

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #427 Side A

Subject: Eldon Currey

Place: Currey Home – Burns, Oregon

Date: April 4, 2002

Interviewer: Christine Stott

CHRISTINE STOTT: It's April 4, 2002, this is Christine Stott and I'm interviewing Eldon Currey today.

ELDON CURREY: I was born March the 10<sup>th</sup>, 1918, in Reardan, Washington. My folks had a homestead in between Fields and Catlow Valley. And before I was born they went up so I would be born at my grandmother's in Reardan. And then after I was born they moved back to their homestead in Road Canyon.

CHRISTINE: What is it, Road Canyon?

ELDON: Road Canyon. That's just north of the canyon, the road from Catlow Valley to Fields.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay.

ELDON: Over that hill on the north side.

CHRISTINE: So R O A D?

ELDON: Yeah. The old wagon road came up Skull Creek and up that canyon and over instead of up the Long Hollow road like it comes now.

CHRISTINE: Oh.

ELDON: And when they moved back, well I was less than a year old, I don't know just exactly. But anyhow, they moved back, but they never did move back to the homestead. My dad worked for the PLS (Pacific Livestock) Company on Juniper Ranch ---

CHRISTINE: Oh, the Pacific Livestock.

ELDON: Yeah, on Juniper Ranch for several years. And then he got a little place down at Andrews. I went to school all eight grades at Andrews. And then when I was in high school, or when I got to high school I went to Crane, went four years to Crane, to high school.

After I got out of high school I worked on different ranches and here and there. And finally got myself a few cows and went in with the Sizemore Brothers down on Trout Creek and run my cows with theirs and worked with them on their place.

Then after I got, well in 1940 or 1941, I could see that we were going to get in war pretty quick, and I was prime target for the draft. So I started looking around, I got my cows all paid for. I sold part of them and paid for them, and leased my cows out to Leland Crump at the Serrano Point Ranch just below Andrews there. And sure enough, I just had got everything straightened out and I got a notice from the draft board. So in April --- I'd been workin' at the White Horse Ranch that winter. And in April I left there and went home to Andrews, and was gonna do a little more and visit around there a little, but I got this notice to come to Burns. So they drafted me, they didn't waste any time on that.

CHRISTINE: That was in 1940?

ELDON: 1942.

CHRISTINE: '42, oh it was after Pearl Harbor then?

ELDON: Yeah. I was at the White Horse Ranch when Pearl Harbor --- I was feedin' cattle, and that night when we came in, we had a portable radio in the bunkhouse, and we couldn't get any radio stations and we thought my radio had went haywire! But then along about 9 o'clock they all started comin' back on, and we found out that Pearl Harbor had been -- So me and Wilfred Rickert were both workin' there, and we were both prime targets for the Army.

CHRISTINE: What was his name, Wilfred?

ELDON: Rickert.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay.

ELDON: He lived, or worked at different ranches around --- he lives in Winnemucca now. But anyhow, when we got the mail about once a week at the White Horse, because somebody had to go over to Fields to get it. And so this one-week we went over, or somebody went and got the mail, and Wilfred had a notice to appear in Burns the week before. So he thought they was going to either draft him right off or put him in jail, so we had to --- he wrote a letter telling them he hadn't got his mail that week before, and we had to go over and get that sent off.

So anyhow, I got done there, like I say, I was just going to fool around and visit around a little, and I got a notice to come in and be drafted. So I went to Portland, and then we shipped from Portland to the Presidio in Monterey. And we were there a week and put on a train, and we went to Little Rock, Arkansas. And I put in basic training

there. Then when basic training was over they put us on a train and sent us the other way and we ended up on Cape Cod. And they were just forming the amphibian engineers --- it was a new outfit; nobody knew what they did, what they was gonna do, and we were there until August. And we got a lot of training.

CHRISTINE: Now did that have something to do with the landing at Normandy on D-Day?

