

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #126 - Sides A/B

Subject: Ella Whiting Luckey

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: January 1972

Interviewer: James Baker

Release Form: No

ELLA WHITING LUCKEY: My father came from Maine, the State of Maine, but what year I don't know. And my mother came from Iowa. I have a grandson who has a book out in the cabin here that is just full of stuff. You had better read that, that's the easiest way. He traced back the family for generations. When I was growing up, I wasn't interested in those things, didn't care anything about them. My mother was a great reader, and she liked history, and she liked to read to me. "I don't want to hear it, Mother." I don't know whether most people are like that or not. I think younger people are, they don't want to be bothered with ancient history. But when you get older, you begin to think something about that. Well, heavens on earth, I knew so little it was pitiful.

JAMES BAKER: Do you know why they came from Maine and Iowa to here?

ELLA: They came to California first, my father and his parents. And I have heard someone say that they settled around Grass Valley and Wheatland first. I can't tell anything for the truth, because I don't know it well enough. But I think they had some holdings around, someone said Grass Valley. But at any rate, after my father and my mother were married, he did trucking, freighting rather, for the mines, and that was around Grass Valley and Carson City, and Nevada City.

JAMES: A lot of mining down there.

ELLA: And then after they was married, I know all my brothers and sisters were born, I don't know whether it was Nevada City or Carson City, somewhere down there. And they came to this country in '74. I don't know what route they took because there were no roads. They just took out over the

sagebrush, I guess.

And when they got here, there was a family, a man and his wife, living at; do you know where the Silver Spur is?

JAMES: No, I don't.

ELLA: Well, it is right down here about two blocks, and the hill kind of slopes off there into the flat, and they had a cabin there. And when my folks got here, they moved in with them because there was no place else to go. There wasn't a house; there wasn't a tent, there wasn't anything. And they lived there for, I don't know how long, because Gwendolyn Hayden, do you know her? She writes these truly story books. She got a lot of this from my oldest brother, and that was the first I knew anything about it. And she says in her book that they lived in this cabin, I don't know whether it was two rooms or three rooms, or maybe just only one room, until they could get a dugout made in the hill right down here. I'm not just positive the exact spot, but I know it was right down there.

So, in the fall my father and my oldest brother went to Canyon City for supplies for the winter. There wasn't anything here to buy from, and Canyon City was the nearest place. So, they went over there in the fall, it took them a month, maybe, to make the round trip. And whether they had that dugout finished, whether this friend of my mother's had that dugout finished or not, I don't know. But at any rate, they talk about the dugout, and they lived the rest of the winter in the dugout. That was before I was born. Then during the Bannock uprising the two families that were in the Valley were called to Camp Harney, you know, and they were fortified there during that --- I don't know how long they stayed up there.

JAMES: What were your parents looking for when they came up from California and Nevada up to here? Do you know what they were seeking? What were your parents looking for?

ELLA: I'm sorry, ...

JAMES: Well, what I was curious about is what were your parents looking for, why did they come to this area?

ELLA: Oh, I know what you mean now. Well, my father thought horses were the only thing, so of

course there was plenty of range and there was nothing on it but wild stock. So, he raised horses when he first came here. That seemed to be the principal business. There wasn't anything else to do.

So, when I was a girl about 10, he and a friend on Silver Creek got together a band of horses and drove them to California to market. Of course, that was covered wagon and buckaroos and what have you. Of course, it was fun for me because I was just a kid.

JAMES: Did you go on that trip?

ELLA: Oh yes, sure.

JAMES: Is that right?

ELLA: Sure, and we went to, our first stop was at his sister's place, that would be my aunt, that was at Wheatland, California. And he worked there through the harvest with this uncle of mine. His sister and brother-in-law had a big holding right around Wheatland, a big wheat farm. And then we went on to San Jose and spent the rest of the winter; because he had a few horses left that he wanted to dispose of. I can remember that pretty well, I was between 10 and 11. Of course, that was the first town I had ever been in. That and Wheatland was just a village. Marysville was a pretty good-sized town. Before or after that, I don't know which it was my brother went with this bunch of cattle to California with a drove. I think that was PLS Company, there was a bunch of buckaroos drove it, and he told lots of incidents that were comical. He said when they got to Marysville, driving these cattle through the town, they stampeded.

