

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #27 - Side A

Subject: Howard Miller

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: November 2, 1972

Interviewer: Pauline Braymen

Howard Miller's ranch is located about six miles south of Crane, and is called Crow Camp. His father came to Harney County in 1885, and filed in that area at that time. Additional property has been added to that original claim, and the Millers have been in the cattle business in that area all these years.

PAULINE BRAYMEN: This is Pauline Braymen, and I'm interviewing Howard Miller on November 2nd, 1972. ... Have to remember every-thing you said, you know, I go back and type it up later.

HOWARD MILLER: Yeah, uh huh.

PAULINE: Well I know Jim Baker talked to Lee earlier.

HOWARD: Oh, uh huh.

PAULINE: And he mostly told me, well I read it quite a while ago, so I don't remember everything he told him, but a lot of things about buckarooing, and making riata, and this sort of thing. And he didn't go into any detail at all about how the Miller family happened to come. This is one of the things I'm trying to tag down is, when the family came, and why they came.

HOWARD: You see my father came to this country quite awhile before he was married. Let's see, oh 10, 12, about 12 years before he was married. He came over from

LaGrande, that area in there. They originally came from Kansas, and they lived in the LaGrande area for, oh about 8 years, I think. He came over with Bob Irving now. Bob Irving is Clarence Young's father, and Cecil Irving. Old Chester Irving, you know is, well Mrs. Young is the only one, I guess, that is living right here now.

But anyway, Dad and Bob Irving came over here together in 1885. And they apparently filed on land over there where we live now at that time. And Bob Irving filed on some just about two miles north of where Dad filed. And then he went back ... with his mother, and I think a sister in 1886. And apparently he probably fenced what he filed on, and built a house. A house that I don't even remember. I think that house later was destroyed by fire or something. Well, let's see.

PAULINE: Well what was his, what was your dad's name?

HOWARD: Charles.

PAULINE: Charles.

HOWARD: Charles T., Charles Thomas.

PAULINE: Do you ever remember him telling how he happened to hear about Harney County, or why they came this way?

HOWARD: Well yeah, they, of course there had been other families come from there. The Swains was one family that came from LaGrande, and my dad knew before. I think, I'm not sure whether he came before, or they came before or after Dad did. But let's see, who lives here now. Gladys Stockton's mother was a Swain. There was quite a family, mostly girls in that family, I think.

But anyhow, they came about the same time. And then others from that LaGrande area, that I can't recall right now, but I know there were. But anyway, this Bob Irving and my dad they came a horseback, and I suppose they had a packhorse and that. And they thought, well if they didn't see what they liked here they'd go on to California. They

thought, had some idea of going on to California. They'd heard about these, more or less new areas. And they just got that far, and decided well that looks good to them, there is lots of grass, and looked like it would stock cows, but they had, they both had some stock. They get over there in that LaGrande area. So that's how they settled that, the reason they settled here, I mean.

Thing is, there is something that I can't remember offhand, and I should know that too, I don't know whether this was still Grant County at that time or not.

PAULINE: I can't, it seems like that they ... '89, but I'm not sure either.

HOWARD: They may have had it filed over there at, let's see Canyon City, I guess, is where they filed.

PAULINE: Yeah. Well there was a land office in Lakeview too, or something.

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah.

PAULINE: I don't know just --- I don't remember the date either when they ---

HOWARD: No, so I can't say for sure now about that. It kind of seems to me like though, my dad said, I used to talk to him about that. Trouble is, I just don't remember it, half the things he told me. But it was before, it was some years before the --- it would only have been a year or two before this Lawen country down there was thrown open for settlement. Well that, now I don't know whether your grandparents were here at that time, or they may have come a little later.

PAULINE: Well my, well you mean my great uncle I guess, or great-great uncle, he was my grandfather's uncle. So he'd be my ---

HOWARD: He'd be your ---

PAULINE: He'd be my great-great uncle. And he came first, and I forget the date that Dad said, but it was '85, '86, it was real early.

HOWARD: Uh huh.

PAULINE: And then he wrote and asked my grandfather to come out and help him.

HOWARD: Well he had sheep, didn't he?

PAULINE: I don't ---

HOWARD: One of the Ausmus' had, run sheep back there, I think.

PAULINE: Yeah, I don't know about that.

HOWARD: There was a flat back there they called Jones and Ausmus Flat. Some people still call it that.

