

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #29 - Sides A & B

Subject: Pauline Braymen - History Notes About Harney County

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PAULINE BRAYMEN: Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. You know it's the memories of those who lived in earlier days that will make the past live for future generations. Lifestyles and conditions are constantly changing, and only by listening to, and reading what those who have lived it can tell us can we save our historical heritage. On New Year's Day, 1974, it had been cold for three days in a row, and the ice on the pond was safe for ice-skating. So my family and friends bundled up for an afternoon of skating in the brisk winter sunshine.

Well ice-skating is not new to Harney County. Those who went to school in the 1890's and early 1900's often skated to school across the frozen meadows and sloughs. Bertha Carey, who came to Burns in 1898 when she was fourteen years old, went to school at Lawen. And although she says she never skated herself, she remembers the other children skating to school. And she tells about the skating parties they had on the frozen waters of Malheur Lake. She says we used to go down there for picnics in the evenings on the border of the lake. It was all covered with ice and froze hard, and we used to have skating parties. We had a big fire, and a big lunch around the campfire, and we'd stay until way late at night. Yes, it was fun, she recalls.

Bertha says that skating on the lake was entertainment in Harney County up into the 1920's.

It's memories like these that are being recorded for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. You know it's the memories of those who lived in earlier days that will make the past live for future generations. Lifestyles and conditions are constantly changing, and only by listening to, and reading what those who lived it can tell us, can we save our historical heritage. When it comes to providing a wide variety of merchandise and services the modern super market of today has little to boast over the Lunaburg and Dalton General Merchandise Store of pioneer Burns. Everything for everybody was the store's slogan. And shoppers in the early 1900's can remember buying alfalfa seed, yard goods for dresses, a pair of shoes, groceries, a screen door for the back porch, and a new harness for the wagon team in one shopping trip to Lunaburg and Dalton's. One could buy everything from hardware to fine laces, including fit yourself eyeglasses at twenty-five cents a pair, and Haviland China.

The two businessmen had an icehouse. They cut ice at the old mill pond in twenty-five and fifty pound blocks every winter, and packed it in sawdust in the ice house for summer use.

There was also a granary for storing seed and feed grains. Popular with the patrons was the phonograph recording room. The store had an Edison phonograph, and made recordings of local piano and singing talent, as well as numbers done by local Indians, including a speech of old Captain Louie, Indian Chief.

The store was a favorite place for friends and neighbors to gather around the store for a visit. Customers looked forward to the first of the year, when Lunaburg and Dalton gave calendar plates instead of paper calendars. The China was gaily decorated with pictures and a calendar of each month of the year. The plates were dutifully collected by residents of the community.

Merchandise was displayed everywhere, on the walls, the counters, and the ceiling. Mildred Gates, daughter of Jim Dalton, remembers they had a long hook to pull items down from the ceiling, she said. One day I was helping in the store, and couldn't find the item the customer wanted, anywhere. I finally asked Mr. Lunaburg, and as he picked up the long hook, he said, "I thought I

told you, never look down, always look up."

Jim Dalton came to Harney County from the Willamette Valley in 1886, and took a homestead near what is now the Island Ranch. In 1897, he and his family moved to Burns and went into the merchandising business with Fred Lunaburg. The two men were partners for thirty years without a written agreement of any kind. Fred Lunaburg, who came to the United States from Germany when he was thirteen years old, had been in the shoe business prior to the partnership. He was well known for his wit, and perhaps many old timers can remember his owl, which always pecked at him. One day the owl pecked too hard, and Lunaburg hit him with a hammer and killed him. When asked what had happened to his owl, he replied, "I hit him on der head mit de hammer, und he couldn't stood it."

In about 1912, the wood frame building which housed the Lunaburg and Dalton store was moved, and the stone building which is now the home of Hirsch's Variety Store was built. The old building stood for many years behind the stone building, and was used for a warehouse.

The gentlemen retired from business in about 1927, and Fred Lunaburg died in California in about 1930.

The Dalton's spent some time in California, but returned to Burns in 1930. Jim Dalton died in Burns in November 1937, at the age of seventy-six.

It's memories like these that are being recorded for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this Pauline Braymen. On January 22nd, 1974, the town of Burns, Oregon will be ninety years old. Have you ever wondered why our town is called Burns, and how it happened to be located where it is? Well if it hadn't been for our first postmaster George McGowan, way back in 1883, this community and Harney County might very well have been named Stenger.

The story goes that when the Egan Saloon and Post Office burned, the post office was moved to George McGowan's store. The authorities requested that a short name be chosen for the site. Peter Stenger, who owned the land the store stood on, suggested that Stenger was short.

However, there was definite feeling in the community that it would become known as Stenger town, where people get stung.

McGowan, a native of Scotland, suggested the name of Burns, after the Scotch poet Robert Burns. And a cowboy was sent out with a petition to gather the required signatures. It was a cold and windy winter day, and when the cowpoke returned, it was highly suspected that he had signed most of the names himself. But the document was forwarded to Washington, D. C., and on January 22nd, 1884, Burns, Oregon became official.

And if it hadn't been for the founders of the Robert Burns Society in 1940, many of the traditions associated with our town might never have been adopted. Over one hundred citizens of Burns signed as charter members of the organization which was established to perpetuate and emphasize the fact that Burns, Oregon was named in honor of the Scottish Bard.

The first project the Society embarked upon was to outfit the Burns Union High School Band with plaid uniforms. In 1951, the uniforms needed to be replaced, and the Society authorized the high school to substitute a similar plaid. These uniforms were used until several years ago, when the school again replaced the uniforms.

