

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #202 - Sides A/B

Subject: Ira Brown

Place: Canby, Oregon

Date: January 22, 1991

Interviewer: Edward Gray

EDWARD GRAY: This Edward Gray with Ira Brown and Margaret ---

MARGARET BRICKAMEIR: Brickameir (sp.?)

EDWARD: Brickameir.

IRA BROWN: Brickameir.

EDWARD: Outside of, north of Canby, Oregon, on January 22, 1991. Okay, Ira, let me confirm, you are the son of George H. Brown.

IRA: The youngest son of George.

EDWARD: George H. Brown, who was a brother to William Walter Brown. Now I want to try to get a little information as to Bill Brown's brothers. And you can say whatever you want to say. Why did George and Robert leave Eastern Oregon and leave William Brown with the sheep?

IRA: Oh yes, that's pretty well known you might say. They came up there, now it is misquoted someplace in there that Ellis came with them, but he didn't.

EDWARD: Ellis Brown did not?

IRA: Ellis Brown, he was the doctor, the eye doctor in Portland. But he didn't go with them; there was just the three of them. There was George, and Bob, and Will. And they went up there and homesteaded on the --- and the three sections --- they each got a section and it cornered at Buck Creek, not at Wagontire. We'll get to Wagontire later.

EDWARD: What --- now let's back up here. They homesteaded not at Lost Creek?

IRA: No, what we called, they called Buck Creek. And that's where the three sections came together. They cornered there. And when they --- my father said when, he'd never seen, actually seen it, when they got there from bringing in the supplies for the winter. All we had for shelter, he said, was a big tarp hung between two juniper trees, that's all, and they had a fire going. He says it was cold, and he says was I ever discouraged. So ---

EDWARD: That's when your father went over there?

IRA: That's when they started.

EDWARD: Okay.

IRA: And I don't know where they got the first band of sheep, but they started with about 2,000 head. And during the course of the development, it raised to 4,000 head between the three of them. And they split them up in various bands, and each one herded a band of his own. I mean it was still a combination of the three. But this went along, as near as I can tell, it went along like that for three years.

And they had this winter, Father said they didn't have any feed or hay put up, and it was one of the worst winters in the history of that country. And he said they lost --- they thought the winter was over, and they had lost practically down to about half the sheep. They were down to about 2,000, and he says the winter started all over again. And we had another one; he says it was just as bad as the first one. And they lost half of what they had left, so it got clear down to one.

And basically why my father left was that he was going with my mother at the time, and she says ---

EDWARD: Maggie?

IRA: Yes. She says no way will I come up there because --- she told me that herself. (Laughter) Said I wouldn't go up there and live in that kind of a place. So that kind of

pulled him back. So they decided to sell to Bill, Bob too. And they --- the two of them --- Bill went down to Portland, to brother Ellis and borrowed \$25,000 from him and bought George and Bob out. And that's what Father came to ... with that money and bought the Joe Parrot land. That was, he bought it originally from the homesteader, this Joe Parrot that had homesteaded that part where the house is.

EDWARD: Yeah, back up just a little bit, Ira. You know whether George, your father, or Robert went with Henry Milbrum over in Lake County and surveyed in 18---

IRA: That would have been Bill that did that, because he got the surveying experience. My father never had any in that respect.

EDWARD: Okay. Bill, you think Bill?

IRA: It was Bill, definitely.

EDWARD: And one other clarification. Now George, Robert and Bill went to Eastern Oregon in about when, 1881, 1882?

IRA: It must have been, yes, about, between 1881 and '82. Because if you count back, for instance when Ellis was born, why that's about, ties in.

EDWARD: Ellis, your brother?

IRA: My brother, who was named after the brother in Portland.

EDWARD: Was born in 1893. Now it says ... says that your father came to this, where we are here, new area, out of Canby. He came here in 1891 and purchased 44 acres of land and then added, and added, and added, and added. But, now you mentioned that you thought that George, Robert and Bill homesteaded land, first homesteaded land on Buck Creek.

IRA: Yeah, he cornered there. Because I noticed in some of the, mentions in there about the Wagontire holdings.

EDWARD: Right.

IRA: That came along way later.

EDWARD: Much later?

IRA: Uh huh. Because I went through there, oh if I don't remember, rather early, and I stopped at Wagontire. See they had a feud there over that spring, and Bill owned it. And here this fellow came in there and fenced it in. And Bill had always left it open to all the homesteaders around there; they could water their stock there. But he kept the range rights, well what I mean they just, you might say, honored it. I don't think he had anything filed on it, but they did honor that. Well this fellow fenced it in and wouldn't let any of them in. Well that started things really stirring.

So when I came through there I stopped at the, that's when I stopped at the Gap Ranch, and the fellow told me about the rattlesnake. I said, "How did you ever settle the Wagontire Mountain feud over there?" "Oh that was easy," he said, "somebody shot the old man, and they killed his kid with a neck yoke off of a wagon. All straightened out," he said, "but somebody took the fence down, and now it's back like it was."

EDWARD: Did Dobkins ever ring a bell; did you ever hear that name?

IRA: I've heard it, but I don't know much about him.

EDWARD: That was one of the people; that was later though. I'll get back to Buck Creek though. Because everybody, all the written material, I think all the written material has said that they thought that Bill, and Robert, and George first homesteaded in Lake, or Lost Creek, excuse me, in Lake County.

IRA: Oh no.

EDWARD: They didn't?

IRA: Huh uh. No, because Father used to often say, he says, "We made one big mistake." He says, "I think if we hadn't of done that, I'd still be there." He told me that one time, later in years. He said, "We should have gone south farther around Malheur Lake."

But he said, "The climate is a little better, and there's lots of water." Because what they started out, they were going to locate around Mitchell. But he said, "The only reason we did, we liked the range fine," but he said, "The only reason we didn't locate around Mitchell was because there was no water there." And no --- you'd have to drill --- in those days you didn't drill a well, you dug one. And there is no springs to speak of. And that's still true to this day; they're short of water in that area.

EDWARD: Very short.

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: So do you know why, Ira, that Robert, and George, and Bill went from this Canby area to Eastern Oregon in the first place?

IRA: Oh, cheap land. See all you had to do is file on it. It didn't cost anything.

EDWARD: That's the basic reason?

IRA: Oh yes.

EDWARD: They were pretty young.

IRA: What you had to do was you had to improve on it, just like it is later. But I don't think the improvement restrictions were too rough.

EDWARD: No, no.

IRA: Because later as things began to develop, why they got tougher and tougher in that respect. But back in the beginning, after George and Bob left, it was known around that area as a triangle. It was Pete French to the south, Bill Hanley to the east, and Bill Brown to the west. Burns being the so-called hub. And I've read a number of books on Pete French, and it is no wonder he got shot. I'm surprised that he lived as long as he did, the way, as rough as that country was.

EDWARD: I am too.

IRA: As you know, if you've read on him, about him, his favorite trick was to go through ---

he hated barbwire, which they all did. And he'd come to a homesteader that had put a barb wire fence around his place, and he'd shove the cattle in there all at the same time and break the fence down, whatever cattle would, that would join his herd, and he'd steal them.

EDWARD: The homesteader's cattle?

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: They'd mix together.

