

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #84 - Side A

Subject: Agness Brown

Place: Brown Home - Burns, Oregon

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Interviewer: Charlene Gates

Release Form: No

AGNESS BROWN: Lunaburg and Dalton had a store, and I don't know when he started, but they had plates made. And around the plate was the calendars, the little calendar, and then of course the advertising was in the middle of it. And Mother must have had --- she was married in 1908, and I don't know, I must have broke all of them in about 1923 or '24, somewhere like that. But she had a great big stack of them. She had every year; she hadn't missed a single year. But, I took care of that --- we were washing them on the stove, where you put your dishpans on the stove, and I went to scald them, and I just knocked the dishpan off that had all of them in it. And not a one of them was saved; I broke every one of them!

CHARLENE GATES: Oh, my gosh.

AGNESS: But, I do have one that I want to pass on to some member of the family. But, it came from Al's mothers.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: It's badly worn, you know, washed off pretty much, but you can tell what it was.

CHARLENE: What year is it; do you remember?

AGNESS: I'd have to look. If you want to turn it off, I'll go get it.

CHARLENE: Oh, okay. Yeah, I'd like to see ---

AGNESS: The one I have is a 1921, with mallard ducks on it. I'm going to pass it on to a member

of the family.

CHARLENE: That will be really nice to have handed down.

AGNESS: Yeah. There's a chip.

CHARLENE: Beautiful. I don't think mine has the --- I think it says Burns Department Store; I'm not sure, instead of Stenger, Lunaburg and Dalton. The one I gave to the museum, anyway.

AGNESS: Lunaburg, Dalton & Company, Department Store. Old man Lunaburg I think started the store; ... from just what I remember Al say. I think that he was the one that gave us --- gave Al's folks a clock that was a real antique. And we passed it on to Roger, because Roger loves clocks. But I'm sure that was Mr. Lunaburg that gave ---

CHARLENE: You knew him? Then did you know him?

AGNESS: Ah, no I can't remember him. I can remember Mr. Dalton. But I can't --- and I can remember George Hagey, and of course Ben Brown, but they are the only merchants that I remember as a kid.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: But I can remember the store, you know, real well. But, of course, it was in there where Penney's, and then Hirsch's are now.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. It's hard to imagine ---

AGNESS: It was a pretty nice store. As I remember, we went up some steps to get into it. Of course, you know, the street is way lot higher. I did find something that was very interesting this week. Nathan was digging, so he got into a bunch of drawers down in the basement, of stuff that we brought up from Al's mothers. I had looked at it and thought it was just pictures of Aunt Clare's house in Mexico, but mixed in with it was an original picture of the building, the Brown Building when it was first ... I didn't know I had this.

CHARLENE: Huh --- let's see, this is --- it's still there, isn't it?

AGNESS: Yes.

CHARLENE: Which ---

AGNESS: Except in 19 and 10 they remodeled it, and then in 19 and 30 they remodeled it, 1950 they remodeled it, in the '50's --- '51 or '52, somewhere along in there. So it doesn't have --- then last year we give it a face-lift. The pillars are going, so we had to do something.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: So, we covered the pillars.

CHARLENE: Goodness sakes, do you know who all these people are?

AGNESS: No, I can't recognize any of them. I mean there is not even a resemblance of anybody. 'Cause Grandpa Brown, Nathan Brown, would have been a pretty old man by then, and the pictures I have of him taken probably ten years later, he looked like a smaller man than any of the people in here. And they don't look like Uncle Ben. There is nobody that looks like Len, and who the woman was, I have no idea.

CHARLENE: Huh. Goodness, but this whole thing was there?

AGNESS: That's the way it looked originally.

CHARLENE: Goodness sakes. That's really a handsome building. It's really nice looking.

AGNESS: Well, look at all the, all the gingerbread on the front of that. And I spoke to Dick Keeler, and he said --- well the wooden plates that they had that fastened to, are still up there, above the windows.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. Huh. A nice brick front, my goodness.

