

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #217 - Sides A/B

Subject: Denny Presley Interviews

Place: Areas of Harney County

Date: 1980

Interviewer: Denny Presley

DENNY PRESLEY: And Lloyd, you were the engineer of the Edward Hines railroad, right?

LLOYD FONES: Yeah, that's right.

DENNY: And this railroad was what?

LLOYD: Huh?

DENNY: What was the name of this railroad?

LLOYD: Oregon and Northwestern Railroad.

DENNY: And it was owned primarily by Edward Hines?

LLOYD: Yeah, uh huh. That's right.

DENNY: And where did it go?

LLOYD: We'd go to Seneca, 51 miles to Seneca. We went each day, 51 miles to Seneca and back.

DENNY: You were engineer on this train for quite a while?

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: And we are going to talk about a specific train and a specific engine. And a specific incident if we can. We are going to talk about the train wreck of 1947.

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: And you weren't engineer on the train at the time?

LLOYD: No.

DENNY: But you knew who was?

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: Who was engineering the train?

LLOYD: E. J. Dick was the engineer, and Archie Miller was the fireman, and when they had the wreck up at milepost 20-21.

DENNY: Now where is milepost 21 at?

LLOYD: Well it's up in Poison Creek, up high, up towards the tunnel, up towards the summit.

DENNY: And what was the incidence behind this wreck? It was --- what time of year was it?

LLOYD: Oh, let's see. I think it was in the fall. I believe it was in the fall. I don't remember; it's been so many years ago.

DENNY: Yeah, it's been quite a while back.

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: Now what I understand it was, this was a logging train.

LLOYD: Yes, that's right.

DENNY: And it was loaded with logs and lumber?

LLOYD: Yeah, it had logs and lumber both on the train. They --- we never did really figure out exactly what caused the runaway, but it was said that they had these new boxcars on the head end. And I think they had sixteen of them. And then they had logs on the flat cars on the --- on the old flat cars on the --- loaded with logs on the rear end. And from what they, from what I can remember, they said that they thought that the triple valves on these boxcars worked so much faster than the triple valves on the old log --- or, or so much slower than the triple valves on the old log cars, that when they started down

the hill why they set up the air, and they just equalized and they never had no brakes.

DENNY: So what did they do then?

LLOYD: Well they jumped off. The engineer jumped off, and then Archie jumped off. And Charlie Pierce was on the head end, and he jumped off, and they let her go.

DENNY: About how fast --- the train build up while it was going downhill grade.

LLOYD: I don't know for sure, Denny, what the speed would be, of course. But they told me it should be --- that train was probably running 80 miles an hour when it hit that turn down there.

DENNY: And then of course she just ---

LLOYD: And it turned over. Just jumped the track and turned over, and went over the --- The engine didn't go over the bank, but a lot of the cars and the lumber did.

DENNY: The engine --- laid the engine over on its side, huh?

LLOYD: Yeah, it just ---

DENNY: Did it --- was that the end of the engine then? That retired it?

LLOYD: Yeah. Well it tore it all up. They had to cut it up with acetylene torches, you know, to get it out of there and just haul it away.

DENNY: Now we're talking about a big logging steam engine?

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: It was a pretty big engine too, wasn't it?

LLOYD: Pretty good-sized engine. Yeah, I don't remember what it weighed. It was a number 26; it was, you know, a good-sized engine.

DENNY: You drove that rain and that particular track for a long time, and so you knew it well.

LLOYD: Oh yeah, yeah.

DENNY: And you could see the debris there for years.

LLOYD: Yeah, it's still some of it laying down in there, I think. I'm not sure, but I think there is.

DENNY: Now this put the track out of operation too, then?

LLOYD: Oh, yeah. It shut everything down until they got it all cleaned up. I don't remember how long it took them, but I think probably at least a week before they could get by it again.

DENNY: They had another engine that they could use?

LLOYD: Oh yeah. Yeah, we had three engines. Yeah. So that's about all there was to it. They cleaned it up and we went back to work.

DENNY: This type of an engine was a logging engine. Is it different than a transport train or a passenger train engine, wasn't it?

LLOYD: Well, not a great lot. It was a steam engine, and it was made more for freight, to haul freight. But I've seen them when I was firing on the mainline; I've seen them use that type of engine in passenger service. You know, in an emergency, they've used them. But these engines here are more or less freight engines, you know, to haul freight.

DENNY: Yeah, you were telling me that it had an extra set of drivers that they could ---

LLOYD: Well it never had an extra set of drivers, but it had what they called a booster. And when you get in a real hard pull, you know, why you could cut this booster, and it was on the trailer trucks. It had a cylinder on the drive shaft on the axle of the trailer trucks. And this here booster would help pull, you know.

DENNY: It would run you out of steam in a hurry though, wouldn't it?

LLOYD: Yeah, but it took a lot of water, and a lot of steam. Mostly water, it would take your water away awful fast. They couldn't use it a long ways, but they could use it to get out of a bad, bad place, you know.

DENNY: And a logging train, a lot of times was packing a lot of weight and she hit some

pretty heavy grades, wouldn't it?

LLOYD: Oh yeah, yeah. We pulled some pretty heavy loads.

DENNY: I remember when you were talking about when they changed over from the steam engine to the diesel engines.

LLOYD: Well we didn't like --- I didn't like the diesel at all. I just didn't care for them at all. But I got ---

DENNY: Used to the steam.

LLOYD: You know, got used to them, and they worked good. They've got more power, there's no doubt about that. They've got more power than a steam engine. They've got more traction because they've got more weight, see. And it's diesel power, you don't really get a run at anything. It don't pull until it gets down to a certain speed, and then it pulls hard.

DENNY: Yeah.

LLOYD: And above that speed why, you know, it can't --- you can only do so much and that's all.

DENNY: Yeah, the diesel engines actually ran electric generator, and the generator turned the electric motors.

LLOYD: Right, yeah.

DENNY: Yeah. So it just put out --- diesel more or less run at the same --- diesel engine more or less run at the same speed all the time.

LLOYD: Yeah, they do, yeah.

DENNY: Kind of like an automatic transmission in a car.

LLOYD: Oh, they speed up, but then they shunt down too. They, its got automatic shunts in there see, and when you get to going about so fast it'll change into the next shunt, just like an automatic transmission. It'll slow the motor down, and then you get to going so

fast again and it'll shunt again, and it'll slow the motor down again. Each shunt in a different pulling range, see. And it works a lot like an automatic transmission in an automobile, you know. About, about the same thing.

DENNY: But they were just real quiet, and a whole new ball game from the old steam engine.

LLOYD: Oh yeah, they was a lot quiet. And of course they were pretty noisy in the cabs too, you know. You've got that big dynamo, and all that going right there in front of you, and the big eight cylinder motor a roaring under there. And they were pretty noisy too.

DENNY: The old freight trains, they had a lot of glory, or dignity, or something about them that the diesels didn't have though.

LLOYD: Yeah, I never --- I always loved the whistles on a steam engine, you know. They sound more like a train. Of course when I first started on a railroad, I started in Portland, you know, on the Union Pacific. I fired up there, moved up to The Dalles and fired east from there for, oh quite a long while, you know. And you could hear those trains. We lived up on 14th street, and you could hear those trains coming up and down the canyon, even over on the Washington side, the S. B. & S. train. And they'd sound beautiful, you know, when they blowed those whistles. You could hear them echo, you know, through that canyon down there.

DENNY: Well I can remember when I was a kid the old steam engines down here at the depot where U. P. came in ---

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: --- Burns. And it just --- when an old steam engine takes off, just listening to her chug and pull, you could just hear the power. You could just --- I don't know there was just more ---

LLOYD: Well the diesel, they had more power, there's no doubt about that. They --- if

you had three diesels, three units, you know, why you could pull a train right in two in the middle, you know, if you put sand under it and widen on it, it would just literally pull it right in two. If, you know, if the train wouldn't come. It was too heavy; it'd just pull it in two.

DENNY: Just pull the couplers in half, you mean?

