

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #274 - Sides A & B

Subject: Jessie Williams Discusses Bill Brown

Place: Burns, Oregon

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Interviewer: Richard Cowan

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JESSIE WILLIAMS: ... trying to write up his family history. And he came here to see what I knew about it. And I give him ... about his grandfather ... And I took him out first to show his grandfather's first wife's grave out there at Silver Creek. And as we come back, I told him all about how the country laid and everything. And I was just to drive up by the museum, I have all these maps, and you just take them to the old hotel tonight, and just spread them out and look at them. And he found right where his grandfather had settled in Silver Creek.

RICHARD COWAN: Is that right? I've got her working.

JESSIE: But that's on those maps up there I think ...

RICHARD: Well now, were you raised out here Jessie?

JESSIE: Well no, I was born in the Willamette Valley, close to Halsey. But I came here when I was four years old, close to the Double O Ranch. We lived there on ...

RICHARD: Well, what was your maiden name?

JESSIE: Bardwell. Jess Bardwell.

RICHARD: Oh, certainly. I forgot all about that. Yeah. (Laughter) Well, you founded Harney County almost.

JESSIE: Yeah, we did.

RICHARD: Well then, Harry was living on the ranch at Silver Creek then.

JESSIE: I hadn't met him until we went to high school.

RICHARD: Uh huh. Come to high school here in Burns?

JESSIE: Uh huh, both of us.

RICHARD: And then you got married and moved to the ranch?

JESSIE: Uh huh. That's right. (Laughter)

RICHARD: Well, now Harry's father was judge?

JESSIE: Well, Mr. Shields was the first judge of Harney County. And then I ought to know what year Harry's father was judge, but I can't tell you. It was on this piece, if I could only find it. I can't imagine where the girls put my ---

HELEN COWAN: They cleaned up around here.

JESSIE: Well, you take it to get addresses out of, you know, and then you lay it down somewhere. And this piece was in there. I have it up to the museum too.

RICHARD: Well, I'll stop up there and get it from you up there. When were you and Harry married?

JESSIE: '14, 1914.

RICHARD: 1914.

JESSIE: '15.

RICHARD: Was his father judge at that time?

JESSIE: No, it was after that. Quite awhile after that. I don't remember who was judge then.

RICHARD: Well, did you know Bill Brown very well?

JESSIE: Oh, not too well. He was at the ranch several times. He come out on the desert for dad's desert claim and he wanted to buy that, and dad never sold it to him. But, you know, you never give up the ...

RICHARD: Well, where was that?

JESSIE: Oh, well you know where Bigstick is?

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: Well, dad and his brother-in-law owned ranches out there.

RICHARD: Oh, I see. Well, see at the time you were, just after you and Harry were married then,

why that was when Bill Brown was right at his peak, wasn't it?

JESSIE: Uh huh. Oh, long before Harry and I was married. We lived out there, grew up on dad's ranch. Whatever he took it for, just a desert claim I guess. You had to do so much work. We'd go out there in the summertime, and they'd --- rode their horses just a lot, lots of times, he had so many horses.

HELEN: Where was that?

JESSIE: Out there around Big Stick, and through there. Just alive with horses.

RICHARD: Well, they said at that time he had around ten thousand horses, is that ---

JESSIE: Oh, it sure was, he had a lot of them. ... seen horses killed.

RICHARD: Well did he, what was he like as a person? This is what I'm trying to find out.

JESSIE: Well, he was a very nice person, as far as we was concerned. He talked kind of funny. Most certain, and things like that. That's what he'd tell the boys when he wanted to tell them something. They beat him out of so much over there.

RICHARD: Well, you know this is what I can't understand. How this man got to own so many horses, and so many sheep, and so much land, and yet all you hear is how people beat him out of this, and cheated him out of that.

JESSIE: See, his brothers were here with him; two brothers were here with him at first. And that's how they got the land; they got the land then. And then ... and he stayed and built up this, well I think he raised most of those horses, and just went out there on the range.

RICHARD: Uh huh. Did he go out and buy stud horses? Did he buy pretty good breeding stock?

JESSIE: Oh, they were good horses, all of them he had. But of course, after the horses quit selling so good, then they went down, because they didn't put stallions with them. But the people that ran horses themselves, they tried to change them themselves, as often as they could. And get the inbred ones ... He gave my dad a horse, and dad gave him to me when I was married. And I rode him all the time. Dad called him Pussy Foot. (Laughter) And he had ...

RICHARD: Uh huh. Horseshoe bar.

JESSIE: Horseshoe bar. On the jaw and on the side.

RICHARD: Were you ever around any of the sheep camps, or any of the sheep operations?

JESSIE: No, I never was right at the camp. I seen the sheep, but I was never right at the camp.

Usually he ... himself.

RICHARD: That's what I heard.

JESSIE: Yeah. Harry's cousin cooked for him over there at his ranch, at Fife where his ranch was.

RICHARD: Oh, at Buck Creek, yeah.

JESSIE: Uh huh. Ruby Street.

RICHARD: Oh, sure, sure, yeah.

JESSIE: She and Henry worked for him over there. She said that ... cheated him. Couldn't do much about it himself.

HELEN: He must have been a very lonely man.

JESSIE: Well, I didn't know it in the books they write in the piece that's in the paper. They say he was in love with America Sutherland. Well it wasn't at all. It was Ruby Street's sister.

RICHARD: She was just a young girl though, wasn't she? That's what someone told me, Bill was in his forties then, and she was a girl in her teens.

JESSIE: Yeah, she was twenty. She was about twenty years old I think. She was quite a bit older than Ruby.

RICHARD: Well, Bill though was quite a bit older than she?

JESSIE: Oh, yes. And his ... had to be his nephew, his brother's boy came to the museum after I was there, and he told me who it was that he was --- that it was the Street, that it was, not Street girl.

RICHARD: Shields.

JESSIE: Shields.

RICHARD: Shields, sure. (Laughter)

JESSIE: The Shields girl. And he had talked to Ruby about it.

HELEN: Yeah, Ruby was a Shield's.

JESSIE: Yeah, she was a Shield's.

RICHARD: Well now, I heard somewhere too that he was kind of interested in Pat Cecil, one of

Pat Cecil's sisters at one time.

JESSIE: Well it could be, I don't know about that. But they lived up there, but they weren't there too much. After they were old enough to go to school, she took them to Portland. Because they was so far from school here. They bought a home in Portland and they went to school down there. Of course, they owned a home here too. But I don't know how long they went to school here, but I don't know how old they were. And I'm not sure we had a high school at that time. I can't remember how old Pat was, but I --- I don't ... and she took them down to Portland to go to school.

RICHARD: Well, did Bill come to town very often?

JESSIE: Not very often.

RICHARD: How did he get his supplies and things?

JESSIE: Well, he had a little store there. Where those were shipped in from, let's see --- oh I could show you ... Bill, or Shields bought a lot of stuff from Bill Brown, and it was made out on one of these places where he gets his stuff from, but I can't think where it was.

RICHARD: I think it was Claude Brennan told me that he was in partners in a store with Johnson, Sylvanus Johnson. Does that name ring a bell?

JESSIE: No, I don't know any Johnson --- Bill Johnson had a brother, could of been him. But I never heard that before. But he freighted all that stuff in. I think he had his own freight wagons probably; he had everything else.

RICHARD: He had enough horses for them, that's for sure.

JESSIE: Yeah.

RICHARD: Well were you there when he shot Overstreet? Were you out in Silver Creek then?

JESSIE: Well, I kind of believe that was before I went out.

HELEN: What year did you go to ...

JESSIE: '14.

HELEN: It was right after ...

JESSIE: Uh huh.

RICHARD: I know that Virgil told me that he came right over and he gave himself up to Virgil's

dad. And then he stayed with Shields' for a day or so then.

JESSIE: Uh huh.

RICHARD: Of course, Virgil said he was fifteen at the time.

JESSIE: Well you see this other girl was quite a bit older than Virgil. See Aunt Julia had two --- a boy and a girl, and then quite a few years, she had another boy and girl, and then several years she had another boy and a girl. So, you see ---

RICHARD: Scattered.

JESSIE: Yeah.

HELEN: There were three families.

JESSIE: Well you might say three families.

RICHARD: Well, what happened to all of them? All I know is Virgil and Ruby.

JESSIE: Oh well, Marie is still alive in Portland. And one boy, and he went to Seattle first, then he moved to California. And Virgil was up there with him a long time. Until he went to the army, I guess. You see they lost one boy, the brother that was close to Ruby. He died, wasn't very old. ... And Myra is the one that Bill Brown was so crazy about. She married a man here in Hines. She would have been just as well off if she'd married Bill.

RICHARD: (Laughter)

JESSIE: Pardon me. I'm going to get that ---

RICHARD: I won't quote you on that.

JESSIE: No, don't quote me on anything.

... Oregon range war.

RICHARD: Yeah, glamour and romance.

