

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #60 - Sides A/B

Subject: Gap Ranch & CCC Camp - With Earl & Grace Kindred

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: March 1980

Interviewers: Mary Pengelly & Victoria Sounart

VICKI SOUNART: First I'd like to show you this map I made. This is what ... the Gap Ranch these days on --- The two old stone buildings have now been enclosed with fences. Okay, there is one here, and one here. This is the highway going to Bend this way, into Burns this way. And then there's numerous old concrete foundations, and some even have wooden posts and things. And I've been talking to different people, trying to find out what the function of each foundation was, like a kitchen, or a barrack or a shop. And I've made notes on this. This is basically my rough draft. And I'd like to get your opinions too.

Also something that might help orientate you is the old water tower, it is right here in the middle. This is what it looks like today. And some of the old foundations are just barely there these days.

EARL KINDRED: Boy, that's going to be a stinker too.

VICKI: Yeah.

EARL: We were there, when, two years ago. And I found one of those concrete slabs, and I can't for the life of me remember what it was, unless it was the cooler that we had.

VICKI: Ah, there was one that was above ground. In fact I think I've got a photo here of it. This one here. Here's one of the old stone houses, and here's the highway going to

Bend, and here's this raise ---

EARL: That's the one that I was thinking of, this one here. And I asked Roy Otto, who was our commanding officer there. Now Roy lives at Vales Lake at Loda, Illinois, and he couldn't enlighten me any on it either. Just too fuzzy.

VICKI: Yeah.

EARL: A man by the name of Blaine Garner was a carpenter who was responsible ... of those buildings out there. But I believe you said this afternoon that he's no longer around, or you at least didn't know him?

MARY PENGELLY: I don't know that name. Now I think one of the other people, I think maybe that Mr. Otley that was there might have said that to you. He seemed to know. He was, we were all sort of talking there. But I don't know that name, Garner.

EARL: And apparently the other men in the technical service, none of those, they did too. Bill Butler, well he's been dead for a number of years, I'm certain, because, how do I say this, J. --- he didn't go by J. though then did he? A fellow who now lives in Washington, Illinois, by the name of J. M. Calder knew the Butlers, and across. I was at their house with him a time or two. Met both Mr. and Mrs. Butler, and across the street was a family by the name of West. There were two girls there, one was named Helen, and I can't for the life of me think of the other. Do you know any ladies around this town whose name was ... West? They would be between 65 and 70 now, I suppose.

MARY: I, that doesn't ring a bell with me. There was one woman that taught in our school who was west, but that would not be her maiden name, of course. But maybe her husband's family was related.

EARL: All I know for sure was that they lived down in this area in the town. And then there was a man by the name of Allen, and I can't think of his first name. But his daughter's name was Jerri. And I don't have the slightest idea how I know that. But I do

remember her name was Jerri.

GRACE KINDER: ... probably.

MARY: I winked at her.

EARL: You're thinking of the wrong thing.

MARY: Well any of these names, the person that I can think of that might recognize them would be Wally Welcome. You know Wally, don't you, you've heard of him?

VICKI: Yes, I do.

MARY: If you get some of these names, he might be able to tell you more about.

EARL: There was a Dorothy Comegy, C O M M E D G E, or ---

MARY: C O M E G Y S.

EARL: Is that ---

MARY: I believe that's the name I know. I knew the family.

EARL: She lived down at The Narrows as I recall. And I have no idea how I got to know her name, except it may have been Sidney Finestein. Sidney was the clerk, company clerk. He came to town more often than I. I didn't know anyone, didn't have any money, didn't have any business in town, so I stayed right here.

GRACE: It's a long way in.

EARL: Yes. Who else can I remember?

MARY: Are those names that you knew --- those names that you've been trying to think of that you knew?

EARL: Yes.

GRACE: After you called.

MARY: Oh, I see, yes.

EARL: There was a Mr. McGowan who was the Ford agent here in town.

MARY: Archie McGowan.

EARL: Archie McGowan.

MARY: And he was the first postmaster of Burns, and he was the founder of the Historical Society.

GRACE: Did you know him?

EARL: Only what I've read in history. I believe the book that you have there.

MARY: This one (Harney County and It's Rangelands) or this one (Harney County: An Historic Site Inventory)?

EARL: That one I think is the book. (Harney County and its Rangelands)

MARY: This one?

EARL: Yes.

MARY: Have you ever looked in this book?

VICKI: Yes, it's a good one.

MARY: Yeah, uh huh.

EARL: And Sandy Anderson was the first man that I got acquainted with in town. And I did that because --- I did that. That's very improper. I got acquainted with him because I brought, I suppose, 15 or 20 pair of shoes in here for him to repair. And got to visiting with him then.

GRACE: ... getting the shoes fixed.

EARL: Well I wrote the requisitions. I other words they didn't get paid without it. So whether they --- Dr. Hibbard, and then there was a man by the name of Brown who was in the bank here. But he wouldn't be around anymore, I don't suppose.

MARY: No, the one who was in the bank, I think he died before 1959, when we moved here. And his brother was a real estate agent here, and he just passed away a year ago in January, Al Brown.

