

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #130 - Side A

Subject: Walt Dickenson & Ruby Temple & Esther Dickenson

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: February 1972

Interviewer: James Baker

RUBY TEMPLE: (2-3-72) ... And then there was a mill in there where Papa had homesteaded that year, and years ago was a shingle mill right in there. We found traces of it on Prather Creek.

JAMES BAKER: Which creek was that?

RUBY: Prather Creek.

WALT DICKENSON: But father bought his mill about 1916, something like that, and it was originally located six miles, actually on

--- Well, it was up close to the same creek you're on, Trout Creek. Then they moved that sawmill over to Prather Creek about 6 or 7 miles south of the present site, and it was the site until 1934.

JAMES: What kind of machinery did they have in those early mills?

WALT: Well, they had these, the only machinery available, they had the circular saws. Of course the band saw didn't come into its own in this area, they did have them in the east, but there were no band saws in here of any sort until 1929, when the Edward Hines Lumber Company came in.

RUBY: They came in, in '24.

WALT: Well, they started, they opened in '29.

JAMES: How was the circular saw run, did they use waterpower?

WALT: Not in this area, because they didn't have water enough to get that power, but it was used in other areas. But in this country it was all steam.

JAMES: How did they generate the steam?

WALT: Through a boiler system, a high-pressure boiler.

JAMES: Build a fire under it? Then they had somebody stoking the fire all the time?

WALT: They had a fireman that took care of the boilers, that was his job. And they had various other people in the sawmill that had their particular jobs. This fireman was the man that took care of the boilers, took care of the fuel in the boilers, cleaned the --- etc.

JAMES: So a fellow would go out and you'd get a crew to cut down the lumber and you'd bring it in. Did he have a pond?

WALT: Well, of course, the way our father operated it, they had a pond in the spring and until early summer. And of course by the time early summer arrived, the water was so short that they no longer had a pond in the area where the pond was. But they'd log in the summertime to keep the existing operation going, and then they'd log in the wintertime and deck them to stockpile the lumber. They didn't cut lumber too much in the wintertime, because their facilities didn't adapt to it.

Now the process that Edward Hines Lumber Company has, where they do have a pond where they keep their logs partially thawed out, but where those logs froze so solid that the circular saws had quite a problem in cutting through the lumber, a little harder job.

Then of course this lumber was all air-dried, piled outside and air dried, and hauled to a retail yard here in town. He had a retail yard there, and they did their planing here, that is, in later years of the operation. About 10 or 12 thousand ---

RUBY: Do you want to know that too?

JAMES: Sure do. Anything that pops into your mind along the lines like that. I maybe wouldn't know to ask that question, so

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RUBY: That's what he got for it, the rough lumber.

WALT: There were probably three or four mills in the area at that time too.

JAMES: Who owned the other mills?

WALT: Well Lem Lowe owned one, he had one sawmill, and my wife's father had another sawmill.

JAMES: What was his name?

WALT: Paul Weil. He had a sawmill for several years. In fact, with the exception I think of my father, the rest of the people were, at the time Edward Hines Lumber Company came in here and was building their railroad to Seneca, they were cutting ties for it quite extensively.

JAMES: So the little saw millers helped build some of the construction for the Hines railroad?

WALT: Oh yes. Now our father didn't get into the tie business at all, but he did furnish, I would say, as I recall it, almost all the lumber for the original present Hines city. Of course there are a lot of new houses been built here, but the old houses he furnished that lumber, practically all of it as I recall. And you know that old hotel that's sitting down there that hasn't been finished, or hasn't been removed; he furnished all the lumber for the forms for that. And the people by the name of Stafford, Derbes and Roy were the contractors for that little community.

JAMES: That was almost a Company town?

WALT: That was a Company town; it was built by the Company.

JAMES: Well, did the coming in of the Hines Lumber Company wipe out the business for those small lumber mills, or was there still some future in it?