The Society requested the mayor to proclaim Robert Burns Week each year in January. And eventually an annual program was sponsored including the bands and choruses from the grade and high schools in the community.

In 1952, the high school changed its name from the Bulldogs to Hilanders, and the school paper and annual became the Bagpipe and the Bard. The girls pep club became the Bonnie Lassies, and the jaunty Scotsman that winks from the wall of the gymnasium became the mascot of the school and the town.

But the Robert Burns Society which was the prime mover in establishing these traditions to advertise the unique about our town has been inactive for some years. The last Bobby Burns program was held in 1958. But it is due to the activities of these members of the Society that have established traditions that have become a part of our community life.

It's facts like these that are being recorded for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know. We'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Several years ago I spent several afternoons with a gentleman by the name of Julian Byrd, pioneer editor of the Burns Times-Herald. He told me many, many stories about the early days in Burns. And one of these stories was an Indian legend that had been told to him by Dr. W. L. Marsden, who heard it from Captain Louie, the famed Paiute Indian Chief. This is the story as Julian told it to me, and I wrote it down.

It was late fall on Strawberry Mountain, many moons ago before the White man came to Harney County. And the animals had just completed the task of preparing for the long cold winter ahead. The pine nuts had been gathered and stored. The birds had made warm nests of thistle down for protection from the cold wind. The bear had tidied his hollow log, ready for the winter's hibernation. All was ready for the snow and the ice, the cold and the wind. And the animals felt pleased and comfortable in the knowledge that they would be safe.

Suddenly the excited chatter of a chipmunk brought all the small furred animals and birds running to the spot where the pine nuts had been hidden. The nuts were gone. A tribe of California Indians passing through the county had stolen them and carried them away. The birds and animals chattered and whaled among themselves. Without the pine nut, they would starve. The coyote had seen the Indians and noted the direction of their destination. He had a plan for recovering the nuts, but he would need help.

The field mouse, the crow, and the magpie were chosen to journey with the coyote to the camp of the California tribe. Then the coyote went to the camp of the Paiutes and told them what had happened. The heartiest young warriors, with the fastest ponies, were selected to help the coyote with his plan. For many days and nights the animals and the warriors trailed after the hostile Indians, through the forest, across the sagebrush planes, into another country far from Strawberry Mountain.

Finally they reached the camp where the pine nuts were hidden. The coyote instructed the

animals to stay hidden while the Paiute warriors went into camp to engage the California Indians in races and games. The Paiutes were welcomed, and soon everyone in camp was participating in the feasting, dancing, and games.

Now the coyote said to his companions, "We will search for the pine nuts." The magpie would watch for danger, and give a warning signal if the California Indians should discover the plot of the coyote and the Paiutes. The field mouse, crow, and coyote began to search the camp. They looked in tents, and searched among the skins and hides. With his sharp nose the coyote found one nut in the sinew of a bow. It was wrapped in so securely he could not pull it out. The field mouse gnawed at the sinew with his sharp teeth, and after long hard work, the sinew broke and the pine nut fell out. Just then one of the hostile Indians discovered the animals. The magpie gave his shrill scolding warning, and the crow quickly picked the nut up in his mouth and flew high above the range of bows and arrows towards Strawberry Mountain.

The field mouse and coyote crept into the bushes and hid. And the Paiutes on their fast ponies rode quickly out of the country before the California tribe could catch them. When the crow arrived at Strawberry Mountain, the pine nut was planted to ensure a crop of food for the animals next year. And when the coyote and field mouse had finished their long hard journey back, the animals welcomed them and rejoiced. Their greatest praises went to the coyote whose cunning and cleverness had saved them from starvation. This is the kind of material that is being recorded for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Many times material has come to the Harney County Library History Project in a round about fashion. A lady in Portland referred us to another lady in Portland, who knew a lady in Michigan who had homesteaded in the Fort Rock area. Now Fort Rock of course is not in Harney County, but the experiences that this ninety-year-old pioneer related for us, are typical of the homesteaders experiences in the high desert country. Mrs. Loie G. Horning-Hecker wrote several pages for us, and I'd like to share parts of it with you today. Loie and Henry

Horning homesteaded near Fremont, which is about five miles west of Fort Rock. After Mr. Horning died, Mrs. Horning was postmistress of the Wastenia Post Office a few miles away.

Phil Brogan in his book, "East of the Cascades," says, "Fort Rock, Sink, Wastenia, and other towns of the Basin were the result of attempts to farm the valley near the end of an unusually wet cycle. Some good crops were produced, and meadows cultivated in years of high moisture. But then came a period of dry years when it became evident that crops would not be grown without irrigation." Mrs. Horning Hecker writes as follows about her experiences: "We were living in Oregon City, Oregon, my husband and I and baby boy, when we decided we would take a homestead, as the government had put up the land in the Fort Rock Valley for filing. So my husband got in touch with Alvin Hawk, who was locating people. He, and his brother Charles, went with Mr. Hawk and located on a place seven miles from Fort Rock, and seven miles from Fremont. This was the fall of 1914. We took the train to Bend and waited there for his brother, who was on his way from Gresham, with a covered wagon. Then we all went on to the homestead, seventy-five miles, camping overnight, and sleeping on pine boughs.

My husband and his brother had put up a house for his family. And in a few days, our little shack was put up just about a quarter of a mile north, on our 320, and our life there began. With no well, we had to haul water from George Hockman's Ranch three miles away, once a week.

