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HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #491

Subject: Marvin Jess

Place: Marvin and Dovie Jess home, 47439 Lavabed Road, Diamond, OR 97722

Date: March 16, 2014

Interviewer: John and Laurie O'Connor

Release Form:

LAURIE O'CONNOR: This is Laurie O'Connor, and I am here in the Diamond Valley, at the home of Marvin and Dovie Jess. Today is Sunday, March 16, 2014, and John O'Connor and Marvin will be visiting and sharing some of the history of this area.

JOHN O'CONNOR: Okay. So, Marv, tell me where you were born.

MARVIN JESS: Well, I was born in Winchester, Idaho, on June the second of 1928. Winchester is approximately thirty-eight miles east of Lewiston, up on top of Camas Prairie.

JOHN: Yeah, I've been there. It's rolling hills. And where did you live? Where did you grow up? Where did you go to school?

MARVIN: Well I went to school and we moved over to Boles, Idaho in 1931. I went to school there at what they called Yellow Pine School, for approximately five years, in District #7. And then we went to Spring Camp. I can't remember the district number. I went to sixth and seventh grade there. And in 1942 we moved to Riggins, Idaho. I finished eighth grade there in 1942-43. And that spring of '44, my folks moved down here. My dad, stepdad, was a brand inspector for the state of Idaho, in the Union stockyards in Spokane. They moved down here in June of '44, and been here ever since.

JOHN: What was it like growing up there, because where you lived there was no road?

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MARVIN: Well, the road was there, such as it was.

JOHN: What were the winters like?

MARVIN: Well, it was pretty severe, most of the time. It would average about three and a half to four feet of snow.

JOHN: What elevation was it?

MARVIN: I would imagine about the same elevation as Seneca. I can remember the fences would be under the snow. Take your horse on the crust and ride over the fence line.

JOHN: What did your folks do? Did they ranch there?

MARVIN: My dad, when they first moved there, went to work for Mike [Sloveajvic], lambing. Later on his job was shearing sheep. Dad was the wool stomper. In the winter time, I guess, he probably went down to feed sheep. I don't know. But he was gone most of the time. And then, when they started WPA, he was a cook on the road crew down there.

JOHN: So, what were your chores when you were a kid growing up down there? Did you have to milk a cow and everything?

MARVIN: Yeah, we had to milk a cow. When I was smaller, we mostly had to cut wood for the kitchen, for the cook stove, and then the heating stove. 'Course, that was about the time that I started grade school. In fact, I still have got a scar on my index finger of my left hand from the ax.

JOHN: Yeah. Yeah, I've axed myself! *[laughing]* God, it's steep country over there, from what I know.

MARVIN: Yeah, it's pretty dad gum steep. I know, my mother married my stepdad in July of '37, I guess it was, and they moved to Divide Creek, which is a little creek that divides the Snake and the Salmon. The mouth of Divide Creek was about three miles [above] the mouth of the Salmon River. And I remember going with Dad in the spring of the year, and we had a cow down. He said she slipped

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or slid. Well, she did. She went for about a half a mile! She was alright until she hit a pile of brush, and then it turned her kettle. And then they walk around that hillside in the spring, when it was thawing, and it was slicker than the dickens.

JOHN: Oh God, yeah. They start out on the north side, where there's lots of cold, crusty snow, and then they start coming around and they hit the south side--

MARVIN: A little bit of sun, phewwww, down they go.

JOHN: Yeah they figure, those guys that ranch over there, they figure a percentage that they will lose just from falling off of those hills.

MARVIN: Yeah, it would run about five cows per year. Dad run about three hundred, three hundred fifty, head of cattle. And we fed some of the hay to the stock, and then the yearlings and stuff would go down on the Snake River, just below the mouth of the Imnaha [*later correction :Salmon*], on the Idaho side.

JOHN: God, there's lots of history there, about when the Nez Perce war was going on, how those Indians would cross that river several times.

