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HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #483

Subject: Rose (King) Robirts, Jerry Schmidt

Place: Harney County Library, Burns, Oregon

Date: May 3, 2013

Interviewer: Cathy Schmidt

Release Form: Yes

CATHY SCHMIDT: Okay. Today is May 2, 2013. And I am here---

JERRY SCHMIDT: Today is the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

CATHY: Oh, correction. Today is May 3<sup>rd</sup>. And I am here with three generations; Rose Robirts, who was formerly Rose King, and [her son] Jerry Schmidt and our son Jeremy Schmidt. And I am Cathy Schmidt. And so we're here to listen to Rose and Jerry's story of the history of their family, which started back in the 1880's with Samuel and Wilimina King. So Jerry, what do you remember of the history of Samuel King?

JERRY: History of who?

CATHY: Samuel King?

JERRY: Well, the only thing I can remember is that the stories were that he came, I believe from Kentucky to Los Angeles, California. And then from Los Angeles, California he came up to Oregon...up to the Burns area. And I'm not sure if he

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homesteaded or he bought the property of the Thousand Springs Ranch. That's something that we need to look up. Or there's probably history already there. In 1885 is when he came up here and...

CATHY: Who came with him? Wilimina King? His wife Wilimina and his son?

JERRY: I don't know.

CATHY: Benjamin Franklin King.

JERRY: No. He was born here.

ROSE ROBIRTS: He was born up there.

JERRY: No, no. He was born in 1887.

CATHY: Okay. I stand corrected, okay.

JERRY: So Benjamin Franklin King was born in 1887. But I don't know when Samuel King got married to Wilimina.

CATHY: Okay. So what...Rose, what are some of your memories of being on the homestead that Samuel and Wilimina had? I guess they moved into a house that was already here? Or they built a house?

ROSE: I imagine they built that. I'm not sure. And anyway, as far as our living up there, Jean and I used to play together all the time. And then the boys played together all the time. So we had a playhouse out on the Rim Rock. And of course, the house had already burned down that they lived in. And then Dad built another house for them to live in. And we used to have our playhouse out on the Rim Rock. And we'd go to the old house that had burnt down and pick up pieces of glasses for our dishes and that kind of thing.

CATHY: So how many kids were there?

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ROSE: In our family?

CATHY: Um hmm.

ROSE: There was Jean and Percy and Frankie and I, at that time. And then Glen and Miles was born later. Because Glen was three years younger than me. And Miles was four.

CATHY: So the old house burned down. But you were born just after the old house burned down, right?

ROSE: No, just before it burned down. Because Frankie said that she had... When it caught fire, Mom told her to take me down to the chicken house...in whatever they had to take me down in. [Chuckles]

JERRY: They probably just carried you.

ROSE: Huh?

JERRY: I wouldn't be surprised she just carried you down there.

ROSE: Well, she said that she had a buggy or something.

JERRY: Oh, okay.

CATHY: And so your early days were spent in a chicken coop. [Chuckles]

ROSE: Yeah. Well...And then we was about...Or I think I was about nine years old and Jean was ten when we started herding sheep. We had to go out and herd sheep one day. And then Percy would herd the next day. And that was our biggest job. But we used to play all over the ranch. We'd go down in the field and watch Grandpa mowing hay and working down there. And we'd play in the creek. Remember where you fell in the creek?

CATHY: Yes. [Chuckling]

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ROSE: We used to jump in. [Laughter]

JERRY: And didn't Grandpa King, he mowed the hay with his horses.

ROSE: With a team of horses, yeah.

JERRY: It was a team of horses that he pulled the mower with.

ROSE: Yeah. He did have a thing with his team.

JERRY: And he also raked up the hay with horses. And he brought it in to stack it with his horses. So everything that he did was with his two work horses that he had. I know one of them...One of the two horse's names was Dolly. And I don't know what the other one was. I think Dolly was a female. And I believe that the other one was a male horse. And he never let us ride the male horse. But we always...All of the Schmidt kids piled on Dolly at one time, all three of us. And he'd slap her on the rear end and tell her to go to the barn. And he would...She would trot all the way up to the barn. Which was fun for us because it had all of the rigging on the horse. And then she would wait at the barn so she could get rid of all of the rigging that was on her. [Chuckles] Because, you know, then she was free of all of the stuff. And then she also...She also got a few bites of oats, or barley. Probably oats. And that was a big treat for her.

CATHY: What else do you remember about going out to your Grandpa's farm or ranch?