WALT: I really don't know. I should say probably it did; however, I don't think that they

were, I think it was coming anyway. I think it was very important that we had that industry come in, even though we might say it wiped out some little operation, because sooner or later it would happen. Those little operations would have had to have grown or been eliminated by themselves anyway. People were becoming disturbed about having to, and I'm talking about employees, about living 25 or 30 miles out in the hills to do their work. They wanted to be working in town, or near town, where they could buy like they wanted to, and not be --- and that's where the sawmills were. And there would be weeks and months at a time when they wouldn't be working, either stay there, which they generally didn't do because they would move on to try to get another job. And then you always had the yearly-renewed job of breaking them in every spring, breaking them in to becoming familiar with that type of work. Their jobs weren't really secure. Of course, in those times, that didn't really seem to become too much of a problem as it would now. We've got to work every day including Sunday to make a living now.

RUBY: I was grown by the time he started that mill. He took his homestead up in 1904, and then he didn't put the mill in till '16 or '17, and I was grown.

And during the war, First World War, why the family run the mill because they couldn't get outside help very well. No one to work for, you know, they were all in the service then. So the family run the mill, and we all worked in the mill. I was the big off-bearer.

JAMES: What does that mean?

RUBY: When you take the boards from the big saw. And my sister was the fireman. And my brother, Ashley was --- he didn't re-saw, or did he?

WALT: I think he did just about everything to kind of keep things going.

RUBY: No, we didn't have a ---

WALT: But I think he worked around over the mill, just about every ...

RUBY: He might have been a --- He might have run a cull. My father was the sawyer.

WALT: I was the foreman. I was pretty small at that time.

RUBY: And the family cut the timber down, out in the timber, sawed it down and trimmed it up and hauled it in, the whole thing. We did it all by ourselves. We'd saw out about 6,000 feet a day; that was about our limit, that's pretty small. But then it was a small crew.

WALT: It was quite an effort for some girls and a young boy and their mother and father, quite an effort, really.

RUBY: My mother helped in the engine room, and did the cooking.

JAMES: Do you remember incidents from that time of the family working together?

RUBY: Well I suppose. I don't know that I can recall. Oh, I know one thing, my sister wasn't well one day, and I took over the job of taking care of the boiler, and I was just stoking that old thing to beat the band. And pretty soon --- I wasn't stoking it right anyway, and pretty soon they lost their power up in the --- and here was the water running out of the top of the boiler. I had turned the pump on and forgot to turn it off, and here was water running out and no steam. That's the only day I ever worked in the --- that was out of my line entirely. That was one of the incidents.

Another time, the Oregon Journal I think it was, or the Oregonian, sent a man in to pick up all this work that the people were doing without the men folks around. And this man came up there to the mill, and he took quite a story back, and they had it in the Oregon Journal. And I never did see that, I was up there working. I didn't know when it came out or anything about it, and I would have liked to have had one of those. But I didn't even know it until some time after it had happened, that is, about the paper I mean, when the man was there taking the information.

And I don't know, one time they were logging and my sister and I were holding a log from rolling while my father pulled, with a team, pulled a log on a hillside, and our cat

hooks whirled and the log started rolling, and instead of my father going on the upper side of the log, he came back towards us. He wanted to protect us, and he came on the lower side and he had to out-run that log. He did too. But of course we were --- he had placed us at the far end to start with, so when the Cat hooks whirled, why we were almost out of danger, anyway. But he came right down that, and that old log rolling down. We had a lot of excitement like that, because we were young and didn't know much about what we were doing.

WALT: The mill was placed in quite a deep draw, and in the wintertime, of course, there were quite heavy snows there. Four feet of snow was nothing, and that would go along for months. And my father built a ramp; you might call it, or a long flume. It wasn't a flume, because there wasn't no water in it, he'd peel these logs and lay them close together, and then they'd slide these logs down off this high canyon, high hills, into the mill site. And there was where you were, I think, up on that landing, when this log rolled.

RUBY: No, when I'm thinking of it was before he had that, because that was after I was married, evidently, because I don't remember that.