IRA: Well that's why this fellow Oliver rode out there when he did that, and his cattle joined it, and Pete says well there is no way you can separate those out of there. I don't have any idea whose they are, where they are. He just up and shot him, right out of the saddle. Of course they had trial on that too, and nothing came of it.

EDWARD: Oliver got out of that with nothing. They acquitted him. Did Bill --- oh boy, I've got to back up here a little, Ira. Your father and Robert evidently sold out by 1890.

IRA: Oh at least, yes.

EDWARD: At least. And then where --- do you have any idea --- this is a hard question, Ira, but do you have any idea where Bill was living between like 1882 and when he built the big house on Buck Creek?

IRA: All over, you might say, as far as that, mainly in a tent.

EDWARD: He was, was he kind of a loner? Did he kind of ---

IRA: Well I'll say he was a loner. He'd put --- that's what, for instance they talk of --- they still laugh about it. He would put a hand full, several hands full of prunes and several hand fulls of raisins in his pockets and be gone for days. He even did that when I was up there. I stopped at the Gap Ranch and asked if Bill was around. They say well he is right over that ridge up there. He's got a band of sheep up there someplace. Says I don't know if he is close enough you could get to him.

So I just took off across country, and sure enough down there in the bottom of that ravine was a band of sheep. Of course he saw me pretty soon, and he come over and talked to me. Oh he says, "I'm sure glad you showed up. I've got to take care of my wool contract in Burns," he says, "just take care of these sheep here, and I'll go and take care of that contract and I'll be right back." I didn't have any idea. I said, "Bill I've never herded sheep in my life." Well he says, "You haven't got a dog?" And I said --- there was 2,000 head. And he said, "Oh, that don't matter," he says, "just keep them kind of together so that they don't get scattered all over the creation." And he says, "I'll be back just as soon as I can." He just took off, he didn't ask me if I had time or anything, or what, he just took off. Here I was with 2,000 head of sheep. And I often think about that. For a minute I kind of didn't know what to do. But I had a real good 22 rifle with me, and that was --- they just don't make them as good as that, it was called a Steeles, and it was the first bolt action. But anyway I'd let, I'd got them back down into this ravine, and when I could just barely, I knew how far that thing would shoot. But the leaders would kind of get, range too far, I'd shoot and have the bullets drop right in front of that leader and turn him around. And do the same thing when they went down this way. And I kept them in that ravine all day. And along about dark, of course they bedded down, and here he came back. And I thought gee, I was sure glad. Well he said, "I got it taken care of." Why I don't know what he had to do, never did say.

EDWARD: Before I forget, did Bill Brown ever drive a car, a vehicle?

IRA: He had a good car, it was called a White. And it was --- but he always had a, some sheepherder or buckaroo --- gosh they just abused that. Well just like you went across it with some of these ... he had this truck driver that --- he sent quit often for supplies. And he told the truck driver, he said, "You know that motor in that truck isn't any good anymore." Said, "Buy a new one, have a new one put in when you go to Bend." He was

going to Bend that time. But what did the guy do, but he bought a new one alright, but he left it in there until he got back to his place and then he put the motor out of his old car into the truck, and put the new one in his car, just traded with him, and Bill never knew the difference.

EDWARD: Why was it --- Bill was an intelligent man.

MARGARET: A trusting ---

IRA: He trusted everybody.

EDWARD: Everybody.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: This is so hard to ask. Why did he allow people to cheat him, and steal from him, when he knew, I know he must have known.

IRA: He did, yeah. I'm morally certain that they didn't intend to do that.

EDWARD: Do you honestly think, Ira, that he just felt that every-body was honest?

IRA: Pretty much, yes.

MARGARET: Yeah, oh yes. Oh yeah.

IRA: Yeah, he trusted them all. In other words that's what happened to his whole estate. That's why my brother went out there. For instance he went to this --- of course the people told Ellis what was going on, and so he went to Bill and he says, "Say those 150 sheep pelts that you had out there in that shed," he said, "your truck driver stole them. He took them to Bend and sold them and kept the money." And he says, "He wouldn't do that, no." So he says, "Say my nephew says that you stole those sheep pelts out there in the barn." He said, "You didn't do that, did you?" Ellis just threw up his hands. Of course ... I didn't have anything to do with them. Well he definitely did.

EDWARD: Now Ellis that you're referring to, Ira, is your brother.

IRA: Yeah, named after Dr. Ellis in Portland.



EDWARD: Who was born Ellis --- this Ellis was born in 1893. What did he do? I mean Ellis, your brother, went over to Bill and ---

IRA: Trying to save --- we could see that the estate was going down the drain, so to speak. They were just stealing him blind.

EDWARD: This would have been in the 1930's?

IRA: Yes, yeah, pretty much. Yeah, yes it was. But I can't pin down the year.

EDWARD: So the family saw that Bill was getting cheated and robbed and had been probably for years, and years, and years.

IRA: Prior to that.

EDWARD: And Ellis, your brother, went over there to ---

IRA: And my Aunt see, worked for him for years.

EDWARD: Your Aunt?

IRA: Aunt Sarah. She was my father's twin sister.

EDWARD: Sarah --- Rodkey.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: Rodkey.

IRA: Yeah, she was married twice. Her second name, her husband was named Belding, but he was kind of a no good, so she went --- he died and she went back to the name of Rodkey.

EDWARD: So Sarah went over to the Buck Creek Ranch.

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: Like in the '20's or '30's?

IRA: It would have been in; actually it was about in the late '20's.

EDWARD: Late '20's.

IRA: Yeah, because I was just a kid when she was there. She came to our place and

stayed, oh a long time.

EDWARD: What did Sarah try to do, Ira?

IRA: Well she kept, she might say kept house for him and a place to come, and cooked his meals while she was there. And, but it just got so bad that she couldn't stand it. And she was the one that talked about this Pete Wilson, he was foreman there at the time, and how he was getting just cleaned out, so to speak.

EDWARD: So a lot of Bill's --- oh we can mention names if we want to, I mean that's the way it goes, tough luck. A lot of Bill's bosses and --- he had a lot of employees, all through like up to 15, 20 at any given time.

IRA: Well for instance back in the early teens, nineteen teens, he sat on the top rail --- I remember my father talked about it. And with a remount bar for the cavalry for the United States Army, and counted a 1,000 head of horses for the --- the buckaroos drove by, at \$85 a head. \$85,000 was unheard of in one sale. And the French government came to him and wanted to know if he had another 1,000 head. He said, "Yes, I have." Says we'd like to buy them. Well he had the buckaroos round them up and bring them down there, and then they couldn't come up with the money.

Now I talked to this little fellow there in Burns that rode for him, a fellow by the name of Sammy Boyce. And Sammy said it just ruined the range around there. And he said here we had this 1,000 head of horses corralled there, and he just turned them loose. And he said they just devastated the range around that area. For a long --- says it was years in coming back.

EDWARD: In 1900, for example, he had approximately 12 men working for him.

IRA: Oh it would vary from haying time to ---

EDWARD: Yeah, 1910 he had --- let me read you some of these names in 1910, Ira, just for the heck of it. Walker and Edna Hall, camp cooks. Thompson, Reed, Pausch, Frank

Pausch. They owned the GI Ranch at one time. O'Shea, McGuire, that's 1910. Then later Forbes, does that ring a bell? Johnny Mosier, Gilbert Morris, Barney.