EARL: Well the reason I remember him, I suppose, I didn't know him at all. But he and

someone else from town put a little plane out at the camp, one Sunday afternoon. It was late in the afternoon, they decided they'd land and visit awhile, I guess. Well they had dug some ditches laying water lines out to those different fields, and the ditch was left open. And of all of the thousands of miles he had to land that plane, he dropped it down in the ditch, and just sheared the wheels off of it. And I have a picture of that plane at home. It's lying there on the ground, and one of the two, I've forgotten which, got cut across the back of their hand, and that's all that happened to them.

GRACE: Can you imagine that?

VICKI: I took my first plane ride in a small aircraft today. And we were, in fact we were flying all around Gap Ranch area.

EARL: Is that right?

VICKI: Yeah. Just to look it over. And Bill Brown, who had the ranch house across the road from, well across from the CCC Camp, had dug a whole bunch of irrigation ditches around Sheep Lake, and Rim Rock Lake, and Hay Lake all through there.

EARL: He sure had.

VICKI: And I was out there with Dick Cowan, who is a rancher out in the Riley area, and we were flying around taking photos, and following all the ditches around the countryside.

EARL: Well that would be an experience.

VICKI: Yeah, oh it really was!

EARL: Of course it hasn't been much more than a week ago we were up in Eugene visiting with Paul R. Lafferty, who was one of our officers at the camp. And Paul remembered Mr. Brown coming there at the camp at different times. And he said we always invited him to eat with us. And he said he did on some occasions. Do you recall all the things that he told about him?

GRACE: He just said he was, you know, just came in very --- I guess he was an

extremely, really wealthy man, wasn't he?

EARL: At one time.

GRACE: But anyway he said he just, you know, come in and visited and stuff. Come in and visit, to tell stories about the old days.

MARY: Dick might like to know about Lafferty. Dick Cowan is researching Bill Brown, so he might like to know that name.

GRACE: Yes, he said he would come in and they were always happy to have him come into the camp, because he would always have some story to tell, intrigue the whole group.

VICKI: Yeah. Sounds like he was a really interesting person. Made and lost fortunes. But never really affected his character to a great extent.

GRACE: That's what he said, it didn't affect him at all, very common, down to earth.

VICKI: That's what Dick Cowan likes to say, is that he always stayed a kind man that would help people out. Sometimes, you don't usually hear of a lot of rich people who will do things for ---

GRACE: That's right.

EARL: Trusted everyone, I guess.

VICKI: Yeah.

EARL: And the fact that he himself was so honest, I guess, that's one of the reasons he figured everyone else was, and ---

MARY: Did you, you met Bill Brown?

EARL: I can't recall having met him. Someone had to stay in the office, because of the telephone, at all times until 9 o'clock at night. And that was a poor time to start anything else. And for some reason, that's the only excuse I have for not knowing every-thing that took place, I was stuck in the office.

VICKI: Yeah.

EARL: But if they would want to get a hold of Paul Lafferty, his address is 766 Crest, C R E S T Drive, in Eugene. And I'm sure he'd be glad to talk about, and tell you all he knows about Bill Brown.

MARY: And the CCC Camp.

EARL: Yes.

GRACE: And she's really interested in that.

EARL: Well would you like the address of the rest of the officers?

VICKI: Surely, if you have them, yes, sure.

EARL: Roy W. Otto, lives at Bayles, B A Y L E S, Bales Lake, Loda, Illinois. And that's L O D A. I learned up at Eugene the other day, of all the officers we had, let's see, everyone of them went into the service, and came out as colonels. So I thought I brought them up just about the way I should have. (Laughter) Roy Otto was our commanding officer. Paul Lafferty whose address you have. Then John R. Casslemen, his address is 2277 East Fulton, Grand Rapids, Michigan. And then there's Arthur G. Gullikson, G U L L I K S O N. His address is 2718 Algoma, A L G O M A Street, Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Who have I left out, Grace?

GRACE: I guess that's about it.

MARY: So you have his name and address?

VICKI: No, I don't.

MARY: Maybe that would be a good idea.

VICKI: Well he gave that to me on a card.

GRACE: Well fill out your name and address, that's ---

EARL: Yes, Rural Route 3, is all. I'm just a plain old farmer.

VICKI: I'll put two stars by your name.

GRACE: He has a nice picture of all those officers.

VICKI: Oh my gosh, this is a ---

GRACE: Yeah, he does.

VICKI: This just boggles my mind.

GRACE: Don't you have a picture, it seems like you have one of the Gap Ranch with stones, named Gap Ranch with stones.

EARL: I had a picture of that area before anything was done. And then I have a picture of it after the camp was completed.

MARY: Does this put you on notice?

VICKI: Oh yeah.

MARY: This is really been ---

GRACE: We need to have a Gap Ranch, you know, spelled it out in stones. I remember you was, I was his girlfriend then, and he wrote letters to me.

MARY: Oh how neat, that's wonderful.

GRACE: He'd send me all these letters and pictures, you know.

MARY: And you saved them all?

GRACE: Uh huh.

MARY: Good for you.

EARL: I have something like 1200 pictures, I imagine.

MARY: Wow.

