

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #385 - Sides A/B

Subject: John & Georgia Crow

Date: July 5, 1994

Place: Crow Home - Burns, Oregon

Interviewer: Edward Gray

EDWARD GRAY: This is Edward Gray with John and Georgia Crow at their home in Burns, Oregon on July 5th, 1994. Mr. Crow, or John Crow will turn 92 ---

GEORGIA CROW: The 27th of July.

JOHN CROW: July.

EDWARD: 27th of July. So therefore you were born in 1902. Where at, John?

JOHN: Cedarville, California.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, I know where that is. When did --- where were you born, Georgia?

GEORGIA: I was born in Connecticut.

EDWARD: Well of course the next question is, when?

GEORGIA: In 1914.

EDWARD: How did you meet up with this young whippersnapper?

GEORGIA: I came out here to teach school in 1936. And it was much easier to take off with him and run cows.

EDWARD: Yeah. Yeah, I wished I could do that. I teach school, you know.

GEORGIA: I figured you did.

EDWARD: It's getting tougher. Anyway, so much for me. I have that your father, David Crow, was born --- well he was married in 1899, born in 1874?

JOHN: He died in 1973 (corrected to 1944), and he was 73 when he died here in Burns.

EDWARD: David, David died in 1973?

JOHN: Yeah. He went on a cow drive, this damned old Petersen, he had two sons that fought all the time, and he liked to have my dad work for him, because my dad was a fellow could josh them along and they'd move cattle without fighting. And he came after my dad, and he always kept a cabin here in town in the winter, it was cold out, you know. And Petersen come along and wanted him to go out and help him move cattle to Silver Creek from out here ---

EDWARD: Oh yeah.

JOHN: --- from one of his ranches. And my dad had the flu, he didn't want to go. But he just coaxed him into going, and he was awful sick. And he stayed all night at Walter Baker's place, the first night.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: Walter, he just died here not many months ago. And he said my dad was terrible sick. They went clear to Silver Creek to ride the next day, and they had to help my dad off the horse. And old Petersen just took him down to his cabin there, and unloaded his saddle and stuff and took off. And never went back to see him at

all, and he knew he was sicker than hell, and living by himself. He was there a week by himself before anyone knew he was there.

He used to work for Newt Hotchkiss a lot, and he thought a lot of my dad, and he used to go to visit him once in awhile. He found him sicker than hell, so he called Georgia and I. We stayed with him until he passed away. I took him to Cedarville to bury him. He had a plot paid for there.

EDWARD: Cedarville, yeah.

GEORGIA: He was born March 30th, 1871.

EDWARD: 1871. Where in the world did I get --- okay.

GEORGIA: 1871, and he died April 28th, 1944.

EDWARD: April 28th, 1944.

GEORGIA: 1944.

EDWARD: Now this is the David Crow that was with Pete French, right?

GEORGIA: Yes, correct.

JOHN: He made a trip to ---

EDWARD: March what, Georgia?

JOHN: --- to Winnemucca.

EDWARD: Yeah. March ---

GEORGIA: March 30th.

EDWARD: --- 30th.

GEORGIA: 1871.

EDWARD: Okay. Now your father worked for Pete French, is that correct?

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: He was born in 1871?

GEORGIA: '74.

EDWARD: '74.

GEORGIA: Now wait a minute here. 1871, that's right.

EDWARD: Okay. Died in 1944.

GEORGIA: Yes.

EDWARD: Where did he die?

GEORGIA: Here in Burns.

JOHN: Here in Burns.

EDWARD: Oh, he is buried here?

GEORGIA: No, he is buried at Cedarville.

JOHN: No.

EDWARD: Cedarville.

JOHN: I took him to Cedarville.

GEORGIA: With the family.

JOHN: He had a plot paid for at Cedarville.

EDWARD: I see.

JOHN: And my mother passed away when I was just a yearling.

EDWARD: Yeah, he was 73, yeah. Okay. How --- John, how long did your dad work for Pete French before --- do you know, altogether? Have any idea?

JOHN: I can't tell you how much, no.

EDWARD: Okay.

JOHN: He worked for him for years, Pete French. And old Chino,

Joaquin Berdugo, he was the buckaroo boss.

EDWARD: Cheno, C H E N O. (Corrected to Chino.) There was Chino, there was Chico, there was Tebo. (Laughter) That's the only ones I know of. Do you, what --- okay, let's go back to 1897. Now you were born only five years later. Did, your father married in 1899.

JOHN: No --- yeah he did, didn't he.

EDWARD: Yeah.

GEORGIA: I don't know.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: It was 18---

EDWARD: That's what Rankin says, 1899.

GEORGIA: Well that part probably is right in his book.

JOHN: That must be about right.

EDWARD: Okay.

JOHN: '80---, was it '87 or '89?

GEORGIA: What?

EDWARD: What did your dad say, David Crow say about Pete French, in terms of a person?

JOHN: He was a fine man.

EDWARD: Fine man. Anything, did he ever mention what kind of things he did for people, or ---

JOHN: No, he bought up, had all these Sod House people mad at him, he was buying up the homesteader's places. He was getting them close to down on the lake. They hated him because there was

barbed wire fences up, and everything they could. But ---

EDWARD: Did they burn stacks of hay?

JOHN: No, not that I ever heard of.

EDWARD: Did they blow up his dams?

JOHN: Huh?

EDWARD: Did they blow up his dams?

JOHN: No, I don't think they did. I don't think Pete was much of a coward. And Marcus Haines, he was raised there around the Sod House.

EDWARD: I was just at his old ranch yesterday, yeah, where Andy Dunbar is.

JOHN: That's where he is living now?

EDWARD: Yeah, right.

JOHN: I was out there ... afternoon.

GEORGIA: No, you were there Sunday.

JOHN: Sunday, day before yesterday. Well we was out there.

EDWARD: Did those people --- now who are you talking about those people around Sod House Springs? Now that was Lewis Bloomfield Springer's place.

GEORGE: Yeah, the Springer place, and Myrtle Caldwell.

EDWARD: Myrtle Caldwell, yeah. Those kind of people. How about Billy Dunn?

JOHN: Well Billy, I don't think, fought with him much, did he?

GEORGIA: I never did hear that he did. My slant on this as a newcomer to the area is just like it is now. Some people had

money, some didn't.

EDWARD: Right.

GEORGIA: And it is just like the California guys that are coming in and eating up the territory on the other side of the mountain. It's the same sort of thing, you see.

EDWARD: Same thing.

GEORGIA: He had money, and so whenever somebody needed extra, and they asked him what would he give, why he bought them out.

EDWARD: You realize though, that Pete French himself, before he was murdered, was suing, or taking, not suing, he was taking to court these people that, around Sod House, to get them off their land so he could claim it for free pasture, is what he was really trying to do. And then Pete, to kind of get it into perspective, in about 1896 Pete French lost most his interest in the Company. Frenchglen just took him over.

GEORGIA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: And pretty soon he had nothing, you know.

GEORGIA: I don't know whether I ---

EDWARD: Plus, then Frenchglen Company started suing all of these homesteaders north of the road, basically, you know. North of Sod House Ranch. So Pete French in 1896, 1897, was having a lot of problems.

JOHN: He owned the Sod House Ranch too.

EDWARD: Sure.

JOHN: He buckarood with him, the day he got shot.

EDWARD: Right. Now there is some pretty tough questions here, John, but I don't care if it takes you a half a day to see what you could do. What was your father's, what was your father's, David Crow's job for Pete French?

JOHN: He was just a cowboy; you might call him, a buckaroo.

EDWARD: Just --- did he tell you what he did when you were young? Did your dad tell you what he did?

JOHN: Oh yeah, he buckarood most all his life. Like me, I have too.

EDWARD: Work with cows. Did your dad work with horses when he was working for Pete French?

JOHN: Well he buckarood all the time, and they all had lots of saddle horses.

EDWARD: I imagine he had a lot of saddle horses.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Not as many as Bill Brown had, but he had quite a few. At Christmas Day, 1897, 97 years ago, what were the boys doing? Did your dad ever tell you what the buckaroos were doing at the Sod House, Christmas Day?

JOHN: Yeah, they was a gathering. That's a big Sod House; Sagebrush Field is an awfully big field.

EDWARD: Give me an estimation where that field is, from the road.

JOHN: Do you know where this Job Corp outfit is?

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: Well the Wright Field, they was, gathered the cattle out of

the Sagebrush Field, and they was going to move them to the Wright Field. It's closer to the Sod House.

EDWARD: Okay.

JOHN: Pete French went up to open the gate into the Wright Field. Of course I know, I've heard all about the Field ... I worked for Scharff five years when I was single, and two years after I got married. And I always did know that country pretty well, because I worked for old Billy Dunn, you know, and when I was working for Scharff I helped all the neighbors brand.

EDWARD: So is Sod House Ranch sitting, or about in the middle of Big Sagebrush Field? Or is Coyote Butte sitting in about the middle of Sagebrush?

JOHN: Coyote Butte is in Sagebrush Field.

EDWARD: Okay, good. Wright Field was what, north, south, east, west?

JOHN: Wright Field was west of the Sod House, but just a short distance.

EDWARD: Not, but not very far.

JOHN: No.

EDWARD: Like a half-mile?

JOHN: Yeah, three-quarters of a mile, I guess.

EDWARD: Okay. That's towards the Blitzen River?