JESSIE: Yeah. The girl that taught school was crazy about this ... that was killed, I forget which one it is. Dobkins.

RICHARD: Dobkins.

JESSIE: Dobkins. And I walked up to school one night to talk to her. Of course, when we was home, there was always someone there. And I walked home with her from school --- there is the ...

If you can see it, I don't know if ---

RICHARD: Yeah, I can see it fine.

JESSIE: Why don't you take it over there by the window maybe? I think it shows on there where he killed Overstreet.

HELEN: You sit still.

JESSIE: Sit still. Sit down there.

RICHARD: Are you sitting ---

JESSIE: I'll move this chair. Sit down. You can lay it on there if you want to.

RICHARD: Okay.

JESSIE: I think that shows, somewhere on there ... killed Overstreet. Because I don't see like I used to.

HELEN: ...

RICHARD: Wagontire. Yeah.

JESSIE: There is the Juniper Ranch. ...

RICHARD: Here is Wagontire Mountain.

JESSIE: Yeah. Here is the sheep camp.

RICHARD: Yeah, and see here is Buck Creek. Buck Creek Ranch. And there is the Gap Ranch.

JESSIE: Yeah, he owned that.

RICHARD: Yeah. And then they tell me he ran out there to Fort Rock.

JESSIE: Oh, yes.

RICHARD: And way up here to Bill Brown's home town of Prineville. Oh, yeah.

JESSIE: But I thought it showed where he ---

RICHARD: Well, he killed him out here at Wagontire.

JESSIE: Yes, somewhere around there.

RICHARD: Yeah, and it doesn't show there. See there is Iron Mountain.

JESSIE: Yeah, I've been right on the top of there.

RICHARD: And ---

JESSIE: No, ... but I guess it doesn't. Maybe it tells in this other part. ... book out of the --- I know it does somewhere, told about Overstreet.

RICHARD: Yeah, here it is right here. Well it says that, actually Bill owned the --- well I won't read this, but the story was that Bill owned the land and this guy was trying to run him off his own land.

JESSIE: Yes, that was right.

RICHARD: Yeah, that's the story I got.

JESSIE: ... about him. And here's another piece. I wrote to the Oregonian to get the other piece. I knew what year the paper was in. And I got it, and it was such fine print, we couldn't read it. So a couple girls who was working down here at the BLM, one took a glass and a read ... and the other one copied it off. So, this is quite a bit of the story we hadn't gotten before.

RICHARD: Uh huh.

JESSIE: So, Bill Brown let the water hole open to all comers so that it could be a public place, but with the coming of, I don't know what he meant there.

RICHARD: Oh, yeah.

JESSIE: It was considered a bad feeling. Too bad they couldn't make that out.

RICHARD: Yeah, it probably says, it's probably Dobkins. Because Dobkin was involved in that too, I know.

JESSIE: Yes. ... because here is Dobkins down here. But Overstreet was quite awhile before Dobkins come in here I think. Doesn't say who his foreman was though.

RICHARD: Well, now I understand several foremen. I've talked to Sam Boyce, and ---

JESSIE: What did he say about it?

RICHARD: Well, he said there was all kinds of foreman. Sumner Houston was a foreman for a while, and Frank Morgan I guess, foreman for a while.

JESSIE: That ---

RICHARD: Mike's dad.

JESSIE: Mike's dad.

RICHARD: Yeah, uh huh.

JESSIE: He was quite a man.

RICHARD: Still is quite a big man.

JESSIE: Is he still alive?

RICHARD: Oh, yes, yeah. He was up here at the fair.

JESSIE: Oh, was he?

RICHARD: I saw him, uh huh.

JESSIE: I told Mike that he and I were related. Because ... to my dad's folks in the valley.

RICHARD: Oh.

JESSIE: You see they took up one of these homesteads out there. And ...

RICHARD: Well, let's leave it here. I'd like to look this over one of these days, if I could.

JESSIE: Yes. I don't like to let you take it home.

RICHARD: No, I wouldn't ask you to take it home.

JESSIE: Otherwise I would. Because I just ... and I go up there and get this out. (Laughter)

HELEN: You can go to the museum.

RICHARD: Yeah, I can go up to the museum and look at it. Tell me, what do you know about the Gap Ranch? Did Bill Brown make it into a ranch, or was there someone there first?

JESSIE: No, I think he, I think he built that little house that's down there.

RICHARD: Was there someone farming there before that?

JESSIE: He farmed there. He farmed there himself. And he went up there and built that, I heard someone say that he went up there where that water comes down and built that ditch that comes down through, by a kicking rocks out. And a shovel or what ---

RICHARD: Oh, he did more than that. There is a lot of work in that ditch. (Laughter)

JESSIE: That's what they said, that he built that ditch.

RICHARD: Uh huh.

JESSIE: That that come out of, well he went, most of it was just manual labor with him.

RICHARD: Uh huh. Well then, he's the one who first saw that basin. It looks like an old lakebed

out there. And he's the one who first started to farm.

JESSIE: Well yes, I'm sure he is. Because that's what someone told me, he built that first ditch that come down through there.

RICHARD: Was he farming there when you were married?

JESSIE: Well, he might have.

RICHARD: Were married.

JESSIE: I think he was ... I think he had someone stay there most of the time then. And maybe Bill stayed there himself part of the time.

RICHARD: Remember Grant Barney?

JESSIE: Oh, yes.

RICHARD: Well, he tells me that's the first job he had. He said he got there and he couldn't get up that hill in his old car, and went to work for Bill Brown there at the Gap Ranch.

JESSIE: At the Gap Ranch. Well did he farm?

RICHARD: Well, I guess he did just everything for Bill Brown. Worked fence, and farmed, and ride horses.

JESSIE: Well I'm sure he farmed. ... Grant Barney, and he worked for ... who he worked for on Silver Creek.

RICHARD: Worked for Wood Best mainly.

JESSIE: Oh, yes, yes. Well when we went out there, you know, Foster's owned that place where Carlon's owned, you know.

RICHARD: Yeah, the ---

JESSIE: Who owns it now, I don't know?

RICHARD: It's changed hands two or three times. It's the old Davey Jones Ranch.

JESSIE: Oh well, it was the Foster place to us.

RICHARD: Foster, yeah, well that's right.

JESSIE: Because they had a boy about the same age as Harry. And they went to school out there together. And they went to high school together.

HELEN: That's where the name Foster ditch comes from.

JESSIE: Oh, yes, yes.

RICHARD: Yeah. That's right.

HELEN: It was by us, Foster ditch.

RICHARD: Uh huh. Well they lived at Wagontire too, didn't they? Weren't the Fosters from Wagontire too?

JESSIE: Well not when she was with Foster. No, after she lived out there, I think before she married Sutherland. But I think it was his place probably.

RICHARD: Oh, uh huh.

JESSIE: But they wanted me to write up a story about the Double O Ranch, and I --- well I started clear back with Fosters, because he was one of the foremen out there. And I come right on up, and his son graduated from this high school. And here that man's son's both graduated from this high school. And now their boys are playing on our football team this year.

RICHARD: Yeah, Steve.

HELEN: Last year he graduated.

JESSIE: And that was this man I was talking about said that owned that ranch. It was his great grandfather, see.

RICHARD: Huh. You know those boys; well it would be the father of the boys that graduated was the ones who built our house.

JESSIE: Oh ---

RICHARD: Dick and Bill Foster.

JESSIE: Oh.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: And you know how they learned that carpenter work? They learned that when they was in the navy.

RICHARD: Is that right? Huh.

JESSIE: They had to draw --- how to load ships, and how to place them, and they laid that from

drawing those ...

RICHARD: I'll be darned.

JESSIE: They just took that up from there. I suppose they worked with somebody that ---

HELEN: Well they worked with ...

RICHARD: Yeah, yeah.

HELEN: And then they went off on their own.

JESSIE: Uh huh. They were pretty smart boys.

RICHARD: Yeah. Well, why don't you, would you start down say at the old Cryder place and tell us who all lived on Silver Creek, and where they lived?

JESSIE: Well the Cryders, the Cryders themselves lived down there with three boys, and then their sister and her husband came out there and lived with them until, I guess he died first.

RICHARD: Was this about the time you and Harry moved in, up there?

JESSIE: Oh, the Cryders were out there before we ---

RICHARD: Way before that, huh?

JESSIE: Uh huh. I don't know when they settled out there. I'll tell you who was there when we moved out there. The Cryders was down there, and the Oakerman's were at the Oakerman Ranch. And Hembree had the store and the post office, just across from the Oakerman place. And then the Williams'.

RICHARD: Now that would be Harry's dad?

JESSIE: Uh huh.

RICHARD: And he had the place we call the Green Valley now ... yeah.

JESSIE: And the Shields' of course, have always been over there. How Harry's dad got a hold of that land, he got this land from that boy's father that I was telling you about. He bought up his land when he left.

