

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #425 – Sides A/B

Subject: Descendents of Lochers

Date: September 3, 2001

Place: Burns Times-Herald Office - Burns, Oregon

Interviewer: Pauline Braymen

PAULINE BRAYMEN: Hi, this is Pauline Braymen, I'm doing an oral history on September 3, 2001, with Arthur Joseph Olsen, and Mary Pauline Olsen Butler, descendents of Pauline, Paulina, and Paul Locher, who came to Harney County in 1887. They are going to visit a little bit about what they remember of their family history here. Okay, Arthur, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

ARTHUR JOSEPH OLSEN: Myself?

PAULINE: Yourself.

ARTHUR: I was coming to, living in --- what would I begin with?

PAULINE: What did you do? What did you do for a living?

ARTHUR: When I went to work?

PAULINE: When you went to work.

ARTHUR: That was not here.

PAULINE: No, but what did you do all your life, after you left Harney County?

ARTHUR: I went to ---

MARY PAULINE OLSEN BUTLER: California.

ARTHUR: California.

PAULINE: Okay. And what was your occupation?

ARTHUR: I was ---

JIM BUTLER: Worked for the newspaper.

ARTHUR: I worked for a newspaper.

PAULINE: You worked for a newspaper, well we are old friends then, just from that, yes. Were you a journalist, or did you work ---

ARTHUR: I was a journalist.

PAULINE: You were a journalist.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Great.

ARTHUR: I was working first of all for the --- the first place where I worked at was ---

MARY: Was at San Jose.

ARTHUR: Where?

MARY: Yeah, when you went to school.

ARTHUR: Yeah, I was in school.

MARY: At Santa Clara.

ARTHUR: At Santa Clara.

PAULINE: So you worked in, for the newspaper in San Jose, California first.

ARTHUR: First, yes, a little while.

PAULINE: Yeah, yeah. So how old are you now?

ARTHUR: I'm now about 80 --- I'm about 81 now.

PAULINE: 81. That's great. So you have been retired for awhile.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Yeah.

ARTHUR: Uh huh.

PAULINE: Okay. Where do you live now?

ARTHUR: I live in ---

JIM: Georgetown.

ARTHUR: Georgetown --- in Germany ---

JIM: Washington, D.C.

ARTHUR: Washington, D. C.

PAULINE: Oh, in Washington, D.C., at Georgetown.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Okay.

ARTHUR: And during my life, the first twenty years of my life I was a journalist, particularly, most of that time was abroad working for the New York Times as a journalist. And he was --- working abroad.

PAULINE: Uh huh. So you were reporting on events that were happening in Europe.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Uh huh.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: During World War II maybe, or after that?

ARTHUR: A little after that.

PAULINE: A little after that.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Okay.

ARTHUR: I was in World War II as a ---

PAULINE: You were in the Marines?

ARTHUR: With the Marines.

PAULINE: My dad was a Marine too.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Okay.

ARTHUR: I was four years abroad as a Marine in World War II.

PAULINE: Okay. Mary, can you tell us just a little bit about yourself, where you have lived, and what you did as an adult, your occupation and ---

MARY: Okay. I was born on the Island Ranch itself in 1918, during the flu epidemic. And then after I grew up, when I got older, my mother Josephine home schooled we three children. And we all had nicknames, because we had an uncle who was very fond of nicknames. And so that is how Buck got his nickname, Arthur. I still call him Buck, because he is my brother. And Barney is my younger brother, and then I was called Sue. We lived on the Island Ranch, and enjoyed our life, our country life very much while we were here. But when we moved to California, of course it was quite different. And we moved to California to a little town called Los Banos, where my father, Arthur Olsen was superintendent of the ranches in that whole area. And we lived in a nice little town, and

went to school until Buck and I were, let's see, we moved when we were juniors in high school. Moved to Redwood City. My father became the president of the company that

he had been working for, for many years; the company was Miller and Lux. And so he had an office in San Francisco, so we lived in a little town, no, not a little town, a good-sized suburban town, Redwood City. And while we were there, or when we finished high school, my brother Buck, Arthur, attended Santa Clara University, and I attended Dominican College in San Rafael, and also graduated from the University of California, Berkeley. And Barney attended Stanford University, and he graduated from there. I became a teacher, took teachers training, a teacher like my mother, and I taught for about three and a half years during World War II. And after that I was, I also studied piano quite seriously, and played the piano and the cello. And after the war I felt I wanted to do something different. So I started working for United Airlines in San Francisco, which was an office job. And I decided that was not for me, and I was just about to do something else when I met my future husband, John Richard Butler. And we were married in 1947. And after that he was an engineer, and he worked for, what do you call them ---

JIM: Standard Oil.

MARY: Huh?

JIM: Standard Oil.

MARY: Yes, various oil companies. Shell in --- we lived in Shell, in Pasadena, Texas which is right near Houston. And then we were transferred to another city, which was

Tulsa, Oklahoma. We lived there for eight years, and that's where my two sons, James Francis Butler, and Stephen Arthur Butler were born. And then John decided to do

something else, and he moved to Billings, Montana. And he and his boss, and friend, built a sulfur plant there. And we have been living there ever since.

PAULINE: A sulfur plant.

MARY: A sulfur plant. A sulfur recovery plant at one of the refineries. And I'm still teaching piano and I have done that ever since my children were old enough to --- just let them carry on their lives, and going to school. And that's about all there is.

PAULINE: Okay. Well Paul and Paulina Locher came to Harney County in 1887, according to the book. And I think that date is accurate. Sometimes some of the dates in this book are not 100%, but we pretty well confirmed that that is a correct date. What did your grandfather do? Do you remember them talking about what he did in Burns when he first came here?

MARY: Well I think, he had a, he was born in Germany of course, and he was in World War ---

ARTHUR: One.

MARY: One.

JIM: No, he wasn't in the war, he was here before World War I.

MARY: Well he was here before World War I. And when World War I started, he felt that he should go back and help the Keiser, so he did. And he got as far as Turkey and they wouldn't let him into Germany at all, so he was kind of disappointed. But he came

back to this country. And he had a wandering spirit. He ended up, I believe at that time, going to Alaska searching, or prospecting for gold. And he also wanted to do something special, so he tried to; well he started a brewery here. And his idea was to have sort of a

hall where people could gather and have fun, and drink beer. And that was what his idea was. But it just never did work out.