MARVIN: Yeah, they crossed, I guess, right there at White Bird, and then around Billy Creek, they went across Joseph Plains, what they called Joseph Plains, hit the Salmon again about the mouth of Billy Creek.

JOHN: Yeah, it's a nice mild climate down on the Snake River, in the winter. And a hot son-of-a-gun in the summer.

MARVIN: Yeah, a little bit hot down there. And lots of rattlesnakes.

JOHN: Yeah, that's what I hear, lots of snakes. Blackberry brush, was that in the bottoms there, when you were there?

MARVIN: No, mostly thornbrush. What they called Blackhaw, thorns about that long. All the creeks

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had thornbrush. You didn't ride through them with your chink chaps!

JOHN: You had to have armor. I know a guy that had a thorn get in his leg, into his knee, and he ended up with a stiff knee.

MARVIN: Well, it's like puttin' a nail in ya'.

JOHN: So then, where did you move, what year did you move from Idaho to here?

MARVIN: Spring of '44. Yeah, I moved here from Spokane. Dad was a brand inspector in Spokane in '43, '42 and '43, for about eight months up there at Spokane. And then we moved down here in June of '44.

LO: And what did he do here? What was his occupation?

MARVIN: Well, we moved over here, where Bill Otley is now, and Dad had, he bought the place, and he had a permit for around three hundred head.

JOHN: How old were you then?

MARVIN: I was sixteen.

JOHN: And then what did you do? Did you work?

MARVIN: Well, I worked in the hay fields in the summertime, for different folks. And then we went to school in Crane, in '44, '45, '46, and '47. And then I worked around the area here, for neighbor ranches. And then, ah, in the spring of '48, Marselle Leake asked me if I wanted a job on the Refuge, for six months. So, I went down there and went to work for, I think it was eighty cents an hour. I run a Cat, plowing the Grain Camp, and Center Grain Camp, and West Grain Camp, with a little 22-Cat and a two-bottom plow.

JOHN: A two-bottom plow? That took a long time!

MARVIN: Well, there were three of us. Two of them little D-22 Cats, and then I think it was a 45-Cat, gasoline job, with a five-bottom plow. And man, he could scoot around. And then the

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summertime, after we got it plowed, and seeded, and the grain was up, then I got the job of irrigating it.

JOHN: And what year was that?

MARVIN: Ah, about '46, '47, somewhere around there. I think I was sixteen, or seventeen, eighteen years old then. Yeah, eighteen.

JOHN: So, that's about the time Scharff was putting in a lot of dams, improving the Refuge?

MARVIN: Yeah, he uh, he believed in farming, raising grain where we could, and then taking the hay off. I know after the grain came off, after the thrashing, the sky was black down here, with ducks and geese.

JOHN: Yeah, they went from just primitive wooden dams, with the CCC's they were--

MARVIN: Yeah, well, most the dams were put in, I think the Grain Camp dam went in in 1932. I don't know when they put the Page dam in. Somewhere in that area.

JOHN: So, what was it like before they put the dams in, managing the water?

MARVIN: Well, as near as I can remember, from what they told me, there's a dam there above the Grain Camp dam, there is a piling structure, and I suppose they had to manually put the boards down. I don't know. But, the road crossed right there, just above Grain Camp, too. When we worked on that dam in '62, put them gates in, you could still see some of that piling above the dam itself. That was the old original dam and the bridge structure, probably.

JOHN: So, who had done that work?

MARVIN: Well, the Refuge. You mean the dam, original? I think it was a contract, but I don't know who was the contractor. Stub Currey's wife, she cooked there in '32, Reta, and her dad was a blacksmith, for making the head gates.

JOHN: I'll be darned. Yeah, Stub was still alive when I first come here, in '89. I just met him, and he

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said he had worked there. He was glad that he was retired.

MARVIN: Yeah, he retired in '74.

JOHN: Well, him and John must have retired together then?