IRA: The best, the only ones that I knew, was one of his best riders was a fellow by the name of Frank Houston. Now Frank Houston was about my time in there. If Frank is still living he'd be about my age now.

EDWARD: He might be still living.

IRA: Yes, he could be. But he was an excellent rider, and an honest person.

EDWARD: Was he a buckaroo boss?

IRA: Yes, he rode for Bill for some little time.

EDWARD: That was probably, yeah there is a lot of Houston's live in Prineville.

IRA: Oh.

EDWARD: A lot of them.

IRA: Yeah, this one was Frank. And he said he was such a good rider, he could ride anything.

EDWARD: I think he might still be around. Oh boy. When did you go over there, Ira? Were you ever over at the Buck Creek Ranch?

IRA: Uh huh. ... first got here. I took the two kids, and the girl, and we went and stopped at the Street Ranch --- but I didn't know where Buck Creek was. The only time I was there was when I was 11 years old, and I didn't know how to get there. And they said, well it's right through there. Says you can go right out through the back pasture. Well the back pasture was nothing but a bunch of sagebrush.

EDWARD: It still is, except for that road.

IRA: Two miles, I went two miles right through the sagebrush and came out on this little road, and there it was. And this, oh Street says it's still there, and President McKinley's picture is still hanging on the wall. I remember that, President McKinley's

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EDWARD: That was Wesley Street.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: And see Wesley Street sold to Barneys in 1936.

IRA: Maybe it was Barney that was there, because it was in the '30's when we went through there.

EDWARD: Yeah, it was Grant and Doris Barney bought it in '36. And they're still alive, they live in Bend.

IRA: In Bend?

EDWARD: Yeah. I think it was called the Barney Ranch, the Street Place. You said you went there at the Buck Creek Ranch when you were 11.

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: So that would have been 1917.

IRA: Yes, because your father drove the car.

EDWARD: In 1917?

IRA: Yes, he had a Model-T Ford. See Father was in the potato business here in this area.

EDWARD: George Brown?

IRA: Yes. And he had these two boys, her father married to my sister, and my brother Ellis were running the show here and were gradually taking over. My brother Waldo, he bought him a place down at Hubbard, he wasn't in it too much. But Father says, "You know, I think we should go and take a look at something." I remember when he got to talking to your dad about it.

EDWARD: That's 1917.

IRA: He said, "This irrigation business," he says, "is going to put us out of business." So

he took off from here, her father drove his car, was a '17 Ford, yes it was about a 1917 Ford, Model-T. And we took our leading hired man, a fellow by the name of Eddie Erickson, and I rode in the back seat. And Father and your father rode in the front seat, and we took off. And we went from here to Yakima and went all through that Yakima Valley, because they were just opening it up then. Then we went to Twin Falls.

EDWARD: Idaho.

IRA: Over into Idaho. And then went from Twin Falls back into Oregon, and spent quite a little time around the Vale area because they were just opening up the Vale Irrigation Project. And on that highway that runs from Vale to ---

EDWARD: Ontario --- Burns?

IRA: Yeah, Ontario. It didn't get much beyond west of Vale because then you begin to run into what they called the alkali belt, and that's another story. But anyway, they were just opening that up, and everything on the north side of the road from Vale to Ontario was available. You could buy it; it was for sale for \$50 an acre. But you had to pay for the irrigation rights right away, because they were putting the project in there, and the government charged the people for it, a \$100 an acre. So that meant that you had a \$100 an acre, \$150 an acre invested in it before you could turn a plow. So they looked that over pretty carefully.

They got back home and we had a Sunday dinner, all the family together. And my father says, "It is just this about it, if you boys want to stay in the potato business from here on, you're going to have to move. There was no argument about it, they're going to run you out of business." Because see what we were doing here was raising seed potatoes for the California market. We sent them carloads and car loads at a time down to Stockton, California for what they called the early market. They would start shipping them, oh usually in December, and over into January. The plants were an early potato

market down there. And he says, "They're going to run you out of business, you won't be in business." So both your dad and Ellis said, "I don't want to go." Says, "It will put you out of business if you stay." It did in a sense, because that was the end of the potato business for this part --- from then --- oh, just to a degree. But you see we could raise about 150 bushels to the acre here, and they could raise 600 just as easy on the same acre.

EDWARD: Did you stop by Bill Brown's Buck Creek Ranch on the way back?

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: That was the first time you'd seen it.

IRA: Yeah, 11 years old, yes.

EDWARD: 11 years old.

IRA: Yeah, and the house was there, that one.

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: Yeah, it was ---

EDWARD: The big white two-story one.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: What do you remember when you were --- 1917? Do you remember anything, anything stand out in your mind, Ira?

IRA: You mean in '17?

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: Yeah, we got to the, coming around the bend going to this place, and here was the foreman's kid, he must have been about 15, 16 years old, putting a saddle on the milk cow. (Laughter) I think it was Pete Wilson's kid, but I'm not sure about that, but I believe it was. And my dad had plenty to say about that.

EDWARD: Your dad was really mad?

IRA: Well disgusted, put it that way. Because that kid of course was a typical kid. I can remember putting a saddle on a steer when I was just a kid around here, just to see what would happen.

EDWARD: Right. What else about --- was Bill there at home when you guys stopped by?

IRA: Uh huh. He wanted us to stay, but Father only stayed one night. "Said no point in my wasting time here." So he talked to him that night, they talked all night. And I couldn't sleep at all, just because I didn't know where to lay down at. They didn't pay any attention; you're just a wart you might say, or something like that.

EDWARD: Is that what Bill was saying?

IRA: So I went and found this bed in there and got in it. It wasn't long here they came to bed, one on each side, they talked back and forth all night. I didn't sleep at all.

EDWARD: You mean in the same bed?

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: You were in the middle?

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: And the two brothers, George and Bill just sit there and

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MARGARET: That's very believable.

IRA: Yeah, talked back and forth. Naturally they would, because Father was going to go home, leave the next day, which we did. And they talked as long as they could, because it's --- They relived old times, and everything else under the sun.

EDWARD: The way --- as far as I can figure, Ira, that the Buck Creek house was built about 1909 or 1910.

IRA: Well that could be. I remember them talking about it. You see it had a nursery upstairs.

EDWARD: Oh yeah.

IRA: And every time a new schoolteacher would come in there, he'd go get her and take her up there and show her. And I remember him telling, the folks talking about him, he'd talked --- here is one that's pretty prospective, possible. And he says, "Now I figure that if I could raise seven sons," or he says, "if --- you could include the son-in-laws in that too," he says, "if I can have seven I've got it figured out that I can put one of them on each of the major water holes in this part of the country and I can control all of Eastern Oregon." And of course this would just scare them to death.

EDWARD: He was talking to these teachers that were coming.

