

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #360 - Sides A/B

Subject: Lois Frost - With Video

Place: Frost Home - Burns, Oregon

Date: April 14, 1994

Interviewers: Dorothea Purdy & Barbara Lofgren

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy, along with Barbara Lofgren, and today we're visiting with Lois Frost at her home in Burns, Oregon. The tape number is 360. The date is April 14th, 1994, and we're in Burns, Oregon. This cassette will be stored at the Harney County Library, along with the video, which we'll take later, and it is with the Harney County History Project. Lois, could you please tell us your name?

LOIS FROST: My name was Lois Rossiter.

DOROTHEA: And can you spell that for us?

LOIS: R O S S I T E R.

DOROTHEA: And where were you born?

LOIS: Born In Tabor, Iowa.

DOROTHEA: When?

LOIS: July 31st, 1910.

DOROTHEA: What were your parent's names?

LOIS: My father's name was William Henry Rossiter, and my mother was Ethel Berheimer Rossiter.

DOROTHEA: What did they do for a living?

LOIS: He was a farmer.

DOROTHEA: Of anything, or just special crops?

LOIS: Well in Iowa they raised corn, and hogs, and things like that.

DOROTHEA: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

LOIS: I have three brothers and one half-sister.

DOROTHEA: And what are their names?

LOIS: My oldest brother is named Darrell Rossiter, and he is 86 years old the 11th of this month. Then there is me. And then my brother Dwight Rossiter, he was in the Navy for 30 years and he lives up at Edmonds, Washington. And then my other little brother is Austin Rossiter, and he lives at Sutherland.

DOROTHEA: You have a sister?

LOIS: I have a half-sister.

DOROTHEA: Okay, what is her name?

LOIS: Her name is Vera Moreland.

DOROTHEA: And where does she live?

LOIS: She lives at Oregon City also.

DOROTHEA: Do you ever get to see these people?

LOIS: Oh yeah. My father passed away when I was five years old and left us children, four of us, and then my mother married George Kesterson, and that's my sister's father. And he raised us, all of us, yeah.

DOROTHEA: So he had a nice family then, didn't he?

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: And what do you think was the reason you came to Oregon?

LOIS: I'm not sure. But my folks, my step-dad and my mom came to Oregon and they liked it so well they came back. But I don't know why they came, unless they saw an ad about something about Oregon, I don't know. That was from Hay Springs, Nebraska, where we came from.

DOROTHEA: Oh, and how did you come to be in Nebraska?

LOIS: Well, my father and mother went there when we were, us children were small. And then he got sick and passed away when I was five. So then my mother married George Kesterson and then my sister was born.

DOROTHEA: Was she born in Nebraska?

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: What did they do, were they farmers also?

LOIS: Well, had a large cattle ranch, that's what my father had there in Nebraska. And when my father passed away why then George took over and took care of the cattle and things.

DOROTHEA: Okay. So when you came to Oregon, about how old were you?

LOIS: I was ten.

DOROTHEA: Ten. Can you tell us something about the trip that you remember? Was there anything that you especially remember?

LOIS: Yeah, we came out on the train. And we left in the evening, and I don't know why, but we left in the evening. Us kids had ridden on the train before, but not this far, and we couldn't go to sleep or anything. My mom let us play around in there, in the train. She had a lap robe that was made out of a horsehide, I still have it, and we put that across the seats and we played under there. And we were three days and two nights, or two nights and three days I'm not sure, on the train, before we got to Portland. Yeah. And then from Portland we went to Drain on the train.

DOROTHEA: And what kind of a ride was that? Was it a long ride, or ---

LOIS: No, it didn't seem, after that other one, it wasn't very long.

DOROTHEA: What did you bring with you when you came that time? Did you have all kinds of luggage, or furniture, or ---

LOIS: Brought everything with us, because my folks were determined they were coming to stay, so everything came with us. There is a trunk over there that is one of the things that came. And yeah, and brought all they could, you know, without household things. We bought that after we got to Drain. But we moved!

BARBARA LOFGREN: So you didn't bring furniture and things like that on the freight?

LOIS: No, no.

BARBARA: They carried freight or anything like that?

LOIS: No, no, I don't think so, it was just mostly our clothing.

BARBARA: I see.

LOIS: Things that were treasured.

BARBARA: You sold everything off and then had to re-buy everything when you got to Oregon.

LOIS: Uh huh, uh huh.

BARBARA: That must be kind of hard to give, for a family to give up everything that they had, really, and start over again.

LOIS: That many of us too, uh huh. And Oregon was so different from what we were used to. In Nebraska we didn't have trees, we didn't have fruit trees or anything.

DOROTHEA: So what do you remember about your house when you first came to Drain to stay? Did they have a place already in mind?

LOIS: It was to be rented. And the people were still there when we got there. It was a huge home. It must have had ten-foot ceilings, and it had two, like two living rooms with a fireplace in each one. And a stairway with four bedrooms upstairs, and bedrooms downstairs, it was a big home. And we had never seen a fireplace before, either. Yeah.

DOROTHEA: So building a fire in that fireplace was probably an enjoyable ---

LOIS: And also it was cold. Because it was such big rooms that you had to be in front of

the fireplace to get warm. Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And you probably heated with wood also?

LOIS: Wood, oh yeah, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Tell us about some of your excursions when you went after wood. And I know you must have had to ---

LOIS: Well I'll tell you we didn't go very far because the wood, the trees were right there. And my stepfather and my brother was going to saw down a big tree that must have been three foot through. And so I and all the little children sat in a, oh a long ways away in a, what they called a hack then, it was like a buggy or a big wagon thing. And so they sawed down the tree with a crosscut saw. My mom was out there watching, and when the tree fell my mom went the other way. My mom fainted and fell over from the noise. (Laughter) And the tree came so far that the tip of it hit the building above our heads. But we were just far enough away that it didn't hurt anything. Now that was our first experience with the wood, yeah.

BARBARA: There is a trick to falling trees that they probably didn't know about.

LOIS: Yeah, well he didn't know how to gage the distance, how tall it was, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Then I understand also that you had never had a Christmas tree. Can you tell us something about that?

LOIS: Never ever had our own. We saw them in churches, but never had our own. But see my brother was 12, and I was 10, and the other little one was 8, and so we went out and got the biggest tree that would fit in that ten-foot ceiling, and took it in. And my brothers made the little cross things, the wood, to sit it on. And then we made our own decorations with paper, and popcorn, and cranberries, and, yeah. And had fun doing it. But our folks said, "Now if you get up in the morning you're not to open anything until we get up." So we were up at 4 o'clock waiting to open up our gifts, but mostly just looking at

that tree, yeah.

DOROTHEA: So that was quite a special fete, even if you didn't have any presents, the tree would have been enough.

LOIS: Yeah. Well in those days you didn't have very many presents either.

DOROTHEA: No, usually you got one nice one and then a couple of little ones maybe.

LOIS: Yeah. And also when we lived there we had all kinds of fruit. We had apples, and all kinds of plums, and grapes, and a walnut orchard at that home, and it was wonderful. Except there weren't any big cherries, like the black cherries. So the friends that my folks met sold us a whole tree for fifty dollars, a huge big tree. And my mom canned, I don't know how she learned to can, really I don't. She canned, she canned in half-gallon jars.

BARBARA: Oh, my goodness.

LOIS: Yeah. And she even canned beans and corn.

DOROTHEA: Don't you think that probably she watched her mom or somebody that did this also?

LOIS: I don't know, I don't know.

DOROTHEA: She never said anything?

LOIS: No. Well I never asked either; just because she was doing it I never asked how she learned how to do it. But, yeah.

DOROTHEA: What kind of meals did you have? Did you have meat, and potatoes, and gravy like they usually, or did you make a lot of your own ---

LOIS: You bet, you bet.

DOROTHEA: --- biscuits and gravy?

LOIS: Always had a garden, raised your own garden. And we had our own hogs and they smoked and cured their own meat, or put it down in brine. We always had that. And my mom raised chickens, she had a little incubator. In this house there was, underneath

the stairway was a little closed in place and she put the incubator in there and hatched out a hundred little baby chickens. And it was with kerosene, a little kerosene light in there that heat that. So we always had chickens.

DOROTHEA: And you had your own eggs?

LOIS: Uh huh. And one year there was seven eggs that didn't hatch, and so she didn't want to keep the incubator running, so she turned it off and put those eggs on a hot water bottle and covered it up and they hatched out. But there was no hen to give them to, so we raised them by hand. And my sister was three years old and she loved those little chickens. And one day she was feeding them on the floor and she said to the chickens, "Get down on your hands and knees and eat that." And Mom said, "Chickens don't have knees." And she said, "Show the lady your knees." (Laughter) Yeah. No, we always had good times, and good fun.

DOROTHEA: Did you, where did you go to school?

LOIS: In Drain, Oregon.

