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HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #492

Subject: Marvin: Jess

Place: Harney County Library, 80 West D Street Burns OR 97720

Date: October 30, 2018

Interviewer: Laurie O'Connor

Release Form:

LAURIE O'CONNOR: Good morning, this is Laurie O'Connor at the Harney County Library, and I am interviewing Mister Marvin Jess of Diamond, Oregon. This is actually a return interview, as we started interviewing him three years ago and then had a missing part of the tape. Today is Tuesday, October 30th, 2018. Welcome Marvin, good to see you in here again.

MARVIN JESS: Thank you.

LAURIE: Thank you. So the last time we were talking, Marvin, the tape quit, and I didn't catch it, you know, the recorder. And we were talking at the time about the draglines and the dragline cleaning of the canals on the refuge. How long it would take you to clean all the canals and what a big job it was. As I recall in that interview you said it took about 3 years to complete all the canal work and then you'd start all over again.

MARVIN: No, it was a bit longer than three years 'cause you didn't get to work a full year. You worked about from, uh, about August till March of the next year because they, they turned the water on again to irrigate. But totally, I think I probably could cover it in about seven years.

LAURIE: The whole thing, sort of?

MARVIN: Yeah, that's full time.

LAURIE: Full time, if that's all--

MARVIN: Yeah, if I didn't have nothing else to do.

LAURIE: And who else ran the draglines, you named a couple of other people.

MARVIN: Oh, Elmer Ash was one of them--

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LAURIE: Elmer Ash?

MARVIN: And Noel Cagle.

LAURIE: Ok. You said Noel was a real good operator.

MARVIN: Yeah he was one of the top operators, as far as Elmer and anybody else, and then [Rolland] Blom, b l o m....

LAURIE: And what were those early draglines, do you remember the progression, the change, what equipment did they have?

MARVIN: Well, they had uh, a shovel front, a crowd shovel, and then you had, if you wanted to have, had an extra boom like you wanted to put in a piling [geedon] to drive piling with. And I think they all, they had uh, an excavator backhoe, big backhoe that went on. But they didn't use it, I think they used it mostly at the Job Corps when they started Job Corps.

LAURIE: Oh. So what's the difference in excavator with a backhoe? Does it have a separate--

MARVIN: Yeah, the cable-operated backhoe, the big backhoe, probably about a three-quarter yard bucket on it.

LAURIE: Huh. I can't even picture that piece of equipment, I'll have to look for a picture of that

MARVIN: Well, they didn't use it very much, I think they mostly used it, they mostly used it on, uh, on when they put Job Corps in.

LAURIE: Ok.

MARVIN: When they put the water tank on top of that hill, and then they used it to come down the hill, they had two Cats tied to it, to let it down.

LAURIE: Oh, to control the—the drop.

MARVIN: To keep it, I mean, it was a steep hill. Anyway, that's what they put the water line in with, that excavator.

LAURIE: Were you there when they put that water line in?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: So that was after 1960?

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MARVIN: It would have been 19-- 56.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: Or, '65, '65.

LAURIE: Yeah, because you started around '60—'60 or '61? 1961 for the Refuge.

MARVIN: Uh, I started in 19...62, September the fifth.

LAURIE: Ok. So that water went in the mid-60s, that tank and the line.

MARVIN: Yeah. Yeah that would have been '65, they started that Job Corps.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: And then I worked for the Refuge in 1948 for six months, and '49 and '50, and then I skipped four years and I went back to work in '55 for six months.

LAURIE: That's after you returned--

MARVIN: From the service.

LAURIE: From the service. And you were Navy?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: Ok. You know I didn't ask you in the last interview, when you were in the service, where did you serve, where were you stationed?

MARVIN: I stationed in Yokosuka, Japan, for two years, and then in December of '52 I returned to the States, we got to the states on New Year's Eve in '52. We hankered down on the, in the, stream, and the word passed that the officers and dependents would go ashore. Everybody else stayed on board.

LAURIE: Oh. They wanted to control it. New Year's Eve!

MARVIN: Well, I guess, I don't really know.

LAURIE: Huh. You had to stay aboard?

MARVIN: Huh?

LAURIE: You had to stay on board?

MARVIN: Oh yes. Yeah., everybody that had the black shoes had to stay on board.

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LAURIE: Uh huh. When you were in Japan, that was pretty much just postwar, what was the feeling of the people toward American servicemen, what was it like in Japan--

MARVIN: Everybody got along with the Japanese. As far as I know, we never had no difficulty in between the uh, the two bloodlines.

LAURIE: Mmhm. Did—there was no feeling of animosity?

MARVIN: Not that I ever knew.

LAURIE: Could you see the amount of hardship in postwar Japan? Was it obvious that they were rebuilding and having--

MARVIN: They were uh, yeah they were building a lot of uh, buildings, and industry, around Tokyo and some of the bigger cities. But Yokosuka was just a Navy base.

LAURIE: Ok. Yeah. So you came back and then you worked for ranchers for a while when you returned from the navy?

MARVIN: Yeah, yes, see, I come in... who the hell did I work for?

LAURIE: Well you say, Kudie—Coonie--

MARVIN: Walt Cooley.

LAURIE: Cooley?

MARVIN: Cooley. C-double o-l-e-y.

LAURIE: Yeah, you said he was good to work for.

MARVIN: Huh?

LAURIE: You said he was a good man to work for.

MARVIN: Yeah, he was a good man to work for.

LAURIE: Ok. And then you worked, uh, you also talked about, you worked for some of the other ranches around there, the Jenkins, Anderson?

MARVIN: Yeah, [Walter] Anderson.

MARVIN: And then.... Leon Thompson.

MARVIN: Roaring Springs Ranch.

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LAURIE: Yeah.

MARVIN: That was intermittent. Haying and fooling around--

LAURIE: Seasonal?