JERRY: Well, I just remember going out there and enjoying the spring water. I remember enjoying the dinners that Grandma made. And I remember enjoying the working...the stacking of the hay that came off of the land up there on the Thousand Springs. And then it was just a really pretty place. I remember I---

ROSE: It was so beautiful.

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JERRY: Yeah. I remember I carved my initials in a tree down at the lower part of the thing. And some years back, probably twenty years ago, Cathy and I went down there and we found that tree.

ROSE: Did you?

JERRY: With my initials in it.

CATHY: It was a lot higher.

ROSE: I think we all carved our initials on trees.

CATHY: And you used to take something over to the Curry Garden Canyon. You used to herd the sheep there.

ROSE: Oh, we used to take the cows up there every morning and turn them in the field so they could eat. And then we'd have to go get them in the evening. It was some milk cows.

CATHY: And about how far was that from your ranch house to the Canyon?

ROSE: Probably just a mile. But it seemed like five miles to us. [Laughter]

CATHY: I'm sure.

ROSE: Oh, yeah. One time we was taking the cows up to Curry Garden Canyon. And I think it was Glen probably. He jumped on one of the cows and was going to ride the cow. And that cow was pretty smart. So she goes under a low limb on the tree and brushes him off. [Laughter] It was funny. He never tried to get on another cow. I always remembered that.

CATHY: Now I remember that the house that you grew up in on the ranch, it seems to me it was two stories?

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ROSE: The original was. The one that burned down was two stories. But the one that Dad built afterwards was just one. And there was only one big bedroom. It was bigger than the living room, really. So what Grandma did was petition off the beds with sheets or blankets, whatever she could find, and make rooms out of them. Jean and I slept together. And Glen and Miles slept together. And Percy, he slept in the utility room.

CATHY: And then what about Frankie, where did she sleep?

ROSE: Well, she was gone most of the time. She went to Grants Pass to go to school, high school. Well, she started college and went to college down there.

CATHY: What year was Frankie born in?

ROSE: Well, she's six years older than me, whatever that is.

CATHY: So...

JERRY: Twenty-four minus six would be...

CATHY: 1918.

JERRY: ,,1918.

ROSE: Yeah, that's right.

CATHY: So it was one big room for the bedroom. And then how about the kitchen?

ROSE: The kitchen was real small, just about the same size as the one in this house. And the dining room and kitchen was all together, just like this.

CATHY: And did you have ranch hands? Or was it all you kids that did the work?

ROSE: The only time we had anybody up there was to shear sheep. Grandpa would get people to come in and shear the sheep in the spring.

CATHY: And then you moved...You lived some other places. Like, what are the other places you lived with your parents?

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ROSE: Well, we lived out at Silver Creek. And Dad worked on the ranches out there. And then we lived on the Baker place. I don't know what to call it.

JERRY: Jenkins.

ROSE: Jenkins place. And I don't know where he worked there. And then we moved to Frenchglen. I started school at Frenchglen.

JERRY: And he worked for Pete French.

ROSE: Yeah.

JERRY: Do you remember what years that was?

ROSE: Let's see. I started school when I was seven. Dates don't mean anything to me. [Chuckles]

CATHY: That was about 1931. And so how long did you live at Frenchglen?

ROSE: I think we must have been down there about three years, because Jean and...Frankie was with us when we was down there. And she went to school there. But she had already graduated from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. But she couldn't go to Crane because they wouldn't let girls live in the dorm at that time. And so she just stayed down there and went through the eight grade again.

CATHY: And how far out of Frenchglen did you live?

ROSE: Three miles.

CATHY: Three miles. What did you live in?

ROSE: A house. They had houses for the Refuge...on the Refuge. Yeah.

CATHY: Wow. And then from there, you moved to...?

ROSE: Back up on the ranch.

CATHY: Okay. And then from the ranch? When did you stay---

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ROSE: And then from the ranch, we moved down to Five Mile Dam.

CATHY: And didn't you do that because the winters were harsh and---

ROSE: Well, we couldn't live up at the ranch in wintertime. We always had to move down someplace. And we lived at...

JERRY: Well, it was because of the snow and everything, wasn't it?

ROSE: Yeah. You couldn't get in and out. And we lived in that house that's close to Catterson's house, right by the bridge, you know, Five Mile Bridge. And there's a house right on the other side. Well, just down a little ways was another one. And that's where we lived for awhile. And I can't think of the name of that place.

CATHY: And then did your dad built a house down on Five Mile Dam?

ROSE: Well, the wood shed...We're using for a woodshed now. [Chuckles] Yeah, he built that.

CATHY: He built that. And so then that woodshed has quite a history because it started out at Five Mile Dam. And then where did it go?