JOHN: Well it's on the east side of the Blitzen, the river; it's on the east side of the field.

EDWARD: Okay.

JOHN: But they gathered cattle at, the Blitzen River runs through there. And Pete French rode with them that day, and helped them gather their cattle. Had the whole buckaroo outfit there, I guess, quite a few of them. His brother was the firstest man to him.

EDWARD: Uh huh.

JOHN: And old Tebo was the next, and I think my dad was the third, if I remember right.

EDWARD: Now the next day, after Christmas, was Pete French out of town Christmas day, the day before he was killed? Do you know that?

JOHN: I couldn't tell you about that.

EDWARD: Okay. There is so many stories that he --- I can't find out. Because I'm trying to go a day-by-day thing. Whether he was out of town and came into Burns on Christmas day, then rode down to Sod House Ranch.

GEORGIA: I don't know.

JOHN: I don't know.

GEORGIA: Well this is what Dave told me, you see, the way I've got this written here. He ---

EDWARD: Oh, he, Dave told that to you.

GEORGIA: Yes, uh huh. We moved from Buena Vista to Sod House on Christmas day, 1897.

EDWARD: Ah, there we go.

GEORGIA: The next morning, December 26th, 1897, we rode to Rocky

Ford Lane to move 2,000 head of cows and calves ---

EDWARD: That's what I was wondering, see.

GEORGIA: --- into the Wright Field. Pete French rode ahead of the cows to open the gate into Wright Field.

EDWARD: 2,000 head.

GEORGIA: He was met at the gate by Oliver. After an apparent exchange of words, Pete turned to ride back to help with the cattle. Oliver shot him behind the right ear, and left by way of west side of Sagebrush Field.

EDWARD: I'm going to try to draw a map of all of this, see.

GEORGIA: Now this is the only thing that Johnny's father ever told me a story, and he told me to get a pencil and paper and write this down.

EDWARD: Okay, could you write that on there. Could you write that on there, Georgia, just what you said?

GEORGIA: Well ---

EDWARD: That's real important. Now, we got that kind of figured out here. How far is Wright Field gate from Saddle --- from Coyote Butte?

JOHN: Well the Job Corp is just this side of that butte.

EDWARD: Right.

JOHN: And Sagebrush Field fence run from the bottom of that butte out, it took in Wright Field, that's what they called the Wright Field. And it run out in the flat --- Oh I was up and down that country when I was just a kid. I went to school at The Narrows.

EDWARD: Right.

JOHN: Used to have all ... saddle horses.

EDWARD: If we go down there Saturday or something, do you think you could find where Pete French was killed?

JOHN: Well I know damn well I could if they haven't changed the fences around.

EDWARD: Oh, there is not hardly any fences left at all. Now, off the top of my head, I got --- I don't know whether you've seen this, from your brother and the Oregon Historical Quarterly of him standing there where this murder occurred.

GEORGIA: Oh, he took a bunch of pictures; we've got that stuff.

EDWARD: Yeah, you got. Okay. I bet you from that I could darn near find it. I was down there, you know, yesterday.

GEORGIA: Uh huh. Remember Rankin and some folks went down there.

JOHN: I took Rankin out there.

GEORGIA: Well now maybe you did, I ---

JOHN: He wanted to go out there.

GEORGIA: Somewhere around I've got a whole --- I don't think they're in here, but ---

EDWARD: See I was down there within a half a mile of the place, I bet you, John, a half a mile of it.

JOHN: You went down south of the butte there.

EDWARD: Correct.

JOHN: Well there is a road that goes right down ---

EDWARD: Right down through the middle of it.

JOHN: That's the first gate you come to. Big gate goes there too.

EDWARD: Oh I think that's probably all gone now.

JOHN: Probably.

EDWARD: They don't, the government doesn't care about history.

JOHN: Oh no.

GEORGIA: Oh no, I'll say they don't.

EDWARD: Yeah, they don't. I hate to say it, but they don't.

GEORGIA: Oh no, they ---

JOHN: There used to be --- in that gate they was so many cattle, they was going back and forth --- there used to be pretty deep cow trails.

EDWARD: Going right through that gate?

JOHN: Right through that gate. Of course it would all be rode over by now.

EDWARD: Oh, the stupid government. Oh, here we go, I've got it Georgia.

JOHN: I saw it ---

GEORGIA: I was just was wondering if I had it here, but I don't.

EDWARD: This thing right here, this is Rankin Crow's version of where ---

JOHN: Yeah, that's when --- I nicknamed him Slim.

EDWARD: Slim Crow. But look how high that is. See that little piece of sagebrush there is where the gate was, or where he died.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: There is Notch Butte. But it is up on a higher plane.
This ---

JOHN: Well that picture is true, all right.

EDWARD: But this is so much different now.

JOHN: Oh yeah.

EDWARD: See that's been eaten off. But look how close we are to
Coyote Buttes. That's not very far from Coyote Buttes.

JOHN: No.

EDWARD: Now I was within a half a mile. But I thought if I
walked across through there, they might get all mad.

JOHN: These stool pigeons down there.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, they are worse than that. They don't know what
the hell they're doing.

GEORGIA: I'll say they don't. Last year they set a fire in 14
mile an hour winds and pretty near burned up the world. They said
it was a controlled burn.

EDWARD: Oh yeah. Well ---

JOHN: That was up to this side of the grain camp where they set
that whole --- north of the Diamond Lane.

GEORGIA: And then right there at Refuge Headquarters they put a

JOHN: Just about burned Dunn out.

GEORGIA: Larry Dunn.

JOHN: Larry Dunn, the refuge traded him that New Diamond Ranch
for his Swamp Ranch down here at Weed Lake. Made an awful good

trade. He's the only one in the country come out with a good trade. And they took bulldozers and put a whole dike around his house and stuff to keep the water out.

GEORGIA: And that's all that saved him from that fire.

EDWARD: That fire, yeah.

GEORGIA: And then we went out one morning and the looneys there at the refuge headquarters had a trash barrel out in dry salt grass, and they put a bunch of these pressurized spray cans in it.

EDWARD: That blew up?

GEORGIA: And they blew out. And in just a little bit of no time the fire went clear up to our old ranch. And if Fred hadn't of been there with his bulldozer it might have taken him out. And then they wondered why his cows were on their lawn.

EDWARD: Well where was your place? What do you mean, down there on Sod House you had a place?

JOHN: Yeah, just east of the ---

GEORGIA: Yeah, that's where we ranched.

JOHN: --- bird refuge headquarters, two miles.

EDWARD: Oh, that big one with the trees?

JOHN: Yeah.

GEORGIA: No, that's the Sod House.

JOHN: Well there is trees there.

GEORGIA: Yeah, there is some. But that was Sod House Ranch back up in the meadows.

EDWARD: Yeah, right.

GEORGIA: But we were on east.

EDWARD: Right.

GEORGIA: In a great big yellow house.

JOHN: Right along the old Princeton road.

EDWARD: Yeah. You know what, I couldn't believe this.

GEORGIA: Fred Briggs has it now.

EDWARD: Yesterday I was thinking about going to Princeton. There is a sign, believe this, there is a sign right there that says road closed.

JOHN: Yeah, Fred had that closed quite awhile.

GEORGIA: They go in by the house. That's the old road.

EDWARD: Oh.

JOHN: That's the old Princeton road, years ago.

EDWARD: He can't, yeah but you can't do that can you?

GEORGIA: Well it's all on his property now, and the road goes around, see.

EDWARD: Oh.

GEORGIA: During the high water they built the road around. And

EDWARD: Oh, the road that takes off to the right that goes ---

GEORGIA: Yeah, that goes to Princeton.

JOHN: Yeah, it goes to Princeton.

EDWARD: Oh, see it doesn't show that on the maps.

GEORGIA: No, I don't suppose it does.

EDWARD: Huh uh.

JOHN: Well that water come in and washed that other road completely out.

EDWARD: Well yeah.

GEORGIA: There isn't any road straight through there anymore.

EDWARD: Well that about blew me away, you know, I thought road closed. Ah ha.

GEORGIA: That's a private road in there.

EDWARD: I thought this was government again, you know.

GEORGIA: No, that's a private road.

JOHN: Nobody pays any attention to it much. But they got gates

GEORGIA: You've got to open and shut gates, and one thing and another.

EDWARD: Oh, yeah. Well we better get with it here, I've got a lot to do.

JOHN: I ... with my car once.

EDWARD: You drove right through it?

GEORGIA: Yeah, he did.

JOHN: Yeah, I ---

GEORGIA: I used to try to keep a road on it, but it got worn off and ---

JOHN: ... he had it open part of the time, you know. Well I've been his flunkey, he bought us out 26 years ago, and I am still his flunkey. We worked for him until I got drug by a horse and pulled my back in two. Broke two vertebrae, and it was the third

time they'd been broke. I was on the shelf quite awhile.

EDWARD: Don't you learn when to quit, John?

GEORGIA: That's why we sold out.

EDWARD: That's why I don't play basketball, John. I've had six knee operations. Okay, anyway. The details, okay, we got that. What type of gun, what kind of gun did Ed Oliver use to shoot Pete French?

JOHN: I don't remember.

EDWARD: Oh.

GEORGIA: I don't know.

EDWARD: Nobody knows.

GEORGIA: And I don't think it says ---

JOHN: But it was a pistol.