MARVIN: Huh?

LAURIE: A lot of seasonal things for Roaring Springs?

MARVIN: Yeah, just in the fall of the year.

LAURIE: Mmhm.

MARVIN: And that's about it I guess.

LAURIE: You got married in 1955?

MARVIN: '55. June the fifth.

LAURIE: June the fifth.

MARVIN: And then I worked for the county road department in '55. Well really I started in '50, but I was only there about three months.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: And then Uncle Sam said, "You come see me."

LAURIE: Right! He had a bigger job for you, and --

MARVIN: Pay wasn't very good but they were furnishing the groceries.

LAURIE: *[laughter]* That's good. So you went to work on the Refuge, and that was John Scharff was the manager for the early part of your, for like the first-- Well, it would have been for ten to twelve years that John Scharff was the manager.

MARVIN: Yeah, he was starting out when I first worked there I guess in '48, he was the manager, and Erickson was a biologist. Ray Erickson.

LAURIE: Ok.

MARVIN: And I don't recall who the assistant manager was. But John was an excellent man to work for.

LAURIE: Yes.

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MARVIN: The day wasn't long enough. If you had a job that would entail that you'd come back tomorrow, we'd maybe finish it tonight.

LAURIE: Uh huh. And that's what he would do, too. He had a good work ethic also.

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: Makes it easy to work.

MARVIN: Yeah, he was a good man to work for.

LAURIE: So then you, you entered some different eras, though. Mazzoni came in, he was assistant manager and then he eventually became manager and you said there were some problems with Mazzoni.

MARVIN: Yeah, he come here with the, uh-- idea that the instructors at the college had entailed, had thumped into his head.

LAURIE: Mmhm.

MARVIN: And--he was a totally different operation from John. Get rid of the cows, and we cut down on the irrigation, you won't irrigate near as early in the spring, and it just--totally different. And it was heartbreaking to see the way things turned out.

LAURIE: Yes. You said at the time when John Scharff was manager, every rancher in the Diamond Valley had a permit.

MARVIN: That's correct. And people in Lawen, and Crane, and Double O, went as far as, I guess, almost to uh-- I wouldn't say quite as far as Hampton, but--

LAURIE: Riley, for sure, I know, all those people had--

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: Yeah. Um, I'm always curious, I don't know, how much of that Mazzoni's decision and how much was changing in the regional and the national--how much--

MARVIN: Probably would have been, I would say thirty-five percent Mazzoni, and the environmental people was about sixty-five percent, maybe seventy.

LAURIE: Ok, so academic and environmental were pressuring, to change.

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MARVIN: Yeah, they pressured the management. 'Cause I know uh, Littlefield come here studying the cranes. And he went around-- After the second or third year, he was wanting to know where the hell all the birds were. 'Cause Joe [Mazzoni] cut the grazing, and he had put a stipulation in the grazing permit that you couldn't mow within fifty foot of a ditch bank.

LAURIE: Hm.

MARVIN: There you are, the, some of the ditches were a hundred foot apart. But you just would stay out of there. But in a year, that's the main trail for the predator, down the ditch bank, down the ditches. And if the ducks nested there, and they were gone.

LAURIE: Ok.

MARVIN: But cutting the grazing down and, and then uh, I don't know whose idea it was when we had quite a lot of farming going on in the refuge system at that time, before Mazzoni come. But we quit that. Because it wasn't natural to have bird feed.

LAURIE: Hm. That must have had a huge impact on the bird numbers, I mean just logically, all those grain fields must have certainly helped with migratory birds.

MARVIN: That's the only place they had to catch anything to eat. You know, in the fall migration, I think when I first come here the sky would be black up around Buena Vista, from the ducks and the birds. And then it's about the third or fourth year after we quit farming, the population went down and then never recovered.

LAURIE: Hm. Farming was still going on, on some of the other refuge systems, like Tule Lake, I wonder why it received such a, uh, negative--

MARVIN: Well I don't really know, but when you quit putting feed for the birds out, they're not gonna come back.

LAURIE: Mmhm.

MARVIN: I know we had that display pond there at the Refuge and we fed grain in the wintertime, then they showed up, the ducks and the swans. We had some snow geese that stayed there the year round. And then when Mazzoni come we took all the fencing down, it's not natural.

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LAURIE: Right.

MARVIN: It's heartbreaking to see what it turned out to be.

LAURIE: Wow. Pretty dramatic. It was a change that happened pretty quickly. It was visible.

MARVIN: Yeah. It was in, probably, not over six years.

LAURIE: Wow.

MARVIN: I mean... bingo.

LAURIE: Who were the biologists that were there at that time and did they question the changes at all or were they also kind of academics—so—seventies--

MARVIN: Well, Erickson was a good biologist, in fact he probably went from here to back east to [Patuxten?]. And then uh, I can't remember what the guy's name was, but he went from here to Hawaii, and then Eldon McLaury took over. He was a pretty savvy biologist.

LAURIE: Mmhm, I've seen photos of him.

MARVIN: Huh?

LAURIE: I've seen photos of McLaury in the Cagle, uh, Noel Cagle's file. We have a lot of his documentation here.

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: Did they uh, did they see the difference, were they concerned with the changes on the Refuge?

MARVIN: Uh, Eldon, Eldon was very concerned. In fact, he had arguments with Mazzoni a time, or three or four. McLaury, yeah. And then Harold [Oubert]-- he was a pretty savvy biologist, he did, we would, he was before Mazzoni come though. And then we had Gary Ivey.

LAURIE: Yes, we did!

MARVIN: And Dave Paullin.

LAURIE: Dave Paullin before Ivey. Dave Paullin was here when we arrived in 1989, but he was leaving about then.

