

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #400 - Sides A/B

Subject: Tom Howard - With Video

Date: December 8, 1993

Place: Drewsey, Oregon

Interviewer: Conly Marshall

CONLY MARSHALL: ... well Tom, where did they get their lumber and such as that, where, just up here?

TOM HOWARD: Well yeah, at that time --- I'm not right sure, but this old John Ott came into the country and started a mill, where did he start it first? He had three locations here before he got too old. One of them was on, up on, just over the ridge from Antelope Swales.

CONLY: Down in towards Alder and back in there?

TOM: On Alder Creek.

CONLY: On Alder Creek.

TOM: Right there. I don't know whether you have ever noticed it, but you come down across that creek, there is a spring there, a trough ---

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: I don't know ---

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: ... right down here in this ridge.

CONLY: Uh huh. Between here and the river.

TOM: Yeah, well right here, you can see those little willows there.

CONLY: Okay. I don't know where I can get them ---

TOM: Right in that area some place.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh.

TOM: And there was a little spring right to the right of it there.

CONLY: Natural spring right here, up from, that up to ---

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And there is no sign of a dugout. I never did see any sign of any.

CONLY: Now that was your grandparents.

TOM: My grandparents, my dad's ---

CONLY: Your granddads. Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: That was in '82.

CONLY: '82, yeah.

TOM: Then that winter, that was the winter they moved the Indians out of here and took them to Yakima. And then they opened it up for settlement.

CONLY: Where was the Indian line, or whatever you call it?

TOM: Well it was on, the fence line between the Farnes Ranch and the Robbins.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And it goes right up the hill. I don't know whether you ever noticed it, but up there north of Bentz's and Ellington's, up that Battle Mountain.

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: You see that fence line that goes up that mountain there?

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: Well that's it.

CONLY: And that was the division of --- that was the west end of the ---

TOM: Yeah. This was on the Agency.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Let's see, what did we call it? Granddad, my granddad's.

CONLY: Your granddad's, uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: That was in '82.

CONLY: '82, yeah.

TOM: Then that winter, that was the winter they moved the Indians out of here and took them to Yakima. And then they opened it up for settlement.

CONLY: Well where was the Indian line, or whatever you call that?

TOM: Well it was on the, the fence line between the Farnes Ranch and the Robbins.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And it goes right up the hill. I don't know whether you ever noticed it, but up there north of Bentz's and Ellington's, up that Battle Mountain ---

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: --- you see that fence line that goes up that mountain there?

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: Well that's it.

CONLY: And that was the division of, that was the west end of the ---

TOM: Yeah. This was on the Agency.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Or, let's see what do we call it? Everybody afterwards called it the Agency Reservation, but Malheur Reservation is what it was ---

CONLY: Oh, it was known as the Malheur?

TOM: I think so, yeah.

CONLY: Because I, you know, they told me over in here that it was, you know, that was the Agency's over there, and that was the headquarters.

TOM: Agency was used afterwards, see, it was the old Agency, Indian Agency.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But it was the Malheur Reservation.

CONLY: I'll be darned. Now did they take what, a 160's, a 140's, 320's?

TOM: 160.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Just straight across from this lot up here where the calves are, well the corner was right in the center of that ... across the river.

CONLY: Didn't --- Tom, was the next settlers in, was they out at Otis, or ---

TOM: No --- well yeah, about the same time. You see Robertson's came about the same year. And all those --- and Robertson's and Altnow's and Masterson's. Hal Masterson, he came in here with the Robertson's.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: That was Gibbs's dad.

CONLY: Yeah. Now how was it settled then from here on, let's say on the north side of the river back towards Drewsey? How did the people then from that time come in?

TOM: Well the next place down here, that's what is known as the old Reece place. A fellow by the name of Hassick's (sp.?) filed on it about the same time, or maybe a year or so later, I don't know just for sure. And then the Cane place --- a fellow name of Hamilton had it as far as I know. I don't know whether they, he filed on it or not. Sim Hamilton.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Then after that he had the Livery Stable in Drewsey.

CONLY: Oh. Was his livery stable where those old rock ---

TOM: Right about where the ---

CONLY: Across from the tavern there?

TOM: No, right in there about where the tavern is.

CONLY: Right about where the tavern is now then.

TOM: I can remember it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: That big old barn that Williams, down at Rotha's, that was the barn, and Ves bought it after Sim sold out, and tore down and moved it over there and rebuilt it.

CONLY: Oh the devil.

TOM: Oh yeah, I can remember that.

CONLY: Huh. I'll be darned. Well then from the Cane place, then ---

TOM: Well then the next place down was the Mitchell place.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Where the ... Milt and Percy had it, you know.

CONLY: When did Milt and Percy come in to this area?

TOM: Well I couldn't say for sure, but it was around the same time. And he settled up on Pine Creek, or ---

CONLY: Was he on Muddy?

TOM: Yeah, Muddy.

CONLY: Oh, was he?

TOM: Yeah, that was his original place.

CONLY: That's where Milt was at, huh?

TOM: Where he first lived, first ... Now I had a, I've read, my folks had a piece they cut out of the paper, where somebody had written Milt's biography. And he, I don't know, they gave where he came from and everything. I think he came from Iowa or someplace, and settled here. But it was in a trunk burnt up in that house.

CONLY: Oh is that right?

TOM: We saved one trunk, but the other one we didn't, it was upstairs. Barbara said that it was just around the corner from the door. If we'd have known it we could have reached it, you know. You know the smoke was so bad we couldn't get upstairs.

CONLY: Now when you say they burnt up, who, where was that house at?

TOM: Oh, the big house over here.

CONLY: The big house, huh?

TOM: Our house up ---

CONLY: Oh, your house. Oh, excuse me. Oh, right here, uh huh.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But I read it, it was in that trunk, because I had read it several times.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then he broadened out, and they come down, they bought this Mitchell place. And I don't know who he got that other from when he took it up. It probably was in that article ...

CONLY: Well now what about the Wallen Bridge? I keep a hearing about the Wallen Bridge.

TOM: Well old Wallen, oh Howard Wallen was his name, and I don't know how he come to the country, or how he happened to be here. But when I was a kid he worked for Burt Dunten, right over here, worked there for years. And he came from Chicago. He was an old cab driver from Chicago. Drove team. And he was a good old fellow. He had a chew of tobacco in his mouth all the time.

CONLY: What, days work or --- brown mule, or ---

TOM: I don't know, the old twist, the old twist.

CONLY: Oh, the old twist.

TOM: And when he got through with the cud, Dunten's had a, the well was out from the door of the kitchen, and there was a roof down over it. He'd take these cuds; he'd put them up along the edge of that, where he could reach them.

CONLY: Save them, huh.

TOM: Dry them.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And he smoked them.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: Boy I've seen him do that.

CONLY: What, did he smoke a corncob pipe or what? ... or what?

TOM: No, I can't remember.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But he smoked them. And he was a hotheaded old fellow. But he'd just get mad, then over it right away. I know we used to tease him, god damn --- And this old barn right here, we'd, he'd get after us, and we'd climb up in there, you know, pocket full of rocks and then throw rocks at him. And he worked there, I don't know how many years, quite a few. Now Laura Dunten could tell you that probably, because he and I are the same age. And then when he left there, why he went down and he filed on this land down here, this piece that you've got.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And that house, well it was up there, you know where it was, you know where Percy buried those ---

CONLY: Yeah, back, yeah he buried those beads.

TOM: Yeah, right by the house ---

CONLY: Just, not long after I come here.

TOM: A big old, kind of a two-story house, kind of a square house.

And I can't think who in the hell lived there. And I don't know whether it was deeded or not. I don't believe it was, I think somebody just built a house there. Because I know Wallen didn't, I don't, I'm pretty sure he didn't buy any part of it, he just filed on the whole thing there. I guess it was 100 --- was it a 640 or ---

CONLY: I don't know what it was.

TOM: I don't know either.

CONLY: My folks out on the lake, I think they filed on 160's back out in, on the other side of the lakes. Now I don't know ---

TOM: Well this happened --- well this was in later days. I can remember when old Dad Wallen, we called him, moved down there and filed on that. It was after he quit Dunten's, and hell I was in school.

CONLY: Well coming back, I want to come back up towards here, up Hall's Cave and then back up in Mule Creek, and back up in there.

TOM: Well that cave is, the first fellows that wintered in this country wintered in that cave. You've heard that story, haven't you?

CONLY: No I haven't, Tom.

TOM: Old Joe Lamb ---

CONLY: Oh, the Lambs from out at the Lamb Ranch?

TOM: Yeah, afterwards. And two other fellows wintered there one winter. They turned their horses up on that side of that tableland, and they re-boarded it up with juniper logs, you know, and some dead wood around, I guess.

CONLY: Now they come in about the same time as your grandparents?

TOM: No, it was before.

CONLY: Before?

TOM: Yeah, before.

CONLY: They were ---

TOM: There hasn't been any men in here except in passing.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: There wasn't a settler in here.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And they lived on deer meat and such, I guess.

CONLY: That's something, Tom, you know the old timers, like over there at Beulah. Don Murphy and them said, he said now there didn't used to be any deer down in this lower country. Used to have to go back up high. Do you remember any deer in this lower country?

TOM: Yeah, my dad said the same.

CONLY: Did he?

TOM: He never killed a deer in his life with a shot, with a gun. He ... a couple.

CONLY: Uh huh, yeah.

TOM: But he never, he said they weren't sick at all.