ROSE: Where it is now.

CATHY: Which is on 420 North Saginaw.

ROSE: 420 North Saginaw.

CATHY: Yeah. And you all lived in that with Jean and her...

JERRY: No, no.

ROSE: Yeah.

JERRY: Jean and...Carl and Jean---

CATHY: Oh, that's right.

ROSE: Miles and Glen...Percy.



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JERRY: No...Oh, did they all live in that?

ROSE: Um hmm.

JERRY: Or they lived in the old house that was there?

ROSE: Where do you mean?

JERRY: Well, there was a house where your house is now. Isn't that the house that they all lived in?

ROSE: Well, when we was up the river is when we all lived in that.

JERRY: In this?

ROSE: Yeah.

JERRY: In... in the woodshed?

ROSE: Woodshed.

JERRY: What is called the wood shed now?

CATHY: Okay. Okay, so then tell the story about moving the shed to North Saginaw?

ROSE: Well, I really don't know how they do that. They put it on rollers some way and just bring it down the road. And then you have to have people in front and on back to stop all traffic while you're taking it through.

CATHY: And so then---

JERRY: But that was probably back in the forties. So it was not like it was...Not like there was a lot of cars. [Chuckles]

CATHY: Right, right. So Jean and her family lived in the woodshed; oh because Lewie helped to build the house that you live in now.

ROSE: Yeah.

CATHY: Okay, say a little bit more---

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JERRY: Lewie is Lewis Fedor.

CATHY: And in the meantime, you had married Frank Schmidt.

ROSE: Yeah.

CATHY: And you out on the ranch of your own. Yeah. So how long...So what do you remember, Jerry, of them living in the wood shed and the other house being built?

JERRY: Oh, I just remember the...I just remember the house being built. And I remember that Jean and Carl and three of her kids anyway...I don't think that Danny and...No, I don't know. I don't know if all of the kids were there. But part of them were. Carol and Marjorie and probably Danny were the only ones. I don't think Norman and Cathy were born yet. And then didn't Jean move? She moved out.

ROSE: Yeah, she lived in Hines.

JERRY: She lived out in Hines...in the old Post Office---

ROSE: That's right. Yeah.

JERRY: ---building, for several years. And then she moved further out by Greenhouse Lane.

ROSE: Well, it's just as you turn off of the highway.

JERRY: Right. Yeah. It was right by the Greenhouse Lane. And she lived out there for several years. And then she moved on. This is Jean Wenzel. And she moved on to Salem, I think. And she went to school. And she worked for the State.

ROSE: Eugene, I think is where she went.

JERRY: Okay, it might have been Eugene.

ROSE: Because Frankie was down there.

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JERRY: Yeah. Anyway, and she went to...I think she went to school. And she got a good job of taking care of her family down there.

CATHY: So I was wrong. It was Lewie that helped to build the rental house on Saginaw, right?

JERRY: Grandma and Grandpa did that one too.

ROSE: That house was for Frankie and Lewis.

CATHY: Okay. And then...So then Lewis did help build the house that he lived in.

JERRY: The other house.

CATHY: Okay.

JERRY: And then Grandpa built a third house on...

ROSE: North Saginaw.

JERRY: ...Saginaw, right down from the house that Mom lives in now.

ROSE: Right across the street from Hillmans.

JERRY: Right across the street from Hillmans.

CATHY: Yeah, and it's still there.

JERRY: And it's still there. And Grandpa built that one, pretty much alone.

ROSE: Him and Lewis worked on that one.

JERRY: Lewis helped until they moved to North Bend. But Grandpa is the one that finished all of that. He did that all alone. I do remember that, because I went down and helped him a little bit...or got in his way probably.

CATHY: And you remember the house that was standing there before they---

JERRY: There wasn't any house there.

CATHY: Next to the woodshed, you said that...

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JERRY: Oh, there was a house. But that was...They tore that down probably in 1950. It probably didn't take very long to tear it down. I don't...I don't remember a lot about it. But I do remember the house.

CATHY: So at one time, Frank King, your dad, owned a lot of Hines.

ROSE: A lot of the town. Not anymore than what's there. He could have. But he---

JERRY: No, he owned...He owned a lot of those...Because I remember him selling lots.

ROSE: Well, he could have. I just don't remember.

JERRY: What I remember there was forty acres that he owned. And he sold it off a little at a time. The other thing that I remember...Because it was right beside Roe Davis. And Roe Davis had an airstrip. He had his own airplane. And I remember Roe Davis taking Mom and I up in his plane from that airstrip when I was probably five...five years, maybe six years old. And I looked out at the road, and we were high enough up. And of course, me being small, I looked down at the road and I thought those were toys...cars on the road. [Chuckles] But I remember that ride was...