LLOYD: Yeah, so you had to be pretty careful, you know. If you slipped down on the mountain you didn't dare just reach up and widen on her again like you did a steam engine. 'Cause if you did, if them engines would take a hold, why they'd yank her right in two in the middle, see, just break in two.

DENNY: Now the --- this steam engine, the train that we are talking about that wrecked. Now did they give you the number? I understand you've got a piece of that train, or they awarded you part of that engine.

LLOYD: I got what?

DENNY: Didn't you get a piece of that engine, the number plate or something off of that old engine?

LLOYD: No I didn't, Denny. I got a number plate, but it was off of an old engine up at Seneca that set for years. I give that number plate to --- Who'd I give that to? Can't remember who I give that to. I give it to somebody that wanted it real bad, and I gave it to them. So I don't know where it is now.

DENNY: Now I also ---

LLOYD: The bell off of it was down at Poison Creek for a long while, off of the old 26. And I understand that they went out and got that, and I understand that they put it up in front of the Hines office out here, on the lawn there somewhere.

DENNY: That's the one off of the one that wrecked?

LLOYD: Yeah, off of number 26.

DENNY: Yeah, I remember people telling the story about, you might be able to tell me

who it was. Pete --- Pierce, I think, was one of the last guys. Was he what, the conductor? Or what was he?

LLOYD: Well he was the head brakeman on that wreck, that day. Let's see, Benny Cockrell I believe was, I believe Benny Cockrell was the conductor, and Chuck Clark was the rear brakeman, and Dave Jones was a brakeman on there.

DENNY: Well if you had a train where you had a runaway, where you had the brakes fail on the cars, the engine wouldn't stop them?

LLOYD: Oh no, huh uh. No, it wouldn't even, huh uh.

DENNY: You just had too much weight behind you. All those ---

LLOYD: Yeah, you had to have them brakes on the cars, or they'd shove that engine right on down. You could slide, set the wheels up --- the brakes up and slide the engine, and it'd slide it right on down the mountain like it wasn't even there.

DENNY: Did they attempt to slow it down by putting the brakes on the train, or did they just figure it was a lost cause?

LLOYD: Well no, I don't ---

DENNY: I mean on the engine?

LLOYD: I imagine they did. I suppose he would, but I don't see why he would either, because he knows that the driver brakes wouldn't even begin to hold it, you know.

DENNY: Well when the brakes failed, when he hit the brakes and he knew he was in trouble, he knew it was a gonner then?

LLOYD: Well he knew it was gone, yeah. And I guess he turned to little Archie, and he said, "Archie, I think we'd better get off." And Archie was over in the canyon, and he said, "That's what I'm a doing." And he had his lunch pail and was all ready to go. (Laughter)

DENNY: Now did they have to relay the messages back to everybody else on the train?

LLOYD: Oh no, no they knew. See they know about what speed, you know, that they

took off. And I think Chuck was on the ground. And usually, you know, they slow down, or they have to go slow to pick him up. You know, he comes up to set the retainers up, see. And then he'd wait there and catch the caboose when it went by. And as I understand it, when it went by Chuck it was going miles an hour. He couldn't catch it, so they knew there was something wrong, you know. Of course they come out in the, on down a ways they cut the caboose off, see. They just pulled the pin on it, they stopped that. It didn't bother the caboose too much, you know, it didn't hurt the caboose any.

DENNY: Now I understand that Charlie Pierce --- now maybe I'm wrong in saying it was Charlie Pierce. But one of the people on the train was the last guys off, and it was going so fast that by the time he tried to get off, that he figured he was going to hurt himself, so he was looking for a place to jump. And I understand there was --- looked like a snow covered bush coming up, so he jumped for the snow covered bush, but it wasn't a snow-covered bush.

LLOYD: Yeah, it was ties.

DENNY: It was a row of ties.

LLOYD: It was a pile of ties, yeah. I understand he hurt his back pretty bad. I --- you know, that's what they said.

DENNY: That would be quite a surprise, thinking you was jumping into a bush, and it's a pile of ties. Dr. Cliff Weare told me that he picked slivers out of him for two days.  
(Laughter)

LLOYD: Yeah. Well E. J. Dick, you know, he had a great long nose on him, and he skinned that. And that's about all that happened.

DENNY: Most of them got off when she wasn't going quite so fast.

LLOYD: Well I don't know how fast it was going. I imagine probably 35 or 40 though when they ---

DENNY: What would you normally --- when they bailed off, yeah. Now when a big old steam engine like that would wreck, now did it rupture the engine?

LLOYD: Huh?

DENNY: Would it have ruptured the engine, when the engine went over?

LLOYD: Well no, I don't think --- It didn't break the boiler or anything like that. But it tore all the piping off, you know, and ---

DENNY: So there would have been a lot of steam blowing off down the canyon.

LLOYD: Oh yeah, all the dry pipes and things like that, you know.

DENNY: It would have been a pretty noisy wreck then?

LLOYD: Yeah.

DENNY: Well you could probably hear steam when she finally went over and did all that damage. You could probably hear steam blowing for a long time, didn't you?

LLOYD: Well, I don't know. See that was down there about two or three miles before that went off. I don't recall just how many, how far it is up there.

DENNY: So there probably wasn't anybody even witnessed the wreck then, huh?

LLOYD: No, there wasn't anybody around at all, you know. They was all off from it. And I think that the men on the caboose, you know, was even cut off before it wrecked. I'm sure they were, you know, because it would have given an awful jar if they hadn't have been.

DENNY: Yeah. They released the caboose from the train?

LLOYD: Yeah, they just cut it off and put the brakes on the caboose, see, the hand brakes.

DENNY: They had manual, with the big wheel? They could turn that?

LLOYD: Yeah, and they stopped the caboose, you know, and let the rest of her go, you know. There was nothing they could do.

DENNY: Yeah.

LLOYD: There was no way they could help any, you know.

DENNY PRESLEY, LARRY ASMUSSEN AND MARCUS HAINES converse on Radio Days for the Kiwanis on KZZR Radio, Burns, Oregon.

MARCUS HAINES: ... of Portland, or your Powerhouse story here.

DENNY: Oh, all right.

MARCUS: If you don't mind, Denny.

DENNY: No.

MARCUS: I was going to school here at the time, and I was quite interested in the installation of this powerhouse. I used to spend some time down there with the old fellow --- I've forgotten his name. But somebody had to stay, to stay right there with this outfit. It was a two-cylinder diesel engine, and then it had a long belt drive to the generator. And then off of the generator was what they called an exciter, which you would know what I'm talking about, ... fields in this generator too.

DENNY: Uh huh.

MARCUS: Well this thing was reloaded with static electricity, and our pastime, you see, was to get somebody's pet cat and take him down there and stick the tail up toward this belt on this exciter. And you'd want to be ready to turn the cat loose because he'd climb the walls or anything else right out over the top of you. But we liked to, it didn't hurt them any though, but it sure put the go in the cats. I can remember that quite well. (Laughter)

Well getting back to the Indian War here, this happened in 1878, and at that time there wasn't such a thing as Burns. So Burns didn't have to worry much about the Indians, and the Indian War at the time because the Indians didn't bother with Burns, there was nothing here to get. So, starting with ---

This thing started out in Idaho with the Bannock Indians. And in a treaty in 1868,

they were given the camas fields in Southern Idaho, which was one of their main sources of foods. And then of course the people started moving in, and they brought hogs and cattle both and turned them in on these camas fields. And of course that didn't set very well with these Indians. And that's, according to Brimlow, that's what set the --- started the war.

Now Mrs. Louie, who used to, is dead now, but lived out here to the Indian Camp, and knew a lot of the history. I visited quite a lot with her, and she said this thing was started over a gambling debt in, out there at Fort Hall. There was a young Indian there that had some pretty influential and wealthy parents, got into a gambling, got into a poker game and spent all his money, and gambled away their part of the families horses and their possessions, and everything. And so when they started to do something with him, about collecting this thing, he killed a man or two. And that actually was the start of the war, according to Mrs. Louie. Of course there was other factors too, there's no question about that.