CONLY: Well that's what --- then you know out there on the lake there was no deer or anything back when, you know, when I was a kid.

TOM: No, ... that lost wagon train come through here, you know, they damned near starved to death.

CONLY: Yeah, that's the way I understand it. Well then what about up Mule Creek and back up in here?

TOM: Well then after, to continue with the cave over here, oh about in the early teens this family, or couple, moved, came into the country from, I don't know where, by the name Pipes, Andrew Pipes. And they were looking for a place to settle. And they filed on those

sections up there. He had one, his wife had one, and a son had one. And they lived in that cave for a while until they got a house built. Oh, quite a little while, I guess, two or three years. And they were there for quite awhile. That's when; we were living down at the Cain place then. And I know he had a, he bought a, 25 or 30 head of purebred Hereford cattle. And he had pasture for them up there, but he didn't have any hay, you know, he had to buy hay in bad winters for cattle. And they were, I can remember the cows, those little old spike horn things, and fine bones, you know, they weren't like the --- I don't know where he got them. And then he finally, he sold them, and he finally sold out. Now Milt --- Dad wintered those cattle for him and put up with him. He was kind of an old infidel son-of-a-gun. Kind of about half mean, you know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And kind of an anarchist. Well Dad favored him all the time he was here. Then when he got ready to sell it, why he sold it to Milt Davis.

CONLY: I'll be darned.

TOM: Yeah, a dollar an acre.

CONLY: Is that right? (Laughter)

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: 1600 acres for \$1600. God Dad was mad. If he'd had a chance, but he'd have bought it, you know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But he didn't get the opportunity.

CONLY: Well now was Milt and them still at Muddy Creek or down here?

TOM: No, he was here then.

CONLY: He was here then.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Now Tom you said you was living down at the Cain place, was that part of this place, by this?

TOM: No, my grandmother bought it from this Sim Hamilton. And he built that house, or had it built, that burned down here, you know, a few years ago. And she lived there with, she had a half-sister that came up from California and lived there with her for a while. And then in, well I was 2 years old, I think, that would have been 1914, Dad and Mom moved down there. This old house over here, I don't know why they moved, but they moved down there. And there was an old fellow that worked for Dad for years and years, a June Ingersol. And Homer Presley, and they leased this place from Dad, and, for part of the crop or something. And we lived down there for, well I started school from there at Kimball Flat, and that would have been in 1919. And let's see, kind of lost my ---

CONLY: Well where did --- now on these houses and stuff you built, or they built, Tom, where did they get their lumber and such as that? Where --- just up here?

TOM: Well yeah, at that time --- I'm not right sure. But this old John Ott came into the country and started a mill. Where did he start his first mill? He had three locations here before he got too old. One of them was up on, just over the ridge from Antelope Swales. And ---

CONLY: Down in towards Alder and back in there?

TOM: On Alder Creek.

CONLY: On Alder Creek.

TOM: Right there. I don't know whether you have ever noticed it, but you come down across that creek, there is a spring there and a trough.

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: I don't know whether it is open now or not. Kind of, you know ---

CONLY: It was when I first come.

TOM: Well that was the mill site.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then I think he started there. And then he moved up here to Milldale and he built his mill there on the banks of the river. And then he had cabins up, or two cabins on up the river there. In the wintertime they'd go up there and cut the logs and pull them down to the riverbank and then they floated them down in the flood.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well he did that for several years, that's how he got his timber.

CONLY: The reason I wondered, you know, I get that old house down there, that yellow house I guess where the doctor is at. And all of that lumber on there was pine lumber, and it was rough lumber, and good lumber.

TOM: It came from these mills.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then the Moffet's had a mill, yeah a mill up, you know where the Moffet Mill, up from our camp there?

CONLY: Yes.

TOM: Well they had a mill there.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: The Moffet's. And I don't know whether he had a partner. I can't remember who the heck it was. But I can remember when they were operating.

CONLY: Now I guess I got stirred around, and started back in the wrong direction. I don't remember where we was at, but it don't make no difference. Down where Bill Freeman, or Jim Freeman and them was at, was there some sort of a mill down there?

TOM: Yeah, a Grist Mill.

CONLY: A Grist Mill.

TOM: Yeah, grind flour.

CONLY: What did they do, have a water wheel and something in the river?

TOM: Yes.

CONLY: Now who had that?

TOM: I couldn't tell, I can't remember.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: I've heard the name, but I just don't remember. A fellow by the name of Robbins started the store.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But the mill was on this side of the river, just this side, above the grade.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: I can remember the old barn there. We used to put our horses in that barn over, down there. Horseback, you know, afterwards. Old big barn, but smooth.

CONLY: From out, there wasn't, it's over to Williams', over there then? I'll be darned.

TOM: And a fellow by the name of Upton and his wife, widow, I think she was --- Frank Upton lived there. I know this Mrs. Upton lived there, and I think she was his widow. I'm not too sure on that.

CONLY: Now is that the same Upton's that would have had the cabin down on the river, the old Upton cabin?

TOM: Yes.

CONLY: You know as I knew it, when I first come here.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Yeah, that's the ... It was kind of old, infidel.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And this Mrs. Upton --- well she was a widow, because she had two girls. Her maiden name --- her name first, the girl's name was Bruce, Grossman and Margaret. Grossman married Fred Beede, and Margaret married Ray Miller.

CONLY: Well is that the Beede that, the Beede Desert was named after?

TOM: Yeah, yeah. There was a big family of Beede's moved in here. Ed Beede was the main, one of the leaders. And then he had a brother or two or something.

CONLY: Now something that was mentioned to me, I think Harvey Cronin or something, said up Mule Creek that the kids used to go up there and fished ---

TOM: Oh yeah.

CONLY: --- up Mule Creek. How many people were, had settled up in there?

TOM: Well there was a family name of Brooks came over here from, I think they must have come from Idaho, because that is where they went when they moved out. And I don't know why they came, or, I guess they was hunting a home or something. But this was later, you know. And he filed on some land up here in the upper end of this flat. They had a cabin up there on the left side of the creek, kind at the foot of the hill. And they had a bunch of little old mustang, fuzz tails, broke, gentle, and a team. Took the railroad, you know, and hauled produce in with those horses. I know a couple of wagons, or --- I don't know whether they had enough poultry wagons. But anyway that's the way he made his living.

And there was three, five kids. They had five kids. There was Raymond and Orville, and Laura, and James, and Margaret. And they all went to school over here at Kimball Flat. And he lost it to the store, Drinkwater's.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: So then he moved across the creek and up towards that hollow field, and filed an

additional, and they lived there, and then he died kind of suddenly.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Left that old lady with all those kids. But the older boys, Raymond and Orville were up, big enough to work, and they were good workers, good kids. And the men around here always had them a working.

CONLY: You do.

TOM: People just kept them, that's what happened. They were nice, good people.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And I don't know how in the hell they ever come into this country. Pretty well educated people. And they, now Orville, when I started school from the Cain place, my uncle was working for Dad and he had the Mitchell place leased from Davis. And this Ed Ward, my uncle, was living there, and he had three kids in school. And he'd take us to school and bring us home every day. He had two bay, old bay saddle horses, they drove them to work, they just went to working them. And he'd take us up and back. I remember in the wintertime they had a little cutter, sled, and he'd come off of this hill up here and cross that flat, until they would want to run. He'd just let them run.

And then in the spring why he left, the brother went over and went to work for the Company right on the Kimball Flat Ranch. Well that left me all alone to go to school; I was in the first grade. So this Orville Brooks had finished the 8th grade, but Dad got him to come down, and he talked to the teacher, and she --- I don't remember who in the hell the teacher --- well I do too, her name was Slater, big old gal from Boise. And she had some advanced work for this Orville; he was a pretty smart kid. And he stayed down there, and I rode to school behind him. And he took this advanced work, you know ---

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: --- until school was out.

CONLY: I'll be darned.

TOM: And then eventually they moved away, moved back to Boise.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: The old lady and the kids.

CONLY: They just let this property go.

TOM: Just left it, just left it here.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh.

TOM: And then, oh years later, old Hall, he was an old infidel, mean old son-of-a-bitch, just stir up trouble. And he was going to try to, he and this Pipes, Pipes had moved up and bought this Milldale place.

CONLY: Now which one are you talking about? I missed that one.

TOM: Pipes?

CONLY: No, yeah, the Milldale place.

TOM: Well that's ---

CONLY: Oh, that's the --- oh, okay.

TOM: Well that's after John Ott had moved away, you know ---

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: --- and built this mill up here on Antelope.

CONLY: Oh, okay, all right.

TOM: And they got together and they was going to buy this property, Brooks property up here. Well they shut us off from getting up the creek.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: So Dad and Burt Dunten went to Boise, and that was back in, oh hell, early '20's. He didn't get around too good, you know. Anyway they made a trip over there and they bought it from him. And he didn't have cash laying around the --- in between them they

got it bought. And that's the way ... and I still own it. And just to keep them from --- because they would have blocked us.

CONLY: Yeah, they would have cut you off ---

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: --- from ---

TOM: And then when old Lindsey filed up the creek on it, on that land, why you see he blocked us off there. We had to get the county to declare a right of way through there to get through.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And that's all that ever lived there, old Bill --- or old --- no there was another old fellow that had a cabin up in what they call the Hall Field now. His name was, oh hell I had it a while ago, started with H., Hayward. And I don't think he ever filed, I think he just squatted up there.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Built a little cabin. Well Hall moved from the cave up to that cabin and lived up there.