ROSE: He was really a good pilot. He just was so careful. He didn't act smart with his plane.

CATHY: That's good. That's good. So what else do you remember about your Grandpa King, Jerry?

JERRY: Oh, my Grandpa King was so great. [Chuckles] Probably one of the things that I remember most is when we was building Butler Granaries out at our ranch, the Rim Rock Ranch, off of Potter Swamp Lane. And the tractor...John Deere tractor, which was a tricycle John Deere G., we picked the roof up and a little breeze come up and blew the roof. And it blew the tractor over. It tipped it over. And I can remember Dad jumping

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off of it when it tipped over. And it never missed a beat. It just kept running. And he went and pulled the wire off of the magneto so it would kill it. And I got pinned underneath the tractor. Actually, it was underneath a cylinder that was a hydraulic cylinder. And I couldn't get out. It caught both of my calves of my legs. And I can remember Grandpa King lifting up the front of that tractor. And I crawled out from under it.

ROSE: Amazing.

JERRY: And that tractor probably weighed probably well over a thousand pounds, way, way more than that.

CATHY: And were your legs broken?

JERRY: No. I didn't get hurt because it pushed me into the dirt. The dirt was soft. I had bruises on my legs. But I didn't...You know, I was able to walk. I just think of him very fondly when I think about that.

And he always helped us do all the haying out on our place and up on his place, on the Thousand Springs Ranch and out at the Rim Rock Ranch. He always was there to help. Grandma King was always there to cook every meal, for all of us that were helping put up hay. And the way we put up hay was with a net and cable. And it was pulled up with a tractor onto the haystack and then pulled back by a horse that...The net was pulled back by a horse. And Rose is the one that did all of the pullback. She always was on the horse.

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And the other thing I remember about Mom was, when we would ride up on the range, I would always tease her about her trying to lose me. But she could never lose me because she was always yodeling. [Laughter]

ROSE: I thought I was up there where nobody could hear me. [Laughter]

JERRY: And I could be maybe a mile away from her, but I could always hear her yodeling. [Laughter]

ROSE: That's a custom of cowboys and cowgirls.

CATHY: So that reminds me of the ranch that you and Frank bought, which it was called what ranch? What was the name of it?

ROSE: Well, we didn't have a name at the time we bought it. But Frank wanted to call it Rim Rock Ranch. So we called it...

JERRY: That's what it was called was the Rim Rock Ranch.

CATHY: How many acres did you have out there?

ROSE: How many acres? 4,280.

CATHY: Wow. And where is it located?

ROSE: Off of Potter Swamp...Road. At the end of Potter Swamp Road, I'd say....to the right.

CATHY: What's some of your memories of living out there? Where do you begin, huh? I know that's a big question. Well, I think I know that you started out in a house that eventually burned down.

ROSE: Yeah. Well---

CATHY: Who was born there?

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ROSE: You know, that house, the way Frank got out here; it was called the Luig Place. And it was the Luig Estate. And how his grandpa ever got to taking care of that estate, I don't know. But...

JERRY: That was Grandpa Schmidt, right?

ROSE: Yeah. His Grandpa Schmidt, your Great Grandpa.

JERRY: Oh, I didn't know that.

ROSE: And anyway, they sent him out here then to live. So I just took it that they... Maybe they bought it and just gave it to Frank. I don't know. I'm really not sure. Because there was people living there when he came out here. And he just lived with them for awhile. And then they all moved out.

JERRY: What was his name?

ROSE: Who?

JERRY: Great Grandpa Schmidt?

ROSE: I can't remember.

CATHY: Guillaume.

JERRY: No. That was Grandpa Schmidt.

ROSE: Guillaume Gabriel was his...his dad. Frank's dad.

CATHY: Oh, you mean it was not Guillaume that took care of it. It was his dad.

JERRY: It was his dad.

CATHY: Wow, okay. We'll have to find that out. Wow.

JERRY: See, I didn't know that either.

CATHY: Yeah. Okay. So, what year were you and Frank married?

ROSE: 1939.

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CATHY: Okay. And then you moved directly to the ranch, did you?

ROSE: Yeah. Yeah. There was a house there at the Luig Estate. And we lived in that. And then...for two years. And then it burned down. And then...

JERRY: It burned down two weeks before Duane was born.