MARVIN: No, John retired in '72. And Stub lasted a couple of years, he could see the writing on the wall, and it didn't set well. Of course, he had been superintendent of the Alvord and the White Horse ranches, and he knew what was a comin'.

JOHN: So was Judd Wise working when you were working there?

MARVIN: No, Judd was before I went to work there. He was at the Double O. See, he was there after Dan Willy took over. I think Dan Willy was the first man at the Double O, first refuge manager, or station manager, whatever they call them. Then Judd took over, and after Judd retired, Len Howard I think was, and then he went from here to Ruby Lakes, as a manager, or superintendent.

JOHN: You knew old Judd, though?

MARVIN: Oh yeah, I worked for Walt Cooley in '60, well Judd was over there, a neighbor. Well, I got a job mowin' and what I mowed the day before, I'd go to work the next morning and ol' Judd would already have it bucked up and piled. And I said, "Why don't you wait until that hay dries?" And he told me why he got up so early! He was probably eighty-five, eighty-seven years old then. He had to get up pretty early. *[laughing]*

JOHN: Who outlasted who, Judy or Judd?

MARVIN: I think Judd outlasted Judy by, I don't know, two or three years. See, she was an aunt of Stub's mother and her, uh, I guess sisters. And she was raised across on the other side of the Narrows bridge there where that windmill terrace still stands. The McKenzie place.

JOHN: Yeah, I think that's still there.

MARVIN: Yeah, the tower is. The windmill blew all to pieces.

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JOHN: Yeah. So before you went to the Refuge, you were in the Navy, weren't you?

MARVIN: Yeah, I worked there on the Refuge in the interim for six month appointments --- for I think, three different years. And then in 1950 they decide they need me someplace else -- I went to the Navy.

JOHN: And got your job back when you got out.

MARVIN: Well, I worked for the county for five years.

JOHN: Well, that's right, yeah.

MARVIN: I went to work there in '55 after -- yes, I was working there when I was newly married. I went to work in April and we were married in June.

LAURIE: In '55?

MARVIN: In '55, yeah. And I worked there, I think, six months and then I went to work for the county in September and I was there for approximately five years. 1960, I guess May of 1960. Primary election day, I remember that, we got ten inches of wet snow here, and this old guy is running the county crew up here to county yards, he decided that he needed to hook on the tail blade and blade rows and I told him to hide that tail blade, I didn't need that. And I went to work for Walt Cooley, I guess the first of June, for seven dollars a day.

JOHN: Hmm. So you worked for a lot of different ranchers, when you'd first come here.

MARVIN: Yeah, I worked here and I worked for Roaring Springs for what, two different summers -- or, partial summers. On the mountain.

JOHN: Who was the best rancher to work for?

MARVIN: Cooley was the best, I think. He paid good at that time, probably more than anybody else paid. He gave us two and a half, which was then good money, that's almost as much as I made on the county.

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JOHN: Who was the worst? *[laughter]*

MARVIN: Oh, I'm not going to answer that.

JOHN: I kind of thought maybe I shouldn't have asked. *[laughter]* But you know, I used to work for John Casey, so, you know--

MARVIN: Yeah, if you worked John, for John Casey, you got the bitter end of the stick. No I think the worst it was the [-----]. They paid one hundred fifty a month, and a dollar a day for board.

JOHN: A dollar a day for board?

MARVIN: Mm?

JOHN: A dollar a day for board.

MARVIN: And you ate one meal a day there. And then on the mountain, I was supposed to get work running the Cat up there, ten dollars a day, well that lasted about three weeks and then they decided, well the buckaroo boss, he got sick of buckaroo men, so they put me on a saddle horse, five dollars a day, and a dollar a day for board. *[laughter]*

JOHN: That's great.

MARVIN: I was there about thirty days and I had to go to see the vet, I was hair-balled. She had three white long haired cats and you go in there in that trailer house, and hair was a-floatin' about. *[laughter]*

JOHN: Geez.

MARVIN: It was grim.