CONLY: Had they been living in what they call the Hall Cave very long?

TOM: Oh yeah, he lived there --- Lindsey went to school, Lindsey and Lucy went to school from there over here when I was going to school.

CONLY: Uh huh. And then they bought, then they moved up the hill.

TOM: Yeah and he filed on this land up here. He never did file on anything over here.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: The Pipes and them took it up.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And I think there was 480 acres up here they filed on.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And that is when he was ... Well my grandmother, my --- to get back now to the --- after my granddad filed here, the original, well then he went up the creek and he filed on an additional 160. That's where, there next to you, where the meadows.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well then after that, years later, my grandmother filed on --- her cabin was right over the hill there, above where the corral is, and she took in this land up the creek here and around. And then she filed on an additional up the creek later on when she was an old lady. Well she died before she proved up. So this fellow that worked for Dad for most of his life, Homer Presley, filed on it for Dad.

CONLY: Now is this Homer Presley, is he related to the Presley's in Burns?

TOM: Yeah, he is an uncle to Cyc.

CONLY: Okay, fine.

TOM: Yeah. And they, he filed on it, and by gad before he got proved up he died. And before he was buried, old Hall had Lindsey file on it.

CONLY: I'll be darned.

TOM: Yeah, because he died right, the Fourth of July, right in that area.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And hell the first thing we knew Lindsey had it. And so Dad, he wanted, he needed it, you know. So he made arrangements with Lindsey, he said, "Well you go ahead and prove up on it," he said. Lindsey had four or five horses. He said, "I'll give you hay for your horses and I'll buy your pasture." And it was partly, two-thirds fenced.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And hell everything was fine with Lindsey.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Hell the old man wouldn't stand for that.

CONLY: Oh, is that right?

TOM: Nope. So we got a notice --- this was after I was out of school, got a notice in the mail from them to give us 30 days to move the fence.

CONLY: Get it out right now.

TOM: Old Deacon Davis and I was up there, snow that deep, rolling that goddamn wire off up there.

CONLY: Getting it the hell out of there, huh.

TOM: He knew if he had the wire there, he might get it proved up. But Lindsey lived up there on it, he had a dugout. And then we had a cabin up there, my grandmother's cabin, but it wasn't even on his land, but that's where he lived.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: But he never proved up, he just lived there off and on for four or five years.

CONLY: But there was nobody else on up, up Mule Creek and back on up there?

TOM: No, that --- it got rocky.

CONLY: Uh huh, yeah. So that pretty well ---

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Have we missed anything between here and Drewsey now?

TOM: No, not that I know of.

CONLY: On that? Okeydoke. I'm going to shut this off for just a minute.

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: Grace Reece.

CONLY: She was who, Tom?

TOM: Grace Reece was her name. And she was a sister to Ves Williams. You know he was Lee and Drex's dad.

CONLY: Now when did they come into the country?

TOM: Oh, well I'm not right sure. I'd say along in the '90's, or early 1900's, along in there sometime, I'm not right sure.

CONLY: I was going to, I asked Rotha and Drex if they would talk to me, you know, and she said yeah they'd sure be glad to, you know. Tell me ---

TOM: Now their places down there are made up of different homesteads, early settlers.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Because when my grandmother came here in '83 why they, she lived in Drewsey part of the time. They built the hotel, and she ran the hotel, and she ran, she was the postmistress, and she taught school. And the schoolhouse was down there someplace in the lower end of Williams' field.

CONLY: Oh, it was?

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Oh it wasn't right in ---

TOM: Not the first one.

CONLY: Oh, I'll be damned.

TOM: I don't know just exactly where it was.

CONLY: Well now, when did the Company, the PLS Company, come in on this, this area, do you know?

TOM: They were in here way early, but they didn't acquire these ranches --- I don't know when, I'd say in the late part of that century, you know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: The late '80's and the '90's. Because I know, one reason I had a great uncle, old Charlie Ward, now he wintered here with us two different winters, and he told me a lot of stuff. And he was an old buckaroo. That's all he ever did until he got too old, and then he

herded sheep. But he was working for the Company, buckarooing, and he said they wintered them out. And he said they'd start in down above Vale --- a lot of that country, you know, that river country was just, wasn't fenced, ryegrass and all. Well they'd push their cattle down that way and they'd winter them in that country. And he said one time, he was just a kid, young fellow with them, and they come up, they just work them up the river, just, if they made 5 miles okay, if they made 10 okay, and picking up cattle all the time. He said one time they rode into this basin right here and they had a cook wagon, and they camped at that spring across the road over here.

CONLY: Yeah, on against the knoll over there.

TOM: Yeah. And they stayed there for a week, let the cattle kind of rest up. And the boss, his name was McKinney, he was quite a drinking man, he said, and they spent most of the time in town, Drewsey. So that would have been in the, I'd say it was in, in the late '80's, or early '90's. Then he said they'd come back, pick up the cattle, and drift them on up the river and into the mountains. Then in the fall they'd gather them and repeat south, gather what they wanted to sell.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But I don't know, I suppose about that time was when they started buying land.

CONLY: Uh huh. Well they bought their land mostly here. Or did they do like ---

TOM: Well they might have had some buckaroos file on some land.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Now there was what they called the Goodman Slough, right over here under this hill. And let's see, there was 80 acres there. Well that was a bad, well they said that was a Company buckaroo by the name of Goodman filed on that for them.

CONLY: Now is that, is that any relation to the Goodman that was over above Beulah?

TOM: No, no. Oh, old --- oh that was Goodwin up there.

CONLY: Okay, all right, all right, yeah.

TOM: This was Goodman, as far as I know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And it was, anyway he got possession of it, the Company bought it, but they never did anything with it, they never even fenced it.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then finally Woodruffs came back over here and, on that place, part of O'Toole's ranch, and they got possession of it. And they borrowed money from the bank, the Vale Bank to buy it, and they never got it paid for. Part of it is on the hill, and part of it is right in there --- well the river, and the road, and the ditch all go right through the bottom of it. And anyway when they --- we was haying when I come up out of the field why Jim Jones was here, and he was, run the bank down here. And he came up; he wanted to sell me that Goodman Slough, 80 acres. They wanted \$400 for it. Well the biggest part of it was right up that rocky point. And I said, "Hell, I don't want it, I don't need it." And I said, "The river, and the road, and the ditch all run through it, and it would be a son-of-a-gun to even fence." So I didn't buy it. But Dave Kent was living down here then, and he bought that place from us, and so he bought it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But they had, then they had another field, well it was the lower end of the Lillard place, between Lillard's and Robbins' Ranch, and that was called Smith Field. And it was only about 80 acres or such. And all the Company did with it was in the fall of the year they'd throw the gates open, you know. And they had fields like that around over the country.

CONLY: They would just have ...

TOM: They just bought them, or, you know, from somebody.

CONLY: Well I know down on the sides of the mountain, down on the Steens Mountain and stuff they only used, you know, 40 acres or something. Primarily the springs and stuff as we know them at that time.

TOM: Yeah, that's right, that's right.

CONLY: And they'd just have the buckaroos, well prove up and file on them, and then they'd take them over, and that's the kind of the way they made ---

TOM: That's the way the sheep men now, Bill Allen, you know, he had several places up here around in this country, and part of them they proved up, and part of them they didn't. In fact most of them they didn't.

CONLY: Before I get, you know, how do you remember the juniper trees and stuff in this area?

TOM: Oh hell, they come in my lifetime.

CONY: They have come in your lifetime.

TOM: Oh hell yes.

CONLY: How do you remember the grass and such as it was at that time, Tom?

TOM: Well it was good, it was good. I, now here last spring at our meeting with the BLM on this Otis Valley ---

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: --- they was talking up ...

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: I said I can remember when I was a kid that it was good feed. I remember one instance ...

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: ... working for us, his name was Bade, he was a Montana buckaroo, he thought he was. Anyway I don't know what we was a doing up there, maybe we was looking for

horses or something. Anyway we had found, Dad had some home --- well those homesteads were fenced up there, and we was out north of them. And we jumped this bunch of horses and there was a big work mare in the bunch that Dad wanted to bring in for haying. Well he didn't want to have to drive the horses all down here, so he got them over against that fence and he was going to lasso her. And every time he'd get in a position to do it, why this buckaroo from Montana was in the wrong place.

CONLY: Helping out a lot, huh? (Laughter)

TOM: Helping out. And Dad would cuss, you know, to himself. Anyway he eventually got a shot and caught her. But I can remember the face of that mountain that day, it was a cloudy day. I don't know why it sticks in my memory, I guess that view. And that grass was that high.

CONLY: Yep.

TOM: And it was just blowing, just looked like waves of water, just, you know, kind of a purple color. And I've always remembered that.

CONLY: Well I'm sure that --- you know my grandmother and my granddad traded through Drewsey, that's one of the reasons for part of this. When they developed Voltage over there on the other side of the lake, they freighted.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Come over Bendire and through here.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: And I always remember my grandmother talking about the grass being stirrup high to the horses, you know, and stuff like that.

TOM: It was.

CONLY: And all it takes is Mother Nature for god's sakes. Because I went out and just, I went out and videoed some grass that was 36 inches high this year

TOM: Hell yeah.

CONLY: And, you know, it's thick and everything.

TOM: Yeah, yeah.

CONLY: But all it, only took was one year of Mother Nature.