ARTHUR: It was a copy of what he was used to, grow up with in Germany.

MARY: Right.

ARTHUR: And that kind of a thing.

MARY: Exactly.

PAULINE: Well, that, I think that's what we referred to as the old castle.

MARY: Uh huh.

PAULINE: Which is located just south of Hines, about two miles probably just the other side of what was to be Edward Hines Lumber Company Sawmill, and the old swimming pool for those who remember the old swimming pool. And then maybe half a mile or so further there was the castle. We always called it Locher's Castle ---

MARY: Uh huh.

PAULINE: --- on the hill, just as you turn around the turn to go on up towards the BLM office today, on the hill on the north side, or the right hand side as you go out. There were --- he carved in the red cinders, he carved Adam and Eve, and I believe the serpent, and the, Keiser Wilhelm.

MARY: Really.

PAULINE: And my Aunt Gladys Ausmus would take her children and I, my cousins and I, every spring we would go there to pick yellow bells, and go up and visit those sculptures. I'm sure they are gone now. I haven't tried to climb up there in recent years to see, although you can still see the rock. But I imagine that most of the definition of the sculptures is gone, because they were, they were getting pretty well worn when I was a kid. And let's see, that was probably when I was 9, 10, and I'm 63 now so --- Well this was about the time you were getting married. So --- and my Aunt Gladys said that she used to play there, and the kids used to go play in the castle when she was a kid. And she was probably --- well she was 93 when she died a couple years ago, so it was quite a long while ago that she played there with her friends. But it was always my understanding that there was a period --- there was a Locher Hall where they did hold dances.

MARY: Oh, really.

PAULINE: And I'm, and that was something I was hoping you folks could clear up for me, and maybe you can. That there was a Locher Hall, where they actually --- and the brewery, as I understood it was up here on the hill.

MARY: Where their home used to be.

PAULINE: Where their home used to be.

MARY: Oh.

PAULINE: And was where the brewery was. And he, and there was a Locher Hall where they did hold dances. And when I --- I always thought that that was different from the castle.

MARY: I imagine so, because the castle was never finished, was it?



PAULINE: No, no. And it was kind of a rambling thing that he just sort of started and built rooms, and built rooms, and built rooms, and it was a pretty rambling thing. And I remember my Aunt Gladys talking about rooms with no windows, and you know, just all kind of maze of rooms and so --- And I don't think that was ever, you know, was never

habitable or used as a hall like he envisioned. But he was trying to replicate his home in Germany, the castle that he lived in, in Germany, was always the story that I've been told.

MARY: I think that's probably true. And I remember we kids played in this rambling bunch of stones and rocks and things when we would come to Burns from the ranch. But my mother never told me anything about that, that I remember. I don't, I mean you would think that she was three years old when she came here. So if all this happened while I was growing up, I didn't know about it.

PAULINE: Well ---

MARY: I wish I had. I'm sure there were a lot of good stories that Mother could tell.

PAULINE: Right.

MARY: Maybe she was too busy with her children.

PAULINE: Well that could be. You know as --- we don't think about those things as being important.

MARY: That's true.

PAULINE: At the time, you know. It's just something that we grew up with, and we don't see it as something important.

MARY: But you were right, there were lots of little rooms. And some would have windows, spaces for windows, but no window, no windowpanes or anything, just little holes.

PAULINE: Was there more than one story? It looks like in the pictures like there was that it was two stories.

MARY: I think it must have been, because we kids could climb up these various rocks, and we enjoyed doing that. Do you remember that Buck?

ARTHUR: I can't, because I was younger, you know.

MARY: I know.

ARTHUR: I can't remember what we were doing. I know they were trying to build something, that's all I can remember.

MARY: Me too. I wish we could be of more help.

PAULINE: Did you ever know your grandparents at all?

MARY: Yes.

PAULINE: Can you tell me a little bit about Paul, what kind of --- what he was like. What did he look like? How do you remember him?

MARY: Well he was a short man. I think that Grandma was taller than he, probably, but I'm not sure about that. But he had a good sense of humor. And he liked to kiss, and he would, you know, play with us a little bit when we would come to visit. And I can remember coming back, coming to visit her son Leonard who lived across the street from them, across from their house in town. And we would go in and help Grandma churn the

butter, with the old thing. And that was exciting, that was real fun. At least I thought it was fun.

PAULINE: Now the one thing that we can't --- we could see what we are doing here, but we can't see it on a tape recorder. So it was a churn, the tall churn with the dasher.

MARY: Exactly.

PAULINE: And you moved that handle up and down to churn the butter.

MARY: And we thought that was just a miracle.

PAULINE: And it was probably wooden, made out of wood.

MARY: Yes, it was, uh huh. And it was in the kitchen, and so I know I would go in and help her all the time. And I also remember sleeping at Grandma's house. And she had feather beds, and I always felt lost in a feather bed, because they were very high, you know, and like, well like down comforters now. And so I would hop into bed, before I knew it, I was in the bed, and the feather bed was right on top of me, practically squishing me. But of course it wasn't squishing me; it was very light and fluffy. And she gave me two dolls when I was about five, I guess. They were bisque dolls, beautiful. One was a little girl, and it probably stood about three feet high.

PAULINE: Three feet high.

MARY: Uh huh. And one was a baby doll, and it was like a real baby, looked just like one. All dressed in costumes, and stuff. And I used to love to play with those.

PAULINE: Do you still have them?

MARY: I do.

PAULINE: Oh that's wonderful.

MARY: They need help, but I do have them.

PAULINE: What about your grandmother, what did she look like?

MARY: Well she looked like my mother, really. Except, I think Mother was shorter than she, as I remember. But I think probably my Aunt Paulina, no Pauline, my Aunt Pauline, looked like her mother than my mother looked like her mother. But I suppose there is a family resemblance between us and our parents, our grandparents and others.

PAULINE: So Paul and Paulina had three children that I know of, Leonard and Pauline, and Josephine.

MARY: Right.

PAULINE: Were those the only ones who survived, that lived?

MARY: Yes.