RICHARD: Oh, yeah.

JESSIE: To get all that land that he had. And Dibbles lived in; you know where the old Dibble house was?

RICHARD: Yeah, uh huh.

JESSIE: They lived there. And then there was always a store there at the end of that lane. There was --- Clark --- I shouldn't forget that. Can't recall it right now. Anyway, was Clark. They had a little store there. Not on the other side of the lane, that that store stood. Just a little bit of a store.

RICHARD: Yeah, Virgil pointed it out to me where it was once.

JESSIE: And he took all the rabbit ears and everything that people killed there in trade for their groceries everywhere.

HELEN: Was there a bounty on rabbit ears?

JESSIE: Oh yes, five cents.

HELEN: Is that so. A pair?

JESSIE: Uh huh. Goodness there was hundreds of them. You know there was, in here was, district attorney I guess he was, and he come down to mother's, he lived right next to mother where she lived. And he come in there when I was in there one day, and he got tough about this bounty. And he said, "You know that wasn't legal?" And I said, "Why?" And he went on, you know, like a lawyer would, and explained the whole thing. I said, "What did you expect us to do, set here and let the rabbits take it?" He said, "No, you did just the right thing."

RICHARD: Well now, the place that you inherited ---

JESSIE: Well there wasn't anyone on that, Daddy Williams had bought it, had bought that land. But there was some people by the name of Hogan that lived there. And then after Hogan's left, Del Dibble lived there. And then after Del was gone, Harry's father bought it. And we moved in there, Harry and I when we ---

RICHARD: Well now, when did Gus get that piece in the corner?

JESSIE: That land? Well he didn't get that until years after. Harry's father always rented that to ... and he bought the road land after.

RICHARD: Oh, that was road land.

JESSIE: Uh huh. That was road land. And he bought that. And we bought the road land up there above us. And then old ... Dibble, I wish you could have known him.

RICHARD: I remember old Peck talked about him a lot.

JESSIE: Oh, I'd say. He had that place where Peck lived. Then the Fosters and the Bests, the Johnson's.

RICHARD: Well now, how about the old, what was the Thorne place when I moved here ...

JESSIE: Oh, Thornes, yes. Uh huh.

RICHARD: Rolley Thorne was his name, wasn't he?

JESSIE: Uh huh. Then when Frank moved there, I don't know why he built that big barn, I never could figure it.

RICHARD: Well, Frank raised purebreds, didn't he?

JESSIE: Yes, he started the first purebreds there on Silver Creek. And they built that big barn, and still lived in a little log cabin that his father had lived in. ... Thorne.

RICHARD: Well then after --- who --- place --- now Alton Basey lived across the valley when we moved here.

JESSIE: Across, against the hill?

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: Well Art Frye lived there when ---

RICHARD: Frye, that's right.

JESSIE: No, Buck Bower lived over there first. Then Art Frye I think bought his place when he left. He went to the valley and stayed at his sisters or something, and passed away down there I think. And then some of the, when you get that map you'll find out there was some --- I forget names worse than anything. ...

RICHARD: Well, just going on up the valley then, next were the Fosters?

JESSIE: Uh huh. Fosters owned quite a bit of land up there.

RICHARD: Well, now the Hirsch's lived out there too, didn't they?

JESSIE: They lived out next to Dry Mountain.

RICHARD: Oh, out there.

JESSIE: There were several people, oh that was all settled up at one time.

RICHARD: All homesteaded?

JESSIE: Yes. There was a house right on top of the hill there from that Clark store. Just right up on top of the hill there, just a little cabin that this fellow lived in. I can't think of his name. But there was just little cabins out there, all over the ---

RICHARD: I heard his name. Mike talked about the Hamilton field.

JESSIE: Well now that's over ---

RICHARD: That's over in the ---

JESSIE: The Williams' place is over the hill, down there. That's where the Hamilton's lived.

RICHARD: Yeah, uh huh. I see.

JESSIE: But I don't remember where they lived. I guess they were there when Harry and I went out there.

RICHARD: Well then there was some, see the Howard's were there when we moved here. And Putnam's had a little place up there too, on up the canyon when we first moved here.

JESSIE: Yes. I don't know exactly where ---

HELEN: That's fairly recent history.

RICHARD: Well, yeah, it's thirty years now. Yeah, uh huh.

JESSIE: I don't know where Putnam's lived. They moved.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: They moved that house where we lived from down in the flat there where the old barn was.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: They moved it up there to the hill, the Putnam's did.

RICHARD: Oh, they did, uh huh. Oswald moved a house in for us too.

JESSIE: He did?

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: Well it was just in awful shape. And oh, lots of people lived out there.

RICHARD: Well then going past the Fosters then, why Johnson's were in that, next to the grange

hall there?

JESSIE: Albert Johnson ... and the other Johnson lived on up where that old barn and all that old house.

RICHARD: Oh, yeah.

JESSIE: Bill Johnson lived there.

RICHARD: The one that burned down?

JESSIE: Did it burn down?

RICHARD: Well it's on the other side of, on the other side of Henry Street's old place, wasn't it?

JESSIE: Right up from Henry Street's place.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: Up there against the hill, from Henry's place.

RICHARD: Would that be the place that the Gibson's ---

JESSIE: Yeah. Tin Gibson had that.

RICHARD: Yeah, Tin was there when we moved here.

JESSIE: That's the same place.

HELEN: That was moved out, then ... was down there with ...

RICHARD: Where Cody's lived, yeah. Well then going west from there, then was Woodie Best, and Bakers lived out in there too somewhere, didn't they?

JESSIE: You mean Don Baker?

RICHARD: Well a couple fields, they called the Baker field.

JESSIE: Well I don't know exactly where those fields --- yes Bob Baker lived down in there. That was Don's brother I guess. Mr. Johnson got those I think, that field out there. But Bob Baker lived out there, he and his wife. They lost two children while they were there. They were both buried up there I think. ... and Betty Williams lost their little girl. She is buried up there.

RICHARD: Did you know the Choate's who lived on out there too?

JESSIE: Yes, yes, I did. A ... family ever lived. I don't know what they lived on. Of course, they lived on deer meat, that was the size of that. And my sister-in-law said they lived on gravy meal

and water.

RICHARD: Your sister-in-law?

JESSIE: Yeah, my sister-in-law that lived down at Coos Bay.

RICHARD: Oh, uh huh.

JESSIE: She lived out there close. The Haines' had a, her father had a homestead out there too. And the people that kept the Suntext office, now what were their names? They were the ones that started the Suntext post office. ... Johnson too. I'm sure, wasn't they?

RICHARD: There was a Kessinger out there I know.

JESSIE: Oh, yes. They lived out the other way from the, they were living out that way. They ... buckaroo at hard times.

RICHARD: Of course, I didn't know the older Choate's, but I know this Tom Choate in Hines, just as fine a person as you'll ever meet.

JESSIE: Oh, the best you ever saw. I used to call him, "Hello Thomas." He'd say, "My name is not Thomas, it's Tom." (Laughter) That's the trouble with all these kids, you know, I've known them ever since they were little tots. I'm the only one alive around yet. (Laughter) And then the Choate's moved down to, on that corner, I don't know whether they built that house, or they moved one in there. Where I told you that little store was.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: The Choate's moved down there, and had a store across the lane on the other corner.

RICHARD: Well, that would be way down by where you lived?

JESSIE: Yes, way down there. And the Kessinger's moved in up there where Peck was one summer. And there was the Choate's and the Lowes who lived around the corner there where ... place is. They had five children, Choate's had six. I don't remember how many Kessinger's had. And we had three. And we was all at once. That was after, of course after, and I don't remember what year the Bradford's put that store in. Quite awhile after we went out there.

RICHARD: Well, where did the Gibson's come in next?

JESSIE: Oh, Tin Gibson worked for everybody, everywhere, and was one of the best workers that

anyone ever saw. He'd be right up and out with all the men anytime. But he couldn't work for himself. Never would get up and get at it. But he married one of Mr. Johnson's daughters. And they had six children I think; there was three boys and three girls. And they lived in that little house just across from the schoolhouse there. I don't know, I guess he took that up as a homestead or something. And that's all they had.

RICHARD: Well Tin's granddaughter Betty Lou owns it now.

JESSIE: Oh, does she?

RICHARD: Yeah, she's got that.

JESSIE: They kept that, the taxes paid up always on that. There is where we made a mistake on that land of dads. Just didn't keep the taxes up on it and lost it.

RICHARD: Well then, he moved, then the ranch that he ended up living on there at Streets, that was originally the Johnson, one of the Johnson's owned it.

JESSIE: The Street's place.

RICHARD: Well, next to the Street's place, against the hill there, where ---

JESSIE: Oh, yes. Old man Johnson, Bill Johnson owned that. They were lovely people. All of them, all of them were, grandest valley you ever saw. What one had they all had.