TOM: Well when my grandmother lived in Drewsey, and Dad was a kid, oh 12, 15 --- he was 10 years old when they moved here, he was in his teens. And he'd go down there, I suppose pretty often, and he'd just stake his horse out, out there back of, up towards the cemetery and that country. Fifteen foot of mecate.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And he said he'd fill up there overnight.

CONLY: Uh huh, you bet.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: It's all it is, is nature, you know, rains and stuff like that.

TOM: Oh hell this country up here, the Company would turn out 2,000 head of cattle right up through here, up Otis and up Griffin Creek. And all the ranchers, hell, from there down into the Otis Valley, two or three, or four bands of sheep, and horses to hell wouldn't have it, and that Otis Mountain and Antelope Swales and that country was the hub of it.

CONLY: Was the sagebrush very ---

TOM: No, no.

CONLY: --- thick up there at that time?

TOM: Not near as thick.

CONLY: Because there again I go back to Trout Creek Mountain and Steens Mountains and the places I've been, and the sagebrush got awful dang thick, you know.

TOM: Yeah, well it disappeared.

CONLY: You know.

TOM: Hell it's, you can't hardly ride through it up there in places.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh. And the junipers, that's the reason I wanted to know about the junipers.

TOM: Yeah. They've come since I've been grown.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh.

TOM: Yes, hell yes.

CONLY: Yeah, it's --- I don't know. They say that the livestock and stuff is ruining the country. I think all it needs is moisture myself.

TOM: That's all, that's all it needs.

CONLY: I think that's all the god's world ---

TOM: If we could get four or five more years like this last year, hell it would be right back to the same condition.

CONLY: You bet. Fires wouldn't hurt a damn thing either, as far as I'm concerned.

TOM: Oh hell, that's what they need.

CONLY: Well anyway it's ---

TOM: We missed a good bet, I know we did. And I'm setting some fires this fall.

CONLY: Uh huh. Was there many sheep besides rancher's sheep? Was there quite a few transient like down on ---

TOM: Yeah, hell yes.

CONLY: Was there?

TOM: Bill Allen was the only man that, here, that had holdings that had sheep here.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then the others all moved in. Well Elder's dad, he came here in 1912, but he was over on the North Fork mainly, and Beulah.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And then Pat Conley came in here, and he bought this place down here for the rights, and hell it wouldn't have fed 30 head of sheep, that is headquarters, you know. And he had this Stinking-water and Pine Creek country.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And he bought his hay, and wintered out. And then McEwen come in on the South Fork, and he worked around up here, and he had an allotment up here. Well that O'Toole's have, you know, where oh, Calamity Butte and that country. And then there was several Irish, old Tom Conley had a little band of sheep. And then the Bascos came. And they didn't own a piece of land.

CONLY: No. No, I know they didn't down on the South End and stuff like that.

TOM: Allen owned land, and Conley owned land, and McEwen.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And that was all. The rest of them was all transients. And up here, Allen always had a band of wethers, or yearlings. Well a band of some transient come in there with some ewe lambs and god damn it they mixed every time.

CONLY: (Laughter)

TOM: And Allen owned the, or had the ... corrals, you know. Well maybe they'd herd together for about a week or so before Allen got around to help them separate them. Well that wouldn't do the lambs any good. Well when they got loose, they'd generally get the hell out.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And that's how he controlled them.

CONLY: Where did they shear most of their sheep ---

TOM: Well ---

CONLY: --- around this country?

TOM: --- I think Allen sheared at Juntura before he went down there, apparently.

CONLY: Did he?

TOM: I can't remember. But there never was any plants up in this area.

CONLY: Uh huh. Now I kind of, I guess I missed where O'Toole, Pat's at? Who owned that? Some kind of ---

TOM: Well a guy by the name of Wright took it up, I think. They was the first ones that I know of that owned it. And Burt Dunten married one of the daughters. I don't know how many daughters they had. I know they had two boys, Jake and John, and this one girl, her name was --- oh hell, I believe it was Eva, I'm not sure. Anyway, you don't remember Monty Dunten, do you?

CONLY: No, I don't. See I ---

TOM: He died before you came here.

CONLY: --- yeah, I really wasn't ---

TOM: He was her child, and Burt's, great big fellow. Nicest fellow you ever knew. And then the old man died and Jake and John were sort of socially abandoned --- about the hell a lot of anything. And they sold it to Conley.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then the Dunlap place, you know, was below it there. And it was, a fellow name of Howard, Mark Howard, filed on it. No relation to us.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then he also filed on some land out on Stinkingwater where Wilber's place was, on Little Stinkingwater.

CONLY: On Little Stinkingwater.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: The upper end of it?

TOM: I forget, I don't know.

CONLY: Uh huh. The reason my dad was out there, and I don't remember him saying ---

TOM: Yeah. One of those homesteads was this Mark Howard. Whether it was, I imagine it was probably the grassiest part of it, or the wettest part, I don't know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: I'm thinking, because this was later on. And then Dunlap he was from Tennessee, and when he came in here, and he bought it from him. And then he sold it to Bill Lillard, that was Frances and Delores' dad.

CONLY: Now there was a part of Drewsey Peak, part of that?

TOM: Oh god I don't ---

CONLY: Because Harvey Hatt bought some of that from Francis Miller.

TOM: Well no. An old fellow, Frank Wright, he was, he lived right there in Drewsey, or out, up --- you know where that old windmill was?

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: That's where he lived. He filed on that land there.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: I don't know how he made a living, but he drilled wells around the lake.

CONLY: Oh did he?

TOM: Yeah. And ... they weren't any relation.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: I don't know where he came from, but I remember him.

CONLY: Well now coming back up, then the next place up here would be Sitz's on the other side of the river from here, or on up. When did the Sitz's come?

TOM: Well they came here in the early '90's, I think. They moved over, or Lou Sitz moved over from Lawen. He and his brother were over there. A fellow, this Robbins that

started the store owned part of it, and ---

CONLY: Did he own a store at Lawen, Robbins, by any chance?

TOM: No, huh uh, no.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Let's see, there was another fellow, a name there. Robbins was there --- can't think of the name. But they had, owned, one had the lower end of the Sitz Ranch, and the other had the upper end. What in the hell was their names? Robbins and --- But anyway Lou Sitz and one of his brothers came. They were German, they came from Germany. Anyway Lou moved over here and bought this land from, I think, Robbins. And that's how he got settled in here. And the other brother stayed over in the Lawen country in the ---

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And you remember the, oh he had four big boys, Allen and Eldon and ---

CONLY: Catterson, no.

TOM: No, Allen Sitz, and Eldon Sitz, and ---

CONLY: Oh yeah, oh yeah. He was a sheriff for a while.

TOM: Eldon was.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And Babe. I guess it was just the three of them. Babe worked with the 3-C's down there, oh around Buena Vista and that country someplace.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: He and another young fellow started up to Burns to a dance one night in February and got stuck out there someplace, and set there until morning, and by god when they found them they were both dead.

CONLY: Yeah, I vaguely remember something about that.

TOM: Yeah. He was a hell of a nice fellow. They all were. Yeah, it was just the three boys. Babe, his name was Leland.

CONLY: Uh huh. So they bought this place then, over here.

TOM: Yeah, yeah.

CONLY: All right then, coming across the river, back to Cronin's, I thought, you know ---

TOM: Well my grandmother, now who in the hell --- oh, August Muller, you'll have to start in up at the Muller place there where Normie's got now.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: They were Swiss, right from the old country. They could talk to me for an hour and I couldn't tell you what they said.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: But August, and William, and Rudolph came in here along about the, I'd say before the turn of the century. And August bought that land up there and took up some of it; I don't know which or what. And William came down, and I think he filed on that Cronin place, the upper end of the meadow. And also that's where Turen had, and he built that ditch around there.

CONLY: The upper ditch?

TOM: Yeah, the upper ditch. Well the Company went in with him, because they'd acquired the Kimball Flat Ranch and ...

CONLY: Now the Kimball Flat Ranch is where?

TOM: Miler.

CONLY: Miler's Ranch.

TOM: And then my grandmother bought it from, bought the Cronin place. Well she bought it all from him. She was quite an old businesswoman. And Cronin had come in here; he came from Canada, from Ontario, way back. He had a couple brothers out here

working for the PLS Company, they was running the ranches. And I don't know how he got over in this country. But anyway he come over here and married a Jones girl, that's old ---

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: Anyway he wanted to buy a ranch, so he bought, he made a deal with my grandmother and he bought that property there above where the house is, and on up. And he paid for it just with whatever, when he had a little money. He was years paying for it.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Well she died in the meantime and Dad --- hell Joe would give him \$10 ...

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then he, then Dad had this place that Turen has got, well he would lease it to Cronin, and Cronin's put into crop land for half the hay, or grain, or whatever. God he used to, I can remember he put up, one, two, three, four great big alfalfa stacks there. And Dad would buy his half, or if he didn't need it, somebody else would. And then finally, how in the hell, I don't know why Dad --- well hell we traded it, Dad traded it to Chet Stallard for three sections of land over on Otis Creek.

CONLY: How did Chet come into the picture there?

TOM: Well their folks came in from, I don't know where.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: But they were old timers, they settled on Otis Creek.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh, yeah. I was just wondering how he come in.

TOM: Yeah, I don't know where they came from.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh. Well that's where Turen was at. Then did it come clear around to where Floyd was ---

TOM: From Floyd's right up ---

CONLY: Back that way.