DOROTHEA: And was that a large school, or was it a one ---

LOIS: It was high school and grade school all together. Used to be there, used to be Drain Normal School before we got there, but it burned and they just had high school and grade school there. And we were a mile and a half from town.

DOROTHEA: What size of a place is Drain?

LOIS: At that time it was 500 people. And there was a large sawmill there, and a few stores.

DOROTHEA: Post office and ---

LOIS: Post office, churches, and doctor's office. We had a lady doctor, Dr. Bertha Devore.

DOROTHEA: As you grew older, what did you girls and boys do? Did you work for other

people, or did you help somebody harvest their crops? Or ---

LOIS: Uh huh, my brothers did.

DOROTHEA: Your brothers did.

LOIS: My brothers did. I worked for a lady too, just gathering eggs and doing things like that for fifty cents a day.

DOROTHEA: When you finished school, did you go on to college?

LOIS: No, I didn't even go but one year to high school.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

LOIS: When I graduated from the eighth grade, I had one year of high school. And then my grandmother in Iowa was bad with cancer, so my brother took my mother and they drove back to Iowa in September. So I stayed home and took care of my step-dad and my brothers and sisters. And they were gone from September till December before they came back. So I did the canning and every-thing while they were gone.

DOROTHEA: So you had learned to cook and can and ---

LOIS: Yeah, my mom had taught me all these things, uh huh. That's why I think the children today should be taught more to do at home. Yeah, I do. How many sixteen-year-old kids do you know that could do what I did?

DOROTHEA: Not very many, not very many, not anymore. So how did you meet your husband?

LOIS: Well he came from Idaho, and his aunt lived across the little creek from us. And they came up to see his aunt. They were good friends of ours too. And his aunt and uncle lived across the creek from us, and they had to go about a half a mile down the road and across the creek to get to their place even. There was no bridge to get across to the --- they had to ford the creek. And as we had known Aunt Mildred and Uncle Delmer all these years, yeah, so then Gerald and I went together three years before we were

married.

In the meantime his father passed away. When he came he was sixteen years old and he helped to move them from Payette, Idaho to Drain. He drove the car with his mother, and his dad followed with his brother and sister with a wagon and team. And they would have to stop and get a camping place every night, and that's the way they came to Drain. Yeah.

DOROTHEA: So they came kind of the hard way, didn't they?

LOIS: They did come the hard way. If you know where Cabbage Hill, as you go into Pendleton, from Pendleton, LaGrande or something, that hill that comes down off of that.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: He said he had to take a rope and tie it to the hind wheel on his car because he had no brakes.

BARBARA: Oh, gosh.

LOIS: Yeah. And they would go twenty miles a day, and then he and his mother would find a parking place to camp that night. And then his father would come with the horses. Then the next morning they'd get up and go again. And somewhere along the line --- I'm going to wear you out with all this --- somewhere along the line other campers were there too.

See this was in 1924, and another boy told Gearald and his brother that there were big fish down there, and they went down and there was a salmon, and they said they took sticks and rolled it out on the soil and it was so big that they put a stick through its gills and its tail touched the ground from their shoulders. And he was pretty tall at sixteen years old; he was full grown at that time. Yeah, and he said they were all, just couldn't believe such a fish. So his mom fried it, there was no way of keeping it. They sliced it up and fried it, and she put it in big crocks and poured lard over it, you always had your own

lard. And then they ate that fish until they ate it all up. Yeah.

DOROTHEA: They didn't put it in a salt brine or something, huh?

LOIS: No.

DOROTHEA: Well that was something for them, that was a really a fete right there.

LOIS: It was. And they said they ate on it for a long, long time, uh huh. And by putting that hot lard over it, it seals it and so it's kept from spoiling.

BARBARA: I hadn't heard that before.

LOIS: We used to --- you had heard that before?

BARBARA: No, I had not.

LOIS: Yeah. We used to, that's how we used to keep --- well sometimes if you fry down sausages or something, you cover it with the lard. And then when you want it, you just took it out and melted the lard off of it, yeah.

But anyway, back to when they came to Drain then, Gearald's father passed away that year, he had pneumonia. So he had to go to work and support his mother, and brother, and sister.

DOROTHEA: And what did he do then?

LOIS: He worked in the sawmill for a dollar and a half a day, or something. Uh huh.

BARBARA: It's hard to imagine a family would get by on that.

LOIS: Uh huh. And then, now I'm not sure about this, he also, after his, rather it was before his father died, or after it, I can't remember for sure, he went to San Francisco to his aunt and uncle's and he was a, he took messages on bicycles, like telegraph messages.

DOROTHEA: Kind of a messenger boy.

LOIS: Uh huh, he did that for about six or eight months. Maybe he had to come home on account of his father passing away. That I'm not sure, I don't remember. But he did do

that.

DOROTHEA: So then did he come back to Drain to stay then after his father passed away?

LOIS: To Drain, uh huh, uh huh. And his mother in the meantime was running a cream station, where you buy the cream and sample it and send it off to Eugene. So she taught him how to do that, and he ran the cream station. And then we were married, and he taught me how to do it, so I ran it too for a while.

DOROTHEA: Okay, so when were you married?

LOIS: We were married the 26th of November 1930.

DOROTHEA: 1930.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And what did you do after you got married, did you have your own home, or did you live with your folks?

LOIS: We were buying our own home. No, we had our own home all ready, and furnished even before we got married. We went together for three years, and we bought this little place, which was right in town. And so then, as I say, he ran the cream station. And he had to drive all over different places to pick up the cream, in the five gallon cans, and bring it home and take a sample out and then test it.

DOROTHEA: Oh, that was why you took a sample out. I was wondering why.

LOIS: Uh huh, you test that for the butterfat. And butterfat was thirteen cents a pound at that time, which wasn't very much. And the people would bring their five-gallon cans of cream in, and then they would sell it to him for whatever the butterfat was worth. Then go across over to the store and buy a pound of oleo, and it made him so mad to think that --- here you got those old cows at home doing this and you go buy oleo.

DOROTHEA: Buy oleo and then you squeeze this little yellow, or I don't know whether

they had it then yet or not, but I can remember we did the same thing.

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Because my mom milked cows, sold cream, and then she would buy oleo. And it had this little yellow, sometimes ---

LOIS: Uh huh, a little capsule, little tiny capsule.

DOROTHEA: Capsule that you squeezed. Some of it had a yellow package of food coloring, and you'd have to whip it up with a fork, or a spatula, or something.

LOIS: But my mom made home, good butter, and she sold the little pats of butter in the molds, besides eggs and things like that.

BARBARA: So how long did you stay in Drain then after you were married?

LOIS: Until our oldest daughter was born in '32. And then he got a chance to go to Corvallis to work in the creamery there, because he did so well down there. And the creamery bought out his creamery, and we went to Corvallis. And he ran a cream route there, where he handled butter, and picked up the cream, and those kind of things. For eleven years he worked there.

BARBARA: And for what dairy did he work?

LOIS: Meadowland Creamery.

BARBARA: Oh. I grew up in Corvallis.

LOIS: Did you?

BARBARA: Yes.

LOIS: Oh, yeah, the old Meadowland Creamery that is down on the river, yeah. And we lived; you know where Murphy's Tavern is, south?

BARBARA: Oh yes.

LOIS: Okay. You know where Park Lane is, the road that goes right straight down from there to the river? Well we built down there; we built our home there.

BARBARA: Is that right?

DOROTHEA: And how many children did you have then?

LOIS: Well we had four, we had four girls.

DOROTHEA: And what were their names?

LOIS: We had Janette, and then we had Claudia, and Ethel, and Jacqueline.

DOROTHEA: Okay. And then why did you move to Harney County?

LOIS: Well ---

DOROTHEA: I know that you, did you move right to Burns, or did you move ---

LOIS: We came, his brother Kenneth was in the partners with his in-laws at Van at the sawmill there. So he came over and wanted us, Gearald to come and help him with the mill. So we came over the summer of '45 and saw where it was. And we liked it so well here that we, I went back home with the girls and he stayed here until January. And then he came back to Corvallis. Janette, we wanted, Janette wanted to graduate from the eighth grade at Corvallis, and so we stayed until she graduated. And then we sold our home and came over here. But in '45 we just spent at the mill. Then '46 we started the home here.

DOROTHEA: You came into Burns then?

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Was there a school in Van? Did your girls go to school there?

LOIS: No, no. That's the reason I came here. We built so they could go to school here in town. Most of the people from out there went to Crane. But I didn't want to, at first I thought I would, but then at thirty miles out I didn't want my girls to have to be out there when I'd be here. So we started this in September, and we moved in before Thanksgiving with just the shell of the house. But since we were from Van, they paid us mileage for our kids to go to school here in town.

DOROTHEA: Well I suppose it's because, you know, they figured that you had to move in anyway, so ---

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: I think they did things a little different too in those days than they do now also. If you moved in now I don't think you'd get mileage.