WALT: This was quite a sight for us to see; anyhow, when this slip where the two logs were laid close together, and the other logs were moving down the mountain would follow --- in a trough. It was quite a sight for us to see down at the bottom. Of course it would just throw snow and scoop the snow out. Many logs would be quite sizeable, maybe 30 or 40 inches in diameter, and it was quite a sight for us.

I remember one time, your talking about incidents, of course the State required us to have our boilers tested, and the State man would come around and we'd have to have the water out of them, cooled, and the man had it out so he could get in and work on the inside of the boiler for scale, etc. This particular fellow that came this time was too large to get into this boiler. And my oldest brother, who was quite a mechanic and machinist,

anyway, and knew boilers probably as well as he did, he asked him to go in and take a look at it. So my brother goes in and looks it over and okays the job. And I'm sure the State Industrial Accident wouldn't like to hear about that.

JAMES: Well, you keep it in the family, even a regulation, and I think that's a lot better. No use bringing in the State. If you cut them down, you ought to be able to supervise the boiler.

WALT: Of course, they should have cut him down a little before they sent him. He was too large to get into this opening, which was a normal size opening for an average size man. But we didn't know that the --- I mean, the folks didn't know the situation or they probably would have required a bigger opening in the boiler to satisfy the inspector.

JAMES: I was wondering about that trough, that sounds like that has a lot of potential for a joke.

WALT: It was a joke, in a sense, but it did the job.

JAMES: I can see that log coming down there, spinning, with the bark coming off, and pretty soon getting planed down just to the right size of a telephone pole.

WALT: Of course you want to remember this was the wintertime and it was really frozen, everything frozen. You could have drug a log five miles and not peel the bark from it, in the wintertime. And almost every night you'd have a little snow on these skids.

JAMES: Kind of wax it up a little?

WALT: It did. And of course, they were waxed because they were frozen. It was green timber and the bark was off from it, and you couldn't stand on one, you couldn't stand up on one, because it would be so slick you --- and a little bit of moisture and possibly melting a little bit, and freezing, and it was quite an interesting thing to see those logs going down there.

Of course they would skid them in, and they had big sleighs where they load the

logs on the sleighs and come up to the top of this hill and drop them off, and they would be skidded into this trough and started down with a team.

JAMES: That skid road, the logs go crosswise to the logs going across?

WALT: Yes, it wouldn't necessarily make any difference in the road, but when it dropped them off, of course they'd try to turn them so they wouldn't roll on that hill. They'd have a stop log or something like that, and the stop log would --- the logs, I should say, would kind of turn them into the trough. And they'd hook onto the back end of the log with a little hook, so they wouldn't be actually --- when the logs went by the teams themselves, it wouldn't take any effort to actually pull that little hook out at the end of the log, hooked onto the ---

RUBY: Those hills weren't too high, either; the skid wasn't too long, was it?

WALT: Yes, it was better than, it was 150 yards.

RUBY: Well now like over in the valley where they have that, that's a mile or so.

WALT: Well, they don't use that kind of a system over there, either.

RUBY: I think they used to, didn't they? But our hills and valleys are not as deep here by far.

WALT: I would guess it was about 150 yards or 200 yards, not over that. But that was enough to move them into the canyon there. The roads went down, especially for winter travel, would be so slick that they couldn't hold their load.

RUBY: They'd slide into the horses.

WALT: That's why they dropped them off up above. A little later than that, they began to building better roads, further around and down through the canyon. But none of our roads were like they are today. The roads that we hauled our lumber on were probably roads that you wouldn't feel too safe on with cars, if they were in the same condition now that they was then. And narrow, many places you couldn't meet or pass, you could back up or



wait for a turnout.

JAMES: Do you remember some of the logging terms that might be lost, that might be going out of use?