AGNESS: But I have the papers, the contract, where he drew up the contract to have them move these pillars into different places. I can't remember --- I think they moved that pillar. And I can't come up with the right --- and another thing you notice in this picture, is how much lower the street was than the sidewalk. And of course that's a wooden sidewalk, with steps coming from the street up to the sidewalk.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. Huh. It must have been awfully muddy.

AGNESS: Oh well, we didn't think anything about mud, you know. Snowed most of the winter, so

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CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: But no, I can remember them putting extra gravel on, you know.

CHARLENE: Yeah.

AGNESS: It wasn't crushed rock; it was gravel that they did get out of a pit someplace. But I can remember putting that on when I was just a kid.

CHARLENE: Huh.

AGNESS: And I don't have any idea when they took this gingerbread off the top, above these windows. And I don't know what that gingerbread was, whether it was all wood --- it must have been.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: Because there is about a 2 x 4 --- 2 x --- maybe a full --- no, it isn't that big, about a 2 x 4. 'Course it's a full 2 x 4 width, in those days it wasn't all planed off. It's above those windows, if you stand out and look, you can see that board up there. And that's what they were fastened to, so they must have been just fancy wooden decorations. And when they got to looking bad, they just took them off.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. I wonder ---

AGNESS: And all this gingerbread, of course, is gone. And that was wood. All that gingerbread along the top was wood. But it's kind of interesting to ---

CHARLENE: Yeah, it is.

AGNESS: The kids tried to look to see what kind of cans were sitting in the window. The magnifying glass didn't bring it out.

CHARLENE: Oh, my. Did --- now that was --- when did he come --- when did the Browns come to Harney County?

AGNESS: It was in '84.

CHARLENE: Oh, so they were ---

AGNESS: The building was '96, you see.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. A lot of people came in '84, '85, it seems like.

AGNESS: Yeah. Now Grandpa Poujade came in '80. That's when Ed Hanley brought in his cattle, into here. And I --- I think Grandpa had been here maybe a year --- no, let's see, he was born in '54. Grandpa must have come in earlier than that, on one trip. But he came to stay in '80. Because I think he said he was 19 --- 18 or 19 when he came in the first time.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: And that's when he brought in the --- came in with Ed Hanley and John Devine. I remember he said that --- at the time they were naming Devine highway. Grandpa mentioned that he came in with John Devine. And he said John Devine was here long before Bill Hanley. They wanted to call it the Bill Hanley highway. But there were people that wanted to do that. And Grandpa was opposed to it because --- he said that he thought if they was going to name it after an early cattleman that it should be John Devine, because that's when he came in. But, I mean, he came in before Hanley did. In fact, he may have come just with John Devine. But then he went back. I think, from talking to other members of the family that I have recently met, that they came in with --- that the boys all came in at different times. You know, I mean some of them would come in on one trip, and then some of the rest of them would come in on another trip.

CHARLENE: Huh. Did the Browns come and build their store; I mean did they go into business immediately?

AGNESS: I have no idea about that. I know that Nathan Brown was up around Walla Walla first. And at one time he had to been down around Oregon City, or down in there, because he filed his naturalization papers at Oregon City, Oregon Territory.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: I'm still hunting for those.

CHARLENE: Oh, oh, where was he from?

AGNESS: Germany.

CHARLENE: Oh, I see.

AGNESS: Yeah, I think Grandpa Brown came from Germany. If I find the papers, I'll know. I can get a copy from the Historical Society, because Al, at one time took it down and they took a photocopy of it. So, they do have a copy of that. But where it's put, I don't know. I've still got about 25 boxes of stuff to get through. And the logical places --- things don't seem to turn up. But the most illogical places --- I think probably Al had it in the desk.

CHARLENE: Huh.

AGNESS: And I'm just now finding the boxes of stuff when we cleaned out the desk.

CHARLENE: Goodness sakes. It does take a long time.

AGNESS: Oh, yeah.

CHARLENE: Just forever.

AGNESS: Well, when they moved out of that part of the building, in such a hurry, stuff was thrown into boxes. I mean it was just --- from here --- they cleaned out a desk they would just take a box and take everything out of it and put it in a box. And I thought, where they were stored, turned out the kids didn't put it there at all. I thought it was out in the storeroom part. Part of it was back on the high part --- shelves, boxes I thought had been there for umpteen years. And, of course, I found papers that I broke my neck trying to find. And I found them in this last trip down, when Roger was here to help me get stuff out of the vault. So, I tell you when you do things under stress --- and everybody helps, everybody helps and they don't know what they are doing.