EDWARD: Yeah, it was a pistol.

JOHN: Shot him behind the right ear, Pete just turned to ride away.

EDWARD: Right. We don't know.

GEORGIA: No, it doesn't say.

EDWARD: No, nobody knows. See I can't find the autopsy report, or the coroner's inquest. Can't find them, they're gone.

JOHN: But I'm pretty sure it was a pistol.

EDWARD: Yeah, it was. Did your father, did your father, David Crow, did he know Ed Oliver beforehand?

JOHN: Did he know what?

EDWARD: Did he know Ed Oliver before he shot Pete French?

JOHN: I don't know whether he did or not. There is a Shelby Petersen up here ---

EDWARD: Right.

JOHN: He is related to Ed Oliver.

EDWARD: Oh yes.

JOHN: Old Shelby is nine days older than I am.

EDWARD: Yeah, he is 92.

JOHN: He will be the 20th, or the 19th of July.

EDWARD: Shelby and I get along fine. He is the only one --- I'm the only one he'll ever talk to.

JOHN: Oh I go see him pretty regular.

EDWARD: He won't talk to anybody else about anything. His mother was Ida Simmons Oliver.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Ed Oliver's wife. Okay, here comes a big question, John. Damn it, just say anything if you know. What happened to Ed Oliver?

JOHN: What happened to who?

EDWARD: To Ed Oliver?

JOHN: Well they turned him loose.

EDWARD: I know that. After the trial ---

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: But where did he go?

JOHN: I don't know where he went. I could ask Shelby.

EDWARD: Shelby has already told me.

JOHN: Oh, he did?

EDWARD: The Simmons family know, they think they know what happened to him. But do you know what happened to him? No idea?

GEORGIA: Never did hear.

EDWARD: You sure, John?

JOHN: No, if I heard ---

EDWARD: You need a glass of whiskey or something to refresh the old memory here? (Laughter)

GEORGIA: No.

JOHN: No, I never knew him at all that I can remember. I wasn't around Burns much them days.

EDWARD: Well the court records say, in 1899 --- well first of all, Ed Oliver sold his homestead in Oliver Spring to Biggs and Biggs.

GEORGIA: Biggs and Biggs.

EDWARD: Biggs and Biggs ---

GEORGIA: I never heard that.

EDWARD: --- worked for Frenchglen Cattle Company. They in turn gave it to, his land, to Frenchglen Cattle Company in 1898. Ida Simmons Oliver Petersen, Shelby's mother, didn't know this. So she went to court in 1899 in Burns and sued for divorce. And in the court papers it states that Ed Oliver run off with what we call a common whore, or saloon girl ---

JOHN: Yeah.

GEORGIA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: --- by the name of Annie Ward.

GEORGIA: Ward, now that --- I've heard that name in something I've read somewhere along the way, but I don't know where.

EDWARD: Well that's in court documents. And there is two or three witnesses stating that Ed Oliver was, quote, shacking up with ---

GEORGIA: With her.

EDWARD: --- Annie Ward in Burns, after the trial, of course.

GEORGIA: Yeah.

JOHN: Well he had some kids, you know.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, I've got pictures of all of them. Yeah, all four of them. Got lot of pictures. Not enough though. But anyway, in 1899 John Buchanan, the sheriff, sent a deputy out with a subpoena and they found old Ed Oliver on the way to Prineville with this girl in the back of the wagon, this Annie Ward. That's the last they ---

JOHN: The last they saw of him.

EDWARD: I went through all the censuses in 1900, unless he changed his name, which he could have.

GEORGIA: Oh yeah.

EDWARD: But why, was there anybody against him?

GEORGIA: Not that I know of.

JOHN: Not that I know of.

EDWARD: No. Most people were probably happy he killed Pete French.

JOHN: Yeah, they --- I don't know but I thought they drew straws to see who shot him.

EDWARD: Okay. I went through that with Don Miller two days ago. Now he didn't find out until much later that his grandfather killed Warren Curtis, shot Warren Curtis.

JOHN: No.

EDWARD: Did you know that?

GEORGIA: Yes.

JOHN: His grandfather got shot through the jaw.

EDWARD: Oh, and it goes on and on. There is just one murder every week around here. But I went with --- told Don Miller this lady wrote a book on Pete French, and it was all fictionalized, and that story was in there, they drew straws. And I told Don, I said, "Now where did you get this story?" And he said he got it from Cogg McKee, and that he would know. And he named five names that drew straws, and Ed Oliver got the short one.

GEORGIA: That's what we've heard, but I didn't ---

EDWARD: But it doesn't sound right. And I'll tell you something else; maybe this will jog some of your memories. Clara Springer told me on the telephone, I'll see her tomorrow, that her grandfather Alva Springer, did you ever meet him?

JOHN: Yes, I knew him. I threshed, helped him thresh his grain one year.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, he died in 1935.

JOHN: I went to school with him.

GEORGIA: That was before I came here, the ... 1936. Don Miller went to school to me.

EDWARD: Did he?

GEORGIA: From September until Christmas.

EDWARD: First thing he does he gets off the range a couple days ago, he grabs himself a beer, you know, and he is 72 years old. He gave me a branding iron; I collect branding irons, old branding irons. He gave me, I think two. Anyway, the straw story, I don't know, you know. I was hoping that you would say yes.

JOHN: Old man Springer, I think he bluffed French out a little down there once.

EDWARD: He must have been, French may have been afraid of Alva Springer.

GEORGIA: He could have.

JOHN: I've heard that, but I can't swear that it is true.

EDWARD: Alva Springer evidently was not one to mess with.

JOHN: I guess not.

EDWARD: And Lewis Springer.

JOHN: I didn't know him. I knew Wilbur, was it Wilbur?

GEORGIA: Yeah, Wilbur was ---

EDWARD: Wilbur died two years ago.

GEORGIA: Oh he did? We didn't know that. But he was living there when I came.

JOHN: And his wife is still alive.

EDWARD: Yes, I talked to her two weeks ago in Salem.

JOHN: Who was she, I don't remember.

EDWARD: Elva was Wilbur's wife, E L V A.

JOHN: I knew her when she lived there at the Springer place.

EDWARD: Wilbur --- Eddie disappeared. (Laughter) Did you know that?

JOHN: No.

EDWARD: Eddie Springer.

JOHN: Old Ed Springer, yeah I've heard of him.

EDWARD: Yeah, he just disappeared in 1926.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Geeze, what a mess.

GEORGIA: See that was long before I came around here.

EDWARD: Yeah. But anyway Clara Springer Tucke says that Alva Springer and Albert Reineman ---

JOHN: Reineman.

EDWARD: Reineman.

JOHN: Yeah, I remember.

EDWARD: Okay. And Ed Oliver ---

JOHN: I knew them folks.

EDWARD: --- were up on the hill looking down, watching French's men move the cattle. And Reineman and Alva Springer went back and Ed Oliver went on down. And I think I know where they were looking; I think they were on the base of Coyote Buttes, looking down in the fields.

GEORGIA: Probably.

EDWARD: I bet you.

GEORGIA: That was the high point around there anyway.

EDWARD: Yeah, I bet you anything. Because Ed Oliver was leaving George Curtis' house to go down to his place at Rocky Ford that day, but he didn't make it, he met Pete French. Maybe he did go. You can see for miles on top of those hills, you know.

JOHN: Oh yes.

GEORGIA: Oh yes. It covers the whole area there, and you get up on top and you can see ---

EDWARD: I don't know, who knows.

GEORGIA: --- for miles.

EDWARD: Too hard to --- so many of them are gone now, that's the problem.

GEORGIA: Well they're all gone, you might say. John is about the only one that had a close relative mixed into this.

EDWARD: Right. Now Marcus is dead.

JOHN: Yeah, Marcus wrote a lot of B.S. about it.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, yeah.

GEORGIA: He was ---

JOHN: He wrote there. He said my dad and Chino was French's stool pigeons. And the only thing he had to go on, they was over at Oliver's and just riding, and they found some of Pete French's cows with Oliver's calves following them, branded. And that's what stirred up the mess, I guess, some.

GEORGIA: But that happens.

EDWARD: Oh that ---

GEORGIA: We used to ride and other people's cattle, and check for our own, and ride through ours to get other guy's out, you know.

EDWARD: I just think it was the pressure of all of this stuff that just got to French when he, you know --- I think he probably did hit Ed Oliver with a quirk, or a whip or something.

JOHN: If they found those cows with his irons on them, they was buckarooing for French, that's their job to get them. I'd say they weren't stool pigeons.

EDWARD: No.

JOHN: They were just buckarooing.

EDWARD: Well there is two sides of this story.

GEORGIA: Sure.

EDWARD: There is John Scharff's who is for Pete French. And there is Marcus Haines who is for the little guys.

GEORGIA: He is definitely off on the other track.

EDWARD: Yeah. So there is two opinions, you know. That makes it kind of --- but there is two sides probably to the real story anyway.

GEORGIA: Well quite definitely.

EDWARD: Sure.

GEORGIA: Well just like I say the California people coming in to try to get a hold of all this territory.

EDWARD: And they are too.

GEORGIA: Sure they are. And it's making enemies here and there.

EDWARD: The G.I. Ranch, owned by people in New York. They could care less about a cow.

GEORGIA: Uh huh. They probably wouldn't know what ---

EDWARD: No, it's all tax write-off for them.