LOIS: Probably not, huh uh, no.

DOROTHEA: So after you moved, say, how long did you run the mill?

LOIS: For eight years we had it.

DOROTHEA: Was it always in the Van area?

LOIS: Yes. Yeah, it never moved. But after we left, we sold out to our partner. Gearald and his brother separated as partners.

DOROTHEA: What ---

LOIS: And so we sold out to Everett Twinam, sold the mill to Everett Twinam. And he only had it a year after we sold it to him. And then it reverted to the Forest Service; there is nothing there anymore.

DOROTHEA: Is there no signs of anything?

LOIS: It was for a long time, there was a sign, Forest Service sign that said Frost Sawmill. But they tell me it isn't there anymore. I don't know why, someone took it I guess.

DOROTHEA: Either that, or they don't have a road in to there.

LOIS: Oh, they do. The mill out here had roads all around up through there. They logged everywhere through there. So there is logging roads everywhere, all through there. So it wasn't that reason that it's not there.

BARBARA: Did you finish the lumber there, or did you just cut? How did you sell your lumber that you ---

LOIS: We sold what they call shop lumber, which was a couple inches thick and wide. We sent that back east. And then we did have a planer and we did --- the house is, the siding on the house was made from there. The house is made entirely out of the wood from our mill.

BARBARA: So that's interesting.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And so did you have trucks come in to there to haul it? Or how did you ---

LOIS: We had our own trucks, and we hauled out to Seneca and they were loaded at the mill at Seneca and sent out.

DOROTHEA: On the train?

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Well that's interesting.

LOIS: And we had, we had a large bunkhouse for the men. We had six or eight men working besides Gearald and his brother. And then Mr. Twinam, Mr. Twinam at that time was running the logging, he did the logging. But when we first were there we logged with horses, a team of horses, and do that. And Gearald's brother did the logging, and Gearald run the mill.

DOROTHEA: Was it already built by then, or did he build it?

LOIS: Yeah, no, it was built. Mr. Ott, Kenneth's in-laws had built it a long time ago. Years and years ago it was built; it was there a long time. And when we went there it was, the mill was run by a steam, steam boiler. But Gearald converted it to oil. But, and then they got to doing logging otherwise, besides the horses.

BARBARA: How did you make your contacts, to know who to buy to, or who to sell to I mean?

LOIS: That I'm not sure, Gearald did phoning and things like that. And then he contacted

the mill out here too, and talked to some of those. And men would come up and help him sharpen the saws and do things like that for him, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Now you talked about phoning, how were your telephones in those days?

LOIS: Okay, which was called Van ... (telephone rings) Six miles below us was the Cleveland Ranch, Tom and Elsie Cleveland, they were old pioneer people there, and they had the telephone office in their home. And we were on a Forest Service phone to the mill, so we could call out from there. And one time Gearald's grandfather in Idaho was sick and he called over there, and the operator asked him where he was calling from, and he told her Van. And she said, "There isn't any place like Van." And he said, "Well there is, I'm talking right there." But that was what we had.

DOROTHEA: What kind of a line did you have, was it through the trees?

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Was it often down, or did you have a lot of trouble?

LOIS: Not, usually we didn't have too much trouble. But it was a Forest Service line, and when there was a fire they kept it up good, on account of the fires. And we had a lot of fires that we went on, and the Forest Service people that were checking the fires would stay at our house sometimes, and I fed them.

And then we had a big old black horse that my husband would take out to check on the fires when, after a little storm. And he would put cans of water on each side of the old horse and climb up over things, and the horse would follow him. Yeah, he was raised in Drewsey, and he was real good, yeah.

DOROTHEA: What about fires at the mill? Did you ever have a fire at the mill?

LOIS: Not a fire at the mill. No, just lightening strikes in the woods.

DOROTHEA: In the woods.

LOIS: Sometimes it would be quite close. Do you remember when Gunbarrel burned,

Gunbarrel fire, we were there during that time. And we'd walk up on a hill and it was seventeen miles across, and you could see the flame going up the trees in the daytime. And Twinam took his Cat over there at 4 o'clock in the morning, and he got surrounded with fire and had to get underneath the Cat, which was the only place he could get. He could have been burned up, but he was okay. It scorched his tractor, his Cat.

DOROTHEA: That's what I was going to say; he is lucky that tractor didn't burn.

LOIS: It scorched it, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: It must have been ---

LOIS: And then after that he logged Gunbarrel, and we run the logs through the mill.

DOROTHEA: So you sent a lot of your wood then into, on the train from Seneca. Did any of it go ---

LOIS: Not all of it, not all of it, some of it was brought here and loaded over on Date Street. There used to be a little place down there.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: Some of it went through that. But none of it was ever sold locally.

DOROTHEA: None of it ever went through the Hines Mill?

LOIS: No, huh uh.

BARBARA: You didn't have any retailing here in town then at all?

LOIS: No, huh uh, no.

BARBARA: It was just to other companies or businesses then?

LOIS: Uh huh. What they call shop lumber. And my drain board out there is made from the shop lumber from the mill too, and it's about that thick. Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Now what did the girls do while you were in the mill? Did they spend a lot of time helping? And I know they packed water, so tell us ---

LOIS: Yeah, Jackie was our water girl. But they stacked slab wood, and things like that,

or any lumber that needed stacking. And you had to put stickers in between it so it would dry right, and things like that. And always Monday morning there was somebody that couldn't work from the bunkhouse, and he was in the bunkhouse. So whoever was available, even I would go down on Monday mornings and work. And whoever was the biggest one that could cook in the house, stayed at the house and cooked.

DOROTHEA: So what did your ---

LOIS: And Gearald gave me a half hour off to get the food on the table.

DOROTHEA: That was what I was going to ask, what did your meals, how long did it take you to prepare a meal?

LOIS: Well whoever was there, we had a big wood stove; whoever was there was cooking, and setting the table, and getting everything ready.

DOROTHEA: You had your regular dinners, like breakfast, dinner, and what time, and what schedule did you follow?

LOIS: Well because of the mill, we had to be on time. So we had early breakfast, I fed half the men, and Mrs. Twinam fed the other half. But we had noon lunch, and then 5 o'clock, or 5:30 we had supper.

DOROTHEA: Did you ever have sandwiches?

LOIS: No, we had food, and lots of food.

DOROTHEA: Did you have a garden while you were up there also?

LOIS: A tiny bit at the mill, it was too high there. And so we only raised cabbage and things that didn't freeze. But the first year we were there we had a garden at the Cleveland's. They gave us a spot that used to be a sheep corral, and the garden just grew so fast, you couldn't believe how fast it grew. And they also ditch irrigated, and I'd never done that before. Sometimes I got too much water running down there. Next time we --- we went down three times a week to hoe and weed. And one time, down at the

bottom, it was on a slope, and down at the bottom it was the funniest looking down there, it looked like an old rooster had been scratching in the beets and things that were little tiny. So Mr. Cleveland was there and I said, "Sure looked like an old rooster had been in my garden." He said, "I was the old rooster, I was putting your things back in the ground."

BARBARA: Oh, you flooded it out.

DOROTHEA: You got too much water, huh?

LOIS: Yeah, it washed it right out, uh huh. But we raised a beautiful garden there. It was late, but it was a beautiful garden. And then we went up in October to dig the potatoes, and it snowed about three inches, so we had to go up to the mill and wait until it thawed off in the day, and dug our potatoes.

DOROTHEA: Did you run the mill during the winter? Or did you ---

LOIS: No, up until January usually if it was an open winter. But not, that was all, never all winter.

DOROTHEA: So what did Gearald do? I guess we never did mention his name. We had ought to say that his name was Gearald Frost.

LOIS: Gearald Frost.

DOROTHEA: And is it Gearald?

LOIS: Uh huh. It is G E A R A L D.

DOROTHEA: A L D. And what did he do in the wintertime then, while he was laid off from the mill?

LOIS: Boy, I don't know.

DOROTHEA: You and the girls ---

LOIS: That far back, I don't remember. But the kids were in school, and I was here. He was doing something all the time, but I don't remember what.

DOROTHEA: Who did the cooking while you were here with the girls? That's why I

asked; did they pack sandwiches or something?

LOIS: Here, you mean in our house?

DOROTHEA: No, at the mill?

LOIS: Oh, well they bached. Gearald and, at our house bached. And then Mrs. Twinam stayed in her house the one-year, and she cooked for part of the men too. But they bached. And they had one man that could even make pies. They ate good food, yeah they ate good food.

DOROTHEA: So they didn't really miss the women, it showed that they could get along by themselves.

LOIS: Well Gearald had known how to cook too when he was a kid so, yeah.

BARBARA: Did you do the bookwork for the business?