PAULINE: Now that's interesting, I had never heard that.

HOWARD: Yeah, and that probably was, you know, that uncle and your grandfather I would imagine.

PAULINE: I would imagine so too.

HOWARD: It's still; well they have shortened it mostly to Jones Flat. But when I was a kid they used the two names, Jones and Ausmus Flat. And I think they were sheep men. I think ---

PAULINE: I'll have to ask Daddy about that. He's never mentioned, or said, you know.

HOWARD: It's back of us there about, oh maybe 4 miles or something like that. It's a little flat, little kind of a long narrow flat, and the water drains into the head of Stinkingwater in there.

PAULINE: So then when they opened the Lawen country up, then your dad took up land in there too?

HOWARD: Well no, he made a wild ride down there when the news got around that they had opened that up. Of course he was out there, I guess, getting his layout, something done, clear the main land here, but anyway he was busy. Seemed like he said he was plowing. And someone came by and said well they have opened up, what the heck did they call that? I can't remember now. Anyway they were, apparently it was in litigation,

and they figured it would be possibly open. I think it had been claimed by Devine, John Devine I think had claimed a lot of that area in there through some Swamp Act or something, you know. And so he, someone came by and told him well they had opened that up, and people were flocking ...

Dad, I think he said he unharnessed his horses, and he was working, one of his team was an old saddle horse, a horse he could ride. So he saddled him up and hotfooted it down there just as fast as he could. That would be about, oh about 20 miles, some-thing like that. Anyway he made the old horse hustle right along. But he was almost too late, but he found a piece of ground. And I don't know where that was, or anything, but he filed on a, I guess, 160 something.

And a fellow came along with a family in a wagon, his wife and kids. And he said, told Dad, he says, "Well I had intended to file on this land," and he says, "Here I am with my family, and no place to go." He gave him quite a hard luck story, and Dad said, "Okay." He says, "I'll just pull up my stakes and you can have it." And so he ... and then he later bought. But that was quite a few years later that he bought the old place down there. See, that must have been 10 years later, something like that.

But he decided, he was a single man, and he didn't have anyone to, other than --- His mother somehow or other did, his mother got a place filed down there in that Red S Field there someplace. Anyway, that was another big hassle. They, I guess according to that decree, the way they divided that land, that there were --- oh what did they call them, people who --- squatters, squatters went in there where they weren't supposed to. And apparently his mother's land was in there. And then later on was what they called the Company, which I think was the Devine Company at that time. That was before Henry Miller, I think, the PLS Company got it. They went in there and they tore those houses down and moved those people out of there. Well of course that caused a big fuss about

that. But undoubtedly the Company had the legal right there, and those squatters they figured maybe if they stayed there long enough they couldn't move them. I think that's where his mother's place was in that area.

But there is an awful lot of history right in that area there. There was a lot of squabbles, and the law apparently wasn't too clear. And they had very little law enforcement. They had a, as I understand it, a United States Marshal who could be easily swayed with a little money one way or another on the deal. (Laughter)

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: So anyway, that's one of the stories that come down. I'd hate to say what the facts were on that. Because everybody saw that from their own viewpoint.

PAULINE: Well this is, this is, depends on who you talk to, how they see these things, you know. It's like the Pete French story. If father worked for Pete French and thought he was a fine man, you take one side of it. And if you were a home --- your ancestor was one of the homesteaders that was being harassed by Pete French, why you get another side of it.

HOWARD: Yeah, that's right. You probably talked to John Crow, did you, about that?

PAULINE: I didn't. This Jim Baker that came in and started the project, he talked to him.

HOWARD: Oh, he talked to him.

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: Oh, about 25 years or so ago, Dave Crow, that's Johnny Crow's dad, he stayed all night with us when we were down there at Lawen, Neil and I were baching down there. And he told us the whole story, and he was there, old Dave was there. He saw the whole thing, and he's the one that took the word to Winnemucca, or wherever it was he had to go. So, well he told us that he liked Pete French, and he'd always been good to him. But he said that he and everyone else figured that French would eventually

get killed. Because he said he was, when he, especially when he lost his temper, he was inclined to be abusive to people, all right. But, and, but he thought that this fellow had no, that killed him, had no right whatever to kill him. So that's the story he told.

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: Well, let's see. I don't know ---

PAULINE: Well now you said your dad married about 10 or 12 years after he came. Who did he marry?