JOHN: I've been on several cow drives ... to the G.I. Ranch. Rankin bought cattle for Seth Davis, when he owned the ranch at that time. And Delmer Baker, and Rankin, and myself, and Chester Baker, that was Delmer's brother.

EDWARD: Oh, there is a flock of Bakers, Houston's.

JOHN: And we'd been on cow drives ---

GEORGIA: Old, old timers here.

JOHN: --- and I filed on a homestead, I filed on a homestead to get 40 acres of meadowland that French hayed in his days, up on--- And Rankin was, him and Bob Hughet was in the horse business, you know.

EDWARD: Bog Hughet?

GEORGIA: Hughet, Hughet, Bob Hughet.

EDWARD: Go ahead.

JOHN: Rankin and Bob run the horses together, and they had lots of saddle horses, and they'd trade saddle horses. Finally they'd trade so much they didn't know which ones belonged to them. They'd just bunch them up, divide them up again.

EDWARD: Who belonged to who.

GEORGIA: There might be a Lewis Hughet in this ---

JOHN: Bob died here several years ago, he was a wonderful fellow.

EDWARD: Is that it, Georgia, Hughet?

GEORGIA: Hughet, uh huh.

EDWARD: Who is Rube Hughet?

JOHN: Rube Hughet, yeah, I knew Rube Hughet some.

GEORGIA: Now that's a name I don't know, I never heard that.

JOHN: I think he must have been a brother to all these boys on the Hughet ---

GEORGIA: The Hughet family was a pretty good-sized outfit, uh huh.

JOHN: --- dad, maybe.

EDWARD: Oh, was it? Well it says Rube Hughet, and I got him, he was born in 1860. It is Reuben Hughet, is what's his real name. Was a member of the last grand jury. This is the testimony. "Identifies pistol as pistol in evidence before grand jury. Saw pistol open in grand jury room, no empty shells." It doesn't say what kind of pistol. So he was part of this testimony, but I didn't know who he was.

GEORGIA: Well he must have been Bob and Lewis' ---

EDWARD: Father?

GEORGIA: Well could have gone back that far, maybe.

JOHN: He could have been ---

GEORGIA: Or an older brother or uncle, maybe.

JOHN: He might have been a granddad to Bob.

EDWARD: Yeah. Are there any Hughet's around town?

GEORGIA: No, but out there at Double O ---

JOHN: One girl is still alive and lives out there.

GEORGIA: Yeah.

EDWARD: At the Double O?

JOHN: Yeah.

GEORGIA: Yes.

EDWARD: I was just there, O'Connor?

GEORGIA: No.

EDWARD: O'Connor's are at the Double O now.

GEORGIA: Yeah, right on the Double O. But we just consider ---
Don Miller is at the Double O too, you see.

EDWARD: You consider the whole thing Double O, that's right.

JOHN: Double O country.

EDWARD: Yeah.

GEORGIA: She is married to a Basco boy.

JOHN: Julio ---

GEORGIA: No, no she is not a Urizar.

JOHN: Well this girl that is married to him, and he has been
blind for the last 30 years.

GEORGIA: Yes, but he is not a Urizar.

JOHN: Huh?

GEORGIA: He is not a Urizar, let me look.

EDWARD: Oh, by the way, do you know that Sheriff John McKinnon
was murdered down in California after he left the sheriff here?
He was shot in 1903.

JOHN: Who was that that was shot?

EDWARD: John McKinnon.

JOHN: No, there is a sheriff got shot down here.

EDWARD: Oh yeah.

JOHN: At the Folly Farm, you know. By god Judd Wise armed a buckaroo there at the P Ranch and I --- sent us up on the Blitzen River. We knew the country, and they knew he was in that Steens Mountain country somewhere. He said, there is a rim rock, and there was not many trails up there, comes down into the river after you leave Frenchglen, you know. And we set up there all day with a rifle waiting for him to come through. And Judd says if he shows any fight, shoot him. (Laughter)

EDWARD: Wouldn't that be ... Oh well.

JOHN: They caught him though, back of Diamond in those hills. They sent him over the road.

EDWARD: What about Jeff Cawlfieid?

GEORGIA: It was Yriarte.

EDWARD: Yriarte.

JOHN: Yriarte, Louie Yriarte.

GEORGIA: Uh huh, Louie Yriarte.

JOHN: He's a nice old fellow.

GEORGIA: She is married to ---

EDWARD: I was just out there.

JOHN: He is married to a Hughet daughter.

EDWARD: Well I'll be out there again.

JOHN: She is the only Hughet left.

EDWARD: Is that the ranch next to Gary and Georgia Marshall?

GEORGIA: Pretty close in there.

EDWARD: I would say it is the next one.

GEORGIA: It is going around toward Moon's there.

EDWARD: Oh, it is up one more. Okay, I know where that is.

JOHN: Yeah, it is down toward Moons. And there is another --- her's is right up by a big spring.

EDWARD: Been to Helen Moon's too.

GEORGIA: You've been to Helen's, uh huh.

JOHN: You have been to the house.

EDWARD: To Helen Moon's.

GEORGIA: He's been to see Helen.

JOHN: You been to Moons, why you come back over the hill and it is the first ranch.

EDWARD: Okay. Went right by it. I was within a mile.

GEORGIA: It is just off the road, just a little bit, yeah.

JOHN: Yeah, it isn't over a half a mile off the road up there.

EDWARD: You can see it easily.

GEORGIA: Oh yeah, there is a bunch of trees around it, and a lot of big buildings.

EDWARD: Let's see, let's see.

JOHN: She's been there all her life. I worked there for Louis, her dad, in about 1930, Bob Hughet. His dad was a putting up Company hay. And I filed on this homestead up here in the --- well the Company had it for years. But Rankin and I got together

and I told Slim, I said, "Slim you know I'm getting tired of this galloping around the country."

EDWARD: For somebody else.

JOHN: And I said, "Let's go to the courthouse and see if we can find some vacant meadows somewhere, in some of these fields."

EDWARD: Oh yeah.

JOHN: And I always had some saddle horses. Well we went up there and we found this 40 acres in the Rimrock Field.

EDWARD: Up above Diamond?

GEORGIA: No, it's going up to Buena Vista there.

JOHN: Just the other side of Saddle Butte.

EDWARD: Oh.

GEORGIA: Maybe you have seen the pictures of the, up in the rimrock, the steer head, or the horse's head with the ---

EDWARD: Yeah, somebody was telling --- Andy ---

GEORGIA: Andy probably told you about it, Andy Dunbar.

EDWARD: Yeah, was telling me about that. Okay.

JOHN: Well that's where I filed on the homestead.

EDWARD: Oh really.

GEORGIA: Right down in the meadow there.

JOHN: Of course it is --- the county put a road through there after that.

EDWARD: I was wondering.

JOHN: And they fenced the road, and, for me. I was buckarooing for Ross Dollarhyde out at Home Creek, a boarding at Home Creek,

keeping cattle up on the mountain. And, on account of the larkspur that come down into Dry Creek Valley.

EDWARD: Oh, yeah. That will kill them, won't it?

GEORGIA: Yeah.

JOHN: Huh?

EDWARD: That will kill them?

GEORGIA: Yes. He says larkspur will kill a cow.

JOHN: Oh yes. It will kill a bunch of them too.

EDWARD: Yeah, I've heard that, yeah.

GEORGIA: And especially if they eat it, and you get them roughed up a little bit and pretty warm, why it affects them. It clots their blood.

JOHN: Old Joe Fine --- I could always get a job buckarooing at the P Ranch. Two different years I quit buckarooing and went out lambing, for little Martin Ramirez. He run 6,000 sheep on the Steens Mountain. And I went down to The Narrows; Rankin had the store down there in them days. And I ---

EDWARD: I didn't know that.

GEORGIA: Oh yeah.

EDWARD: After Haines left?

GEORGIA: Yes.

JOHN: Huh?

EDWARD: Rankin had the store at The Narrows after Haines left?

JOHN: Oh yes, it changed hands several times after Haines left. Rankin finally wound up with it and went broke.

EDWARD: Oh yeah. There was nobody around.

GEORGIA: Comegys had it when ---

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: In '29 ---

GEORGIA: --- when I came here, and then ---

EDWARD: Sidney ---

JOHN: Shorty Lassiter and I, he had a wife and four little kids, two girls, three girls and a boy, I think. But he had a little service station at Frenchglen, and we was pretty good friends. And this store building, Rankin just pulled out and left it there. And they sent the taxes to me.

EDWARD: Well ---

JOHN: I was still around.

EDWARD: It ain't your problem.

JOHN: So by golly, I kept them paid up. And I didn't, wasn't doing nothing with it. But Shorty Lassiter had a service station at The Narrows. And we got together and just decided we'd --- that was in my name, you know. We just decided we'd go down there and clean the old building, the store building all up and put a new floor in it and have dances. God we sold over a hundred tickets on a dance night. But the musicians cost us so damn much we didn't make any money.

EDWARD: You didn't make any money.

JOHN: His wife was a good cook, and Shorty was quite a little carpenter, built a restaurant right across.

EDWARD: Well when was --- is this in the '30's?

JOHN: Yeah.

GEORGIA: It was before I came, it was in the latter '20's.

EDWARD: Oh, okay, '20's.

JOHN: Yeah, this was in the '20's.