RICHARD: Well, we found this out when our house burned down. You know what a wonderful place it was. Well then, going up above Streets, now the next place when Parmele lived on it, when we came here.

JESSIE: Well, that was an old Johnson place.

RICHARD: Another Johnson place.

JESSIE: Uh huh. I think that was Mr. Johnson's brother. I can't remember his name. I've heard them call it too. I can't remember. What did you say that Johnson's was, they said was over there in the ---

RICHARD: Oh, yeah. Sylvester or something like that. Sylvanus.

JESSIE: I don't believe that was the ---

RICHARD: Yeah, that's ---

JESSIE: But anyway, they lived up there. And Mr. Johnson owned it. I bought it from him. And then I don't know how Mrs. Street, I have to think --- Henry's uncle, Joe Street owned some land up there above Henry's somewhere, didn't he?

RICHARD: I thought ---

JESSIE: Isn't that what Parmele has?

RICHARD: Maybe that's what it was.

JESSIE: I think that's --- I think when Parmele got that land there, I think they bought that place.

RICHARD: Uh huh.

JESSIE: But I can't think who lived up there. Seemed like Mrs. Street lived up there. I can't remember whether it was some of the Street family. I didn't know them so well.

RICHARD: Well ---

JESSIE: Then there used to be a post office right in there.

RICHARD: The old Evergreen post office is up there somewhere.

JESSIE: Uh huh. Yes. Right across from Cecil, in that little end right there. And I don't know the name of that post office at all.

RICHARD: Yeah, Fred Baker was telling me about it at one time.

JESSIE: Oh. Where is that book of mine? Oh, here. ... museum, now I don't know where it is. I haven't had it out since. I can't remember the name of it. Because all the post offices were in it, the little ones, that ever was in here.

RICHARD: Huh.

JESSIE: I told them about one that was named Kennedy down here. And it never really was a post office, because they didn't have, there wasn't enough mail to make it a post office.

RICHARD: I see.

JESSIE: But that's in there. Now where did I put that? That might tell about that Evergreen.

HELEN: Was it a bound book or a scrapbook?

JESSIE: Yes, it was a bound book. Uh huh. I don't know where I put it.

RICHARD: Well then going on up from there. Why there was one other ranch I know above

where Parmeles were. And I think the Gibson's owned it when we came here. Probably another Johnson place up there, huh?

JESSIE: Probably. There was several people that lived out there on that bench, you know, out there. That was all taken up. All farmed. That's where Hirsch's lived and ---

HELEN: They raised potatoes they once told me, didn't they?

JESSIE: Oh yes. They raised, Williams' always had a little ... of land there that they plowed. They would plow it one summer, and then raise potatoes on it the next year. And they raised good potatoes. No water ...

RICHARD: Do you think there was more moisture then than now?

JESSIE: Oh, yes.

RICHARD: Had more rain?

JESSIE: We always used to have a lot more summer showers than they do now. We used to have summer showers go across that valley out there, and we'd be laid off one day, and the others would all be working. But we'd have to lay off maybe three or four days on account of rain.

RICHARD: Is that right? You mean up at Silver Creek where ---

JESSIE: Yeah, where we lived.

RICHARD: Yeah, where you and Harry lived, uh huh.

JESSIE: We had some old hay, you know ... because it would feel pretty good, and here come a thunderstorm. They had it all in little bunches, you know, and we were going to put it in the barn, and here come a thunder storm across there and just swept that hay clear to the ground. Had to go out and turn it with a pitchfork.

RICHARD: Oh boy.

JESSIE: Nobody else, we was the only one that was down from working. And it would go across the upper part of the valley. We always had storms out there. But we don't have anything like we used to, weather. It's all changed.

RICHARD: Did you know Wood Best very well?

JESSIE: Oh, yes.

RICHARD: And Mabel?

JESSIE: Oh, yes, I should say.

RICHARD: Well now where did Wood first come from?

JESSIE: Best --- what was his first wife --- you know how you forget things, I know just as well his first wife was, anything---

RICHARD: Wasn't she related to Lena, was it Lena Street from over in Buck Creek?

JESSIE: I don't hardly think his first wife was.

RICHARD: Because I know ---

JESSIE: I think Best himself was related to the Streets.

RICHARD: Well maybe that's what it was.

JESSIE: I believe it was.

RICHARD: Okay, yeah. Well she died, didn't she?

JESSIE: Yes, they had one son. I believe they had another daughter too.

RICHARD: Yeah, Lena mentioned a daughter.

JESSIE: I believe that Doc Hembree married their daughter. And she died. I believe that was the way it was. I can't, if Harry was only here, he could tell you all that. I believe ... married the Best daughter. And then Woodie, their son, Woodie Best, I think he moved away from there. I don't know whether he married a local girl or not. I don't think he did.

RICHARD: Well, Mabel told us he married a girl from Portland.

JESSIE: That's what I thought; he went to school up in there.

RICHARD: Yeah. And they tried to move back here, but she wouldn't stay.

JESSIE: She wouldn't stay, that's usually the way.

RICHARD: Uh huh.

JESSIE: Well, I'm sure that Doc Hembree married Best's daughter. But you remember the name --
- I haven't talked about for so long, that you forget.

RICHARD: Well, where did Mabel Best come from?

JESSIE: Well the Gibbons, she and two brothers ---

RICHARD: Bert and Clyde.

JESSIE: Uh huh. Came in here and they took a homestead out there somewhere, didn't they?

RICHARD: Yeah, out there, yeah, out there west of us, over against the hill.

JESSIE: Yes. And she was a schoolteacher. I think she taught out there. I think she ---

RICHARD: She taught at Buck Creek, didn't she say to us once?

I know she was a schoolteacher.

JESSIE: Yeah. Well you know after you married, they didn't let you teach. I taught one year before Harry and I was married, and I couldn't teach anymore. (Laughter) I substituted out there several times. But ---

RICHARD: Well Wood was, did Wood homestead there, or did he start that ranch?

JESSIE: Well I believe he did. I don't know what it was, whether it was, I can't hardly --- it might have been a homestead. Or you know those days they took, if I get ... piece about Daddy Williams, he told so much about that. They had something else besides a homestead. Not ... I can't remember. And that's the way he took his piece of property down there where the old homestead, or home stood. And that house that stood down; was you there before that house burned?

HELEN: Just, we was --- you mean the Best place?

JESSIE: No, Williams place.

HELEN: Oh, the Williams place.

RICHARD: Which ---

JESSIE: Bob Williams' old place.

RICHARD: Oh, no, no it was before we came here.

SIDE B

JESSIE: ... out there too, you know on that side.

RICHARD: On Chickahominy.

JESSIE: Well yes, somewhere out there.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: And so, did Lowes.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: They weren't there I guess after you got there.

RICHARD: No, they had left there. Well did Peck marry a Johnson? Was Peck married to Bertie Johnson, or someone sometime?

JESSIE: No, yes, but well --- before Johnson married Bertie, he married her. And Johnson was his best friend. Then after Peck and her separated, Johnson married her.

RICHARD: Uh huh.

JESSIE: See Peck and Birdie moved to Santa Barbara and they had a, quite a restaurant down there. Then that earthquake struck and took everything they had.

RICHARD: Oh, is that right?

JESSIE: Peck worked down there in the oil fields. She run the restaurant. He worked, he laid more pipe down there for that oil when it first come in there. It was too bad to lose a brain like Peck's.

RICHARD: Yeah, he was quite a guy.

JESSIE: Oh, I say he was. He was so good to show kids how to do things. He'd take any kid out there and show him in fifteen minutes how to do these things that would take other people weeks to teach.

RICHARD: I know he taught all the kids on the creek how to fish.

JESSIE: Yes. Anyway, he was so patient with them. Anything they wanted to learn.

RICHARD: Well when Gus was there, was he in partners with Harry's dad at one time?

JESSIE: You know Gus wrote up all these stories, and you would think he owned all of that. And I hate to talk him down, because Gus was one of the greatest men that ever was. But he worked for Harry's dad for wages all those years that he told about.

RICHARD: That right?

JESSIE: And that piece that's on that, on the front of that Ruralite magazine, all that. Well he was just a working for wages when all that went on. All those things he told. But at that time, he had

gone on his own.

RICHARD: Yeah, uh huh.

JESSIE: But to go back, don't quote me on this either. All of them had been in partners for a long time, and finally father Williams divided up the land up there and said he would give each one of us so many acres. But Bill's wife and Lee's wife didn't want to take it. Harry and I took ours. And of course, then the other kids all blamed us; I was the black sheep among all of them. Because I could do most anything with Harry's dad. And then he and Gus bought some sheep. They wanted Harry to go in with them. I'm just telling you this. I don't want this to go out on anything else. When I told Harry, I would rather have ten cents and have it my own than to be in partners. So, I didn't say anymore. But he didn't go in partners with them. And they lost everything they had.

RICHARD: Oh boy, uh huh.