HOWARD: Yeah. He married Ada Smith. Her father ---

PAULINE: Now is this S M Y T H?

HOWARD: No, S M I T H.

PAULINE: Okay.

HOWARD: He wasn't related to any of the Smiths in here. And he somehow, he had a place over there around, in Silver Creek, in the Silver Creek area. And he come up here with my mother when she was pretty young, I guess. And her mother had died, so there was just the two of them. And I can barely remember him, he lived until I was, I think, about five years old. And I just remember him as an old white whiskered man. And I don't know too much about when he came there. I never got that all figured out, I guess no one ever told me.

But anyway, my mother, somehow or other, that he got that place down there at Lawen where, oh Orthenile Hayes had, he's got that a little later. Let's see, I don't even know who lives there now. But your dad, Henry knows about that, the old Orthenile Hayes place, and Scott Hayes ... They lived on that place. Well they were, they were related to my mother through marriage. That is her half sister married Scott Hayes. And I guess that's the way the Hayes got their place when the old man died. But just when they came to Harney County ---

Mom taught school, I think that's the reason she happened to meet --- I think that's the reason my dad met her. She taught school down there. I don't know where, someplace around in there. PAULINE: There were several schools down there.

HOWARD: Yeah. I think it was down there close to the lake some place or another. I never learned too much about my mother's people there. We got a, oh one of these family tree deals that traces them clear back before the revolutionary war was. That didn't, you know, your talking about names and people that I didn't know anything about. And I would have been a lot more interested in finding out more about when they came in here. But I still can find that out, come to think about it. Because Martin Muck and his brother Harry Muck that are my cousins, and I see Martin once in awhile. He's, I think, probably in his 80's now. But he would know. I just somehow never asked him, I guess.

PAULINE: Well they came in early, though, they would have been, they've been here really early.

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah, they'd been here.

PAULINE: So well now Crow Camp, I know I did some research on that here a long, long time ago, but I've forgotten what I found out about it, generally. But the Crow Camp was a freighter, or a freight stop at one time.

HOWARD: Yeah. And I think that fellow's name was Dave Crow. He was related to, he was an uncle, or a great uncle or something to John Crow here. And the odd part about that as far as we were concerned, we didn't know, and my father didn't know, where that name came from at all, and why I don't know. Because it must have been, people who knew where that name came from when my father first came here. But they speculated that it had to do with the crows flying around, or the Crow Indians maybe camped there some time, or something. But it was simply, this Crow was a freighter that apparently freighted from Fort Harney to Winnemucca, and that was a camping place. And the old

road, actually it's still visible in some instances. There weren't any fences, maybe he just cut across. Missed the water, where the free water was standing in that in the springs. And that old road is still visible. And apparently that was the old freight road. And I think this man's name was Dave Crow, if I remember right. I was talking something to Johnny Crow about it. He found that out when he went back to visiting some of his relatives, I think he said Montana or some-thing. But that was the thing that always surprised me, why didn't someone tell my dad where the name of that place --- of course the Crow Camp Ranch itself was the one that J. P. Rector ... County Judge, they always called him Judge Rector. And where we live now, he took that up and bought land around it, and that sort of thing. He established that place and it was called the Crow Camp Ranch. Now I've heard in later years that there are other Crow Camp Ranches around, but that I know for a fact. That at one time was the one and only Crow Camp Ranch. So, but since then, that name Crow Camp has gone several miles each way. But at ---

PAULINE: Well this Judge Rector he planted an orchard there, and had big picnics out there, and all kinds of --- didn't he?

HOWARD: Yeah, but I don't know just for sure. I think though that when we bought that place we got an abstract of the titles. And probably, I've just forgotten, I think when he came in and made his first filing, that he bought out an interest of, I think a couple brothers by the name of Robinson or Robertson or something like that, that were using that as a place to run horses. And they made some, oh these first filings on some land there, but they hadn't proved up on it. Well he bought what interest they had, apparently. That was the story of how that ranch got started in there.

He was an old New Englander. One of his nephews, later on, after we got the place, came two different summers and ... and he was an old man then too. Talked to us about it, and they were, I think it was New York. Anyway, all these trees that he got were

from back east there. And he must have had, oh 30 or 40 varieties of apples there. And we never did find out the names of all of them because they belonged to that eastern country there. They really weren't marketable apples, for this day and age. They were mostly those old hard winter apples that would keep forever if you put them in a cool place, you know. And some of them are real good. They are mostly gone now, you know. We hardly ever get any apples anymore, because one thing, we haven't tried to keep the orchard up.