Charles had a few cows beside his two horses, so needed more water. He had four barrels, and we had one. He would fill the barrels, put a block of wood afloat on top, then put a gunnysack over the top and drive the hoops on tight so not much water was wasted over the rough roads. We were up high, so we could see a long way off. A dog or coyote would sound a long way off. And quiet, I used to think my ears ring.

The soil was good, would grow almost anything if it had water. But there was very little water, and frost. We saved our wash water for the garden that we tried to grow. We had a few vegetables.

It got real hot sometimes. To keep butter and milk cool, my husband dug a hole and sunk an

apple box into it on the north side of a big juniper tree. With two covers, it worked real well.

A baby girl arrived December 1915. We rented a couple of rooms of the storekeeper for the occasion in Fort Rock. Then moved back to our homestead shack in about a month, in a bobsled.

In the fall of 1916 when my husband had been out at Corvallis two months, I and the children went to join him. It was a hard trip for us.

In the spring we left for the homestead again. In Salem, Johnny was sick, had scarlet fever, and we were quarantined for four weeks. Then we started for Bend. Their Johnny got pneumonia, so we had to rent a room. When he made a turn for the better, his daddy came down with it, and in ten days passed away.

The children and I went on to our homestead, as we had no money, and no place to go. I proved up on the homestead.

The people signed a petition for me to get the post office, as the ones who had it were leaving. So I became the postmaster of Wastenia, and moved down, it was three miles. It only paid about seventeen dollars in three months.

I boarded the teacher, as it was close to the school. And as my father had come out from Wisconsin, he did the janitor work, and cut most of the wood. The wood was hauled from the reserve. By getting a permit, George and Grandpa would go up and cut and saw all our wood and haul it down in big blocks.

I'll not forget our first Thanksgiving dinner. We had jackrabbit for meat, and dried stewed prunes for dessert. We drove to Fort Rock to get our groceries, had to go through an alkali spot down by the Connley School. It took nearly all day with a lumber wagon and team.

My neighbor, the Hockman's, were wonderful friends and a great help to us. George made us a bobsled so we could haul our water from his place. He was a missionary, and once a month we would have an all day service, Sunday school, lunch, and George preached in the afternoon.

Our house on the homestead was build of wide rough lumber, stood on one end with a 2 x 4 laid flat half way up. The cracks were battened with thin boards, and we put building paper on the



inside. It was cold enough that the tack heads would be all frosty in the mornings. We had to get a small airtight heater, as the cook box stove was not enough to keep us warm.

We had to clear forty acres, so my husband Henry would cut the sagebrush and pile it. I would help, and then in the evenings we would burn it, a pretty sight. The baby slept in the buggy.

After my husband died, and we were left alone, Grandpa did a little brush cutting, but it was too hard for him. That was before we went down to where the post office was.

One time a boy came into Fremont on the stage, sick. It turned out to be smallpox. Our mail carrier, Charles Anderson caught it, and was very sick. He brought it to the post office of course, and several in our neighborhood got it, including my children. We didn't have a doctor. The nearest was Silver Lake, and he came up after it was nearly over. I had followed instructions in a doctor book, so got over it all right.

It wasn't all bad out there. We had our fun at birthday parties and picnics. We had some good singers, and some very nice programs at the schoolhouse. I used to catch up the horse and go over to Hockman's, and then go round up their cows when they could not go. That was fun. Had to go three miles to round them up and climb a steep rim rock. Would usually take the collie dog, which was surely trained well. I helped milk some of the cows too, back on the homestead.

My husband Henry Horning was a barber and used to walk down to Fort Rock across the fields and do barber work on Saturday. Some thought it a dreadful place to live, but it was fascinating to us, and we were lonesome for it after we left. I shut my eyes now sometimes and go over the scenes and the things we used to do. Have wished I could see it again, but I won't at my age.

So many left the country, we had to discontinue the post office. We then left to keep house for my father in Portland." This is the kind of material we are gathering for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Ella Voegtly, mother of Ray Voegtly who lives in Burns, wrote the story of her trip west to Oregon. She wrote this in about 1959. She says, "My father M.

F. Williams, and mother, and my sister Florence, who was twelve years old, and myself started out in a covered wagon on a cold day in the spring of 1888, in the month of June, with a little team of mules. We traveled across the western part of Kansas which all seemed like prairie. About the second day out, it was so cold, and we finally came across a lady out picking up cow chips for fuel.

She, with her family, lived in a dugout over the small hill. The family invited us to stay all night, but the blizzard lasted two or three days. While we were there, my mother did the washing and baked enough light bread to last us several days. The next state we entered, Colorado, crossed that, but don't remember too much about Colorado. It seemed to me I walked about one third of the way out here.

We first crossed the Cimarron River, and the Platte, and Green Rivers. There were no bridges over either of them. We had to ford all of them. Sometimes I thought we would never get across.

We, my sister and mother and I, walked up all the hills to lighten the load for our little team. We came across a part of Utah. That was where we saw our first Indians, and of course we girls were so scared, we didn't know what to do. We had never seen Indians before, only two that came up into Kansas from Oklahoma, but they were not bad. They talked about raising cabbages and onions, and different vegetables.

We left Utah and came through a part of Wyoming. Camped near Cheyenne and hunted antelope. One ran right through our camp. We were there about a week, then started on over into Idaho. We came through Hailey, Idaho, but that is about all I can remember about Idaho. I was only nine years old, and I don't remember the whole trip very well.

When we crossed the Snake River, I think it was at Huntington, we took the freight wagon road toward Burns, and came through Vale. We arrived in Harney, and the first man we saw and talked to was George Sizemore. He was standing on a platform in front of the small office building in Harney.