CHARLENE: Yeah.

AGNESS: Everything goes in and --- there's stuff in there that--- had I been down there it would have gone in the wastebasket. So, now I'm going through it and putting it in the wastebasket. But its things like that, you know, it's just hard.

CHARLENE: I know it takes an awful long time.

AGNESS: I thought of one thing that was interesting. Did I tell you the story of the men that was -- had murdered somebody here, and they had the trial?

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: Well, Mother always said there was only one thing that burned up in the house --- when it --- when our house burned down at Harney, that made her not regret the house burning quite so much. When Dad sat on the jury, and I think that a person could look this up and follow it down, you know, it would be something. I haven't had time to do it. But, Al looked up in the courthouse, and there was a murder case that Dad sat on the jury. And it's in the court records over here.

Anyway, this man, when he was sentenced to die at Salem, and they gave him his last request, and that was to have his hide tanned, and apiece sent to each member of the jury, and the judge, and the clerk, everybody got a little piece of that.

CHARLENE: Oh.

AGNESS: Well, my mother just pretty near died. She didn't know what to do with it. What do you do with it? It was almost sacrilegious to her to throw it away.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: And, she sure didn't want to keep it. So we had this big attic, we had--- it was really a two and a half story house. And up in the attic, why Dad had all his stuffed birds. And Dad was a taxidermist, as well --- he had a hobby in those days, and it was stuffing birds, and all kinds of animals. Well, anyway, the attic was full of those kinds of things. But Mama took that envelope up and put it in the attic. Well, the attic was the first thing that burned. So we are quite sure that that piece of skin burned up. But I don't know what the rest of the people did with theirs.

CHARLENE: Gosh.

AGNESS: But, everybody got one.

CHARLENE: Isn't that grizzly? Oh.

AGNESS: But, now those would have to be in the records of the penitentiary, wouldn't they?

CHARLENE: I suppose so. Gosh. But they actually carried that out, I mean ---

AGNESS: They actually carried it out.

CHARLENE: An awfully strange request to ---

AGNESS: Well, he was mad.

CHARLENE: Well, yeah.

AGNESS: That was the thing; he got even. Yeah. He got even with them. And Mama said that was really getting even.

CHARLENE: Yes, it sure was. That's awful.

AGNESS: I have been going to --- I think I've got the number of the case, so I'll have the names, you know. I don't even know what the man's name was. But, there was only one case that Al could find where Dad served --- where on the jury was Charley Davis, and it was a murder trial. It was the only one over there that he could find. And, you know, it was the period of time after Mama and Dad were married, and before Dad died. So, it was only about a ten year period in there. So it was along in there, twelve, fifteen-year period, I guess. But it wasn't, you know, too long a period that --- there was only one murder case that --- where he was on the jury. So, it would be fun to write and find out if there was anything to the story. You could have that job, Charlene.

CHARLENE: Oh, gosh. I don't know if I would want to find out. I wonder if anybody has kept it this long.

AGNESS: Well, I doubt that anybody --- you know, probably most people just threw it in the stove and burned it. But Mama, she couldn't do that. But it got burned up anyway.

CHARLENE: I wonder who it was --- did they, was it a murder in here, in Burns?

AGNESS: Well, you can find that in the courthouse records. That's up in the courthouse records. Al had got a hold of the information for me, and I had it in there, and I may still have it. But in all the shuffling of papers and stuff, I have no idea where it is right now. But, I know I can go over here to the courthouse and find that record. Because he went clear through the court records, and there was only one case that was murder case, and that the man was executed, that Dad served on. So that pretty well tied it down to one person.

CHARLENE: I wonder if anybody --- I wonder if they would honor that kind of request today.

AGNESS: I don't think they would. No, I don't believe they would.

CHARLENE: Pretty much out of reason.



AGNESS: But years ago, whatever they asked, they honored. But anyway, that is one of the gruesome tales they told about this.