IRA: The teacher, yeah, and she scarcely knew him. Now he came pretty close to marrying one, she wasn't of course a schoolteacher there, because she was raised in that area, and her name was --- I'll think of it --- Shields. And Vern told me when I was up there visiting and ---

EDWARD: Now what ---

IRA: --- and Vern Colvin he was a friend of ours, and we went to see him, and he was a loan agency for First Interstate Bank, for cattle loans. And he told me, he says, "The fellow you ought to look up when you go down there, because it is easy to find, is a fellow by the name of Shields, and he is right there at Riley." So I stopped and asked at the Riley place, the store, where Shields lived. And said, yeah he says, he pointed how to get there. So I went up and talked to him. We got there about 1 o'clock, and he wanted me to stay all night in the worst way. Oh he says, "Stay," he says, "I want to talk to you."

EDWARD: Who, this Shields guy?

IRA: Uh huh. And come to find out, I mean now I know it, I didn't think of it at the time, he was the brother of the woman that I say Bill should have married. In fact Bill tried, but of course she was scared for the same reason. But I talked to him for two or three hours.



EDWARD: What was his first name? Was it Thomas?

IRA: I don't remember that, what's his name. But come to find out he was the, at one time was the judge there. And when Bill shot that Overstreet, why Shields went with him down to Lakeview. And he says, "It's true," he says, "We were ---" and he told me where the cabin was when they was ... he had two boys apparently. And there was myself, and he says, "Uncle Bill, and my two boys went along as kind of guards, so to speak."

And three men rode in one night and demanded that we turn Bill over to them. And they all had rifles, and they really meant business. Shields says, "Well," he says, "I went out and talked to them. You can't have him, if that's what you mean." And he says, "If you want to shoot it out, we'll shoot it out with you." Now Shields told me this himself. "We'll shoot it out with you," said, "my two boys are pretty good shots," and he says, "I'm no slouch myself." And of course he says, "You know how Bill gets along." And he says, "I guarantee you there will be at least two of you that will never get back to Burns." He says they left. And that's the last ---

So when they got to a certain ridge, I didn't know where it was, where the two boys went back home. And he went on down to Lakeview with Bill, and the judge down there of course turned him loose.

EDWARD: I want to tell you something, Ira, and I'm going to show it to you. I let you talk; I didn't want to say a darn word. I know, I just --- I'll find it here in a second. I talked to, in Portland, Marie Shields Barrett, that is the daughter of the Thomas Shields you were talking to.

IRA: Oh could be, yes.

EDWARD: She is 91 years old.

IRA: She is 91?

EDWARD: I want to show you something. Let me take ---

... (Pause in tape)

IRA: That this ... instead of Bill ---

EDWARD: Oh, you mean Myra Shields ---

IRA: Yes, the one that was going to marry Bill, or Bill wanted to marry her, I'll put it that way.

EDWARD: Right. This Myra married in 1899, she married Joe Vanderpool.

IRA: You've of course; they stole the locket off of you, didn't they?

MARGARET: Oh yes.

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: What he did, he went and had this locket made, I had never seen it until you --- but I heard about it, of course. It had the brand, the horseshoe brand on a little diamond. She didn't know anything about that he was doing this. He went up there and just put it around her neck. He says, "Now I've got my brand on you, you're mine." And that's the way he proposed to her.

EDWARD: This girl right here.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: And that's the girl.

IRA: That's the first time I'd ever seen a picture. (Laughter)

EDWARD: And Marie, the lady I interviewed, remembered that.

IRA: Oh, I'll bet she did.

EDWARD: She was very young.

IRA: I would say probably she was 16.

EDWARD: Yeah. Myra, I got it out, it took me awhile. Myra was about 16 years old. Bill was 40 something.

IRA: Yeah, that could be. Now I never put much credence in this fact that he was going

to marry Mickie Hutton.

EDWARD: That's Link Hutton's ---

IRA: Sister.

EDWARD: I've got to ask you this out loud.

IRA: Well I could tell you something about that.

... (Pause in tape)

EDWARD: ... old Bill here, it's more fun.

MARGARET: Is that perk noise going to bother?

EDWARD: Oh, I don't --- probably. I don't know, Margaret. Back to the Shields. I'm really --- Ira it's great, you got a great memory.

IRA: I was telling her, it's hard for me to recall names. Now on the spur of the moment, if I can think about it for a little while, yeah it comes back to me, because I don't use them.

EDWARD: No.

IRA: Just like this fellow Shields, I don't think that I mentioned his name until now, and it was years ago that I talked to him.

EDWARD: Years, because he died in about 1941, '42.

IRA: Yeah, I suppose, uh huh.

EDWARD: We're talking years ago, Ira. You mentioned --- I want to finish up on Judge Shields. He was the first judge of Harney County in 1889, for a very short period of time. He was quite a character. Well what --- well I've got to bring this up, I mean it's all there is to it. This Overstreet thing, you know that Bill got in an argument, whether --- it probably wasn't Bill ---

IRA: No, see like I --- I don't know if I mentioned or not, my father just got in with a freight wagon from The Dalles, that's where they brought in their winter --- and he had the winter supply.

EDWARD: This was George, your father?

IRA: Yes, to do them all winter. And just had unhooked the team, and of course they were sitting around this, all they had was just this campfire a going. Because it was really a sheep camp at the time. And these three riders rode in and started shooting at Bill. They seemed to zero in on him. That's the one they wanted to get rid of apparently, he was --- figured he was the leader. And it's true that --- because my father told me the story about the time that first shot went by Bill. He went over to the wagon, because Father always carried a 30-30 rifle in the freight wagon with him on the trip, and just pulled the gun out of that and pumped a shell into the chamber, because he didn't dare let one sit in there in case it would go off accidentally. Pumped a shell into it, and just one shot, he shot Overstreet right out of the saddle. It hit him in about the stomach, and went clear out through his back. And of course it just killed him in a matter of just a short time. And the other two lugged him out of there. Now that's what started, you might say, the ---

EDWARD: Sheep, cattle ---

IRA: It ended the feud from that standpoint. He didn't have any more trouble.

EDWARD: You said your father had just come in from The Dalles with a winter's supply. This is real important, because I'm going to try to find where this place, happened, this summer.

IRA: Oh yeah, I think you can.

EDWARD: Do you know --- well there is probably three things Ira, what your father told you, because your father was there.

IRA: Uh huh, and Bob too.

EDWARD: And Robert was too. What year approximately, and the location?

IRA: Gee, I don't have either of those. Because Father didn't want to talk about it very much. As I got older I asked him about it, and that's the way he related the story to me,

which naturally was pretty much accurate. But as far as where in that area up there, or even when as far as you might say, that I didn't know. And I never did know the two men that rode with him, the outlaw.

EDWARD: One was probably Ike Foster who was a foreman, probably, was a foreman for the Riley Hardin Ranch. That's probably --- The year is maybe 1885.

IRA: That would come --- would be pretty close to it, because Father was still there. And I told you he was only there either three or four years.

EDWARD: The location is probably, a lot of probablys, on Lost Creek in Lake County, northern Lake County.

IRA: Do you think it was that far south?

EDWARD: I'm not sure.

IRA: I don't think it was, because --- Well still --- because Harney County covers a big area.

EDWARD: You know where the Gap Ranch is?

IRA: Yes.

EDWARD: This would have been about 20 miles southwest of the Gap Ranch.

IRA: Oh.