ROSE: Yeah, that's right. And I lived in a tent house that summer, after Duane was born. And then Frank and Grandpa, and I don't know who else, built the house that was lived in for the rest of the time. It was just a doll house; only two bedrooms, four kids and all the help that come along.

JERRY: That's so true.

CATHY: And I remember pictures of the kitchen that was sparkling clean and black and white linoleum.

ROSE: It was.

CATHY: And like a table that was in the corner.

ROSE: Yes.

JERRY: Well, there was a nook.

CATHY: And your oil lamp that you had because you didn't have electricity.

ROSE: Right.

JERRY: We got electricity out there in 1954. That's what I remember. I could be---

ROSE: The REA line came through.

CATHY: No, we had electricity before that.

ROSE: No.

CATHY: Yeah. We had our own line. We had our own line. And then REA went through just the opposite direction.



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ROSE: We had...I can't say what they are, those batteries.

CATHY: Like a generator?

JERRY: Oh, no, no. No.

CATHY: Where did the electricity come from, from that line?

ROSE: The REA line is the only one that went through there.

JERRY: But we had...All of the ranchers out there got together and put in their own line.

Don't you remember that?

ROSE: No, because I thought it was just all on our REA.

JERRY: No. Because they weren't even out there during that time. They came through probably...'56, maybe. Maybe two years later, or three years later, '57, somewhere around there, REA. And they built a line that went just the opposite way. And what I remember was the dairy over there.

ROSE: Eban Ray.

JERRY: Eban Ray was part of it. We was part of it. And Lee Morris was part of it, of putting that line in. Everybody was together. You don't remember that?

ROSE: I don't think Lee Morris was there. I think it was still Walter Baker when the line...I'm not sure thought. Walter Baker left there before.

JERRY: Oh, it could have been. I can't say. I don't remember Walter Baker being out there. I remember Lee Morris. But not to say that I know, because I don't.

ROSE: Well, that was Walter Baker. He was the original one to have that.

CATHY: So speaking of neighbors, so what are some of the neighbors...names of some of the neighbors that you remember having out there?

ROSE: We had Walter Baker and Chester Baker.

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JERRY: Lee Morris.

ROSE: Lee Morris.

JERRY: Eban Ray. And Ollie...or I mean, Bob Hughet, Ole Hughet and Claytons.

CATHY: Weren't the McUne somewhere along there?

ROSE: I never could remember that one that had the airplane and he was killed in---

JERRY: Clayton.

ROSE: Clayton.

JERRY: Yeah.

ROSE: It could be.

JERRY: I know it was, because I went to school with his daughters, Linda and Paula.

CATHY: But weren't there some McUne out there too?

ROSE: Well, they was way out.

JERRY: But they were way up north. Oh, and then Finley's.

ROSE: Yeah.

JERRY: Finley's were up there.

ROSE: Just above Bakers.

JERRY: And then above Finley's was McUne.

CATHY: So what did you do for fun, when you weren't ranching?

ROSE: For fun?

CATHY: Um hmm.

ROSE: Well, we used to drive around the old cow trails a lot. And played lots of games.

JERRY: And they used to play cards with McUne's, all the time.

ROSE: Yeah, we used to do that.

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JERRY: And then we would play with the kids.

ROSE: And then on Easter time, every Easter, we had an Easter party. And the whole neighborhood came. And if the roads were so bad they couldn't drive in, they'd come in in the wagon.

JERRY: We'd go down with a tractor and the wagon and pick up people, for the last mile and a half to go the house.

CATHY: Did you have an Easter egg hunt?

ROSE: Yep. Yep. Clear up on the hill.

JERRY: And not just an Easter egg hunt. But there was a...What do you call it when they put pieces of paper out?

ROSE: Oh, a scavenger hunt.

JERRY: A scavenger hunt.

CATHY: Wow. Fun.

ROSE: We had it for both the little kids and the big kids. The little kids, they had to hunt around the house. And it was fun watching them.

CATHY: Oh, yeah . Yeah.

ROSE: And then we'd have a big dinner.

JERRY: So Eileen and John Anderson and their kids came out. Jean and her kids came out to the ranch. Oh, there was a lot more than that.

ROSE: Oh, the one that she just said that had the radio station.

JERRY: Oh, Wards?

ROSE: Wards, they used to come out. And Alyce Sawser and her kids came out.

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JERRY: Oh, did they? Okay. Her kids were Renee, Dennis and Dolores. There was an older one.

ROSE: Yeah, I know. I can't remember her name.

JERRY: I can't remember her name. But anyway, I went to school with Dennis and Dolores.

ROSE: We had lots of people come out for Easter.

CATHY: Wow, how fun.