WALT: You know I doubt very much if there are too many that are going out of use, really. They might be used, the same terminology in just a little different manner. Now you might talk about skidding; when we talked about skidding, we referred to our horses skidding along. Well skidding today would be the same thing, only with a Caterpillar or with a --- So these terms are pretty well established actually. Of course the old --- they didn't in this country, they did in the Bend country a lot, you know those --- What did they call those high wheels over in the Bend country, they're set down around LaPine, that had to be used pretty well on flat country, or reasonably flat. They didn't use any of those in here, and I don't think they ever used them, at least to any major extent over in the valley, in the coast country. I can't recall. No, that's a thing of the past for sure. And of course there's a new one coming in right now that is just being tested, and that is the helicopter, which has never been heard of before.

JAMES: And they've got the thing that now is real, there used to be a joke about sky hooks, and now there really are sky hooks.

WALT: Of course they used that term, and now today it's coming into its own being.

JAMES: Like a left-handed wrench, or something.

WALT: We had those too, but the people that used them could use them with either hand.

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RUBY TEMPLE: (2-5-72) ... couldn't find a board big enough to make his piece of furniture he was working on, and one of the kids said, "Well go and ask the teacher if he won't give you a board stretcher." And he went around there looking for that board

stretcher.

WALT DICKENSON: It's like the fellow that cut the board off three times and it was still too short. Well now you probably have been told about our local history here over, and over, and over, and you probably have been informed about the mail run through this country and so forth by boat. This is, of course, before my time too, but I'm sure that I'm at least partially correct in regard to it. From the hill over here, as you came over, across to these hills you see here, in the springtime they carried the mail by boat across there.

RUBY: I imagine. I know our folks came here in '97, and they reached Ontario in March, and they had to stay there until May because the water was so high they couldn't come in here. And what travel they did have followed around these foothills. But the water all over the valley was so much that they couldn't come in.

WALT: I've heard my father say that in the spring when the water was high, carry it from the point of this hill. Now I don't mean the top of it, because it would have been --- but the water level got across to the foothills on the other side, which would be a, possibly a couple of miles. And that's the way they got their mail back and forth.

RUBY: That was in the spring. I know my folks in 1911, the spring of 1912, they were; my father and his brother were plowing some ground down here for Pete Clemens, turning this sod over. And one morning in particular they went to get up and whirled around out of bed and stuck their feet down in about this much water. It had raised over night, and just covered --- and that was in April. And it just covered all that country down along where this river goes. But we had lots of snow then in the mountains.

JAMES BAKER: More than now?

RUBY: Oh by far, there is no comparison. Up at Idle City mines where now, what is it, 2 and 3 feet the snow, or 4 maybe, but it used to be 10. And right here in the valley it was nothing to be 3 foot all through the winter. The men always had sleighs to haul their hay

out to the cattle. Well now then they just don't have that snow. That's why the lake down here dried up, there's no, a lot of snow to make the water.

WALT: Night before last the water was up here within about 3 inches of that floor, right up here ... Of course this flash flood ... but it was all over the lawn, which happens pretty regular.

RUBY: But then there was nothing for it years ago to be all across this part of the country.

WALT: No, that's right.

RUBY: Now where my father had a planer mill, and later after he had this sawmill for a while, he got a planer mill and he put it over here to the, where he lived. And we've got pictures of where the, our children were riding around in a boat between the house and this planer shed.

WALT: Yeah, that would last for a month to six weeks. We used to play when I was a little kid, we used to play, oh from the present highway, and that's where the planer mill was just on this side of the highway going to John Day. And we used to play on rafts from about that area to the river, and you could figure on that for a month. You'd finally see on the ground a little where it would be going down a little bit every day, finally the river would contain.

RUBY: And then they got to dredging the river out and it would carry more of this water, didn't get high so much. ...

He's been here now for --- he came in 1908, so that would make it 64 years, you see, since he's been here. And I was born right here.

JAMES: In Burns, or up in the hills?

RUBY: Well it was up the river about, how far is that Baker place? WALT: About 6 miles?

RUBY: That's where my folks lived at that time.

JAMES: How were the schools up there?

