

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #407 - Side A

Subject: George Clark

Date: March 17, 1987

Place: Drewsey Grange Hall - Drewsey, Oregon

Interviewer: Russ Clark

(Note: A lot of background noise in the Hall, so can't always hear what is being said.)

GEORGE CLARK: ... don't know whether it was the Muller's or the Davis'. Both came around 1883 I believe, or 1883.

RUSS CLARK: Okay. Muller's came from Germany, didn't they?

GEORGE: Switzerland.

RUSS: Switzerland, okay. Where did Davis' come from?

GEORGE: Lakeview.

RUSS: Lakeview. Okay. It says, when did your family first come to the area --- well 1883 probably?

GEORGE: I think about 1883.

RUSS: Yeah. It says, why did they come here?

GEORGE: That was when this part of the country, out of the reservation, was opened for homesteading.

RUSS: Okay. Where did they settle at?

GEORGE: Muller's up on the Griffin Creek. Davis' up around Duck Creek.

RUSS: Where is Duck Creek at?

GEORGE: It's Mike Johnson's place.

RUSS: Oh, oh yeah, I remember now. Starts where we go elk hunting isn't it?

GEORGE: Edge up there.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: I think Johnny Davis' dad homesteaded there on Duck Creek. Jess Davis on the Wolf Creek. Gearharts on up there, I'm not sure just where they called their ...

RUSS: Muller's moved from around three different places around here, didn't they? Settled three different plots?

GEORGE: August Muller --- there where the ... Rudolph was the one that had your lower field. And I think ... where Turen Duntin lives now.

RUSS: Oh. Isn't he the one that built the Muller ditch?

GEORGE: Uh huh.

RUSS: Did the whole families come with them when they come over, or did they just come by their selves?

GEORGE: They were single. My granddad, August Muller, worked on a railroad around Baker someplace until they, it was open for homesteading here. Then he came and took a homestead the next year or so, ... Grandma Muller came.

RUSS: Yeah. Did they ever leave this area and come back, or did they all stay here the whole time?

GEORGE: Glen Davis left here awhile and then came back here. He died here.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: Lived over at Sumpter for a while, had a ranch over at Sumpter for a while. Did some mining over in there.

RUSS: Yeah. Do you know when they were born, or where?

GEORGE: Grandma Clark Davis, her maiden name ... 1858 I think.

RUSS: Where did they go to school at?

GEORGE: I'm not sure. The Muller side of the family, what schooling they got, would have been in Switzerland.

RUSS: Oh yeah. Did their kids, where did their kids go at? Did they go ---

GEORGE: I think the first school they had was right up the draw, back where you live.

RUSS: Yeah. Where that old bedspring is up there.

GEORGE: And the ... was up there in the flat, up there, lower end of the Robbins Ranch at one time. Then moved on up about a half a mile above where the school is now.

RUSS: How many children, how many kids did the Muller's have?

GEORGE: Seven, I think.

RUSS: Okay. Were they all born here, or --- They didn't all live, did they?

GEORGE: No. No, there were only four that reached adulthood.

RUSS: One went till he was 21, or something didn't he, the one that got kicked?

GEORGE: Yes. I think three died as children.

RUSS: They're all buried in the Muller Cemetery up there, aren't they?

GEORGE: No. The children?

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: No. ... buried in Burns.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: And my mother was buried in Drewsey. Uncle August was buried in the Muller Cemetery, and Uncle Rudolph, Grandmother Muller. Ed Muller is buried in Portland, I think.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: He moved to Portland before I can remember. He was back here for a visit.

RUSS: Yeah. Let's see, it says do you know anything about the mills, and the businesses around here?

GEORGE: There were several mills, sawmills. John Ott had a mill in about three different places. One over on Alder Springs, one at what they call Millvale, one by the, the last place was up by Van Gulch.

RUSS: They floated logs down the river from, to Milldale, didn't they?

GEORGE: That's where they took them, yeah.

RUSS: Was there a lot of businesses in Drewsey or ...

GEORGE: Well there was at one time, I think, two stores, two hotels, about three saloons, a couple blacksmith shops, a newspaper publishing ---

RUSS: Aunt Norma has some newspapers.

GEORGE: ...

RUSS: Aunt Norma and Jim Sitz, I think, have newspapers.

GEORGE: They got some of the papers have they?

RUSS: Jim Sitz has, I think, most of them.

GEORGE: Has he?

RUSS: There is some in the Museum too.

GEORGE: *Drewsey News*?

RUSS: Yeah. It was called the, one was called the *Pioneer Sun*, or something like that.

GEORGE: Oh.

RUSS: And then another one was called the Drewsey something.