JOHN: Wow, that's great. Well, being as I worked on enough ranches in my life, I know that you really get a good experience working on different ranches because everybody does it a little different and uh, and you gotta, it's like going to a dance and dancing with a bunch of different women.

MARVIN: Working [ranch name?] then you go to Double O and it's entirely different. I mean, there's only one way to do a thing over at the Double O, and that's their way. In Diamond there's several

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different areas.

LAURIE: When did you go work full time for the Refuge, Marv?

MARVIN: Ohhh, '62, September the fifth.

JOHN: There's a picture of Marv on that tape that I had, I don't know what I did with that tape, on the Refuge. The tape of Scharff and the biologist McNulty?

MARVIN: McNary. Um, McLaury. Eldon McLaury.

JOHN: Yeah.

MARVIN: McLaury. Eldon McLaury.

JOHN: Yeah. and then there's a video of you running the dragline in the '60s – the movie was made during the--

MARVIN: The old green dragline?

JOHN: Yeah. I had that movie, maybe it belonged to the Refuge and they got it back. Yeah, it was a, you remember seeing that movie?

LAURIE: I remember seeing that, and I would like to try to find that again, and finally get it converted to a DVD, if it's still running. It was sort of like the Marlboro man, the music, you know, it made it sound like the big wild west, and it was a thirty-minute documentary about life on the Refuge

JOHN: Yeah.

LAURIE: I don't know where it came from or where it went, but I'll look for it.

MARVIN: That would be the "Wings Over Blitzen".

LAURIE: I think it might have been.

JOHN: Could be.

MARVIN: There was a guy that come along, what the hell was his name, he give us that ...***... book on the Kingfisher?

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LAURIE: Eastman.

MARVIN: Huh?

LAURIE: Eastman.

JOHN: I think that name sounds familiar as far as the movie.

LAURIE: I think that's the name of it, we'll have to try to locate it and see if there's a copy anywhere.

JOHN: Yeah. I know there's a video, there's a view and then there's a, they took a video of the wind blowing and this arrowhead all of a sudden, yeah—

DOVIE: Like it was in sawdust.

JOHN: What's the name of that movie?

LAURIE: Wings Over the Blitzen.

JOHN: Wings Over the Blitzen. Well. Ok.

LAURIE: Forgotten all about that, until you remembered it. You don't have a copy, Dovie?

DOVIE: No, no, we don't have a copy.

MARVIN: Yeah, I think the best man I ever worked for, John Scharff.

JOHN: Yup.

LAURIE: What was it like working for John?

MARVIN: Well as long as you done your job, he left you alone. Only had one drawback. If you had an hour, hour and a half, or two hours, before you finished your job, John would come up here, and: "By golly boys, I think if we finish this, we won't have to come back tomorrow." [*laughter*] There'd been many a day that we spent that way.

JOHN: Yeah.

MARVIN: But he was a good man, good boss.

JOHN: What I remember about old John was, when he'd come out to Double O, before he'd say

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anything, he'd allus [*throat clearing*] clear his throat, maybe he'd straighten his tie out--

MARVIN: Straighten his tie, "I got it boys." [*throat clearing*] Yeah. [*laughter*] I remember we was having some kind of an inspection down at the Sod House, the region officers come up and he told me, he said, "You get this area cleaned up, Marvin", and I had one limb sticking out over the road on the south east side going around the lawn. I said, "What do you want to do about that limb, John?" "That limb stays right there, Marvin." "Ok, fine and dandy." I get most of the lawn cleaned up, the yard picked up and the trash, the garbage. Mrs. Scharff come out, says, "Take that limb down." [*laughter*] "Well" I said, "John said leave it." "I'll handle John. You take that limb down." So I got my ladder and chainsaw and went up and cut the limb off. But, you know, she said, "I'll handle John, you go ahead and get that limb off."

JOHN: That sounds familiar. Yeah, there was plenty of work to do, and there was a bigger crew back then, workin'.