TOM: --- just the way it is now.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: Same fence, and same lines.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Yeah. And Dad run his, or he owned it for a long time. I remember we used to go over there and feed cattle, and haul hay over that hill there. And cold weather, god damn, we made a lot of trips over. And then he traded it to Chas. And with a house on it, and he leased it to Fred Beede. He was the fellow that --- he built up part of this, on this reservoir out here.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: For three years, and Fred was, built the house. Well that old house that Turen lived in, that was the house.

CONLY: That was it.

TOM: Yeah. He got a pretty cheap ranch there.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then about that time Chet's come back here --- you know he went broke once, and broke his dad, and he went off down, around Klamath, and his wife left him down there. And he come back and started over. Got a few calves around, and cows, and buckaroos to work and ---

SIDE B

TOM: ... he was going to marry her, and he wanted a little house for her. Well, so he traded those sections over there to Dad for the place, and then she turned him down.

CONLY: I'll be darned. (Laughter)

TOM: I think she already had a husband if I remember right.

CONLY: Very likely.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: And then when Floyd, where Floyd is at, what was that place?

TOM: Well the McMullen's had that.

CONLY: That's the two places together there?

TOM: Yeah. They had it and, the two places was one.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: And the old man when he, no he was still alive, and Charlie and Burt Dunten lived over here. Well Charlie lived, he had a house across the river up on that hill; you know where that poplar tree is over here?

CONLY: Oh is that right?

TOM: Yeah. And he lived up there. That's where Byron was born.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: But it was awful unhandy. Hell, in the spring of the year they couldn't get across there.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: They built a bridge across the river. Hell, I can remember that bridge well. But then that wasn't the only thing, you know, those, the low land there you could get off the bridge and mire down.

CONLY: Yeah, yeah.

TOM: So he finally, he and Burt split up. Split the ranch here, and ... or Dunten's --- no, Dunten's weren't here. They dug it, the original ditch, and this is it right down here under this hill that goes around.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: That's the end of it right down there.

CONLY: Tom, I didn't turn that thing on. I got to back up to Chassie's place again.

TOM: Well ---

CONLY: But you didn't know who ---

TOM: I'll start out, now this was in '92. No, yeah, when they built this ditch. Now '83 it was it when they built it, because it was a lot of pick and shovel type, the way they dug most of it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And it come around down through the Cronin place, and then it came right down the fence line between Sitz and ---

CONLY: Milers?

TOM: Miler, or Company.

CONLY: Company, uh huh.

TOM: The early ditch.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But they had possession at that time. But it was all, mostly sagebrush. That lower field, you know how it runs, it laps around the corner of Sitz's down --- well that was about, I think about the only meadow that was on it up there. And that would be the runoff from the coalmines where it comes down through here.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well then in '92 they all got together, the Company and the rest of them, and they built this ditch, called it the middle ditch.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And they started out at the same place in the river, but they kept it on grade. Well

it come down where it is now, you know. But it was '92, the Company got an '88 water right out of it, but the ditch wasn't built until '92.

CONLY: Well, that's one way to get ---

TOM: They didn't have an honest water right on nine-tenths of their damn ranches.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh. They just had a good lawyer or something.

TOM: Good lawyers.

CONLY: Well that was kind of the way it was over there on the P Ranch.

TOM: Oh sure, all that country.

CONLY: You know.

TOM: This Swamp Ranch up here that Riley's had, it was on that side of the Indian line, but it got an '82 right.

CONLY: Before it was, while it was still a reservation.

TOM: It was still Indian land then. Yeah. It's got the oldest right on the river, but by god it's not an honest one.

CONLY: Then the Dunten place, or where Byron lived, below Milers, now who ---

TOM: Well as far as I know it was Burt and Charlie's --- they filed on it as far as I know now. There might have been somebody else in there, but I never heard of it.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh. And then where, right over here, is that part of ---

TOM: Well no they ---

CONLY: --- the Dunten place.

TOM: Burt bought it from, they bought it from Sam Williams, see. See they came here with my granddad.

CONLY: Oh, okay, I guess we got that the first time around then.

TOM: Yeah. He had 160.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: Laid right along here some ways, or right next to us.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then the rest of it up there, I don't know, they must have filed on it and acquired it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well no, wait a minute. There was a fellow by the name of Delaney that filed on some land right above it here, right on the riverbank, and Charlie bought that, or they bought it together I guess. And that's why; he built that house over on the hill there. And that's why this mountain right here is called mountain, Delaney Mountain.

CONLY: Okay, and that's just one up above, right up here.

TOM: Yeah, this mountain right here, this lava bed up there.

CONLY: Yeah, okay, uh huh.

TOM: Yeah, Charlie bought it from --- or they both bought it from, Charlie got most of it when they split up.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And I supposed he reached across the river there. And that's --- then this land up here, I think that was, Burt filed on it, I'm pretty sure, this hillside.

CONLY: Uh huh. Now Tom I went, you know, up here elk hunting and stuff up here on the mountain. And we've got Trail Flat, and back up in there, was there a number of people that lived up in there?

TOM: No.

CONLY: They just kind of ---

TOM: Now that Trail Flat, a fellow by the name of Arthur Works filed on that for Bill Allen.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: Bill used to drop around in there, down on that tableland with a band of sheep or

two in the spring. And boy it was a dandy; you know, for a band of lambs, that, a little clover.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: And, but he never did sell it back to Allen. Well Allen maybe didn't want to buy it or something.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Anyway he had possession of it. And he used to, he lived up there. And he come down in the --- I don't think he spent the winter, because that damned old cabin, you could see through it. But he'd work; I know he'd come down and hay for Dad. And Mama said she never saw a ragged a man in her life as that old boy was when he come down from up there. And he built that damn road up that grade.

CONLY: Oh he did?

TOM: You bet. Team and scraper, and pick and shovel, working old fool. And he never did sell it, but he finally just moved away. He went down and he worked for Allen down at Juntura for a long time, and then he faded out. And it finally went for taxes. Molly Duntun bought it for \$96.

CONLY: I'll be damned.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Well there was a lot of that happened, you know.

TOM: Oh yeah. Dad bought that ... place over here for \$216.

CONLY: Uh huh, you bet. Yeah, there is a lot of it. But there was really nobody then living up in that area to speak of?

TOM: No. The only man that ever spent any time --- now the next, Lige's homestead there, you remember old Lige.

CONLY: Yes, you bet.

TOM: Well he filed on it about 1918. In fact Works fenced it. Then Lige was drafted into the army. And Works fenced it for; Dad paid him to fence it while Lige was in the army.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then above it another uncle, Herb, that would be Jim's dad, he filed on a homestead and he was in the army. And then Lon had a homestead there that's ... and Grover Ward, another uncle had a homestead up here on the basin. Well Grover never proved up, and Lon didn't prove up, but Herb did. But if they served their stretch in the army, you know, they, hell they cut off about half or two-thirds of it.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And Lige spent some time up there, but I don't think Herb ever spent a night on his.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: But he got title to it.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: And that's all. And then the Sexton field, that's right below it. But there is an old, I don't know how he happened to be in this country, they said he was an old osteopath or chiropractor or something. And he, a friend of the Stallards, or the Byrleys or somebody. Anyway he filed on part of that field. And then the upper part of the school section, and he bought it. And the Stallards financed it, and then they got, eventually they bought it from him.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And Worlow was the same thing, old John Worlow. But he never did sell his, he lived up there. In fact a Company buckaroo found him dead in his cabin one fall up there where --- oh it was pretty late. He went up there hunting, tail end, you know.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: And rode over, and they was right above that butte. They found him there, laying

there.

CONLY: Tom, I want to ask you, you've seen the cattle and horses and stuff come and go, you know. Do you think that they were the downfall of the grass and stuff like that?

TOM: Hell no. Not really.

CONLY: They were coming and moving, they were able to move at all times.

TOM: Why sure. I'll tell you my own idea; I can't find many people that agree with me, but the goddamn fences ---

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: Every time they put a fence in they're creating a problem on both sides of that fence.

CONLY: You bet your life.

TOM: I don't give a damn where it is.

CONLY: I wished they'd tear all the god --- excuse me, I shouldn't say that. I know Harvey Hatt; he has always been a firm believer in, you know, against those fences down there.

TOM: Oh ---

CONLY: He said Christ all mighty, let's get rid of the damn things. But we can't do it.

TOM: Nope.

CONLY: You know they have shoved the wild horses, they've shoved the --- and you know I always --- I thought the sheep and the cow man was supposed to have fought and not get along and stuff like that, and probably they did. But you know I can't see where sheep and horses and cattle all don't go together.

TOM: They were as compatible as hell.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: Now Bill Allen right there with us, on our range, he moved right in on it. But he

didn't hurt it. Hell those sheep after the homesteads were acquired and fences were up, hell he and Dad made a deal. He come down through there in the spring of the year with a band of ewes, of lambs, around on ours. Hell, they didn't hurt them a bit. Our cows would come in there behind them, and they say a cow won't eat where a sheep is. Well that's all bullshit.

CONLY: Well I remember when O'Toole, Pat O'Toole went out, you know, I used to go up there and see the feed and stuff that he had up around Calamity and ... up in there.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: And then they forced him out, you know, the government, as far as I'm concerned.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Then the same way, well when Martin and Philip Coin they used to come through over to Beulah and stuff over there, trailing them sheep through.

TOM: Yeah, yeah.

CONLY: They never touched ---

TOM: Hell no.

CONLY: You know, to me they should be running them together, and running everything like it is.