But anyway, old Judge Rector was a man that knew, he knew trees and knew fruit, apparently. And he was an old bachelor, he never married.

PAULINE: He never married. Do you know how Crane and Crane Creek happened to get its name?

HOWARD: No, but I think I should know. I think I've been told. Of course the town of Crane undoubtedly was named from Crane Creek there. I don't think there is any doubt about that. I can remember when they were, oh talking different names. There were several different names mentioned, well what should be call this new town that's going to be built up because the railroad has come in. And they finally settled on Crane. And I remember at the time I was a little disappointed, I thought they ought to have been able to find a fancier name than that, but then --- Undoubtedly that came from the Creek, but I think I've heard --- and I tell you who I think told me was Eldon Sitz's mother. See they were pretty early in that, and they lived over in that area. Now I think that she told me where that name originated.

PAULINE: Well I might check with Eldon, he might remember.

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah. I believe that's the way it was there. Then there is a creek that comes down just north of us there where, come down through my, where Dick Arnold lives now, which was part of the old Bob Irving place and the old Adam George place.

There are a lot of Adam George descendants in this area. Oh, Emma Davies down there, and ... at the bird refuge. Oh, I don't know, there must be --- oh heck.

PAULINE: Oh isn't Georgia Paris married to ---

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah. And Dean and Jerry Bennett and all those. Well anyway, they located on Mahon Creek. Now that, I'm not sure, there was a Jim Mahon that a lot of people in here still remember. I barely remember him. But he had, then, in later years he had a place over there in Anderson Valley. But now whether there was a Jim Mahon, I think there was another Mahon or two that were related to him, and I don't know which one of those that Mahon Creek was named for. I don't know whether anyone ever said anything, you know, told you about that. That's the only --- let's see, that's the only other creek that comes down in our area, of any size at all.

Now Lee would have had, should, and I'm sure, can tell you quite a lot more. You say someone talked to him. And he could tell quite a bit more about some of that stuff. He remembers, let's see, Lee is about 8 years older than I am, and he remembered people, some of those early people that I can't remember. And he knew where they lived, and what they were doing, and that sort of thing.

PAULINE: I read the interview that Mr. Baker did with him. But it's been, oh several months ago that I read it. The thing that stuck out in my mind was that he was telling about how to ... riata or something.

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah.

PAULINE: He went into a lot of detail as to how to do that, which is real good.

HOWARD: Uh huh, yeah.

PAULINE: Well do you see much change in the way that cattle business is run in Harney County now, over the years?

HOWARD: Oh yeah, yeah, I should say it is. It has changed all together, you know. For

instance, there is something you undoubtedly picked up, for I think it was in about 1897, or something like that, and they had a hard winter in here and my dad lost more than half of his cattle. And others lost a proportionate ... because they just hadn't gotten around to putting up hay. Evidently Dad must have been, lived here for around 10 years, and the winters had been mild enough, and there was enough grass and enough, but they didn't bother to put up hay much, except for the saddle horses, work horses, whatever it was. Well this hard winter came along, and it darned near wiped them out. I guess it did put some people out of business.

And I think it was the year that Devine sold to the Miller and Lux outfit, because I can remember my dad saying that the count was on the, what came in the fall before, and not what got through the winter until the next spring. And he said he thought that meant an awful lot of difference. So I think that must have been, as I remember, it was about '97.

PAULINE: Uh huh, I think that sounds right. I know it was right along in there someplace. So Harry Clark out at Drewsey was telling me about it.

HOWARD: Oh, uh huh. Had he been in this area at that time, I wonder?

PAULINE: Yeah, he was born here in '87, I think, or '85 someplace along in there. And he remembers, not personally, but he remembers them talking about it.

HOWARD: Them talking about it, yeah. And of course then they started putting up hay. But even when I was growing up, matter of fact up until the, see around late 1930's or '40's, a lot of people were going into the winter without enough hay. They were taking a chance on, well if you have an easy winter we'll get through, and if we don't why we are going to lose some old cows, but then they're probably not worth very much anyway, so we won't worry about it. Well, we can't do that, you know, you'd go broke in a hurry if you tried that now.