EDWARD: A little north of Wagontire Mountain, kind of on the base of it.

IRA: Yeah, could be. Yes, because I used to hear my father talk so much about Glass Buttes.

EDWARD: Glass Buttes, right. Glass Buttes is right, five miles away.

IRA: Yeah, it would be in that general area.

EDWARD: In that area.

IRA: Yes.

EDWARD: Well we're going --- that was one thing I was really hoping to find where that

location was. But it is so difficult, that's a long time ago.

IRA: That's the only time that he would ever talk about it at all. And I can see why ---

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: --- because they, he wanted to forget it.

EDWARD: You see Judge Shields, the first thing Bill did was go to that --- there it is, right there. Went to this cabin of Shields to turn himself in, say shot this guy. And Shields, from what Marie Shields Barrett said, is that her father, Judge Shields, was totally on Bill's side.

IRA: Yes he was, he told me so. And when you were out, I was talking about the Hutton's.

EDWARD: Okay, yeah I wanted to get the old Link, old Link Hutton.

IRA: Because when I was telling about looking up this Sammy Boyce that originally had ridden for Bill, Sammy told me he said, "You see that window up there in the peak of my house?" He had a pretty nice house.

EDWARD: Where was this, in Burns?

IRA: No, Sammy Boyce had a house out, it would be between Burns and Christmas Valley, but it was off the main road quite a little ways. And, because Vern had told me to look up Sammy Boyce, he had ridden for Bill. And he told me how to get there. You turn off the main road and follow this road down. And he didn't tell me about all the forks there. Fortunately I kept taking the one to the right all the time, and I came to this field where there was a fellow greasing a hay rake. And I said, "I'm looking for Sammy Boyce." He said, "You're a looking at him." A little fellow standing here with a grease gun in his hand. And when I told him who I was, and what I wanted, gee he just ... and sat down, he wanted to talk the rest of the day. I must have spent about an hour at that time, although I saw him several times after that.

EDWARD: Was this the same period of time you had seen Shields, or was that later, this seeing Boyce was that later?

IRA: I saw Shields after that.

EDWARD: After that. So this ---

IRA: I saw Shields about the last time that Shields must have been alive.

EDWARD: So this was the late '30's.

IRA: Yeah, because Sammy Boyce, he says, "You see that window up there in my house?" He said, "I hid Link Hutton's wife up there for several days." Because he said, "The mail carrier came to their place with the mail at the time that Link Hutton was beating up on his wife." And he saw the whole thing, and he stepped in and took her part, and Link shot him and killed him deader than a doornail.

EDWARD: Who did Link shoot?

IRA: The mail carrier.

EDWARD: The mail carrier.

IRA: She didn't tell me his name. But she was the only one; say would be the witness against him. Of course he knew that, and she got out of there. And he says, "She came here, and she told me that Link would be looking for her." So he said, "She wanted to hide here for a few days." So he said, "I couldn't think where to hide her. So I put her up there in the top of that, and she stayed up there for several days." "And sure enough," he says, "Link showed up here looking for her." Said, "Well I haven't seen her." And he said, "I didn't invite him in the house at all." Which was usually the --- in those days they did. And he left, and he said, "That's the last time I ever saw him."

EDWARD: Ever saw Link Hutton.

IRA: Yeah. But he said, "Then she left here too." Said, "I don't know whatever happened to her."

EDWARD: Where in the world was this Boyce's place, was it between Christmas Valley and ---

IRA: Burns.

EDWARD: Oh, that's a long ways.

IRA: Oh you bet, that's why when I turned off, because Vern Colvin told me where to turn off, the road from Lakeview to Riley.

EDWARD: Oh, yeah.

IRA: And turn west.

EDWARD: You must have turned west right around Wagontire.

IRA: Oh, before I got there.

EDWARD: Before, just beyond --- I know where --- because there is a road today that goes across.

IRA: Yes. Like I say I couldn't tell which to go to his farm, ranch.

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: I couldn't tell which one to take. You know that that little Sammy Boyce when --- it was after that experience with him at the ranch, telling about hiding Link Hutton, he bought an airplane. And he flew it himself. (Laughter) Because he said you can get around so much faster up in this country. (Laughter)

EDWARD: What post office was he by, do you recall? I'll give you some names. Lake?

IRA: Oh, you mean ---

EDWARD: Sammy Boyce.

IRA: Well he wasn't anywhere near any post office.

EDWARD: Oh, he wasn't?

IRA: He was the mail carrier.

EDWARD: Yeah, there was a place called Stauffer, and Lake ---



IRA: Oh yeah. No, I don't know what station that the mail carrier was out of, in that ... But whatever happened --- they apparently didn't nail Link Hutton for it.

EDWARD: Who was, Link Hutton worked for Bill Brown.

IRA: At one time. See he had a brother too; they called them the Hutton Brothers. And then they had a sister called Mickie. And you often hear the remark about Bill was going to marry Link's sister, Mickie Hutton. I don't think such a thing ever came about at all. Because she carried the mail for a while.

EDWARD: Link Hutton, I keep running across that name. And in fact I called some Hutton's, Ira, but they had never heard of Link Hutton. I called some in Brown ---

IRA: Oh yeah, I was trying to think --- Now Mickie Hutton's name was Americas, does that ring a bell?

EDWARD: Sutherland?

IRA: Well that could have been her name eventually, because she was just a young person when Link shot the mail carrier.

EDWARD: This is really interesting. Let me tell you a little bit. Bill sold his property down on Lost Creek, by Wagontire Mountain, to Americas Sutherland.

IRA: Oh yeah, could be.

EDWARD: This is starting to make sense.

IRA: Yeah, because that could be Mickie. Because they only had just the one sister, that I know.

EDWARD: And he sold the land, this is what he told Fred Lockley in 1932, it's in here. He sold the land in which him and Overstreet got in that argument and fight over, to Mrs. Sutherland. And that's on Lost Creek. And she owned it in 1936, by the maps.

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: So Mrs. Sutherland, Americas, is probably Link Hutton's sister.

IRA: Yeah, because nobody else would ever have a name like that.

EDWARD: No, no.

IRA: I don't remember what the other brother's name was, I knew at the time.

EDWARD: Was it Frank?

IRA: Could be.

EDWARD: I think it was. I have not been able to find any relatives of the Hutton's.

IRA: No, because I don't think this woman that he ran off had any family at all. And that was the last he saw her.

EDWARD: I'm trying to remember where I keep seeing Link Hutton's name, but I can't remember right now.

SIDE B

EDWARD: ... Yeah, you mentioned that. Go ahead and do that story.

IRA: They detected it in the sugar. In other words if you know anything about strychnine, strychnine is bitter, just like quinine. And then my father said we detected it right away so we didn't eat our cereal. They made --- in those days it was common to take one of these tin milk pans, which were about this big around and about that deep and put a whole --- Bill did this right up to his last days. He'd dump a whole bunch of oatmeal in it and heat it all up and put a little sugar on it and pour a can of condensed milk, the whole can right on top of it. That would make me sicker than ---

EDWARD: Thinking about it.

IRA: But anyway, so that's what they did. And they were each eating it, and that's when they ran into this bitter taste. And of course they didn't eat it at all after that.