TOM: Well I read an article just here lately, and some fellow, I've forgotten, I believe when we was in Montana or Wyoming, I think it was in Montana, he'd always heard that. So he got busy with, in this area that he was acquainted with, and he got some cow men, and I think he had to buy some sheep, and he put them on the same ground at different times. And I can't remember ...

... (Pause in tape) (Repeat on tape of some of the same information.)

TOM: ... property up here. Well they shut us off from getting up the creek.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: So Dad and Burt Dunten went to Boise, and that was back in, oh hell, early '20's. He didn't get around too good, you know. Anyway they made a trip over there and they bought it from him. And he didn't have cash laying around, and between them they got it bought. And that's the way Jordan and I still own it. And just to keep them from --- because they'd have blocked us.

CONLY: Yeah, they'd have cut you off from ---

TOM: Yeah. And I know Lindsey filed up the creek on it, on that land, why you see he blocked us off there. We had to get the county to declare a right-of-way through there to get through.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And that's all that ever lived there. Old Bill, or old, no there was another old fellow had a cabin up in what they call the Hall field now. His name was, oh hell, I had it a while ago. It started with an H., Hayward. And I don't think he ever filed, I think he just squatted up there.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Built a little cabin. Well Hall moved from the cave up to that cabin and they lived up there.

CONLY: Had they been living in that they called the Hall Cave very long?

TOM: Oh yeah, he lived there. Lindsey went to school; Lindsey and Lucy went to school from there over here when I was going to school.

CONLY: Uh huh. And then they bought, then they moved up to here.

TOM: Yeah, and he filed on this land up here. He never did file on anything over here.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Pipes and them took it up.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And I think it was 480 acres up here they filed on. And that's when he was going --
- well my grandmother, to get back now to the --- after my granddad filed here, the
original, well then he went up the creek and he filed on an additional 160, that's where,
there next to you in those meadows.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well then after that, years later, my grandmother filed on, her cabin was right over
the hill here above where the trail is. And she took in this land up the creek here and
around. And then she filed on an additional up the creek later on, when she was an old
lady. Well she died before she proved up. So this fellow that had worked for Dad for
most of his life, Homer Presley, filed on it for Dad.

CONLY: Now is this Homer Presley, is he related to the Presley's in Burns?

TOM: Yeah, he is an uncle to Cyc.

CONLY: Okay, all right.

TOM: Yeah. They, he filed on it, and by gad before he got proved up he died. And
before he was buried, old Hall had Lindsey file on it.

CONLY: I'll be darned.

TOM: Yeah. Because he died right at the Fourth of July, right in that area.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And hell, first thing you know Lindsey had it. And so Dad, he wanted it, he needed
it you know, so he made arrangements with Lindsey, he said well go ahead and prove up
on it. He said Lindsey had four or five horses. He said, "I'll give you hay for your horses,
and I'll buy you pasture." And it was partly, two-thirds fenced.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well hell, everything is fine with Lindsey. Well the old man wouldn't stand for that

stuff.

CONLY: Oh, is that right.

TOM: No. So we got a notice --- this was after I was out of school. Got a notice in the mail from them to give us 30 days to move the fence or ---

CONLY: Get her out right now.

TOM: Old Deacon Davis and I was up there in the snow that deep running that god damn wire off.

CONLY: Getting it the hell out of there, huh?

TOM: We knew if he had the wire there he might get it proved up. But Lindsey lived up there on it, he had a dugout, and then we had a cabin up there, my grandmother's cabin, but it wasn't even on his land, but that's where he lived.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But he never proved up, he just lived there off and on for four or five years.

CONLY: But there was nobody else on up, up Mule Creek and back on up there?

TOM: No, it got rocky.

CONLY: Uh huh, yeah. So that pretty well ---

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Have we missed anything between here and Drewsey now that

TOM: No, not that I know of.

CONLY: --- on that? Okeydoke. I'm going to shut this off for just a minute.

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: Grace Reese.

CONLY: She was who, Tom?

TOM: Grace Reese was her name. And she was a sister to Ves Williams. You know he

was Lee and Drex's dad.

CONLY: Now when did they come into the country?

TOM: Oh, well I'm not right sure. I'd say along in the '90's, or early 1900's, along there sometime, I'm not right sure.

CONLY: I was going to, I asked Rotha and Drex if they would talk to me, you know, and she said yeah, they'd sure be glad to, you know. Tell me ---

TOM: And, now their places down there are made up of different homesteads, early settlers.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Because when my grandmother came here in '83 why they, she lived in Drewsey part of the time. They built the hotel, and she ran the hotel, and she was the postmistress, and she taught school. And the schoolhouse was down there someplace in the lower end of Williams' field.

CONLY: Oh, it was?

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Oh, it wasn't right in ---

TOM: Not the first one.

CONLY: Oh, I'll be damned.

TOM: I don't know just exactly where it was.

CONLY: Well now, when did the Company, the PLS Company come in on this part, this area, do you know?

TOM: Well I, they were in here way early, but they didn't acquire these ranches --- I don't know when, I'd say in the late part of that century, you know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: The late '80's and the '90's. Because I know, one reason I had a great uncle, old

Charlie Ward, now he wintered here with us two different winters, and he told me a lot of stuff. And he was an old buckaroo. That's all he ever did until he got too old, and then he herded sheep. But he was working for the Company, buckarooing, and he said they wintered them out. And he said they'd start in down above Vale --- now a lot of that country, you know, that river country, was just, wasn't fenced, ryegrass and all. Well they'd push their cattle down that way and they'd winter them in that country. And he said one time, he was just a kid, a young fellow with them, and they come up, they just work them up the river, just, if they made 5 miles okay, if they made 10 okay, and picking up cattle all the time. He said one time they rode into this basin right here, and they had a cook wagon, and they camped at that spring across the road over here.

CONLY: Yeah, on against the knoll over there.

TOM: Yeah. And they stayed there for a week, let the cattle kind of rest up. And the boss, his name was McKinney; he was quite a drinking man he said. And they spent most of the time in town, Drewsey. So that would have been in the, I'd say it would have been the late '80's or early '90's. Then he said they'd come back, picked up the cattle, and drifted them on up the river and into the mountains. Then in the fall they'd gather them and repeat, push them south, gather what they wanted to sell.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But I don't know, I suppose about that time was when they started buying land.

CONLY: Uh huh. Well they bought their land mostly here. Or did they do like ---

TOM: They bought it all. Well they might have had some buckaroos file on some land. Now there was what they called the Goodman Slough, right over here under this hill. And let's see, there was 80 acres there. Well that was a, Dad always said that was a Company buckaroo by the name of Goodman filed on that for them.

CONLY: Now is that, is that any relation to the Goodman that was over above Beulah?

TOM: No, no. Oh, old --- oh that was Goodwin up there.

CONLY: Okay, all right, all right, yeah.

TOM: This was Goodman, as far as I know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And it, anyway he got possession of it, the Company bought it, but they never did anything with it, they never even fenced it.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then finally Woodruffs came back over here and, on that place, part of O'Toole's ranch, and they got possession of it. And they borrowed money from the bank, the Vale Bank to buy it, and they never got it paid for. Part of it is on the hill, and part of it is right in there --- well the river and the road, and the ditch all go right through the bottom of it. And anyway when they --- we was haying when I come up out of the field why Jim Jones was here, and he was, run the bank down here. And he came up; he wanted to sell me that Goodman Slough, 80 acres. They wanted \$400 for it. Well the biggest part of it was that rocky point. And I said, "Hell, I don't want it, I don't need it." And I said, "The river, and the road, and the ditch all runs through it, and it would be a son-of-a-gun to even fence. So I didn't buy it. But Dave Kent was living down here then, and he bought that place from us, and so he bought it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But they had, then they had another field. Well it was the lower end of the Lillard place, between Lillard's and the Robbins' Ranch, and that was called Smith Field. And it was only about 80 acres or such. And all the Company did with it was in the fall of the year they'd throw the gates open, you know. And they had fields like that around over the country.

CONLY: They would just have ...

TOM: They just bought them or, you know, from somebody.

CONLY: Well I know down on the sides of the mountain, down the Steens Mountain stuff, they only used to, you know, 40 acres or something.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Primarily the springs and stuff as we know them at that time.

TOM: Yeah, that's right, that's right.

CONLY: And they'd just have the buckaroos, well prove up and file on them, and then they'd take them over, and that's kind of the way they went.

TOM: That's the way the sheep men, now Bill Allen, you know, he had several places up here around in this country.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And part of them they proved up, and part of them they didn't. In fact most of them they didn't.

CONLY: Before I get, you know, how do you remember the juniper trees and stuff in this area?

TOM: Oh hell, they come in my lifetime.

CONLY: They have come in your lifetime.

TOM: Oh hell yes.

CONLY: How do you remember the grass and such as it was at that time, Tom?

TOM: Well it was good, it was good. I, now here last spring at our meeting with the BLM on this Otis Valley, they was talking up ...

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: I remember once instance ... Anyway I don't know what we was a doing up there, maybe we was looking for horses or something. Anyway we found, Dad had some home --- well those homesteads were fenced up there, and we was out north of them. And we

jumped this bunch of horses, and there was a big work mare in the bunch that Dad wanted to bring in for haying. Well he didn't want to have to drive the horses all down here, so he got them over against that fence and he was going to lasso her. And every time he'd get in a position to do it, why this buckaroo from Montana was in the wrong place.

CONLY: Helping out a lot, huh?

TOM: Helping out. And Dad would cuss, you know, to himself, and such. Anyway he eventually got a shot and caught her. But I can remember the face of that mountain that day, it was a cloudy day. I don't know why it sticks in my memory, I guess that view. And that grass was that high.