VICKI: I would like to work up something with you, that we could try and get some of them duplicated for our records here, and maybe even publish a little book or something, a little pamphlet of some sort.

EARL: You may have them, cause we have two children, but they aren't ---

MARY: No, there are two possibilities here at the --- our library has a fund for historical research, and they could pay for the prints to be made from them, to copy them. So you



don't have to give up your original pictures. But it would be very valuable to have some of those pictures in our local historical society. I don't know how many people would have it. I suspect that many have moved away, you know. I don't know how many have stayed here in Burns.

VICKI: I've asked for all the people I've talked with, I've asked every one of them if they have any old photos. And a couple of them say, "Yeah, somewhere," you know. But they sure haven't kept up with them. And, you know, I've seen some someplace, even BLM was supposed to have some at one time.

EARL: My pictures are, most of them are in pretty good shape.

GRACE: Uh huh, and you had an enlargement made of the officers.

EARL: Yes, our youngsters liked to look at them when they were young, and some of them got bent. But most of them, I think, are

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VICKI: Gee, I've never been to Illinois, but --- some relatives in Michigan.

EARL: You've never been to Illinois?

MARY: You wouldn't have to go, you could get ... you'd have to go and be able to select.

VICKI: Of course.

EARL: What was, well you neither one know, I don't suppose, and then you might. There was a young woman who had been married I guess, and divorced, or her husband died or something of the kind. But she had a youngster four or five years old, and her name was Tilley something. She ran a restaurant down here where this Elk-horn is now. And her reason was, my brother would shoot me yet for this ---

MARY: We won't tell anyone.

EARL: We got in here ---

GRACE: Except you're being recorded.

EARL: Seven years ago, when we stopped out at the Ponderosa Motel, at that time. And we'd made plans to get up early the next morning and go down to the P Ranch. You are familiar with that?

VICKI: Yes sir.

EARL: And it's always been easy for me to get up, it seems. And that night I heard some cars outside the motel, and I thought well people are getting up and going to work. So I roused everybody up. And they got ready to go down to the P Ranch, and my brother looked at the clock, and it was what time, a quarter of two or something of that sort.

GRACE: In the morning.

EARL: Apparently somebody was just coming in, instead of leaving. Well, he said, "You're not going to get by with that, we'll go up town and get some coffee or breakfast."

GRACE: We were all going to stay up then, he was so mad.

EARL: We come up there, and that restaurant was still open.

GRACE: I guess it must have been all night.

MARY: The Elkhorn? Yeah, I don't usually go there.

EARL: And ---

GRACE: Well we didn't know one from the other.

EARL: After we had our bite to eat, and I got to talking with one of the cooks, I guess it was, and I was asking questions about this, that, or the other. There was an Indian sitting there at the counter, and he had a belt on, and I think, do you recall what name was in the back of it?

GRACE: Yeah, it was Charlie.

EARL: Anyhow, it made me think of some of those fellows that we played baseball with. There was a Father Egan here, who was ---

MARY: He was here when we --- he was the Catholic Priest who was here, and he was

still living, he was still here when we moved here in '59.

EARL: Well he was, I don't understand it, not being Catholic, but he was the priest at the time. And he sponsored a baseball team of Indian boys. He was Five Mile, Camp Five Mile in Buena Vista. And what was that other one clear down at Frenchglen? Yeah, Squaw Butte and the Indians. There were five teams, and ever so often we'd play, either at the town diamond just over the hill here, or the diamond out at Hines, or out at one of the camps, whatever. And I had the names of all those fellows at home. If I had a little bit of sense I'd have brought them along, I guess. I'll see if I can find some of those.

There was a young man, an Indian man; his English name was Davis, that was associated with care and welfare of the Indians at that time. And I saw him later, up at Pendleton at the Round Up, and there were three of them there. He told me then that he was on his way to New York. The government was sending them out there for some further instruction. And I've regretted ever since that I didn't make more of an effort to keep in touch with him, but I didn't. And I've wondered so many times what became of him. I think he was a real fine young fellow. But he's another man that I've remembered.

GRACE: You started to tell about that, the Indian with the belt there that we saw.

EARL: Yeah, that was one of them, I can't think of their name. And I'm certain that he was the same name. Was it Sam?

GRACE: Well it might, but I thought it was Charlie. Does it matter?

MARY: There was, there is a family here, an Indian family whose last name is Sam.

EARL: That's not --- I'm sure there was two of those boys that played on the team.

GRACE: Well you'd know better than I would, Earl.

MARY: But you have the names of those people on those teams?

EARL: Yes.

GRACE: He has some of the old; they had a newspaper a little newspaper at the camp,

didn't you?

MARY: And you kept all those? Do you have copies of all those?

EARL: Part, just ---

GRACE: Some of them. He won a spelling bee one time, and he has that.

EARL: Oh, Grace!

GRACE: Well I just remember bits and pieces.

VICKI: Well this is wonderful though, now my goodness. For so many years you don't know what's going to come about saving something like that. And then they're worth something.

MARY: ... save them and everything. ... I happen to have one of those things, you know, in my file, desk, in my un-indexed files.

EARL: Oh, we had a doctor out at the camp too, Dr. Marvin Spear, and he spent as much time there in town as he did out there, so some may have remembered him. He, as far as I know, he is now the head of a hospital in Leavenworth, Washington.