MARVIN: And he was-- I don't know what you'd call him-- He wasn't a biologist like McLaury

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was by no means

LAURIE: What about the different work leaders? Did you have any real stark impressions of various work leaders? Which ones were the most successful or, what kind of a work leader lead a good team?

MARVIN: Noel Cagle was probably the best one, the best man, I ever worked for. And then we had Norm Warneke. He was— He took the place of Noel when Noel retired. And he was a good fella but he—he never got out of, got away from the office.

LAURIE: Oh, he was pretty much caught in the office, huh?

MARVIN: Well, 'round headquarters, he-- When Joe come we got rid of the building repair man, the maintenance man, and the carpenter. So Noel kind of tried to do all that, but there's no way you could do it. And then the maintenance man, old Bob Carlton, he only had one leg, but he kept the Refuge headquarters spotless.

LAURIE: Oh.

MARVIN: The leaves were raked, the lawns mowed, and the irrigation was, the lawn irrigation-- But it's not so much anymore.

LAURIE: No, it seems like it's--

MARVIN: It's heartbreaking to what it was, and what it is now.

LAURIE: Yeah, it seems like there's a lot more staff now, but not as much work.

MARVIN: Nobody does anything.

LAURIE: It seems that way, at times, yeah. It doesn't look like morale is good.

MARVIN: So you had the manager and the assistant manager and the biologist, and two clerks— and building repair man. I think there was nine people just around headquarters, and then Noel had the dragline operators and the maintenance men at different stations, and then in the fall of the year we'd hire a temporary probably for any--three to five months. From August to about till it froze up.

LAURIE: Temporary to do which projects, what was important--

MARVIN: Anything Noel decided, I mean had to be done, like building fence, or putting in irrigation pipes. He kept everybody pretty busy.

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LAURIE: Things that had to happen before freeze up and to prepare for the following spring--

MARVIN: Yeah, for the following spring--

LAURIE: --runoff, I imagine

MARVIN: When—yeah. And then the dragline would start in August and work till, say, March.

LAURIE: Mmhm.

MARVIN: And then you had the road graders and grain work. He kept everybody pretty busy.

LAURIE: And a lot of people lived right on the Refuge--

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: --through all this era. I don't know how many families lived at headquarters—but all the substations--

MARVIN: Well, let's see—it was—John Scharff lived there, and the assistant manager, and the biologist, and both clerks, and maintenance foreman, the building repair man. I think there were about seven.

LAURIE: Living right at headquarter? Seven families right at headquarters?

MARVIN: Yeah, between six and seven.

LAURIE: That's amazing, what a change. Now nobody lives there.

MARVIN: All the houses are uh-- I don't know what they do, if anybody lives in any of the houses or not.

LAURIE: I don't know either.

MARVIN: They got all that stuff built for the fire crew, but I don't know what kind of maintenance they do on it. See we didn't have a fire crew when I worked there.

LAURIE: So if there was a fire, what happened?

MARVIN: Noel would pass the word, to get over here with your fire equipment. Like as with pull-type sprayers and the dozers, and maybe a grader or two. And then he would probably notify the county road department, that we might need a little help.

LAURIE: So it was all contained--

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MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: --within the community itself and it didn't take a special crew at that time.

MARVIN: Yeah, I know when Mr. Constantino come, he said, "There'd be no fire maintenance outside the Refuge boundary."

LAURIE: No—you can't—you couldn't go help suppress fires off the Refuge?

MARVIN: No. Anyway, when they had that big fire in the Double O area country, that I can't remember the name of it, but here the neighbors come in, Blake Nuffer was living there, and here's the neighbors all coming in from almost to Riley, and moved everything out.

LAURIE: Yes.

MARVIN: And moved everything out.

LAURIE: For him, for his family, they helped his family get off the Refuge—but, yeah.

MARVIN: And anyway, Mr. Constantino decide that wasn't the right thing for him to do to put a deadline that we couldn't go outside the Refuge boundary to fight a fire. He changed his mind.

LAURIE: After that, yeah. That was big fire, that must've been in the mid '80's sometime. That's when Blake would have been living at the Double O Station.

MARVIN: In the 80's. When did you come here?

LAURIE: We came there in '89, and it had been vacant for at least a couple of years.

MARVIN: It was about '80, '87, something like that.

LAURIE: I'll look that up, I remember hearing about that fire, I know even cattle were burned, out west of there, they just sort of lied down and got consumed.

MARVIN: Yeah, it was a pretty severe fire.

LAURIE: What was it like during the floods? What happened there, and what were your— What was the Refuge response, do you think?

MARVIN: They wasn't much the Refuge could do. I mean the gates were left raised on the dams--

LAURIE: Just let everything through.

MARVIN: But the river was only take so much, and then it spread out. As I know uh--they wanted

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me to go up the Stubblefield canal to see if the boards were in the head gate up there. [*chuckling*]

Took three and a half hours to go five miles.

LAURIE: Wow. Why? I mean what, you just—working your way around--

MARVIN: Stuck. Mud.

LAURIE: You're driving in, in all that water and mud?

MARVIN: I drove for a while and then I waded. Put my hip boots on, but I don't know what's the reason was, what they wanted to know. I could never figure it out. I think old [-----] was manager at the time. [*chuckling*] Constantino. Don't say that--

LAURIE: Yeah, well you just did! [*laughter*]

MARVIN: Don't put 'er down! [*laughter*]

LAURIE: I won't write it, no. So, the floods lasted for what, five years? Basically?

MARVIN: Uh, less, it started in about, uh, I guess, '85, I think. Seems like '85. 'Course Tom Downs come in '84, I think it was.

LAURIE: Ok. So did the headquarters, that area all flooded, didn't it? Or, didn't they have to move the office and everything out?

MARVIN: Well the ranchers were flooded out, the Taylors flooded out, and-- let's see, who the heck else? Old Marcus Haines? I guess Dunbar lived there then.