EDWARD: Now is that when ---

IRA: That's what started Bill on this kick of taking a little bit of strychnine every day, and

he did for years after that. Because that's where that story comes from when he went into this --- he got to showing off ... went into this drugstore in Burns and that young fellow, he wanted an ounce, it was common to ask for an ounce of strychnine. And after he got an ounce of strychnine --- right while the fellow was there he took his knife and pried the cork out of it and dipped it in and took a taste of it. And he said, "Young man," he says, "they ought to have the law on you for selling something like that, that wouldn't even kill a sage tick." And naturally the fellow is just out of Corvallis, and he went running into the boss and he said, "The man up there is going to commit suicide. He just took a whole bunch of strychnine, right out there in front of me." "Oh don't pay any attention, that's old Bill Brown." (Laughter)

EDWARD: I can just see that.

IRA: He didn't even come out to talk to him.

EDWARD: He knew who it was.

IRA: Don't pay any attention to him.

EDWARD: Now when --- who was trying to put the strychnine in the oatmeal and the ---

IRA: He never did really know other than it was the followers of this Overstreet. In other words what was friends of his --- because naturally, and its gone on for years, the feud between what they call the sheep men and the cattlemen.

EDWARD: And the cattlemen, okay.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: It got real bad around Paulina.

IRA: Must have.

EDWARD: Real bad. That's another story I might do. Did --- now your dad was there at that time, he was still in Eastern Oregon with Bill, right?

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: And then ---

IRA: Oh, the strychnine thing, yeah.

EDWARD: Yeah, yeah. Of course they carried --- it has been said that Bill carried, you know, he had strychnine in his pocket and it kind of mixed with his raisins every once in awhile.

IRA: It did.

EDWARD: And he just got so used to ---

IRA: He didn't pay any attention to it, I mean the fact that they got mixed with the strychnine and the raisins and the prunes, he didn't pay any attention, he just ate them anyway.

EDWARD: Just ate them anyway. They got a little dust on there, and he got kind of immune to it evidently.

IRA: He said he did.

EDWARD: Yeah. What are --- what are some of your thoughts about Bill Brown? For example, why, how --- I don't know, Ira, how to really say this. Why did they succeed? You had seven children, the Brown family.

IRA: They all succeeded.

EDWARD: Hannah and the --- Sam ---

IRA: They were hard workers, as far as that part of it goes. But, well he did some things that just didn't make sense in my book.

EDWARD: Now Bill, Bill?

IRA: Yes. For instance a fellow, Shields I guess it was told me the story about Bill got the idea that the people that made bacon were making a huge profit. So he said, "I think we'll raise our own hogs after this." So he bought a whole bunch of pigs. And I don't know through death or whatnot, it just simmered down to two, that's all he had left, a big one

and a little one. And he went to some fellow there and he says, "This is the end of the pigs." He says, "If you'll butcher those two pigs, I'll give you one of them, I want the other one." Well with one big one and one little one, and he says, "Well which one will you give me?" And he says, "Well you just as well take the big one I know you'll steal it anyway." (Laughter) So that's the way he explained it. The little fellow got the big one for butchering the two of them. That's just one of them.

Oh, they told stories over and over again, I can't remember all of them. Just laughable like that. For instance here come a drummer, salesman for supplies, out to the ranch. And he gave Bill a one-pound box of chocolates. He says, "Here is one of my main features." And Bill took the whole box and just kept talking to him, and eating out of it at the time, and ate the whole thing. And passed the box back to him. Oh, the fellow was just furious. He said, "Now," he said, "I don't have anything to show the people that I call on after here," he says, "You've eaten everything I got." "That's pretty good stuff," he said, "Just send me a ton of it." One-pound boxes, a ton of them? Well --- two thousands boxes of --- So while he was there, "Oh say by the way," he says, "I need a, some baking powder. We're always, seem to be running out of that." "Well how much of that you want?" "Better send me a carload of that." "A carload of baking powder?"

When he got to Burns, he went into somebody that he had confidence in that would know. He said, "Say this old fellow out here," --- and he told them what he'd ordered. He said, "Did he really tell you that that's what he wanted?" "Yeah." "Then you send it to him, because he'll pay for it." So they did.

And that's, of course another thing, then he did this too, because I know a fellow telling me about it that he got a hat out of that place. In other words he carried a whole bunch of Stetson hats.

EDWARD: This is in Bill Brown's store.

IRA: Store, yeah.

EDWARD: Horseshoe Bar Store.

IRA: And he said, "The sign on it, take your pick, but be sure and put it down on the pad what you took, and how much the price tag said on it." Well this fellow tried on --- I think he put down a \$1.50 for a Stetson hat. (Laughter)

EDWARD: Why did --- I'll get back, just a couple things. Do you know what happened to that store, Ira, by any chance?

IRA: Oh yeah, he just finally had to lock it up. They stole on him so bad that it just didn't pay to keep it going anymore. And when I was there with my father, when I was 11, there was just a little place dug out where it had stood. I don't know if they burned it down or what?

EDWARD: Oh, it was gone by 1917?

IRA: Oh yes. Yeah, it was gone.

EDWARD: Oh, that helps. Nobody really knew, they couldn't ---

IRA: He just closed it up.

EDWARD: Said that they may have just burned it down maybe.

IRA: Well I wouldn't wonder. Either that or else they stole the lumber out of it. Sure they would do that.

EDWARD: If they're going to steal, they're going to steal the whole store. When you were over there in 1917, was there any --- maybe I better ask this first. Before he built the big two-story house, do you know if he had a building there before that?

IRA: Not much of any consequence, no. But that was --- see apparently this Buck Creek was right there.

EDWARD: Right, right.

IRA: It started from a big spring.

EDWARD: Yeah, it's right back here.

IRA: And there was always water there.

EDWARD: Uh huh.

IRA: So --- Yeah, because when I --- that was a very important thing. When I stopped at the Gap Ranch that --- I was telling you when I asked a fellow about if there were any rattlesnakes still there. He said, "You know, I was riding just the other day," and he says, "I rooted out a couple of old horses with this horseshoe brand on their jaw." He says, "And they could still run." He says, "I spooked them for a little while just for the heck of it." He says, "They took off," he said. And sure enough they were still there. He says, "They were so old that they had gone from gray to white. See a horse will turn white if he is gray, as he gets older. And he said they were pure white.

EDWARD: And the horse --- the brand on Bill Brown's horseshoe brand wasn't on the butt, it was on the ---

IRA: Right there on the jaw.

EDWARD: On both sides or just ---

IRA: No, left hand side as I recall.

EDWARD: Huh.

IRA: Because the reason I mention that, is this Sammy Boyce told me, he says, "You know, I came across --- I saw this activity around," he named the corral, it didn't mean anything --- it was below Lakeview somewhat. He said, "I saw all this activity, I was riding through the country over there, and I went over there to see what was going on. They had a bunch of horses in the corral. They didn't want to talk to me, have anything to do with me." And he says, "You know what those fellows were doing, they were taking a knife and cutting out the hide that covered that horseshoe brand on the jaw. Then they took buckskin string and poked four holes in it and they crossed it this way and tied it back

together. It would heal with a scar, but he says, "You couldn't make anything out of it at all." And that's the way they changed the brand from the horseshoe bar. He says they just stole the whole bunch. And of course I didn't dare say anything about it because I couldn't prove it.