Well anyway, the Bannocks were over at Fort Hall, in Eastern Idaho, and they organized then and started for Oregon. And on their way there was 600 or 700 of them, as I understand, and they killed anybody that happened to be in their way. And some of the settlers tried to stop them there, and several of them were killed, and all. And they came through the Glens Ferry country, and along down through the Snake River, and then pulled out and came through near Silver City, over here in Eastern Idaho, or Western Idaho. And there was a battle fought there with the settlers, and a couple of the settlers were killed, and an Indian or two, I suppose. But they always killed more Indians than white men, they always do that in the movies, you know.

But anyway they headed on through this country into Eastern Oregon, and, which brought them into Barren Valley country there. And the first evidence we have that they

were in the country here was when they burnt up the Crowley Ranch. As you know where it's at, there Denny.

DENNY: In Barren Valley.

MARCUS: In Barren Valley, yes. Well in the meantime, they had sent some Bannocks down to the reservation at the Agency, which is covered now with the Beulah Reservoir. The Paiutes had been put on a reservation down there, and they had a fellow by the name of Reinhart, who was the agent down there. Well they gave them their rations every Saturday, and they brought in some Bannocks with them, and Reinhart refused to give the Bannocks anything out of their commissaries there. And that didn't set too well with them, especially with Egan. He was, it turned out Chief Egan, he shared his rations with some of them, and then just shortly afterwards, they just organized there, and took out to the south and joined the Bannock Indians out in Barren Valley. And then from Barren Valley they worked on up to one troop at the Folly Farm, and burned up a house or two up through the Barren Valley country there next to their mountain, and camped at, I suppose Juniper Lake. They, some camped around there and kind of got organized again.

But from there they divided their forces. They sent the warriors through the Happy Valley country, and the rest of the families, the older people and that; they went down and crossed at the Rockford, on the Malheur Refuge there on the Blitzen River.

And luckily for, a little later on these folks, instead of crossing on the sand reef, which was in at the time, they followed around the south side of Harney Lake, went around by the Double O and back up Silver Creek where they camped, where, what they called the spud farm out there now. It's below the highway there two or three miles.

Well the Indians, the warriors then they went into Happy Valley, and these folks had been warned there that the Indians were coming, so they had gotten out and gone to

Fort Harney. And they gathered up some horses and spent some time around there. And then from there, they came down into Diamond Valley, came right down through Swamp Creek country, and down. And Pete French's crew were branding calves at the old Diamond Ranch, now that's where the Jenkins lived. And they come down in through there, had a bunch of scouts out in front of them here.

Now this is, I have three different versions of this, of this encounter, so I'll give you one or two, or however many you want. But this is according to John Witzel. Now John was a 17-year-old boy working for Pete French, and he was herding horses. They didn't have fields in all those days like they do now, so it was a case of somebody staying with the horses, taking them out. I've herded horses lots of times, and it's a terrible job. Anyway John was out this morning with these horses, and he saw these Indians. There was a couple of them trying to sneak up and get in behind these horses that he was herding right up the --- would be up the Cucamonga Creek, the country there.

So he, he started his horses then down to the Diamond Ranch where Pete French's outfits were, where they were branding calves and getting ready to go to work there, and he caught them just in time. Well he got in there, and by the time he got in there, there was a bunch of Indians right behind him. And Pete French grabbed the gun that they had. He said that there was about twenty of them around there on this job. And they had one gun, and a box of shells. So he told the fellows to catch their horses, and in the meantime, he crawled up on a post, and they started shooting at these Indians. There was five or six of them that was out ahead of this bunch. John said that back; there was Indians coming back as far as he could see, probably 600 or 700 of them mounted. But these fellows are out in the lead.

Well Pete French got off a shot or two, and the Indians did too, and they shot a post off that Pete was up on and it dumped him, and he saw plenty there. So he got on

his horse and away he went.

They started up McCoy then, and, up McCoy Creek. That's where the Thompson's live, and Freddy Witzel. And Pete French had kind of taken John along with him, John Witzel. And they got up on the rim, and John got off and was holding Pete French's horse while he was shooting at these Indians following these fellows up through there, and that's when John was shot.

Well we'll back up a little bit more here. And Coon Smyth was supposed to have come in, that's the fellow that was supposed to have started Coon Town. And he came in from Southern Oregon to see a fellow by the name of Barton, who lived at Barton Lake at the time. So this morning he started up through the valley there, and he got up on top of the hill and run into a bunch of Indians. So he turned around and down off of the hill he came, and these Indians were supposed to be right after him. Well he got down there at the Diamond Ranch and his horse was run down, but he said French wouldn't let him have another horse. He said he had turned his horse loose there with the idea in mind that he would get a horse out of the caviada there that was in the corral. But he wouldn't let him have a horse, so he had to ride his horse. And they caught a horse there that they called, "Old Spanish Horse," for the Chinaman cook. And there was no saddle for him, and just put a rope around this old horse's neck and put the Chinaman on him and away he went. Said he was crying, and he knew that was the end for him, which it was. (Laughter)

So up through the McCoy they went. Well this old Chinaman couldn't ride very fast, and old Smyth's horse was giving out, had given out on him, and so he didn't last very long. And he said that they were back in the dust there, it was real bad going up through the trail. And they were right behind Pete French's out-fit, and in front of the Indians. It was kind of a poor place to be, I guess. But anyway, the old Chinaman fell off

and the Indians killed him there. They caught him just shortly after that.

And so they, his horse, he said, he just couldn't get him out of a trot then. And this old Spanish horse, the Indian, or the cook had been riding, was just trotting along with him there, so he just jumped off of his horse and grabbed this riata that was around this horse's neck and he kept right on going. Well he hung onto this rope and this old horse took him right up over the hill with the rest of them. He said that everybody was hollering, "Run Smythy, run." Well Smythy said he was doing the best he could to keep up with that old horse on the end of that riata.

And in the meantime the Indians were shooting at him, and the bullet went through his pant's leg, I think, and that made him run a little faster probably. But while they were getting up the hill then, Pete French was shooting at these fellows, and ---

DENNY: We've got one minute Marcus, and then the radio station is going to take it back from us, so before they do we thought maybe we might --- We'll be back with Marcus here in a minute and he'll continue the Indians Wars. Right now he's got --- the Indians have got him what, up on the rim captured?

MARCUS: No, no, they ---

DENNY: They are holding him upon the rim.

MARCUS: They got up on the rim there, and this is where John, John Witzel was shot, and they killed his horse too.

DENNY: Oh, well, we'll ---

MARCUS: We'll start over again with that, huh?

DENNY: We'll start over again with that.

LARRY ASMUSSEN: All right back to Denny and Marcus Haines.

DENNY: Marcus shall we get that stranded cowboy off that rim rock?

MARCUS: Well, we'll try to. (Laughter)

LARRY: You guys are just like TV. You leave us right there at the very suspenseful part of it.

MARCUS: Well we're supposed to get you excited about this, you know, and then leave you right at the high pitch of it.

DENNY: We might kick in too, that Bennett's Texaco, and the Burns Ford are co-sponsoring, helping co-sponsor this Indian Wars, with Marcus Haines.

MARCUS: Okay. Well John Witzel was holding Pete French's horse while he was shooting at these Indians who were chasing the rest of them. And of course Coon Smyth was dangling out on the end of this riata, hanging on like grim death to it. Somebody, you know. But they finally all got up there and got together. And as John started to get on his horse, the Indians had made one final shot up there, and this shot went through John's hip and into the chest of his horse. And they jumped on their horses, and this horse carried John about a, less than a quarter of a mile and he fell over dead.

So John jumped off and got on behind somebody else, and they went to Krumbo. Now they had a ranch over to Krumbo. Now that's where the Krumbo Reservoir is now. They had a little place started there, but they had more horses. So John --- somebody caught a horse for him and he rode on to the P Ranch there. But Coon Smyth, somebody slowed this old horse up long enough, and Coon jumped on him bareback and he was home free then. So they went on to the P Ranch, but the Indians didn't come up over this ridge. They thought probably there was somebody --- there was only one place right in through there where they could get up on top, and go along the edge of Steens Mountain on to the P Ranch. And I guess they were a little afraid that somebody could really bump them off when they come up through there, so they didn't come up over there. They went on to the P Ranch, and on the way around there they ran onto a couple fellows with a wagon and got them to unhook their horses and jumped onto them. One of them was a

mule, I think, and they went to the P Ranch.