GRACE: Was he the one that was in an article in the National Geographic about?

EARL: No, no, no, U. S. News. I have that article too.

MARY: U. S. News, oh.

EARL: Yeah.

GRACE: Was there something about the Spears mentioned in that? I remember reading about him in some magazine, and I said that's the doctor they had in camp, you know.

MARY: Was he just at your camp? I met a doctor who is now in Baker, I can't think of his name; he was kind of a supervising doctor for all the camps in this area. He lives in Baker now. I can find out his name, I just can never remember it.

EARL: He may have worked out at the Boise ... at that time.

MARY: I don't know. He was kind of a commander type doctor, I think. He wasn't always

in each ...

EARL: Uh huh. Could have been a corp. area doctor also.

MARY: Yeah, I think maybe that was what we're talking about. We could just go on and on about ...

VICKI: Oh, I know.

MARY: How did you happen to come here?

EARL: Where do I start this?

GRACE: Well you said you always wanted to come west. Or you thought you would like to. It was during the depression and ---

EARL: All of my life, as far back as I can remember, I was always fascinated by anything, and I'd read everything that I'd seen about the West, I think. And I wanted to come west. And my family was very poor, and in addition to that my mother was a victim of tuberculosis. And there was no money for frills that I ever remember. We had what we needed, but that was the story. And when I was out of high school, I'd been out what, three years, four years; I'd worked in a grocery store. Started there after I got out of high school, and had been there something over three years. And they were a little concerned about my health at that time. So the doctors had told me that I would probably be better off if I was outside. So I worked on the farm that summer. And I was visiting with a kid from Macomb, Illinois, who had just returned from the State of Washington. He'd spent six months there in the CCC. And of course I asked him what it was all about, and he told me. So he also told me how I got into the program, or how anyone got into it. So I went to our township supervisor and told him what had happened, and I wondered if I could possibly go that route. And he said, "Well Earl, that is a relief measure." And he said, "I doubt very much if I could get you into that." He said, "After all you have a job, and that's for people who don't have."

So I forgot it for about a year. And I met him on the street again. He was a very good friend, because prior to that we had lived next door. And I knew him as well as anyone. But I met him on the street again that fall. And he said, "Do you still want to go out West?" Gosh, I don't know, I hadn't thought any more about it. But I soon made up my mind I would like to go if I could. Didn't know where or anything of the kind. And he said, "Well I'll send your name in." And later when I got to working in the office, and I found that he had written on the top of my record, "Wants to go." And he signed his last name, which is Very. And it looked as though he wants to go very badly, or something else. I don't know whether it had anything to do with it or not, but none the less it was, oh a month or six weeks and I got word to report to Topeka, which was our selective service center there. And I went over and I passed the physical there, and they told me to be at a certain railway station, I've forgotten what it is, at 5 o'clock the next morning. And I was there, and on my way.

GRACE: You were at Fort Sheraton in Chicago first, huh?

EARL: Yeah, Fort Sheraton for a month. And it happened the next morning after I arrived in Fort Sheraton, I was at the bulletin board, trying to learn what I could, and one of the officers came up, his name was Beard. And he asked if there were any good scribes or typists. There were several of us grouped around there, and a kid from Calumet City, Illinois, said well he could type. And I said, "Well I can write so I can read it." "Well you're the fellows I want." And we went in the office and we worked day and night, practically. But the good that came of it was this, everyday almost; requisitions would come through for 30 men to go to Alabama, or 30 men to go to Colorado, or a 140 to go to North Dakota, or something of that kind. Well this kid that was with me, who was a Polish boy by the name of Tryzoski, and when our name came up on the roster we simply dropped it.

GRACE: That's to finagle around.

EARL: And here came a requisition for a 140 men, I think it was, to go to someplace in California. And that was the place for us, and we stuck our names on that roster.

MARY: Oh, that's neat.

EARL: But then the biggest joke was still on us. Because our destination was changed four times on the way out here. And we wound up at Roseburg, Oregon. And we were there; see we got there in November. And this is going to sound a little silly too, because do you remember what day it was when we got out there?

GRACE: No, I don't remember. Well it was ---

EARL: It was in mid-November, I suppose.

GRACE: I, yeah I imagine it was.

EARL: And then on the first weekend, first Saturday in February of the next year, I went to town for the first time. I didn't have no business there, I didn't know anyone, and I was having a lot of fun on the weekends. We can go up on a mountain, or we --- some of the fellows went fishing, one or two that I knew. Anyhow, I'd get with a buddy of mine and we'd just do something like that.

GRACE: We went to that camp too.

EARL: Yeah, we visited that one while we were ---

GRACE: While we were at Rogue River at our sons. And then I didn't walk up to the --- it's quite a ways up to the Wolf Creek Falls, down back up in, you know, the mountains, or hills, or whatever. But ... and Earl walked up there and took some pictures of the Wolf Creek Falls. They had a, boys, kind of boys ---

EARL: Work camp, government work camp there now.

GRACE: For kind of delinquent's maybe, or something, wasn't it?

EARL: Don't say that.