LOIS: No, no, he did it. He did it, we made a little shop up there and he did that too. He did all of that, yeah, besides keeping everything running. Anything that broke down he either fixed it, or we had our own little blacksmith shop that he fixed everything up, or else come to town with it. That's why I can't understand what he did in the wintertime while we were still up there. He ---

DOROTHEA: Maybe he fixed up everything so that it would be running good in the spring.

LOIS: Oh, I know what he did; he worked for anybody that needed anything done in town. Anything, carpenter work, repair work, fixed the floors, anything. That's what he did, yeah.

DOROTHEA: So he was kind of a handy all, handyman all winter then.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Did you look forward to going back out in the spring?

LOIS: Oh yes. The day school was out we were ready to go. We loved it up there, uh

huh.

DOROTHEA: That was your ---

LOIS: And we had a nice home up there. It didn't look very good on the outside, it was all rough lumber and everything, but it was all sealed and finished inside. It had a long room like this for front room where we ate. And then the kitchen was real handy, it had a sink with a pump in it, the water was right there. And just three feet from it was the stove, all the built-ins were there. And then it had three bedrooms.

DOROTHEA: What kind of utilities did you have? Like coal oil lamps, or kerosene lamps?

LOIS: We had gas lanterns, gas lanterns for that. And then we had a cellar to keep our food in, that was built in the side of the hill, right, just outside the house.

DOROTHEA: And did you have hot water any way? Or did you have a, we used to have about a 25 or 30 gallon tank off of our hot, I mean off of our wood stove.

LOIS: Fastened to the stove, that was part of the stove.

DOROTHEA: No, this one was, well it was kind of like, we called it a tank. It was about this big around, and it hooked onto the stove with pipes. And this heated somehow through these pipes into this hot water.

LOIS: Uh huh. No, the big stove we had was a huge big stove, and it had what they called a reservoir in the back, that was built onto the stove. It was a stove itself, and it was heated from the stove, from the heat from the oven.

DOROTHEA: That's kind of like we have at our mountain cabin. It has probably about a, oh it's probably about twenty gallons, and it sets on the side.

LOIS: It's all fastened to the stove.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: Uh huh. Yeah, that's the way we had our water, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Only it isn't very clean. It's kind of dirty now.

LOIS: It gets kind of rusty down in there, doesn't it?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: And another thing I learned at the mill, was when we first got there that I and the girls liked to go out and watch them log, or go walking or something. So I put a lot of that heavy big pine bark in the stove, keep fire until I got back, and that was wonderful. Always came home to a nice warm house, and the fire, so I could cook real fast. But pretty soon it began to smoke, and it smoked the whole house up. And it had made soot clear around, big long stringy soot from that pine, just smoldering away in there. And so I had an awful time getting that all cleaned out, and I never did that again. That was terrible.

DOROTHEA: Did you ever try burning pinecones and things like that to keep ---

LOIS: No, no.

DOROTHEA: You didn't burn ---

LOIS: We just burned the bark.

DOROTHEA: Bark.

LOIS: Then after that I just let the fire go out and build it up. Because the stove was big and heavy, and you get a good hot fire in twenty minutes, you could bake biscuits. It was a big stove, a heavy stove. And Gearald also got me a motor washing machine so I could wash; otherwise I had to wash by hand. Bake my own bread, and do all those things.

DOROTHEA: So when did you finally move into town, in what year?

LOIS: From the mill?

DOROTHEA: Completely.

LOIS: To stay?

DOROTHEA: Yes, and stay.

LOIS: Must have been '45. No, not '45, '45 was the year we came over here. '46, we were there eight years, you figure out that.

DOROTHEA: About '53.

LOIS: '54, '54, it was the year Ethel was married.

DOROTHEA: Oh, married. Let's see, we graduated in '54, did she get married the same year?

LOIS: In June, after she was graduated, it was '54. That's the year we came in, because our house burned down up there.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

LOIS: Our house burned at the mill, and so we ---

DOROTHEA: What happened?

LOIS: We had just a stovepipe that went up through the attic, and up through. And some friends of ours were staying there hunting; they always came over for hunting. And he was going to, he did the baking, he was going to bake bread, and he had a hot fire and he looked up and the ceiling was on fire. But there wasn't enough water to put it out. And so we lost everything that was in the house.

DOROTHEA: Where did you get your water from?

LOIS: From the well in the kitchen. That's all ---

DOROTHEA: That's the only water you had?

LOIS: Uh huh. There was a spring outside that was sealed up, but you couldn't get to that fast enough. Is all you had was the pump, and the little well from under that was only six foot deep, clear up on top of the mountain.

DOROTHEA: Huh. That's all the further you had to go to get water?

LOIS: So those --- yeah, it was right there. And went out there where I had the garden, we had a little spot about three foot across, and three foot deep and to water the garden

with, and things like that. The water was there on top of the mountain.

DOROTHEA: I'll be darned.

LOIS: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Usually you would think that on top of a mountain you would have to really dig down deep.

LOIS: No.

DOROTHEA: Because like when Tim (Purdy) dug his well we had to go 250 feet to get water.

LOIS: I suppose. And down on the flat, and up there, see we were a thousand feet above Cleveland's, up there on top of the mill. But apparently there was a spring there, because this spring was enclosed with a cover over it outside the house that we put our watermelons and homemade root beer down in that in the summertime.

DOROTHEA: Tell us something about what you did to keep yourself, I know that you worked all the time, but I mean were there idle times when you maybe knitted, or sewed.

LOIS: I sewed. We sewed and mended, and things like that. And then when you have to cook for a lot of people, you have to know what you're going to cook next time too, and prepare for that. Then you baked your own bread, you were busy.

BARBARA: Where did you go to get your supplies?

LOIS: We came to town, to Burns.

BARBARA: In Burns.

LOIS: Un huh.

BARBARA: And how often did you come in to get groceries?

LOIS: About, once or twice a week. We would buy \$50 worth of groceries to last us a week. And then we had our own beef here in the locker in town too. And then I raised chicken, and we raised chickens up there, took them to the mill too. We bought little baby

chickens, a 100 baby chickens and we had a little brooder, I still have it. And we, Gearald made a little pen back there, a little house to put the brooder in. And when the chickens got six weeks old, we took them to the mill and put them in the --- they had a chicken house all enclosed, and fenced in, so I fed chickens to the men. Had fried chicken.

DOROTHEA: Well that was, that's neat. Every Sunday you had fried chicken.

LOIS: Yeah, or in between. If somebody would come, we had chicken anytime. We'd just go out and kill a hen, chicken, yeah.

DOROTHEA: So you also had your own eggs that way, right?

LOIS: No, we were never there long enough for them to grow up to have, to lay eggs. But, because we butchered and brought them, because we weren't there long enough to -
--

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: Yeah, but anyway we had our own meat that way. And then one year people had, that worked for us, had a big sow and she had 13 little pigs.

BARBARA: Oh gosh.

LOIS: And she didn't have enough milk for all of them. So Mrs. (Alice) Lawrence that owned them, she was a heavy lady, and she and I would go down and we would snatch out a pig and we'd feed it. But anyway the little runt was just about to die, and after a while the mother wouldn't let us in anymore to catch the pigs. She didn't want that. So Mr. Twinam's father sent the little runt that was, he was clear down, it was clear down, it was just about to die, to our house because we had milk, we had our own cow. So we fed the little thing with a spoon and saved it, and put it to bed every night in a cardboard box with a half gallon of warm water in there with it. And it would get up in the morning, as soon as it heard us, it would start squealing and come running out. And if you didn't watch it, it would bite you on your ankles just something terrible. And Jackie played with

that, called it Pinky. Yeah, little Pinky with the ribbons. She'd lead it around and played with it. And I made it a trough when it got big enough to go outside, and made it a pen. And it was born in July, we went back in October for hunting, and the little Pinky come running to us and squealing and wagging its tail like a dog. And I've got a picture of me holding it, that big. And people can't believe that it would let you hold it. I was holding it in my arms, standing up with it, yeah.

SIDE B

DOROTHEA: ... the pig then when ---

LOIS: Well we butchered it, and put it in the locker. Gearald always made his own hams and bacons, so we always had that too. But while we were at the mill Gearald's mother came to visit us, and she helped Jackie make a squirrel cage, a good-sized squirrel cage with a little round thing in the middle, that whirled around, with a screen around it. And the men would catch the little chipmunks and she would play with them, and feed them. And it was sitting on a stump about as high as that card table. And we had a big black dog, and one day Jackie opened up the cage to feed it, and one came out, and it went right in the black dog's mouth. And Jackie screamed so loud that Gearald shut down the mill to see what was wrong.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

DOROTHEA: Oh I bet he was happy. (Laughter)

LOIS: Yeah. And also the big black horse that, Midnight, that Gearald took when we had fires. He was a riding horse; they hunted off of him too. But Jackie rode him bareback, and she was standing up on his hindquarters one day, and he was walking with her, and she fell off behind his heels, just turned off and fell off on her head. Gearald shut down the mill again, and he said, "Don't ever do that again."