GEORGIA: There was nothing there when I came here.

JOHN: Anyhow, of course we bootlegged too.

EDWARD: Oh sure, everybody did.

JOHN: Had to bootleg.

EDWARD: To make a living.

JOHN: To make a living.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: Well we just wasn't making enough money, that either one of us was doing any good. But we played rummy a lot. So Shorty and I we had a long visit, by god, we wasn't doing very good. Of course little Shorty when he come to town after store stuff, we had a little service station and sold candy, and lunch goods and things.

EDWARD: Wasn't too many people going through there then, was there?

JOHN: Well there was always quite a bit of travel there. And anyhow, we wasn't making enough. Little Shorty he come to town, and everybody liked him. He'd get in the Elkhorn, and if he had any money he ---

SIDE B

EDWARD: Did your dad stay in Oregon after he got married in 1899?

JOHN: No, he bought a little ranch south of Cedarville.

EDWARD: Oh, okay.

JOHN: That's where my mother passed away.

EDWARD: Was your dad working for Pete French when he married your mom?

JOHN: No.

EDWARD: No, okay. So he quit working for Pete French very soon after he was killed?

JOHN: Yeah, I think he must have.

EDWARD: Must have been right after. 1998 (correction 1898) or somewhere in there he must have quit working for him.

JOHN: I guess possibly he did. But I don't --- yeah, my mother passed away, I was one year old.

EDWARD: Oh, I remember.

GEORGIA: That's all of The Narrows.

JOHN: 1902, him and Bill Crow, his brother, broke horses.

GEORGIA: There is a date on the back of it there, I think.

EDWARD: 1912.

JOHN: What's that?

GEORGIA: A picture of The Narrows. A picture of The Narrows way back in the ---

EDWARD: That's big.

GEORGIA: --- dark ages.

JOHN: There used to be quite a lot of ---

EDWARD: That's huge.

JOHN: Huh?

EDWARD: That's a big place.

JOHN: Used to be quite a few houses.

GEORGIA: There was a hotel, and a store, and ---

JOHN: All that's a standing there now is that Church house, where Church's live.

GEORGIA: Yeah.

JOHN: There is, somebody else is staying at The Narrows --- But that old rock cellar ---

EDWARD: Yeah, yeah.

JOHN: I made a bedroom out of that.

EDWARD: Well what was that originally, that rock cellar that is still standing?

JOHN: Well they called it the jail. But ---

EDWARD: Can I use this to have it re-copied, Georgia?

GEORGIA: I don't see why not. Do you think ---

JOHN: I don't care.

GEORGIA: --- loan it.

JOHN: Huh?

GEORGIA: You can loan it to him to get it copied.

EDWARD: I got a little --- I've had so many pictures in my hands, my god almighty. I put them in these things until I get back to Eugene, see.

GEORGIA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: 1912, okay.

GEORGIA: Well I've got the homestead picture.

EDWARD: Now homestead picture, which one, Georgia?

GEORGIA: That was Johnny's homestead up there where the ---

JOHN: Along the rim rock.

GEORGIA: Along the rim rock.

JOHN: Rankin and Bob Hughet ...

GEORGIA: I just run onto it, and that's ---

JOHN: --- with a bunch of horses one day, and Todd Smith, he had four geldings he wanted me to break to ride. Wages was only \$30 a month, but he said ---

EDWARD: Oh yeah, that was standard.

JOHN: He said, "If you'll come here I'll board you and pay you \$40 a month if you'll break these four head of horses." He said, "They're all three year olds." And I said, "Well I've been around horses all my life," and I said, "Claude," or I forget his first name now. But anyhow, his last name was Brown. And I said, "Brown, that damn one gelding there is more than a three year old." ... So he lied to me, he said, "No he isn't." Anyhow I went after them the day Rankin and Bob come to my homestead with a bunch of horses. Rankin had ---

EDWARD: This one?

JOHN: Huh?

EDWARD: This one?

JOHN: Yeah. I had an old man help me build that.

GEORGIA: We lived in it one winter.

JOHN: We wintered in there one winter.

EDWARD: Well you don't need much, you know.

GEORGIA: We --- just one room that was fairly tight. We had a good cook stove to make heat.

JOHN: I was running at Squaw Butte. I run the Squaw Butte cattle for a year. I guess I could have been there yet, but --- Ted Dunn didn't get along with his relation very good, and no ---

EDWARD: Oh, Ted Dunn, yeah.

JOHN: No one helped him.

EDWARD: A brother to Billy.

GEORGIA: Yes.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Yeah.

GEORGIA: That's the ranch that we bought, we bought it from ...

EDWARD: Right. That used to be --- that was a Dunn homestead originally, this one, right?

JOHN: The old lady Dunn.

GEORGIA: Yes, uh huh.

EDWARD: Right, right.

JOHN: That building is still there.

EDWARD: The lake is out here.

GEORGIA: Yeah, in behind it there.

EDWARD: And the road up here says road closed.

GEORGIA: Yes, uh huh.

EDWARD: Yeah. You borrowed these boards from somewhere, didn't you?

JOHN: Yeah, there was a big building ---

EDWARD: You can tell.

JOHN: --- big building down in the flat. Two story building, and Billy Harris owned it.

GEORGIA: We called it Harris Flats. It was down ---

JOHN: And he ---

EDWARD: By Buena Vista?

GEORGIA: Yeah, it would be north of Buena Vista.

EDWARD: Right.

GEORGIA: Just off to the right.

EDWARD: There is a Foster Flats.

GEORGIA: Well, in Foster Flats there.

EDWARD: Is that right in there?

GEORGIA: I guess partly ---

JOHN: There is a flat, and there is road over next to the government fence right down there. He had it fenced at one time, barbed wire and posts. And no one had lived there for years. I buckarood with him one winter at the P Ranch.

EDWARD: You borrowed his boards, didn't you?

GEORGIA: He bought the old building and took it down, and built another.

JOHN: Anyhow I run into Bill. We buckarood together one winter

at the P Ranch.

EDWARD: Oh, those were something, boy.

JOHN: And old Curly Jordan was an old man, and he used to work on ranches for wages, you know. And he used to moonshine too.

EDWARD: Oh yeah. Everybody moonshined.

JOHN: Yeah. And I just had a tent there. And he was up on Jack Mountain, there is a spring up there and it belonged to Les Griffin at that time. And Les told him he --- a pretty nice little two-room cabin. And he went up there to make some moonshine. Well there was no traveling in them days hardly at all down through by my place.

EDWARD: I don't know where the road was back in those days.

JOHN: It was right along where it is now.

EDWARD: Oh, it was?

JOHN: Uh huh.

EDWARD: Oh that, okay. Let me stop you a minute, John. This is important, we were talking about this. You, of course, know where the P Ranch is.

JOHN: Sure do.

EDWARD: Do you remember where the Buena Vista, Pete French's Buena Vista Ranch was?

JOHN: Yeah. It was just two miles from my homestead.

EDWARD: Right, its south, south.

JOHN: Well it would be east.

EDWARD: East?

JOHN: Just on up two miles farther is, where Buena Vista Ranch is.

EDWARD: Is there anything left there?

JOHN: Oh yeah, the government built a big rock house. They could have hauled rock from, let's see, from the lava beds, but instead of that they had a rock quarry. There is a canyon behind my homestead, and they got most of the rock there.

EDWARD: But is there anything left of Pete French's Buena Vista Ranch? Any buildings or anything?

JOHN: Yeah, it's there. Oh yeah, there was a CC Camp there for, when they came in.

EDWARD: Where in the world --- you know you go along the highway to Frenchglen, and it says Buena Vista, but there is a highway department building there.

JOHN: Well there is a lot of buildings there.

GEORGIA: There might be some old parts of old buildings over there. I don't know for sure, but there is quite a circle of stuff over there.

JOHN: There is a big rock house, nice home.

EDWARD: Was that Pete French's?

JOHN: Well he could have owned it at one time, yeah.

EDWARD: Because your father says on Christmas day he left the Buena Vista Ranch to go to Sod House.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Now parts of the Sod House are still standing.

JOHN: Yeah, well it isn't. It's just; drive there off the road a

quarter of a mile.

EDWARD: So I wanted to take pictures of the ---

GEORGIA: I haven't any pictures of anything there at Buena Vista.

EDWARD: You don't? Oh, that's what I was wondering, yeah. Because I don't know what's left.

GEORGIA: Well I don't know whether there is. There is quite a few buildings and parts of buildings maybe there.

JOHN: They kept a man there and his wife for years. Don Miller's brother, wasn't it?

GEORGIA: No, no, it's a cousin.

JOHN: Don Miller's cousin.

GEORGIA: Clyde Miller.

EDWARD: And that was Pete French's old ranch?

JOHN: Yeah, years ago. And the Company got it after that.

EDWARD: Right, Frenchglen.

JOHN: It was a Texas outfit come in there when Swift bought it out.

EDWARD: Yeah, I've heard of Swift.

JOHN: And they had a buckaroo outfit, Texas boys. And there was Augustine Gilbert, he had us boys --- well Bill Harris, myself, Emmett Briggs, Earl Peck. We caught over 2,000 hogs out in the swamp.

EDWARD: Hogs?

JOHN: Hogs.

EDWARD: Hogs?

GEORGIA: Yeah, they was, run wild up there.