Well they kind of divided forces there, and these fellows with the wagon, and Coon Smyth and some others, they went on up into Catlow Valley to Home Creek where Shirk was living at the time. And the rest of them started for Fort Harney. They were afraid to come down through the valley the way the road is now, so they went up on Jack Mountain and came down and they crossed on the sand reef. And John tells about this trip, and he said that they arrived at the sand reef about 4 o'clock in the morning. See, this was the 15th of June, so the days are about as long as you would find them, so it's getting pretty light by 4 o'clock, and they rested twenty minutes there. Now he was riding a horse with a blanket strapped on him, they didn't have a saddle for him. And they said somebody had to see if there was any fresh tracks across in the sand there, if the Indians was waiting for them, and luckily there wasn't. So they crossed on the sand reef and they went out across the Sunset Valley, and through by the Island Ranch. And from the Island Ranch to Fort Harney, which would have been probably close to a 100-mile ride there.

And John --- the bone was broken in John's hip from the shot, so he was pretty tough, a pretty tough kid to have stood that ---

DENNY: Imagine he got pretty sore didn't he?

MARCUS: I'll bet he got pretty sore. He said he spent pretty near a month there in the hospital there at the Fort. Well of course there was other people that were already in there too. There were quite a bunch around there, so they decided that they would go out and find out kind of where these Indians were.

Well in the meantime, the Army had started out after the Indians. And there was a Captain Maynard, who was kind of a rough rider guy, and he was really after them. Well he came from Boise, and right through by the Agency, and right into Fort Harney. And he organized the group there and they went out and looked for the Indians. They had Pete

French and others, and that's when they located the Indians there at the Camp that, on Silver Creek.

Well they organized there pretty well, and then struck the camp there just at the break of day, and they did a lot of damage around there. There was four or five of the soldiers, and some of the volunteers were killed. But they didn't know how many Indians that were killed.

But Chief Egan, who had taken over the leadership after Buffalo Horn was killed in route here from Idaho, and he was shot three times there. He was shot in the wrist, and shot through the chest, and in the groin. And they stayed around there for a while, and then went back down the canyon a ways, and put up fortifications, and was ready to go at them again here pretty soon. But during the night the Indians slipped away, and took right up Silver Creek, and went on up into the Battle Mountain country. They were heading for Washington, they wanted to get in with the Indians up there, they were on the warpath. But they had to go through the Umatilla Reservation, and that was their downfall.

But anyway, Captain Howard, General Howard rather, was coming with all the reinforcements, and he was several days behind them. So he had three wagons filled with ammunition, and he got in here and crossed the Silvies River, and one of them mired down, and he had to leave it. And then it rained all this time, and he started up on these trails here after these Indians with this stuff here, and he made thirteen miles one day with the oxens and mules, and all that they could hook on to this.

DENNY: They weren't catching them very fast, were they?

MARCUS: No, the Indians were a little bit more mobile than he was. So anyway, there's what they call the Howard's Blade up here. He left another one of his ammunition wagons. And that's the wagon that sets up here in front of the museum now.

DENNY: It's an all-metal wagon too, isn't it?

MARCUS: It's an all metal wagon, and full of lead. It got heavy pretty quick probably. But anyway we have it up there in front of the museum.

So the Indians then got nearly to the Pendleton country, and I guess they were raising havoc around there. They killed shepherders or buckaroos, or anybody they could, miners, or anybody they could catch up through there.

But finally they got involved there with the Umatilla's, and the Umatilla Indians were peaceful Indians and they killed Egan. And they cut his head off and took it down to John Day and had him identified, and that settled the war right there. And they captured all these Indians then, and they got them rounded up and took them up into Washington where they were going, and put them on a reservation up there.

And finally the Paiutes kept tripling back, and lots of them came back, and that's --- went on down there. Actually their headquarters in those days was down in Nevada there, around McDermitt and that country. And a lot of them worked their way off back down there. Some of them stopped in this country they went through. But that was, that was about the last use of the Fort at Harney, at Fort Harney. It was closed up in, around 1880, and disbanded.

And the people have used the windows and doors, and what they could get out of it. Of course they were all log buildings there too, to build Harney City.

DENNY: Uh huh.

MARCUS: And my uncle started the store in Harney City in 1889.

DENNY: Well we are going to get into the history of Harney City here in just a little bit. But I thought I'd back you up just --- Marcus can talk about this Indian War in a lot more detail than he has, I know he's just running through it pretty quick. But I might back him up to a couple places. Now I'm not clear on this myself. Now I know in Barren Valley there was a bunch of Chinese killed there by Indians. Now is this the same bunch of

Indians that were marauding through?

MARCUS: I never heard of that, no.

DENNY: Never heard of that? It was in the Brimlow book there, and several other accounts, I was just curious about.

MARCUS: They was killed in ---

DENNY: In Barren Valley.

MARCUS: Out in Barren Valley?

DENNY: Yeah.

MARCUS: Well, could be. They were kind of prime targets, these Chinamen. They weren't much for guns, you know.

DENNY: Yeah, well I guess the Chinese were all a foot, you know, and they were carrying all their goods and everything in carts, handcarts. And there was only Chinaman that had a horse, from what I understand.

MARCUS: Oh.

DENNY: And he's the only one that got away, all the rest of the Chinese were killed. And their stuff, I guess, was scattered off across Barren Valley where they had made a run for it. Of course they didn't make much of a run.

MARCUS: No, no they couldn't.

DENNY: But --- and you were talking about where Howard was chasing them and he was only making so many miles a day, and the Indians were making --- It's kind of like Gary Novotney was telling me here the other day, he met a car on his radar that was going 85, and his car was acting up, so he turned around, was chasing him in hot pursuit at 35! (Laughter) Kind of like Howard chasing the Indians.

MARCUS: That would be a good comparison. You bet, sure would.

DENNY: I would like to remind you that this Indian Wars, and Marcus Haines was

brought to you by Dennis Bennett and Company down at Bennett Texaco; Burns Ford down on main street, which is an old, old Ford dealership, one of the oldest in the northwest from what I understand. Right, Marcus?

MARCUS: Right.

DENNY: And Desert Graphics; High Desert Realty, Tom and Tim Clemens; Elkhorn Barbershop; and Knieriem Auto Body and Glass. We thank all you people for sponsoring Marcus. And we are really enjoying hearing this thing about the Indian Wars.

Well Larry, where are we going now? We're going to go with Harney County Insurance; and F. H. Garland Real Estate, which is in --- I guess they are in the old U. S. National Bank Building?

MARCUS: Uh huh.

DENNY: Marcus says uh huh. I know we were having a hard time deciphering that the other day from one of these books. But I knew that Marcus would clear that up in a hurry.

Now Marcus ---

MARCUS: No, that was Harney County National.

DENNY: That's Harney County National?

MARCUS: No, First, no, First National.

DENNY: First National.

MARCUS: First National Bank is where the agency is now.

DENNY: Now we're going to start talking about what, Harney City?

LARRY: Harney City, right now.

DENNY: That's what Marcus was leading into.

LARRY: We also have another sponsor of Harney City this morning; it's the Saddle Butte Gallery.

DENNY: And they wanted to hear something about shootings, and that was talking

something about a shooting in there, and we thought maybe Marcus would talk about Harney City, and the shooting in Harney City. And maybe Marcus would say something about another shooting too.

LARRY: Okay, we'll --- I'll read a little bit on Harney now, on Harney City, because Marcus covered just a little bit there at the tail end of the ---

DENNY: He kind of led us into it.