ROSE: It was a fun time. And not only that, we square danced out on the ground.

CATHY: Oh, wow. Well, speaking of dancing, I understand that you were quite the dancer.

ROSE: Well, I never figured that I was. It was just...Because that was my talent, was dancing. But people say now, you know, they liked to watch Duane and I dance because we're the only old time dancers. The rest of them are modern stuff. And they don't go for the modern stuff like they do the old time.

CATHY: And didn't they have dance contests back when you were young?

ROSE: No. Not contests.

JERRY: Not contests. But they gave prizes out for the best dancers.

ROSE: Yeah.

CATHY: Oh. Okay.

JERRY: And Mom got lots of those prizes because...Dad played in the band. So he was always in the band.

JEREMY SCHMIDT: What did he play?

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JERRY: He played a guitar. And he also sang. Yeah, I don't think you knew that, did you? [Chuckles]

JEREMY: Hmm um. Grandma played the fiddle too, didn't you?

ROSE: Not then.

JEREMY: Oh, not then?

ROSE: No.

JERRY: She started playing when she was sixty.

JEREMY: Oh, wow. [Laughter]

ROSE: Seventy. That's just a pastime.

JERRY: But that's what it was for everybody. So, you know, I mean it was just fun. And then Dad also called square dances.

ROSE: He was a real good square dance caller.

JERRY: He really was. He was---

CATHY: I can believe it. He's got a good memory for that.

JERRY: He's got a good memory and---

ROSE: Yeah. And he could make up a pattern as he went along.

JERRY: He did.

CATHY: Wow.

JERRY: Yeah, he would make them up. And then you had to follow those patterns that he made up. If you don't know anything about square dancing, you know, it's...there's all kinds of moves. There's all kinds of patterns, I guess. And you put those patterns in certain places. And then the dancers have to do those. But you have to know what those patterns mean, you know, do-si-do, allemande right and allemande left and all these kinds

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of things. Those were all little patterns. And if they threw them in, the caller would throw them in, why, you then you had to do those. It's not like we didn't mess up.

[Laughter]

ROSE: All the kids learned to square dance. Allemande left to your left hand. Back to your partner and left and right. [Laughter]

CATHY: Sounds like fun.

ROSE: Hand over hand and round that ring.

CATHY: Now your ranch, you did a lot of different things. You raised a lot of different things on the ranch, it seems like.

ROSE: Well, yeah. But whatever we raised different from grain, why it wasn't very much. It was just...He just was experimenting with different things.

JERRY: He raised about, what, a hundred and fifty head of pigs one year.

ROSE: Yeah. And they got out too, and everybody had pigs. [Chuckling] We supplied everybody with pork.

JERRY: It was right by the house. And oh, it stunk so bad. It was really nasty. But we always raised three pigs for our own use. We always had our own chickens for our own use. We had...I shouldn't say this, but we usually butchered two deer every year. [Chuckles] And we butchered our milk cow's calf. It was usually a two-year old. And we would butcher that every year. So one beef, two deer, three pork, three pigs and I don't know how many chickens. The chickens that I remember were the ones that would attack me. And on the third attack, that was when we had them for a meal next time. Because I never let them attack me the third time.

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ROSE: Well, I didn't know they attacked you. But before we moved over there, and right after the house burned down, we had those chickens. And every time I'd go out there, this one chicken would come at me, every time. You know, they'd fly up and paw you down. So I picked up a big stick and I hit this chicken over the head. And it knocked him out. And I thought I'd killed him. And I hollered at Frank to come and ring his neck, because I didn't want to ring his neck. So he came over there. Just as he got there the chicken got up and run away. [Laughter] He wasn't going to have his neck wrung.

CATHY: Kind of a smart chicken.

JERRY: Did he ever attack you again?

ROSE: No. He didn't.

JERRY: No. That's the funny thing is. Usually if you could knock them plumb silly, then they would never attack you again. They did learn.

CATHY: They did have somewhat of a memory.

JERRY: They did learn. But they took a lot of hard licks before they learned. [Chuckles]

ROSE: I know. I hated that old rooster. [Chuckles]

JERRY: Well, that was what attacked me was banty roosters. And I remember I didn't mind them attacking me the first or second time. But the third time, why, we usually had a chicken dinner. [Chuckles]

CATHY: How about you had some critters that enjoyed...Like, sometimes they entered your house. And I remember a snake story. A snake?