LAURIE: They'd already bought it by the floods? I think, yeah, I think so, I think Margaret said she never wanted to do that again.

MARVIN: But it was, it was pretty well surrounded, with water. But--

LAURIE: The buildings themselves didn't flood on the Refuge?

MARVIN: Hm?

LAURIE: The buildings didn't flood at the Refuge itself?

MARVIN: No. No, we didn't lose no buildings. But we did, we had to move the houses down outta there.

LAURIE: Ah.

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MARVIN: There was, I think three houses we had to have moved because the water was creeping up.

LAURIE: Uh huh. You could still run, the maintenance was still run out of headquarters, you could still keep the equipment and everything there?

MARVIN: Yeah. Yeah I know uh, they, when they uh-- Larry Dunn was [*inaudible*]

LAURIE: Where did he live at that time, was he off of Harney Lake?

MARVIN: He lived on Mud Lake.

LAURIE: Mud Lake, mmhm.

MARVIN: Anyway, he did talk to Mazzoni and, and see if he could get the dragline down there. Well, we moved the dragline from up there to P Ranch area and down to headquarters, but the water was over the dike out there in Mud Lake. So here come uh-- I can't remember what the guy's name was. But anyway they had the big [hopped over] long boom, and he got out there, and [Rory] Travis is operatin' and he stuck the mast down seventeen foot.

LAURIE: Wow.

MARVIN: And he pulled it up and turned around and come out of there.

LAURIE: Seventeen foot!

MARVIN: Yeah, they had a big dike out there-- be east and-- south of the-- Larry Dunn's. And the water was getting over the top of that neighbor's -- about a seven-foot dike.

LAURIE: Uh-huh.

MARVIN: Anyway Rory stuck that [mast], that back hoe down seventeen foot and still going. It was just soup, underneath. So he backed out. And Larry Dunn, he moved, moved his house, or moved his stuff out to the--on the south side of Harney Lake.

LAURIE: Oh, so he just did a temporary relocation at that time?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: They traded later, the Refuge traded them Diamond Valley land for the--

MARVIN: Yeah, seventeen hundred and some acres for Diamond Valley up there at the Refuge, east

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side of the Refuge. The Huffman field, Wrangle field, and the [Hugsly] field I guess you call it.

LAURIE: Mr. Dunn always said--

MARVIN: Hm?

LAURIE: Mr. Dunn always said that he, he never had an operation, though, as good, as he did down by the lake. He said that was always a better ranch for him. It's hard picturing, but he said he could run more cattle with greater ease down by the lake than he could in the Diamond Valley.

MARVIN: I don't know.

LAURIE: Yeah.

MARVIN: He might have.

LAURIE: Sure prettier in Diamond.

MARVIN: Hm?

LAURIE: It's a lot prettier in Diamond than it is on the lake.

MARVIN: We got more mosquitoes, too.

LAURIE: Oh yeah, well--

MARVIN: But I don't know how many cattle he had on the Mud Lake area, but--

LAURIE: What did you see in the change of the quality of the hay fields, Marvin? You said that they changed so many practices when Mazzoni came in, and then forever after, they changed the irrigation, they changed the grazing.

MARVIN: They don't irrigate, like John [Scharff] wanted. John would turn the water on in March or April, but he didn't turn it on in innumerable gallons. He kind of keep a management on it a little bit. And the maintenance man from P Ranch and Buena Vista, they kept a pretty close eye on what fields needed a little more water or didn't need as much. But now they just turn it on and, there's no management.

LAURIE: They don't control the levels as much; they just seem to--

MARVIN: They just open the head gates, and all they can get on there, and just leave her set. And that's where the tules are coming in.

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LAURIE: Yeah, too much water?

MARVIN: Too much water, too long.

LAURIE: Yeah, too little oxygen, I suppose, in the soils. You told me about some of the good clerks that were there. Ruth Warneke was a clerk at the headquarters?

MARVIN: Yeah. After Ivan Carey retired. And then before Ivan was uh—well, my head's not working today.

LAURIE: I think it is. Did Norm and Ruth live right on the Refuge somewhere?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: They lived at headquarters?

MARVIN: They lived at headquarters when they moved from the Double O.

LAURIE: That's right, they did live at the Double O.

MARVIN: And Clyde Miller and his wife took over the Double O after Noel Cagle's retirement.

LAURIE: Who was Mrs. Gail? Was that another clerk?

MARVIN: She was assistant clerk.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: Irma, Irma Gail.

LAURIE: Ok. Did her husband work on the Refuge?

MARVIN: No. He uh, he had uh, book shop here, he'd done printing, Gail Printing, you probably saw that.

LAURIE: I didn't, I've never noticed that, I'm sure Karen [Nitz] has heard.

MARVIN: Oh, he had a book he printed in Harney County.

LAURIE: Oh.

MARVIN: I think they probably got one, a copy here.

LAURIE: I bet they do. And then you said there was a Robbins, who was also-- Robbins was in the office as a clerk? Do you remember that, that you have, uh, Arleen Miller and a Robbins?

MARVIN: Uh, what the hell was her name?

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LAURIE: And Becky--

MARVIN: Afton, Afton Robbins.

LAURIE: Afton?

MARVIN: Her husband was BLM.

LAURIE: Okay. And Becky Buck?

MARVIN: Becky Buck, yeah. She was there when George was there.

LAURIE: Yeah.

MARVIN: And there's another one, but I can't remember what her name was, she come here when, I guess John was still here, she was gonna revise the clerkship, and she, I don't—I think she was from the Portland office, I can't remember what her name would've been. [Bud] had his own way of doing things and when he had done that for—till he retired; and he took over from uh, Gene Heath, I think was his first clerk, that I remember.

LAURIE: Oh.

MARVIN: He lived there on the Refuge, him and his wife and, I think, five kids.

LAURIE: Oh, I've never heard that name. Okay.