For one thing of course there isn't unlimited area for the cattle to run over. It's fenced up, even through private fencing, or the BLM. And our ranges are definitely restricted to a certain area, that's come up under the BLM. But anyway, the cattle, oh have been bred up and the quality has been improved, and people don't try to go into the winter with the possibility of losing half their ... anymore. Which was ...

PAULINE: Well marketing practices are different too. They sell at a different time. And didn't people used to keep steers until they were ---

HOWARD: Three and four years old, some of them. They'd make the long drive; I can remember them, my dad talking about driving to Huntington. Huntington was one market area from here. Of course they'd go through the mountains there, hills, and probably wasn't too awful long drive. But they would deliver steers that far, you know, that was their market. Possibly some went to Ontario when the railroad got there. And even, oh fairly recently now, Lee, he helped take a bunch of cattle in the early 1920's over close to Lakeview. They would deliver cattle, 150, 100, or 150 miles without thinking too much about it. Well of course that's all a thing of the past there.

And we still, we're changing all the time in our method of running cattle. There is no doubt about it; we're going to have to. Things are changing. The type of cattle we're going to have to run, you know, and as like you said the time we sell them, and the weight, the right weights to sell and all that, that's more and more important. And those things they just weren't important at all apparently in those early days.

PAULINE: Well I've always wondered what the point of keeping the steers until they were three or four years old was. And the only thing that I can figure out was so that they would be strong enough to make this long drive. Because you couldn't start out with this small ---

HOWARD: Well I think that's ---

PAULINE: --- calf or a yearling even.

HOWARD: Yeah, or a yearling, even a yearling.

PAULINE: And make these long drives and have them make it, and have any weight left when you got there, which they didn't anyway, I guess.

HOWARD: A lot of it too was the, well we can just run these out, and heck here --- I know my dad's cattle, they'd spend six months out of the year trying to find where they'd gone to. They might come clear across the valley and be over here around Burns. And my dad regularly rode over in the Drewsey country. And, you know, any place in an area of 50 miles --- Well to them it was, there was unlimited territory to run over. And this steer, two year old steer only weighs about 600 pounds, so we keep him a year and get another 100 or 200 pounds on him, and isn't costing us much to keep him, you know. And that's just the way it went. And people probably, you know, if they could see any profit in it, they would do the same thing now. But now there is no profit in running those ...

But then beef was so much a pound and it didn't make much difference whether it was yearlings, or two year olds, or four year olds. It was so much a pound when they got to market with them anyhow.

PAULINE: They didn't ---

HOWARD: But it was all --- you see it was all practically grass beef that went into your retail outlets there. There was very little, maybe now, no grain fed beef in this whole big area. That's only --- there might have been some research done on it, but I don't know what it is. But this fattening beef up to the grades the trade requires now is relatively new, you know, in this country. I would say it probably doesn't go back much more than 50 years. And so people were used to eating grass fat beef, and if they --- they'd sell them to a buyer and he had some good pastures to put them on for a few months why he had all that the market required anyhow. I think there is a lot of it, you know, along in that area

there. It certainly is a different game altogether than it was at that time.

And when I was a kid we always had poor cattle in the wintertime. The old cows, you'd leave them out just about as long as they could exist, before you put them in to feed them hay. And your weak cows, they'd be dying, and you would be tailing them up. That was just a part of the game. I felt, well that's just a part of it until I got old enough to find out that there has to be a better way than that.

PAULINE: You didn't have to lose a lot of cows. Well that's interesting. I haven't really gone into that a lot. But mostly the comparison that people make is that the weather has changed enough. The amount of rainfall and snow we get has changed enough so that we don't have the grass that we had. From what people say when people first came into this country, you know, it was just lush grass everywhere. And that the water from the lake would come up clear as far as Saddle Butte down there.

HOWARD: Yeah.

PAULINE: Clear, way up.

HOWARD: Well on the other hand, you go back a little farther, it seems to me that about the time that my dad came in here, they had a series of mild winters, they must have had. And the first really bad winter came along, caught them completely unprepared. And he'd been here for at least 10 years. So we maybe, you know, in a mild cycle now, but I would hate to bet that that won't revert back, you know.

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: And I think probably if we trace that back, if we could, I know there is information on that. We would find that when a lot of the early settlers came in here we probably were in a mild weather cycle. That's my feeling on it. And then we went through those really rough winters. I don't know whether you remember any of those really rough ones or not, but I sure do. And for the last, oh I don't know, 12, 15 years ---

PAULINE: Yeah, well the last really, real winter we had I think was about '55 or '56.