DOROTHEA: Did she get hurt, or just ---

LOIS: Didn't hurt her a bit.

DOROTHEA: He must have seen her then.

LOIS: Yeah, he saw it happen. But Midnight never moved a foot; he just stayed right there. And they also, all the girls rode the logging horses too, yeah, especially one team we had.

BARBARA: Did the girls like living up there in Van?

LOIS: Oh, they loved it; they loved it, uh huh. Yeah, we were right in the timber. We had about a five-acre spot that was all fenced in so the cattle couldn't get in to us.

BARBARA: Who were some of your neighbors while you lived up there in Van?

LOIS: The Cleveland's, Tom and Elsie Cleveland. And Victor and Agnes Cleveland, there were two families that lived side by side, the son and the folks. And then the only other neighbors was six miles, and his name was Merlie McMullen and he looked after people's cattle up there during the summer. And he would drop in and visit us a lot. He ended up by being 80 years old and still looking after the cattle. But we worried about him, and we said, "Now every time you go out," he also had a phone, "to call us or come through and tell us which way you went so we'll know if you made it home alright." And that's all that was up there, there was nothing else.

BARBARA: Well I wondered if the girls had any other children to play with, or just themselves.

LOIS: Just a few young ones, that the people that worked for us had children.

BARBARA: I see.

LOIS: They were all smaller, usually. But we did our own entertainment, we played ball. The men, the young men from the bunkhouse would come out and play ball. Or we played croquet, out where the lumber had been stacked, and the sawdust around, and

the bark, we'd rake off a place and play croquet at night. And if it got too dark we'd light a lantern and finish up by lantern light. We enjoyed it up there, just loved it up there.

DOROTHEA: What were your summers like? Did it get real hot in the hills, or was it comfortable?

LOIS: It was never too hot, at least not to me; I could take a lot of heat. No, it was just nice up there. There was no flies or anything up there, it was just nice.

DOROTHEA: Did you ever have a special day that you just sat around and visited, or the girls went someplace, or did you take a day off in other words?

LOIS: All of us?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: Only on a Sunday. But Sunday Gearald was usually repairing or doing something like that. No, we just walked in the woods, and take long hikes, and pick flowers. Kids played in the water; there was a little creek that ran down through there. We never ever took any time off unless we had to come to town for groceries or something.

DOROTHEA: So when you moved in for school then, that was really more your times off.

LOIS: When you could relax, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Now did you go back out on weekends, every weekend then after Friday came?

LOIS: After school came? Yes, whenever we could we went out, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: So let's go on into when you moved into Burns, what did Gearald do then?

LOIS: After we sold the mill, you mean?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: Well then he started doing sand and gravel. He got trucks and a little tractor with a loader on the front, and he hauled sand and gravel, and cinders. A lot of cinders, for years he did that. And then after that he put up a asphalt plant.

BARBARA: Did he own a gravel pit or something to work out of?

LOIS: No, he bought it from the, out at Hines.

BARBARA: Oh.

LOIS: He bought it so much a yardage from the --- it was red cinders is what that was.

BARBARA: So he bought it and then resold it?

LOIS: Uh huh.

BARBARA: I see.

LOIS: Uh huh. And so he did that for a number of years. And then he put up the asphalt plant, built it all up by himself. He went over to Tillamook and bought all the parts and put it together. And then he started a gravel crusher, crushed his own gravel for the asphalt plant.

BARBARA: And where was this located?

LOIS: It was over in east Drain, or east Burns.

BARBARA: In Burns?

LOIS: Uh huh, on Date Street, yeah.

DOROTHEA: When you came to Burns I know you started a garden, because I know you have gardened a lot. Did you join any social activities; become a girl's scout leader, or anything like this?

LOIS: I taught 4-H one year because I had done that at Corvallis, I did that. But I belonged to the Mother's Club is the only thing I ever did join, was the Mother's Club, and did that.

DOROTHEA: Did you hold any offices in the Mother's Club?

LOIS: No, I just was a guest there, I was always too busy at home, yeah. But then with the garden, yeah, I always --- the minute we got here and was permanently in town I had my garden out here, and loved it. We always, I always had a garden from the time I was

a little kid, we gardened.

DOROTHEA: You still do?

LOIS: Yes, and I've got my tomato plants growing right now.

DOROTHEA: How about your cantaloupe and things, and watermelon, do you have that growing?

LOIS: No watermelon. They don't plant those until later. Watermelon don't ripen here, it takes too long. But last year is the first year I didn't have cantaloupe. It was too cold, they just didn't grow. But I'm going to try again this year.

DOROTHEA: Cindy (Purdy) tries it every year. She grows hers in the house until about the middle of June, to where she thinks maybe she might miss that first frost.

LOIS: Oh, you usually get caught with that first frost, you cover.

DOROTHEA: In July.

LOIS: And then in the fall you cover, cover, cover too. But I made a scrapbook the other day of all the pictures that I've taken of my winnings at the fair, my arrangements, and the vegetables. And I had forgotten that I had a 17-pound cabbage that looked like this, holding this --- I used to raise a lot of big cabbages and things, uh huh. And then down at the fair there is still a big-framed picture, or framed, of my ribbons.

DOROTHEA: Ribbons, right, I know they hang it in there with all the queen's ribbons, or the, no the president's ribbons.

LOIS: Yeah, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: The pioneer presidents and things.

LOIS: My first, very first ribbon I won at the fair was in '49. And then I skipped until '50 something, I don't know why. And then for a while I didn't take pictures of it, too. But after I took pictures I finally got the scrapbook full. And I was just amazed at all that I did do. That's my fun, is the garden and the fair.

DOROTHEA: Your flowers, how about your flowers?

LOIS: Oh, I raise everything that will grow, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Do you give these flowers to people, or do you just plant them and grow them for your own pleasure?

LOIS: Anybody that wants any can come and get them for anything. If they want them for the church, or anything, I usually have enough to share.

DOROTHEA: When do they start blooming?

LOIS: Until the frost hits them in September usually, sometimes. Sometimes it's froze hard enough to kill the asters in September, so you never can be sure. But last year I had my football mums, the first time I've raised football mums, and they bloomed in October, completely bloomed in October, they were about this big.

DOROTHEA: Now I know also that you've also gotten a lot of ribbons in your flowers. You've also won, they have a plaque ---

LOIS: The plaque, uh huh, with my name on it.

DOROTHEA: Tell us something about that.

LOIS: Well it's the grand champion, or the sweepstakes one that you get the plaque for that year. And one plaque I had here with my name on it three times, that was three different years. And you get to keep it from one fair until the next fair; you get to keep the plaque here.

DOROTHEA: Then, what were those for? I know one of them was for your, was it glads? I can't remember.

LOIS: Sometimes there was --- well there was so many, I don't really remember. But you remember at first they used to give silver things? Candle holders or something, I won a silver tray one year. And then they had a punch bowl, another lady won that. You had to get your name on it three times before you won that. And so I've won so much I couldn't

tell you. And so much money too. And I also won sugar, and fruit jars, and cookbooks.

DOROTHEA: So that must have been the canning department.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Cookbooks.

LOIS: Uh huh. And then they have this, what they called the camp out, cookout, whatever it is, and you fix a complete meal. I did that for two years in a row, I won that. And the other was 15 jars, up to 15 jars; I won that three different times. So I don't do that anymore.

DOROTHEA: Now it's the, what's his name, it used to be between George and Mary, and Ken --- can't remember his last name.

LOIS: I don't know. I don't pay too much attention anymore.

DOROTHEA: He's a scout leader I think.

LOIS: I don't can anymore.

DOROTHEA: I can't think of his name, my names are gone blank on me. But Mary has quit that now too, so I don't know who they're going to ---

LOIS: Well with George gone, he did a lot of that canning.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah.

LOIS: He told me he did. He said he canned from the time he was a little kid.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: That was your brother-in-law, wasn't it?

DOROTHEA: Yeah. And he really enjoyed the garden.

LOIS: Did he?

DOROTHEA: They really enjoyed gardening. In fact I think that's why she gardened was because George enjoyed it, and he loved to can.

LOIS: Uh huh, oh yeah.

DOROTHEA: They would go out camping and fishing, can the fish.

LOIS: Uh huh, he bought worms from me, yeah.

DOROTHEA: He would go out and he would get a deer, and they would can the venison.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: And yeah, he'd do those camp cooks, or whatever that's called, that camp cookout, or whatever.

LOIS: Yeah, uh huh, cookout, uh huh. It was for a complete meal.

DOROTHEA: And won every year. Yeah.

LOIS: Yeah. And he was a nice person; I always liked to visit with him. He'd come and get worms and talk to me, yeah.

BARBARA: So how much time did you spend, do you spend in your garden, or have you spent in your garden during the summers? Do you spend a good share of the day, every day?