MARVIN: Yeah, I first went to work there, see, Albert Olson was at Buena Vista. And-- Russel Wilson was in P Ranch. And I can't remember what that guy's name was at the Double O. But Judd Wise was at the at the Double O in the, in the early, or late, late '40s.

LAURIE: You remembered Mrs. Benson. She lived on the Refuge for a long time.

MARVIN: She lived up there at the Benson Pond, yeah. George was a, uh, a biologist. I didn't know her, but I knew George a little bit. I know Albert and I, he come down to get me one winter day, he doing some trapping on the Refuge for beaver control. So we had two or three beavers and two or three mink, so we took them up to Mr. Benson so he could skin and stretch them and—and Albert said, "When you go in there, Marvin, you gotta take your shoes off."

LAURIE: Oh, into the house?

MARVIN: Into the house.

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LAURIE: That was the order?

MARVIN: That was the order of Mrs. Benson.

LAURIE: She lived there for quite a while even after her husband had passed away, didn't she?

MARVIN: I think he retired and then I don't know where they went to-- I think he was there before John come along.

LAURIE: Yeah. I think he was sort of like a game warden, that's what they called him, when he first started, and he was there to prevent the poaching of the birds.

MARVIN: And Johnny Crow was one of the game wardens.

LAURIE: Yeah, I just found that out, a couple of weeks ago, that Johnny Crow was a warden.

MARVIN: Yeah, he was uh-- If they had a little whiskey, they'd be alright.

LAURIE: *[laughter]* Then he could look the other way, maybe. For some offenses. You also got in on rescuing and kind of those, clean up from some airboat accidents. The airboats have been used for a long time on the Refuge, but they bring a set of problems.

MARVIN: They were banding geese at Boca Lake, Dr. Erickson was on the airboat and he made a big circle and come back and of course the bow wave from the previous passage upset him.

LAURIE: Oh, his own wake?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: His own, wake, huh?

MARVIN: Anyway the water was about, between four and five foot deep out there. They had quite a time getting that boat—that was in the '40s--

LAURIE: Who was that, that was running it?

MARVIN: Raymond, Dr. Erickson.

LAURIE: Oh, Dr. Erickson, okay.

MARVIN: Ray Erickson.

LAURIE: Okay. Huh.

MARVIN: Yeah, they had quite a banding program. Then, when they had the Knox Pond built, they

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had a banding site there, too.

LAURIE: And you, there was a really bad accident with Dave Paullin, at one time?

MARVIN: Yeah. That was-- hell, I don't remember, March, I think, and I can't, I— George was the manager. But I remember him a-telling Dave--- Dave said that the wind was blowing like crazy. It must have been about '87, '86. And he had the-- what the hell was her name? She was the head of the Corps, the Job Corps. Anyway, her and uh-- they were supposed to go with Dave, and the wind was blowing, I would say, between sixty and seventy miles an hour.

LAURIE: A real wind.

MARVIN: And Dave was kind of dubious about it, going out, and I remember down in the shop, George said, "Well, it's a chance of a lifetime, Dave." And by God, it just about was.

LAURIE: They tipped?

MARVIN: Hm?

LAURIE: They tipped, or they got stranded, what happened to them?

MARVIN: Yeah, they had, they tipped over, and Dave was a-standing on the canopy over the propeller when they found him out there. And then [Dean Kanaar?] had an accident. He was over there towards Lawen, him and Carroll Littlefield.

LAURIE: So, Kanaar, what was his job, was he a biologist?

MARVIN: Assistant manager.

LAURIE: Okay, assistant manager.

MARVIN: Yeah, Dean Kanaar.

LAURIE: Okay. Okay, he was out with Littlefield?

MARVIN: Yes.

LAURIE: And what area do you think they were in?

MARVIN: Over around Lawen somewhere, I can't remember, probably over around uh-- oh, the old Ruh Ranch. R-h-u--- r-h-u-e—or something like that.

LAURIE: R-e-u-b, r-e-u-b, is that the guy that wrote the book with Scharff?

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MARVIN: Who you mean?

LAURIE: No, I think uh Reub, I thought Reub had been a friend of Scharff's, too, but--

MARVIN: Reub Long?

LAURIE: I mean, that's the one I'm thinking of, I'm wrong. So this is the Ruh Ranch over by Lawen?

MARVIN: Rhu, r-h-u. [Ruh]

LAURIE: Okay. Okay, r-h-u.

MARVIN: And they went uh, [out there], and I don't think Dean [Kanaar] had ever run an airboat before. But you don't go up wide open and crank it around. It upset. The only thing it accomplished is Littlefield had a bath. *[laughter]*

LAURIE: Yeah, they got totally spilled into it.

MARVIN: It sunk the boat.

LAURIE: And did somebody have to rescue them, or were they able to get out of--

MARVIN: They was able to get out, and then they uh, I guess they must have had a radio, and they called in. And we had the-- What the heck was it? The Corps of Engineers, they had a-- doing something out there, I don't remember what. Anyway, they had a big flat barge type boat, and they went over and found the boat, and then Norman, somebody else went out there, and with a come-along, and pulled it back in, pulled it to shore, and put her in the headquarters and washed the motor off, and I guess it went back to Tule Lake, I don't know.

LAURIE: Oh, okay. It was still operational, but you don't know what happened?

MARVIN: Well, yeah, it-- We washed the motor out, and with three or four oil changes, and it run. But Tule Lake got a new boat, a new air boat.

LAURIE: Out of the deal. Yeah. What pictures did you bring us here?

MARVIN: Oh, I just had a few, not very many. They never took very many pictures of me. I didn't have time to fool with them. What the hell was-- kind of a dam--

LAURIE: How do you open—I think [...] there, it looks like it opens.

MARVIN: That's wedding pictures.