MARVIN: Yeah, in the fall of the year we'd have anywhere from six to seven extra guys haulin' dirt and rock, and runnin' Cat and can and scrapin'. Runnin' two draglines.

JOHN: I bet you burned a lot of diesel back then, huh?

MARVIN: Yeah.

JOHN: Went through some tires. Takes a little money to get things done.

MARVIN: Well we didn't have all the goddamned people in the office. There were John, and Bug Carey, which before Bug was Gene Heath, he was bookkeeper. They had one secretary, I can't remember what her name was. Assistant manager, a biologist, a building repair man, and then two dragline operators and ol' Cagle was a field man, er, what you call, a foreman. And the assistant manager, we never saw him, he went to the field and he stayed out all day. At first went to work there and Dell Pierce was the assistant manager here, and Joe Mazzoni was at the Double O.

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JOHN: So Joe was a maintenance guy, huh?

MARVIN: Assistant manager.

JOHN: Oh, and he lived at the Double O?

MARVIN: Yeah. He was greener than grass on the lawn. Buildin' a fence out there, home of Richie and Hal Hibbard, Joe was supposed to be helpin' 'em, and they run out of staples, or steeples or whatever you wanna' call 'em. So Richie was goin to headquarters, and Joe says, "I'll go get 'em!" He took off like a shot cat, he got down the road about five miles, come back and he says, "What's a steeple?" [*laughter*] Well, they had a little trouble with Joe, he was just a little bit eager, Homer or uh, the hell was his name, Hal Hibbard, he put his lunch kit out, way the heck out away from the fence line behind the sagebrush to keep out of the way, and Joe Mazzoni was on the ol' Farmall tractor with a digger line, made a big circle and run right over the top of his lunch kit. Hal said, "If I'd left it in the pickup, I'd a probably been burned up." [*laughter*]

JOHN: That's good.

MARVIN: They had a little trouble with some of the managers or assistant managers, manager trainees, I guess you'd call them.

JOHN: Now what was the joke they told about – I heard the joke about Mazzoni, they said that, somebody said that they heard that the Italians are building rubber tires now and they're really good tires except when you drive them they go wop-wop-wop--

MARVIN: Yeah, Parelli. He didn't appreciate that joke. They go flat, they go wop-wop-wop-wop. Yeah, he had a hell of a time growin' up. He was supposed to fix the phone line or, you had a, old metallic circuit going to Burns and the poles were getting rotten, and they was a falling down and the insulators was a falling off, and they sent, John sent Joe up to fix it. Had a pickup and a ladder. And he come in about four o'clock, and the whole side of his head was skinned up. And somebody said,

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“What happened?” He said, “Well, the pole broke” [*laughter*] He got up and put that there ladder-- well he had a twenty-two-foot ladder, you know, sticking up like that, he got it pretty lean, pretty steep, got up there and fell off. Went down the pole and cracked his head. We had him go on the other side of the lake, he was spraying weeds, supposed to be. He come in that night, the side of his head is all bloody and blue—he’d got stuck. Jacked the pickup up and got some brush stuck under it. Reached underneath across the jack and the handle down and nicked that trip.

JOHN: Whap!

MARVIN: Thank God it was a wooden handle. If it’d been a pipe handle it’d killed him. Yeah, he took, well, it took quite a lot to learn him something. We come there one time and someone was hollerin’, I guess it was some female student – trainee—doing something. And we had a safety meeting. She was having trouble, she got stuck and couldn’t get the jack to work. “What do I do?” Well, the assistant manager – I don’t remember if it was Joe or Dell Pierce – “Go piss on it.” [*laughter*] That’s the last we heard of the trouble. And then we had the field center, the Job Corps moved in.