PAULINE: And we know that there were at least three others.

MARY: Uh huh.

PAULINE: Jim, can you tell us about those. This is Jim Butler, Mary's son Jim.

JIM: Right.

PAULINE: And they have been to the cemetery.

JIM: There is, at the grave at the cemetery there are the three graves for Paulina Locher, who died in 1948. And I believe she was born in 1859. And Paul Locher, who was born in 1852, and died in 1925.

ARTHUR: That's right.

JIM: And then there was a grave of three children, I don't have their names with me, but one was born in 1887, I believe, and died the same year. One was born in 1889 ---

ARTHUR: Henry.

JIM: Henry, and died in 1892, who must have been three years old, or four years old.

And then there was one that was born in 1894, and died I believe that same year. So we are not sure what the history on those three siblings of Arthur's and Mary's mom's ---

ARTHUR: The three of them, the third one was Anna.

JIM: Oh, the third one was Anna.

ARTHUR: Third one was Anna.

JIM: It was a girl, a boy, and a girl.

ARTHUR: That's right.

JIM: Okay.

ARTHUR: That's right.

JIM: And Josephine was born in Europe.

MARY: Yes, in Germany.

JIM: In Germany. And her next sister --- she was the oldest?

MARY: Mother was the oldest.

JIM: Your mother was the oldest.

PAULINE: Josephine was the oldest, and she was born in Germany.

MARY: Yes. And she was three years old when they came over here.

PAULINE: Okay.

MARY: And Mother could tell me that, if they needed something at the store, what store I don't know, she never said, they would send Mother to the store because she being only three her English was much better than her parents. And so she would run up the hill to

wherever the store was, and what kind of a store, I don't know, I suppose grocery. And she would pick up whatever it was. And Aunt Pauline was nine months old when she moved, when they moved to the United States. So she was just a baby.

PAULINE: Did they come --- well they had to come by boat. Did they ever talk about that trip? Do you ever remember ---

MARY: I had the idea that they came by boat to New York, then they got a train. And they evidently had some friends in Wisconsin, who told them to come and visit, so they did that briefly. But my grandfather was an adventurous soul, and he wanted to go west and see what was there. And so he went all the way to Oregon, and that's where they decided to settle. And then later on, as I said, he went to Alaska a couple of times during the gold rush period. I have a bracelet that he gave me --- he brought some gold back, a couple of hunks of gold I guess, and he had this bracelet made, which I still wear.

PAULINE: That must have been a really --- I can't imagine traveling with a nine month old baby.

MARY: I can't either.

PAULINE: In those days on a boat, and then across the country. Oh my!

ARTHUR: And people were traveling across the country, they lost a lot of them at that time on the way.

MARY: That's right.

ARTHUR: That's right. I'm not sure how, whether they were going across country or not, I'm not sure.

MARY: Yeah, I'm not sure either. I never heard that story. But I didn't hear much about covered wagons or anything, ever.

PAULINE: You know I imagine they came most of the way by train at that point.

MARY: I think so, at that point.

ARTHUR: But there was no trains in any place near, where Burns was.

PAULINE: No, they might have been able to come as far as Ontario.

JIM: Ontario.

PAULINE: Ontario.

MARY: Probably. And then they'd take the ---

PAULINE: The stage or wagon.

ARTHUR: That was a long trip from Ontario.

MARY: Yes, it was. Oh, it took us a long ---

PAULINE: Well ---

ARTHUR: Took three or four days.

PAULINE: How long did it take you to come to town from the Island Ranch, when you came to town? Did you do it in one day?

MARY: Yes, we did, because it was only sixteen miles. But the road was poor most of the time. And we often, we had little Ford cars, and we always had flat tires, always. Because I can remember being quite expert at helping whoever it was that was repairing the tires, and get the right item to them, you know, like you would --- do you want this wrench, or that one, or whatever. And I was able to help them. But I would say that it probably took us at least an hour to drive the sixteen miles, unless it was good weather

and good roads more or less. If we drove in the spring after the snow started melting, it was just mud all the way. And we would get stuck in the mud, and it was an adventure to come to town. We didn't do it often.

PAULINE: I can imagine not. Well you said that your dad worked for Miller and Lux.

MARY: Yeah.

PAULINE: And of course that is why he was at the Island Ranch.

MARY: That's right.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: When did he come to the Island Ranch?

MARY: It must have been around 1912, or '13. Because he and Mother were married in 1917, I believe. I hope I'm right on that one.

PAULINE: And about how old was he, do you know? Do you remember when he was born?

ARTHUR: He was born about 19 ---

JIM: 1886.

ARTHUR: 1884 or something like that.

JIM: I think 1884 sounds very familiar.

PAULINE: 1884, and his name was ---

MARY: Arthur Raymond Olsen.

PAULINE: Arthur Raymond Olsen.

MARY: Yeah, O L S E N.

PAULINE: I don't want to get the Olsens and the Butlers mixed up here.



ARTHUR: He was the oldest, the latest born.

JIM: He was the youngest.

ARTHUR: The youngest.

JIM: Of how many, eight?

ARTHUR: Eight.

MARY: I think ten originally, because two died.

ARTHUR: Two died.

PAULINE: Now where did he come from?

MARY: San Francisco.

PAULINE: From San Francisco.

ARTHUR: Yeah. He and a Norwegian jumped the ship to stay in San Francisco. He was a traveler; he traveled by the ship.

JIM: That was your dad's dad?

MARY: Yes.

ARTHUR: That's right.

MARY: Uh huh. Gustav Olsen.

JIM: Gustav.

PAULINE: Gustav? That would be G U S T A V ---

MARY: E, I think.

PAULINE: E. Was there an E on the end?

MARY: Yes, he was a, had a job on a ship from Norway to San Francisco. And when he got to San Francisco I guess he decided that was as far as he was going to go, so he just

left, and got a job in San Francisco. And when he married my mother, who was an Irish girl ---

JIM: Your grandmother.

MARY: My grandmother. They had the ten kids. And I remember hearing that the two died, and eight survived.

PAULINE: So what was your grandmother's name?

MARY: Ellen.

ARTHUR: Ellen Fortune, all I can remember.

MARY: Ellen Fortune was her name.