CHARLENE: That's pretty raw --- frontier there.

AGNESS: Uncle Cecil Irving was here, of course, for the funeral. And we went down to the bridge, the new bridge that they've got at the Narrows, and he stood there, and he was telling us all about the lakes when he was a kid. And he said there were times when --- he didn't think this much water --- but there were times when there was lots of water in the lake. So many people had the idea that the lake never has been high until this time. But, it has been.

CHARLENE: It's pretty high. You know, you were talking to me about a tornado that came through here a long time ago.

AGNESS: Oh, I guess it was a tornado. It looked like a whirlwind that was on its side. It was just rolling around, and around, and around. We were living on the ranch at Harney, for us three miles east of where the Harney town site was. And it was right at the mouth of the Mortimer Canyon. We had a grain field that was south of us, and it went through that grain field, probably I would say a quarter of a mile from the house. And a child's eyes, you know, can distort the size of that windstorm, but I would have said it was like a --- as high as a two story building, maybe. That rolling mass of wind, and dust, and dirt, and --- but it was --- As I used to think about it, we used to sit and make ovals when we were writing, round, and round, and round, and round. Well, that's what this was doing, going round, and round, and round, and round, only it was going level. It wasn't a funnel coming down, this just went --- And Uncle Almy lived over in the next canyon, it lifted his barn up, left the --- apparently the mangers weren't fastened to the building itself, because it picked the building up and left the horses standing there tied to the mangers, and turned it around, and sat it down. And all they had to do was move the mangers back into it, it wasn't, you know, it didn't seem to hurt it any. And it didn't hurt the house at all.

CHARLENE: Huh.

AGNESS: But that's --- as far as I know --- of course I was maybe, I wasn't old enough to go to

school.

CHARLENE: Oh.

AGNESS: So, I was little. And that whirlwind might have been half that size, or it might have been twice that size, you know. My judgment as to how deep snow was in those days was, you know, if there was fence post sticking out of it, just barely sticking out, it was as high as the fence. But, to know whether --- how much snow was there and things like that, I don't remember, Charlene. And I think that maybe my memory, from that sort of thing may be faulty. You know, what might have looked awful big to me might not have amounted to much.

CHARLENE: But still, if it ---

AGNESS: Well, I can remember snow clear up over the --- the snow clear over the fences.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: But, that was drifted snow. May have been all bare out in the field, I don't know, you know.

CHARLENE: Yeah, uh huh.

AGNESS: So, and I can remember winds blowing it like that. But, I can remember one hailstorm when we lived at the ... place. Did I tell you about that one?

CHARLENE: No, I don't think so.

AGNESS: Dad was putting up hay over in the Red S Field, and Mama --- we kids were along. The house was in an L shape, with a big porch on the inside of the L, and that went out, oh, I suppose six, seven feet, maybe eight feet out from --- and it had a roof over the porch, too. But this storm come up and --- oh, the wind was blowing, and it was an electrical storm, and pretty soon it began to hail. And it hailed, and it hailed, and it blew it onto that porch to where it was up oh, three feet, and slanting down till it made a bank in there that was three feet high at the back. And oh, that was ice. Mama rushed in and she got out the ice cream freezer, and we had ice cream out of that hail. There was that much hail.

CHARLENE: Oh, for goodness sake.

AGNESS: And she was --- she could pack it so it froze good. We had a whole big gallon of ice cream out of that.

CHARLENE: Oh, I didn't know you could do that.

AGNESS: Well, we did. I can still --- that was the best ice cream I ever ate.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: 'Cause we lived on the ranch, we didn't have any ice in the summertime, you know.

CHARLENE: I guess not. Huh. That's interesting.