We drove on to Burns and camped across the river from the Bell-A Ranch for some time.

Then my father took a contract for cutting cordwood and fence posts for two German fellows by the name of Luig. They owned the ranch that is now owned by Mrs. Hebner on Prather Creek.

We then went up into the hill at the head of Prather Creek and Dad built a log cabin with a stone fireplace that we cooked on all winter. The cabin didn't have any floor, but just dirt. We had bunk beds with straw ticks for mattresses. We lived on sourdough bread, bacon, beans, potatoes, dried apples, and peaches. One can of peaches was fifty cents, if bought in the store.

The Luig brothers would go to Huntington or Ontario for provisions for the winter. They would sometimes butcher a beef and we would get a quarter of it. In the spring, we moved down on a ranch on Prather Creek. Dad farmed it. He borrowed a team of horses to plow with, and I at the age of ten did the harrowing. At noontime, the little mules would always take me home for lunch.

The house we lived in was log, but the doors and woodwork was lumber from the old Fort, for there wasn't anything left of Fort Harney but the cemetery, which was moved to San Francisco a few years later. My sister and I went to school at Harney, which was a larger town at that time than Burns.

We later bought the Harney Hotel, and in 1897 we left for Hoquiam, Washington. We stayed there just nine months, when my brother-in-law Louie Woldenberg, Jr., sent for my father to come back to Burns and help him with his stage contract.

We came back in 1898 and was here just a few years when I met and married Mr. Voegtly, in 1901."

Mrs. Voegtly passed away several years ago, but her story will be preserved. This is the kind of material that we are interested in collecting for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Have you ever wondered why Malheur Lake is named Malheur Lake, when it is located in Harney County? Why not Silvies Lake, or Steens Lake, or Blitzen Lake, or Indian Lake? Well, the editor of the Ontario Argus Observer newspaper has wondered the same thing, and a couple years ago wrote an editorial concerning the fact. His

editorial is entitled, "Theft is Theft". Malheur County citizens could well get upset over the recent development which becomes obvious when looking on any decent road map or atlas. Malheur Lake is in Harney County.

Only the musty annals of time will reveal when this lake was stolen from Malheur County, and taken into Harney County. The history is not a good thing to go by in matters of this nature, especially in this case.

Malheur County citizens have a right to their lake. Nobody knows more than its citizens, how restful and needed a lake can be. But low and behold, out from under the very eyes of its citizens the lake was stolen, just how and why remains a mystery.

Perhaps Harney County citizens needed the water despite the fact that they already have a Harney Lake, and just decided to take a lake from Malheur County, never thinking the loss would not go unnoticed. But no, the sharp eyes of the Argus have found the theft of the lake, and in all fairness demands the return of it. No doubt clever Harney Countyites took the lake when Malheur County citizens were out fishing or hunting, or tending cattle, or engaged in some other noble deed.

Moving it must have been a chore. It's funny it went unnoticed. Perhaps they waited until it was frozen, then going over in a group, skidded the entire lake into its new location, never realizing that by not re-naming it, eagle eyed Malheur County citizens would find it. So fair is fair. Harney County, give us our lake back, or we may skid it back one of those cold nights ourselves."

History often comes up with some humorous turns to events. Reading in one of the old newspapers of very early Burns, an article was found concerning the removal of the county seat to the Bird's Nest. We've talked to a lot of people, and no one knows for sure what the Bird's Nest was. We have some good guesses, but no one can come up with the answer to this mystery.

If you happen to know the answer to the mystery of Bird's Nest, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Claire McGill Luce was born at Andrews and spent her childhood with her grandfather in the Harney area. She left the community to spend an exciting life,

which took her all over the world. But she remembered the Harney County roots with great affection. And she was convinced that the history of the area is an important part of our heritage.

About three years ago, she gave the library a grant of money, and although she attached no strings to that grant, she strongly indicated that she would like to see the Harney County Library develop an extensive collection of historical reference materials concerning Eastern Oregon. It was along these lines that the Library was thinking when they purchased a microfilm reader, and the microfilm copies of the Burns Times-Herald, the available copies of the Crane American Newspaper, and the Harney County American, and the Harney Items, and an early Bend Newspaper.

Librarian Gen Slater has worked to obtain copies of books pertaining to the area. And it is surprising the amount of material available to researchers on the Harney County reference shelf.

But much of our history has not been written down. And the project with which I have been associated is one of collecting the oral history of the county. Funding for the project came after Mrs. Luce's death from a family memorial fund, and a matching federal grant.

About a hundred and fifty people have participated in the project to date, and we know many, many people still to be inter-viewed. It is an exciting project, one that will prove invaluable in years to come when our great-great grandchildren will be able to read about life in frontier times.

And in Harney County, frontier times are not so very much in the past. When you consider that the first settlers in Harney County came less than a hundred years ago, and you consider the long history of our nation in comparison, then you can realize that what happened in the early 1900's is an important part of our historical development. The things that I am told by people who lived in those days as homesteaders, as cattle ranchers, as businessman in an isolated frontier community are comparable with things that happened in other areas much longer years ago.

We have the unique opportunity of hearing these kinds of experiences firsthand, or at least only second hand. We'd like to see the community as a whole involved in the preserving of our historical heritage. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. The Jones Family had quite a rude introduction to Harney County, what with a shoot-out during which the Marshall was killed, and a run away stage team. Lawrence Jones recalls how his family made the trip to their new home in the Dog Mountain area when they came to Harney County from Montana in 1912. He says, "Mother and us four, Floyd, my oldest brother and I, and then Ted, and then Gladys came out, and my dad stayed in Montana to sell everything off. He sent us on ahead, because my grandfather had a stroke, and they sent for us. We came on the train from Montana to Ontario. We came through Pendleton, and then on down to Ontario. We had to stay all night there, and then take the eleven o'clock stage out the next morning.