LOIS: In and out of the house all the time. I'm out there all the time. But my knees are bad now, so I'm going to have to watch it now. But yeah, as I say that's my fun. And the heat doesn't bother me, so I'm out there. I planted that tree out there forty years ago. It will be forty years this July that our first grandson was born, and I planted it a week before he was born, and it was this big, a little --- And we got it from where they tore down the Brown house, which Al Brown's folk's home that was fifty years old. And that little tree was there. And Father Egan said, I asked him if I could have it, and he said, "Yes". I thought it was a rose bush, it had little thorns on it, and it turned out to be that tree.

DOROTHEA: What kind of a tree is it?

LOIS: It's locust.

DOROTHEA: Oh, locust.

LOIS: And last year, after all of our snow, it had the most, it was solid with bloom last

year. Absolutely solid with bloom.

BARBARA: It liked all the moisture.

LOIS: Uh huh. Yeah, and then I had better and more raspberries last year too, on account of that.

DOROTHEA: Do you have much trouble with birds?

LOIS: Birds? No, not any.

DOROTHEA: They don't come and eat all your ---

LOIS: The neighbors had a cat, and he was in and out. No, I've never had trouble with them eating my raspberries, like they do out of town. I know they lose all their berries.

DOROTHEA: Yeah. Alice, my kids have raspberries that, raspberries that Alice Shepard gave them, and if they don't cover them, and even then they can't save them. The birds get them as fast as the kids do.

LOIS: Oh, well that's what I've heard, that even before they're ripe they get them. No, I never have any trouble. I get a few grasshoppers, but that's all.

DOROTHEA: Alice was always so stingy with hers. Us kids, us kids used to go out and sneak in her garden, because she always grew a garden too.

LOIS: Uh huh, she used to give me plants.

DOROTHEA: And she was always so stingy with her raspberries, and we could never figure out why. Well now I know, because she barely gets enough to make a couple of jars of jam.

LOIS: Yeah, sure.

DOROTHEA: And that's all she gets. But she did pick some of those suckers, or whatever they're called, and gave them to Tim and Cindy.

LOIS: Uh huh, uh huh. But then they get some of this, like plastic that they put over it, that holds, that keeps the birds off. No, I've never had to do that.

DOROTHEA: Cindy has also tried to raise, oh what are those blue, elderberries.

LOIS: Elderberries?

DOROTHEA: And she has a, two plants in her yard. The birds eat those too. She's never gotten an elderberry off of it. So --- Well what kind of vegetables and things do you grow in your garden?

LOIS: Start out with peas, and carrots, and beets, and parsnips, and lettuce, and cabbage. Last, now I won't raise any cabbage any more because it's too much trouble with fighting the bugs. And then my cantaloupe. Yeah, and corn, I had corn last year again too. It was late. I had nothing to go to the fair last year. It was such a funny cold year, and I didn't have a ripe tomato, I didn't have nothing from the garden last year.

BARBARA: Things didn't come on until way late.

LOIS: I know it. But my corn did, I still have corn frozen.

DOROTHEA: You also make your own ketchup, and things like this. Can you tell us how you got started doing this?

LOIS: Yeah, uh huh. My mom, my mom always did those things. I learned beside my mom. That's why I say, more kids should be taught things to do now, because we --- In those days you made a lot of ketchup, you made, well my mom used to can 500 quarts of fruit and things. And so you made a lot. And sometimes we would bottle it with a can opener, or a bottler that would bottle it with a cap that you put on it.

DOROTHEA: Like for root beer?

LOIS: Just like --- uh huh. And you just cook your tomatoes and run it through a sieve to get the seeds out, and put your little bag of spice and sugar and vinegar and cook it down. I taught Dauna how to do it.

DOROTHEA: Does Dauna have a garden?

LOIS: No, she tries, it's too cold out there.

DOROTHEA: It's too cold.

LOIS: But you know when they had the city garden here in town?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: She, I was living at the little Vern Bossuot's house then, that year, and she, Ethel had a garden too. So, yeah Dauna canned tomatoes, and made ketchup that year, and some jelly.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, I've made ketchup. I used to like to do all that stuff, but I lived in Silvies Valley and it was too cold to grow a garden. I got so discouraged; I don't like to garden anymore.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: It just discouraged me to the point where I don't even like to plant things. And now I don't have a yard.

LOIS: Where do you live now?

DOROTHEA: Out on the Sand Hill.

LOIS: Oh, out that way.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: And it's cold out there too, isn't it?

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: It's more open out there.

DOROTHEA: But Cindy lives up on the hill, and it's warmer on that hill apparently.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Because she grows a lot, she grows watermelon.

LOIS: Do they?

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: I saw watermelon at the fair one year, you remember?

DOROTHEA: Oh, they enter those every year at the fair, and I don't know how they get them unless they grow them in the house, or something.

LOIS: I thought they must have got them from Safeway.

DOROTHEA: Well I thought so too, but they also got a ribbon on them, and you can't do anything.

LOIS: I know it, not in Harney County. Because mine never got about this big, and they never did ripen.

DOROTHEA: I know. We wanted to cut them, we wanted to cut them, and the judge wouldn't do it. So ---

LOIS: But that big, that had to be ripe, it had to be ripe. But I still wanted to see where it grew. I still wanted to see.

DOROTHEA: I've often wanted to look ---

LOIS: They said they grew it down here by the Jiffy Wash, said somebody had a little --- Well I've never seen a greenhouse or anything down there. So I think it grew across the --

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DOROTHEA: Across the street. Yeah. We often thought so too, but they also brought in, big old squash.

LOIS: Well they can raise big squash here.

DOROTHEA: Great big huge squash.

LOIS: You remember Mr. and Mrs. Stewart, Henry Stewart; they raised those big long banana squash. I took them to the fair for them sometimes when they got older and couldn't do it. Yeah, you can raise those. And I still, I still had a squash this year until March upstairs that I raised last year. It was a blue hubbard. And then I raised the buttercup ones all the time, and they keep.

DOROTHEA: I love those.

LOIS: I do too. But you don't buy them at the store.

BARBARA: Where did you, do you get your seeds that you use?

LOIS: From Burpee's, or Gurneys, or wherever I can find them. But usually, earlier, I just ordered out of the catalog and then I have it. Then I save my own ---

DOROTHEA: Do you raise your own potatoes?

LOIS: Yes, I still got potatoes upstairs, yeah. They're starting to sprout now, but I don't like the boughten potatoes.

DOROTHEA: I mean do you plant from your own potatoes also?

LOIS: No, I, if I have some small ones I do, but I usually get the certified seed. Because if you buy them from the store they don't ripen, or they don't sprout, they've been treated.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

LOIS: I tried that one year. I didn't have anything.

DOROTHEA: I, that's the reason I asked, because I've tried it from peelings once in awhile you get these old soft potatoes that's got all these sprouts and you'll peel them off and my mom used to plant those.

LOIS: Yeah, yeah you can do that.

DOROTHEA: You know, in the old days we used to have ---

LOIS: But they didn't treat them in those days either like they do now.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: You don't see them sprouted at the store like they used to.

DOROTHEA: No. I didn't realize that they must put a treatment on them.

LOIS: Uh huh.

BARBARA: You say you've done all the flowers and the garden things to take to the fair, did you ever work on the fair board or do things at the fair to ---

LOIS: No, no, huh uh.

BARBARA: You just weren't interested ---

LOIS: No, I just furnished things for the fair. No, I've never done anything like that.

DOROTHEA: I don't know what we're going to do out at the fair when the older people quit, like George he is gone now, and he's not entering.

LOIS: Harold.

DOROTHEA: And Harold's quit. And I don't know what we're going to do out there.

LOIS: I know it. And you need a new building so bad. He showed me last year how bad that floor is in that old building. That old building was everything when we came here, everything was there upstairs. I used to, I did too down there, I worked down there a couple years, entering things in the fair. Yeah, I did that.

DOROTHEA: Did you work with Naomi Walter, or any of those, Georgia Crow?

LOIS: Georgia Crow, and Aunt Norma Curtis was up there. We were upstairs at that time.

DOROTHEA: And that's where the needlework and stuff was.

LOIS: Uh huh, the sewing was up there.

DOROTHEA: Well do you do much needlework now that you're alone? Do you do needlework, or I see a little handy Kleenex holder?

LOIS: That was given to me for Christmas, Marie Cote made it. No, I'm getting lazier all the time, I just read a lot. And I still make little funny things. I think I'm going to enter the Christmas Fair again this year. I did that for eight years, I didn't realize I'd done it eight years. And I was the first one to make the teddy bears. Next year everybody was doing it, everybody is doing it since then.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

LOIS: But I made my own pattern, I still have the pattern. And the first year I had them down here I sold out by 4 o'clock, and you're supposed to stay until 7, and they let me go

home. She said, "Slip out quietly," and they let me go home. Yeah, so I've done those things.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: But as I say I'm getting lazy anymore, I don't do too much.