ELDON: Well, yeah, that was our specialty, was amphibian landings. And we were shipped over to Scotland, yeah Scotland, we trained there a little while, and we shipped --- No, that was wrong. I was shipped to Ireland first, and we trained there a little while. Then we was shipped to Scotland and we trained there a little while, then we loaded us up and we didn't have much equipment, really. We'd had some training, and they loaded us up on the old liner that was a --- they didn't have cruise ships then, they had --- what did they call them? I don't remember. It was the Monarch of Bermuda, and it was from --- it sailed from England to New York and from New York to Bermuda. And then I don't know whether it sailed back to England or what. Anyhow, that was where --- but it was all fixed out for a troop ship then. So we were, they loaded us on that, and we were around 20 days on that ship. One of the English sailors told me we were almost to the Canary Islands at one time, and we had no idea what the deal was.

But then finally we went by the Rock of Gibraltar and we got into the Mediterranean, so we knew about where we were going then. So we made the D-Day landing in North Africa, and there we --- we had very little equipment. We had some, and I didn't take a Caterpillar ashore, but the next day they put me on one, and that was

my job from then on --- driving Cat, and eventually I got to where I drove a little of everything.

But we were in North Africa and opened up the port there and took a lot of supplies over the beach. Then they got Oran captured, so then we moved there and we moved supplies there. And then we spent, oh that was in November that we landed in there, and we spent all winter there.

And then the next year --- I don't remember the dates, but anyhow we loaded up again, and we had a lot more equipment and we knew a lot more what we were doin' this time. Then we went up and landed on Sicily, and I took a Cat ashore there. Then after --- Well, we spent --- that was pretty early in the spring, I think. I'm not sure of the dates on all this. Anyhow, we were there a while, and they sent us back to Africa again. Then we loaded up again and we made the D-Day landing in Italy. Then we went from there on up through Italy until along in the fall, and they loaded us up and we got, they took us back to Oran in North Africa and loaded us up on the old Monarch of Bermuda again and took us back to England. And so we were there all winter, and we really got equipment then, and we knew what we were in for then, of course.

And so after spendin' all winter there we loaded up and this time we didn't load on a liner, we loaded on landing craft --- LCTs (Landing Craft Tanks). We went across the English Channel, we was three days on that LST, which held six tractors and a couple of Jeeps, was our load.

CHRISTINE: LST, is that what it was?

ELDON: Yeah, landing, LCT.

CHRISTINE: Oh, LCT.

ELDON: Landing Craft Tanks.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay.

ELDON: And it was rough --- boy, almost everybody was seasick and wet and pretty miserable. And so on the morning of June the 6<sup>th</sup> they put on a fireworks display for us, all the battleships a shootin' at Normandy Beach. And so, as quick as they got done shelling --- and the bombers were goin' over, bombing too. And as quick as they --- they kind of got quieted down a little --- well, we went ashore. And we were the first ones to put any machinery on shore. I don't know, it was --- H-hour was six or something like that, so it was an hour or so after that where I drove a B-7 Cat ashore. From then on it was just the same thing all over again, until the war ended finally.

Well after they got France liberated, then they made us in combat engineers, and we went on up into Germany, we went over in Germany further, and later it was the Russians took over as we moved back out. That was my war experiences.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh.

ELDON: And I still had my cattle, so I thought I was going to be a cattle baron yet, and came home. And of course in the meantime, when we were in Massachusetts I met Lillian.

CHRISTINE: Now that was before you went over to Europe?

ELDON: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: You had met her?

ELDON: No, we wasn't married, we just met.

CHRISTINE: You met before that.

ELDON: Then we wrote while I was over there.

CHRISTINE: Oh, uh-huh.

ELDON: So I came back and I was going to take up --- but the cattle business didn't look as good to me as it had. And I never could get enough money to buy a place of my own, so anyhow, it didn't take me very long to figure out I didn't want to go into the cattle business. So anyhow, Lillian and I had decided to get married. I went back to Chicago to school and spent one winter there. And so ---

CHRISTINE: What were you studying?

ELDON: Electrical engineering. So then in the spring well Lillian and I got married and we came out here.

CHRISTINE: Now that was in '46?

ELDON: Yeah, '46. Yeah, I was almost four years in the Army.

CHRISTINE: You got married in Massachusetts, then?