JAMES: In the town?

ELLA: Yes, Marysville was just a village then too. I can remember Marysville pretty well. Then in later years, I was down to Wheatland and stayed one winter with an aunt, and then I came up to Biggs and stayed with a cousin a while, and we went to Marysville, it was just a village then.

Of course, as far as anything going on here, people ask me about it, what happened. Well, I said, you know, I was a pretty small kid. I didn't know much about what happened. My parents told me I was born at Camp Harney, and I guess I was.

JAMES: They ought to know.

ELLA: I asked a friend of ours that was here visiting one time, I was trying to get my Social Security, and I went to see her. I thought she would know more about it than anybody. So, I said, "Zelda, did you know I was born?" And she said, "Yes, I know very well you were born," because she said, "I happened to be present." There was maybe, oh I'd hate to say, maybe a dozen, I think that's putting it pretty large, families that was camped at the Fort. And she said, "Yes, you were born, you were born in the officer's quarters." And I said, "Who was my doctor?" And she said, they didn't know anything about doctors, they didn't have a doctor. "Well," I said, "did my mother have a midwife?" "Yes, she had a midwife." She knew her name, oh, she had a wonderful memory. And she could tell you all about that Indian War.

And she said she was going to school down in the Diamond country, and she was staying with a family down there. I don't know whether this will record or not, this hoarseness of mine. I was over there talking at the library, and I couldn't talk. And she said when they came and told them to get into the Fort, they started out in a, just a Dead X wagon with a team. And she said she knew they weren't making any headway at all, so they unhitched the horses and left the harness and wagon and rode bareback into Harney. Now it is just about 100 miles from Diamond down here to Harney. She said they rode all night, she and this man, to get into the Fort. Oh, my goodness, she just knew everything.

I don't know, I've heard it said that her daughter was like I was she didn't want to hear that stuff. And she would shut her mother up when she got to telling tales.

JAMES: You mentioned a wagon, was that a Dead Akes wagon that came into the Fort?

ELLA: Well, just an old common heavy wagon, a Dead X wagon. You know, they had wagons, and they had hacks, they were a little lighter, the hacks were. And then in the city I saw my first surrey top, or something like that they had, carriages.

I remember on this ranch, my uncle's place, he had a single horse buggy, he had a double horse buggy, and he had a carriage. That was all new to me, newer than going to the moon is now.

My brother went to school there too, that winter. No, we didn't go to school only several months, because we went on down to San Jose, so we didn't stay there only a few months.

I grew up, saw Burns grow up, I can remember when there was no Burns. See, the main trading post was "Eegan". People now call it Egan.

JAMES: That's not correct, though, is it?

ELLA: Well, I say it is not because it was named after Chief Egan. I have some property down here on Egan Street, and I'll, they will ask me where it is, and I'll give them the number on "Eegan". Oh, Egan, and I say no, "Eegan". I'm going to stick with it. No one says "Eegan". I don't know whether they give any pronunciation of it or not, but have you ever read Sarah Winnemucca's history?

JAMES: No, I haven't.

ELLA: Oh, it's interesting, of course, to people here. And she mentions Chief Egan numerous times in her history.

JAMES: I'd like to know if you were acquainted with her, did you know Sarah Winnemucca?

ELLA: Oh, no, I was too small.

JAMES: Too small, I see.

ELLA: I was born in '78, and you see, well that was during the Indian War, of course, but I was just a baby. But she did, in her book, mention about coming into the Post a number of times. Because, you know, she was an interpreter for the soldiers, and she was not only trying to help the soldiers, but she was trying to help her people too.

JAMES: I know that she saved them from one of the Indian battles.

ELLA: Yes.

JAMES: Did she die shortly after that time?

ELLA: No, I think she went back to Washington, D. C. and she married. She married a white man, and then she wrote this book. Dr. Clifford Weare brought me up a book, it was a little more in detail, then I've got a magazine article on it. But it tells, gives her name, her father's, and I think she lost her mother. And a family had taken she and her sister in with them, and they sent them to

Sacramento to a Convent, so she got her education there, what it was, until some of the parents of the children who went to that Convent made a fuss about going to school with an Indian. That's like they are making fusses now about blacks. We even had it here a little bit when the Indian children started to the public school.