EDWARD: Well it has been said at one time he probably had around 10,000 horses running all over out there.

IRA: At the time that I went up there, was going to work for him one summer, just like my brother Waldo did. And the kid I went with got appendicitis, and gee that was pretty serious.

EDWARD: Oh, very serious, a lot of them died.

IRA: And we was afraid we'd lose him, so I came back home with him. I never did stay the summer. At that time he had 6,500 head of horses, and 20,000 sheep.

EDWARD: That would have been what year?

IRA: About 1918.

EDWARD: 20,000 head of ----

IRA: Sheep.

EDWARD: Sheep.

IRA: And 6,500 head of horses.

EDWARD: Horses.

IRA: Because we stopped at the Gap Ranch, I mean that's where we got off that thing that went by.

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: They called it the stage, and sometimes they called it the --- but it was just merely a touring car.

EDWARD: Why did Bill, why did Bill stay in Eastern Oregon when all of his brothers were



here on this land that we're on right now? Or a lot of his brothers anyway.

IRA: You know what he'd do --- I heard him tell my father this. He says, "You know I just don't enjoy coming down here with all this congestion." He says, "When I was here last time, and I'm going to do the same thing this time," he says, "when I go back," and he named the road that is right there where the sign points to the GI Ranch, "I'm going to get off there and walk home." And my father says, "Hey that is 25 miles." "That's right," and he says, "When I get home I feel much better." So he walked the 25 miles. Because when my brother Ellis went up there the first time and worked for him, he walked in with a suitcase from the same place.

EDWARD: I wonder if that was around Hampton? I bet you it was. Because that's how I'm going to go in this time.

IRA: Well it would be --- yeah, it would have to be.

EDWARD: I think so, yeah.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: I think it is.

IRA: I stopped there, you talk about Hampton. I stopped there and talked to the fellow that ran it. And he says, "That old truck out there came off that place," but I don't think it was Bill's truck. He said it was --- they used that on the old Bill Brown Ranch. But I don't think it was Bill's, and it was just rusting away out there in the back.

EDWARD: Did Bill, how did he, did he get along with most people, Ira?

IRA: Oh, very well. Yeah, he didn't have too many enemies. Of course, as far as the sheep men and the cattle, yeah they would tangle. But for the most part, yeah, he seemed to be pretty well liked.

EDWARD: How did he get along with his brothers George, Sam, Ellis?

IRA: Real well.

EDWARD: Did they write much?

MARGARET: Oh no, there was a strong bond.

IRA: Oh yeah, no they didn't argue much.

MARGARET: Different, but loyal, really loyal.

IRA: Yeah, yes, you bet.

MARGARET: One of the letters that I dug out, they had sent him some money, I think, when he was in Salem, \$5.00, and a self-addressed envelope, and they didn't hear from him. But they were ...

IRA: That story about the shovels is true.

MARGARET: Oh sure.

IRA: Yeah. See while he was there, in fact he used to brag about it through this various donations that he made to this ---

EDWARD: Yeah, Bill Brown made quite a few.

IRA: He made a deal with the Methodists that he could come down to that Methodist Home in Salem and spend the balance of his days when he couldn't take care of his --- would have his meals and whatnot. And you know they tried their best to get around that. They wouldn't honor it when he came down there. And I don't remember, it might have been the family again that stepped in there and made them live up to it. Because he used to show everybody this card that he had. But it was eventually --- because he would get asked that, what's eventually going to happen to you. "I got this place where I can go to live." And he would show them this card over and over again. Then they didn't want to abide by it.

EDWARD: The Methodist Home.

IRA: Yeah. Margaret, you may recall --- I don't know if you ever heard your father talk about it, but they did the same thing with our Uncle Ellis. You remember that?

MARGARET: ...

IRA: Yeah, the Bank of California, this is another family story. They stole, through a very slick attorney, a million dollars from our Uncle Ellis, the one that my brother was named after.

EDWARD: That was the doctor.

IRA: Yeah.

EDWARD: Eye doctor.

IRA: Because it was a rather strange --- I roomed in the same area, same living quarters in Eugene with a fellow that eventually married Dr. Ellis' nurse. This is ... has nothing to do with the other. And she came to the family, because I knew her through this fellow that I knew that she married. She came to the family one day, and she said, "Say, I don't know if you people know what's going on." Says, "That bank is stealing him blind."

EDWARD: This must be when he was quite older.

IRA: Yeah, it was, it was on his last year. In fact he ended up with cancer of the prostate, which was quite common in those days. And she said, "I, fortunately," she said, "I've kept a daily diary of the whole goings on. I know what is taking place. And if you ever need it," she says, "I'll appear for you in court." And she found that, they found that out and fired her the next day.

EDWARD: That sounds very familiar, Ira.

IRA: That sort of scam is still going on.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

IRA: But I keep thinking you ---

EDWARD: What were some of Bill's personality traits, do you know?

IRA: Well I told you about the pigs, and if I could think about it, because I'll think of them afterwards, things that he did.

EDWARD: Well make sure you write them down, Ira, when I leave. What, okay, how tall a guy was he?

IRA: Was he?

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: Six, two.

EDWARD: He was six --- he was my height. He was a big man then?

IRA: Oh yes he was. He was the biggest of the family. My Uncle Bob was pretty much the same, that was with him up there.

EDWARD: Pretty good-sized guy.

IRA: Oh yes he was.

EDWARD: In those days, that was big.

IRA: Yeah. And plenty husky. Yeah. Because so many of the family, my two uncles in Portland were small, weren't they?

MARGARET: I guess.

IRA: Oh, maybe about five foot seven, maybe five eight.

EDWARD: You mean Ellis and Sam?

IRA: Yeah. They were small.

EDWARD: William was born in 1855; he was 85 when he passed away, yeah.

IRA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: Okay. I want to --- I'll go through this real quick, Ira, because I don't want to talk, I don't want to write too much about it anyway. What caused the downfall of Bill Brown in Eastern Oregon?

IRA: The thievery.

EDWARD: Thievery.

IRA: Like I say, my family knew that, and my brother Ellis went up there and tried his best

to steer that thing around. Because it was inevitable what would eventually come of it.

EDWARD: Did Bill by any chance, do you think, got land poor too?

IRA: Well yes, in a way. Because what happened in that respect was that the horse market just went to nothing, and he had all these horses on hand. So it ended up in that respect that he sold them for dog food to an outfit in Portland called Schlosser Brothers.

EDWARD: Schlosser.

IRA: Schlosser Brothers.

EDWARD: Schlosser Brothers.

IRA: They were in the dog food business. And when cattle got to where they were too expensive for them to use for that purpose, then they bought his entire herd, a big herd of horses. And that's where this Sammy Boyce remarked about that. He said, "Bill called him up, got in touch with him," said, "I want to see you." So he said, "I'm selling these horses, I hate to admit it, to go for dog food because there is no more market for them."