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LAURIE: Oh good, I can scan this! Thank you! Wow! Isn't that something. So that's 1955.

MARVIN: June the fifth.

LAURIE: And it was taken in town here, did you get married in Burns?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: Nice photo.

MARVIN: Yeah, at the Presbyterian church.

LAURIE: Wow. Dovie's mother was a schoolteacher, right?

MARVIN: Yes.

LAURIE: Yeah. That's a nice photo.

MARVIN: Well I don't know where the-- yeah there-- I think that's the only picture I got of the dragline operations.

LAURIE: So do you remember which area that's in?

MARVIN: Yeah, that's in Krumbo Lane.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: We took a bridge out of there on the east side of the river, and we put that pipe in.

LAURIE: Okay. So you replaced the bridge with a culvert? Put a culvert in?

MARVIN: Yeah, and there's Noel Cagle, and Russell Rogers and myself. And that's about the only one I've got.

LAURIE: Anything else there of interest, though? I'll bet some of those are good. I'd sure like to know where all the photos went from the Refuge archive. You know, I think a lot of them got damaged being left in the basement in poor storage. Nobody seems to know where they are. They wouldn't let us keep some of the old pictures, you know, that John had found at the Double O, they wanted them back, and then they lost them, so nobody--

MARVIN: Well, I think a lot of them went with the manager.

LAURIE: Oh, could be. It could. Or maybe they went into regional office.

MARVIN: I uh, I had a book of John Scharff's. Had all the fields and the number of cattle and the

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AUM's, and John [inaudible] and George and, what the hell was his name, assistant manager--

LAURIE: Voss? Was he--

MARVIN: Dan Walsworth.

LAURIE: Oh—oh—oh yeah.

MARVIN: --Was on a tour. So John had that book along, he's looking through it, and Walsworth jerks it out of his hands and took it, I don't know what happened to the book, so, but it had all the fields of the P Ranch area, the amount of area, and the uh, the amount of cattle it would--

LAURIE: Graze and--

MARVIN: Anyway, Mr. Walsworth. He was another piece we could have done without.

LAURIE: Yeah. Pretty--kind of strict, kind of thought he was going to change the world, if I recall.

MARVIN: Yeah. And then we had that other [***]. Richard.

LAURIE: Richard Voss. Yeah, he hired John, actually, he's the one that, he's the one that hired John, you know. You know, I have an interesting question. What do you recall of the uh, the water, the legal battle over water up at Krumbo with the Hammonds? How did that transpire, what happened there? They challenged--

MARVIN: Well as near as I remember--

LAURIE: Can I, can I just see those? [*Looking at Marvin's photos*]

MARVIN: Oh, that's military pictures. That was my ship, the one I'm--

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: Now that one, that big cruiser there is uh, it was from uh, Australia.

LAURIE: Hm. So what happened with the water?

MARVIN: Well, Blake Nuffer was at the P Ranch, and when he left P Ranch, they hired Mr. Downs. But you couldn't tell Tom Downs nothing, he already knew it. Anyway, Tom, had got-- Well anyway, I guess he didn't, he'd been there two or three years, as near as I can remember. Two years. But I know they had a hearing, and this lawyer from, with the Hammonds, he asked Duane—or, Blake-- how, how many acres. I think he was a water lawyer from Boise, or where the hell he was from, but-

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- how many acres he had, and I think Blake told him it was twenty-six hundred or something like that. He said, do you mean to tell me that you irrigate twenty-six hundred acres by yourself? Blake said, no, he said, we turn the water, uh, flood type. Oh! So they got to thinking and went down there and, and Mr. Downs had neglected to turn the water on the Krumbo Valley for two years. Well that's all Hammond needed. And as far as I can tell, and I know I was supposed to meet with the hearing [...] guy up here, anyway, Richard met me down at the Hilander. And he was wanting to know some things that [...] when Krumbo was built, '58, and then I told him about poisoning the fish, when Krumbo wasn't Krumbo Creek, and I think that was in '59 or something like that.

LAURIE: I see pictures, 1961 and '62, where they—there was hardly any water in Krumbo and they were applying Rotenone, so—

MARVIN: Yeah. Anyway, Richard, time I got to talking to him, and he said, “You got different ideas than what the Refuge has”, so he didn't ask me to get on the stand.

LAURIE: Oh.

MARVIN: But, I couldn't understand what the big— The Refuge had more damn water than they could use anyway, out of Krumbo, Krumbo Creek. But anyway, it cost Hammond quite a lot of money to put that-- they put a measuring system up there in Davis Springs. They had a house—I've seen that house down below, and I was up there several years later and the water had washed all the water line out. I guess it was a monitoring system of what the--

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: But hell, they never didn't do anything with it after it washed out.

LAURIE: Hm.

MARVIN: It cost quite a lot of money to put that monitoring system in.

LAURIE: Didn't they have to actually--

MARVIN: Well--

LAURIE: --pull the water uphill, to use it?

MARVIN: No, it uh, they had uh, look like an inch and a half plastic pipes comin' out of the spring

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into that house there. But the creeks had got high and when the water went out and it washed that plastic down the creek, and I don't think anybody ever went back up to see what the hell happened. I think they had a measuring [inaudible] at Davis Springs put out alright, but I don't think they ever went back up to see what happened to it-- the Refuge.

LAURIE: The Refuge didn't check on it? Was that monitoring station right on the Refuge land?

MARVIN: Yeah, it was on—just below the private fence line. Probably not over a hundred yards, if it's down that far, but I don't think whatever they done to it, or whatever they put in, I don't think it ever worked, never, they never went back.

LAURIE: Hm. But then the Hammonds were able to defend their water right in court? Just—you think just because of non-use for two years on the part of the Refuge? I think it takes longer than that to prove non-use.