Of course, I grew up with the Indians, and my father, we had a place out here on the river, and whenever the Indians came, they always got feed for their horses, and part of the food that we had. But, you know, it wasn't the Paiute Indians that caused the trouble, it was the Bannocks.

JAMES: I'd like to know something about how you feel about this country out here, about the wide-open spaces, and about the kind of people who live out here.

ELLA: How do I feel about it? I think it's the only country in the world. And it is getting polluted now with foreigners. (Laughter) But it used to be, in early days, everybody was everybody's friend. You didn't have to have a note at all, all you had to do was if they had it, they'd give you the money, and that was it. And we weren't wealthy people, not by a long shot, but my husband, my father, rather, always managed to make a good living for his family. And, of course, he would go to some outside town to get our supplies, and we would lay in a year's supplies, and if there was a family came into the Valley who didn't have anything, he always divided with them, several families in my day, when I got old enough to remember, that he helped. No, this is the only place in the world for me at any rate.

JAMES: Were there any hard times out in this country that you remember, hard times, struggle, times that were not particularly enjoyable, the tough times out here in this country?

ELLA: I think I know what you are talking about, but tell me again, explain that again.

JAMES: Well, you say this is the best country out in the world, but I know what a struggle it is to live out here in the wintertime, for example, or other hard times.

ELLA: Well, in the wintertime, of course, there's nothing outside of this mill, and that didn't come in here until '30's or '40's.

JAMES: People tell me that 19---

ELLA: But there wasn't anybody here but a few ranchers and a few businesspeople in town, and we could take care of ourselves. We didn't have to have welfare. We didn't have people who had to have help. They managed to get by some way. Of course, as the place grew and the population grew, we get more people out of work, because there isn't enough work in this country. Now last fall, I noticed oh so many people, young people especially, came in here looking for work. Of course, there was no work here, only a little ranch work, and there isn't one in a hundred that knows anything about ranch work, especially kids from the city. I have nephews who are in ranch business, and they hired those kids, well, that didn't know anything.

JAMES: Do you remember any funny stories about the tenderfoot or greenhorns who came in here and made mistakes?

ELLA: Oh, I don't know what they did used to call them; we didn't call them tender footers. Mossbacks.

JAMES: Yes, I've heard that.

ELLA: Mossbacks. Oh, there have been a few, but not too bad. Because, you see, there was no mode of transportation, and not many roads at all, so we were left pretty much alone in the early days. They just couldn't get here. Even, I remember when they talked about the Coxeys Army.

JAMES: Yes, is that right, the populace?

ELLA: Well, we weren't bothered with them, because they couldn't get here. And tramps, we used to hear about tramps. Here's a funny story. I had heard about tramps when I was a kid. My mother sent me on my pony to get the cow, and I guess I rode a mile or so and I saw a man afoot. Well, I came back home just as fast as that pony would carry me, and I was just a squalling at the top of my voice, "I saw a tramp, I saw a tramp." Probably was no one only some of the, well there was two or three people up the river, there was an old fellow had a cabin up there, and that scared the daylight out of me, saw a man afoot. That's as bad as seeing anybody walking now. No, we weren't troubled.

I don't think in all the time I've lived in this house there has been half a dozen, a dozen

people. The last year or two I've had one or two people come here and give me some big tale about getting broke down, or broke or something, wanted some work. But we never had tramps or anything like that. Of course, when you get out on roads that were traveled more, you'd see people footing it.

JAMES: Yeah. Do you remember a fellow by the name of Tebo, used to be a buckaroo boss for ---

ELLA: I know all about Tebo, but I didn't ever know him. Of course, I've seen Tebo. He was a buckaroo down to Frenchglen, Pete French's ranch.

JAMES: Would you describe what he looked like to me?

ELLA: He was a pretty good-sized Mexican. There was a story, I think that is in print some place, when they went through the P Ranch and told them the Indians were on the warpath, I may not be able to tell that straight. I think Pete French and his Chinaman cook --- I'd better let that story go, because I can't get it straight. There was something about that, they started out, I don't remember whether the Chinaman was killed or not.