GRACE: Wasn't it, wasn't it?

EARL: They just come out of the city. They may be delinquents; I don't that, but give the benefit of the doubt.

GRACE: All right.

MARY: Well they had a lot of programs, CETA, the Job Corps.

EARL: That's what it is.

MARY: And a lot of the ...

EARL: But we were there until the following May, and then we came over to Gap Ranch.

MARY: Well that was quite a contrast wasn't it?

EARL: Yes, it was indeed.

MARY: What was your reaction to the desert country?

EARL: I thought we'd gone off the deep end.

GRACE: You'd come to the end of the world, huh?

VICKI: Especially after that lush green in Roseburg.

EARL: Uh huh. And it was --- I'd say I was here three months before I got to like the desert. And I do like it. If I ever moved into Oregon, I would just, I'd rather be on this side of the state than I would the west side of it. I like to go there, it's beautiful. There is lots to see and lots to do, but I feel so hemmed in. Of course where we come from it's pretty open. If you've been in Central Illinois, you know what it is. It's corn and soybeans, and that's about it. And I don't know, I just fell in love with the desert. I was for ... in the office.

We all had one week out of each six months, providing we had behaved our-selves, and we'd arrange ahead of time, arrange an itinerary so to speak. The officers had automobiles, the regular army officers. And I think that I made every trip that anyone of them made with the exception of one. Lieutenant Castleman went to Alaska one summer on his leave, and I missed that. But other than that I made every trip the officers did. And



it was not because they liked my company all together, I guess, but we could share expenses and take turns driving and things of that sort. Just made it, we felt, a better trip.

And as a result I got to see a lot of Oregon. Much more than the average fellow who was in the CCC's. And then of course the fact that I spent two years out here gave me a little more time to see it too.

MARY: And were you going together before he left Illinois?

GRACE: ...

MARY: So how long was it all together while he was here, and you were getting pictures and letters and ---

GRACE: How long were you gone? I've forgotten anymore.

EARL: Is this --- it was eight years from the first time I took her home from a party until she caught up with me for good.

MARY: You were persistent ---

GRACE: Surely it wasn't eight years?

EARL: Of course, I was just 21 years old the first time, at that church party. And I was how old when we were married? Well I was 29, so I think that makes 8 years. Of course I was gone three years, so that's not as bad as it might have sounded.

MARY: And you have how many children?

EARL: Two.

MARY: Two? And one of them lives here in Oregon. Was he influenced by your having been here?

GRACE: Evidently, he ---

EARL: Oh, it must have been.

GRACE: They just thought he made it sound like paradise before he got a chance to come out here. And so they just love it. They don't think they'll ever come back to Illinois

again. And you know, they like the West. They ---

MARY: And then where does your other ---

EARL: Our daughter lives in Peoria, Peoria, Illinois. And her, her husband and our little spoiled granddaughter.

GRACE: Six years old, our little granddaughter. Every time we talk on the phone, "When are you coming home?" She thinks it's been such a long time. Well it has been since the 4th of December we came to ...

EARL: Now you have a number of people, I presume here in town, who have been here a number years and would remember?

MARY: Were you in on the, you must have been in on the construction of that camp. You were here while it was --- or was it constructed, or what was the situation when you got here?

EARL: An advanced cadre had come over, that was a group of probably 25 men, and were in the process. The mess had not been completed, only part of the tents were up.

MARY: This was May?

EARL: Yes, Ma'am.

MARY: What year?

EARL: 1935.

VICKI: Do you remember those stone buildings being there when you got there? Or was that something ---

EARL: Neither were there at that time.

VICKI: Okay.

EARL: There was absolutely nothing, according to the pictures. And I'll have to admit this picture was one that I'm thinking of in particular, is one that I got from someone else. I didn't take that picture. We did much of that, you know, traded pictures with one another.

And I remember very vividly the first coyote I heard. I knew what it was, but nonetheless, I was awake, to stay awake the rest of the night.

MARY: Now it seems from what, that you've kept in touch with these people, or many of the people that you knew there. And apparently all the officers ---

EARL: Yes, all the officers.

MARY: You kept in touch with them.

EARL: Yes Ma'am.

MARY: And they're all still living?

EARL: Yes Ma'am. Oh, I know many of the enlisted, or enrolled men. If I just take a little time I can name you, how many?

VICKI: I found something real neat out there. There's a rock, and somebody's written their name into it. It's hard to see from these photographs, but it's on the west side of the old water tower. Okay. Built kind of into this wall right here. And written into it, it says Paul, and then it looks like it says either Luther or Luiheo, or something like that. And then it has, it looks like Corydew, (Corydon) Indiana. Something like that. Do you know if it, do you remember anybody's name of Paul from Indiana? It was Bellevue or something like that, or a town that might have these letters in it?

EARL: 1935, we were there six months. It was in the, about the first of October that we moved over to Squaw Butte, and a group from New York state was moved in there. Now where, I haven't the slightest idea.

VICKI: Okay. No one else does either. But it could have been done after, way after, I don't know.

EARL: I noticed something there today. I told Grace I didn't think that was the same bunkhouse that was there when we were. But we stopped nonetheless to check and see.