ELDON: Yeah, in April, the year after I was out of, got out of the Army. So we moved out here, and we've been here ever since. I worked part time for a while for Frank Hirsch, and then I worked here and there. Then I got --- well, I worked at the experiment station out at Squaw Butte, but we had a couple of kids --- well, three kids by that time, and the oldest one got to where he had to go to school, so we moved into Burns to send him to school. So that's pretty much the story of my life. I worked at the little mill down here until it closed up --- the little Wolverine Mill.

CHRISTINE: Oh, yes --- the Wolverine Mill. I remember that.

ELDON: And then it closed up. I had put in for --- they were going to start mail delivery here, so I put in for that and got the job, just about the time the Wolverine closed up.

CHRISTINE: When was that?

ELDON: Gee, I don't know.

CHRISTINE: Mid '50's or something?

LILLIAN CURREY: '47.

CHRISTINE: Oh.

ELDON: '40 ---

LILLIAN: '48.

ELDON: Well, it was '49, '50. Must have been about the '50's.

CHRISTINE: Okay. So, Chester was born in '47, right? Same as me.

ELDON: Yeah, '47.

CHRISTINE: And then ---

ELDON: And Alice was born ---

LILLIAN: '49.

ELDON: What?

LILLIAN: Wasn't she born in '49?

ELDON: No, 1948.

LILLIAN: '48.

ELDON: And then Jackie was born about four years later.

LILLIAN: '50.

ELDON: Huh?



LILLIAN: She's 1950.

ELDON: Was she?

LILLIAN: Halloween.

ELDON: I don't know. Anyhow, we had five kids.

CHRISTINE: Oh, five.

ELDON: Yeah. And anyhow, before the youngest two were born I got the job carrying mail. So I never had another job then, I just stayed with that until --- I was there, what, twenty-eight, twenty-nine years?

CHRISTINE: You retired then in ---

ELDON: I retired.

CHRISTINE: What year, do you remember?

ELDON: In '79.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh.

ELDON: Yeah, '79.

CHRISTINE: Well yeah, you needed a good secure job if you had a big family, huh?

ELDON: Yeah, well, while I was workin' I built this house, and I was in the post office --- I was never postmaster. I was officer in charge and assistant postmaster and had every job in it but janitor --- I never was janitor. But I had carrier and clerk and on the way up and then I retired in '79.

CHRISTINE: And that was when they still had the old marble post office downtown?

ELDON: Oh, yeah, yeah.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, still there.

ELDON: That was way before they put this new one in. So then after I retired I thought I'd have time to do all these things, and I still don't have any time. I spend all my time workin' at something.

CHRISTINE: Do you? What do you do?

ELDON: Well, just take care of Lillian right now, mostly. Her health ain't so good.

CHRISTINE: Oh, uh-huh.

ELDON: And take care of the place. And we do quite a lot of traveling.

CHRISTINE: Oh, do you? Where do you go?

ELDON: Oh, we went back --- well, Chester was in Florida for a while, so we visited him there. Went back to Massachusetts a time or two, a couple of times I guess.

CHRISTINE: Do you drive or fly, or what?

ELDON: Both.

CHRISTINE: Both, uh-huh.

ELDON: I like to fly because it don't take you long to get there; I hate to fly because you might just as well lay down on the couch and go to sleep, for all you see. I thought when I flew I'd be able to see the whole country, you know. And gee, one time we flew from Boise back to Boston, and it was a beautiful day out here. And we thought, I thought, well we had day flights all the way through; we'd be in an airplane all day long and I said, "Well, we'll get to really see the country." And we got to Denver and landed; had to lay over an hour there, and when we took off there was a big old bank of clouds north of us, and they flew right into that, and we never saw the ground until just before we got to Boston.

CHRISTINE: Isn't that the way?

ELDON: And they told us, they flew us over the Great Lakes and up into Canada and came into Boston from the north, and we never saw it --- all we saw was them clouds down below. But when Chester was in Tennessee, he moved from Florida to Tennessee, and when he was down there, we drove back one time just to see the country --- took ten days to go from here to Tennessee. We visited some people we knew in Arkansas and just took our time, and really enjoyed it. But like I say, when you fly you don't see anything --- it don't take you long to get there, but I hate that waitin' and layin' over in airports. Then catchin' planes sometimes in airports they kind of rush you too.