JAMES: The way I heard it, somebody stole his horse and left him for the Indians.

ELLA: The Chinaman? Somebody has that book, and I expect it is about as near accurate as if I'd tell it. So many times, we used to have a man here by the name of Mart Brenton, and he was a buckaroo at the P Ranch, and people would ask him questions, and he would just make up big stories. No more truth than anything on earth.

JAMES: You know I'm interested in some of those stories. I know they're not true, but I'm interested in the stories, if you can remember any.

ELLA: There was one incident that I know about, and I know it is true, and he was quite a notorious character, and his name was Jack Miller, you may have heard of him. At any rate, he was a buckaroo for John Devine, I think, or the PLS Company. Must have been John Devine, that was before the PLS Company had that property down there. And I think he cooked a little too, around in restaurants, he could just do anything. So, my aunt came up here from California, she was a young widow, and she was working in a restaurant, and she met this Jack, and they were married.

Oh, there are other stories about him, about he shot somebody, and so on and so forth. Well at any rate, after they was married, he got a team and a hack, I guess you'd call it, and they thought he stole it, maybe he did, maybe he didn't, I don't know, I've heard both ways. So, they had a big posse from Canyon and here. We had a ranch out across the river there, and this posse, you're not acquainted with this country, so I can't tell you where it was, but Willa Ray, that's a dairy, they have a place right out here across the river on the hill, but it wasn't there at that time, of course. But there may have been a 100 people out on that hill, and they knew that Jack was in that vicinity someplace. So, they were looking for him up and down there. There are some sloughs that run through there, and he was in this slough all day, in the water, and in the brush, and so forth.

Well, I had just come home from school, I rode a little white horse to the country school on Poison Creek, and I had just come home from school. And he came to our house, and my sister and I were the only ones there. And he was wet and cold and hungry, so we fed him and give him dry clothes, my brother's clothes, and he said to me, "Can I have your horse?" Oh sure, he could have my pony. So, he took my pony, an old slouch hat of the boys, and pulled it down over his face, and a rifle. He rode right down south through this posse, never rode out of a trot or anything. He went to the Island Ranch, he turned the horse loose and he came home, of course. After that I don't know what become of him. He must have got fresh horses at the Island Ranch though, because he wound up in Alaska. And that was the famous Jack Dalton that you've read about in Alaska.

JAMES: Is that right?

ELLA: And he sent for my aunt, and she went up there, but she didn't live very long. She died soon after she got up there. My brother went up there in, oh around in the '20's or '30's and he worked with Jack for a while.

JAMES: Do you mean that he looked so much like one of your kin when he was riding back through that posse, that they didn't bother him?

ELLA: They never bothered him; they never said a word or anything.

JAMES: They must have said, well there goes one of the Luckey's, or something like that.

ELLA: They may have thought he was ...

JAMES: Do you remember other people?

ELLA: Other people? What other people? Just people, huh?

JAMES: Just people.

ELLA: Well, I remember John Devine, I remember Pete French, I remember Bill Hanley very well, they were at our house many times. My mother, after I was in my teens, my mother was in the post office for 8 years, and of course we knew pretty near everybody in the valley. ...

JAMES: Well, what about Bill Hanley, John Devine?

ELLA: Bill Hanley? He was just an ordinary man. I think they came here, he and his brother Ed, I don't know the year, but I believe they came from Medford. Have you ever heard anything about them?

JAMES: Not that part of it.

ELLA: I think they drove a little bunch of cattle overland from Medford. I may be wrong about that now, but at any rate, they come from some place in the valley. And he got a lot of land from --- you see what Pete French would do, he'd get a homesteader to take up a homestead and they would never live on it, and he would buy it, get it for nothing. And that's how he got a lot of that land down there.

And then there was a lot of dispute over swampland, and they would claim it was swampland, and he got a lot of that swampland there. That was over my head, I didn't know too much about it. But I think he had title to pretty near everything, and if he got it that way, it was perfectly legitimate. Of course, there was people that didn't like him because he owned a lot of land, would claim everything. But Pete French, he was a real good fellow. I knew him personally, and my mother's friend was a housekeeper for him. And I had been down to the ranch a number of times to visit her.