I can remember Ted and I coming up that one mountain this side of Vale. It was pretty steep. We asked the stage driver if we couldn't get out and walk to make it a lighter load. We didn't hardly weigh twenty pounds apiece, but anyhow he said, "Why sure." There was lots of this red and white obsidian. We'd never seen anything like that, you know, and we had our pockets full when we got back on the stage.

We left Vale at eleven o'clock in the morning, and we traveled all night, and practically all the next day to get to Burns. When we got to Harney, that's where the trouble started. We pulled up in front of the post office, and the Marshall came across the street from the store, or the livery barn. There was three men sitting on the sidewalk, and they were talking and cursing. The Marshall said, "There is a lady on the stage, you be careful of what you are saying." The men said something, I didn't get what. Then the Marshall said, "Now you be careful, or I will run you in." And he went on into the post office.

There was one man who came out from behind the store, and he had four rifles, and he gave each one of the three a rifle. Mother said, "There is going to be trouble." So when the stage driver got out, he said, "We'll stop at the store and get a drink. They've got good water over there." He turned the team around and drove over to the store.

About this time one of the men shot at a chicken just past the post office. And of course us kids was watching, and we hollered, "He just about killed that chicken." The team started to run,

and we never got stopped until we got down to the first house on the left, south of Harney. We pulled up there, and the people there had heard shots and had come out to the road.

Anyway, we got our drink and went on into Burns, and we met the sheriff on the way out, so we knew then that somebody had got killed. When we got into town, they questioned us, and Mother was getting pretty nervous.

The Marshall was named Stroud, and he was killed. He was a big man, sandy complexion, and I can just see him today. He was across the street there, and he was just as straight as --- he had his shoulders thrown back like he was kind of proud of himself. I guess within two or three minutes after we left there, why that was it, and he was killed.

Anyway my Mom didn't want to answer any more questions. My aunt and uncle, Jim Kendall had made arrangements for a fellow to take us out to the ranch where they were living. So he took us out, and in a few days the lawyer came out to get the testimony. He got Floyd's, and Mom's, and then later on they wanted me, but I couldn't take it. I was twelve years old, and they took me in the room, and I just couldn't do it, so they excused me. But Mama and Floyd testified.

After the trial, I think they got two years, and that was all they got for it, and they was out in one. You know I've thought about it so many times. We thought, what are we getting into, a wild country like this. But you know, that was the last time we ever heard of anything like that. We really thought we were getting into a wild country."

This is the kind of material that we are collecting for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

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SIDE B

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Maurice Fitzgerald came to Harney County in 1873. He was stationed at Fort Harney, and was a scout during the Modoc Indian War. He spent those early years in Harney County, and in later years wrote a document entitled, "Harney County, It's Early Settlement and Development," in which he detailed his knowledge of the events that occurred in this

area. He gives us some firsthand descriptions that are very colorful and very interesting.

One of the incidents that he relates is kind of exciting, and I would like to share it with you today. Maurice Fitzgerald writes: "I cannot refrain from recording an encounter that I witnessed in Burns in 1884, between two men with whom I was well acquainted. It was dramatic and awesome, and held you spellbound while it was being enacted.

There was nothing attractive about Burns in those days. In fact it was as raw and crude a little burg as one can well imagine. There were two saloons, two small mercantile stores, a rough and tumble hotel, a blacksmith shop, and a livery stable in the making. The saloons were the most popular resorts, and seemingly the most prosperous. For the cow punchers from the larger cattle ranches, and the few small stockmen and settlers of the surrounding country, when visiting the embryo city, made such places their headquarters. Much bad whiskey was consumed and card games were well patronized, and not infrequently a shooting fracas to enliven things was pulled off.

Among others who came occasionally on business or for pleasure was one Jack Miller, a native of Texas. He came to Harney County in the spring of 1883, and was given employment on the large cattle ranch of Devine and Todhunter, on which he worked steadily for more than a year and earned the reputation of being one of the best and most reliable hands on the ranch.

He didn't touch intoxicating liquor, something very rare among workers in those days. Saved his wages, and quitting the ranch went into business for himself, establishing a camp in the adjacent timbered hills where he got out timbers of all kinds for fencing and building purposes. His camp was located some fifteen miles from Burns, where he had four or five men employed in the timber, and a camp cook named Matt Egan.

For some reason, best known to himself, two or three days before Christmas he paid Egan off, and installed in his place a buxom widow of middle age. The discharged cook didn't accept his discharge philosophically. He realized that he had given entire satisfaction to the members of the crew in preparing their meals, and resented the action of the boss in firing him so that a place could be found for a female friend, who Egan believed was incapable of performing the duties required as



satisfactorily for all concerned as he.

Egan came to Burns, and after imbibing a few drinks of fighting whiskey, let it be known that he considered his former employer a rotten skunk who had treated him so shabbily. A day or two after Christmas, Miller agreed to come to town to get a few things needed at the camp. He hadn't been there very long until he was accosted by Egan who let him know in very plain language what he thought of him for doing such a dirty trick, and added that there was only one he-man's way of squaring the score between them, and that was by going out behind the blacksmith's shop and shooting it out.