So that's about the story of my life, not too exciting, but ---

CHRISTINE: Oh, I found it interesting. Anything about the war is always really interesting.

ELDON: Well I really, there's very few people that got, made four D-Day landings.

CHRISTINE: Yeah that's amazing!

ELDON: I don't know if I should tell you this, really, but we were told that we were --- that the Cat drivers --- When we went into France, were given the Croix de Guerre by France, which --- well then they changed it so the whole outfit got it, and which is --- They sent Cat drivers because they, well, you're pretty exposed on one of them Cats out there. But I never got hurt, never got wounded.

CHRISTINE: Wow.

ELDON: So here a year or so ago I found out France had a medal for me, so I sent for it and got it. It wasn't the Croix de Guerre, it was a --- well, do you want to see it?

CHRISTINE: Yes, I'd love to. And you know, Lillian, you feel free to speak up too, that's fine, it doesn't have to be just Eldon. Just go right ahead.

ELDON: It was just given to D-Day ---

CHRISTINE: (Reading) "Monsieur Eldon C. Currey; June 6, 1944." Well, isn't that something, after all these years?

LILLIAN: He was surprised when he got it.

CHRISTINE: Yeah that's a very nice certificate.

ELDON: And here is the medal.

CHRISTINE: Oh, and the medal! Wow!

ELDON: Yeah, great --- don't buy no beans, though.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, but how many people have a medal like this? Oh, and it's heavy, too! Oh, very nice. "Federation of French War Veterans, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1919-1994, New York, U.S.A." Wow, that is nice. It's so heavy. How many Americans have a medal from the French government? Not very many Americans, I bet you. That's wonderful.

ELDON: Well, I imagine there's quite a few, because D-Day was kind of, pretty crowded around there for a while.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, well, they took their sweet time to get it to you, but better late than never, huh?

ELDON: Yeah. So that's kind of my story of my life. I'm still enjoying living.

CHRISTINE: Well good.

ELDON: Seem to get a little done once in a while, but not much.

CHRISTINE: Yeah. Lillian, do you have anything you want to add?

LILLIAN: He finally come and got me in '46, and we were married.

CHRISTINE: Did you think maybe he wasn't coming back?

LILLIAN: No, I was surprised that he wanted to come and get me. We got married, and then we started out here.

ELDON: We drove clear across in a Studebaker (both shares a laugh).

LILLIAN: It was interesting --- I had never been out of New England.

CHRISTINE: Well yeah, what a shock to come to Harney County, huh?

LILLIAN: (Chuckling) Yeah, I was wondering what it was going to be like?

CHRISTINE: Did he warn you about the sagebrush and the dry weather?

LILLIAN: No, he didn't say anything. He was kind of worried too, for fear I wouldn't like it.

CHRISTINE: Maybe you wouldn't come if you knew, huh?

ELDON: I told her, but she couldn't understand it. She'd never seen country like this.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh.

ELDON: When we started back there, we got up in the Green Mountains or somewhere, and there was a little snowdrift above the road and she wanted me to stop and take a picture of that snow. And I said, "Heck ---

LILLIAN: It was spring, and it was late in spring, and it was snowdrifts.

ELDON: --- you'll see a lot more snow than that before we get home and when we get through the Wasatches." We had gotten a blizzard up there, and she, we was going

through there and the snow was just a-flyin' and she said, "Well, I guess you was right --- I see a lot more snow that I thought I would." (Both chuckling)

CHRISTINE: Well, give me a little background on yourself, Lillian.

ELDON: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: Where and when were you born and ---

LILLIAN: Well, I was born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1920. And my folks moved up to Peabody when I was, oh, I must have been 12 years old. And then my dad died when I was 14.

ELDON: Twelve, wasn't it?

LILLIAN: Twelve, yeah. So my sister and I, we were left ---

ELDON: With your mother.

LILLIAN: With my mother.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh.

LILLIAN: Then I graduated from high school, and I went to work for Sylvania Electric for six years, and that's when Eldon came along. We decided to get married, and I up and left. I had been working in the filament department, and my boss wanted Eldon to stay so he wouldn't lose me. But Eldon said nope, he was going back. And I said, "Well I was going back with him."