Bill Hanley, he was a good, generous man too. But anybody that acquires anything, even today, they think they steal it; that's what the other fellow thinks, or they wouldn't be able to have

had it. Well, if they're clever enough to get it, one way or another, that's their business. There was Bill Hanley and Ed, and I think another brother, John.

Someone told me just the other day that they had visited with Martha Hanley. I think Medford is their hometown, I may be wrong on that. And what a wonderful time they had with Martha Hanley, that was Bill's younger sister [niece]. And she is the only one left, and what property there was from the old folks, well she has. Her name's Martha Hanley, and I believe they live in Medford, maybe it's Jacksonville.

JAMES: What were some of Pete French's better qualities, that you remember him as a generous and good man. In what way do you mean?

ELLA: Generous?

JAMES: You were saying that Pete French was a good man.

ELLA: He was. I'll always hold up for Pete French. Because I know he did lots for the settlers down there and helped them in many ways.

JAMES: Such as what?

ELLA: And you know he was --- it was Ed Oliver that killed Pete French. I think I went to part of that trial, and I think it was a frame-up. I think he just deliberately killed him. He shot him. They said Pete, I'm not too sure, but I think the argument started over this Oliver would open his gates, fence, Pete's gates, and let his cattle go on Pete's feed grounds. And Pete went out there one morning and found the gate down, and he got off to close it, and he told Oliver that if he didn't let that gate alone, he'd kill him. That's the way the story goes, because, I don't know, Oliver had it all his own way. His was about the only testimony there was. And then someone said he had a switch, and he hit Oliver over the head with the switch, and Oliver shot him. But I don't know; I believe Oliver just killed him in cold blood.

JAMES: Did Pete French carry a switch around normally?

ELLA: You know he wouldn't be carrying a switch around. Of course, there's lots of willows there, and he may have cut a willow or something like that. I expect he always carried a gun,

because most of the early timers did. But whether he pulled a gun on Oliver or not --- I don't think Oliver claimed he pulled a gun on him. I think he said he told him he'd kill him if he didn't leave that gate alone. Oh, I never believed a bit of that trial.

At any rate, this Oliver cleared out soon after that and left his family and picked up with some woman and left. And the family came to Burns. My son and one of her daughters were kids together. She married a man named Pete Petersen. I never was personally acquainted with Mrs. Oliver, but I think she was a good woman all right.

JAMES: Before we talk about somebody else, I would like to know some of these ways that you were thinking of that Pete French helped the homesteaders and helped settlers in this area. The way that he was a good community man.

ELLA: You mean something about his generosity?

JAMES: Yes if something comes to mind that way.

ELLA: Well, I know he was a generous man. He didn't think any more of \$1 than we would think of \$25 now. And if anybody needed anything and they didn't have it, he'd give it to them.

JAMES: Did he ever give Company beef to a family that was starving? If there was a family that was hungry during a hard time, did he ever give them a Company steer?

ELLA: Well, I couldn't say to that, but I wouldn't doubt it. They stole plenty off of him. He didn't have to give it to them.

JAMES: Off of him. Didn't have to give it to him, huh?

ELLA: If they were hungry, no one had to give it to them, all they would do was go and get it and kill it. (Laughter) They figured what was yours was part mine, and they would just go and get it.

JAMES: Did he ever try and stop anybody from doing that?

ELLA: I couldn't say, I doubt it. Of course, you would have to catch them.

JAMES: Yeah, that would be hard.

ELLA: And I think he would just skip it, let it go. I used to have a picture of Pete, but my son got the notion in his head that he was going to write a biography of Pete French, and he took the

picture. But my mother was in the post office, and of course, they did all their business through the Burns Post Office.

JAMES: Uh huh. What about John Devine?

ELLA: John was a great fellow. When he first came here, he came as a young man. He wasn't married when he came here, and I think John Devine made the Island Ranch house that stands down there now. He was a great big husky fellow with whiskers. I know he came to our house lots when I was a kid, because there wasn't too many settlers in the Valley, and these old bachelors were looking for a home cooked meal, and make it to our place. And they didn't wait for an invitation, you know. People just, especially the ranchers, they would just ride up and unsaddle their horse and put it in the shed or corral, or what have you, and come in and make themselves at home, and wait for dinner. Well, that was traveling, oh, in the '20's and '30's.