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JERRY: We left the kitchen door... We left an outside porch door open. We left the kitchen door open. And Mom had just waxed the floor. And when we came home there was a rattlesnake in the middle of the kitchen. And he---

ROSE: Well, we was just on the porch. Duane hollered. He says, Mom, don't come out here. And of course, I had to go see why. [Chuckles] About that time here comes the snake in the house.

JERRY: And so anyway, we got the rake and raked it outside.

CATHY: Because he couldn't move because the linoleum was so slick.

ROSE: Yeah, it was too slick for him.

JERRY: Yeah.

ROSE: Couldn't crawl.

JERRY: So anyway, that was one of the things. Actually, it was good that he got in the house. Because if he'd stayed just on the porch, why somebody could have got bit by him. Because we wouldn't have seen it.

ROSE: As soon as Duane said that, of course I had to go see why I wasn't supposed to come out there. [Chuckles]

JERRY: And then there was one about the rats that were out there. [Chuckles] That run across Dad's back, when he was laying on the floor...naked. [Laughter]

ROSE: And then the rats on the ceiling, up in the attic. It wasn't finished off on the wall and the rats looked down over the wall at the kids. [Chuckles]

CATHY: Oh, boy.

ROSE: I hated those little packrats. I worked out in the field one day. And I always wore something over my head. And I had a real bright red scarf that I had on that day.



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So when I came in, I just put it...I thought I put it on the washing machine. Wherever I put it, the packrats found it. And they'd go for anything bright. And they packed it off. And I never did find it. I looked all over the machinery, down holes, out in the field...or, up on the hill. And I never did find it. And he sure run off with it...because it was bright red.

CATHY: How about the wells on your ranch, they were pretty unique...artesian wells.

JERRY: Yeah. I think there was twelve or thirteen. Wasn't there twelve or thirteen wells?

ROSE: Well, no, there was only five of artesian wells. Five artesian wells was all we had. But---

JERRY: One, two, three, four, five...six.

ROSE: It could have been six.

JERRY: There was six. No, there was six. There was six artesian wells. And they ranged in depth from 50 feet to, I think 130 feet. And they were all different temperatures.

ROSE: Yeah.

CATHY: What were the temperatures?

ROSE: One was real cold. And one---

JERRY: One of them was real shallow was like ice water. It was really cold. And others were really, really warm. Had really warm water coming out of them.

ROSE: But we just left them run all the time.

JERRY: And then there was water on...It was called the Bugman Place, right?

ROSE: Yeah.

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JERRY: Which was Eban Ray's place. But it was called the Bugman Place. And there was a big spring on the Bugman Place. But we had the water rights to it because when my Dad bought the property, why that water was running onto his property. So, he had the water rights to it.

CATHY: So what was it like in the springtime? I understand there was quite a bit of water out there.

ROSE: And quite a bit of snow to go through. There was times that we had to go out with a Cat. And we didn't have a...I don't think we had the dozer on it at that time. I remember going up to the lane. Somehow we had to even go in the bar pit, although I don't know why. It was rough, getting in and out.

JERRY: Well, there was times when we stayed in Hines because...in the springtime when it was running off. But that whole valley out there was...I remember time and time and time again, that whole valley being covered from one side to the other with water.

ROSE: And filled with birds.

CATHY: Oh, boy.

JERRY: Yeah. In the springtime, why there was just hundreds of thousands of geese.

ROSE: Geese and swan...and ducks, millions of ducks.

CATHY: Cranes?

JERRY: No. Well, during the summertime there was cranes.

ROSE: We had lots of cranes when we farmed.

JERRY: They were sandhill crane though.

ROSE: Yeah. We used to watch them dance while we was working.

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JERRY: I remember one time that we come down off of the range land, Mom and I did, and there was a coyote out in the field. And we went over to check it out. And it had rabies. So we left it alone. And we went back to the house. And I got a rifle. And we went down in the truck. And I shot it. And then we dug a real, real deep hole and buried it in a deep hole so nothing could eat it. But that was the only rabid...That was the only rabid animal I ever saw. But it was definitely rabid. Because he was...He couldn't even run he was so sick. He was just frothing at the mouth.

CATHY: Hmm. Wow.

ROSE: We used to have lots of hunters come out from all over, everywhere; California, Montana, just...Idaho, all over, come out there. They'd dig a pit and get down. And then like I told you before, Charlie Wellington, he used to come out hunting ducks. He had arthritis so bad, you know. So he always came and got Frankie to go out with him and pick up the birds for him.

JERRY: Yeah. Charlie always came out to the ranch and helped himself to the deer also.

ROSE: Yeah.

CATHY: Oh. [Chuckles]

JERRY: But he was a good friend. I mean...