Miller, cool and collected, said, "Matt, you've been drinking. Go and take a sleep, and when you are awake you will feel differently. There is no reason why you and I should have any trouble, we can always be good friends, and I hope we shall." Miller's levelheaded talk seemed to appease somewhat the wrath of Egan, for the time being. So they parted without further recriminations. But the armistice was of short duration. Egan took an additional drink or two when his outraged feelings again flared up.

Meanwhile the news had spread that trouble was brewing between Egan and Miller. Ben Brown and I had happened to be standing in front of the Brown Store when Egan came, coming out of the Johnson Saloon, which was close by. Seeing us, approached and said to me, "Fitz, I'm not going to let anyone do me dirt and get away with it." I tried to mollify his feelings and dissuade him from making trouble.

While I was speaking, I noticed that Matt was gazing intently down the street, although there wasn't a soul in sight. He knew that Jack had gone down in that direction and saw his horse saddled and hitched to a post on the opposite side of the street. Presently, we saw Miller come out of Wash Smelser's place and started walking towards his horse. Egan stepped off the sidewalk, and as Miller was nearing the hitching post shouted, "Jack." At the same time beckoning with his hands for him to come hither.

Jack stopped in his tracks, his head bent down for a few seconds, then whirled and came

walking up briskly towards us, his arms swinging leisurely at his sides. He wore a heavy blue flannel jacket.

Egan stood motionless as Jack approached, until he was within fifteen or twenty feet, then said, "Lookout." And at the same time drawing a pearl handled Smith and Wesson six-shooter which he had ready for use. The long barrel inside his trousers belt in front, with the handle protruding from his open vest which had only the lower button fastened. In drawing his weapon, he had to raise his arm several inches. Just as he did so, Jack crouched, then darted in like a flash, grasped Matt's wrist with his left hand, forcing it up just in the nick of time so that the bullet passed harmlessly over his shoulder. Then reaching with his right, he drew from the breast pocket of his jacket a Colt's Bulldog which he raised to fire. But Egan on the alert with his left, caught Jack's gun hand just as he pulled the trigger forcing it down so that the bullet went into the ground. There they stood for a few seconds, each holding the other's gun hand. It made a dramatic and awe inspiring tableau.

Ben Brown and I were spellbound, and never moved a step. Just then the report of the firearms emptied the saloons and stores, so that the finish was witnessed by quite a little crowd. Both were strong men, but Miller having the under hold possessed the advantage. With the supreme effort of sheer strength he forced Egan's left hand upward until his own was in line with Egan's body, while still holding Matt's right aloft with his left. Then rapidly sent three or four bullets into his opponent's midriff. Egan slumped to the ground saying as he fell, "You got me Jack," and expired immediately.

Miller, naturally excited, placed his foot on the dead man's body, wrenched the weapon from his hand, then with a gun in either hand, walked up the middle of the street in front of the saloon where seven or eight reputedly tough characters were assembled, saying, "If any of you don't like what I've done, get right out here and try your hand."

None of these reputed gunmen said a word or made a move. Jack thought that there might have been a friend of Egan's among them, but there wasn't.

In a little while Miller quieted down, turned Egan's gun over to the hotel man and rode to camp. Nothing was ever done to question the legality of the killing. It was generally considered justifiable homicide.

In a few months thereafter Miller left the Harney County, and in 1886 went to Alaska where he spent about ten years trapping and hunting until the Klondike discovery of gold, when he developed into quite a prominent character amassing a considerable fortune, but not under the name of Jack Miller."

This was an account written by Maurice Fitzgerald who came to Harney County in 1873, and who documented his firsthand account of those early days in the Harney County country. This is the kind of material that we are collecting for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Katie Jones Wheeler is the daughter of Hugh and Lettie Jones who came to Lakeview from Kansas, and then to Harney County in 1912, and 1913. There were seven children in the family, Denver now deceased, Theodore of Ashland, Katie of Hines, Alonzo better known as Stub of Fort Klamath, Carl of Princeton, and Harland of Ontario.

In an interview Katie gave for the Harney County Library History Project, she tells of those early days in Harney County. Katie says, "I was born in Kansas and we came from there in a covered wagon when I was just little. I don't remember at all. We came to Twin Falls, and then we went to Lakeview. I was three years old. I started my first year of school in Lakeview, and that was the year that my dad came to Catlow Valley.

It was 1912, and he put up a tent and built a one-room cabin and cleared a piece of ground. My mother and we kids stayed in Lakeview until Dad came in 1913 to get us.

I went to school about two months in Lakeview until the snow got so deep I couldn't go. Then in the spring Dad came and got us and we moved to Catlow. Our home adjoined the Rock Creek Ranch that Taft Miller owns now.

They called the community Rag Town because everyone lived in tents until they could build

their houses, and I think there was a homestead on every 160 acres. They built two schools, a grade school and a high school. Then there was the Pioneer Schoolhouse. We had to go five miles to go to school. We usually went horseback until the weather got bad, and then we went in a buggy. Dad built a bobsled. Those days we used to have hard winters with lots of snow. I can remember we had a rough winter that first winter in Harney County. Winters were just more severe in those days. Lots of times we couldn't go to school, the snow would get so deep and then drift, and we had to cross Rock Creek. We usually went horseback until the weather got bad, and then we went in a buggy. Rock Creek would be high, and froze over, and then in the early spring it would begin to break up. He used to drive a big old gray mare to school, her name was Doll. By this time my older brothers had finished school, and I was doing the driving for my two younger brothers. I can remember many a time climbing out tiptoeing across the ice a couple of times to see if it was safe to cross with the horse and buggy. Sometimes I didn't make it, and fell through. I remember one time I did. Mrs. Bradeen was the teacher; she was Bill Bradeen's mother. What I'd do was pull the lines out and throw them across, then I'd go across the ice and pull on the line and old Doll would come across. If we fell through, the water would be deep; it would run into the buggy.