JESSIE: And that's how Gus got, come to go out on his own. He didn't have much to start out with. ... He had some timberland, and he sold that. That's the way he --- too bad he couldn't have kept that timber land because it's still worth a lot more money than he got for it.

RICHARD: Did you know the Laughlin's over there, where we used to live?

JESSIE: Yes, Clara Laughlin's.

RICHARD: What were they like?

JESSIE: Oh, he was good enough. I didn't know Mrs. Laughlin so well, but I knew their girl. And Mr. Laughlin, oh he was the oddest man that ever lived. (Laughter) He used to tell them, come in and we'll have an early breakfast.

LOUISE CLAY: How are you?

RICHARD: Hi Louise, how are you?

LOUISE: Fine.

RICHARD: We're pumping your mother dry. (Laughter)

JESSIE: People used to go over there and they wouldn't have any supper, you know, and he said come on in, we'll have an early breakfast. (Laughter) That big Laughlin boy, I wonder what ever become of him.

RICHARD: Oh, Lloyd.

JESSIE: Lloyd.

RICHARD: Well now Barney told us, said he was the meanest kid in eastern Oregon. And ---

JESSIE: He was an ornery kid.

RICHARD: I think he had, Barney said he had diabetes and they had to take one leg off at one time. And then he finally died.

JESSIE: I'm not surprised at that at all.

RICHARD: But what did Barney say, he once even tied his father to a tree or something. Just ---

JESSIE: Oh, he told so many stories on Mr. Laughlin about things like that, you know. He'd come to stay at other people's houses and they would feed him and everything, but when you went to his house, and come in late for supper, come on in, we'll have an early breakfast. (Laughter) And you had an early breakfast too.

RICHARD: He did huh?

JESSIE: He was right.

RICHARD: Well, did Laughlin's build that old house over there at Swamp Creek, or was there someone there before them?

JESSIE: Oh, I kind of think they built that house. Because they were the only ones that ever lived there until --- that I knew of. They was there I think when we went on Silver Creek.

RICHARD: Now I heard at one time that Laughlin's and Wood Best were partners on some sheep or something like that. Did you know anything about that?

JESSIE: No, I didn't know that Mr. Best ever owned any sheep. He didn't like sheep.

RICHARD: He didn't like sheep.

JESSIE: Well, he might have, Laughlin had sheep. And he might have gone in partners with him. He run them, you know.

RICHARD: I think Barney told me one time that he did.

JESSIE: Yes, they might have been. I wouldn't doubt it at all. As long as he didn't have to have them on ---

RICHARD: On his place. That's about the way I feel. (Laughter)

JESSIE: You know you could have a little bunch of sheep, of course Harry's father always kept a little bunch of sheep on the ranch. But he kept them fenced in a certain pasture. And we, and when we run short of beef, we always had a mutton to kill, you know. You know we always had meat. So, we tried that, and they went up to Pecks. Peck didn't like sheep either. (Laughter) But it bothered them so much; we just couldn't keep them in, that was all.

RICHARD: Yeah, yeah, they go everywhere. Our oldest son had a little flock of sheep.

HELEN: 4-H.

RICHARD: 4-H sheep.

HELEN: A breeding project.

RICHARD: They pretty much went ---

JESSIE: Oh, you bet they do.

HELEN: Their own way.

RICHARD: Where they wanted to.

HELEN: Oh yes, our shrubs are still --- you know that was several years ago, and the shrubs still haven't come out of that sheep episode, sheep period.

LOUISE: Your oldest son in college?

HELEN: Uh huh.

LOUISE: Where did he go to school?

HELEN: He's at Stanford.

LOUISE: Stanford.

HELEN: He'll be home in three weeks for spring vacation.

LOUISE: Years go by in a hurry, don't they?

JESSIE: I'll say they do. The other boy graduates this year?

RICHARD: Yeah, uh huh.

JESSIE: Don't take long. Seems like they were little kids.

RICHARD: Little kids, quite big now.

JESSIE: That's one --- my brother's teachers said when my brother went to school. He was just a little short fellow; he wasn't any taller than I am. And he got out of school and he went to wrestling with a fellow that had won the belt down at Corvallis. And he just grew right away. He got to be six foot two. And this little woman, she was just a little short thing, and she called him Guffy. And when they told her this was Guffy, she couldn't believe her eyes.

RICHARD: Well now ---

JESSIE: There used to be so many people out there at Silver Creek. You know they always had a big school, always.

HELEN: Big student body. The school didn't seem terribly big, but the student body ---

JESSIE: No.

RICHARD: Did you go to school out there Louise?

LOUISE: Yes.

JESSIE: Oh yes.

LOUISE: Until the, the first six grades.

RICHARD: Uh huh.

JESSIE: Gus graduated and then we had to come in here. But he took the ninth grade out there.

LOUISE: I went to seventh and eighth grade in here, and high school. But after Gus got in high school, why the folks moved to town then, every year.

RICHARD: The last person who graduated from Silver Creek was Dorothy Macomber. Chuck's daughter, Chuck and Marie's daughter. And the day when she graduated, why we had Ruby Street out there too. And Ruby was the oldest living graduate of Silver Creek at that time.

LOUISE: Well, that was a long time ago.

RICHARD: Yeah. Now I --- while I think of it, was there a store at the Gap Ranch at one time? When we came here there used to be some gas pumps out in front there that weren't used. And Floyd Gee was living there as I recall.

JESSIE: I believe they had gas out there, but I don't remember any store. But I believe he did keep some gas out there.

HELEN: Of course, that wasn't any highway, that wasn't any through highway until '30's.

RICHARD: Yeah, well, it was part of the Gap Ranch.

HELEN: Yes.

JESSIE: Well I imagine it was for, just to use there at the Gap Ranch.

LOUISE: I don't remember any store out there.

JESSIE: There never was a store out there, I'm sure.

RICHARD: Well they had a, regular pumps.

LOUISE: Yes, I can sort of remember that.

JESSIE: Yes, I remember that.

RICHARD: And you know, set in concrete as if it were for sale or something like that. It was probably just a gas station.

HELEN: You don't suppose it might have had something to do with the 3-C's that were out in that area?

JESSIE: Why would they put it on that side though?

HELEN: I don't know. Maybe whoever had the property put it in for them.

JESSIE: Everyone --- everyone wants to put that 4-C Camp in for Bill Brown. That had nothing to do with Bill Brown.

RICHARD: He was gone.

JESSIE: Why yes.

RICHARD: When that came in.

JESSIE: I said that what was Bill Browns was on the other side of the --- should have been restored. They ought to have restored that building, you know, and keep it.

RICHARD: You mean the ---

JESSIE: The Bill Brown building.

RICHARD: Bill Brown. Well, now they have kind of partially restored the old 3-C buildings. Yeah, the government buildings.

JESSIE: I tried to get them to restore Uncle Tom's old log cabin out there. Because he was the first

judge of Harney County. But ---

HELEN: It's torn down now.

RICHARD: Yeah, it's dozed into a pile now.

JESSIE: Oh, is it? Well, they could have restored it then, there was no reason why they couldn't have. It's been seven or eight years ago. I'd hate to say how long I've been at the museum. I wouldn't believe it until I looked back in the books.

RICHARD: Well, I'd like to take this home and think about it, and listen to it again. And I'll think of a dozen more things to ask you.

JESSIE: Well, I can't think of anything else. There was lots of people that lived out there on that -- - what were those friends of ours, name, Louise I told you, you always called Betty. Alkali? Can't anymore think of their names than nothing now.

LOUISE: Mosier.

JESSIE: Mosier's. Charlie Mosier and his wife had a place out there on the --- next to Hirsch's somewhere.

RICHARD: I never heard that name.

JESSIE: Well they did have.

LOUISE: ... and Charlie Mosier.

JESSIE: They was there when Harry and I was married. Just a new, a couple about our age. And we used to go horseback out there, and they'd come into our place in their big wagon. We was just back and forth all the time.

LOUISE: Where did they live, Mother, now?

JESSIE: Out on the hill there where Hirsch's lived, you know. Back up in there, towards Dry Mountain. They had a little cabin there.

LOUISE: You go up --- I don't know how you get there now, but there used to be a road, go right through the Shields Lane and go right up over the hill and on out. I don't know if there is still a road there now.

JESSIE: Yeah. All kinds of roads out there. That's where Macomber --- do they still live out

there?

RICHARD: Yeah, uh huh.

JESSIE: Is that on the old Hirsch place? That place of ---

RICHARD: I thought the Hirsch place was closer to the Foster place. Up there on that side of Dry Mountain.

JESSIE: No, the Hirsch place ---

HELEN: Was that in that canyon?

JESSIE: Well, they was right along that road. Oh, I don't mean Hirsch now, I mean Kessin --- well what was --- Kessinger's.

LOUISE: Well that was ... name, Kessinger.

JESSIE: Oh yes, but I, but what was her husband's name?