CATHY: Speaking of deer, wasn't there a---

ROSE: It was mostly antelope that we had out there.

CATHY: Wasn't there a deer that was shot and then the game warden came by?

ROSE: Oh, you're thinking about when Francis Griffin started coming---

JERRY: No, no. No. We had butchered a deer. And Ellis Mason came out to the ranch.

[Chuckling] And, you know, he walked right over the guts of it. Never said a thing.

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ROSE: Oh, he wouldn't. He was real good. [Chuckles]

JERRY: Ellis Mason was a wildlife officer. But, you know, he knew that all of the ranchers, during that time they all...

ROSE: Didn't bother us at all.

JERRY: No. Nobody bothered us. But one person that would turn you in was Francis Griffin. And Francis Griffin was well known around here, back in the probably 30's, 40's and 50's.

ROSE: He had a place out in Sunset Valley.

JERRY: Well, Dog Mountain, wasn't it?

ROSE: Well, he was kind of down by Dog Mountain, Sunset...I mean Dog Mountain. Anyway, he had a bunch of dogs. He always had lots of dogs. But he didn't have a job. I don't know how he got his money to buy food for the dogs even. But he'd go around to the neighbors and a food...beg for a meal. He happened to walk into our house. That one time that he came, it was just before suppertime. And he ate everything I had. He drank a gallon of milk. And I didn't have any milk for the kids for supper. And, yeah, he did. You know, he'd go so long without eating. And then, boy, if he got to where he could have a meal, he ate it all.

CATHY: Wasn't there a bowl of applesauce that...?

ROSE: What?

CATHY: A bowl of applesauce that got left behind? And when you came back, it was gone?

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JERRY: I remember that. Because Mom went to work. She was working at the...working at the hospital. And he came. And she had made this big, yellow bowl of...You know those bowls...that she has in her cupboard right now? Full of applesauce. And he ate the whole thing.

ROSE: And then another time---

JERRY: And then she was upset when she came home and there wasn't any applesauce left. [Chuckles]

ROSE: Another time he came, we had company from North Bend. And they was sleeping in the bedroom next to where they could look out at the shop. We always hung our deer out in the shop at night to age it, you know. So anyway, I saw him walking down the road. So I hollered at Frank. I said, you better get out there and get that deer in because Francis Griffin is coming. He'd eat everything you had. But he'd also turn you in. So anyway, Frank went out there and got the deer. And in the daytime we kept it under the bed where these people were sleeping. So he passed it through the window across their bed. They didn't know what was going on. [Chuckling] It was so funny. But we managed to get that deer in before he saw it.

JERRY: What I remember is he was also naked. [Laughing]

ROSE: He was something else, I'll tell you.

JERRY: It was so embarrassing.

CATHY: Not Francis, but your husband was naked retrieving the deer, right?

ROSE: Yeah. [Laughter]

CATHY: Well, you know, you weren't expecting a visitor.

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ROSE: As soon as I saw him coming down the road, I knew that we better get that deer in. [Chuckles]

CATHY: So you all farmed other places too.

ROSE: Well, Frank and I did. Before the kids was born, we farmed down at Buena Vista...two thousand acres of grain down there. Yeah.

JERRY: It wasn't just before we were born, in the '60's...

ROSE: No. Duane was born. But---

JERRY: I remember going down there. I remember driving a tractor back from there. [Chuckles]

ROSE: No, you couldn't have.

JERRY: Yes I did. Uh huh. Yeah. Ted Jones and somebody else stayed down there.

ROSE: No, we didn't have Ted Jones at that time. Bill Yarber.

JERRY: Oh, no, I'm talking about later on in probably the early 60's.

ROSE: That wasn't...Frank must have got a small amount to farm down there. I don't remember that.

CATHY: So what do you remember, Jerry?

JERRY: Oh, I remember that they drained all of the water off of it. And I don't know, I would guess that there was a thousand acres down there that he farmed.

ROSE: 2,000 acres we put in.

JERRY: But anyway, I remember...And I don't know exactly, but it was at Buena Vista. And...

CATHY: Was it hay that was raised there?

JERRY: No. It was barley.

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CATHY: Barley, okay.

JERRY: Yeah.

ROSE: Barley, oats and wheat and rye is what we raised.

JERRY: All I remember down at Buena Vista was barley. There might have been oats too. But I remember...But I never worked down there. But I remember driving the tractor back, because it was a long, long, long forty miles.

CATHY: And it wasn't paved back then, was it?

JERRY: No.

CATHY: Yeah, it would be...

[End of Rose (King) Robirts, Jerry Schmidt oral history]