LARRY: --- Indian War. He led us in very well. The anticipation of the Indian attacks drove many of the settlers from all over the country to seek protection with the military post at Camp Harney. In the latter years of 1870, as fear of the Indians evaded, the Fort was gradually abandoned by the soldiers, and as Marcus indicated the people began to use much of the lumber from the encampment to construct new homes for themselves. Located about one mile from Camp Harney, and 16 miles east of Burns on the Rattlesnake Creek, Thomas Banes began the first business establishment at Harney City in 1885. Well now, was he an uncle of yours, or is that someone else?

MARCUS: No, that was someone else.

LARRY: All right. By then many homes were already evident in the new town. At the same time that Harney County was created from Grant County by an act of the legislature in 1889. Harney City was also designated as a temporary county seat. The legislature directed the voters to vote on the permanent county seat in the next June 1890 election. Even though Burns had a majority by six votes, the Harney City residents contested the decision, and took the issue to the Supreme Court. Harney City did not want to surrender the official county records. Consequently, after the election, several brazen Burns inhabitants handled the situation their own way. Several individuals rode to Harney, and while the town slept took the documents to Burns. The court finally confirmed the election results in 1892 in favor of Burns. There is still some debate today by Harney City

descendants as to whether Burns should have been the county seat of Harney County. Are there any recollections along those lines? (Laughter)

DENNY: You're going to get into a part here that I thought was kind of interesting. It says by 1900 Harney City had grown to support three saloons, a post office, a dance hall, two mercantile stores, a church, a jail, two hotels, and a first year junior high school was established. There was such avid rivalry between the saloon owners in 1912 that two saloon proprietors, Buckman and Clay, called a shootout down Main Street against their competitor Strout. Strout lost the battle, and was shot many times until dead. Now that Buckman and Clay, Marcus, that's the same Buckmans and Clay outfit that ended up in Crane, weren't they?

MARCUS: Right, yes. Burbank Clay was the fellow's name.

DENNY: They had a Clay Hotel there in Crane?

MARCUS: Yes.

DENNY: Well I kind of thought we'd bring and kick --- I kind of thought that was kind of interesting.

MARCUS: Yeah. I think Harney got a little too tame for them, so they moved out and started all over again down at Crane.

DENNY: Yeah. Then Crane got a little wild. (Laughter)

MARCUS: Yeah, they used to --- I don't think anybody got killed down there. But they used to get the old Majestic Hall there, but you don't remember it of course.

DENNY: No.

MARCUS: But everything is burned up in Crane now that we knew of in the '30's. And we used to dance till midnight and fight till morning. (Laughter) That's the pastime, your dad can tell you all the stories.

LARRY: Well that isn't the way we got it the other day, yesterday, from Marge Shull.

DENNY: 'Course that wasn't Crane.

LARRY: She said they had a midnight dinner. Well that's different in Crane, I guess. This was out at Fields, wasn't it?

DENNY: Andrews.

LARRY: Or Andrews.

MARCUS: Andrews. Yeah, their ---

LARRY: Andrews, yeah, they ate till midnight, and danced till daylight. (Laughter) That was a little tamer place maybe.

MARCUS: It didn't bother them. They drank at Crane instead of--- they drank supper there.

DENNY: Yeah, they were in prohibition times. They weren't allowed to have it. What do you mean they ---

MARCUS: Yeah, you bet. (Laughter) That's the reason they had it.

DENNY: You say we can't have it, so we do.

LARRY: Well Denny, who were our last two sponsors that brought---

DENNY: Our last two sponsors was --- I'll have to find it here. We've got Harney Insurance, Harney County Insurance Company, that's F. H. Garland Real Estate; and Saddle Butte Gallery, that's Gerry Schillinger.

LARRY: Okay, we are going to interrupt right now and bring a couple of ads.

DENNY: We've got Burns Electric here, and Burns Electric is an electrical contracting. They have Whirlpool appliance sales, RCA television sales, and video, movie rentals, and their helping us sponsor today with Marcus Haines here.

LARRY: We also have Harney County Federal Credit Union. They invite you to shop at home and use their loans. You can get shop and home loans. You can have all types of commercial loans, home loans, yes. New car loans with 9.75% interest for 48 months.

And also new car loans for 10.25% for 60 months. Shop at home discounts do apply. They have mobile home loans, RV loans, off road vehicle loans, home improvement loans, and home equity loans. That's at Harney County Federal Credit Union.

DENNY: We were talking about Harney City. Your uncle did have a general store there, didn't he?

MARCUS: Yes, yes he did.

DENNY: And that was your dad that had one in The Narrows?

MARCUS: Another uncle.

DENNY: Another uncle. You had lots of uncles. Your dad was what, a rancher then?

MARCUS: He was a store man too, but he was at Princeton.

DENNY: Oh, he was at Princeton. Kind of had the county wrapped up.

MARCUS: (Laughter) You bet.

DENNY: It was kind of Haines Incorporated, huh?

MARCUS: Fred came in here and was involved in this Island Ranch thing, down here when Henry Miller --- Oh, we'll back up here just a little bit. There was a fellow name of Hen Owens around here that was quite a land promoter, and he put a boat in a wagon and drove all over what is the Big Red "S" down here, and went down to the legislature and told them that he had been all over that place in a boat. But he didn't tell them that it was in a wagon. And he bought it for a \$1.25 an acre, and he sold it to John Devine who had the Island Ranch down here at the time.

DENNY: That Big Red "S" in that what, swamp?

MARCUS: No, well it's swamp, yes. And they marked the swamp lands with a red pencil, with a red "S", and ---

DENNY: But it really wasn't a swamp, huh? It might be swamp today though.

MARCUS: And it's a lake now. Anyway, in '89 then, when Devine lost everything he had

here in the hard winter, then Henry Miller bought him out, the PLS Company. Why the people began to getting wise as to what had happened, and then the legislature came in and told Miller that he had to --- If he was going to own that he had to buy it, and pay for it, and so on and so forth. Well in the meantime then, the settlers went in there and tore down the fences and was kind of taking it over like they did in Malheur Lake, and Fred Haines was in the bunch. And Fred said they got a little too rough for me, so I went up to Harney and started the store instead. So that was along about that time.

And then Charlie, the youngest brother of the three, came in here in the early, about, just after Charlie got started there, or Fred. And then that's when they divided their business, and Charlie went down and started the store at The Narrows, in 1892. And then my father was in the Spanish American War, and when the war was over he came back and was clerking for Charlie there at The Narrows, when he married my mother, whose husband had been killed there about 1900, there at The Narrows. And then later he started, and went up and had a store at Princeton, which had been moved ---

SIDE B

MARCUS: ... lightening and thunder.

DENNY: Oh, I'll be danged. I didn't know that.

MARCUS: So then he goes on to, on through to Camp Harney, and then he got down and found the sand reef was washed out, so he had to go around by the Double O. But he was on his way up through there anyway, on around Silver Creek. And that's what this camp was for there, and he went on through. But then in the --- A fellow by the name of Captain Williams came here in '65, in September, working out of Camp Currey, and set up Camp Wright, right down here by the Island Ranch. And he tells about exploring around here, and found something that he had never seen before, and he said he didn't

think that anybody else had ever seen anything like this. He camped down here near where, on the south fork of the river. Does this matter if I mark on this?

DENNY: No, go ahead, Marcus. We're drawing pictures here, you people can't see them. (Laughter)

MARCUS: Well I can explain it to you fellows and then you can tell somebody if you have to. Well here's the Blitzen --- or the Silvies River coming down here, and it goes down here below Burns a little way, and it forks, as you know. It goes like this. And he was camped down here on this south fork. Here's the Hanley Lane coming through here like this, and he was camped down here. And then he went --- goes on down here at the end of Wright's Point.

DENNY: That was the Island Ranch, huh?

MARCUS: Right down in here where the Island Ranch is now, and built Fort Wright that fall. And they spent the winter here and did a lot of exploring around. And the next spring, in April, the camp burned up and that was the end of Fort Wright. But it was being supplied from Camp Currey up here.

DENNY: Currey.

LARRY: Okay, that ---

MARCUS: So that's about all I can tell you about Camp Currey.

LARRY: It's good to have this first hand information from Marcus Haines. We still have another Camp, and also a little more about the Frenchglen Hotel.