PAULINE: Ellen Fortune.

MARY: Fortune, F O R T U N E, Fortune. Evidently that's an Irish name too.

ARTHUR: That's an Irish name also. I'm not sure how the Fortunes got to San Francisco.

MARY: I have no idea.

ARTHUR: I have no idea.

JIM: But they were, do you have an idea when they were married?

ARTHUR: Yeah, pretty close. Let's see --- they ---

JIM: They were probably married around the civil war time.

ARTHUR: I don't think during the war, but right after the war.

JIM: Right after the civil war is when they were married.

ARTHUR: I think so, yeah. That was about it.

JIM: Well we visited their grave a few years ago at Benecia, (California) there in the Dominican Cemetery, at Benecia, a little cemetery.

MARY: We didn't take the dates down though.

JIM: We will get the dates and pass them on to you, we would be happy to do that.

PAULINE: Okay, that would be good to send them, and we can put them with the transcript.

JIM: Okay.

PAULINE: It kind of puts the right time period on that.

JIM: We can verify some of these dates, would be good.

PAULINE: So then your dad, Arthur ---

MARY: Arthur Olsen.

PAULINE: Arthur Olsen went to work for Miller and Lux.

MARY: Uh huh.

PAULINE: And came to the Island Ranch from San Francisco. And what was his job there?

MARY: Well he was in charge of all the different ranches around here. There were many ranches that belonged to Miller and Lux.

ARTHUR: He was the boss, he was the overall boss for a lot of those ---

MARY: Yes.

ARTHUR: He would keep everything under control. And --- the Island Ranch was the top of the whole thing. The Harney Ranch was an example, Harney Ranch. I can't remember all the names.

MARY: I've forgotten too.

ARTHUR: After that ---

PAULINE: Well it is a well-known fact that they had property and ran cattle all over the county.

MARY: They did.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: From the Steens to the Drewsey area.

MARY: Right.

PAULINE: And you talk to any old timers and Miller and Lux always played a prominent place in memories of so many people.

MARY: Yes, they had a big conglomerate of ranches, and all very well run too. And my father would drive his little Ford car of some type from ranch, to ranch, to ranch. And I remember saying at first, the cowboys kind of wondered about this young man from San Francisco who didn't know anything about cattle, or ranching, or anything. But he was a manager, and so he was able to guide them, so they did the correct thing, and produced enough cattle and enough feed for the cattle, and all the rest of it. So we didn't, we didn't see an awful lot of Daddy sometimes, especially during the good weather because he would be gone. He would go from ranch, to ranch, to ranch.

PAULINE: Did he ride, or did he ---

MARY: No. He was not a rider.

PAULINE: That's makes me feel really good. I will interject a personal note here. My husband is a rancher, and he doesn't ride a horse either. And so sometimes some of the

neighbors in the past, the old timers, kind of looked at him with a little skepticism and, about his ability to run a cattle ranch. But he has done that all his life without having to ride a horse. He can find someone else to ride the horse. So I will tell him he is emulating a very successful person. (Laughter)

MARY: That's right.

PAULINE: What did your mom do, did she help with --- You know, did she have --- you said she was a teacher.

MARY: Yes, she was.

PAULINE: So did she teach school at the Island Ranch, or in the Island Ranch area?

MARY: No, huh uh, she didn't. But when she got old enough to go to, like middle school, which would make her about an early teenager, my grandmother decided that they would send her to Baker to a convent school, and she would board there all winter. And she would just be home during summertime. So she did that, and then when she graduated from high school, because she did middle school and high school, then she was through --- her education was finished at the moment, but she didn't think so. She was very interested in teaching, trying teaching herself, and so she taught someplace around here in a country school. And she tells about how, she told about how she would board, had board and room with a family. And then they gave her a horse to ride to school. And so she would do that, and sometimes she would ---

ARTHUR: She had a bunch of cowboys she was teaching.

MARY: Yes, uh huh. She also, yes she was teaching cowboys because they were --- well they wanted to learn some more too. Well their parents wanted them to learn something. So did she tell you anymore about her teaching?

ARTHUR: I just remember one time they took hold of --- they took her upside down.

MARY: Yes, she told me that too. She was about, well a little taller than I perhaps, but not very tall. And so they just, one of these cowboys just picked her up by her feet and turned her upside down, and ha, ha, ha, you know. And she was furious!

PAULINE: I can imagine.

MARY: I don't know what she said to them, it must have been effective, because they never did that again.

PAULINE: So you said she was about as tall as you. How tall are you?

MARY: Well I used to be 5' 3". I'm shrinking, slowly.

PAULINE: But she was just a little woman.

MARY: She was, yes.

PAULINE: And I imagine dressed in a long skirt, petticoats and all.

MARY: That's right. Definitely.

PAULINE: That would have been pretty hilarious, must have been. Can you imagine her button top boots, or shoes, you know.

MARY: How they picked her up ---

PAULINE: Yeah.

MARY: She also worked for the telephone company here in Burns for awhile.

PAULINE: Oh, tell me more about that. Do you remember more about that?

MARY: I don't know much about it, except that maybe during the summer perhaps when she wasn't teaching, and I don't know how many schools she taught at either.

ARTHUR: Neither do I, no.

MARY: Do you remember?

ARTHUR: No.

MARY: But anyway, what she really wanted to do was go to college. So she saved her money, and she took the train to Chicago, and wanted to go to the University of Chicago. She had no idea what she was taking on, because she really didn't understand, I guess,

what a big school the University of Chicago is. So she got to there, got to Chicago, and was taking a few courses and discovered that really she was not prepared for that at all. And she was most discouraged. And she said that she almost just got on the train and came back home again to Burns. And she said, "No, I'm not going to do that. I want to have an education." So fortunately she met somebody who was at the University of Chicago, who was from Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and they became friends.

ARTHUR: Uh huh.

MARY: And this woman, I think her name was --- I don't know what her name was, I better not say, I don't remember. This woman said what you have to do is go to the University, go to Oshkosh and go to the normal school there and learn how to teach. So she did. So she spent, I'm not even sure how many years, two anyway, and learned everything she needed to know about teaching. And then she came back to Burns and she was teaching school when my father came here.

JIM: You should tell about that.