LOUISE: Perkins.

JESSIE: The Perkins place was right along that road. Now was that what they bought, that's what I meant.

RICHARD: Now that name sounds familiar, yeah.

HELEN: Did Macomers buy Perkins place?

RICHARD: Well, the Perkins place was up in there somewhere. I think Macomers bought that place in particular ...

JESSIE: Yes, Hirsch's lived out there too. They lived out, on out towards the mountain, north. I don't know whether this map I have up there would show that or not. But it sure shows Silver Creek Valley. You could, it shows everyone that used to live out there. You could sure find it. Because that boy found right where his father had his place.

HELEN: I found an old map that Mr. Young --- what was his first name?

RICHARD: Clarence.

HELEN: Clarence Young gave me. A big map of the county, the northern part. Would you be interested in that?

JESSIE: Yes ...

HELEN: He was a surveyor. And one day he just handed it over to me. I was talking to him about something, and ...

JESSIE: Well, these maps are what Harry's dad had. And then Harry got them, and they are all wrapped up, and I can't think what the outer ones are. And I never had looked at these others, and the blueprint that just showed everything. Until one day, I don't know, someone come in wanting to know something about Silver Creek, and after they was gone I thought about these maps. I unrolled them and noticed that they went clear back. So, when this boy came I went and got them for him. And he took them down and looked at them. And he said he just found everyone up and down Silver Creek that used to live there. When it was first settled.

HELEN: Well, I'll bring this big thing in; it's on a canvas all rolled up. I'll bring it someday.

RICHARD: Well you know Clarence Young; right up until he passed away, why you could talk to him about a corner way out here. He'd say well there is an old juniper tree there, and a rock fifty feet from it. You look by that rock. It's incredible the way that man knew this county.

JESSIE: Oh, yes, he knew the county.

RICHARD: Well, you were quite young when you were married then?

JESSIE: Twenty. Harry was twenty-one, and I was twenty.

RICHARD: That was kind of old to get married in those days, wasn't it?

JESSIE: Yes, at that time ... at a young age.

RICHARD: Uh huh. Well, why don't we, can you think of anything else right now dear? You think about it, Jessie, and I'll be back in a few weeks.

JESSIE: Cryders, was there anyone else that lived down there at the Cryder place?

LOUISE: Not ...

JESSIE: What was that sister's name?

LOUISE: Talmadge.

JESSIE: Talmadge.

LOUISE: Talmadge.

JESSIE: And they come ---

LOUISE: ... and she and her husband come out there and lived with them.

JESSIE: He was a doctor.

RICHARD: Well, there were two Cryder brothers weren't there?

JESSIE: Three.

RICHARD: Three. Were they all, were they all here at the time of the war?

LOUISE: Ernest and Del and Russell. And then Mr. Talmadge, and they all ---

JESSIE: That Russell was the greatest ---

LOUISE: ...

JESSIE: What would you call him? Russell, he knew everything about a car, and everything else.

Louise's class come out there one weekend, to spend a weekend. One of their cars broke down just as they started home, wouldn't start. I looked up the road and I saw a load of hay coming down. I said, "You wait a minute, there is a man on that load of hay that will fix it for you." He just got out and took a piece of barbed wire and fixed it.

LOUISE: Well, they were all very handy.

JESSIE: Oh, yes, every one of them.

LOUISE: Knew a lot about mechanics.

RICHARD: Did they have a shop down there at one time?

JESSIE: Oh, they had the greatest shop there ever was.

RICHARD: Someone was telling me about them.

LOUISE: That sister of their's was the sweetest little lady. She lived up, I don't know, maybe that old place was torn down when you people came. You know where that triplex is across from the, you know where ... out there. You know where that triplex is there now, there was an old, old, old, old building that had a little apartment there on that corner.

JESSIE: Was that the ...

LOUISE: Yeah.

RICHARD: I don't remember that.

LOUISE: But I think it must have been torn down when you people come here.

JESSIE: Yes, they lived there quite awhile.

LOUISE: Mr. and Mrs. Talmadge lived there.

JESSIE: Did they leave before he died? Or did he die here?

LOUISE: No, I think he died here.

JESSIE: Why he'd be dead ---

LOUISE: She was, I don't think he was buried here. She lived then with the boys for quite a long while after he died. Because I remember ---

JESSIE: I've got her recipe for making hominy.

HELEN: Oh, hominy.

JESSIE: Hominy out of corn.

HELEN: Oh, for goodness sakes. I thought that hominy was something that was grown. I didn't realize you could ---

JESSIE: It's made out of corn. You take lye and take all those hucks out, and --- well ---

LOUISE: And bleach it and ---

HELEN: My goodness, I'd rather eat the corn. (Laughter)

JESSIE: It was the best hominy. You wouldn't think you'd ever eaten any hominy if you'd eat some of that.

LOUISE: My grandmother used to fix hominy until; I'd rather have the hominy than the corn.

JESSIE: Anytime.

LOUISE: Anymore I ---

RICHARD: You wouldn't want to make it.

LOUISE: I wouldn't want to go to all that trouble.

JESSIE: Well, we used to be able to buy it, you know, in the big sack like beans. I guess they don't have it anymore.

HELEN: Don't they have a can --- when I was a kid we had canned hominy.

JESSIE: They have a can now. But that don't taste like hominy to me.

HELEN: Maybe that's why I don't like it.

LOUISE: It's just plain. Not much taste to it.

HELEN: No, it's blah, bland, very bland, kind of starchy.

RICHARD: Well, the Cryders sold to Frank Cluster, didn't they? Or was there someone else in there in the meantime? And they moved to town?

JESSIE: Oh, there was one brother that died.

LOUISE: I'm not too sure that both of them, two of them ...

RICHARD: I never heard of any Cryders still being alive after we moved here in 1950. See Frank had had the place two or three years.

JESSIE: Well, Russell went to. Oh, no, they went down --- what makes me say that. They went down to Ashland and found them a little place, and a school, and all built all around them down there, you know. And they finally, I guess, Russell --- I don't know, did all three of them go? I believe they did? We went down there and stayed all night with them. Mrs. Talmadge was ---

LOUISE: She was still alive.

JESSIE: She was still alive. She was still with them.

HELEN: Was that the ones that had the house down ---

JESSIE: Yes.

HELEN: And they sold it.

LOUISE: Well no, they just lived in the front --- they just rented.

HELEN: Oh, they rented.

LOUISE: Yeah, it was an old ---

JESSIE: Oh, Ruel, (sp.?) it was the old Ruel house.

LOUISE: Yeah, it was Bill Ruel's parents.

JESSIE: Yeah, parents.

HELEN: That name sounds familiar.

JESSIE: I haven't been able to find out what her given name was.

LOUISE: Well I knew at one time.

JESSIE: Wasn't Winnie, was it?

LOUISE: No.

JESSIE: That's all I wanted to know. I have so many people write in here to the museum, trying to locate some of their relatives. There is a Taylor I'm trying to locate, but I've never been able ---

LOUISE: I can't think of what her name was, but it wasn't Winnie. ...

JESSIE: But they moved, they moved to Ashland and bought this little place. Oh, the vegetables, all they raised when we went down there, they had the loveliest place. They hadn't been there but about two years when we went down there. The ... house. I think they built it themselves.

LOUISE: ... big carving down there.

JESSIE: Yes, I did. But they just raised everything down there.

RICHARD: Well now, when you and Harry left, you sold to the Kellogg's, didn't you? Kellogg's had it ---

JESSIE: Yes. We sold to the Kellogg's.

RICHARD: When we were there, when we came here.

JESSIE: See we didn't have electricity out there then. I had Aladdin lamps. I had a floor lamp even. And they just drove by; they never come in and looked at the house or anything. When they found out we didn't have electricity, they near died.

RICHARD: Really, they bought the place without knowing that?

JESSIE: They didn't even know it.

RICHARD: Huh.

JESSIE: They was kind of odd people.

RICHARD: Yeah. We never knew them too well. I knew the boys pretty well, they were nice boys.

JESSIE: Oh, yes.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: She was a wonderful person.

RICHARD: Yeah. She was a worker.

JESSIE: Oh, I'll say she was. She worked over in the hospital in Boise, you know, a long time after

he was gone. And their little boy was named Bobby. And our little boy we lost was named Bobby, and I left his little wagon there on the place for him when we left. Because I had no use for it, and I thought he could play with it and get some pleasure out of it.

LOUISE: There was three ...

JESSIE: What was their oldest one's name?

LOUISE: Ross.

JESSIE: Ross.

LOUISE: His father's name was Ross.

RICHARD: Yeah, Ross and Bruce.

JESSIE: Bruce was an awful sweet kid. They was all good kids, all of them. Of course, I don't find much fault with anyone that lived out there. They said, wanted to know, did we differ any. And I said, "Well why should we, we all, none didn't have much more than the other." So --- got along very well.