CONLY: Yep.

TOM: And it was just blowing, just looked like waves of water.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Just, you know, kind of a purple color. And I've always remembered that.

CONLY: Well I'm sure that --- you know, my grandmother and my granddad traded through Drewsey, that's one of the reasons for part of this. When they developed Voltage over there on the other side of the lake they freighted.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Come over Bendire and through here.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: And I always remember my grandmother talking about the grass being stirrup high to the horses, you know, and stuff like that.

TOM: It was, it was.

CONLY: And all it takes is Mother Nature for god's sakes. Because I went out this, I went out and videoed some grass that was 36 inches high this year

TOM: Hell yeah.

CONLY: And, you know, it's thick and everything.

TOM: Yeah, yeah.

CONLY: But all it took was one year of Mother Nature.

TOM: Well when my grandmother lived in Drewsey, and Dad was a kid, oh 12, 15 --- he was 10 years old when they moved here. He was in his teens, and he'd go down there I suppose pretty often, and he'd just stake his horse out, out there back of, up towards the cemetery and that country. Fifteen foot of mecate.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And he said he'd fill up there overnight.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: That's all it is, is nature, you know, rains and stuff like that.

TOM: Oh hell this country up here, the Company would turn out 2,000 head of cattle right up through here, up Otis and up Griffin Creek. And all the ranchers, hell, from there down into the Otis Valley, two or three, or four bands of sheep, and horses to hell wouldn't have it. And that Otis Mountain and Antelope Swales and that country was the hub of it.

CONLY: Was the sagebrush very ---

TOM: No, no.

CONLY: --- thick up there at that time?

TOM: Not near as thick.

CONLY: Because there again I go back to Trout Creek Mountain and Steens Mountains and the places I've been, and the sagebrush got awful dang thick, you know.

TOM: Yeah, well it disappeared. Hell it's, you can't hardly ride through it up there in places.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh. And the junipers, that's the reason I wanted to know about the junipers.

TOM: Yeah. They've come since I've been grown.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh.

TOM: Yes, hell yes.

CONLY: Yeah, it's --- I don't know. They say that the livestock and stuff ruined the country, and I think all it needs is moisture myself.

TOM: That's all, that's all it needs.

CONLY: I think that's all the god's world ---

TOM: If we could get four or five more years like this last year, hell it would be right back to the same condition.

CONLY: You bet. Fires wouldn't hurt a damn thing either ---

TOM: Oh hell, that's what they need.

CONLY: --- as far as I'm concerned. Well anyway it's ---

TOM: We missed a good bet, I know we did. And I'm setting some fires this fall.

CONLY: Uh huh. Was there many sheep besides rancher's sheep? Was there quite a few transient like down on ---

TOM: Oh god yes, yeah, hell yes.

CONLY: Was there?

TOM: Bill Allen was the only man that, here, that had holdings that had sheep here.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then the others all moved in. Well Elder's dad, he came here in 1912, but he was over on the North Fork, mainly, and Beulah.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And then Pat Conley came in here, and he bought this place down here for the

rights, and hell it wouldn't have fed 30 head of sheep, that is the headquarters, you know. And he had this Stinkingwater and Pine Creek country.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And he bought his hay, and wintered out. And then McEwen come in on the South Fork, and he worked around up here, and he had an allotment up here. Well that O'Toole's had, you know, where, oh Calamity Butte and that country. And then there was several Irish, old Tom Conley had a little band of sheep. And then the Bascos came, and they didn't own a piece of land.

CONLY: No. No, I know they didn't down on the South End and stuff like that.

TOM: Allen owned land, and Conley owned land, and McEwen.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And that was all. The rest of them was all transients. And up here, Allen always had a band of wethers, or yearlings. Well a band of some transient come in there with some ewe lambs and god damn it they mixed every time.

CONLY: (Laughter)

TOM: And Allen owned the, or had the ... corrals, you know. Well maybe they'd herd together for about a week or so before Allen got around to help them separate them. Well that wouldn't do the lambs any good. Well when they got loose, they'd generally get the hell out.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And that's how he controlled them.

CONLY: Uh huh. Where did they shear most of their sheep ---

TOM: Well ---

CONLY: --- around this country?

TOM: --- I think Allen sheared at Juntura before he went down there, apparently.

CONLY: Did he?

TOM: I can't remember. But there never was any plants up in this area.

CONLY: Uh huh. Now I kind of, I guess I missed where O'Toole, Pat's at? Who owned that? Some kind of ---

TOM: Well a guy by the name of Wright took it up, I think. They was the first ones that I know of that owned it. And Burt Dunten married one of the daughters. I don't know how many daughters they had. I know they had two boys, Jake and John, and this one girl, her name was --- oh hell, I believe it was Eva, I'm not sure. Any-way, you don't remember Monty Dunten, do you?

CONLY: No, I don't. See I ---

TOM: He died before you came here.

CONLY: --- yeah, I really wasn't ---

TOM: He was her child, and Burt's, great big fellow. Nicest fellow you ever knew. And then the old man died and Jake and John were sort of socially abandoned --- about the hell a lot of anything. And they sold it to Conley.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then the Dunlap place, you know, was below it there. And it was, a fellow name of Howard, Mark Howard, filed on it. No relation to us.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then he also filed on some land out on Stinkingwater where Wilber's place was, on Little Stinkingwater.

CONLY: On Little Stinkingwater. The upper end of it?

TOM: I forget, I don't know.

CONLY: Uh huh. The reason my dad was out there, and I don't remember him saying ---

TOM: Yeah. One of those homesteads was this Mark Howard. Whether it was, I

imagine it was probably the grassiest part of it, or the wettest part, I don't know. I'm thinking, because this was later on. And then Dunlap he was from Tennessee, and when he came in here, and he bought it from him. And then he sold it to Bill Lillard, that was Frances and Delores' dad.

CONLY: Now there was a part of Drewsey Peak, part of that? Because Harvey Hatt bought some of that from Francis Miller.

TOM: Well no. An old fellow, Frank Wright, he was, he lived right there in Drewsey, or out, up --- you know where that old windmill was?

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: That's where he lived. He filed on that land there. I don't know how he made a living, but he drilled wells around the lake.

CONLY: Oh did he?

TOM: Yeah. And that's, we weren't any relation.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: I don't know where he came from, but I remember him.

CONLY: Well now coming back up, then the next place up here would be Sitz's on the other side of the river from here, or on up. When did the Sitz's come?

TOM: Well they came here in the early '90's, I think. They moved over, or Lou Sitz moved over from Lawen. He and his brother were over there. A fellow, this Robbins that started the store owned part of it, and ---

CONLY: Did he own a store at Lawen, Robbins, by any chance?

TOM: No huh uh, no.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Let's see, there was another fellow, a name there. Robbins and --- can't think of the name. But they had, owned, one had the lower end of the Sitz Ranch, and the other

had the upper end. What in the hell was their names? Robbins and --- But anyway Lou Sitz and one of his brothers came. They were German, they came from Germany. Anyway Lou moved over here and bought this land from, I think, Robbins. And that's how he got settled in here. And the other brother stayed over in the Lawen country in the ---

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And you remember the, oh he had four big boys, Allen and Eldon and ---

CONLY: Catterson, no.

TOM: No, Allen Sitz, and Eldon Sitz, and ---

CONLY: Oh yes, oh yeah. He was a sheriff for a while.

TOM: Eldon was.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: And Babe. I guess it was just the three of them. Babe worked with the 3-C's down there, oh around Buena Vista and that country someplace.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: He and another young fellow started up to Burns to a dance one night in February, and he got stuck out there someplace, and set there with the motor running, and by god when they found them they were both dead.

CONLY: Yeah, I vaguely remember something about that.

TOM: Yeah. He was a hell of a nice fellow. They all were. Yeah, it was just the three boys. Babe, his name was Leland.

CONLY: Uh huh. So they bought this place then, over here. All right then coming cross the river, back to Cronin's, I thought, you know ---

TOM: My grandmother, now who in the hell --- oh, August Muller, you'll have to start in up at the Muller place there where Normie's got now.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: They were Swiss, right from the old country. They could talk to me for an hour and I couldn't tell you what they said.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: But August, and William, and Rudolph came in here along about the, I'd say before the turn of the century. And August bought that land up there and took up some of it; I don't know which or what. And William came down and I think he filed on that Cronin place, the upper end of the meadow. And also that's where Turen had, and he built that ditch around there.

CONLY: The upper ditch?

TOM: Yeah, the upper ditch.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well the Company went in with him, because they'd acquired the Kimball Flat Ranch in the meantime.

CONLY: Now the Kimball Flat Ranch is where?

TOM: Miler's.

CONLY: Miler's Ranch.

TOM: And then my grandmother bought it from, bought the Cronin place. Well she bought it all from him. She was quite an old businesswoman. And Cronin had come in here; he came from Canada, from Ontario, way back. He had a couple brothers out here working for the PLS Company, they was running the ranches. And I don't know how he got over in this country. But anyway he come over here and he married a Jones girl, that's old ---

... (Pause in tape)

TOM: But she made him a good wife, they raised --- Anyway he wanted to buy a ranch, so he bought, he made a deal with my grand-mother to, and he bought that property there

above where the house is and on up. And he paid for it just with whatever, when he had a little money. He was years paying for it.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Well she died in the meantime and Dad --- hell Joe would give him \$10 maybe.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then he, then Dad had this place that Turen has got, well he'd lease it to Cronin, and Cronin's put it into crop land for half the hay, or grain, or whatever. God he used to, I can remember he put up one, two, three, four great big alfalfa stacks there. And Dad would buy his half, or if he didn't need it, somebody else would. And then finally, how in the hell, I don't know why Dad, well hell we traded it, Dad traded it to Chet Stallard for three sections of land over on Otis Creek.