HOWARD: Yeah.

PAULINE: I think that was the winter, '55 and '56. And we really haven't had a winter since then.

HOWARD: No, no.

PAULINE: Not anything like when I was going to school.

HOWARD: So that, the weather sure, that's affected our operations, no doubt about that. And it isn't just the, these winters that's changed, but we haven't had a good spring for so long that's it's hard to --- But I can remember when we was kids, when it broke spring it was pretty much spring from then on instead of this winter-spring deal for a couple months after we think it should be spring.

PAULINE: Warm one day and cold the next.

HOWARD: Yeah, freezing, you know. Freezing the moisture out of the ground. As I remember it then, we might have an awful rough winter, but it would, when spring came it was a lot more dependable than that. So --- but that all does affect our method of operation that's for sure. As a matter of fact we figure on feeding an extra month, at least, from what we used to in the spring. And we, they established April 1st as a turnout date say on our range. Well we found out that May 1st is more nearly when we should be turning out. The weather has been too cold. Maybe the grass will start in March like it did this last spring. Looked like everything was going to be fine, and then the latter part of March and all of April was just a replay of the winter, or worse.

PAULINE: Nothing grew.

HOWARD: No. So those things will affect --- I wouldn't say that that's necessarily a permanent deal that is if we go back to severe winters. Of course we're going to have to change with them, that's all. It will be a different ball game.

PAULINE: Yeah. Did you go to school at Lawen, or ---

HOWARD: No, I'm the only one of the kids that didn't, it just happened. The older kids went to school down at Lawen. And Dorothy, the younger sister, she finished up her grade school at Lawen because the family, we had this place up here at Burns where Helen lives now. And the family lived there most of the time I was in grade school. Then when I was in high school I, sometimes I boarded with other people. But I finished out my high school in Burns. And Dorothy finished high --- well let's see, we all finished out high school here in Burns. None of them went to Crane. Although the Crane school was in operation when I finished, and when Dorothy finished. But we finished in ---

PAULINE: Was Lee the oldest?

HOWARD: Yeah.

PAULINE: Yeah. Lee and then Neil?

HOWARD: No, then Ruth. Lee and Ruth, and then Evelyn, and then me, and then Dorothy.

PAULINE: Dorothy. Now I don't know her, I guess.

HOWARD: No, she's lived out in San Diego for about, oh let's see, close to 40 years.

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: You want a cup of coffee?

PAULINE: Yeah, I think I'll coffee up too while you're pouring. That pot is so heavy that you can't tell whether ---

HOWARD: You don't know whether it is full or empty.

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: Whoops. That's oilcloth, isn't it?

PAULINE: It's contact paper.

HOWARD: Oh, is that what it is.

PAULINE: Yeah. I need to put new on. No it doesn't ---

HOWARD: It doesn't burn?

PAULINE: Huh uh. This has been on about two years, so it lasts pretty good too, for just being old, just paper.

HOWARD: Yeah.

PAULINE: Well it's plastic, I guess. But ---

HOWARD: I thought --- I set the coffee pot on it for a minute, and I looked, oh gosh maybe this is something that will curl up and ---

PAULINE: No, it --- Well I suppose if it was something real, real hot it would. But it sure beats putting down a new counter top. When it gets really bad why I put a new batch down. Yeah, it sticks down pretty good. If I would be a little more careful it would last a lot longer. But I get to ... with a knife, and then it gets damp underneath, and it starts to work up.

Do you remember a fellow named Rube Haines? Was he Marshal when you were in school?

HOWARD: Oh yeah, yeah, you bet he was. We got --- real expert in razzing Rube Haines when he came down Main Street.

PAULINE: I've heard tell that this was ---

HOWARD: Yeah, he wasn't so bad. We thought he was awful mean. But he did have the kids pretty well buffaloed.

PAULINE: Oh, Lee Williams out at Drewsey was telling me about the poker chip whistles that the kids used to make to torment him with.

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah. In fact I can remember old Rube Haines he always wore a big old watch there, in his vest pocket. He was very efficient. And the old Model-T Fords they --- some kid or something, come down main street too fast, that was when main

street was pretty darn rough, full of chuck holes and everything else. You come a bouncing and a smoking down Main Street, and he'd yank out that old watch and time them down the block. If they were going too fast he'd get after them. (Laughter) Well I think old Rube was a pretty good marshal.