RICHARD: Well, when you and Harry were first married then, back in 1914, how often did you go to town?

JESSIE: Oh, we didn't go to town very often.

RICHARD: Didn't get to town very often.

JESSIE: We had our little horses. Saddle horses, and we just went to everybody's a horseback. Anyplace Harry went, I went, for two years.

RICHARD: Well, did the store out there have most of what you needed most of the time?

JESSIE: Oh yes. But Williams Land and Livestock Company bought things wholesale, you might say. They'd buy ten sacks of sugar at a time, you know. And you'd all have it.

HELEN: Divide it up.

JESSIE: Then after Harry and I went on our own, we kind of bought the same way. We never had any money, but we had our grain and stuff that we traded in. We never wanted for anything. We had our own beef, and milk, and butter, and chicken, and eggs. We didn't want for anything. I made the girl's clothes over lots of times. But then ---

LOUISE: They was as good as anybody else's.

JESSIE: Better than lots of others.

RICHARD: Well you came in here to high school, Louise?

LOUISE: Uh huh.

RICHARD: And did you buy a house here in town.

JESSIE: No, we just rented.

RICHARD: And Harry batched out there?

LOUISE: We'd go home nearly every weekend.

JESSIE: Weekend.

HELEN: How long did it take, how long was the trip?

JESSIE: How long did it take to go back and forth?

HELEN: Uh huh.

JESSIE: It was a long road then.

HELEN: A couple hours.

JESSIE: Yes.

HELEN: Three hours.

LOUISE: ...

JESSIE: Well, it would take quite awhile. Still a pretty crooked road when we were first married.

Well Robby was quite a good sized ---

LOUISE: Not when we was in high school.

JESSIE: Oh. Robby was quite a good-sized boy when they built that road over the hill.

HELEN: That was in 1930 I was told.

JESSIE: Yeah, he was born in '27.

RICHARD: Yeah, in the '30's.

LOUISE: But I'd say it'd take ---

HELEN: Oh, I mean in the early '30's.

LOUISE: Two hours probably. Grandpa Williams and Elynor would take longer because they had

to gawk around and talk and visit. (Laughter)

JESSIE: And run off the road a time or two.

HELEN: Well did you have a car, an old Ford or something?

LOUISE: Grandpa had a Model-T Ford.

JESSIE: Well, we didn't have a car for a long time.

HELEN: You used a wagon or buckboard or whatever.

LOUISE: Well we used a car, but ---

JESSIE: I'd gone back and forth with Harry when I was first married.

LOUISE: I don't think we ever went in a wagon.

JESSIE: We didn't call it a buckboard. Well then dad used to have a buckboard. But this was just a little spring wagon I think. But that's the reason we didn't go very often. I didn't care to ride that. I'd rather stay at home.

HELEN: Sure.

RICHARD: Quite a job, yeah.

JESSIE: I had a lot of fun running around with Harry. (Laughter) Any place we took a notion to go, we just go and get on our horses, and away we'd go. We'd go out to stay with this couple over night, and just tie our nightclothes on the back of our saddles, and away we'd go. They wouldn't know we was a coming ... nobody to let them know. We didn't have a telephone either then.

RICHARD: When did you get the first telephones at Silver Creek?

JESSIE: They nearly always had a telephone on Silver Creek. They had it long before any of the other outer places did. They put their telephone wires, some of it was barb wire, run across the fence and put the ---

RICHARD: Insulators.

JESSIE: --- insulators on it, for a long time.

LOUISE: I can't remember ever not having a phone.

JESSIE: Oh no, they had it all fixed up a lot better when we moved out there.

RICHARD: Just up and down the valley, or could you call Burns too?

JESSIE: You could call, they got it into Burns.

LOUISE: When I was there, I don't know how long ---

JESSIE: Well, they had it long before Harry and I was married, because I used to call him on the telephone.

RICHARD: Talk for an hour and forty-five minutes the way these kids do now days? (Laughter)

JESSIE: Yes. We'd play tricks on them. Well, Harry wouldn't talk that --- I can't imagine Daddy talking that long.

LOUISE: No, I'm sure Daddy wouldn't talk that long on a telephone. He didn't like to talk on the telephone very good.

JESSIE: He didn't like the telephone too good. His mother used to say I always called up when she was a grinding coffee. I must have called him early in the morning, or in the evening. She'd always be grinding coffee. She'd tell me that lots of times. She had one of those great big old coffee mills, you know, round.

HELEN: Oh.

JESSIE: The first time I made coffee out there on the Williams Ranch, they liked to died. Harry's brother, Harry didn't say a word. Harry's brother sure liked to died. My folks didn't drink strong coffee. And they drank it strong enough to float an egg I think. Of course, they all used sugar and cream in it.

HELEN: The sweeter the better.

LOUISE: Yeah. I remember when we were little, and Daddy always used sugar and cream in his coffee. We thought it was great stuff to go and drink Daddy's coffee after he was through with it, because it had sugar and cream in it.

JESSIE: I never drank coffee until after Louise was a great big girl. I got to ---

LOUISE: You never did drink sugar in it though then.

JESSIE: No. I got to drinking separated cream in my coffee. It made it awful good. How funny we do.

HELEN: What did you; do you remember anything about the Spencer's? Did you know the

Spencer's, Charlie Spencer and ---

JESSIE: Spencer's, oh yes. They lived over at Buck Creek too, you know.

HELEN: Yeah.

RICHARD: They what?

LOUISE: ... Mace's family.

RICHARD: Yeah. Yeah, she was Charlie's sister.

JESSIE: You know I never knew until the museum up here, I got around to meet Pansy Mace's grandmother. I'd never heard her mentioned. And Shelby Petersen was here the other day, and he said that she lived with Dibbles. Frank Dibble was related to the Spencer's somehow. I think this grandma, Spencer --- Winters was an aunt of his. And they kept her a long, long time. And that's where I met Mrs. Winters.

HELEN: Well, that would be the Winters place then, next to the Spencer place on Bulger.

RICHARD: Bulger. Spencers and Winters were relatives of some sort.

JESSIE: Yes, Mrs. Spencer was a Winters.

RICHARD: Oh, that's what it was.

JESSIE: And she had several brothers.

HELEN: He was an uncle I remember. Charlie Spencer then.

JESSIE: Yes.

RICHARD: Yeah, yeah, that's right.

JESSIE: Yes, Winters, I don't know which one you knew, if you knew any of them.

HELEN: We didn't know, just Charlie.

RICHARD: Just Charlie is the only one.

HELEN: They were all gone ---

RICHARD: I never even met Pansy. Is she still alive?

JESSIE: Oh ... Well this woman wrote in ---

RICHARD: That's right, sure.

HELEN: Oh, that would be a Cody.

LOUISE: No, ...

HELEN: Yeah, but let's see, she ---

LOUISE: She is Wanda Wentz.

HELEN: Oh, Wentz.

JESSIE: Uh huh.

HELEN: Okay, Wanda Wentz. Was a ---

LOUISE: Spencer.

HELEN: Spencer.

RICHARD: Well now is Wanda still alive?

LOUISE: No.

JESSIE: No, Wanda is gone. Andy is the only one that is living. But this woman that wrote in here and told about this elderly lady that she is writing about. And wanted to know if she had any, what would you say, call them ---

LOUISE: Descendants?

JESSIE: Yeah, descendants a living around here. And we finally dug up; her obituary was in the Burns paper years and years ago. And I said to Marcus Haines, he had the first letter. And he said, "Can you answer this?" I said, "Yes I can, because I know that's Pansy Spencer's grandmother."

HELEN: Who was it?

JESSIE: ... It was her grandmother.

HELEN: What was her name?

JESSIE: She --- her name was Winters.

HELEN: Oh yeah, you told me that.

JESSIE: No, it was another, it was another name, not a Winters.

HELEN: She was married to a Winters.

JESSIE: But anyway, she wanted to know if there was any descendants that lived around here. And I wrote and told her, I said yes, she had a granddaughter that lived here, and that lady had a daughter that was here, and that lady had a daughter, and that daughter had one boy, and then had

triplets. So, I said she has quite a few descendants.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: But of course, I knew grandma Winters. But I'd just forgotten all about ---

LOUISE: That name wasn't Winters.

JESSIE: No, it wasn't Winters.

LOUISE: I don't know what that name was. Wait a minute, I remember Cy Winters. He used to live over there in Bulger.

JESSIE: Oh Cy, and they had, she had two other brothers I think. One was George, and one was ---

LOUISE: Cy used to have a trap line, trapped rabbits, snares I guess.

JESSIE: Yeah.

LOUISE: He used to use snares, and he used to have, oh all the way up and down the valley.

JESSIE: Well they, any rabbits coming in over there?

HELEN: They would go starving today, people that tried to trap rabbits. No.

JESSIE: None over there. Then out this way, a woman told me that they ate up all her flowers a year ago.