DENNY: We might --- That's the French Hotel here in Burns. We might have Marcus, if he will, come back this afternoon and help us with that, because I don't know if we'll get that covered this morning.

LARRY: I don't know how much more time they are going to give us here. We ran over, they're not really concerned about any. I think that we are using up time that ---

DENNY: Wake up Chris, wake up!

LARRY: We're going to hit Camp Smith right quick. And sponsoring Camp Smith is Harney County Farm Supply and the U. S. National Bank. And we'll give you a few excerpts from the Camp Smith, and if Marcus has any thoughts on that, we'll call on him too.

With the excavation of Camp Alvord in June of 1866, the troops moved to a new location on Whitehorse Creek, north of Quinn River Mountain where a new camp was established. The post Civil War period in Harney County was notable for frequent hostile Indian activity, which necessitated military operations to protect the white advance. One of the functions of Camp C. F. Smith was to provide protection for the Oregon Central Military Road, which would pass Old Camp Alvord, and Camp C. F. Smith. Then go eastward to the Idaho line. Grants were subsequently made to the Willamette Valley and the Cascade Mountain Wagon Road Company to complete a road from Albany eastward to Idaho within five years. The camp is thought to have been named for Major General Charles Ferguson Smith, who was an officer in the regular army. It was abandoned on November 9, 1869, leaving little record of the noteworthy activity. John Devine, the earliest cattle baron to establish operations in Harney County, chose the abandoned Fort site for his headquarters, which became known as the Whitehorse Ranch. Devine's famous ranch continues to operate at the same location today, and is widely known throughout the region. A short distance from the ranch is located a sign erected by the Malheur Historical Society which briefly describes the significance of the site. Several scattered graves are also to be seen. One, which reads, "William Bunyard, January 13, 1874, to November 1, 1897." The primary historical significance of Camp C. F. Smith stems from its abandoned site being occupied by John Devine, and subsequent role of Devine's cattle empire. Okay, Denny, back to you and to Marcus.

DENNY: Well I know that there's about seventeen things there that Marcus could talk about for four hours. I could tell that by listening to Marcus before. Every one of us could cue him on something. And before we really get into that, I have --- maybe this will cue him too. This is Camp Alvord, which predated Camp Smith, right Marcus?

MARCUS: Yes, that's how it sounds anyway.

DENNY: Yeah. In August 18th, 1864, Captain George B. Currey of the First Oregon Cavalry, which Marcus was talking about here a while ago, describes in a letter to H. C. Gibbs, Governor of Oregon. It says Camp Alvord is located 300 miles south of southeast from The Dalles, in the midst of the finest grass valley I have ever seen since the broad prairies of the Mississippi Valley. This grass valley that he is speaking of ---

MARCUS: Well it's the meadows --- It's the meadows there at Alvord, at the Alvord Ranch. There was a --- We've been trying to locate the site of the Fort there. He built what they called a Star Fort, and left a fellow there to --- And he had Alvord Creek flowing down through it here, and another one over here, and another one over here on Wildhorse Creek, and it was going through there too. But the Star is built like a star. It's just dirt embankments, you see, and they could get in here and get protection from almost any place. But it was just made out of sod, you know, and dirt. But they did have the water running through there where they could stand quite a siege there.

LARRY: Okay, this segment has been brought by the Harney County Farm Supply; and also the U. S. National Bank. We appreciate their support of Kiwanis Radio Days.

DENNY: And I guess we'll continue this afternoon. The radio station (KZZR) wants it back. Chris keeps giving us that --- cut throat thing. That means we're through I guess. And back to KZZR and Chris.

...

MARCUS: Well Ed, let's ---

ED KOENEMAN: He was a German, and that was his trade. He was a stonemason by trade. Learned it in the old country.

MARCUS: You bet, I knew Charlie well. I always enjoyed Charlie. He always had one thing, you know, he liked his beer.

ED: Yeah.

MARCUS: Charlie says, "Too much beer, just right." (Laughter)

ED: That sounds like Charlie all right.

MARCUS: Doesn't that sound like Charlie?

ED: You bet.

MARCUS: You bet. Well, Ed ---

ED: Charlie told me one time he could have built this house in a lot less time, but to get the boys to haul the rocks sometimes was a problem.

MARCUS: I'll bet.

ED: If they could do it a horseback, you got a lot of rocks, but they didn't like the idea of pulling them down the ...

MARCUS: Well now, by golly it's quite a trip for this yellow rock, from south of The Narrows there. It must be 12, 15 miles, isn't it from here?

ED: The trouble was, Marcus, you see, they just pick it out in the raw down there.

MARCUS: Right.

ED: And bring it up here and he'd cut it on the table. He'd chip it with a chisel and a little ax.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: And they'd lose 50% of the rocks.

MARCUS: Sure they would.

ED: And ---

MARCUS: You bet.

ED: And if you notice a lot of this rock isn't all square. Some of it is six cornered, and especially on these window openings. Notice the different angles that that rock is cut?

MARCUS: Yes, you bet. It's a design all of its own. Here now, I think this building is about 50 feet square, Ed. Then ---

ED: I don't know what the dimensions, I'm not too sure about that.

MARCUS: I think I stepped it here when I was here this spring, just kind of curious to know about it. But we'll go in there pretty quick. I wanted to talk to you a little bit about the rooms here.

ED: You notice the rock on the windowsills there, Marcus. At one time there was only one piece clear across those windows, see. And the vandals have taken axes and sledge hammers, and broken them all up.

MARCUS: Yes, they are all out on this side here, you see.

ED: Yeah, and it's a shame because the weather didn't affect it very much.

MARCUS: No, gosh no.

ED: The rainy weather didn't do it. But I don't know why people like to break up something like this, but ---

MARCUS: Well Ed, about what year would you say this was built or completed? It probably wasn't built in a year for that matter, was it?

ED: No, I would imagine it took 10 or 12 years.

MARCUS: Oh, it was that long? Uh huh.

ED: Yes, they got it in shape so they could live in it. Then they just kept adding or finishing, and adding to it until it's just what you see now.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: Ah --- I think, of course I was only a, small then. But it looked to me like it was

completed when I --- that I can remember.

MARCUS: First time you can remember?

ED: Yeah.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: But I think it was started in the late, in 1900 sometime there.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: But these people were already here and established, and they didn't run many cattle.

They had a wonderful herd of horses though. Their horses were worth money, you know.

MARCUS: That was their business was running horses, wasn't it?

ED: Yes. Dad bought a horse from them, an unbroke horse, and he paid \$150 for it.

MARCUS: That was a lot of money in those days.

ED: He was so damned wild, that it took all summer to tame him down so that you could hook him up to something.

MARCUS: (Laughter) I'll bet.

ED: But they did have wonderful horses. During World War I they sold a lot of horses to the cavalry, the United States cavalry. They gathered up everything, and everything that would qualify they got a good piece of money for. But then after that, why the price of horse just dropped off to practically nothing. 'Cause people were buying tractors and ---

MARCUS: Well Ed, let's --- or can you establish fairly close to when they finally left here?

They were gone in 1923 when we came out here.

ED: Oh yeah, they left here, they must have left here --- well right after World War I, I'd say in about '19. I think Buck Newell was, he hung out here tougher than any of them. In fact I've got a picture of him. But ---

MARCUS: Yeah, I think the house, Ed, as I recall in 1923 was vacant.

ED: Yes, but there was some people after that, that lived here, Marcus.

MARCUS: Yes, I see that there is paper on the wall in there that is dated 1938.

ED: Yes, there was some people came here from Idaho with the idea of raising turkeys. And it only took them one season to find out that they either had to be in the coyote business or the turkey business, but they couldn't be in both.

MARCUS: Both of them wouldn't work, huh?

ED: They went out of the turkey business pretty fast. And they finally got discouraged and they left. They had made plans to buy the place, 'cause it was dry, and it was ideal for turkeys, and lots of grasshoppers to feed them with. And if it hadn't been for the coyotes, I think they could have made it. But it was just another failure.

MARCUS: Well then ---

ED: Their name was Jones, Sam and John Jones.

