be fed.  
CS: Did you ever feed them?  
MV: Oh yeah, often, often. Sometimes we...if we had...they would...now if they were men they would chop wood sometimes. Sometimes they would like to do that to have food. We always had lots of bread and things that we could make sandwiches that somebody, you know, that would come.  
CS: Would they come to the front door or the back door or both?  
MV: Both.  
CS: And would they just ask for food? Would you bring them in or would you just give them food on the back porch?  
MV: No.  
CS: Were you often by yourself when that happened?  
MV: Sometimes, yeah.  
CS: Did you ever have any... Did you ever feel uncomfortable doing that?  
MV: No, I don't think so. The only time that, you know, we told you about the fellas that stole the gas out of the garage. That's the only time I know that anybody... And of course when we had the...when we had...we butchered, you know, and had the smokehouse there, they'd often break into the smokehouse and steal the hams and stuff.  
CS: Maybe it was just transients that were hungry, do you think?  
MV: No, I don't know where...who did that.  
CS: But now you've lived close to the highway, to a major highway, forever and spent a lot of time here by yourself and you half the time probably didn't even lock your doors too much and you'd always answer the door to whoever was there. And you never felt any fear or apprehension about doing that?  
MV: I guess not 'cause I still do it. [laugh]  
CS: It's paid off.  
MV: I just never think of the...  
CS: You just saw the goodness of people or hoped that that worked?  
MV: I guess so. I just never think too much about it.  
CS: Did you ever hear of any stories of other people doing that, or did they...or anybody ever say you had to be crazy to do that, or were they doing the same thing?  
MV: Lately...I mean, in the later years people told me I was crazy, but never before that have I ever heard it.  
CS: Of course they were hungry and coming to you before, but now they were...had car trouble or...  
MV: Yeah.  
CS: Get over the hill. Cell phones cut that down, do you think?  
MV: Oh, possibly, uh-huh. Not very much. There isn't near as much as their used to be.

CS: You've... All your life you've lived on a ranch and taken care of those things, but you've also had this music career all of your life, starting very young and then studying yourself during \_\_\_ and teaching after that and you still are teaching. You still have adults and youngsters? They still come to the house?

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: And I understand you just had a recital this last week.

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: And the recitals you had here you would do what? How would you handle that? At the house, when you had recitals at the house?

MV: Oh, we would take the furniture out and we've got chairs in the basement and we'd fix a little... And then I...if I had students we had two in day, one at two o'clock and maybe four o'clock.

CS: And the parents and...

MV: And the parents...

CS: ...grandparents would come.

MV: ...would come, uh-huh.

CS: Would you serve refreshments?

MV: We'd... I think we seated forty people in that big room. Yeah, then we'd have cookies and punch afterward.

CS: And you'd make all these cookies yourself?

MV: Yes.

CS: They must've been really pleased over all that.

MV: They liked the cookies, uh-huh.

CS: I would bet. When you teach... We have all kinds of teaching ways, groups and so on, so you pretty much still traditional? Making sure that they hold their hands correctly and they do warm-up excersises and practice technique and you've stayed with that? And you've belonged to a teaching organization for several years now, with other music teachers. You get together with them for meetings and updates and so forth?

MV: Uh-huh. It's a national... There's the MT and there's the National Music Teachers.

CS: And you still belong with that?

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: I remember you used to go to Oregon conventions of those.

MV: Yeah. And there were two national, one at Portland, one at Seattle.

CS: Oh, national?

MV: Mm-hmm.

CS: That must've been a treat.

MV: It was. Next year it's gonna be at Seattle again, but I probably won't be able to go.

CS: I'll go with you up there. [laughs] That just might work. So you're gonna continue to teach?

MV: Just one more year.

CS: Retirement is not in your vocabulary?

MV: Well, yes, after next year. We'll see. [laughs]

CS: It's been... It's been a lot of good years.

MV: A lot of years, I don't know...

CS: Were they not good?

MV: It's been nice, uh-huh.

CS: Alright. I think I'm done. Can you think of anything else you'd like...[end tape]