DOROTHEA: What do you have ---

LOIS: However I made things every Christmas for every one of my great grandkids, so I guess I do something.

BARBARA: I should say.

LOIS: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Do you do any painting?

LOIS: I did last year. I don't have any here that I've --- those black and whites over there I made years ago. And that's all I have, the rest of them I've all give away that I made last year.

DOROTHEA: How did you do those?

LOIS: That's painted on glass. You have your picture underneath, and then you trace it with the paint, and then turn it over. And that's all there is to it. And the one with the pigs were from when the kids were little. Claudia must have been about nine, and she said make one eating, so I tried to make one eating. Little pigs don't eat standing up, but she wanted me to make one eating. But I did that.

DOROTHEA: Well once in awhile they do.

LOIS: Do they?

DOROTHEA: Yeah, you'll see them doing that once in awhile.

LOIS: They'll try it.

DOROTHEA: Daddy raised pigs too, and you'll see them going up and snitching once in awhile.

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Let's go on then, you were mentioning you had several grandchildren. Can you tell us some of their names, and who they belong to?

LOIS: Well I told you the name of the girls, did I?

DOROTHEA: Yeah, those are your girls.

LOIS: Okay.

BARBARA: And who they married, and what children you have, grandchildren.

LOIS: Okay. Janette married Ted Campbell, and they had two boys, they had Bruce and Brad. And then Claudia married Earl Sandquist in Walla Walla, Washington. Claudia went to Kinman College, Business College, and she met Earl there, and they were married in Walla Walla. And she had Brenda and Julie. And then Ethel married Alan Bossuot and had David and Dauna, that's my grandchildren. Then Jackie married Dan Marshall and had Michael Marshall. Now that's my grandkids, seven grandchildren. But Claudia passed away when she was thirty years old, and had Brenda and Julie. Brenda was six and Julie was three. Then Earl married a lady that had two little boys, all the same age, within months of being like a pair of, two pair of twins. And they all grew up, and now those boys, between them have six children. So those are my step great grandchildren. Yeah, so I've got all those.

DOROTHEA: And then Bruce has ---

LOIS: Bruce married, but no children.

DOROTHEA: He does not have any children.

LOIS: But Brad has the two girls.

DOROTHEA: Two girls.

LOIS: Uh huh. They're the oldest ones of my great grands.

DOROTHEA: Dauna has two boys; she married Clyde Wensenk, and has Cole and

Sean.

DOROTHEA: And David has ---

LOIS: David has Darbie, which will be 13, and Bret was 8.

DOROTHEA: And she married, I mean David married ---

LOIS: Karen Miller.

DOROTHEA: Karen Miller.

LOIS: Uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Okay, who are we missing? And Michael is not married yet.

LOIS: No, he is going to college at Ashland. That's it, we started out with Bruce. Bruce has no children, he isn't married anymore.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: He did marry, but they divorced. I don't think we missed anybody. Brenda and Julie both married though, Brenda and Julie with the two little girls.

DOROTHEA: Okay.

LOIS: See that's Claudia's daughters.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: Brenda married Sam Simpson and she has Haley and Trenton. And Julie married David Bradley, and they have Mandy, she is 9, and then they have Tyrell and he is 7. And then she has a little one that's 3, and her name is Candace. And that's it!

DOROTHEA: So you've got ---

LOIS: Eleven great grands.

DOROTHEA: Eleven great grandchildren. Okay.

LOIS: Yeah. Yeah, a lot of people can't even remember their grandkids, but I think I do pretty good.

BARBARA: No, you're doing really good.

DOROTHEA: You really do. I was just going to say, you've got quite a memory for names, better than mine.

LOIS: Then I also, I don't make them anything except for Christmas time, but that takes a lot of doing to make for all eleven. And for a while I made for other step ones too.

BARBARA: So you probably spend your whole year just working towards Christmas then.

LOIS: Yeah.

BARBARA: And what kind of things do you make for them?

LOIS: Oh, bears, and dolls, and all sorts of things.

BARBARA: You enjoy sewing still?

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah. And I also do Alan Bossuot's coveralls, mending the coveralls from Alan's Repair over there. I've done for twenty years --- that's what I do mostly anymore.

BARBARA: Is that right?

LOIS: Yeah, and some of them takes me six hours to get them done. But I've done four this couple of days, they weren't too bad. That's what I do now.

DOROTHEA: Do you help any of the girls cleaning, or --- I know you do a lot of babysitting.

LOIS: No, I don't help anybody do anything but the coveralls, that's about all.

DOROTHEA: And so do you wash these also, or are they washed before you get them?

LOIS: Oh, she washes them before she brings them. Uh huh. Yeah, because she has her washer and dryer there at the shop.

DOROTHEA: So tell us what else do you do, do you travel?

LOIS: Well, after I had surgery three years ago, as soon as I was able I got on the bus and went over to Oregon City and spent the time with my brother that was 83. We, I organized all the family, and we all met there for his birthday, all the brothers and sisters were there for his 83rd birthday. And then that was in April, and then in June we all got

together and went up to my brother's at Edmonds for his 80th birthday. And then two years ago they all came here for my birthday.

BARBARA: Wonderful.

LOIS: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: And so ---

LOIS: Then Jackie and Ethel had all the neighbors; they had all the yard full of neighbors that came for my birthday.

DOROTHEA: I understand your close neighbors, the Thornton's, are moving.

LOIS: Yes, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Where are they going?

LOIS: They're going to move to LaGrande to be near their son up there. Uh huh, and I'm going to have them over tomorrow night for supper. And then that way they can load everything up and leave in the morning. And they're going to eat in John Day on their way to LaGrande. They're going to, the children are coming, all coming down to help them.

DOROTHEA: How many children do they have?

LOIS: They have just the son and a daughter. And the daughter lives near Portland, and their son lives up there. But she has, they have two grandchildren up there. One daughter of Fred and Pam's works, and the other one has a boyfriend and is going to get married in July. So they'll be near someone, they're getting to the point they need to be near some of their family. And Florence always has done so much for us. She was a RN, and then she had to quit on account of her back. Now she has a bad knee, and she has got Lupus. She's got so many things wrong with her, but I'm going to miss her.

DOROTHEA: Oh you are, yes.

LOIS: When my husband was sick, rather than go call the hospital we'd call Florence. Or when I was bad, the kids would call Florence. Yeah, and she'd come.

DOROTHEA: Have they sold their house?

LOIS: Yes they did, they sold it ---

DOROTHEA: They already sold it?

LOIS: They never even advertised their home. They just talked about it, and the people that bought their home is a teacher at Crane, and he heard about it, and they drove by a couple times and told his folks about it. And the folks called up and asked about it. They were going to come on a Sunday, then they said I'll come on Saturday, they came on Friday, and they bought it. They never had seen it before. And that's the same way with the things out of their house. Things that they wanted to sell, the Schwann man bought their lawn mower, and he bought a chest of drawers. Things like that went; I never had seen anything go like that has. And you know Paul Petersen?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: Paul Petersen had that house built over there. And the people that ---

DOROTHEA: There is a spider going down there.

LOIS: I got him, I got him.

DOROTHEA: I don't want him biting you.

LOIS: Anyway, Paul ---

DOROTHEA: You mean the one that lives; I think he lives in LaGrande?

LOIS: Yeah, Paul Petersen lives in LaGrande, but these people that bought the place were friends of Paul Petersen in LaGrande. And they took their pickup to him to get it fixed, and told Paul that they were coming to Burns and he said, "Where?" And they told him, and he said, "That's my house." (Laughter) Yeah, see what a small world it is.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah. I'll be darned, yeah.

LOIS: And Paul and Billy come to see me every time they come to town. Because I used to keep little Danny when he was little.

BARBARA: So after your husband had his asphalt business, how long did he work at that?

LOIS: Oh.

BARBARA: When did he retire?

LOIS: He finally just had to retire, it was, must have been '79 when he had to give up. He was getting bad; he had to give it up. Yeah, it must have been then.

DOROTHEA: '79 or '89?

LOIS: Couldn't have been '89; no it couldn't have been '89. Because '79 was when I was --- well now, it was '80 something. I'm not sure.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, because I was going to say ---

LOIS: I'm not sure.

DOROTHEA: He was still, he had that scrap stuff.

LOIS: Metal, yard stuff over there.

DOROTHEA: Over there, yeah.

LOIS: Yeah, and we had the rabbits. After he quit the asphalt plant then he did that. He raised rabbits and "junked". He was a junker, that's what he did in between times too. He was a junker, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Because I know he hauled the scrap to Portland a lot.

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah. That's what he did. So it was in the '80's, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Because I was going to say what, did he pass away in '90?

LOIS: '91.

DOROTHEA: '91.