MARCUS: Oh? No relation to the Jones out below us here?

ED: No, huh uh, no.

MARCUS: Well now that family of Jones lived here at one time, did they?

ED: Who's that?

MARCUS: Lawrence and ---

ED: Oh, yeah. Right where they are living was their dad's homestead. See down there? You can see it right down there in the flat. And they're still living there.

MARCUS: Well they lived in this house at one time though.

ED: No.

MARCUS: They never did?

ED: No, Lawrence bought this on delinquent taxes one time, but he didn't live here. He lived at our place adjoining him, you see, he lived over there.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: Here is quite a water problem; because you notice the spring is down there three or

four hundred feet below the house. And if they lived here they'd have to carry the water up, they'd have to put in a pumping system, and this --- They had a well here by the back door of the kitchen with a windmill on it for years. But it barely would, if they were careful, they could get enough water to run the kitchen.

MARCUS: Well I'll be darned.

ED: And that was all. And most of the time they carried water. Ben Newell and Marley Newell carried many thousands of gallons of water from this spring up to this house.

MARCUS: By gosh that's quite a trip. Quite a little ---

ED: Yeah, it's all up hill.

MARCUS: Go a little easy with the bath water.

ED: Yeah. Ben said I wished this spring was on the upper side of the house. I'd carry water downhill and empty buckets up hill.

MARCUS: Ed, name the Newell families of Eastern Oregon. ...

ED: So that makes a family of eight children, Marcus. Five boys and three girls.

MARCUS: Now the father was a one-armed man, is that right?

ED: Yes, he was. A well educated man.

MARCUS: He was a school superintendent at Harney County at one time.

ED: Yes. I'm not sure whether he was the first or the second.

MARCUS: Second one, I think.

ED: Second one I imagine.

MARCUS: I've got the dates at home. I'll put them in this tape. I should have picked them up today, but I forgot. Hank Slater got them for me. (I'm going to interrupt here and list the school superintendents here. I have a listing up to Mrs. Weittenhiller, and apparently our first school superintendent was a L. R. Baker, and that was in 1889. Then Charles Newell from 1890 to '95.)

ED: I don't recall the first man, maybe you know.

MARCUS: No, no I don't.

ED: Well anyway, he was school superintendent there for years. At the same time he had already filed a homestead right on this place, see.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: And during the vacations and so forth, he'd come out here and fence it, and put this homestead in shape in order to live here. And later after that he worked also on the newspaper, setting type and so forth. In fact, I guess he was the editor.

MARCUS: Oh.

ED: And later the Griffins took over the paper, Mary Griffin and her husband. They worked in the ---

MARCUS: What paper would that have been?

ED: It was called the "Harney County News".

MARCUS: The "Harney County News," yes, I know that.

ED: Yeah. That's as far as I know. If it had another name, I don't know, I don't recall it. But we used to --- Dad subscribed to it all the time, it was a weekly, and we always looked forward to getting it as it was about the only source of news you could collect in those days.

MARCUS: No radio or telephone. (Laughter)

ED: And unless you met someone on the road, why that was the biggest way of getting the news, or somebody traveling through, other than the paper. The paper was really ---

MARCUS: You really waited for the paper, didn't you?

ED: And it was real expensive, I think it cost a \$1 a year.

MARCUS: Oh, all of that, huh?

ED: Right, a \$1 a year. Now Buck and Rack, and Sis and Molly, and Ben all went to

school down here on the corner. Buck and Rack were eighth graders at that time. They only went there one year. And I think Sis went two, two or three years. And Molly and I were just about the same age at that time. I kind of lost track of all of them except a nephew. No, one of Manny's, either Manny's boy or Todd's boy came through and stopped and we had a, had a, quite a bull session. And he told me that, I believe it's Manny works for BLM over at Vale.

MARCUS: Oh, he does?

ED: He's in the BLM office at Vale. And every time I've gone through there, it may have been a holiday or too late to contact him, and I've never been able to ---

MARCUS: Well he would be darn near ready for retirement, wouldn't he, Ed?

ED: Oh, he'd be way past retirement, I'm sure.

MARCUS: Well, yes.

ED: Maybe he's only an advisor or something. Maybe he doesn't have a regular office there. Maybe he's just on the --- He knew so much about this country, and the sagebrush and the coyotes, maybe he's just an advisor.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: And on the board some place. But he had something to do with the BLM program, so he told me, this Charlie Newell. Old man Charlie Newell's grandson.

MARCUS: Oh, he's the grandson?

ED: Uh huh.

MARCUS: Oh, I see.

ED: Of the old Charlie Newell.

MARCUS: Oh, I see. I thought he was one of the boys.

ED: No. Mr. Newell was a scout for the United States Army in Montana, and that's where I understand that he lost that arm, was in that Indian skirmish ---

MARCUS: Indian fight probably.

ED: --- up there.

MARCUS: I was going to mention that to you, I thought maybe he might have lost it in the Civil War. He would have been about right for that too.

ED: Well, he could have been ---

MARCUS: Well I was just guessing there. Being a scout, he could have lost that way too, you bet.

ED: He was a powerful man. He could --- he lost his right arm, and of course he was forced then to use his left arm. And he could chop more wood with that left hand than an ordinary man could in an all day chopping. He could cut that much in two hours. With --- you never saw a man could swing an ax, and he didn't just take a short cut on the handle. He got right out on the end of that handle, and you wanted to stand back because the chips would really fly.

MARCUS: Holy smokes!

ED: He was really a ---

MARCUS: If he got a fellow by the neck he could really bounce you around. --- We're in business again.

ED: Are we ready to go?

MARCUS: You bet.

ED: Mrs. Newell was a very helpful person in this neighborhood. Anytime there was anybody sick in the neighborhood, why you could depend on Mrs. Newell to help them out.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: She'd be right there to help. She was a very charming person. Well, let's go in the house.

MARCUS: Yeah, we'll go in and we'll talk about the house a little bit here. I'll shut the tape off until we get in there.

We're standing here in front of the old Newell House. I have some pictures Ed, that were taken here and around, so I can use this tape with these pictures. The thing that bothers me is these two rooms out here on this end, when you get in them, they are partitioned off.

ED: Yes.

MARCUS: In order to get in either one of these rooms, you came out on the porch and went in.

ED: Uh huh.

MARCUS: And then you get to looking in the ceiling and the roof, and there's no sign of a stovepipe hole. I wondered how they heated these rooms.

ED: Well they had only one chimney that connected the front room there in the kitchen, Marcus.

MARCUS: That's all I can see. I was wanting to mention that to you.

ED: They had a big old heating stove there in the front room, and it took up so much room that in the summertime they set it out, and then in the fall they set it back in there. But that was the only source of heat in that whole house was that one chimney there next to the kitchen. One stovepipe served both purposes. Now you see these two rooms you spoke about, Marcus, this one on our left here was the old man's --- what they call a parlor.

MARCUS: Oh, the parlor.

ED: Unless you were a special guest, you didn't get in there. The old man had a lot of Indian relics in there, bows and arrows. And a wonderful display of arrowheads. And that room was completely wall-to-wall, was just lined with old time stuff like that. And the one

on the right was his library, and he had thousands of books. And one time all those walls were lined with book shelves, and any subject you wanted to look up, why you could find it in that library. I'm sure it was a better library than any in the country at that time.

MARCUS: Well that accounts then for the two rooms being more or less isolated from the rest of the house, doesn't it?

ED: That's right. Yeah. He didn't call it his library, he called it his study.

MARCUS: His study, huh.

ED: When he wanted to get away from all the noise and everything, why he'd go in there and lock himself up and dig out a book ---

and he was well versed in anything. Any subject that you wanted to talk about, why you could say he was an authority on it. Well-educated man, well educated. I don't know where he got his schooling, but if he got it the hard way, why he sure did a good job of it.

MARCUS: It stayed with him anyway.

ED: Right.

MARCUS: Well Charlie Backus undoubtedly had probably some of the old buildings in the old country in mind when he built this house.

ED: Yes, I'm sure he did, Marcus. 'Cause he said that he kind of designed this on some castle in Germany.