AGNESS: But that was quite a storm. And then there was a time --- well I recall this, because they said that the time that the last eclipse was here, said that there wasn't anyone living in this part of the country that could probably remember a total eclipse. But, I remember the total eclipse when I was, oh, just barely old enough to go to school, I guess. We had just moved to the ... place, and --- Dad of course, didn't know in advance there was going to be an eclipse. We didn't have papers and telephones, and all this. And we were in the upper field. He had two horses hooked to this wagon, and we was up there fixing fence, my brother and I. He was a year older than I was, and we were up there with Dad. And of course, we were just going along for the fun, and Dad was repairing fences along, getting them all back in shape. And all at once it began to get dark, and darker. Well Dad knew what it was. And the horses spooked. So he got us kids back to the wagon, and we drove --- it was probably a quarter of a mile back down to the house. And when we drove in, all the chickens had gone to roost, and the cattle were just kinda running around, kinda scared like. And these two horses, Dad got --- unhooked them right quick and took them into the barn, because they were just scared like everything. And I can see chickens coming out --- caw, caw, caw, caw, caw -- - it passed, you see, and it began to get daylight again. Those old chickens, they sure were mixed up, they couldn't figure out what the scoop was. But --- but that was a total eclipse.

CHARLENE: Hmm. Gee.

AGNESS: I remember the ones that partial eclipses, you know, as a kid. But that was the only total one that I ever knew. And it got just as dark as night.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. Hmm.

AGNESS: But the chickens didn't like it.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: It was startling to them.

CHARLENE: I bet it was. It must have been kinda funny.

AGNESS: They come out of the hen house just caw, caw, caw. I can still see them a walking through the --- you know, and they --- it had been an awful short night. You know they couldn't understand it.

CHARLENE: Oh, that must have been confusing. You were telling me something about a stuffed deer on a rim rock, that somebody ---

AGNESS: Oh, that was out at the place at Harney. My dad wasn't above playing a joke on anybody if he could get away with it. And of course in those days, why you could shoot a deer any place, any time, you know. There was no game laws of any kind. So, he took a saw horse, and he took a hide from a deer, and he took a set of horns, and built up some wood there so it would look a little bit like a head, set those horns on it, and put that hide back on it, set it up on the rim rock above our place. Which was --- it would be quite a little hill up there, but it was close enough to the road that they could shoot and hit that thing from the road. So here along --- Dad put it up there and then he sat back and waited for the first sucker that would come along and shoot at it. And you would just be amazed at the number of people that would stop out --- they had to stop beyond our granary which --- there was the house, and then the barn, and the granary was still on out. And they had to stop out beyond that. But, then they would come to the house, they couldn't figure out why that animal didn't drop. They would just shoot at it, and shoot at it.

CHARLENE: Oh, my gosh.

AGNESS: I've heard a lot of people tell that story. They were probably the suckers that was doing the shooting.

CHARLENE: Oh, gee. That would be funny.

AGNESS: But that was a typical joke. There was another thing that Dad always told a lot, I thought was funny. Maybe, alas Mother didn't. Of course, there was a big bunch of the Davis boys and they'd come in, and they was all going to the dance that night. And the first got --- they all wore the same size. And the first guy in, he would take the best pair of shoes, the best pair of trousers, the best shirt, the best tie, best coat, best everything. And the next guy come in, he would get second best all down the line. And the last guy might not even have a clean shirt to wear. But that's the way they did. They just --- whatever was in the closet, why they would take, and the other guy -- they didn't each have their own clothes, they just took whatever there was there. And so it was always a rush to get in on Saturday night so, they could get dressed up before the other guy did.

CHARLENE: Uh huh. My goodness sakes. There was quite a lot of dances and stuff going on, on Saturdays and ---

AGNESS: Well, years ago I think, I don't know how often they had those dances, but the folks, in the wintertime when it was cold, they would, Dad would put straw in the back in the hack, and they would put a canvas on it and put bedding in there. And Mama would heat bricks on the back of the stove and wrap them up in towels, and put them in this bed, and then stick all three of we kids back there. And of course, they had the hand warmers and foot warmers that they had, and we would drive the three miles into town, into Harney, to the big old Harney Hall. And they'd wrap us kids up in quilts and pack us into the dance hall, and they had seats all the way around, and so you'd just put your quilts down and your kids down. And the kids would get up and run all around and play, they'd get tired and go to sleep awhile, then they'd wake up and run all around and play. And they'd go home just about time to milk the cows, and then they'd go to bed.

CHARLENE: Huh.