GEORGE: Oh.

RUSS: Do you remember quite a bit about the town?

GEORGE: No, it wasn't a lot bigger when I was little than it is now. Two hotels, one burned down, and the other one was torn down. Tavern burned down.

RUSS: Store burned down once before it did last time, didn't it?

GEORGE: Yes. And then two blacksmith shops burned down.

RUSS: Who is that? You know that picture of that blacksmith shop on the calendar, whose is that?

GEORGE: Charlie Miler's, Chas' father.

RUSS: Oh. It says, do you know any of the following events reminded you of any stories or things with --- these are just a list of stories. Anything about the fairs?

GEORGE: ...

RUSS: And it says thieves?

GEORGE: Thieves? I'll invoke the 5th. (Laughter)

RUSS: And fires?

GEORGE: Several fires since I can remember.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: The store burned twice. I remember when one of the blacksmith shops burned. Bartlett Hotel, or the Capps Hotel burned while I was in the service in 1943, I think, or '43 I guess it was.

RUSS: And it says anything about cattle or horse drives?

GEORGE: No, I've never ---

RUSS: The Company probably sold before you remember, or do you remember the Company?

GEORGE: Oh, early days.

RUSS: So it wasn't ---

GEORGE: I wasn't very old when the Company begin to selling off their property.

RUSS: Was it in the '30's?

GEORGE: Yeah, early '30's, late '20's and early '30's.

RUSS: Yeah. How they used to hay.

GEORGE: Oh, with horses?

RUSS: Yeah. Like that old mowing machine that's up at Aunt Janie's.

GEORGE: Horse mower, horse rakes, horse bucks. Most of it was stacked with a slide, some with derricks.

RUSS: There was never a circus in Drewsey was there?

GEORGE: Yes. I remember a circus when I was about in my first year of school, when the circus, I remember being here. These traveling shows come through, put on a ... in the hall once in awhile ... One circus is all I remember.

RUSS: There was a jail in Drewsey, wasn't there?

GEORGE: ...

RUSS: Was there any jailbreaks?

GEORGE: ...

RUSS: It says fights over water or schools.

GEORGE: Well I think there have been a few.

RUSS: Yeah, I remember fights over the water. (Laughter) Indians, remember anything about Indians?

GEORGE: Well the Indians used to camp here when I was a kid. Did several years ... several times every year. He worked for my dad some. Camped over where you live.

RUSS: Yeah. Right up the draw there I found a tomahawk about that long. Mom lost it somewhere cleaning my closet, threw it away or something. It was real nice, made out of that colored rock from the draw, about that long.

GEORGE: Huh. Every time we'd plow this field over here beside the house, usually there would be a lot of arrowheads ...

RUSS: Yeah we plowed that field over around the point and we found a lot of stuff ... I found a scraper the other day about that long.

GEORGE: Did you? They evidently camped here quite a lot.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: Before ---

RUSS: By the school, we found a lot of stuff too, like that arrowhead I showed you yesterday.

GEORGE: Uh huh.

RUSS: House building; you know anything about house building, building houses?

GEORGE: ... ranch houses you mean?

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: Most of them were built before I can remember. My folks built this house over here when ---

RUSS: Harry has it here in this thing. He has it here in this thing when it was built.

GEORGE: It was here before I was ...

RUSS: '17 or something like that.

GEORGE: Something like that, yeah.

RUSS: It says swimming or washing clothes at the hot springs.

GEORGE: Yeah, there used to be a bathhouse and washhouse there. All the neighbors would come and wash their clothes about once a week.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: Didn't have to heat the water.

RUSS: You got the bathtub out of the river, didn't you?

GEORGE: Yeah it, the bank caved off and it fell off in the river.

RUSS: You know anything about midwives?

GEORGE: Who?

RUSS: Midwives?

GEORGE: I guess you would call my mother a midwife; she delivered a lot of babies

around here. Sunshine Dunten did too.

RUSS: Was there any doctors in Drewsey?

GEORGE: Not since I can remember. There were earlier. None since I can remember though.

RUSS: Remember any of the dances?

GEORGE: Ever since I can remember there have been dances.

RUSS: Yeah. I think that's about all. I had another sheet some-where, but I don't know where it went now. Oh here it is.

GEORGE: Haven't I told you enough lies already?

RUSS: I guess. You know anything about the schools?

GEORGE: The schools?

RUSS: Know when any of them were built or anything?

GEORGE: No, the school at Drewsey ... early '50's.

RUSS: Yeah. They moved the Wolf Creek School, didn't they?

GEORGE: Yes.

RUSS: Isn't that the one we go to school in?

GEORGE: Yeah ... in 1959 I think, or '60.