PAULINE: Well I've kind of, from what the different ones have told me, have come to the conclusion that he maybe was --- part of his handling the kids was a little tongue in cheek. He was having about as big a time out of it as the kids were.

HOWARD: Yeah. And he was still marshal after I got out of high school, I think. No, maybe not either.

PAULINE: Didn't he get shot and killed, or something? Yeah.

HOWARD: Yeah. I guess that was before, that was before our time. Because they had a different marshal when I was in high school. That's the funniest darn thing. And just one incident there, the only time I was ever arrested. A bunch of us kids we'd been out the night before, we'd run up and down Main Street, and we'd yell and whoop. And they had some of these street signs, just right to play leapfrog over, and we'd jump over those. And the next day the marshal came out; his name was McDonald, Laddie McDonald. And he read off some names, says, got us, pulled us out of the classroom and everything. Says, "You're under arrest." We looked at each other, and we all searched through, we figured we'd probably done something wrong all right, sometime or other, but we couldn't think what in the world it was.

And he marched us down to the justice of the peace. That was, Patterson was his name, and he was an old deaf feller, he had one of these ear trumpets. But he was really a nice old fellow. He heard the complaints and that, and then he kind of give us a little lecture about how we should behave ourselves and that. And then he told us, well we'd better get back to our classrooms.

Somebody had reported, and the funniest part of it was there were two brothers, the Horton brothers. And whoever gave the names gave the wrong one. So the innocent one that hadn't been down, running up and down Main Street, had probably been home studying. He was the one that ---

PAULINE: That had got arrested.

HOWARD: Yeah. It was sure funny. But talk about a blank looking bunch of boys --- we were pretty sure we'd been into something, probably fairly recently, but we couldn't think what we'd done.

PAULINE: That was bad enough to get arrested.

HOWARD: Yeah. If he had known, probably we had done some things that we could have been hauled in for. But whoever it was that turned the kids in, and we never did find out who that was, they weren't very accurate. And the old justice of the peace, he couldn't see that we had done anything very wrong anyhow. (Laughter)

PAULINE: Do you remember the first car you ever rode in?

HOWARD: No, no I couldn't tell --- I can remember when I was about 3 or 4 years old, that's where we had, moved to town, had a place there, we came in from the ranch. And we rode a car, in a car, but I don't remember who's it was, or anything about it.

PAULINE: Well you had been pretty small yet then.

HOWARD: Yeah, yeah, I was too small to know, other than it was something strange and new, and I was probably a little bit afraid. But that's --- Then we had, my dad got an old 1910 Model-T when I was 5, 5 years old. But I know that I had ridden in cars before that. But there wasn't, or there was still these old freight teams coming in, you know, when we were kids in grade school. I think they went out about the time I went into high school, and the trucks began to take over the hauling. But, well by that time the railroad had come to Crane anyway, and there probably was some horse freighting from Crane to

Burns, I imagine. But mostly it was the old trucks then. Some of those were real dillies.

But they made it through, and you know there wasn't even any gravel roads, they had to slow it along through the mud one way and another, and those old truck drivers they had it just as tough as the old freight team drivers had, getting through. I can remember them having lots of trouble. This road here, it was just, you know, it would get hub deep in the spring too.

PAULINE: Well I can remember before it was paved, when I was just a little girl, it was graveled then. But I can remember in the spring going to town that the water would be up and running on the road up there at the river bridge. And ---

HOWARD: Yeah. Well that was just about the time the old auto-mobile age was coming, developing, you know, and people were slowly getting away from the horse drawn stuff. As far as transportation was concerned, it was, it was quite a bit later before they mechanized too much out on the ranches though.

PAULINE: Yeah.

HOWARD: That would run up until, oh I'd say 1930 before there were many tractors. We were still raising our, workhorses, and using them until, actually we quit using horses about 1940. So that was right at the time, of course, when the big change took place as far as the automobile and mechanizing power was concerned. Although they had, I know they had those old threshing machine engines and that sort of thing long before that, as far as that goes. It was just the average rancher or farmer in this area wasn't using mechanical power.

But, and I can remember one threshing outfit that was a horsepower. They used horses, they had a team, I don't know, four, six, or eight horses, whatever it was, they just walked the circle there and had their power unit here, you know.