JOHN: Yeah, they never knew for sure, but some people claim Pete French had them drove up in there. And other people claimed that they ---

EDWARD: Hogs, you mean down on the Blitzen?

GEORGIA: Sure.

JOHN: Yeah, right on the ---

GEORGIA: Wild out there in the ---

JOHN: The Blitzen River is just east of the Buena Vista.

EDWARD: Yeah, right. My god, that would drive you nuts.

GEORGIA: They lived in the haystacks in the winter, and ---

JOHN: I give Bill \$25 for that big old building, nobody lived in it.

EDWARD: And you hauled her off, or tore it down.

JOHN: Then I --- and John Kirk, he tried to break a big bay horse to ride, and of course when I filed on that homestead why I had some kind of a car, always had some kind of an old car. Once in awhile a new one.

EDWARD: I bet you always had old ones, John.

JOHN: Not always.

EDWARD: Not always.

JOHN: I bought a 1928 Whippet Coupe, and I had it for a good many years. God that was a tough ---

EDWARD: Yeah, and they only made them for about four or five years.

JOHN: What?

EDWARD: They only made them for about four, about four or five years. That was a good car though. That was a darn good car.

JOHN: Yeah. The first time I used it --- why my dad used to work for Al Ohms and his wife. They had a ranch in Catlow Valley. And they told me one winter; he was working for them, and looking after their cattle. In fact they had some rye hay there, but he didn't have to pitch any hay that winter, it was kind of an open winter. A lot of bunchgrass up in them low hills north of Catlow Valley.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: And so they said they'd board me if I'd go out and live with my dad and --- well I moonshined. They had a good blacksmith shop there, and that old ... and I think I had just one 50 gallon barrel out there in Moonshine Pass.

EDWARD: It was good, huh?

JOHN: It would work out all right, we had moonshine to drink, you know. Anyhow, Rankin had a damned old spoiled horse. He'd been working for Virgil Moon and Fay Perry ---

EDWARD: Oh yeah, Virgil Moon.

JOHN: Yeah, he was on the Moon Ranch.

EDWARD: Yeah, right.

JOHN: I wintered down in there with them, with Virg and old Bill Burgett. Did you ever got any ---

EDWARD: Bill Burgett worked for Bill Brown.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: Yeah, he was an old timer. God he was a wonderful old man.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: And him and Rankin was in the horse business. And so they --- I was there that winter with Virgil, we was feeding cattle a little bit. He had a hired man there too. Of course that Bill he did the cooking, he was a pretty good old cook. They got pasture from R. G. (B.) Jackson out at Wagontire.

EDWARD: Oh Jesus.

JOHN: I don't know, had about ---

EDWARD: Ray B. Jackson.

JOHN: --- ten or fifteen head of horses. And old Bill he wanted me to take --- we got, Virgil Moon and I went out there one day to Jackson's. Yeah, we went down and saw old Bill Brown that day. We had the Model-T and he forgot to fill it when we left the ranch. But that Lakeview road used to go through there.

EDWARD: Right, yeah.

JOHN: So we, Virgil says, "By god I got, I forgot to fill up with gas. I'm afraid to try to go home, we might run out. Let's go on down to Bill Brown's."

EDWARD: The Gap Ranch?

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: So we drove in there. Old Bill was a friendly old fellow,

you know.

EDWARD: Oh yeah, yeah.

JOHN: And Virgil says, "Bill," he knew him pretty well too. He says, "Bill we're damned near out of gas, could we buy some gas off of you?" "Oh," he said, "there is two barrels out there in the shed, one has got gas in it, and one has coal oil, but you boys can tell the difference." (Laughter) By god, we got coal oil.

EDWARD: Oh.

JOHN: Oh, and it turned cold that night. He started back to Wagontire, across to the Moon place, you know.

EDWARD: Oh, bad road.

JOHN: Well for Model-T's it wasn't too bad.

EDWARD: Oh, bad now.

JOHN: And so we was out there, just --- there is a homestead, big homestead there, brush barn, and a pretty fair house. And there was a table, a wooden table; they probably had it in the house at one time. But it was out in front, and it had snowed on it, and then melted, and there was snow all around it too, in the fall of the year. But the damned old Ford quit us. We wasn't out of coal oil, it just wouldn't go.

EDWARD: Oh.

JOHN: Well, it was, oh a little farther than across the street there, to where the homestead was. And the table had been awful wet, so we built a fire under it, there was a brush barn, we

carried brush from there and built a fire under it. It didn't catch a fire, but it would steam that. And old Virg and I we'd crank on it until we both give out. And we'd go and lay on that warm table and sleep a little. (Laughter) We went up there the next morning and ---

EDWARD: You guys are made out of something, I don't know what.

JOHN: We went up there the next morning --- well we stayed all night there. It was early in the morning, but we walked up to it, we had a little sleep, we walked up to it. I don't remember whether Virgil got a hold of the crank or I did, but we cranked on it several times that night. Well anyhow, it started. And I said, "Virgil, don't let this damn thing quit, just keep her going." Then we made it home to the Moon Ranch.

EDWARD: Well what ---

JOHN: We had a lot of experiences.

EDWARD: I want to read you this. This was done in 1931.

JOHN: Yeah. I took the homestead up there in 1930.

EDWARD: Well I ain't going to read all of this. It would take us all day, and I --- What time, Georgia, what time is it?

GEORGIA: It is half past three.

EDWARD: Half past three already?

GEORGIA: Yeah.

EDWARD: I got, supposed to leave by 4 o'clock. Okay, here we go, real quick.

"You're David Crow?"

"Yes sir."

"Alright."

"Where do you live, Mr. Crow?"

"P Ranch."

This is 1931. I didn't know your dad was at the P Ranch then.

"Are you working there?"

"Yes sir."

"How long you been there?"

"Since August 27th of 1931."

"Last year, when did you first come to this country Mr. Crow?"

"I don't remember when I first come, I was too small. But I came back in 1884 or '85."

"What was the occasion for your first visit to this country, and why were you here?"

"Over here at Denio."

So they came to Denio.

"I mean before 1864, when did you first come here?"

"Well it was long after 1871."

So your dad was born in 1871. So he must have been a little baby.

"Where were you born, when you born?"

"1871."

Okay, then it goes on, and on, and on, and on.

"Who did you come with?"

"My father and mother."

"What business was he in?"

"He and a fellow by the name of George Mason moved a bunch of cattle from Sonoma County, California out here to Denio."

That was 1871. Then they went to the Diamond Ranch and Robie. Now got to read you this. This goes on, and on, and on.

JOHN: Who told you all this?

EDWARD: This is David Crow.

GEORGIA: This is, this is ---

EDWARD: Your dad.

JOHN: Oh, he did?

EDWARD: Yeah.

GEORGIA: During the trial.

EDWARD: Trials.

GEORGIA: See, this is the ---

JOHN: He had a good memory.

EDWARD: Yeah. Well this is 1931. He is answering questions to a lawyer. He says, "Why did you leave?"

"Robie had sold out to Mr. French. My father shipped the family below and stayed ---"

Okay --- where is it, where is it?

"Do you remember Peter French?"

This is your dad's.

"Yes sir."

Question, "Just tell what you remember about Peter French the first time."

Answer, David Crow, "When we was there at Diamond he gave me a horse and saddle, is how I remember him so well."

"About how old were you then?"

David Crow, "Oh, I could not have been 5 or 6 years old."

"Do you have any recollection of the Diamond Ranch?"

Blah, blah, blah.

"When did you next come back to the Blitzen Valley?"

"Oh, I come back in 1894, 1895. I don't remember, it was either 1894 or 1895, in March."

"That was when you returned to the P Ranch?"

Now we're getting into some interesting stuff.

"Yes sir."

"You had come back into this country you said about 1884, or 1885."

Your dad, "Yes sir."

"Where did you locate then?"

Your dad, --- see I got to go through these tonight.

Your dad, well --- question, "Where did you locate then?"

Answer, "I was working for Todhunter and Devine until they sold out."

That's 1885.

"How long did you work for them?"

"Four or five years."

"What were you doing?"

"Riding."

Question, "Riding cattle?"

"Yes sir."

"Then you went to the P Ranch about 1894?"

Your dad, "Yes sir."

"How long did you stay there then?"

"Stayed there a year and nine days."

Question, "Were you at the P Ranch when French was killed?"

Answer, "No. I was here at the Sod House when he was killed." Question, "Were you working for French?"

Answer, "Yes, sir."

And then it just ... Now when I first looked at this, it said, the lawyers --- where am I?

The lawyers, question, "Were you at the P Ranch when French was killed?"

David Crow, "No, I was here at the Sod House when he was killed." And then when I first looked at that I go, now is there somebody B.S.ing somebody here. Did he mean he was at the Sod House Ranch house, or did he mean he was at the Sod House, you know.

GEORGIA: Yeah, he was working there. This proves that.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: And the buckaroos stayed there that night before he got killed.

GEORGIA: Yeah, you see, this story that he had me write, and I had Vienna copy this for you.

EDWARD: So you, when I first glanced, then I go, damn David Crow wasn't there when he was killed, but he was. He meant the Sod House; the ranch is the whole thing.

GEORGIA: Well he was working for the Sod House area.

JOHN: He probably wasn't too anxious to give out much.

EDWARD: No. And that again, that's 1931.