MARCUS: Well, I suspected that.

ED: He said it was a miniature reproduction you might say, of that, he said. And what he copied from covered acres, but he said was afraid it would take him too long to make one that big, so he cut it down considerable. But he said it was supposed to resemble a castle in Germany.

MARCUS: Well getting back to the front of the house here now, the rooms that Ed was just mentioning are separated by a porch that is probably 12 feet wide, and you come out

of, I imagine a living room, Ed, out on the porch here?

ED: Yes, but you notice there is three doors, one to each side room there, and then one main floor.

MARCUS: And then you came out on the porch, and then you went into these two rooms from this porch. That would be from the outside. There is no inside entrance to these rooms. And I can understand why, now that Ed has told me the history of the place here.

ED: And you notice those two windows on each side of the door there Marcus, and the door was leaded colored glass at one time, all of it.

MARCUS: Holy smokes.

ED: In fact there wasn't enough clear glass in that door, I don't believe, to look out. In order to look out you had to open the door.

MARCUS: You had to open the door. (Laughter)

ED: But it was beautiful. It was reds, and greens, and blues, and yellows, and it was all leaded glass, and where it come from, I don't know.

MARCUS: And the two windows too, Ed? They were ---

ED: And the two windows. It was beautiful ---

MARCUS: Kind of a matching set, in other words.

ED: Yes. I don't know where they had those made, but it was a beautiful job. You notice they have all disappeared. You can't even find a piece of the glass.

MARCUS: No, I'll bet you can't. Gosh, no.

ED: Well, shall we go inside?

MARCUS: Yeah, you bet. We'll go on in and ---

ED: Take it easy, these floors are pretty rotten. The Shetland ponies has been wintered in here sometime or other. The evidence is still on the floor.

MARCUS: Gosh, a fellow might run onto a rattlesnake here too, might he?

ED: I was wrong about the glass, there's a piece of some blue laying here.

MARCUS: There's a little of it laying there. There is all right, right out on the porch.

ED: Small pieces, but people have picked up the larger chunks, I'm sure. Yeah, you might want to be careful, 'cause you might drop through this old floor any place.

MARCUS: Well this, Ed, was the living room then?

ED: This long room, yes. You notice there on the north side there's a little wainscoting left on there?

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: I don't know if everybody would know what wainscoting is; because I'm sure it's not used much more nowadays. But it's made of wood, looks like a high-grade flooring, and stained or painted. You notice this bedroom ---

MARCUS: Looks like a good four feet, isn't it?

ED: Yes, about four feet high. And that went clear around this room, all the way around, and above that was papered. You can still see some of the old paper hanging here on the wall.

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: Now this is one of the bedrooms here on our right, Marcus. I think this was the girl's room, as I remember it. And this other room here with the boarded hangings on it, you notice are all diamond shapes, or half diamonds, this was the master bedroom. And they had a ---

MARCUS: Yeah, I saw that.

ED: I used to marvel at the furniture that they had in here, which was real nice. Dressers and easy chairs, and beautiful bed, a big double bed. And this was the master bedroom.

MARCUS: The master bedroom was in the northeast corner of the house, isn't it?

ED: Yes, uh huh. You'll notice it has two windows in it, see.

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: And the girl's room only had one.

MARCUS: Uh huh. Well, Ed, these walls here are over a foot thick, aren't they? And in this particular --- take these bedrooms here, this has been plastered. Is that true with all the outside walls? It probably is, huh?

ED: Most of the --- No, I think that this one was the only one that was, these two bedrooms, and the parlor, and the library, I think were the only ones that were plastered, Marcus.

MARCUS: They used some lime, and I don't know whether they had cement in those days or not, do you?

MARCUS: Yes, I think they did, they had something.

ED: They had something to hold it together.

MARCUS: It stayed together anyway, hasn't it?

ED: Yes, in pretty good shape.

MARCUS: You bet.

ED: You'll notice that it's plastered right on to the stone, except around the windows.

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: And the framing. These walls must be 16, 17 inches thick, aren't they?

MARCUS: Well yes, they must, they are well over a foot. You can see right here on this. I would guess 18 inches probably, Ed. Now this I suppose was the kitchen here in the northwest corner of the house?

ED: Yes, uh huh. That door led right into the kitchen. You can notice the old stovepipe hole up there, see, I was telling you about. It came out, and they had the stove sitting out here, quite a ways out in the room here.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: And then that stove pipe went across there horizontally and connected up with the stove in the kitchen. It was a great big old iron stove.

MARCUS: An old Home Comfort, huh?

ED: Now you see this other hole cut here, that was done later by somebody else.

MARCUS: Yes, I ---

ED: That goes into the bedroom on that side, see.

MARCUS: Now that was a bedroom in there then? There was three bedrooms in the house?

ED: There was one for the boys. Some of the boys slept in there.

MARCUS: Well Ed, tell me about the attic, or the upstairs here. We've got a stairway ---

ED: It was never completely finished, Marcus.

MARCUS: I wondered about that. I looked at these 2 x 6's, these ceiling joists, and I couldn't see any nail holes in them like there had been a flooring laid on them, and somebody had taken it out.

ED: Well on that east side up there, facing the east there, Marcus, it was floored over. But it never was sealed in, see.

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: And a couple of the boys kept that for their --- They did have a bed up there. I think it was in the summertime, or when it wasn't too cold why some of the boys slept up there. Anyway when they had company, why somebody had to sleep up there to --- in order to have enough room. You understand they had quite a family of their own, and then ---

MARCUS: You bet. Gosh, eight kids, they had to put them some-place, wouldn't they?

ED: Yeah. So the kids probably sacrificed their bed and went up there in the attic. It was partially floored on that side, I'm sure.

MARCUS: Uh huh.

ED: Now you notice the ceilings completely gone on this side. I don't know what was in there, but I think it was just this ceiling. A great deal like this flooring here, you see. It was nailed up there and then papered over.

MARCUS: Probably.

ED: This was a beautiful room when they lived here. They had pictures and paintings, and --- that they'd brought with them when they moved in here. A person can't believe it.

MARCUS: Well this is quite a roof structure here too. The engineers would probably tell you that the way Charlie Backus put this roof on here nearly 70 years ago, it wouldn't stand. But here the shingles on the north side all in pretty good shape yet. Not to mention the 2 x 4 rafters.

ED: I think one reason that some of those shingles are left, or a good part of them are left, Marcus, is because of the pitch of the roof you'll notice is very steep.

MARCUS: Right, oh gosh, yeah.

ED: It won't hold any moisture. As soon as the snow went off, why it dried off. And I'm sure that's helped preserve it. And speaking about the building of that, the 2 x 4's and everything, you notice how straight up and down those are? Very few of them have come loose.

MARCUS: Right, it's well constructed.

ED: It's built like a bridge, you know.

MARCUS: You bet.

ED: The cross bracing is perfect, and it really has taken the storms, and winds. Except you notice the vandals have pulled some shingles off, so they could use the cross pieces there that the shingles are nailed to as a ladder, so they could get up on the roof.

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: For what reason, I don't know. 'Cause you can see quite a bit of this construction

right through the front door.

MARCUS: See enough without getting on top of the roof. Besides if you ever missed a step up there, you'd be flat on your back here on the ground before you knew what happened.

ED: At least you'd have some slivers to pull out.

MARCUS: You bet, you sure would. (Laughter)

ED: Yes. This was one of the show places for a long time in this part of the country. I don't think there's a house constructed and set on such a nice view spot, where you could look clear across the valley. You can look clear over there to Jack Mountain, and The Narrows, and Steens Mountain. And you can't hardly see the Double O, because this point sticks out there, you see, from here. But you can look right over to Harney Lake and Mud Lake. It was a beautiful building site. I'm sure he spent a lot of time figuring out just exactly where to build this house. It's a ---

MARCUS: Yes.

ED: In order to have a good location where you could look out into the valley.

MARCUS: Well I think we've got this pretty well described, Ed, so shall we drive on around to the oil well now, and ---

ED: Have you ever been down to the spring, down here a ways?

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