CHRISTINE: So it could have taken a whole different turn if you had decided to stay in Massachusetts.

LILLIAN: (Both chucking) He didn't like the big city, and so ---

CHRISTINE: Yeah. But you were on Cape Cod, right?

ELDON: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: So how did you get all the way up to northern Massachusetts?

ELDON: Well, a guy I buddied with was from Peabody, and that's how I met Lillian. He said, "My wife's girlfriend --- you'd ought to get acquainted with her." So I said, "Well, I'm willing," so that's how we met.

CHRISTINE: So, someone set it up. And they were already married though, that couple?

ELDON: Yeah, they had just been married. They were ---

LILLIAN: Newlyweds.

ELDON: Yeah, they had been married three weeks, I think or something, when they drafted him. His mother-in-law said, when we were getting married, she said, "Well, Pat and Margaret have been married seven years and haven't had any kids, and Pat got a Purple Heart --- he got hit with shrapnel in his arm. And she says he won't never tell us where he got hit, but we know, because they're married seven years and haven't had any kids yet." But they had a family after that, too. I think they had four kids, three kids, something like that.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay. So, let's see, you have Chester and Alice and Jackie, and then, who are your last two children?

ELDON: Eleanor and Johnny.

CHRISTINE: Eleanor and Johnny. Okay, they were enough younger than me, that I don't remember them.

ELDON: Yeah.

LILLIAN: The only one that's around here is Eleanor.

ELDON: The rest of them are all moved.

LILLIAN: Alice, Alice, they've gone their ways.

CHRISTINE: Where is Eleanor? Is she here in town?

ELDON: Yeah, she lives in Hines and works at the Louisiana Pacific.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay. Does she have a different last name?

ELDON: Yeah, Duke.

CHRISTINE: Duke. So you must have grandchildren then.

ELDON: Yeah, we have seven grandsons.

CHRISTINE: Seven grandsons.

ELDON: No granddaughters. Now our great-grandkids are coming, and we got ---

LILLIAN: One daughter, one great-granddaughter.

CHRISTINE: One great-granddaughter.

ELDON: We got two daughters, (great-granddaughters) Rodney and --- we got three great-grandkids, and ---

LILLIAN: Two.

ELDON: Yeah, three.

CHRISTINE: And two of them are girls.

ELDON: And two of them are girls.

CHRISTINE: Okay.

ELDON: So we're gettin' some granddaughters after all. Just took us a lifetime to do it.



CHRISTINE: Right. I'm going to turn off the mike right now. --- (Pause in tape) And you were born in Reardan?

ELDON: Yeah, R E A R D A N.

CHRISTINE: Reardan, Washington. Then you were about a year old when you came to

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ELDON: Yeah, I'm not sure just what ---

CHRISTINE: 1918, was that your year of birth?

ELDON: Yeah, 1918.

CHRISTINE: So I'll put 1919, question mark. And you first lived where, at Andrews?

ELDON: Well yeah, yeah at Andrews.

CHRISTINE: And you came to town ---

ELDON: What?

CHRISTINE: When did you start living in town?

ELDON: Oh, in '46 after we were married.

CHRISTINE: Okay. And you went to school out at ---

LILLIAN: Crane.

ELDON: At Crane.

CHRISTINE: High school at Crane.

ELDON: And grade school at Andrews.

CHRISTINE: Graduated from Crane Union High School.

ELDON: 1936.

CHRISTINE: Okay, Lillian, what is your date of birth?

LILLIAN: September 16, 1920.

CHRISTINE: I'm a September baby too.

LILLIAN: Oh.

CHRISTINE: The 7<sup>th</sup>.

LILLIAN: The 7<sup>th</sup>, oh.

CHRISTINE: And you were born in Salem.

LILLIAN: Yeah, Salem, Mass.

CHRISTINE: Where and when were you born, Lillian?

LILLIAN: September 16, 1920, in Salem, Mass. (She knew that I had once lived in Massachusetts.) Did you travel quite a bit around that area?