I was cooking for a man named Jim McDade down in the South End of the county, and we had one dinner guest regular. He'd make it to the table just as regular as could be for dinner; besides the men that Jim had working. He wasn't the only one, but he'd make it real regular. I said Jim, "Why don't you let me keep track of his meals and you charge him?" Oh no, he wouldn't do a thing like that.

JAMES: That's a good story, that's something. John Devine, did he have a lot of property?

ELLA: Oh yes, he owned what they call the Island Ranch. And Vogler, Vogler sold it, I think he's got it back again though now, had to take it back. I know John Devine made that Island Ranch house. It's a pretty good size house. And then he got married and brought his bride there, but Mrs. Devine didn't live too long here. I think they did go on down to Juniper Lake and, I can't remember whether Mrs. Devine was living then or not, but at any rate, my mother sent me to California with Gilcrest. He was the head overseer for the PLS Company. And we stopped at John Devine's the first night, at Juniper Lake. That's just on the other side of the mountain. And Mr. Gilcrest says when we went in; I was a kid about 16, "Meet my wife." "Yeah, like hell." (Laughter) 'Cause he knew me since I was a kid, and he knew better than that. Those old fellows wasn't very careful

about their language. Everything went.

JAMES: Do you have a favorite spot in this country? Do you have a spot, a piece of land, that you think back on?

SIDE B

JAMES: Do you have a place that you like more than others in this county?

ELLA: I don't think I understand that question.

JAMES: Well, what I want to know is something about your favorite recollections about this county, and where things you like to think about happened, where good times happened.

ELLA: Oh no, I can't think of anything especially.

JAMES: Do you like the South End better than Burns?

ELLA: Oh no, I should say not.

JAMES: Okay.

ELLA: I lived down there; I was down there one summer with my husband. He was the water master down there, and I just went down there to be with him more than anything else. This Jim McDade, he had quite a bit of property, and he also had some leased. And he had quite a few men, and his cook left. And how I happened to get that job. I said, "Jim, why don't you let me do this cooking?" He was an outspoken guy. "You?" He thought I was a city lady, you know. "Do you think you can do this cooking?" "Well," I said, "I can try awful hard." He used quite a few swear words too.

JAMES: He did?

ELLA: So, we just got along beautifully. It was no trouble for me to cook for them. They had everything handy, you know, big supply of stuff.

JAMES: What did you cook for breakfast most of the time?

ELLA: Sourdough biscuits, that was a must. Sometimes we had cereal. They always had dried fruit on the table, and beefsteak, oh slabs of it, great big slabs of beefsteak. He killed a beef every

week. And there was no such thing as a refrigerator, but we would hang that beef out at night in the air, and then in the daytime put it under a hay stack. Keep it away from the flies, and oh, you never ate meat that tasted like that did. And it was no trick at all to get up and make two great big, I had a double oven, we'd burn sagebrush and make two great big pans like this of sourdough biscuits. Because they had about 20 or 30 men on the average. Oh, I think I'd make cereal, some kind of mush, and beefsteak, and there was fruit on the table, dried fruit of some kind, and biscuits. They had a pretty hearty breakfast out of that, you know.

JAMES: Sounds like they did.

ELLA: They wasn't a bit backward about taking a great big steak either.

JAMES: Where did you get your sourdough starter?

ELLA: Oh, anybody can start sourdough. That's all in your eye about having to get a start. I could start sourdough now with just a little buttermilk or something like that.

JAMES: Pretty easy to do?

ELLA: Oh, they said the first start of sourdough had to come from the Klondike. What was her name that brought it down to the states? Klondike Kate. We had sourdough biscuits before we ever knew there was a Klondike Kate. My mother always made sourdough biscuits, and codfish, and gravy and potatoes with their jackets on for breakfast, and that was what I was raised on. I'd just love to get some codfish now. I got a little box of codfish, about 3 x 4 inches, just about like this, maybe that deep. I got three messes out of it, 'cause it just took such a little dab, \$1.49. My father used to buy it in boxes like this, and about 4 or 6 inches deep, and oh, I don't know what he gave for it, nothing probably, but we'd have it piled up like that, because he came from Maine and that was his --- he was raised on codfish.