GEORGIA: I don't know what caused him to, but many times I would have loved to have asked questions, but he wasn't the talkative kind, you know.

EDWARD: When did he tell you this Pete French shooting?

GEORGIA: I don't know, it was many, many years ago, out there; he was staying with us at the ranch.

EDWARD: Now wait, now when did he die? 1944. So it was before 1944. When were you guy's married?

GEORGIA: In '37.

EDWARD: So between that time.

GEORGIA: March '37.

EDWARD: Okay.

JOHN: He stayed with us sometimes.

EDWARD: All right.

GEORGIA: He stayed out there at the ranch with us occasionally. And that's the only thing that he ever wanted --- I don't know why he really wanted me to write that down. But he said, "I'll tell

you about the Pete French thing if you'll get a paper and pencil and write it down."

EDWARD: Good. You put that on there, Georgia.

GEORGIA: And I wrote ---

EDWARD: Yeah.

GEORGIA: This is the way David Crow told it to me, and I signed it for you.

EDWARD: Great, great. I'll call this the Crow private papers. Does that sound good?

JOHN: I don't think he spoofed much though.

EDWARD: No.

GEORGIA: Oh no, huh uh. Johnny's dad never spoofed, and John doesn't spoof.

EDWARD: Okay, the two important things are, number one --- Dad, Dad --- David --- I call these people Dad all the time. (Laughter) David Crow never mentioned, or either you don't recall, what kind of gun it was that killed?

GEORGIA: No, he never, he never said.

EDWARD: .45 Colt, .38 Smith & Wesson, I don't know.

GEORGIA: It's hard to say.

EDWARD: I don't know, I don't know. There is no coroner's inquest; I can't find the coroner's inquest. If anybody would find the coroner's inquest it would be me. And I've looked, and looked.

GEORGIA: Well you hunted up there where it should be, but isn't,

I guess.

EDWARD: All right. What happened to Burt French, do you know?

JOHN: No, I don't.

EDWARD: Never heard?

JOHN: Probably heard, but I don't remember.

EDWARD: Okay. You don't know what happened to Ed Oliver. Whether he was ---

JOHN: I don't know what happened to Ed Oliver.

EDWARD: Okay, I was going to tell you what the Simmons family felt happened. They say he came back to Burns, after he got rid of the common whore girl. Came back to Burns, was in a saloon, went out to take a wee wee in the outhouse, and some French boys grabbed him and cut his throat. Why?

GEORGIA: I don't know. But you know, somewhere along the line I've heard that story.

EDWARD: Yeah. Now I think that all this funny stories came out of that 1951 book on Pete French. The straw story did. She didn't verify anything, it was fiction. Now then Giles French wrote, "Peter French Cattle King," that was fairly accurate, that other book. And that was fairly accurate. But the first book was a lot of B.S. So I don't know.

GEORGIA: I think what Giles French wrote is pretty true.

EDWARD: Yeah. And I'm going to go through his papers in Portland and see what I can find.

GEORGIA: We --- he was here one time, oh many years ago.

EDWARD: Yeah, I imagine, yeah.

GEORGIA: He was up here at the P Ranch; they had a celebration up there. And he was one of the speakers, and he was real pleasant to listen to.

EDWARD: Yeah, I've given my share of speeches already.

GEORGIA: It's a long time ago, I don't remember.

EDWARD: Yeah, I don't remember when he died. His wife is still alive, she is 94. Is 92 the magic --- 92 and 94, I know a lot of people that age.

The other thing was, John and Georgia, was pictures of David Crow. Pictures of Sod House, Buena Vista, any of the trial men, Chico, any of that. Any ---

JOHN: Old Tebo, he was, he is the one that filed on that place.

EDWARD: Yeah, the P Ranch, right.

JOHN: P Ranch. He is the one that planted them trees.

EDWARD: I got --- you know what? You know, everybody says that Tebo came to Oregon with Pete French in 1872. He didn't.

JOHN: He didn't?

EDWARD: No. He says in these trials, he didn't come until he was 14 in 1882.

JOHN: I knew old Tebo well. In fact I was a pallbearer for him.

EDWARD: Yeah, he died in 1937, I think. I think it was 1937.

JOHN: Gee, I ...

EDWARD: Did he ever tell you anything about the death of Pete French, Tebo?

JOHN: He didn't tell me about ---

GEORGIA: He was gone before I ever came here.

JOHN: He never told me anything.

GEORGIA: See that was all before ---

JOHN: He'd tell you lies.

EDWARD: Oh, he would?

GEORGIA: The biggest part of this all happened long before, see I only came here in '36.

EDWARD: Yeah, '36, right.

GEORGIA: And all this was under the mat by the time I came.

EDWARD: Yeah. Well that would have been almost 40 years, that had passed. Boy, that's hard to ---

JOHN: But old Tebo ---

GEORGIA: Well we've been together 57, and it doesn't seem that long.

EDWARD: Living in that shack he gave you? (Laughter)

GEORGIA: We spent one winter there, and we had a high old time there, I'll tell you.

JOHN: We only had one little room there, you know, so I had a bedstead in there and I took it outside, and I got some old lumber and I put her, made us a cellar to put her groceries in underneath the bed.

GEORGIA: We had to get in the chair to go to ---

JOHN: We had to get in the chair to go to bed. (Laughter)

GEORGIA: We had to climb ---

JOHN: R. G. Johnson, he was a running the outfit, he was the big shot, and he wouldn't even stop to see Platt. I never visited much with Platt. He had a straw boss there, and he was a good boy. But him and I got along fine, trying to break a mare to ride.

GEORGIA: Did you want pictures of Johnny's father and mother, is that what you want?

EDWARD: Oh, that's the only one, oh that's the one that is in the book. The mother --- oh David is the one I'm really --- now she died young, right?

GEORGIA: Yes.

JOHN: Yeah, I don't think she was very old when she died, and I don't remember.

EDWARD: That's in Rankin's book, I know that.

GEORGIA: Well I think you showed me two little pictures.

EDWARD: Well that one I don't have.

JOHN: We loaned Rankin a lot of pictures, Georgia and I.

GEORGIA: But these must have been taken just before they were married, because it is 1899. 1899 is on ---

EDWARD: Do you remember Fay Comegys?

JOHN: Oh god yes.

EDWARD: Can I use that one? Now I'm going to show you, I'm not saying nothing.

GEORGIA: You can let him have that one to copy?

JOHN: Sure.

GEORGIA: Would you? Okay.

EDWARD: Okay. Who is the guy on the right, do you know?

JOHN: He is the bartender.

EDWARD: Right. What's his name, do we know? I'll tell you where it is, it's at Diamond.

JOHN: Oh, at Diamond. Georgia and I was to Diamond day before yesterday, I bought a saddle there.

EDWARD: They got any branding irons? I collect branding irons.

JOHN: No, I don't.

EDWARD: Who is that? That's Fay Comegys.

JOHN: That's old Fay.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: Fay was a big man in later years.

EDWARD: Oh yeah.

JOHN: He had a --- Georgia and I run the stage ---

EDWARD: That's Sidney Comegys, the bartender at the Diamond ---

JOHN: Is who?

GEORGIA: Sid.

EDWARD: Sid.

JOHN: Oh, Sid Comegys.

EDWARD: Comegys, yeah.

JOHN: Yeah, he was at Diamond a long time.

EDWARD: Yeah. This is Fay Comegys. You believe this, this picture was taken the day Pete French was killed.

JOHN: Oh, it was?

EDWARD: It is his wedding picture, and the next day he got married in Burns. This was taken in Burns. Geeze.

JOHN: I knew ---

EDWARD: That's Alva Springer.

JOHN: Yeah. I threshed one day, and he kept us out in the field until after dark. He wanted to finish. He didn't want to have to start up everything the next day. And I forget, another fellow and I we just walked off on him. We'll be back to help you in the morning. Damn, we're not going to work all night.

EDWARD: ... (Laughter) Yeah, we're out of here. I think I might make my deadline here. I think that's it for now.

Now, the other thing, John. If I can get permission, and my god if I don't get permission from the Malheur Game Refuge I'm going to be shooting somebody. If I can get permission to go down there, would you go with me, John Scharff, probably Bill Swisher, and probably Harold Gibson, to try to find the exact spot where Pete French was killed? Would you go down there?

JOHN: Why sure. I've taken other people down there.

EDWARD: We got to find that and put a post in the ground, or something, before all you guys are gone. All we got to go by is those pictures your brother took, you know, that's it.

JOHN: Yeah Rankin, I took him out there. You remember?

GEORGIA: Yeah, I know.

JOHN: We spent the day out there. I took pictures of the buttes and ---

GEORGIA: Have you got those pictures?

EDWARD: Yeah, I've got those.

JOHN: That's where you got the pictures.

EDWARD: Yeah, right.

GEORGIA: I found ours, and so I ---

EDWARD: I don't have the originals.

GEORGIA: Well ---

EDWARD: You have the originals?

GEORGIA: Well no, I don't suppose so. Because they're pictures that Rankin sent us.

EDWARD: What did I do with that?

JOHN: I was never interested in them, but Rankin used to come here and stayed awhile and ...

EDWARD: Well he didn't live around here, did he?

JOHN: Oh he used to, yeah.

EDWARD: But he lived, didn't he live somewhere else?

JOHN: He lived at The Narrows for years. And him and his wife had the hotel and the store both.

EDWARD: At The Narrows?