CHRISTINE: Yeah, quite a bit. You know, after I had two years of college, then I got the bug to go and travel, and I was going with a guy who was at Otis Air Force Base, so I went back there to see him. Then we broke up and I moved around different places in the North Shore area. I worked in Burlington at a government printing company, and then after --- my husband, after we got married in 1970, then we went to Oklahoma and Germany, and then Sacramento, we were divorced there. Then I lived in L.A. and Portland and ---

LILLIAN: All the West Coast ---

ELDON: You're like me --- ended up back at Burns.

CHRISTINE: Ended up at Burns --- so far. I've been back here four years now.

LILLIAN: Do you know anybody in Salem?

CHRISTINE: Oh, not any more. No, this has been --- 1967. Is that 35 years ago?

LILLIAN: Huh?

CHRISTINE: Is that 35 years ago. Oh, my gosh --- hard to believe. Okay, you were in the U.S. Army. Oh wait a minute, I've got to get Lillian's schooling, too.

LILLIAN: Schooling?

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh.

LILLIAN: High school in, Commercial, Salem Commercial School, and --- have you got down there I worked at Sylvania?

CHRISTINE: I have it on the tape, but I will write it down also.

LILLIAN: I was there six years, in the filament department. (She speaks with a fairly strong New England accent.) It seems like a long time ago, now.

CHRISTINE: Well, it was. So what you, you like to travel, you say? Or you have traveled. What else do you folks like to do?

ELDON: Fish.

LILLIAN: Like everybody else out here --- they like to fish.

CHRISTINE: Yeah. People don't do it much any more, it seems like. Do you see a lot of fisher-people out there?

ELDON: We never even took the boat out last year. Lillian's got to where it's too hard for her.

CHRISTINE: Oh, yeah. And you have lunch at the senior center regularly, huh?

ELDON: Yeah.

LILLIAN: We kind of enjoy meeting the people down there and talking with them.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, uh-huh. Okay, you were married when?

LILLIAN: April 14, 1946.

CHRISTINE: In Salem?

ELDON: Yeah.

LILLIAN: Yeah, it was Peabody. Everybody we used to know back there is dead.

CHRISTINE: Really. And Chester was born when?

LILLIAN: '47. March '47.

CHRISTINE: And was that here in Burns?

ELDON: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: And Alice?

LILLIAN: She was born here, too. When is her birthday?

ELDON: '48.

LILLIAN: Yeah, '48.

CHRISTINE: Just a year behind Chester, I think.

ELDON: Yeah. And Jackie was born in ---

LILLIAN: 1950. Halloween.

ELDON: Yeah, she was born on Halloween.

CHRISTINE: J A C K I E ?

LILLIAN: Huh?

CHRISTINE: How do you spell Jackie?

LILLIAN: Her real name is Jacqueline.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh, okay, I'll put that down.

LILLIAN: But we call her Jackie.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh. And her last name is Duke now, is that right?

LILLIAN: Yeah.

ELDON: No, no Webb.

LILLIAN: Webb.

CHRISTINE: Oh, I got the wrong person. Right. And does Alice have a different last name?

LILLIAN: Oh, gee, yeah (chuckling).

ELDON: Goetschius. I can't spell it --- how ---

LILLIAN: G O E T S C H I U S.

CHRISTINE: Wow. And then the fourth child was Eleanor?

LILLIAN: Yeah, Eleanor.

CHRISTINE: E L E A N O R.

ELDON: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh. And her name is Duke.

ELDON: Duke, yeah.

CHRISTINE: They were all born in Burns, right?

ELDON: Yeah.

LILLIAN: Johnny is ---

ELDON: When was Jackie born --- I don't know.

LILLIAN: What, Jackie?

ELDON: No, Eleanor.

CHRISTINE: Eleanor is ---

ELDON: April, but ---

LILLIAN: April 16<sup>th</sup>. Oh, I get them mixed up. And Johnny is, what?

ELDON: He was born just a year after her.

CHRISTINE: Were there a couple of years between Jacqueline and Eleanor?

ELDON: Yeah, a couple of years.

CHRISTINE: Or a year and a half? It would either be two and a half, or one and a half years, probably.

ELDON: Oh, I don't know. Somewhere we got it; we could look it up. I don't know.

CHRISTINE: And Johnny is spelled with a "y" or "ie"?