CONLY: How did Chet come into the picture there?

TOM: Well their folks came in from, I don't know where.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: But they were old timers, they settled on Otis Creek.

CONLY: Yeah, uh huh, yeah. I was just wondering how he come in.

TOM: Yeah, I don't know where they came from.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh. Well that's where Turen was at. Then did it come clear around to where Floyd was ---

TOM: From Floyd's right up ---

CONLY: Back that way?

TOM: --- just the way it is now.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: Same fence, and same lines. Yeah. And Dad run it, or he owned it for a long time. I remember we used to go over there and feed cattle, and haul hay over that hill there.

Cold weather, god damn, we made a lot of trips over. And then he traded it to Chas. And with a house on it, and he leased it to Fred Beede. He was the fellow that --- he'd built up part of this, on this reservoir out here.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: For three years, and Fred ... built the house. Well that old house that Turen lived in, that was the house.

CONLY: That was it.

TOM: Yeah. He got a pretty cheap rent there.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And then about that time Chet come back here --- you know he went broke once, and broke his dad, and he went off down, around Klamath, and his wife left him down there. And he come back and started over. Got a few calves around, and cows, and buckaroos to work and --- He finally got a start again. And he got a case on an old gal and he was going to marry her, and he wanted a little house for her. Well so he traded those sections over there to Dad for the place, and then she turned him down.

CONLY: I'll be darned. (Laughter)

TOM: I think she already had a husband if I remember right.

CONLY: Very likely.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: And then when Floyd, where Floyd is at, what was that place?

TOM: Well the McMullen's had that.

CONLY: That's the two places together there?

TOM: Yeah. They had it and, the two places was one.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: And the old man when he, no he was still alive, and Charlie and Burt Dunten lived

over here. Well Charlie lived, he had a house across the river up on that hill. You know where that poplar tree is over here?

CONLY: Oh, is that right?

TOM: Yeah. And he lived up there. That's where Byron was born.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: But it was awful unhandy. Hell, in the spring of the year they couldn't get across there.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: They built a bridge across the river. Hell, I can remember that bridge well. But then that wasn't the only thing, you know, those, the low land there you could get off the bridge and mire down.

CONLY: Yeah, yeah.

TOM: So he finally, he and Burt split up. Split the ranch here, and ... or Dunten's --- no, Dunten's weren't here. They dug it, the original ditch, and this is it right down here under this hill that goes around.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: That's the end of it right down there.

CONLY: Tom, I didn't turn that thing on. I got to back up to Chassie's place again.

TOM: Well ---

CONLY: But you didn't know who ---

TOM: I'll start out, now this was in '92. No, yeah, when they built this ditch. No, '83 it was when they built it, because it was a lot of pick and shovel type, the way they dug most of it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And it come around down through the Cronin place, and then it came right down

the fence line between Sitz and ---

CONLY: Miler's?

TOM: Miler, or Company.

CONLY: Company, uh huh.

TOM: The early ditch.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But they had possession at that time. But it was all, mostly sagebrush. That lower field, you know how it runs, it laps around the corner of Sitz's down ---

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: --- well that was about, I think about the only meadow that was on it up there. And that would be the runoff from the coalmine where it comes down through there.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well then in '92 they all got together, the Company and the rest of them, and they built this ditch, called it the middle ditch.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And they started out at the same place in the river, but they kept it on grade, well it come down where it is now, you know.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: But it was '92. The Company got an '88 water right out of it. But the ditch wasn't built until '92.

CONLY: Well, that's one way to get ---

TOM: They didn't have an honest water right on nine-tenths of their damn ranches.

CONLY: Uh huh. They just had a good lawyer or something.

TOM: Good lawyers.

CONLY: Uh huh. Well that was kind of the way it was over there on the P Ranch.

TOM: Oh sure, all that country.

CONLY: You know.

TOM: This Swamp Ranch up here that Riley's had, it was on that side of the Indian line, but it got an '82 right.

CONLY: Before it was, while it was still a reservation.

TOM: It was still Indian land then. Yeah. It's got the oldest right on the river, but by god it's not an honest one.

CONLY: Then the Dunten place, or where Byron lived, below Milers, now who ---

TOM: Well as far as I know it was Burt and Charlie's --- they filed on it as far as I know now. There might have been somebody else in there, but I never heard of it.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh. And then where, right over here, is that part of ---

TOM: Well no they ---

CONLY: --- part of the Dunten place.

TOM: Burt bought it from, they bought it from Sam Williams, see. See they came here with my granddad.

CONLY: Oh, okay, I guess we got that the first time around then.

TOM: Yeah. He had 160.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: Laid right along here some ways, or right next to us. And then the rest of it up there, I don't know, they must have filed on it and acquired it.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: Well no, wait a minute. There was a fellow by the name of Delaney that filed on some land right above it here, right on the riverbank, and Charlie bought that, or they bought it together I guess. And that's why; he built that house over on the hill there. And that's why this mountain right here is called mountain, Delaney Mountain.

CONLY: Okay, and that's this one up above, right up here.

TOM: Yeah, this mountain right here, this lava bed up there.

CONLY: Yeah, okay, uh huh.

TOM: Yeah, Charlie bought it from --- or they both bought it from, Charlie got most of it when they split up. And I supposed he, reached across the river there.

CONLY: Okay.

TOM: And that's, then this land up here, I think that was, Burt filed on it, I'm pretty sure, this hillside.

CONLY: Uh huh. Now Tom I went, you know, up here elk hunting and stuff up here on the mountain. And we've got Trail Flat, and back up in there, was there a number of people that lived up in there?

TOM: No.

CONLY: They just kind of ---

TOM: Now that Trail Flat, a fellow by the name of Arthur Works filed on that for Bill Allen.

CONLY: Oh.

TOM: Bill used to drop around in there, down on that tableland with a band of sheep or two in the spring. And boy it was a dandy; you know, for a band of lambs, a little clover.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: And, but he never did sell it back to Allen. Well Allen maybe didn't want to buy it or something.

CONLY: Yeah.

TOM: Anyway he had possession of it. And he used to, he lived up there. And he come down in the --- I don't think he spent the winter, because that damned old cabin, you could see through it. But he'd work; I know he'd come down and hay for Dad. And Mama said she never saw as ragged a man in her life as that old boy was when he come down from

up there. And he built that damn road up that grade.

CONLY: Oh he did?

TOM: You bet. Team and scraper, and pick and shovel, working old fool. And he never did sell it, but he finally just moved away. He went down and he worked for Allen down at Juntura for a long time, and then he faded out. And it finally went for taxes. Molly Duntun bought it for \$96.

CONLY: I'll be damned.

TOM: Yeah.

CONLY: Well there was a lot of that happened, you know.

TOM: Oh yeah. Dad bought that ... place over here for \$216.

CONLY: Uh huh, you bet. Yeah, there is a lot of it. But there was really nobody then living up in that area to speak of.

TOM: No. The only man that ever spent any time --- now the next, Lige's homestead there, you remember old Lige?

CONLY: Yeah, you bet.

TOM: Well he filed on it about 1918. In fact Works fenced it. Then Lige was drafted into the army. And Works fenced it for; Dad paid him to fence it while Lige was in the army.

CONLY: Uh huh.

TOM: And then above it another uncle, Herb, that would be Jim's dad, he filed on a homestead and he was in the army. And then Lon had a homestead there that's ... and Grover Ward, another uncle had a homestead up here on the basin. Well Grover never proved up, and Lon didn't prove up, but Herb did. But if they served their stretch in the army, you know, they, hell they cut off about half or two thirds of it.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And Lige spent some time up there, but I don't think Herb ever spent a night on his.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: But he got title to it.

CONLY: Yeah, you bet.

TOM: And that's all. And then the Sexton field, that's right below it. But there is an old, I don't know how he happened to be in this country, they said he was an old osteopath or chiropractor or something. And he, a friend of the Stallards, or the Byerlys or somebody. Anyway he filed on part of that field. And then the upper part was a school section, and he bought it. And the Stallards financed it, and then they got possession, they bought it from him.

CONLY: Uh huh, uh huh.

TOM: And Worlow was the same thing, old John Worlow. But he never did sell his, he lived up there. In fact a Company buckaroo found him dead in his cabin one fall up there where --- oh it was pretty late. He went up there hunting, tail end, you know.

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: And rode over, and they was right above that butte. They found him there, laying there.

CONY: Tom, I want to ask you, you've seen the cattle and horses and stuff come and go, you know, do you think that they were the downfall of the grass and stuff like that?

TOM: Hell no. Not really.

CONLY: They were coming and moving, they were able to move at all times.

TOM: Why sure. I'll tell you my own idea; I can't find many people that agree with me, but the goddamn fences ---

CONLY: You bet.

TOM: Every time they put a fence in they're creating a problem on both sides of that fence.

CONLY: You bet your life.

TOM: I don't give a damn where it is.

CONLY: I wished they'd tear all the god --- excuse me, I shouldn't say that. I know Harvey Hatt; he has always been a firm believer in, you know, against those fences ---

(END OF TAPE) bl