Now at the bunkhouse that was there, when you stepped in the front door, and it may be to the left, and also on the door facing between the kitchen and the dining room, I took it to be. And then on the front door facings from there to the west wall, and on the west wall over to the window, it had a brand. And then it had other brands that could be made from that. That entire area from the window clear around to the door --- let's see, there was a cowboy carved, a picture of a cowboy was carved on the facing of that kitchen door. And I looked especially to see if that was till there.

VICKI: Was this on one of the stone buildings now?

EARL: No, that was the old ranch house, on the other ranch.

GRACE: It was across the road from where your camp was.

VICKI: Yeah.

EARL: But we looked on the outside boards on the west side there, I'm sure it is the imprints of some branding had been done on those boards. It's very indistinct. But nonetheless it was put there at one time or another. I was tempted to take a picture of it, and I decided it wouldn't do any good.

VICKI: How many men were at Gap Ranch when you were here?

EARL: Full company strength was 240, and I'm not certain that, well it wasn't much of the time that we were at full strength. Because, oh someone would get sick, or someone would leave without authority, and some of them were sent home before their enrollment period was up for administrative reasons. And other things, I suppose.

MARY: How are the archives kept on the CCC?

EARL: I understood they all burned. One of those famous fires they have in Washington every so often. Now that is hearsay. Who were we talking to? Someone wrote there for some kind of information, and told us that. They were told that those records, part of them at least were burned.

GRACE: ...

EARL: It might have been.

GRACE: I didn't remember that much about it.

EARL: Because I know I was the one that put all of our records in, in fact I helped make the boxes to put all of our records in. And they were sent to the headquarters in Boise. And from there then on to Washington.

MARY: Now this was, your officers were Army?

EARL: Yes Ma'am.

MARY: I don't know if they would be in the war department archives or not.

EARL: Yes, their records would be, definitely.

MARY: Well that would be the place to go for them. I don't know if you, sometimes the Army won't release things. I know I've had people that have done research on Army things, and they'll get papers, and then there will be some that are late. And then there will be some that might be upside down, and you can't read it. That means they won't always release all the information. But somehow it's --- but that might be a way to get it. I don't know if you've thought of that.

VICKI: No, I hadn't. That's a real good suggestion.

MARY: At least the officers involved in it would be mentioned there, you know. So it is possible you could. Well, that's where you go to find out about old Forts, their specifications on their buildings, and maybe that type of the Army ...

I kind of gather from your talking that really the CCC had a rather major impact on your life, in a lot of ways. I mean it was an experience that you really have a lot of memories about it.

EARL: Yes, I think it did. Because, oh I can say I was just an Illinois farm boy, and grew up on the farm and ---

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EARL: And in between that if we had our work done, well we were more or less on our own, and we did what we pleased. And then as I've already told you, if the officers were going some place and we managed by some hook or crook, you know, to take advantage of that to the best of our abilities. I got to know, I suspect there were a thousand boys that I was in touch with. They came and ... you know. By the way I spent the last six months up in the State of Michigan.

MARY: The last six months of your enlistment in the CCC?

EARL: Yes, Ma'am. The government took all six-core area companies out of this district, out of this area, core area, and sent us back there. Dumped us out in the six-core area. And there were five of us, and we were all over on the company overhead too, by the way. And they sent us up to Watersmeet, Michigan.

GRACE: Did you say you were from Michigan?

VICKI: I have, my in-laws are from Roseville, which is outside of Detroit. And I've only been there a couple of times.

EARL: Which way from Detroit?

VICKI: North.

EARL: North.

VICKI: It's basically a suburb these days.

EARL: We have a friend, and again this was a fellow that I met up in Michigan, who lives at Milan, that's just west of Detroit about forty miles. And we get up there occasionally. But, oh there's just no end to these people. It's been a great pleasure, if nothing else. Roy Otto, I call him by his first name now, even though he is a colonel. Roy spent thirty years in the Air Force, by the way. And makes his home there, it's about fifty miles west,

east of us. And we get together pretty often. And John Castleman became, after he retired, he became one of the vice-presidents of the Old Clay Bank and Trust Company. And I thought I had seen banks until I got up there. Now I don't know what you people think of banks, but that one is a little different. There are 800 people that work in that bank.

VICKI: My goodness.

EARL: It's unbelievable.

MARY: This is in?

EARL: Grand Rapids.

MARY: Grand Rapids.

EARL: Art Billington spent his twenty years in the service, and much of that was over in Germany. He came back and retired in Stevens Point. We've seen he and his wife, and their son, oh many times. They, for years, went to Prescott, Arizona for the winter months. And they'd either stop at our house as they went down, or as they came back, or maybe both. And spent a couple of days with us. And then we've been up to Wisconsin numerous occasions to visit them. And let's see, that's Roy and John, and Art, and that leaves Paul Lafferty. I've seen him only twice since we were here. He's the gentleman over in Eugene. The other time I went there to see him, we missed him for some reason, I've forgotten. But it's really been nice to keep track of them. And in addition to that, there's Don March who became a schoolteacher and lives in Albuquerque. J. M. Calder who has retired from the Hiram Walker Refineries there in Peoria, and lives still there in Washington. And there's Spiral Bradford in Hopedale, Illinois, and is retired. And Bill Hammonds retired from the Quaker Oats Company at ... and lives in Green Valley. And then there's a lad in Aurora, Illinois, who is retired now. Disability from the Army in addition to his retirement.