MARVIN: Well, I think what the Refuge wanted was the water right in Krumbo. See, it comes in the south [and east] and it drains over quite a lot of country up there. That's what was filling the old reservoir that Kerns built.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: And Dwight, I don't think he got any water out of the main Krumbo Creek. It's dry, Krumbo. And that's where the Refuge—I don't know what the hell they were gonna' do with all the water.

LAURIE: Oh. There was enough water they couldn't even place it, even if they had all of it?

MARVIN: Well, they put that pipe in there, in the dam and the nearest I can remember, I don't think they ever raised it over six inches.

LAURIE: Hm.

MARVIN: You know, the head gate.

LAURIE: Mhm.

MARVIN: But uh, the original dam, I think was nineteen some, nineteen foot or something, from the bottom of the pipe to the water level before the uh, before the reservoir went out.

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LAURIE: Historically, you think the Refuge had all the water rights from that drainage? I think, that's what I understand--

MARVIN: Well they had it, yes, if they would have managed it, if they used it, but Dry Krumbo was dry along about the first of June, or somewhere along there, so they still got the water out of big Krumbo—but it's just typical government, they want the whole damn [thing].

LAURIE: Well, once you give it away, of course, you may not ever get it back.

MARVIN: Yeah, you never get it back. And I don't know whether they had a water right out at Krumbo—Dry Krumbo or not, the government. I don't know whether they had a water right or not, but they was a-wantin' one.

LAURIE: Hm.

MARVIN: But I know Kern, that built that reservoir, I think in '48, or '9--

LAURIE: And that's Krumbo Reservoir Dam.

MARVIN: No, that was Dry Krumbo, that's--

LAURIE: Oh, Dry, okay, Dry--

MARVIN: Hammond Reservoir--

LAURIE: Okay, so that's called Dry Krumbo?

MARVIN: But, but uh, main Krumbo dam was put in there in '58.

LAURIE: That's what you had said, so you're—I—I was confused. Okay. Do you think-- I don't know, do you—we see other areas that we're concerned that the Refuge doesn't document or doesn't use water, do you think they have the potential to lose more of their water rights around the--

MARVIN: Well, I don't know.

LAURIE: Mhm.

MARVIN: But they've got a lot of ground that's got a water right, but is usually a, uh high, greedy greasewood knoll.

LAURIE: Sometimes, mhm.

MARVIN: I know Jack Richardson was a-documenting all that water rights years ago, before he

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retired.

LAURIE: Mmhm, I remember.

MARVIN: And he said, they've had country that try to put a water right on you, that's nine foot above the surrounding terrain.

LAURIE: Yeah.

MARVIN: Typical government, as far as I can see.

LAURIE: I guess.

MARVIN: But if they would manage it like they're supposed to, like John [Scharff] did, it would be a showplace.

LAURIE: Uh huh.

MARVIN: I mean, but you can't get all the people in the office off their backsides to do anything.

LAURIE: Or to agree, even, on what the right approach would be. Some people think it should be natural, some think it should be managed for an enhanced habitat.

MARVIN: You'd have to have—get somebody that has a little bit of common sense--

LAURIE: Also--

MARVIN: --Than you get out of a book or something or somebody telling him what he's supposed to do.

LAURIE: There is a difference between academic-- an academic mind and field expedience, and there's definitely a difference.

MARVIN: Yeah. I know that lady that wrote that book. The hell was her name, she come up here. Lois Edford. She come up here the second or third year that Mazzoni was here and done a lot of study. She should have a book here in the library, but I don't know, I know there used to be one in the library headquarters, but it disappeared.

LAURIE: Hm. And she wrote a book just about all the different practices on the Refuge, or--

MARVIN: No, she, she done a – I think she spent, either one or two summers at the P Ranch, and studying the different operations that Mazzoni would have had a-going. And then she done a lot of

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visiting with Marcus Haines.

LAURIE: Okay. You don't remember the title of that book?

MARVIN: No. In fact, I never did see it, but Marcus was telling me about it.

LAURIE: I'll look for it, I don't recognize that name, but I haven't--

MARVIN: Lois Edford was her name.

LAURIE: Edford.

MARVIN: Hm?

LAURIE: Edgeford? Or Edford?

MARVIN: Edford. It seemed like.

LAURIE: Okay, I'll look for it. So how has life been in the Diamond Valley? You settled there right after you married, is that a--

MARVIN: No, we come there in 1944, in June the twenty... twentieth or twenty third, or twenty first.

LAURIE: Which year was that, Marvin?

MARVIN: Huh?

LAURIE: Which year? Did you say?

MARVIN: '40-- 1944 in June.

LAURIE: Your family came?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: Yeah.

MARVIN: My mother and stepfather, and my sis and-- my sister, half-sister, and half-brother. Coming in there, I think we got here about six o'clock in the evening of 1944. And the mosquitoes so goddamn thick you couldn't get your breath. We had that one, that house, we had one bedroom. So uh, there's Bobby [Gill], a kind of a half cousin-- Him and I pitched a tent out there. The only thing we done is corralled the mosquitoes.

LAURIE: Oh, in the tent? Yeah. So you moved here right from Idaho? You came directly from Idaho?

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MARVIN: Well we, we lived in Idaho – till 1942, I guess. And then Dad sold the ranch to John Spencer in June, '42. Had quite an experience to make him decide to sell. In March I ended up with this appendicitis. So he went up on the mountain, the ranch up there that had a phone, and called an operation in Lewiston. Well uh, the guy that run a boat, the mail boat up the river, was up at the Pittsburg Landing and being headed down the next morning. So they loaded me on a travois [...] behind the mule, and down over the mountain we went for six miles, down at the boat landing. Well, about two o'clock in the afternoon, I think, or two-thirty, we heard the boat come down the river. They picked me up, took me to Lewiston, and then the doctor cut me open within a half-hour later after we got there. And I come home, I think in March, after I was operated, and they'd sold out. So we went from there to the Riggins, and I went through the eighth grade there, and then Dad got a job as brand inspector in Spokane. In the old Union Stockyards. We was there for approximately nine months. And he, he decided that foggy country wasn't for him, so we come down here.