MARY: Okay. And she said that there was a new bachelor in town, and all the girls were just very thrilled to have a young man who was the head of Miller and Lux, and not married, you know. And so she looked him over, and he had asked her out, and she accepted. And they had quite a little romance going while she was teaching, and while he was supervising all the ranches.

So then when she lived in Oshkosh and went to school, she boarded with a family who --- by the name of Ostertag. And Lydia Ostertag was a young woman that, the same age as my mother, approximately. And she, the two of them were great friends. And so even when summertime came and Mother would go back to, come back to Burns and see her family, that would be fine with her. And then she would go back to visit the Ostertags again. And Lydia Ostertag --- what was the man, the civil war man --- your uncle ---

JIM: Yeah.

MARY: Anyway, that's the ---

JIM: I thought you meant to tell her that Lydia Ostertag used to, became your ---

MARY: Mother-in-law.

JIM: Became her mother-in-law.

MARY: Yes. So Lydia had a --- let's see, two kids, Fran and Don. And Mother of course loved to write letters. She was a great correspondent, and so was Lydia. And the two of them wrote letters about weekly. And I can remember one of the letters from Lydia Ostertag, or Lydia Butler came, because she married Dr. Butler. We kids had to sit



down and listen to all the, what was going on with the Butler family. Do you remember that?

ARTHUR: Yeah.

MARY: And we were going, ho hum. (Laughter) So then in 1920 --- no, no, about 1930, or '31 or '32 we drove back to Wisconsin and Chicago and visited all the people that Mother had been corresponding with all those years. And had a wonderful time visiting everybody, including the Butler family, with Lydia Ostertag Butler and her husband and the two kids.

ARTHUR: And she made a great friend in Rosalee, somewhere along that line.

MARY: Yes.

ARTHUR: That's right. And she died. You remember your good friend died?

MARY: Yes that's right.

PAULINE: Ostertag, was that O S T E R T A G ?

MARY: Yes, Ostertag.

ARTHUR: Ostertag.

MARY: So anyway, later on John Butler came out to --- well he and my brother Art, or Buck, were better friends than John and I were. Because, you know, boys and so on. And they, when we saw the Butlers it was Buck or Art, and John, rather than Mary and John. But anyway after World War II then he was working in the --- he'd been in the Navy all during the war, he came back to San Francisco and was working in Emeryville at Shell Development. And he lived right near the campus, the Berkeley campus. And I wasn't going to school there then, but of course I knew all about people and so on. He

had friends there, so we became friends and saw a lot of each other. And after the war, we were married in 1947. And we had Steve and Jim.

PAULINE: So your sons are Steve and Jim Butler. I'm watching this tape to make sure we don't run off the end. How long was your dad at the Island Ranch? Did ---

MARY: He moved in 1926, so it must have been about ten years.

PAULINE: Okay.

MARY: They transferred him to California, to be the supervisor of all the ranches in California, around Sacramento and around the Central Valley, which he did.

PAULINE: And you were how old then?

MARY: The two of us were juniors in high school.

ARTHUR: That's right.

JIM: No, no, you weren't juniors when you moved to --- how old were you, what grade were you in when you moved to Los Banos?

MARY: Oh.

ARTHUR: Well I was about six months old, six months old, right?

JIM: Six years old.

ARTHUR: Six years old.

JIM: You were about eight years old, Mom, right?

MARY: Yes, just about eight.

JIM: They ended up being in the same grade.

ARTHUR: I got there --- I was six years old, so I should have started at the first grade, but my mother was teaching me from the time I was about three years old, and so I was able to read and write ---

MARY: Of course. We had school together, everyday.

ARTHUR: That's right, we went to school together.

PAULINE: And your mother taught you?

MARY: Uh huh, yes.

ARTHUR: So they put you in eight o'clock --- or eight years old --- the third grade.

MARY: They decided that I was a second grader.

ARTHUR: That's right.

MARY: So I ---

ARTHUR: I was supposed to be in first grade.

JIM: First.

MARY: Untrue. (Laughter) So then we had a large grammar school, and they had a high first grade, and low first grade and high first grade. And low second, and high second, two divisions, because there were a lot of Italians, Portuguese, Spaniards there, and some of those kids couldn't speak English, and so they were stuck, you know, having to learn English first.

But I can remember one time that Buck got a note from the teacher to take to his mom, maybe you don't remember this, well I sure did. She said, "Please give this to mom, to your mother, and I'm going to call her, and come and see her about it." So on the way home, I guess Mother picked us up, but anyway you showed me the note, and I

said, "Huh, I wonder what that is all about, you know." And you said, "I don't know."

And I said, "Well did you do anything wrong?" "No, no." So, of course I assumed, and I guess you did too then, that something was wrong in the classroom. So you lost the note, and Mother came to school and went to see the teacher ---

## SIDE B

PAULINE: --- Telling the story of Buck taking home the note from the teacher, and thinking it might be something wrong. So he conveniently lost the note. And when his mother went to school and talked to the teacher, the teacher said, "What do you think about putting Buck in the second grade?" And you could pick up the story and take it on now.

MARY: Thank you. Well the idea was that you shouldn't have brother and sister in the same grade, you know, it's a poor idea. But Mother said, "That is great, why not?" And so we went through school, all through school together. And when we went to our 50<sup>th</sup> high school reunion in Redwood City, everybody there that we knew --- of course it was a much bigger school then than it was in Los Banos. But in any case the people that we did know, and who knew us, always thought, and had always thought that we were twins. And we had to say, no we were not twins, we were just brother and sister. And he was always much smarter than I, always.

ARTHUR: I was a better scholar when I was a kid.

MARY: Yes. Oh, of course.

ARTHUR: Then you were.

MARY: Yeah. And he started his career of journalism, really, in that high school too.

Because he had a journalism class he could take, and he took it. And he became the

editor of the paper, and I don't know what all. I think we had a weekly paper, didn't we?

It was a high school called Sequoia Union High School, it was a very big school. I think

it was like a county high school. So ---

ARTHUR: And it was one, very --- nice school in the California system. And they had

some --- Sequoia was one of the good schools.

MARY: In the whole ---

ARTHUR: In the whole business.

MARY: In the whole state really.

ARTHUR: That's right.