LOIS: We had our 60th anniversary in '90, and he passed away in March of '91.

DOROTHEA: Because it was just about a year after Daddy did, or not too long after Daddy passed away.

LOIS: Was it? Yeah.

DOROTHEA: And we had the house there for, I think we've had the house now for about ten or eleven years.

LOIS: Oh, that used to be by there, by Ethel?

DOROTHEA: Yeah, uh huh.

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: So, and he was working there then.

LOIS: Oh yeah, uh huh. That was ---

DOROTHEA: Well I was trying to think of some of the interesting things that we might have missed talking about. And we're going to start trying to think, to tell the people that if you can think of anything funny that happened during your life that you might want to share with us, or something that your kids did, or something interesting or exciting that has happened to them.

LOIS: It might be ---

DOROTHEA: It might be nice to throw in.

LOIS: Right now, blank as blank on that. There was always something going on. One time coming out from the mill with a load of lumber he went through the bridge at Drewsey. The bridge broke right down behind him, and he just, the front wheels was on land enough to keep him from going through into the water.

BARBARA: Oh, my.

DOROTHEA: Oh, good. And so ---

LOIS: Yeah, we've got pictures of that.

DOROTHEA: Did he get stuck in the bridge then?

LOIS: Well yeah, he was, see it was like this, see his rear end was in the water with a load of lumber on it.

BARBARA: How did they pull him out?

LOIS: I don't know.

BARBARA: Probably unload it.

LOIS: Probably had to unload it and then be pulled out, uh huh. That's the bridge as you come into Drewsey, right down there.

DOROTHEA: It's right there on the corner, or just right ---

LOIS: As you come down, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, off the corner. Woo, yeah, because that's deep.

LOIS: Yeah. I don't remember what time of the year it was, probably when it was low. But anyway, the bridge just left him, and that was it.

DOROTHEA: Yeah. How about anything that the kids did? Did they ever break a leg, or have anything exciting happen like that?

LOIS: No, nobody, Ethel broke her arm when we first came here, over visiting the little neighbor girl. But she was what, 10? After ... tripped over their tricycle and broke her arm, broke her wrist. I don't know, we've lived a pretty ---

BARBARA: You've been pretty lucky then haven't you?

LOIS: Pretty lucky, uh huh. Janette had her appendix out, we were at, she used to have chronic appendicitis, and then it wouldn't be ready to operate. And one time we were at the mill then she hurt so bad we couldn't come out. And then she had to have them out after that. Just appendicitis, and Jackie had hers out too. That's it.

DOROTHEA: Did she have hers out later?

LOIS: Jackie?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

LOIS: When she was 13, uh huh. And then Janette was 14. The first year we were here that happened to Janette, at the mill that time, and then she had them out. But that's, as

far as I know that's it.

DOROTHEA: Did you always have, having four girls; did you always have a houseful of boys?

LOIS: Well yeah, each year, you know, as they grew old enough. Yeah, we had a lot of friends. The kids from Drewsey used to come, yeah. And I'll tell you one thing about Janette and her boyfriend. And I could tell you he is from Drewsey. And see Janette started high school here. And at that time this street out here was the only street that was paved, on account of the fair. And so Janette and her boyfriend, instead of coming down this street, they came down the other street, and they got stuck right across the street over there, so bad they had to come and get their father to pull them out. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: That was embarrassing.

LOIS: Yes, and then have to walk home in the mud about this deep, through there, to get home.

DOROTHEA: That's something we might ask you, when you first came to Burns, has there been quite a change in the town since you came?

LOIS: Oh yeah, a lot of change. We used to come over here in '36, and '38, and bring our children over here to see Gearald's brother, he was here. And there was no lawns, no trees; we thought this was the most ungodly, god-forsaken home you ever saw. And the dust, and the hot, it would rain in the night and you couldn't even tell it the next morning that it rained.

Yeah, and then when we came then, when we came over here in '45, and '46 we bought the two lots, this was all sagebrush. There was just a little tiny spot out here that was the church's lawn. Sagebrush between here, all of this completely around was all sagebrush on this side of the street. And the little house up there where the Mortenson's live was there, and that was it. The sagebrush was taller than my head. The Indians

could walk through it and you couldn't see them.

And when we'd be at the mill they would walk through, there were trails through, and somebody would start the sagebrush on fire, and the minister from the Lutheran Church, Mr. Nickodemus, (Rev. Albert R.) would come over with his rake and help the firemen put it out. He said he could do more with a rake. Yeah, and lots of times we would come in, if we didn't come in all the time during the summer, the barley, or the rye or something would be all around the house, would be about this high right up against the house, which was always dangerous.

And one time, well I cut a lot of the sagebrush. And we had a little woodshed out there, and one time a man come knocking on my door one Sunday, everybody was gone but me, and he said, "Lady your woodshed is burning up." And I couldn't believe it. I run through and looked out and could see the flame coming above the woodshed. And so he grabbed the church's hose, and it scorched the back steps of the church before the firemen got here. He put it out before it burned the church. Yeah, that --- And so I cut more sagebrush, I cut more sagebrush around the woodshed. It would be like this, it would be big beautiful sagebrush.

DOROTHEA: Did you use it then to heat with?

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah. And then when we built here, see our water line, we had no water line on this side of Diamond (Street). Our water was, the Indians dug three-foot deep ditches from here to Diamond, and our meter was at Diamond. And you had to tar those pipe to keep them from rusting in the ground. They're still in there. After they changed the water over here they put copper pipe in. Yeah, but when they built this home back here we thought that that tractor digging for the house would get it, but it didn't go deep enough. It must have missed it about this much.

DOROTHEA: Do you get your water from out here then, now?

LOIS: Uh huh, now, uh huh.

DOROTHEA: So those lines are not any, don't have anything?

LOIS: No, they're still there.

DOROTHEA: But they're just still there.

LOIS: Uh huh, yeah.

DOROTHEA: And then the streets were, a lot of them graveled.

LOIS: Graveled, uh huh, most of them, yeah. As I say when we, '46, this was the only one down this way that was fixed. And I'm sure it was for the fair, wasn't it?

DOROTHEA: Must have been. There must have been a reason.

LOIS: They had the fair then too. Well we always figured that was why. But they tell me that years ago the fairground used to be right across the street.

DOROTHEA: Right up where the Pine Room is.

LOIS: Yeah. And the Nichols used to dig up horseshoes and things out of their soil. But that was before our time. Even when we came over here, I don't know where we visited Gearald's brother in this town, I don't remember where it was. We have a picture, but that doesn't mean anything.

DOROTHEA: Yeah. Well things have changed too, like you say, so much that you wouldn't probably be able to ---

LOIS: And all of our girls went to school at the old Burns Grade School, which is now the Slater School. And then they went to high school, finished high school there. You went to high school there too.

DOROTHEA: Which is now the Lincoln School.

LOIS: Lincoln Junior High, uh huh, where our grandchildren go.

DOROTHEA: Did Jackie go to school there too, or did she go out ---

LOIS: Oh yeah, she, she wanted to, she would have been the one that graduated in the

high school, the new high school, and it burned, so she had to graduate there, uh huh. Yeah, all four of ours graduated there.

DOROTHEA: Well Lois ---

LOIS: That ought to be enough to keep you going.

DOROTHEA: Well I was going to say our little red light is telling us that we're about to the end of our tape again. And we don't want to wear you out, so why don't we call this a hold, and ---

LOIS: That ought to be plenty, if it does any good for you. Is there anything in there that will do you any good?

DOROTHEA: Oh, it was very interesting, we enjoyed it. Told us lots of things that we haven't heard before, too.

LOIS: There is probably a lot more if I could think about it. But, you know, you kind of ---

DOROTHEA: We'll think about them after we leave. That's what we always say; "Now we should have asked her about this."

LOIS: When us kids were little, you did your own entertainment, like you did. You didn't have all the toys that they have now that they do things with, and we did our own things. And for April Fool's Day, we lived out in the country on a graveled road, and there was just very few people even had a car at those times. And my brothers were always full of the old dickens, and they would make a little package like you get it from Montgomery Ward or something, and put it in the road and have a string on it, or binding twine, and when some car would come they'd jerk it out of the way. And put out a billfold, and people would stop and run back, and then it was gone. (Laughter) Oh, and my brother called me Sunday night, last Sunday night, because his birthday was Monday, and we talked an hour and a half. These old times we used to do, yeah. And my mom was in on this too; she used to do funny things. For April Fool's Day we'd have, we always had

company, and Mom cooked chicken and things. But we would take little tiny potatoes like this and cover them with frosting, or make like candy, and make a big dish of that. Or make deviled eggs with, we'd put cotton in it and put your egg back on it, and --- (Laughter) We always, you know, you always did all these things. And we went to dances, we went to country dances. People danced in their homes, and all these kind of things.

(END OF TAPE)

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