... (Discussion of injury and present state.)

EARL: And then there's Lynn Vanell who is retired now, who was with Sears and Roebuck for, its been over 21 years, the first time we were up there. And its been, I suppose he had 30 years probably with Sears. And who else?

MARY: ... in addition to what the BLM wants to do with this, going through something about that?

VICKI: ... so far all your information has been really helpful to us. Just hearing your stories and the names.

EARL: Oh I hope some of it can be used.

VICKI: BLM, who actually the area where this part of the CCC Camp is, is on public land. And we would like to work up some sort of interpretive program eventually, where visitors to come, and maybe put some signs up that explain the CCC Camp. The uses, the different functions of the foundations there. Generally the role that it played in the lives of quite a few people. In addition we would like to nominate it to the National Register of Historic Places. And that involves documenting it with a formal sketch map, photographing it, trying to learn as much about it as we can. And in the end writing a statement of significance about its importance within the local community, and state, and the country too. And the questions that I have been asking people primarily have to deal with, oh the functions of the foundations, you know, where the kitchen was, where the dining room was, things like that. The years that the CCC Camp operated at Gap Ranch, which ... started in May of '35.

EARL: Well the cadre who are over there, had cleaned the area up. Now that was littered, well completely covered with lava rock. And they cleared it off, or most of it, and call it a stone fence around it. Now you have a picture of it, you showed it there to us today.



MARY: ...

EARL: A stonewall.

GRACE: Hand my purse to me and I'll show it to you. Isn't that cute, I've got everything in here.

VICKI: There's a lot of stone fences still remaining out there. They run parallel to each other. We were wondering if they ... they were driveway like boundaries or anything?

EARL: Well we had a parade ground out in the front, and the flag pole was out there, not too far from the road. And of course there was that area and ---

GRACE: Well I don't know, was that on that stone wall around that?

EARL: You can see the flag out there.

GRACE: The ... in our perspective, you know, the background of it and everything.

VICKI: Oh my goodness, and its all so clear, and the vegetation too.

EARL: Uh huh.

VICKI: Well you're just as handsome!

EARL: Couldn't get any worse, huh?

VICKI: Thank you.

GRACE: Uh huh.

VICKI: Some people, Joe Urbannick, I don't know if you remember him, he's working for the Prineville District of Bureau of Land Management now. I think he's, he said he used to drive a truck out of the base camp, and in the base station here in Burns to all the different CCC Camps, and bring supplies. And he remembers the recreation, or the dining rooms, and the offices being up close to the road. And the shops being towards the back. And there's a loading ---

EARL: That's right.

VICKI: There's a loading ramp back here. And quite a few foundations here. You may

remember, oh gosh, Mr. Rose, I think is his name. There's a woman here named Mildred Mayo, who was married to man who was the, gosh, do you recall what his function was? Anyway, it was down someplace. Her husband anyway worked at Gap Ranch.

MARY: On the Ranch?

VICKI: No, on the CCC Camp, yes. Let's see.

EARL: You don't know what, in what capacity then?

VICKI: Boy, I do, but it just slips me right now. I'm sure I've written it down; I'll have to look through my notes. I was thinking he was a carpenter. He wasn't a, he wasn't one of the officers, but he was ---

EARL: Another thing that I regret is the fact that I destroyed so much. I took many of the rosters, had to have a roster for every-thing, and in triplicate at least. I kept copies of many of those, and after they'd been around home, 25 or 30 years, and finally I just pitched a lot of them in the garbage. I still have some menus at Thanksgiving and Christmas time. And names of many of them on that, and not nearly all of them.

VICKI: Mr. Rose was a mechanic supervisor, a foreman or something.

EARL: Rose?

VICKI: And he married Mildred, and has since passed away. And she is now Mildred Mayo, and a ranching family from out in that area. And she worked for years at the BLM office as an administrative officer. And she had a lot to say about it. She had gone out there for dinner a couple of times and ... her sister-in-law. And she remembered a few things like that. She thought that the office was up in front by the highway. That was the first thing you saw when you came in.

EARL: Well I can give you a ...

VICKI: That would be good.

MARY: Now both of the Mayos, Dick and ---

VICKI: ...

MARY: Carl Mayo came to Harney County with the CCC.

GRACE: ...

VICKI: Would this be easier for you?

EARL: Sure, thanks.

VICKI: I knew Carl did.

MARY: Okay, they were from Florida?

VICKI: Huh, I didn't know that. They seemed like such old natives.

MARY: Westerners, yeah.

VICKI: That Carl Mayo went with me in the plane today.

MARY: Oh, yeah.

VICKI: He was telling a story.

MARY: The ranch up there was the Cecil Ranch. That's the ranch that, his wife was named Cecil. The Cecil's were, they'd been ranching here since 1870's. Their ranch is known as the Oregon Century Ranch. One of the few where it's handed down from ---

GRACE: From generation to generation.