RUBY: Well they had one country school, but my oldest brother went to that school, but I never did. They moved into town when I was just a baby.

JAMES: Did they ever say why they came to Eastern Oregon, all this water, and then the next week all this dry sagebrush?

RUBY: Well, you know, it wasn't so dry in those days in the summer. We had enough moisture from the snow in the winter, that we had fine crops and everything. These little mountain meadows, why they'd have hay this high all summer long, you know. It was just wonderful. It's been this lack of snow and moisture that has dried this country up the way it is. But they came here because his father was here. My grandfather came here either a year or two years before my father did. I think it was one year, wasn't it?

WALT: I don't remember.

RUBY: And my grandfather's brother was here before that, and that brought my grandfather. And then my father and one of his brothers, brother-in-law it was, came then in '97.

JAMES: What part of the country did they come from?

RUBY: Nebraska.

WALT: It was quite an opportunity for people who wanted to get on West, I mean, there was a lot of opportunity here in the field of ranching, and homesteading, and small sawmills, etc.

And of course this valley along the river, even today is a very rich soil, where there is enough moisture to produce a crop. And at that time there weren't too many people settled here. There wasn't all the people out on the, as you were referring to a while ago, these dry sagebrush knolls. Because they were settling along. And even today, it's a very rich country.

RUBY: My father came here; one of the main reasons was to get away from the cyclones. They had so many of them there in Nebraska, and the blizzards in the winter, that his father was here, and that was one drawback there, so that was one of the reasons. But he was afraid almost to come, because he heard that rattlesnakes could spring for 20 feet and hit you. And also these porcupines could throw their quills, they wouldn't have to hit you, they could throw them, and it would run clear through these leather boots, you know, all those absurd things.

WALT: Those were the good old days.

RUBY: He was a little afraid to come, but he still was afraid of the cyclones and blizzards. I don't think he would of come if his father hadn't been here.

WALT: Our climate has changed a lot in the last 40 years too. It's mild enough to ... I remember when I was a relatively young man, I'd been up in the mountains, the hardest part of the winter, and the weather was real cold. In fact, it was about 50 below zero up there. And I was hauling wood out, and I broke down up there, at 50 below zero and had to lay out all night. By the time morning came and I got my rig in operation again, I'd burned all my wood up. Just about every stick of wood that I had on that truck, to keep warm. So that day wasn't too profitable. But the climate has changed a lot.

JAMES: Shows you how cold it was then.

WALT: And people today, it would be pretty difficult for them to get up there and survive at 50 below zero, because they're not used to it. I wouldn't want to get used to it.

RUBY: We had quite a lot of, years ago, of cold spells that last, you know. But I recall one when I was in high school that lasted just about a month, and the highest temperature we had during that whole month was 20 below zero, day or night, that's the highest it was.

JAMES: That's just incredible.

RUBY: Uh huh. And, you know, most people don't believe those things today; they don't think they happened. They think they're just stories, but they certainly were true. And this water, we could go into the schoolhouse in the spring and look out from the schoolhouse window, you see, the schoolhouse was up on the hill, and all we could see was one huge lake, this whole valley was one huge lake. And then that water would run out, or seep, and there we'd have this valley floor, you know, to farm. But many a time I've looked out that window and just a huge big lake, just come up like this did that I told you about a while ago. Come up over night and that water would be all over from the river. And then, of course, it went back gradually, got deeper and more snow melted.

JAMES: Are there any unusual characters you remember out here?

WALT: Yeah, but I'd rather not name them.

JAMES: Why don't we call them? There was this fellow; I don't want anybody getting in trouble, like me!

WALT: I don't want them to get in trouble either. I doubt very much if I could relate anything to you that you haven't already heard probably.

RUBY: Fred Haines, he was quite a ---

WALT: Yeah, but he knows all the history of ---

RUBY: I presume.

JAMES: But I don't know many personal incidents about Fred Haines.

WALT: I don't know any, I really don't know any.