Anyhow this time I fell in and I nearly froze by the time we got to school. Mrs. Bradeen was real tall, slim woman, and wore her dresses clear down. I remember wearing her clothes that day. The kids --- well I don't think any of them studied all that day for laughing at me.

Bill Bradeen's uncle taught too, he was one of our teachers. There were a lot of people there when we lived in Catlow. My two brothers older than I went to high school at the Pioneer School, and then we left there when I was fifteen. I went the first two years of high school at Voltage, and that's all I ever had. Dad wouldn't let me come to Burns, he thought it was too wild, so two years was all I got.

There would be lots of times we couldn't go to school, because it would drift so bad. Horses would just lunge through the snow, you know. And today people will look at you like you are crazy when you tell them."

These have been a few excerpts from an interview with Katie Wheeler who lives in Hines, and who spent her early years in the Catlow Valley. Next week I'll continue telling more from Katie's interview. This is the kind of material we are collecting for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Today I would like to share more from an interview with Katie Wheeler who came to the Catlow Valley in 1913, and spent her school years there. Katie now lives in Hines.

It was no easy chore to get to school in the wintertime in those early days. And Katie tells a few incidents that happened to her. She says, "Mother had a big rock and it just fit in her old Majestic range. She put that in the oven at night, and built a fire the first thing in the morning. By the time we were ready to go to school, that old rock would be just hotter than hot, and she'd wrap it in sacks and put it in the buggy for us kids to keep our feet warm on the way to school. We had five miles to go, and I can remember the little ones starting to cry.

We had this old mare, oh Dad loved his horses more than he did his kids, and she had to have hay and grain. We had to take a sack of grain to school for the nosebag of grain every day. And you had to hold her all the time, or she wanted to run. And when the little ones would start to whimper, I'd shake the lines and holler, and boy old Doll would run. If Dad knew today, he'd turn over in his grave. She'd just be lathered by the time we'd get to school. Of course when we got home from school, we'd get a brush and brush her all down. But she loved to run.

We all had copper toe boots. I had boots just like the boys, with copper toes and buckles on the top. We got one pair when school started in the fall. And by the time school was out in the spring and the snow went off, we went bare footed until school started again.

Mother would cut burlap sacks in strips and wrap our feet over our boots and then put the hot rock in the buggy. But oh, it was so cold, and the kids from the other way had the job of doing the janitor work in building the fire at the schoolhouse. But they were always late. I can remember getting to school and running up front to the stove. The little kids would be bawling, and I would

get a fire started.

The last time we went down to Catlow, we wandered around on old roads, and through the sagebrush until I found where the old school was. And I found the top off of one of the old stoves. It was one of those that was chrome-like.

One of the schoolhouses is at Blitzen. There was this old fellow who lived there that bought the schoolhouse and moved it to Blitzen. He was going to make a nightclub out of it.

Kids today just don't know what roughing it is. But mother would always put the rock in the buggy and hitch up the buggy or the sled whichever we went in, and bring it up to the gate and away we'd go."

You know they were fighting here awhile back afraid that they were going to exterminate all the coyotes. "Well the homesteaders then made a living trapping rabbits and coyotes, Katie Wheeler tells. There was a five-cent bounty on rabbits, and a five-dollar bounty on coyotes, she says. We kids had a snare line on one side of the road that we run going to school. We'd get the ears off the rabbits. This was the proof needed for collecting the bounty. And then on the way home we'd check it again. And Mother and Daddy ran a trap line too. All the homesteaders were doing this, and that still didn't kill the coyotes. This was in about 1917. I think we had maybe seven different rabid coyotes come to our house. We'd find them in the manger and we lost one of our dogs. Dad built a high, high fence around the yard so they couldn't get into the house.

The first year we lived in Catlow, Dad dug a deep well, and he rocked it down. I remember he put a wagon wheel on ropes and covered it with canvas. He'd ride that down into the well, and bring the dirt up in buckets, and he rocked it up. We drew our water out of the well with a horse and a ten-gallon keg. Then later we put a pump in so we could pump water for our stock. There was no way of watering a garden, but Mother always used to put green onions and radishes along the trough where we could dip the water out and water them, and around the pump where the water would run down when we pumped into the trough."

These have been a few excerpts from the interview with Katie Wheeler who grew up in the

Catlow Valley. Next week I'll bring you more from her interview. This is the kind of information we're collecting for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. I'd like to share some more of an interview with Katie Wheeler who came to Catlow Valley in 1913 with her parents. She has many interesting things to tell about life in those earlier days in Harney County.

She tells, "My dad and older brothers used to hay, and the boys worked in the sheep camp with the lambing in the spring. Mother and us little kids would pump water every night. We kids would chase the cows away. They'd come in and drink half a barrel. Every night we would pump water in two barrels and two half-barrels. I used to think those old cows would just pride themselves on how much they could drink. They would come in along the middle of the afternoon and stand there and drink, and drink, and drink. And every night, us kids would take turns pumping. We'd each one pump so many strokes. The littlest ones couldn't handle it alone, and it took two of them to work the handle. But we would count the strokes, and then Mother would take over and pump about twice as much as us kids did.