LILLIAN: Just John, J O H N.

CHRISTINE: All right.

ELDON: He was born just a little less than a year after Eleanor.

CHRISTINE: Oh. I can't remember ---

LILLIAN: May.

ELDON: Yeah, but what year was Eleanor born?

CHRISTINE: Maybe we can go look for that after we get done with this. Let's see, Eldon, your father's name?

ELDON: Was Chester Currey.

LILLIAN: Hiram --- how he hated that!

ELDON: Yeah, but he never went by that, he went by Chester.

CHRISTINE: And your dad's name, Lillian?

LILLIAN: Huh?

CHRISTINE: Your father's name?

LILLIAN: Bateman, B A T E M A N.

ELDON: But his first name.

LILLIAN: Oh, Gilbert, John Gilbert.

CHRISTINE: Do you know the dates of either of your parents' ---

LILLIAN: Huh?

CHRISTINE: Do you know any of the dates of your parents' birth?

LILLIAN: Let's see, he was born in August.

ELDON: Yeah, but I don't know ---

CHRISTINE: You don't know the years? Okay, that's fine. So you were about 14 when your dad died?

LILLIAN: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: So it would be about what 1934, something like that? 1933?

ELDON: Must have been '34. No, maybe you weren't quite 14 when ---

LILLIAN: I was in my last year of grade school.

CHRISTINE: Oh, uh-huh, that sounds about right. Did your ancestors come from some other country?

LILLIAN: Ireland.

CHRISTINE: Ireland, okay.

LILLIAN: Grandmother Bateman. I don't know what year or ---

CHRISTINE: Well that's all right. Did you --- I know you were a homemaker. Did you ever have jobs outside the home?

LILLIAN: I worked at Sylvania.

CHRISTINE: Oh, I mean after you had kids and all that.

ELDON: She worked at the hospital.

LILLIAN: At the hospital for a few years. Harney County Hospital for a few years.

ELDON: More than that. You went up there for two years cuz you needed social security, and you worked there seven years, Mommy.

CHRISTINE: In housekeeping, or in the kitchen, or ---

ELDON AND LILLIAN: Nurses' aide.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay.

LILLIAN: Yeah that was different from what I was used to. I had been working with that filament wire, and ---

CHRISTINE: Yeah. So, mother's maiden name. Do either of you know that?

LILLIAN: Yeah. Locke. L O C K E.

CHRISTINE: And what was her first name?

LILLIAN: Anna. A N N A.

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh, okay.

ELDON: Mine was Alice Clayton.

CHRISTINE: I see where you got your kids' names!

ELDON: Yup. Yeah, we had so many kids we couldn't think of enough names all by ourselves, we had to go ---

CHRISTINE: And about your mothers' dates of death?



ELDON: Oh, my mother died in '45. I don't remember what her date of birth was though.

CHRISTINE: That's okay.

ELDON: She was 49 years old, so I don't know. She died while I was overseas.

CHRISTINE: Oh. Do you have ancestors that came from another land?

ELDON: They never knew. They came from so long back --- Lillian was going to hunt all my ancestry up, but she never got too far. They came to Oregon in 1853; was it '53 or '54? In a covered wagon.

CHRISTINE: From where?

LILLIAN: From Nebraska, wasn't it?

CHRISTINE: From Nebraska.

ELDON: No. My ---

LILLIAN: His mother.

ELDON: My mother was from Nebraska, but the folks came from Indiana, the Curreys, before that.

LILLIAN: Oh, yeah.

ELDON: So they never did, could never figure out where they came from eventually.

CHRISTINE: Oh.

ELDON: Some said Scotland and some said --- I don't know.

CHRISTINE: That's okay. Brothers and sisters?

ELDON: I have one brother, Lee Currey.

LILLIAN: I have one sister, Jacqueline.

CHRISTINE: Okay, there's that other name there, isn't it?

ELDON: Yup (chuckling). There's that other name.

CHRISTINE: Is she still living?

LILLIAN: Yeah. Whereabouts is she now?

ELDON: My brother lives down at Medford.

CHRISTINE: I'm sorry. I forgot to write his name down.

ELDON: Lee.

(END OF TAPE)

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