JOHN: Yeah, uh, the Job Corps, the Malheur Field Station. I took a mutton over there, last year, last summer, because I don’t have a walk-in cooler, and I struck a deal with Duncan, I said I’ll give you some of this mutton, if you let me hang it there for a couple, three weeks. And he said, alright. And I went in there, and there is not a hook in – you know, there’s –a big cooler, and there wasn’t a hook to hang any meat on. They said a lot of things were built that way, they got everything you know, really done well, but when it got to finishing or doing it--

MARVIN: There was hooks in there.

JOHN: There were hooks.

MARVIN: You’re damn right, there were lots of them.

JOHN: Huh. But there was no two-by-fours, nothing to hang. I had to lay it down on some--

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MARVIN: Yeah, they were, there was a full course of hooks in there when they first made that.

JOHN: I'll be darned. So when they built that, then you saw 'em – what year did they build that job?

MARVIN: Sixty-five.

JOHN: Sixty-five.

MARVIN: Yeah, we started, I think in last of, first part of March, made that road in, then I think the contractors come in, built that, the houses, that summer. Far as I can see, it was a waste of money.

LAURIE: Well, what was it built for, who initiated it, what was it supposed to do?

MARVIN: It was supposed to a training center for these underprivileged children.

LAURIE: Ok.

MARVIN: I know that colored boy, there was a lot of them come here from Virginia, Baltimore, and that one come in here he'd been here three days, and he told Hagley, "I think I'll go home," he said. "Ain't nobody here knows anything." [laughter] Well, you know, coming out of Baltimore--

JOHN: Ain't nobody knows anything.

MARVIN: Goddamn, I don't know. Well they was, well hell, those instructors just settin' on their backside, didn't teach 'em a goddamn thing. They had all kinds of equipment, but they bring in that crap from the military junkyard. It wouldn't run.

JOHN: Just wore out?

MARVIN: Well, it's been scavenged, parts missing off of it, and what the hell, ya didn't have no place to work on them. They'd had nice shops, had all kinds of hand tools, but nothing for heavy equipment.

JOHN: Hm.

MARVIN: It was a total waste of money, as far I can see.

JOHN: So they laid in sewer lines and water lines and there's, it was supposed to be quite a facility

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with everything they laid in there but, uh, that's about as far as it got, but right now nothing is, there's no irrigation--

MARVIN: Well, there'd been no, no, nobody took care of it. They built that fancy gym and the first thing I noticed about it, they left the doors open.

JOHN: Yeah, and the roof leaked and--

MARVIN: --ruined the floor.

JOHN: Ruined the floor.

MARVIN: And then when they closed, it was a total disaster, I mean, stuff that never been unpacked went to the junkyard.

JOHN: Yeah.

MARVIN: Air conditioners, little ones and big ones. No good, covered up. And they said it cost more to put it on the surplus list than what it was worth, but I don't know about that either. Yeah, '65, March, we, I guess we were startin' that road about the first of March.

JOHN: So, the Refuge built it up then.

MARVIN: Yeah, we had a couple, three guys from the mill, and then the Refuge, equipment, we had a lot of, some of it from Hart Mountain and some of it from Sheldon, or not Sheldon-- Klamath Falls, Tule Lake -- couple of carry-alls and a Cat and then an old eight- and then the whole sixteen-yard Bruce Harris series they sold that for a hundred dollars after putting them new tires on. Christ.

JOHN: That was a good can, that sixteen yarder. I seen that whole thing get tipped over, you know, quite a few times, and I see the cable all get -- get all -- run outs, and twisted up, and it didn't take much to get her back in operation again.

MARVIN: No, it was a good carry-on.

JOHN: Yeah.

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MARVIN: And they put them new tires on there, and Tom ruined it, ruined the tire.

JOHN: So, working on the Refuge, you had your hands on just about every piece of equipment that come and went there while you were there, I'm sure. And you know, run all kinds of different equipment.

MARVIN: Yeah. Everything they had.

JOHN: Yeah. And it wasn't like it is now, you know, I mean, the old Johnson bar, we had on that old D-8 and, and running those friction clutches on the dragline, you got a work out, and now, it's all--

MARVIN: All hydraulic.