Daddy built this one room cabin when he first came to Catlow, and then he built on. I remember he built a frame and put a tent over it, and he put coats of linseed oil and paint until it was just like a board. And my older brothers slept in that. It was just at the end of the house. It was walled up so far, and had a stove in it, and it was just like another room. We used to go to Beckley and Blitzen for supplies. And then in the fall he'd go down to Surprise Valley, California with a four-horse team and he'd get apples and potatoes and carrots, a whole load. And he used to bring --- well they were like half-kegs, one each of strawberry and apple jelly. There was nothing out at Catlow to can. He'd bring a five-gallon can of honey. Dad built a cellar. It was dug down with steps and rocked up, and he had bins in that cellar, and Mother would put the carrots in the sand.

He'd go to Blitzen and buy a barrel of flour, macaroni, and beans, and a slab of bacon, and

that was about it, a slab or two of bacon. I can't remember Mother making much roast. It was steak or stew.

And we usually had a couple of pigs to butcher in the fall. We used to make lard. We rendered lard and pork, and I remember curing it. I remember just freezing it and hanging it up. We always rendered our own lard, and Mother would make butter in the summer when the cows were fresh and giving lots of milk. We couldn't eat much cream, because we had to keep it for butter. And she would work that butter, and work it and work it, and then she'd put it in those big crocks and put brine on it, that's salted water. And then put a plate over the top of it with a rock on top to hold it down.

And eggs, when the chickens were laying good, she'd put eggs down in water glass. It's kind of like Jell-O, and it's clear. She'd put the eggs in these crocks in the water glass, and they would keep. The butter would keep all winter, or until it run out. Mother used to wash her butter so well, she made the best butter. She used to make it in rolls like that, and take her paddle and make marks across the top. I could always tell Mother's butter, because of the marks.

We always had lots of milk and cottage cheese. Mother made cottage cheese every day. I think my mother made the best light bread of anybody I ever knew. She used the whey off the cottage cheese. To make cottage cheese, you put the sour milk on the stove and get it hot, and it separates. And then she'd drain the whey off, and put the curds in a bag and hang it on the clothesline and let it drip. And she'd use the whey for light bread. It was so light, and not porous and dark. If she didn't have whey, she used potato water. You just didn't go to the store for this and that and the other.

The Rock Creek water surplus came down across our place. Dad built a dam and we had a pretty good reservoir there. But they've changed the channel now, and it doesn't go across the homestead at all anymore.

We had a rye patch and a wheat patch, and once in awhile on a good year with the reservoir we could irrigate the wheat patch. For several years there were good years. We had rain and lots of



snow and good crops, and then gradually it got drier and drier each year, and less snow, just like a drought. People just couldn't raise their grain. But we always had rye and wheat, at least enough for our stock in the winter.

But it gradually got warmer each winter. Well it is still getting warmer, we don't have near the winters that we used to have. But finally Dad gave it up. The years got worse, and worse, and worse. First one would move away, and then another. We went to Voltage then and Dad worked on ranches.

We were in Catlow there eight years. Gradually homesteaders left one at a time, gave up, gave out."

These have been excerpts from an interview with Katie Wheeler who lived in Catlow Valley as a child, and who now lives in Hines. This is the kind of information we're collecting for the Harney County Library History Project. If you have a story to tell, let us know, we'd like to talk to you.

Hi, this is Pauline Braymen. Pioneer Day is coming up Saturday, and it is a time for remembering stories from years past. How many of you remember the Westminster clock that chimed on the U. S. National Bank Building? Well I'd like to tell you the story of how the town clock fenced the cemetery. The fund that was to have bought a town clock for pioneer Burns instead fenced the Burns Cemetery many years later. In about 1907, a theatrical group spent most of the summer in Burns. They were so impressed with the hospitality of the little pioneer town that they gave a benefit performance one night before they left. The money raised was given to the town to be spent for something the people wanted. It wasn't hard for the townspeople to decide. A town clock, one that chimed the hour and could be heard all over town.

The benefit theatrical was a huge success. Everyone in town went to see the play, and even the actors paid admission. However not enough money was realized at this time to finance the town clock. The money was entrusted to Julian Byrd, until enough could be raised to buy the clock.

The May 2nd, 1908 Burns Times-Herald said, "Local people are anxious to get the town

clock in position, and are making inquiries. The matter of prices and size are now holding the order up, as Mr. Gemberling has not received all the information he desires before the order is made. From inquiry made it would seem that close figuring is necessary to secure a good town clock for the money now available. It is thought however, that the order will not long be delayed."

Word later in the month revealed that the three hundred dollars in the fund would not even meet half the cost of the clock desired. A satisfactory clock with an eight hundred pound bell was priced at six hundred and seventy-five dollars.

Years passed, and although the fund was added to from time to time, nothing more was done to further the purchase of the clock. In 1929 the Harney County National Bank Building was completed, and a Westminster chime clock was installed. The fund which had lain idle for so long was now of no use.

Mrs. Archie McGowan was at this time quite interested in the improvement of the Burns Cemetery. She had worked with the City Council to have trees planted in the area, and arranged to have the cemetery landscaped. At her suggestion, it was decided to use the town clock fund to fence the cemetery grounds.

Ironically enough, the bank's Westminster clock no longer chimes. U. S. National Bank took over the Harney County National Bank Building, and the clock chimed for many years until the building was remodeled in the 1950's, and the clock was replaced with a neon sign, much to the dismay of the local management and townspeople. The clock was dismantled and stored in Burns.

There are some of us who remember Westminster chimes ringing out through the town when we were downtown shopping, and have that hope that maybe someday Burns will again have a town clock." This will be my last program for the summer. I've really enjoyed talking to you these past few months. And just remember, if you have a story to tell, I'd like to talk to you.

(END OF TAPE)

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