MARY: It was excellent.

ARTHUR: It was an excellent school.

PAULINE: Well it must have prepared you well. Because working for the New York

Times is a very prestigious position.

ARTHUR: That's right. I was able to write pretty much, pretty much, better.

MARY: Yes, you were.

ARTHUR: So from the beginning, I was all right.

JIM: Now when they were, I ask them about how they --- that you remember coming in

here to Burns, and seeing your grandmother.

MARY: Yes.

JIM: Why don't you talk about that for a minute. How you come in --- now you lived at the Island, grew up at the Island Ranch. But you would come in and spend time with your grandmother.

MARY: Sometimes we did, yes. We also spent time visiting Uncle Leonard and Aunt Minnie, because they didn't have children then. And they liked children, and we loved to go to their house.

JIM: Was that here in Burns too?

MARY: It was right across the street from the Locher house.

JIM: Now the Locher house is on the hill, right?

MARY: Uh huh.

JIM: We think it is the house right below the museum now.

MARY: We think.

JIM: Is that what you think ---

MARY: Or some ---

PAULINE: Well this is --- the stone building.

JIM: That stone building at the bottom of the hill there.

PAULINE: Uh huh. That is more than two stories, with the garage underneath.

MARY: Yes, uh huh.

JIM: Right.

PAULINE: That's what I've always understood, that that was the Locher house.

JIM: We have driven around town and decided that that must be the house. Now it didn't have a second story, is that right?

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Well actually you go in on the ground level at the top of the hill, but the house goes down to the bottom of the hill, doesn't it? Yeah.

ARTHUR: That's right.

PAULINE: Yeah.

MARY: Yes, I think it does.

PAULINE: So I think they have a garage under there now. I don't know what it ---

ARTHUR: Well they didn't have a garage at the end. The last ten years of her life she was down on the second floor, the lower floor.

MARY: Who was?

ARTHUR: Grandma.

MARY: Oh, Grandma Locher?

ARTHUR: Uh huh.

MARY: Oh, I see.

ARTHUR: The last ten years of her life. She was living down there. She was living alone.

JIM: When was this? When was the last time you saw her? Did you come here with your mom in --- you made a trip up here with your mom ---

ARTHUR: That's right.

JIM: --- Josephine. And what year was that, '34, '35?

MARY: '37, I think, '38.

ARTHUR: Maybe '38, something like that.

MARY: Because she died in '38, I believe.

JIM: She was, right before she died you came up here, right?

ARTHUR: That's right, because I was driving for her.

MARY: Yes.

ARTHUR: Okay.

JIM: What do you remember about that trip?

ARTHUR: That trip. First of all I remember going over that way, and halfway up Malheur desert, you know ---

MARY: Uh huh.

ARTHUR: And the car stopped, broke down.

MARY: It did?

ARTHUR: Remember?

MARY: No, I wasn't there.

ARTHUR: Well we stopped at --- we picked up this girl and took her into town, so she was able to get somebody to go, to come down and take her back.

MARY: Huh.

ARTHUR: I guess you forgot that.

MARY: I don't think I ever heard that.

ARTHUR: Anyhow, we did that, halfway up the Malheur --- way up through the desert. Okay, now we stayed there for a couple weeks.

MARY: Oh.

ARTHUR: Remember we stayed a couple weeks?



MARY: No.

JIM: I think you were with your mom alone, weren't you?

MARY: Yes.

ARTHUR: Yeah, I was the driver, and you were the rider.

MARY: No, mother was the rider, not I.

ARTHUR: Well that's right. Mom was the rider.

MARY: Uh huh.

ARTHUR: And we went across the, Klamath Falls on down into Northern California through the desert, the forest.

MARY: For heaven's sakes.

ARTHUR: And we stopped at one point, and Mom said, "I would like to take a little rest." So I --- be taking a little nap in the car. She went into the woods and kind of laid

down for about half an hour or two with --- She was feeling, not very good. So I was a little worried about how she was feeling.

MARY: I bet you were.

ARTHUR: And I was in a hurry then to get home. To get her back to the doctor, see how things are going. Anyhow ---

MARY: Well did you get to Burns?

ARTHUR: Oh we got to Burns, yeah.

MARY: But it was going on the way home that she got sick?

ARTHUR: It was on the way home.

MARY: I see.

JIM: What do you remember about the trip when you were here at Burns? You saw your grandmother, right?

ARTHUR: Right.

JIM: How was she doing then?

ARTHUR: She was living alone. Her husband was dead.

MARY: Yeah.

ARTHUR: And she was living alone.

MARY: That wasn't good either.

ARTHUR: That wasn't very good.

MARY: Well Aunt Pauline must have come and gotten Grandma then.

ARTHUR: 87, 87.

MARY: Because my grandmother lived with Aunt Pauline in Everett, Washington for a long time. And she lived with us too.

PAULINE: So she and Leonard, she and --- no, Leonard stayed here.

MARY: Yes. He eventually went up to Seneca, and they came back to Burns. Then they moved to Klamath Falls.

PAULINE: Okay. And your Aunt Pauline moved to Washington.

ARTHUR: Everett, Washington.

MARY: Everett, Washington, yes.

PAULINE: And who did she marry?

MARY: She married a man by the name of Lars Larsen. She was a nurse, an anesthesiologist in those days. It is unusual to have a nurse do the anesthesia, but she took courses. And she made quite a bit of money doing all of that. And she built a huge, not huge, she built an apartment complex of single homes. They were all connected.

JIM: Right in Everett, Washington, on the corner of Norton and Pacific Street. They are still ---

MARY: They are still there.

JIM: They are still there today. And Leonard Locher's wife, which is, who is Minnie.

MARY: Uh huh.

JIM: Aunt Minnie, she lived there. I think she must have died approximately 1990, early 1990's. But she lived there after Pauline died, and ran the apartments. And I would occasionally visit her, because I lived in Bellingham for many years. And I know Uncle Buck had visited her ---

ARTHUR: A couple times.

JIM: I remember I met you there, and took you up there once.

ARTHUR: That's right.

JIM: In the '80's.

ARTHUR: I remember that, yeah.

JIM: You were recruiting for the state department. He used to work for the state department, so he was recruiting. Must have been about '85, '86. 1985, I should say.