RUBY: I'll tell you one. He owned this park right down here at the foot of the hill. He owned that land and he gave it to Burns for a park. And they never would fix it up into a park; they seemed to have some excuse some way. And then finally, I know it, but this has kind of bothered me all the time, they finally turned this over some way, they turned this park over some way to the City and they named it Davidson Park, and I always did

think it ought to be the Haines Park.

JAMES: That sounds fair to me, I'll tell you that for sure.

...

JAMES: No, no, I was stuck for a question right there.

WALT: Well now, I remember years ago that, we'll call them Joe and Frank, they were old buckaroos, and they had considerable differences of opinion in regard to their fences and who owned this stock, and who owned that, and they become quite furious with each other. And I remember that, Joe was telling this, I don't know that anybody saw it, but he went over to Frank's place and they got into --- he rode over on a saddle horse, and about that time Frank rode back up to his barn and saw him coming. And he was telling the story, and he said that he'd gotten off his horse and he grabbed Frank off of his horse. And he said, "I didn't realize that Frank was quite the man he was." He said, "I had an awful time turning him loose." He didn't say that Frank whipped him, but he said he had an awful time turning him loose. So I assume that Frank came ... was able to settle his differences.

JAMES: A lot of conflict over the cattle?

WALT: Oh yeah. The thing of it was that there was so much range in early days that they thought nothing of it. And of course that rancher felt that anything that his cattle could wander out on, that was his domain. And then the ranches became a little closer together, and he didn't want to give that up, even though the people owned it, the Company. And there were a lot of misunderstandings and there were a lot of hard feelings. In those days, I imagine, history and TV, and so forth, they settled things between themselves, instead of going to town and getting an attorney, which was the proper procedure. But sometimes they had to dig a grave, and that's the way they settled their differences.

JAMES: I understand in one of these conflicts, a fellow got shot in the belt buckle, knocked the wind out of him instead of getting shot in the belly.

WALT: Well I never heard of that, but I'll guarantee you that that would knock the wind out of you. You can put that in your information there.

JAMES: That would set you against the wall.

WALT: But I'll bet he was pretty happy. I think that is why the old sheriffs used to wear such a big badge.

JAMES: Like a bulletproof vest.

RUBY: You want to shut that off?

JAMES: Sure will.

...

RUBY: When I was a baby they had this out here east of town.

JAMES: A large water wheel?

RUBY: A great big one, and a horse would walk in there to keep it a going, and then it picked up water out of a hole and poured it out. And I have tried to find out where that was located, but I have never been able to.

JAMES: Did it run a mill?

RUBY: No, it just pumped pool water.

JAMES: Lifted up water so that it could be set down.

RUBY: And I have a picture of that water wheel with the horse in there. And I can't find anybody that remembers just where it was. But it was somewhere east of Burns.

JAMES: Maybe somebody who sees this in the Library in the next couple of years or so will be able to fill that in.

WALT: I'm wondering if it wasn't down around Rye Grass, around Johnnie Woods' present property down there.



RUBY: I can't tell you, because I don't, I was just a baby when they were there. But in later years, why it was still there, but I don't know where abouts. I can't remember. Not too late a years, but then after I got a little bigger.

JAMES: You don't remember who owned it?

RUBY: No, I don't. It seems, if I remember rightly, my uncle had this rented, this place, and we lived there right close to --- there was two houses there, and that's just about ---

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JAMES BAKER: (2-5-72) And they usually end up in Ontario. And from what Walt said, it would seem to me like your parents kind of filled in there a little bit between the Midwest and Idaho. And so I think it would be really interesting to have a little bit of a description. Because a lot of people came out that way, an awful lot of people.

ESTHER DICKENSON: Well most of it that we knew about was our grandfather and his uncle, our grandfather on our mother's side, and his uncle was a scout. This is what he did, he just brought trains out and he'd go right back and bring another one.