RUSS: Yeah, that step says something like that. But you see ... put the steps in, it says '50 something on it.

GEORGE: '59 I believe.

RUSS: You know anything about the stage stops?

GEORGE: Only what I've been told. For a while Uncle Jess Davis drove the stage from Drewsey to Van and back, with a team.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: I think he was about the last one that drove with a team.



RUSS: It said that Tom Cleveland, said he drove it with a team for a while. It says ---

GEORGE: Well maybe after ---

RUSS: Right before Lloyd took over.

GEORGE: Yeah.

RUSS: Says that he drove it for a team right up till he got sick ...

GEORGE: I think he did.

RUSS: He had a big wagon and a team of horses.

GEORGE: And Leo McKinnon ... drove it with a team for a while.

RUSS: Yeah. Remember anything about Sitz's hot springs?

GEORGE: I remember going and swimming out there when I was about the second grade.

RUSS: I was reading in that interview of Georgia Smith's, or Sitz I mean, she was saying about, talking about that, where they had to put the water in and let it cool for almost a week before they could swim in it because --- said it was, something went wrong with it if you didn't let it cool.

GEORGE: Probably the only time I remember going swimming out there, Percy Davis and my dad and I went out there once. Pretty small kid.

RUSS: Huh.

GEORGE: I don't think I was even in school yet.

RUSS: Your Uncle Harry is, log, when he was younger, or did he do a lot of things?

GEORGE: He did the logging before I was born.

RUSS: Oh. Can't think of anything else.

GEORGE: Good, I can't think of any answers anyway.

RUSS: Oh, this --- who owned your place before you got it? Or who had it first?

GEORGE: Muller's.

RUSS: Muller's.

GEORGE: Muller's. My mother bought it from her folks.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: They in turn got it from people by the name of Ward something.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: I don't know what their first name was. I know they always referred to this as the Ward place, the ... did.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: Where we live now ... took that up, I think.

RUSS: Yeah. But what's --- you know that cabin floor or whatever above your house, them boards and stuff right above your house up there, that cabin floor or whatever it is up there?

GEORGE: Oh, up above the road?

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: That was Jack Drewitt's homestead.

RUSS: Oh. He's the one that homesteaded after the deal where he couldn't get mineral rights or something, wasn't it?

GEORGE: ... I think he homesteaded that about the last year ... before the Homestead Act was repealed.

RUSS: Yeah. I guess that will be enough.

... (Pause in tape)

GEORGE: George's father's I think. Lester Riley and George Riley were brothers. George is Howard Riley's father.

RUSS: Okay.

GEORGE: George is on the place that ... has now.

RUSS: Do Riley's have to call it Riley place?

GEORGE: Les Riley ... across the ditch from the community hall then.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: I don't know who Joe Robertson was. John Robertson was a, the John Robertson I'm thinking of lived at Beulah when I knew him.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: He had that place right below the dam there at Beulah.

RUSS: Oh, yeah.

GEORGE: William Robertson is Bill's father. Abner Robbins owned this Robbins Ranch up here that the Pine Creek Ranch has now.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: I don't know who the Roberts brothers were. Gabe Rush was an old prospector, woodsman.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: I don't know too much about Ira Ruble, I remember him. I think he had a homestead down there across the river from Pat O'Toole's. Anyway they called that the Ruble hill.

RUSS: Yeah.

GEORGE: J. L. Sitz was Jim's father, Jim and Glenn's father. William South, there were two William South's, young Bill and old Bill.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: Ruth Riley and Gladys Williams' father and brother. Jarvis Smith used to have a saloon in Drewsey. Lem Stallard, I think that should be Len, I'm not sure, L E N. I didn't know him, but he was Chet Stallard and Ed Stallards father.

RUSS: Oh. He must be ---

GEORGE: That place out there on Otis that Jim Sitz has now.

RUSS: Oh. Must have been pretty old then by the time he came here, wasn't he?

GEORGE: I think so. Joe Sturtevant, I don't know anything about him. I've heard the name. And Cisero Stewart, I don't know who that was, or Dave Stewart. How far do you have to go?

RUSS: Just to the next one and that's all.

GEORGE: Bill Ward.

RUSS: And that Howard Waylen.

GEORGE: Howard Waylen. I'm not sure, but I think he is the one we called Dad Waylen.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: And he had a homestead, I think Conly Marshall owns it now.

RUSS: Oh.

GEORGE: Right up, upon the hill above where the trees are along the road. And there is, this side of the ...

RUSS: Oh, yeah.

GEORGE: That's all you'll have to do?

RUSS: Yeah, that's all I'll have to do.

(END OF TAPE)

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