ARTHUR: About '85, I think. That was probably that year. That was before I, was pretty close to when I retired.

JIM: Right.

ARTHUR: Okay.

PAULINE: Well this is a really far out question. I've got another question about your family, but I have to interject. Did you happen to know a man named Robley Winfrey? He is my husband's uncle who lived in Washington, D.C. and worked for the state department, and he was a civil engineer. And I don't know what all ---

JIM: Which years would that have been?

PAULINE: Well he was --- probably after World War II, and he probably died about ten years ago.

JIM: Uncle Buck worked for the state department, he worked for the New York Times.

ARTHUR: Uh huh.

JIM: And then when did you work for the state department?

ARTHUR: About ten years after that.

JIM: Well, but about 1970, 1968?

ARTHUR: This is not in New York.

JIM: I mean you lived in Washington, and worked for the state department. What year did you start in?

ARTHUR: From 1980, to '87.

PAULINE: Yeah that's probably after Uncle Robley retired then. Well it was a wild thought. It come into my head, and we'll have this documented for historical purposes.

(Laughter) But at any rate, he had probably retired by the time that you were ---

ARTHUR: I think so.

PAULINE: Yeah, that you were there. And the chances of your knowing him anyway was probably really slim, but stranger things have been known to happen.

MARY: You never know.

PAULINE: Well Leonard's wife was Minnie. Was she a Burns, Harney County girl, or was she from away from here?

MARY: She was from Eugene, or Corvallis, one or the other. Because she was a, she graduated I believe --- I'm not sure whether it was Eugene or Corvallis, but she was a home ec. teacher.

PAULINE: Uh huh. So she came to Burns to teach in the high school.

MARY: Evidently.

PAULINE: And that is where Leonard met her.

MARY: Right. And they were married and ---

PAULINE: Did they ever have children?

MARY: Yes, they had three children. There is two still alive. Leonore, and Marian, and Leonard, Jr. He is not very well. I'm not even sure he is alive.

JIM: Well, we as ---

ARTHUR: He has been very sick.

JIM: He has been very sick, the last we saw him. We saw him three years ago.

MARY: Yeah. He had rheumatic fever when he was a young man. He was very sick, and I remember the family was terribly worried about him. And they got, I think my father had something to do with stopping a train here in Burns, because we did have a train running through then. And they took him to Portland or Seattle. I think it was

Portland. And they treated him. Of course they didn't have any antibiotics then, and it was a tough thing to treat. But I don't think his health was always that great, although he was a big man, tall and heavy. I mean not heavy, just muscular. And I can remember, I would come into the house and he would give me a hug, and I would go --- lose my breath completely.

PAULINE: And this was Leonard Jr.

MARY: Yes. Well no, no, that was Leonard.

PAULINE: That was Leonard, okay.

MARY: He was a tall man, a big man.

PAULINE: Uh huh. Well, another question about the brewery. Do you remember whether your grandparents were still running the brewery when you were a child, or had they retired by then?

MARY: I don't remember anything about the brewery at all.

PAULINE: You don't remember about the --- about it.

ARTHUR: I don't remember the brewery either. I was too small.

MARY: I think I was too small too, actually.

ARTHUR: Except I have some vague memory of bottles.

PAULINE: Well that's where I was going, was if you had any memories of the bottles of ale.

MARY: I didn't.

PAULINE: Did you --- did he have a glass of beer with dinner, or that kind of thing?

ARTHUR: Maybe so, maybe. They didn't give me any though. (Laughter)

MARY: Too bad.

PAULINE: But you remember the bottles. Where were they stored?

ARTHUR: I can see them along the wall, I can see them along ---

MARY: In the kitchen?

ARTHUR: Huh?

MARY: In the kitchen or the dining room?

ARTHUR: Somewhere in the dining room.

PAULINE: In the dining room.

ARTHUR: Somewhere around there, in a room next door to the brewery, where he was doing his work. Anyhow, that was --- I'm not sure whether he was ---

JIM: Where was this building at? Was this at your grandmother's house, or was this up the hill from your grandmother's house?

ARTHUR: It was in my grandmother's house.

JIM: Okay.

PAULINE: Well another question, the stories are, was that he made tunnels back into the hill. And there is even a story, which I feel is really pretty far-fetched, was that he tunneled all the way to the castle out here on the other side of Hines. (Laughter) But I doubt very much that that part of the story is true. But do you remember anything about some tunnels back into the hill?

ARTHUR: I can't remember that. What I can remember is its downhill. The summer, I mean the winter --- the snow would come down and we could have the sledding.

MARY: Right, we did.

ARTHUR: Down the hill from our house, down to the bottom of the hill.

MARY: Yes, I remember that very well.

JIM: That was at your grandmother's house, or grandfather's house.

MARY: There is a hill.

JIM: Right, there is one right there.

MARY: And to us it was a steep hill.

PAULINE: Well it is still a pretty good hill. Yeah, for Harney County it's a ---

MARY: But somebody, somehow we got a sled.

ARTHUR: Uh huh, that's right.

MARY: I don't know. And so we would go down the hill, and I guess Daddy would stop the sled, or I don't know, I don't remember what happened.

ARTHUR: I think it kind of got --- at the bottom --- flat.

MARY: And it just stopped by itself.

ARTHUR: Stopped by itself.

MARY: And I suppose we dragged the sled up again.

ARTHUR: That's right.

MARY: Must have.

ARTHUR: That was real work.

MARY: Yes, I'll say. Yes, I have good memories of that. There was quite a bit of snow too.

PAULINE: What about the sidewalks in town were they still wooden sidewalks?



MARY: Wooden. They were --- And I remember, I think I remember that where the historical building is, was a hotel with a big porch facing the street. And people would gather there and visit with each other, and smoke a cigarette and whatnot. I never went in the hotel, I don't think. I don't know, was it much of a hotel?

PAULINE: I don't remember, because it was a vacant lot when I was a kid. And then they built the --- but let's see, it belonged to the Hanleys.

MARY: Oh, yeah. That's a familiar name.