And he said, "I want you to ride for me and round them up for me." And Sammy says, because Sammy Boyce told me this story himself. He says, "Bill, how much do you plan on paying it?" "I'll give you \$150 a month." Well he said, "I've got to have somebody help me. I can't ---" "Well go get somebody." Well he said, "Were you going to pay them, or you want me to pay them?" "Well I expect you to pay --- if I pay you as much as \$150 a month, I expect you to pay them." Sammy says, "I can't do that Bill, no way." He says, "How much will you give me by the head?" "Well how much do you want?" He says, "Seventy-five cents." "Okay, I'll take that." So he said, "I got ---"

He told me who he got to help him. And they went, started corralling horses. Well he said, "It wasn't two --- it was about three days," he said, "went by." And of course Bill had to --- because I kept telling him, now you get your buckaroos to get them out of here so that I can use the corral to put more in.

And so he said, came by --- and just about the third day --- and he says, "Naturally," he says, "if I start around a corral I bring the ones in that are the closest, and I had pretty near a 100 head there." And Bill says, "Oh my gracious," he says, "I can't stand such a thing as that." He says, "Seventy-five dollars," he said, "for three days work, no way." He said, "We're going to go back to this so much a month business."

"You're not going to go back to that with me," he says. "You just give me a check for what's in here, and you go get your buckaroos to go corral them." So he says, "I didn't see Bill for oh some little time over that." Says, "Say Bill, I know you rounded up the horses and sent them into Portland." He said, "How did you come out paying by the wages so much a month in comparison to seventy-five cents a head? How much did it end up costing you?" He says, "I know you know, because that's the way you keep track of things." Says, "Well it likely," he says, "it came to almost \$3.50 a head." He says, "I knew that all the time." (Laughter) So it was, ended up reasoning.

And I'll tell you a funny angle to that at the time, and it was a story in the stockyards. Because I worked in the stockyards in my younger days, Portland, working for commission for selling cattle. And I knew the Schlosser Brothers real well, because they bought culls for dog food. And when they started on this horse business, I respected his thoughts very much. He says, "You watch," he says, "I can't base this on a particular quotation in the Bible," but he says, "it is going to break the Schlosser Brothers for killing those horses for dog food, you watch."

The Schlosser Brothers was a prominent factor in Portland in the, out of the stockyards there in Portland. And the Schlosser Brothers died dead broke, both of them. They didn't have a dime. One of them that held on the longest tried to make a living buying a half of a beef and had it in the back end of a little pickup and drove through the country, and he would drive into a farm place and he'd cut the housewife off this much,

weigh it on a little scale, seventy-five cents and a dollar a piece. And that's the way he ended up, Curt Schlosser. And he says that's why, the fellow says that's why because they killed horses for dog food. Says you can't do that.

EDWARD: I bet you Bill Brown; I bet you he wasn't happy with that, I wouldn't think he would be.

IRA: I should say not. He didn't want to even talk about it. But he stayed with that end of it too long. For instance one herder took off with his sheep, 2,000 head, and he tried to find him. And said the last trace that he could trace on, they went through Lakeview ---

EDWARD: Heading south.

IRA: Heading south.

EDWARD: Probably to Nevada.

IRA: Yeah. But see that was quite a bunch of Irishman wasn't it, down in that country?

EDWARD: Yeah, a lot of Irish.

IRA: Yeah, that's where they supposedly went. But he couldn't find a trace of them.

EDWARD: Did Bill ever have a person that he could, was honest and relied on? Was there --- you mentioned ---

IRA: Frank Houston.

EDWARD: Yeah, Frank Houston.

IRA: He would, yeah but he was no businessman. He was just a heck of a good hand, real top drawer. Because Bill came to me when I was up there with this kid, and he said, "Now I want you to ride with Frank." Because he said, "I haven't any idea how many colts I've got. So I'm going to put Charlie --- Frank in charge of the buckaroos and you go along and keep track of how many you brand, and what they are, whether they were geldings or mares." They never got to it; I don't know what they did then. But Frank was a nice, a heck of a nice guy.

EDWARD: I'll look, and if he's still around ---

IRA: Oh, he'd tell you more about it than a lot of them.

EDWARD: I ought to get a hold of him. Do you know by chance, Ira, if anybody has any of Bill Brown's branding irons or anything like that?

IRA: I wouldn't know that. Because the brand went with them, a certain bunch that he sold. Now which ones, I don't know.

EDWARD: Yeah, I don't know either. What --- when did --- well I'll ask anyway. When did Bill just finally have to leave the old Buck Creek ---

IRA: Oh yeah, he couldn't take care of himself. He got to the age, you know --- But you know he went to, he went around various financial institutions in Salem --- who was it told me that, and tried to borrow money to go back in there and get started again. Heck, he could hardly, you might say, take care of himself. He wanted to get started all over again. Because great Scott, they borrowed money like crazy. My father did the same thing. I never remembered him being out of debt.

EDWARD: Oh, the depression, you know.

MARGARET: ... most interesting ...

EDWARD: Bill evidently in 1935 just let it go, I don't know. You can ---

IRA: That could have been about the time, yes.

EDWARD: You can help me out on this, Ira, to the Pacific Wool Growers something or other. I've got it; I can't recall it right now. Does that make sense?

IRA: He borrowed, ended up borrowing money wherever he could. I mean, because for instance when they broke it up, the Gap Ranch went for \$3,500, the whole thing.

EDWARD: Oh gee.

IRA: The ranch that you've got the building there, the Gap Ranch, a fellow bought it that was headquartered at Summer Lake. Because I talked to the fellow that was putting up



the hay, I told you, and he said that's where his boss lived.

EDWARD: Winters.

IRA: And the outfit that bought this one, they paid \$2,500 for it, for the house and the ground that went with it at the time, for a summer deer, a hunting lodge.

EDWARD: Yeah.

IRA: And that's ... in Portland.

EDWARD: And then in ended up with a guy, in a guy's name by Dominique Verges. That was in the '50's.

IRA: Yeah, well that could be. Because you see the financial setup, I mean that put that thing together in the form of a loan

--- there's ...

MAN: Hi.

IRA: Why they foreclosed on him.

EDWARD: Right.

IRA: And then they sold it to, I don't know whether it was the best bid they could get, whether they came out even or not. I wouldn't know as to that.

EDWARD: Yeah, that gets so messy, you can't tell.

IRA: Well, unless you were right there at the time, there would be no carry over on that.

EDWARD: Yeah. Just trying to get an idea in terms of when Bill actually left. I know that George said that he came here and stayed in a house for about a year.

IRA: Yeah, he stayed with my brother Waldo and lived in Hubbard.

EDWARD: Oh, Waldo, okay. And you recall what year that was by any chance?

IRA: Gee, no.

EDWARD: I think it was after '32, and before '36.

IRA: Oh, it had to be after '32 because --- Yeah.

EDWARD: Waldo was born in '96. But I guess that Bill only stayed at Waldo's place for approximately a year.

IRA: It wouldn't have been any longer than that. Because I can remember Blanche talking, Waldo's wife talking about it. "It's time for dinner, Bill." "My," he says, "I just had something to eat a little while ago. It can't be time to eat again." And she just laughed; he didn't realize time was going by.

EDWARD: Yeah, yeah.

IRA: No, he was pretty well going down the middle of the road, so to speak, by then.

EDWARD: Let's see, let me ---

(END OF TAPE)

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