JAMES: Was that dried?

ELLA: All dried and salted codfish. I don't care anything about fresh codfish. But it has to be salty and stink like the dickens before it is good. When I was married, I tried to feed my husband codfish, and oh my goodness, he'd say, "I won't eat that stuff."

JAMES: Well, back in the South End when you were cooking, did they come in for lunch, or did they take a lunch out with them?

ELLA: No, we had a shed right down in the hay field, hay on the floor, and then there was some upright posts and they had willows and hay on the top. Oh, it was lovely, you know, never got hot, you know, plenty of fresh air all around. But when there was a windstorm come up, that was a different matter. That was terrible then. As long as it was calm, it was a wonderful place. Never get tired working out in that open air, you know. And I had to carry all the, had a Basco boy, he lives down here now, he would do such chores as that for me. Carry the water and peel the potatoes and help. And so, one day he said to me, talking in his Basco way, you know, if Jim would let me go into the field and help him and get somebody here to help you, there wouldn't be so many men sleeping under the hay cart. So, I told Jim what he said. "By god," he says, "he may have something there." So, I said, "Why don't you get Stella down here," that was his wife. "Do you think you could get along with her?" Well, I says, "Of course I can get along with her." So, he got his wife down there to help me, and let the Basco boy go into the field. They always called him Jim McDade because they never could pronounce his name. I don't know his name to this day.

JAMES: Long Basque name?

ELLA: Yeah. But he'll always wave at me every time he sees me down on the street.

JAMES: What did you serve them for lunch? What did they eat for lunch?

ELLA: I usually had some kind of a salad. There was a ranch over, oh 5 or 10 miles from the camp where we could get fresh vegetables once in a while. So, when we could get fresh vegetables, I'd have a salad, and I'd usually make pies of some kind of dried fruit, you know, no fresh fruit. And we'd have pie, and potatoes, of course, they were a mainstay, and canned food, maybe canned tomatoes, canned corn, something like that. And I'd usually have a roast at lunch, dinner, and that would be a real roast too, 10 or 15 pounds, maybe bigger. And after that roast was cooked in that Dutch oven, wasn't a Dutch oven, was just a big old restaurant stove is what it was, but I'm telling you, it was good meat. Now I can't eat meat. I can eat anything but meat, no I can't eat anything, I

don't eat very much of anything.

And the cook before me, she was pretty extravagant. She would throw out a lot of stuff. So, Jim said to me, "By God, you're starving my hogs to death." "What do you mean, Jim?" "Well, there's no slop to feed his hogs." I didn't throw out anything, they ate everything.

JAMES: Did you put the extra food into soup?

ELLA: The leftovers? There wasn't any leftovers, that was what he was complaining about, because I didn't have any leftovers. The men ate it all. And his cook before would throw so much stuff out. Oh my, she was an extravagant cook. But they cleaned out everything. I wasn't a good cook or anything like that, but I guess they liked it.

JAMES: Sounds good to me.

ELLA: That was really fun. I didn't mind that a bit. So, when it came time to pay me --- I think the men were getting \$1.65 a day, and he said, "What do you want?" Oh, I said, "You can give me just what you give the rest of the Indians." So, he gave me a check for, I think, a little over \$100. That was the most money I ever had.

JAMES: Well, that way of life is pretty much gone now. What is the important thing that has been lost from that way of life? What's the value of that way of life in the early days that we don't know about that I don't know about now?

ELLA: The value of what, living? If we had \$10 in our pocket, we was rich. When my husband and I were married, I don't know whether he had enough to pay the minister or not. That didn't matter, didn't bother. Of course, kids don't think much about it, you've got your parents back of you. You know, you'll eat anyway. My mother would give me 50 cents and tell me to go to the butcher shop and get 50 cents worth of meat. Well, that would be enough for a meal for four or five, six people maybe. We didn't have to worry about food if you had anything at all.

And as far as clothing was concerned, everybody made their clothes. There wasn't too much ready-made stuff then. Through catalogs you could buy clothing. But here there was no such thing as ladies' shops. I had one of the first ladies' shops that there was here, second one anyway.

Because I bought ... milliner in the '20's, I think, along about '21 or '22. And I run that shop for 35 years.