JOHN: At The Narrows, yeah. And one summer all we did was run horses. He was buying horses for a little, a horse buyer, and I can't remember names worth a damn anymore.

EDWARD: Well you don't have to, except if you start forgetting ---

JOHN: And ---

GEORGIA: See this is ---

EDWARD: Oh, that's the original. Now could --- that's what we need to take when we go down there John.

JOHN: Is that my dad?

GEORGIA: No, no, these are those pictures that Rankin sent you of the place where he thought that they got, found him.

EDWARD: Rankin and John Crow.

JOHN: What?

GEORGIA: No, I don't think it says John Crow.

EDWARD: Yeah.

JOHN: It does, don't it?

EDWARD: Yeah.

GEORGIA: I didn't pay any attention, but maybe ---

EDWARD: Who is that? That's not you, is it John?

JOHN: Yeah, it might be.

EDWARD: You were a tub. (Laughter)

GEORGIA: No, he had a big coat on there.

EDWARD: Oh sure, Georgia.

GEORGIA: That's ---

EDWARD: I'm going to start wearing my big coat.

GEORGIA: And then he's got his fists in his pockets to shove it out.

EDWARD: Your wife is helping you out here.

JOHN: That's when I was getting Rankin up there.

GEORGIA: He is getting skinny now, but he used to be heavier.

EDWARD: Now there is two ponds. There is a gate. See I can't

make that out in those pictures.

GEORGIA: Oh, you can't?

EDWARD: No. There is a gate right there. Coyote Butte, that's still there, that road right there.

JOHN: Yeah.

EDWARD: God, I couldn't have been that far --- I could find it if I had these pictures with me, I'll guarantee you. That pond thing is probably still there, that dried up.

JOHN: Oh yeah.

GEORGIA: There is marshes out there and all around.

EDWARD: Now wait a minute.

GEORGIA: You guys can take those pictures with you. I'll keep it, and ... where they are.

EDWARD: Rankin and --- oh, now wait a minute. Rankin Crow and Bud Wilkes, and Bud took all these pictures.

JOHN: Bob what?

GEORGIA: Bud Wilkes.

EDWARD: Bud Wilkes.

GEORGIA: He was the fellow that came up here with Rankin to go out there and look around and take those pictures that day that you guys went out there.

EDWARD: Boy, I'll tell you ---

GEORGIA: That's so long ago I don't remember who was around it. It was nobody that I knew.

EDWARD: I was trying to remember when this was.

JOHN: I remember taking him out, but I have no idea ---

GEORGIA: I can't even read the date on the ---

JOHN: --- Coyote Butte then.

EDWARD: And ... hills.

JOHN: There used to be a road that goes to Rock Ford Lane.

GEORGIA: I thought maybe I could read the postmark on this and get an idea, but ---

EDWARD: West side of Coyote Buttes?

JOHN: Yeah, just ---

EDWARD: Still there.

JOHN: --- come down off over the hill.

EDWARD: Still here. Oops. Still there, I think.

JOHN: Yeah. Lester Cawlfieid and I both had saddle horses, you know, we was going to school at The Narrows. Rankin and Gladys hadn't been married only a little while, and they was Curtis --- ... was a running a ranch up at Rock Ford Lane there, and they had a ranch on the Rock Ford Lane. Rankin and Gladys went to work for him. He got married when he was 17, Rankin did.

EDWARD: Wow, that's young.

JOHN: That's Sandy Morris and another fellow in jail up there. I've never been in jail, but I come up with them to the wedding. Sandy Morris used to ---

EDWARD: Don't even --- you've never been in jail, John?

JOHN: Huh?

EDWARD: You've never been in jail?

GEORGIA: Only to go in and see somebody.

JOHN: That's the first time I was ever in jail.

EDWARD: Oh, okay.

JOHN: I had to hide out of here, but I kept four other people out. And the sheriff --- I knew the sheriff, old Friday.

EDWARD: I love all that stuff.

JOHN: You've heard of Friday?

EDWARD: Oh yes.

JOHN: Well ... already in years.

EDWARD: In Lake County, was Friday, in the '30's.

GEORGIA: Uh huh.

JOHN: They had a store; Van Cuen (sp.?) and Friday had a store at Plush.

EDWARD: That's right.

JOHN: And my dad was the buckaroo boss.

EDWARD: So did W. Z. Moss.

JOHN: And old Friday and Van Cuen --- Rankin and I was just kids, and we was just over the hill, at Honey Creek at the 7T Ranch a lot. Then we was at the Art Ranch a lot. And when we was there we'd go down to the store and visit Van Cuen and old Friday. When I was working on the dairy at Cedarville, and I run into a friend of mine, he was working on, I was working for Lewis Moshaw's (sp.?) brother. He had a dairy ranch, and I was milking cows.

EDWARD: You were milking cows?

GEORGIA: Yeah, when you run to hide out, why you do all sorts of

things, see.

EDWARD: Oh. ... to be a sissy milking cows.

JOHN: In 1923 I worked on a dairy ranch, Patterson Dairy. And I had a cousin there, Lee Stewart. And he was married, they had a baby, and I run onto him. My dad and I had been over at Klamath Falls. Worked on the road between Klamath Falls and ... from the 1st of April till the 1st of July. And worked horses, you know.

EDWARD: Yeah, fresnos?

JOHN: I bought a 1923 Overland.

EDWARD: Good car.

JOHN: Touring car.

GEORGIA: This is why I decided to run cattle.

JOHN: We wintered on the ...

GEORGIA: That was taken in Seymour, Connecticut when I was 3. My first horse. I just run onto that.

EDWARD: That thing looks fake. Did you see the hair? It looks like they combed the hair.

GEORGIA: Well I don't know.

EDWARD: That's a little Shetland.

GEORGIA: Uh huh.

EDWARD: Yeah, okay.

GEORGIA: I was only 3.

EDWARD: Oh boy, do you remember her?

JOHN: I'm not that young. (Laughter)

GEORGIA: He didn't know I existed. I was in Seymour, Connecticut

at that time.

EDWARD: Seymour, Connecticut. Glad you got out of there, huh?

GEORGIA: Well I don't know. Because I didn't stay long enough to know what it was like.

JOHN: I've knew her for about 57 years, or a little better.

GEORGIA: Oh, that's part of his bridle.

EDWARD: Oh, okay. I was wondering. It looks like it is combed or ---

GEORGIA: No, it is tassels on the ...

EDWARD: There you go. Van Houston has been married --- you know he is 92. Oh my god, everybody is 92. Anyway, he has been married 60 some years. So last time I was over there, we was just B.S.ing at the table. I'm going to divorce that woman.
(Laughter)

JOHN: That what he said?

EDWARD: Yeah. (Laughter) He had been married 67 years.

JOHN: You know Birdie and Shelby had been married, I believe, 62 years.

EDWARD: She just up and died. It wasn't that long ago, four years ago.

JOHN: Last spring, a year ago.

GEORGIA: No, it's more than a year, dear. It's two, maybe three years already.

EDWARD: Yeah, it's been --- because I interviewed Shelby in '91 or '92, and she had passed away just a, shortly before that. I

don't know whether I do get copies of those.

JOHN: Well we used to be ---

GEORGIA: Well if you don't want copies of them ---

EDWARD: Yeah, maybe I will. Yeah, maybe I will, Georgia.

GEORGIA: Well it just depends. You can take them out there with you just this way.

EDWARD: Well I get discounts in Eugene, you see. See they give me a big discount.

GEORGIA: Well why don't put all of ---

EDWARD: Just put them all in.

GEORGIA: I think they'll all fit. And I've got my name and address on the back of those.

EDWARD: 86 South Fir, right?

GEORGIA: Yeah, it is written on the back of, and here.

EDWARD: Okay. I got to get that anyway. 97720?

GEORGIA: Yes. And if you want to be real accurate, put avenue there, ave. I thought we lived on a street.

EDWARD: Harold Gibson told me where you guys live. Anyway, is it 4 o'clock yet?

GEORGIA: Straight up.

JOHN: Just 4 o'clock.

EDWARD: Yeah, I got to get my butt in gear. I've got to give a speech to a bunch of writers, I guess, Thursday. And I'm seeing John Scharff probably Thursday morning. And I'm going to try to get him and you, we'll go back out there and find this place. If

I can get that --- and then Forrest Cameron, do you know him, John?

JOHN: I don't have ---

GEORGIA: No. Forrest --- the man, Forrest Cameron.

EDWARD: Malheur Game Refuge.

GEORGIA: Out at the Game Refuge, the fellow that runs the Refuge at the present time, Forrest Cameron.

EDWARD: Do you know him?

JOHN: I don't know whether I do or not. I don't fool around that refuge much.

EDWARD: I don't blame you there.

GEORGIA: He might be one that I call the nut, that I --- when the fire broke out there. I told a bunch of those guys to get back in the office and leave me alone.

JOHN: Yeah, burned the fence down and Fred's cattle come ---

GEORGIA: And they were all on the lawn, and they asked me, and they asked me what I was doing. And I said, "I'm taking Fred's cattle home." And they wanted to know why. And I said, "Well you guys burned down all the fence, that's why they are here."

EDWARD: What is wrong with those people?

GEORGIA: And I told them to get back in the office out of sight, and leave me alone. That I knew --- the cattle knew ---

(END OF TAPE)

b1