AGNESS: But that was common. You know, I mean everybody did that.

CHARLENE: That sounds like fun.

AGNESS: Oh, it was fun. It was fun for the kids. Oh, I can remember that was lots of fun. We just loved to go to the dances. And even the ride in was fun. We'd put that tarp up over our heads,

we were just as warm and toasty in there as could be. And it might be zero outside. I believe the only ones that suffered was the poor old horses. 'Cause they'd be left out, you see, just standing out in the cold. They were probably used to it.

CHARLENE: Yeah. I guess so.

AGNESS: I've been trying to think, they had several, you know, it might not have been once a week, you know, like that. But I'm sure that they had --- but then of course, on holidays and things like that they had special ones.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: But all the people from miles around would come.

CHARLENE: Hmm. It was their only entertainment.

AGNESS: I don't know where the music came from, but I suppose there was somebody would play the fiddle ---

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: 'Cause by the time I was really old enough to know too much on things like that, we had moved from Harney, and then I guess people came into Burns to the dances. But people from down south of town, south and west of town where we lived, I presume they came into --- they wouldn't have been much further from Burns than we were from Harney. But it was never the same, you know. It wasn't that small village type friendships that --- 'cause this was all the people that ever lived around Harney, and they'd go clear out to Buchanan, and every place. All --- people from all around. As I remember, that was a big hall, and they'd be a lot of people dancing. So there was a lot of people that went.

CHARLENE: Well, how big was Harney when you were growing up?

AGNESS: Oh, wow! Well, on one side of the street, I can remember --- really, the only thing I really, really remember was Fred Haines' Store, which was on the south side of the street. And it had a big high --- you walked up some steps to get up to this high boardwalk, and --- But you know, as I remember it, it was a store about the size of the Lawen Store.

If they took out the post office and thing and let it run on back like it used to, it was about that size. And 'course they, I don't know whether the post office was in Fred Haines' Store or not. They --- they always had stick candy in the --- I don't know what we paid for a stick, probably a penny. They was long sticks of candy that was wrapped up. And I don't remember what --- they weren't wrapped up either, they were in a glass jar, and he'd open, he'd take that lid off. When you bought one, then you'd reach your hand in and take one --- whatever color you wanted. And that was always the big treat that we got when we went to the store. Then across the street, but of course that was dry goods that was the Bauer Store. I expect that's where Mama bought yardage, and all that kind of stuff. And that wasn't very interesting, so I don't remember that. You know to a kid, why the candy part, and the grocery part, and what you ate was --- I can remember that. And then of course, I think it was there, he was still running the store longer, after I had --- you know.

CHARLENE: Well, when did Harney kind of disappear?

AGNESS: Well, I think when they took the records after the vote, and Harney won, and the officials from Burns took all the records to Burns, I think ---

CHARLENE: Oh, my gosh.

AGNESS: I think that was the death note to Harney. You know, it went on down hill from then on. Though they had the election, and that's documented. And of course, Harney at that time was the county seat, and so they promoted this election to see which one would --- and Harney won. But in the dark of the night they stole the records and brought them to Burns.

CHARLENE: I'll be darned.

AGNESS: And that's how Burns got to be county seat.

CHARLENE: Oh, that's incredible.

AGNESS: And of course, there's --- I guess it was well documented, and anybody that was a handwriting expert would know it, that when they were trying to get signatures to put a post office at Burns, this fellow was given so much money for each signature he got on there, and he had a list of the people he was to go see. He went out here some place, and sat down under a bridge or

somewhere, and he wrote all their names on the petition and brought it back. And that was the petition, I understand, that's back in Washington.

CHARLENE: Oh my goodness, wasn't that challenged?

AGNESS: So, you see, all the crookedness didn't start with Nixon!

CHARLENE: Gosh, no.