JAMES: What do you see in the future for this part of the country?

ELLA: No good.

JAMES: No good.

ELLA: I don't know, seems to me like today, everything is going to pot, in more ways than one. I don't know, I had a renter in a house, and they had come up here from the valley. And her husband was retired on disability, or social security and couldn't work, and she wanted to go into a little gift shop. And I said, "You're braver than I am. I wouldn't get into that now if it were me." So, she stayed a little while and froze out, she couldn't make it. Well, I don't think anybody in town is getting rich. There is, I think, an outlet I might say, for land letters, because it seems to me like this land that you couldn't give away has gone up terribly. Places that we didn't think was worth anything, they are now getting \$100 an acre and over.

That Vogler, I don't know how he acquired, he must have got some money, he made it in this country too, I think. But he owns all the valley out there practically, he did and he sold all that land. He got a hold of an awful lot of land out there, and he's a millionaire now, I expect. Of course, there's lots of those places that I expect that he sold that they had to give them up, and he had to take them back. But he still has them, and he can re-sell them to another sucker that comes along.

--

bl

MRS. ELLA LUCKEY

Born at Fort Harney. Had no doctor. During Indian scare. Officer gave up his quarters at time of birth. Were three families in area. Howsers and Whitings were others. Frank and Martha McLeod had a cabin under hill east of library. Ella's folks lived with them until finished dugout in the hill. Came here from Virginia City and Carson City. Her father's sister said that the wagon

looked like a gypsy outfit as her grandmother saved everything. Had tubs hanging on outside of the big wagon, cows trailing behind. Four in the family and had four horses to a wagon. No roads and used a compass. Skip Whiting was a brother. Father's family was in California for some time. Her grandmother left two daughters in Ohio and her mother and sister came around the Horn. Tailor by trade. Grandmother came up here when only 5 or 6 years old. Had first garden and flowers in Burns. Also had the first post office in Egan. Library Club named streets.

Father drove horses to California making about 40 miles a day. Horses more in demand than cattle. They camped at night and slept in wagon. Ate mostly dried foods. She saw fresh tomatoes and watermelon for first time on that trip.

Her father freighted from The Dalles, Ontario, and Huntington to get enough for the winter. Always helped other people. Father was from Maine and loved codfish. Also had dried apples, chicken and eggs, wild hogs from tules, wild game.

Cave below hill had one room with cook stove and chimney, dirt floor, rag rugs, bunk beds, straw mattress. Mother would go out and gather wool from dead sheep and make mattresses for buckaroos, get \$25 for them, just a single mattress. Maggie Donegan was the first child born in the Diamond country. There was a girl born in Canyon City before either one of them. Ella was the first white child born at Fort Harney, and Lt. Maurice Fitzgerald was the first man to see her after birth in July. They were back on their own place by fall, out past the Indian Village, and to the right where Red Walter lives now. Lady from Kiger country said Indians were uprising so settlers were called into Fort. After Fort disbanded, Peter French bought the mill, and the lumber came from Canyon City. Ella went on stagecoach back and forth to school, very rough riding, came by Baker from the University of Oregon. Came by sleigh once by Ontario and The Dalles. Mother was in the post office for 8 years so she grew up there.

On one stage trip, she was sitting between driver and a passenger, with her hat on, but when arrived had no hat. Slept when the horses swam through the river, as there was no bridges. Made it in one day as changed horses at stage stations and traveled day and night. Horses walked, not go at

a trot like on TV. Stage stations were cold, like sheep camp, but main lines had hotels. Near Silvies Valley, the house on the hill was a stage station. Burns was only about 10 years old then. Lola Stenger from Kiger started out in a wagon with a team and thought she could make it to the Fort during the Indian Uprising, but found she was making no headway so unharnessed the horses and rode bareback all night to Fort Harney, about 100 miles.

Mr. Locher built a brewery back of where Chevrolet Garage now stands. Had a dance hall above but was finally condemned. Built castle beyond Hines, one room after another, the way he had seen in Germany. Very nice family.

Not many people in early days, but lots of parties. Remembers visit to Island Ranch in buckboard to see the bride, Mrs. Devine, very beautiful and from California. No reception. Lived here remainder of life and lived at Alvord after leaving Island Ranch.