PAULINE: Yeah. He was one of the cattle kings of Harney County, later date cattle king. But he, when his wife Clara died, her sister donated that piece of property for the museum and library, where the museum and library is. So that's --- you know when I was a kid it was a vacant lot, there was nothing there. I don't know whether the building must have burned down or --- probably burned down, because that is what usually happened. If the house was gone then --- I never researched back to see what was there before.

MARY: Maybe there wasn't a hotel there then.

PAULINE: Well I'm sure that there probably was, but it was gone before I was old enough. I was born in 1938, so ---

MARY: Oh yeah, so things would be gone.

PAULLINE: A lot of things that you would remember when you were a child would not be the same for me.

MARY: It wouldn't be.

PAULINE: Well is there anything other, Jim, that you can think of that they should be telling us about?

JIM: Well I just have to thank you for giving us the opportunity to talk to you today. That is the big thing. And I think we will probably walk out the door and remember some other things. I know that's probably true with both of them. Right, Uncle Buck?

ARTHUR: Right.

JIM: You will probably walk out the door and say I should have told them about this. And what we'll do is we'll send you some more information.

PAULINE: Well this would be good. I was just going to say the thing to do, is when they tell you something, write it down.

JIM: Oh, I'm going to do that.

PAULINE: And type it up --- because you think you will remember, but you don't. And, you know, oh gosh he told the story and I can't remember the details. So if they visit, I mean make notes, and then type them up, write yourself some letters. And if they have a lot, I'm sure a lot more memories to share.

MARY: I have one memory I forgot to share, it always tickled me. My mother was a very fun loving person, I mean she liked to visit with people and all that kind of thing. And Aunt Pauline was the same way. But Aunt Pauline had a great sense of humor that mother didn't have. She was just full of it, I think. So when World War I started, she was a nurse, and she wanted to --- she decided what she wanted to do was join the nurse corps or whatever it was in those days, and go and help the soldiers, or the sailors, or whoever. Work in the hospitals or something. So she went to Portland, so I guess she

probably was in Seattle at the time. I don't know where she got her nurses training, but it was probably Everett, or I'm not sure. Anyway, she was in, not Burns, but a bigger city, and so she investigated, or to who she would have to discuss joining the nurse corps. So she walked into this place, and this young man was at the desk and he was waiting to find out all the information about everything. And the first thing he asked her was, "May I see your birth certificate?" And she said, "Birth certificate? I don't have one." He said, "Didn't your father get you a birth certificate? Where were you born?" And she said, "Well I was born in Germany." He said, "Oh well, you can't possibly belong to the United States Nurse Corps at all. You have got to have a birth certificate." And she was just aghast, just amazed that her father did not get one for her. I guess he had done it for everybody else, but he missed Pauline. So she was furious, and she had a temper too. And so she just stamped her foot and went out the door. And he said, "What's the matter with you?" And she said, or she said, "What happened to you," he said. And she said, "It happened nine months too soon in Germany." (Laughter)

PAULINE: So she didn't go into the Nurse Corps.

MARY: She couldn't join it. So then she went back to college, or nurse school, or whatever, and became a, you know, more nurse training. But I have always thought that was such a cute remark.

PAULINE: Nine months too soon in Germany. (Laughter)

MARY: And she used to say, I don't think this young man even knew what I meant. He was probably so young that he didn't realize that babies didn't come from the stork or something. (Laughter)

PAULINE: Oh that's a great story. Well I really appreciate your taking time to do this.

MARY: Well we appreciate you taking the time.

PAULINE: It's going to be a real addition to the Oral History Project at the library, and one that, you know, we wouldn't have gotten if you hadn't made the contact.

MARY: That's right.

PAULINE: So I am really grateful, Jim, for you to take the initiative to look me up.

JIM: Well, we appreciate your time, Pauline.

PAULINE: And this is just great. And like I said, if there are other things, or dates, or things that you remember, or stories that you remember, or information that you think about the family, that you think should be with this, just get it written down, and do it for your own sake. Because I sat and listened to my dad tell stories for years, and I didn't get them all down.

ARTHUR: I have written a story of my family's history from Europe.

JIM: For your dad's history.

ARTHUR: My history.

JIM: Would you like that donated to the museum?

ARTHUR: That ---

PAULINE: We would love to have it.

ARTHUR: Okay.

PAULINE: With the --- it's the library, and it's the Oral History Project, which was funded by Claire McGill Luce, who was the wife of Henry Luce III, who, you know is

Time Magazine. So this is a prestigious, I think, collection. Without her generous donation it never would have happened.

MARY: I wonder how she did that, why she did it?

PAULINE: Well she was born down at Andrews. And she just had, wanted to do something for her home.

JIM: Where is Andrews? Is that in Harney County?

PAULINE: Andrews, Fields, Steens Mountain, East Side of Steens Mountain.

JIM: Okay.

MARY: Oh, I see.

PAULINE: Yeah.

MARY: I didn't know that.

PAULINE: And then her family were the Rogers family. Her mother was a Rogers, and he, her father had a ranch at Harney. And she went to school in Burns, and graduated from Burns High School. And went on to have a very, you know, a very exciting career.

MARY: Of course.

PAULINE: And wound up married to Henry Luce III, of Time ---

JIM: Well I'll make sure that Uncle Buck's articles ---

ARTHUR: It's not an article.

MARY: It's a book.

JIM: It is a small book.

ARTHUR: Two hundred dollars --- I mean two hundred pages.

PAULINE: Two hundred pages, uh huh.

JIM: I haven't seen this before, so this will be interesting.

ARTHUR: I brought a copy of it. I was going to have you make a copy of it.

JIM: Okay. It is in Billings. We'll make a copy, give him the original back and send it on to you.

PAULINE: Okay. So that's great.

ARTHUR: And give one to you.

PAULINE: Okay.

ARTHUR: That would be pretty good for you.

PAULINE: Yes it would, I would love to read it, I would love to read it.

ARTHUR: Okay.

PAULINE: And just to end up here, and because we are on the other side of the tape, I want to say again that I was talking to Arthur Joseph Olsen, Mary Pauline Olsen Butler, and her son Jim Butler is with us. And we're at the Burns Times-Herald office on September 3, 2001, and we have been talking about the Locher family. Thanks again.

MARY: Well thank you Pauline.

END OF TAPE - bl