JOHN: Hydrostatic air and all that stuff. So, yeah--

MARVIN: But maybe that's the reason they can't run anything; they don't have no air. *[laughter]*

JOHN: Yeah now that it's, that equipment is so sophisticated, and nobody knows how this all evolved, you know. And I know one time I was talkin' to old Henstock about it, and I said, "These guys bitch about the backhoe," and you know, and equipment not being what it should be. I said, "They should go back when they were just little old single axle dump trucks", and Keith said, "No, they need to go further than that," he said. "Back to a wheelbarrow and a shovel." He says, "That's where they need to start these guys out."

MARVIN: Yeah, either that or one of them old horse drawn scrapers.

JOHN: Oh yeah. Fresno.

MARVIN: No, it's the kind that had four horses on it, had a self-loader.

JOHN: Oh, oh I see, yeah I was thinking of the old fresno, that--

MARVIN: Yeah, a six foot one. Four horses on that.

JOHN: By golly Laurie, I got that book, from Archie Campbell, about how, you know, his road building, and where it started. And this guy he used to work for in North Dakota, when he started out

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building road for the federal highways, and he had--

MARVIN: Fresno.

JOHN: Yeah. And just horses and mules, and then, pretty soon got equipment, and pretty soon he was the big—but anyway, it's a book, little, short, full of photos I know you'd like to read it, but—yeah--
- the old equipment that they had to start out with, uh... and I think back then it was all on the job training, wasn't it? They didn't send you to some equipment school.

MARVIN: Yeah, it was on the job, yeah. You didn't--go to school.

JOHN: And anybody that's run equipment, you know, what was the hardest thing to learn to running, everybody I know said, a dragline is a hard piece of equipment to learn, so--

MARVIN: Yeah, they uh, John was real good, he's what you uh--he's really emphatic that you take care of them.

JOHN: Yeah.

MARVIN: And they got that old green dragline, I think they got in fall of '45 and Elmer Ash ran that till he retired in '65, I guess, '66, walked it from here to Double O, probably eight days. Worked it all winter, then walked it back.

JOHN: They don't go very fast, then, yeah?

MARVIN: Not quite a mile an hour.

JOHN: Yeah, that's the stuff that they should, that needs to be put down as far what it used to be like.

MARVIN: And he walked that old [Lima?], that had a yard and uh, what was it, a yard and three quarters, a yard and a half? Walked it from Burns, they come in on a train, and they walked it from Burns to Sod House, and they, I think they used it for maybe two years. Elmer said it's too big, so he walked it to Crane, loaded it on the train there. Yeah, it had a, I think a sixty-five foot boom on it. He said that's too damn long, takes too long, too far to swing. Wouldn't 'a made no difference, but you

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couldn't tell him that.

LAURIE: What was the swing on the draglines? What was the radius there? How far could you swing out a bucket on a dragline?

MARVIN: Oh usually about sixty-five foot, that's as far as you could get any accuracy.

LAURIE: Ok.

JOHN: That's where the skill is, I mean hydraulics are hydraulics, but when you start throwing cable out there--

MARVIN: Oh that was, that was the ol' green Koehring with the manual clutches--

JOHN: Yeah.

MARVIN: Yeah, and the in-haul cable was sixty-five foot, and that would mean you'd, probably, probably sixty-two feet, because you got your-- Why, I seen ol' Noel Cagle pick up a fifty-gallon gas barrel out there, put that bucket on top of it. Course he'd missed a few of them, too.

JOHN: Yeah. What was the worst wreck you ever seen with one of them draglines?

MARVIN: Huh?

JOHN: What was the worst wreck or mishap that you seen on of them draglines, what--

MARVIN: Well I think the worst I ever saw was when Elmer slid it off the bank down there, and tipped it over.

JOHN: Did he get hurt?

MARVIN: Nope. He tipped it over, slid off there, and tipped it over on the side--

[tape ends]