AGNESS: Oh, it's been corruption --- Al told another good one on election, since this is getting close to election. He told a good one on election. This fellow was running for sheriff. Well, they weren't above bribing in those days either. And he asked this old gentleman, what --- I'm not going to name names, I know who it was, but I'm not going to name names. Anyway, he asked him who he was going to vote for. And --- "Well," he said, "that's sort of private." He said, "I don't tell people who I vote for." And we'll call this guy Jim Jones, was going to get to be sheriff. And he said, "Well, now," he said, "there'll be five dollars in it for you if you'll vote for me." And he said, "Well, how will I know whether you'll vote for me or not. How do you know whether I vote the way you do? How are you going to know whether to give me the five dollars?" And he says, "Well, I'm going to give you the five dollars, I'm sure you're going to vote for me." And he said, "You put an X up in the corner," he says, "I've got somebody --- a clerk that's going to watch and count to be sure." And then he says, "So, I'll know." So the fellow says, "Oh well, all right, for five dollars he thought he could accommodate him." So he went whistling down the street, he met Joe Blow, and he said, "Who are you going to vote for, for sheriff?" And he said, "Well, I hadn't made up my mind." "Well," he said, "there'll be two and a half in it if you'll vote for this other fellow." And he said, "Well, how will they know whether I vote." "Well," he said, "you put a X up in the corner." "Well, for two and a half I can do that." So he gets his two and a half and this fellow goes whistling on down the street, and he said, "I made two and a half, and I'll vote for whoever I darn well please."

CHARLENE: (Laughter)

AGNESS: That was the corruption in those days.



CHARLENE: Oh gosh. Well that's pretty unsophisticated corruption. Doesn't take too many brains to figure that out, I guess, in a small town. Gee.

AGNESS: No.

CHARLENE: That's funny. Gosh.

AGNESS: No, but --- there was a lot of that sort of stuff that went on in those days, just like they do now. I mean corruption didn't start with present day, a lot of people think it did, but it really didn't.

CHARLENE: Gosh. Well, I guess they didn't try to cover up much, I mean --- that's not covering up much.

AGNESS: No, no. But I thought it was pretty clever of the old guy to figure out how he could get the two and a half and let the other guy be the corrupt one. He got two and a half and he voted for who he pleased.

CHARLENE: Yeah. That's pretty good --- we've got corrupt politicians. Oh, goodness sakes. I was also wondering about --- who was it that told me --- Dot Timms was mentioning a place called Brown's Canyon, and she said it was up here ---

AGNESS: Brown's Canyon is, this is, we always called Ball Park Canyon. The next canyon over was Brown's Canyon, it --- at the time that, oh in the '30's, when we were married, this piece of land that is known as Indian land was --- belonged to N. Brown and Sons. And they --- oh Nathan Brown was a little more modern than lots of people. He put a dam in up here. 'Course he didn't have to have an engineers report, and an impact study or anything like that in those days. You just went out and got you a scoop --- or a fresno and a couple of horses, and dug up enough dirt and put up there to make a dam. And even when --- oh goodness, my kids were little, that dam was still there. I think the dam broke in the '40's, as I remember it. But they used that water to irrigate this field, and it was quite a dam. The kids were big enough; they were nine and ten years old. Because they were big enough to come when we lived over on this other place, they'd walk over here, and over into Brown's Canyon.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: And had a raft, but Mama didn't know anything about it.

CHARLENE: Oh dear.

AGNESS: ... (Unrelated)

CHARLENE: Well I was wondering --- now this dam, you were saying about you had a rowboat?

AGNESS: Oh, no the kids lugged some --- when we --- finally Al went over to see what was so interesting over there, and the kids had a raft over there.

CHARLENE: Oh.

AGNESS: There wasn't a one of them that could swim at that age.

CHARLENE: Oh, my god!

AGNESS: Oh well, it didn't take father long to take those boards apart and he carted them away, and that was the end of the raft.

CHARLENE: Huh.

AGNESS: It was pretty deep. I don't know how deep that water was. I know that when it broke, it flooded everything down in that end of the --- in the east edge of town there.

CHARLENE: Oh, my gosh.

AGNESS: It didn't break --- it wasn't a sudden wall of water, or anything. But, it was in one spring when the ballpark was flooded, and of course I haven't seen water in the ballpark like it used to be. Because one time --- one spring, since we have lived up here, I looked out and there was a little kid, looked like he was about ten or twelve years old, was walking through, and he was up to his arms pits.