And our grandfather in his youth made several trips with him. And when he'd come out, well this was a highlight of his trip to us; he'd sit and tell us these old stories. And he told a lot of them. One that Grandpa told us was about after the settlers had settled here, and the parents, I can't remember where the parents had gone, and they left about a 12 year old boy and his younger sister, I think 10, at home while they just went to a neighbor's to help out or something. And a little band of Indians came by and they went in there and they butchered the milk cow that the family had, and they made the little boy and the sister carry these, carry all the meat they could. And they took them, and they made the children walk. Maybe they were afoot, I don't remember, but they made the children walk. And they got out, they walked as far as they could, and the little boy was, finally he tried to take his sister's load too to help her along. And she was giving out, and

she was crying, and so the Indians just picked her up by the feet and bashed her head on a rock and left her, and went on. Just things like this that Grandpa used to tell about.

Then he also told about one place, he said they hadn't had any trouble with the Indians for quite a ways on the trip, and they were remarking about how trouble free. And some of the new people coming in the train had said, well, they thought that this was a wild country and here they hadn't even seen an Indian. And he said, "Well, they're around. They're watching us all the time." So they came by where the creek had made a little curve there, and there was a squaw sitting there on the bank fishing. And one of the smart aleck young kids just coming out West, and he pulled up and shot her. And they hadn't gone any distance at all --- you remember Kate, about Granddad telling this?

KATE ?: No honey, I don't remember Granddad; he was quite a bit older.

ESTHER: Oh, don't you? She toppled over into the creek, and they said, they told him that they were in for trouble then because that's why she was out there. And sure enough, before they had gone very far the Indians caught up with them and stopped them, and they were in large enough numbers to handle the situation. And they demanded this man, or they would wipe out the whole train. And Granddad said that the wagon master saw no other way, and he turned him over to them. And he said that they skinned him to the waist and salted him, and as far away as they could go, they could hear him screaming.

But Granddad was always just full of stories like this, cause he made several trips with his uncle too, and the uncle had made a lot of them, and they were always telling, he'd tell us kids stories about that. And they came through and settled; I think, when my grandmother and them came through they went to Pendleton, on through from Idaho and on through to Pendleton and settled. And a lot of the people he brought in his train was from Missouri. And our grandmother, our mother's mother, walked from Missouri to

Pendleton with the wagon train. Her job, she was one of the older children in the family, if not the oldest. Do you know if she was the oldest?

KATE: I don't know for sure.

ESTHER: But anyhow she was 12 years old when she did this, and her job was to drive the milk cow. And she walked from Missouri to the Oregon country, and drove their milk cow.

JAMES: What was her name?

ESTHER: Carpenter, Etta Carpenter was her name.

JAMES: And your grandfather's name?

ESTHER: Howard Cole.

JAMES: Those stories are really tragic.

ESTHER: Yes, they are. Granddad had seen a lot of things, pretty near every trip had its events like that, you know. It was a cruel country. My brother-in-law here, we were all working in a hay camp, my mother was cooking. Maybe it was his place they were haying, I don't remember about that. But anyhow, he was with the hay crew. I was riding a stick horse around the yard one night, so he took an old pepper can mother had thrown out that day and cut the bottom out of it, and put a wire through it, and a bell in there, and I just bucked all over the yard with that bell ringing. And I never knew he'd be my brother-in-law in later years. He put a bell on my stick horse, and I just bucked all over the place.

JAMES: Let me ask you that question that I asked last, before I turned over the tape, and that is there anything about the land that, or the people, that you think of in really personal terms?

ESTHER: Well I feel a strong attachment to the land, for the wooded areas and the streams and the like of this, a real strong attachment for it. I think if I should move anywhere else and make my home, I think this would always be my home. And the

people the same way. I mean the people are, it's hard to separate the land from the people, you know, when it's both, because I've known them both, they've both been long -- and it just seems like they belong together. They don't change; they're just the same. They are friendly, and I know that I would never feel the same about any other country as I feel about the country around here. I like the hills, and the woods, and the streams. Seems like you are a part of it, seems like you belong with it. And the people are wonderful. I think they're the most wonderful people in the world.

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