MARY: Yeah, it's been in the same family for a hundred years or more. I am going to have to do my Historical Society News Letter. I'm going to have to get it down to the printer.

... (Private discussion)

EARL: I'm going to make a row of tents, pray tell, ... at that.

GRACE: You had a picture of them at home. Go back and see all those tents.

VICKI: So the men stayed in tents?

EARL: Yes Ma'am.

VICKI: Okay. I guess no one has ever told me that before. I guess I've never asked it,

that helps.

... (Discussion of proposed trip to Gap Ranch following day.)

MARY: Yes, I think, you see the CCC's are really considered to be an important national institution. And they are interested, the societies that are interested in the preservation of history are really trying to get information about the CCC's. You know how we always wait until just about everybody is gone, and we don't know too much about it, before we get concerned.

GRACE: I have a little bracelet that he sent me too, from there. It has a little pine tree on it, and its got CCC's on it. It's a little silver like thing.

MARY: ... (Reunion talk)

EARL: As an artist ... retired. You know I had a picture in my mind as plain as day of that recreation hall, but I don't know where it was.

VICKI: Was it a pretty big thing?

GRACE: Jay might know, Jay or Don Barnes. And Roy ---

EARL: Let's see, when I first came over here I was supply sergeant. I was made supply sergeant soon after I got to Wolf Creek. And I was supply sergeant --- And this, pardon me, that main road is out here, of course.

VICKI: Uh huh.

EARL: Oh yeah, we had these half moon things built from a rock wall there, in a crescent shape. And built the dirt up on an incline, and then had Gap Ranch on one Company 1629, and Camp Wolf Creek, I think, was on the other one over here. And that was out where it could be seen from the road.

VICKI: Oh.

EARL: And roughly that's the plan. The flagpole was out here in front. Not quite even with this, but out here in the front, nonetheless.

VICKI: Yes.

EARL: And this rock wall that you see in the picture was roughly in this manner, back there, not too far. And this was the parade ground, where we met each evening for our reveille. Reveille, retreat, I'm getting my days turned around. Now these tents extended down in this area, they were parametrical tents. Now they, that's why I couldn't understand those concrete slabs, unless it was the technical service. They did have, oh there, but there were four rows of parametrical tents. It's in, these two were, no the middle two were up close together, and that left an area in there. Call it a walkway, or whatever you want. But it was a street down between this pair --- And then we had another open area here when we met formation for company business, or we met there before we'd go to the mess hall. Anytime the company was called out, other than for reveille, or something of that sort. Some of the district officers ... This was where I was in the beginning here, in the supply tent. And that was pretty close to this wall. Perhaps it should be up here, really. And the next tent, and this tent by the way, as I recall, was 40 foot long.

VICKI: Okay.

GRACE: How many men to a tent or ---

EARL: Well over here there were six to a tent. I had my quarters there in the supply room, so there was one in that one.

VICKI: ... Were there anything, kind of like rows continuing over there?

EARL: Yeah, that's right.

VICKI: Five, or six, or ten? Going down this way do you recall a lot of them? Well I guess if there were six men to a tent, we could figure that out by about 240 men.

EARL: 180, that would be 30 tents, wouldn't it? That would be 15 on this street and 15, or more than that. I don't recall just exactly what it was. But our Army office was mostly in

that area, and then we had an infirmary tent. And these also were parametrical tents. The educational department had, they were field tents. But what, they had another name for them. I can't recall, it had to have been over there someplace. I don't know exactly where. Well anyhow, this was technical service in this quarter, and in the Army. And the officer's quarters were here. And each officer had a tent of his own here in this area. And that road, somehow or another, wound around. No, it was on this --- that's right, it went on up here. ...

GRACE: ...

EARL: There was a big cooler, a walk in cooler, it was right on this side of that kitchen.

VICKI: Was it a stone building, the walk in cooler?

EARL: No, it was ... structure. Now these tents, all of them, the foundation was lava rock, and then they had boards, of course, over the top of that. And they had wood floors in the tents. I have pictures of ---

VICKI: Yeah, here's a picture of the lava rocks in this road, cinders. You see some of these ---

EARL: Would that be close to the windmill?

VICKI: Pretty close, yeah.

EARL: ... bath, the bath and washhouse, and the latrine was all ...

VICKI: Some of those, I think, are near this one stone building. Right here together, these days, there is a like a shower and bath area, and kind of a sunk in pit now, so ... the latrine. Then this raised concrete, that you mentioned, I showed you earlier the ... Why I'd love for you to go out there with me tomorrow.

EARL: Well I'll go with you if it will help any.

VICKI: Yes.

... (Discussion)

VICKI: At the Gap Ranch house across the road, was there ever anyone living there during the CCC days?

EARL: No.

VICKI: Okay.

EARL: The only time it was occupied was in the spring of the year, and they brought the sheep in. See there was a sheep-shearing pen there, and oh I expect they'd be there a month, shearing sheep.

VICKI: What happened to all the tents and things when the camp was closed down?

EARL: Pardon me? They all went back to the army.

... (Miscellaneous discussion)

MARY: It was interesting to talk to you folks.

GRACE: Well we've enjoyed it very much.

... (Discussion of pictures)

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