LAURIE: And then they settled right where you live now, is that near where your folks settled, or what did they—where did they end up on Diamond Valley?

MARVIN: Where, where the folks lived, is where Bill Otley lives now.

LAURIE: Okay.

MARVIN: Where I lived, I bought that from Dad in 1950-- '60-- '68. I think it was thirty acres, or twenty-nine, or something.

LAURIE: And then you built the house there?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: There was no house when you bought it, you built it?

MARVIN: No, there was no—there had been a house years ago, but I can't remember the guy that owned it. There was a little stone cabin and a yard there, some shepherders built it.

LAURIE: Were there a lot more sheep?

MARVIN: Hm?

LAURIE: Were there a lot more sheep in that country when you first came there?

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MARVIN: Yeah, they was-- a lot of them come in here from, I guess, probably from southern Idaho. There's Sam Arrionberry, Drew Kanerian and I can't remember what that other guy, his name, the hell his name is. Warren McLane. Had two bands of sheep, and Kanerian had two bands. And old Arrionberry, I don't remember whether he had two bands or one. Two bands, I think. Seems like.

LAURIE: So they'd be down in the winters, and go up high country in the summers, you think?

MARVIN: Go up to the top of the Steens in the summertime. And I don't know where the—I think they went back to the – Kanerian went back to Jordan valley—not Jordan valley—uh, Juntura area. And I don't remember where Arrionberry come from, but Warren McLane, he, he bought hay there in Diamond Valley two or three different times.

LAURIE: Hm.

MARVIN: But I know in Double O country, there used to be a lot of sheep that wintered out there.

LAURIE: There were even the Basque—you know, there was a couple of guys that had Basque names that owned ranches, that one Don bought from.

MARVIN: What ol' Don Miller got, now that was a sheep outfit. And then there was two or three Irishmen from Lakeview area used to come up here and-- Barry I think their name was.

LAURIE: Yeah, there are Barrys still in Lakeview, I've seen that name there-.

MARVIN: Yeah, there's a lot of em there, used to be. But they was, there was a lot of sheep wintering down here in the Double O country. Course that's before the Refuge ruined it all.

LAURIE: Yeah, well. Changed it, for sure. But I can still picture a lot of that area seemed like it would be good sheep country just because it's so far to water, you know, up in those hills.

MARVIN: Yeah. Well they wintered them, quite a bunch out there, on the hay.

LAURIE: Hm. Down on the fields. That used to be sheep? They had sheep wintering down on the meadows?

MARVIN: Yeah. And I don't—I think that was before-- the hell was his name-- [...] Huff got in there. Or maybe about the same time.

LAURIE: Hm. Were you ever tempted to ranch? Did you ever--

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MARVIN: Well, I never had money enough to do anything. You uh, somebody said, well you got good money in the service, I said, well yeah. We started out at forty-six dollars a month, and ended up at fifty-two after four years. We didn't get very far ahead.

LAURIE: No, not wealthy, by any stretch.

MARVIN: And I know when I first went to work for the Refuge in '48, it was ninety-seven cents an hour.

LAURIE: Huh.

MARVIN: Farmin', runnin' a plow.

LAURIE: Seven dollars plus a day. Eight dollars.

MARVIN: And then they took out a little bit for taxes and social security.

LAURIE: Yeah.

MARVIN: That is different now.

LAURIE: So when, if you were making that on the Refuge, what would a ranch hand have been making in that era?

MARVIN: Well, he would have probably been making about three dollars a day.

LAURIE: Hm.

MARVIN: Ninety a month, plus his board.

LAURIE: And you're talking here 1940s?

MARVIN: '48.

LAURIE: '48, about then, uh huh.

MARVIN: Haying wages was it was, I think haying wages was three dollars a day. That was, uh-- if you run a mowing machine or a rake or a buck it was still three dollars a day. The stacker, he got, I think he got four and a half.

LAURIE: Hm. Because that was a special skill? So, is that why?

MARVIN: It was a skill that you didn't acquire overnight. Stacking with a net.

LAURIE: Yes. They used a slide, would they have a slide?

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MARVIN: Some of them.

LAURIE: Some did?

MARVIN: Some, some didn't, uh, I know uh, I guess the only slide I ever stacked after was Charlie Beckley. I think that was the only one I ever worked with. Most of the rest of them just roughed in.

LAURIE: Was it mostly mechanized, when you started working on the ranches for haying, was it horses, teams, or mixed?

MARVIN: No, uh, some of them had a tractor, but not very many of them.

LAURIE: Oh?

MARVIN: Most of them still had the old horse, horse-mobiles.

LAURIE: Horse-mobiles? That's good! I've never heard that term. Yeah.

MARVIN: [Wilbur Rice] told me, he said he, he was, running the hay crew at P Ranch. He said, I had thirteen mowers in the field. And he said one day, every damn one of them was running. [laughter] He said, it got pretty exciting.

LAURIE: Yeah!

MARVIN: Said, of course when they took off, he'd kick it out of gear, that sickle board would drag, made quite a lot of difference. Well, by golly!

LAURIE: Well, this is a good interview, Marvin, I really appreciate you coming in. Um, I just love getting these histories, I want to get a, I want to take this picture, what one was that, I think I want to take a copy of this if I may, can I do that?

MARVIN: Yeah.

LAURIE: So I'm going to end the interview. I don't have a watch on, do you?

MARVIN: Yup.

LAURIE: Be about 11:15, I think.

MARVIN: 11:20.

LAURIE: 11:20, not a bad guess. Thank you so much, Marvin. It's always a pleasure.