HELEN: Well, last year was pretty good for the wildlife. I mean little things would come along. But not like when we came, golly gee you would see dead rabbits all over the highway and the road. And Dick had to poison for rabbits. They would get into the alfalfa. You don't have anything like that.

JESSIE: Oh yes. Of course, you don't get the grasshoppers this year.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: Is there any out there?

RICHARD: No, they stopped just north of us.

HELEN: Who.

RICHARD: Grasshoppers.

HELEN: Oh, yeah.

RICHARD: Up Izee country, in that ... country, they had them bad.

JESSIE: Oh, I'm scared to death for this place. They is terrible out here, east of here.

RICHARD: Yeah, I know they were bad.

JESSIE: And we didn't, they was one boy that told his, it was the Whiting boy, and he is in the, I forget what he took, but he took all this at school, and he was studying it, you know. And he said if you don't have a hard freeze in October to kill those, he says you will be bothered with them next year. And we watched it, whoever, this girl and I, and there was not a freeze in October that would of killed anything like that.

HELEN: We had a long nice fall. Beautiful.

LOUISE: ... them grasshoppers.

RICHARD: Yeah, I do too. I wish you hadn't told me. Now I'll be worried about it all summer.

HELEN: Oh well, I saw what we did battle with last summer so much. And there was one in our yard today.

RICHARD: A gopher.

HELEN: A ground squirrel.

LOUISE: Aren't they terrible?

HELEN: Oh, they were awful last year. Everywhere, the whole field were just alive with them. Our yard was alive with them.

JESSIE: I don't know how you get rid of those.

LOUISE: I don't know how you would get rid of them.

JESSIE: Well, they put poison grain out of course.

RICHARD: Yeah.

HELEN: Yeah, we tried poisoning, we tried gasing in the yard, you know the lawn area. They were just everywhere. And I thought probably, because we had so much water last year that was in the fields. They just drove them up to higher ground.

JESSIE: It looks like it would drown them all, but it doesn't.

HELEN: It didn't. It just drove them out.

JESSIE: They had those years ago, we used to carry water and drown those, make those things

come out of the holes.

HELEN: We put hoses in those holes, and it just didn't work. Didn't we?

RICHARD: Yeah, we did everything.

HELEN: We did everything, all kinds of poison, and gas, just did --- Oh we might of killed a few, but they bred faster.

JESSIE: That's the trouble with those and rabbits too, you know, they breed so fast.

RICHARD: Well Mom, maybe we better go, and let these people rest a little bit.

JESSIE: Well, I've enjoyed this.

RICHARD: Well what days are you up at the museum, Jessie?

JESSIE: Well, we're not open yet.

RICHARD: You're not open now.

JESSIE: You see the furnace blew up, and we've got to clean that whole thing. And the fire adjuster was just in. Of course, you can't even insure any of the antiques. Just the cases. And we've got about thirty-seven cases in there. And he was in there, and then there was several other things that he --- The walls and the ceiling and all, they going to paint those, and clean it up.

RICHARD: Kind of a big job.

JESSIE: He said they would pay for someone taking the pictures off of the wall. Well, if they take them off the wall, I can clean them up myself. But I hope somebody will help us up there. Marcus will go up, and there will be somebody else that will help.

LOUISE: But they don't really open the museum until June.

JESSIE: Not until June.

RICHARD: Yeah, that's right.

JESSIE: But if at anytime you want to come in and go up there, I'll go up with you.

RICHARD: I'd like to come in and spend some time with that book too.

JESSIE: Yes. I'd like for you to. You could take those typed pages out. No one knows they are in there but me. Well any of it, as far as that. I put the whole thing in there about Bill Brown. And all those others too.

RICHARD: Let's keep the whole thing together. I'll come in some afternoon, or some morning. I think it would be better to do it that way.

JESSIE: That story on that Dobkin thing out there might be kind of interesting for you to read too. I put all that --- All they got in there is a lot of the ---

LOUISE: You could take photocopies of it or something.

HELEN: Yeah, I was thinking you could maybe ---

JESSIE: Oh yes, since it is typed, you could take photocopies of it. Well it's not, I have the whole thing.

LOUISE: I think the library has a photocopy machine.

JESSIE: Best one is just up at the ID office.

RICHARD: Yeah.

JESSIE: There is a little bit in that old Harney County book about Bill Brown. Do you have that?

RICHARD: Yeah. Yes, I've got that, uh huh.

JESSIE: But I don't think there is much else about him anywhere. And he was one of these guys that in here, he had all that money and all that --- and give it all away, you know to, then dies in the poor house. But he wasn't, he didn't get his land like these other fellows. Now all these other fellows got their land, just, it's terrible when you read about it.

HELEN: He didn't just grab it, just took.

JESSIE: Yeah, they all did. Now there is a lot of letters in there from Miller and Lux, and they wanted to know what become of the rest of them. Well I took them all, they was just setting back there in a ... box, to tell you the truth. And I took them all and put them in one of these great big paper books, you know. And of course, they are not in a very good way, and they are all coming loose. I'll try to get another book and put them all in--- get some of that rubber cement to put them in with. And the way they told how they got the land, it's terrible. Then there was a boy come in there, his name was the same as that, who was it that had that other big ranch out here --- Devine.

RICHARD: Oh, yeah, John Devine.

JESSIE: Yes. His name was Devine. And I said well I've got his life in here in a book. Do you

want to read it? And I got it out so he could read it. And he said, "Well you know, the way he got his land and all, I don't know whether I want to be any relation or not." I said, "Well, they all got it that way."

RICHARD: All but Bill Brown.

JESSIE: Yes, all but Bill Brown, he didn't. He never got any of his that way.

HELEN: How did he do it, buy it?

JESSIE: Oh yeah, he bought it or ---

HELEN: Homesteaded?

JESSIE: See he and his brothers all homesteaded I think to start with. And then I think he just bought the rest of it. Because he had lots of money at that time. He could write a check on, just pick up an old can, like it had tomatoes or anything in it, just write a check on it. I don't know whether --- do you have the check anymore in that bank where he wrote it on a piece of ---

LOUISE: Well Mom, we don't have anything like that.

JESSIE: Shingle. I thought there was a ---

HELEN: You're all business, no sentiment.

LOUISE: With computers, what would you do with it?

JESSIE: Oh, I know, but it should have ---

LOUISE: I know, but over the years, we just have a retention schedule where we don't keep things for that many years.

JESSIE: Well, I thought that would have been unique, you know. A check like that, anymore.

HELEN: Well it would have to go back to him anyhow. They always send checks, no matter what it is written on, back to the ---

LOUISE: Yeah, it would go back to the owner or the drawer.

JESSIE: I suppose it would.

RICHARD: Well, you know, this is what first got me interested in Bill Brown though. Bill Hanley, Pete French, John Devine, Miller and Lux, they got what they got by stepping on people.

JESSIE: Well, I don't think Bill Hanley did as much as the others.

RICHARD: Well that's true, but you always heard people criticizing them.

JESSIE: Yes.

RICHARD: But you never hear a bad word about Bill Brown. Anybody I've talked to who knew him, has not ---

JESSIE: Well I think the way Bill Hanley got a lot of his, that people would just be up against it, you know, and he'd buy them out for little or nothing, you know. It's all the same, but then he did it in a different way.

RICHARD: He didn't squeeze them though, the way the others did.

JESSIE: No, I don't think so. These other guys did. In that Miller and Lux letters, lots of them he'd say, keep me posted on such and such, you know. Who owns it and all. And when the taxes come due, just go up there and pay taxes on it. That's the way they go. One letter he told them, see he run it from right down there in San Francisco. And one letter he told them to pay this man only thirty dollars a month, and don't let any of his family eat at the cookhouse.

RICHARD: Yeah, he always called the day-to-day shots from his office in San Francisco.

JESSIE: Oh, yes, he did. Yes, he did.

RICHARD: Well, we'll go on. Gee, it is going to take me a long time to get all this assimilated.

JESSIE: Well there is probably more I could have told you about that.

RICHARD: Well, we'll come back.

HELEN: Maybe if you remember something, jot them down, you know, make a note.

JESSIE: The schoolteachers out there, didn't Mrs. Best teach out there when she first come?

LOUISE: I have no idea, not after I ---

JESSIE: Well you didn't go to her, but I ---

HELEN: She came in 1912, or '14.

RICHARD: She and Wood were married in 1912.

LOUISE: I wouldn't know about that Mom. The first teacher I remember was Helen ...

JESSIE: Yeah, I know.

HELEN: You were first grade?

LOUISE: So that's the first teacher I remember.

JESSIE: Do you remember going to school to Mr. Gibbon?

LOUISE: No, I didn't go to school to Mr. Gibbon.

JESSIE: I thought he taught ---

LOUISE: I never had a man teacher.

RICHARD: Poor deprived little girl. (Laughter)

JESSIE: She was an awful good little girl; hear all the teachers tell it. (Laughter)

(END OF TAPE)

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