CHARLENE: Oh my gosh.

AGNESS: If he had drowned, that's the reason I remember it so well, if he had fallen over and drowned, you wouldn't have know where to look for him. Nobody. He always came past here going to school, but you'd have thought when the ballpark was flooded he'd have had sense enough to go around, but he didn't. He went through the ballpark, and I watched him. I watched until he

got out on the other side.

CHARLENE: Well, that was kind of dangerous.

AGNESS: After the Indians bought the land; they never used the dam anymore. And that's why that is broke, you see, it was after the Indians owned the land.

CHARLENE: Oh, I see. They didn't keep it in repair or something?

AGNESS: No, they didn't repair it. It probably had rat holes in it, you know, and the water seeped through until --- and it was probably when, by the time it finally got to the place where it was washing, and washing a hole through. Because, where it washed through was just --- we walked over there to see it. It was just a little narrow place where the dirt --- it was just a dirt filled dam, and where the dirt had washed out. If it had been anybody that was interested in irrigation or anything, they would have kept that in there. But ---

CHARLENE: Well, that land then was not the original reservation?

AGNESS: Well, of course, you know, this has only been a reservation for the last few years.

CHARLENE: Oh. No, I'm not sure ---

AGNESS: These Indians, local Indians just plain wouldn't stay. They were supposed to be over at Warm Springs.

CHARLENE: Oh.

AGNESS: And they take them over there, and they'd beat them back. They're kinda like a dog, you know, they just; they beat them back. And when I was a kid, they all lived in tepees out here on the hill.

CHARLENE: Oh.

AGNESS: Out, well out where the garbage dump is. Out that way is where they all lived. And then finally the government came in and put some houses up for them, such as they were. Four room houses, I think they was a square house with a partition through the middle each way. And, of course, their bathroom was a path down to the little shanty, and that was --- for a good many years until they finally bought this land. And when they bought that, that's when they built these

houses out here.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: And now I don't know whether the Brown land went as far as the Indian --- as far as the edge of the Indian lands is now, or not. I don't know where that line went through there. Although, I'm inclined to think that it probably did because they were in on that flour mill deal when they built the dam up the river, and had the flour mill up there. That's a story that somebody can --- will have to get from someplace else; I don't know it. I do know --- and I don't know who all was in on it or anything.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: Now those are the kind of things I might get into now. I might run into the papers that will tell us something about that.

CHARLENE: Yeah, that would be interesting. I haven't heard.

AGNESS: I ran into the deeds on the French Hotel.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: Says, it's in an envelope now. Boy, I stuck them all back in there in a hurry. To all deeds --- and it says, deed to the land of the French Hotel. Of course, Mrs. Rembolt had something to do with that. And Al's dad was the executor of that estate. So I've run into all kinds of those kinds of papers. It's going to be a long haul, to go through and sort, and see what can be made of some of that kind of stuff.

CHARLENE: Uh huh.

AGNESS: And I don't know whether I'm historian enough to know how to assemble it.

CHARLENE: My goodness sakes.

AGNESS: It's been fun. It's all I can say --- its sort of fun getting rid of a bunch of old papers. It's the only fun in it.

CHARLENE: Gosh, yeah. I know it. I've had to do quite a lot of that myself.

AGNESS: Well, as long as it was just tax files it wasn't hard, because tax files, they were all Al's

copies from taxes, and I would just go like this and burn them.

CHARLENE: Hmm.

AGNESS: But when I get into a box that has a little of this, and a little of that, then you have to start reading.

CHARLENE: Yeah.

AGNESS: Because you don't want to burn up something that maybe is important.

CHARLENE: Yeah, that's true.

AGNESS: And of course, it is unfortunate that they are the ones that have been sitting where there has been dust on them, and you got all this dust to contend with. It isn't --- it isn't easy. I don't know of any of the other things --- maybe you can think of something.

CHARLENE: That's all I had on my list at the moment. But I'm sure I'll think of some other things. I appreciate your taking the time to do this, 'cause ---

AGNESS: Well, I'm sorry that I didn't have time to do a little research, but you know when you have a death in the family, and all the people coming, you can ...

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