PAULINE: Uh huh. Then they brought the grain into, and run it through the thresher.

HOWARD: Yeah. Now they used what they called headers. And these header boxes, they were built high on one side, and low on the other. And then they had the --- I can't remember what kind of a

--- Oh, the header itself was a machine that worked like, some-thing like these swathers do. And they'd wouldn't cut, you know, only just down below the head a ways on the grain. And then it was elevated into these wagons, you had a spout on them, and all horse drawn. And then they, when they took those to the --- hauled those to the threshing machine, I think they had a kind of a special kind of a fork, a pitchfork, maybe a five or six tined deal or something like that, and they pitched those grain heads. Some of them maybe would have a foot of straw attached to them, and some of them maybe just a few inches.

We had an old head ... that was left there at the place when we first got the place where we live now. But it's all gone. It was kind of an antique in itself. But I can --- but I was, I wasn't very big when that sort of thing went out either.

PAULINE: Well I want to get it just clear in my mind now, just where your dad's homestead was, where he first took up and --- your dad ... from Crow Camp.

HOWARD: Yeah, from where we live now, actually we join; see he joined on to the Joe Rector place on the north. And there is still an old building or two down there. We're slowly getting that, those old buildings cleaned up. Still an old building or two down there.

But he, they could take up 320 acres. And I think they called that a desert claim at that time. And then later on my mother took 320 acres just west of it, which would take it down to where the country road is now. So that made 640 acres, which is the way I remember it. Now Dad somehow or other, he ran a lot of cattle from that 320 acres for a number of years, anyway. That's all the land he had. I think he bought that place down at Lawen,

oh that was after Lee was born, I think, probably, oh just before the turn of the century, which gave him another 160 acres down there. Well he ran close to a 1000 head of cattle from 160 acres of meadowland, and 320 acres of dry land. And a lot of other people were doing the same thing.

PAULINE: Well they didn't, I mean they just turned them out, there was range all over the country, I guess.

HOWARD: Yeah, that's the way it was.

PAULINE: Yeah. Well this field that is located down there next to where Tripp has his place there, is that what you call the Indian Field, is that Indian property, or does that belong to you?

HOWARD: No, there is a lot of Indian land out in that area. That's --- if you'll look on the, you know, old township maps. It isn't very well blocked. It's --- some of them, there may be two or three adjacent quarters in there, and then there will be a part of it sticking off down here by itself. But that --- oh there must be --- and actually you see that extends clear over here just be-yond the Rye Grass country, well, or in the Rye Grass country there is still Indian land. So that --- we rent, and everyone that runs out in there, we have our, most of us have our ranges fenced there. But we've got Indian land fenced in with it.

And so we rent that, not directly from the Indians, but through the Indian Agency. And then everyone else that runs out in that area has got several quarters of Indian land. Now I under-stand, possibly we can start --- well years ago we could rent directly from the Indians, and maybe they're going to give it back to them, I don't know. But ... for the last, oh probably 15, 20 years we've had to rent it through the Indian Agency.

PAULINE: Well I don't know whether this thing that they just settled up this last month out here, that affects this other land out here or not, I don't think it does. I think it's just right

up there around Burns.

HOWARD: Yeah, that's the way I got it in the paper. But eventually they're going to, probably will; undoubtedly they'll give it back to the Indians. The worst of it is, there is very little land at the present time that is worth developing and doing anything with. And so the grass that it's producing, generally doesn't amount to too much, and they're not getting much out of it.

Now we rent some Indian land though up there, and part of it lays up on the hill north of us, a mile north of us. And on the deal we developed a 100 acres of that, and put in crested wheat. We developed everything that didn't lay up on the hill, that was too rocky or too ... to get the machinery in or anything. Let's see there is 320 acres of Indian - -- I don't know how they ever happened to let them have that piece in there. Some of that is fairly decent land. But somebody slipped and they gave them, let them have a little land.

PAULINE: That's kind of the history of the whole thing. Anything that amounted to very much was a mistake.

HOWARD: Yeah, and this Indian story went clear on through. I'll tell you it wasn't very good.

PAULINE: No, it sure isn't. And the more you find out about it, the worse it looks. But ---

HOWARD: Well I guess, have we covered about everything.

PAULINE: Yeah, I'm sure --- that really, that helps a lot. And I sure appreciate your coming ---

(END OF TAPE)

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