

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #67 - Side A

Subject: Elaine Richardson Murphy

Place: Paisley, Oregon

Date: June 23, 1992

Interviewer: Edward Gray

EDWARD GRAY: ... it tries, there we go. This is Edward Gray with Elaine Richardson Murphy in Paisley, Oregon on 6-23-1992, talking about Wagontire Mountain. Elaine, you going to tell me how old you are?

ELAINE RICHARDSON MURPHY: 61.

EDWARD: 61, you look pretty young for 61. Your dad was Boss Richardson?

ELAINE: Yes.

EDWARD: And he --- how did he end up going out to Wagontire?

ELAINE: He leased it from George McCollum from Malin.

EDWARD: Malin, okay. And George McCollum had bought it from the Hutton' s?

ELAINE: Yes.

EDWARD: America Hutton Foster Sutherland. Tom, no Tom was killed in 1934.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: When you guys --- and you went out there with your dad and ---

ELAINE: And my mom.

EDWARD: And Mom. What was your mom's name?

ELAINE: Thelma.

EDWARD: Thelma ---

ELAINE: Tucker ---

EDWARD: Richardson.

ELAINE: Uh huh.

EDWARD: What --- do you recall --- well what year was that?

ELAINE: 1946.

EDWARD: And do you recall what was there at the Link Hutton's residence in 1946, besides the house?

ELAINE: Well the house, there was an old barn, corral. There was a shop and a garage; maybe it was a garage. I think there was three, two or three buildings out there.

EDWARD: Did anybody ever point out to you where Harold --- it's not that early in the morning folks --- where Harold Bradley was killed, or shot?

ELAINE: Yes, in the shop.

EDWARD: In the shop. Not in the shed, in the shop?

ELAINE: I think it was the shop. It's been a long time.

EDWARD: Can't be that long, I was five years old.

ELAINE: Well I was 14 or something.

EDWARD: Who, do you recall who pointed that out to you by any chance?

ELAINE: No, probably my dad.

EDWARD: Just --- probably your dad.

ELAINE: But I don't remember.

EDWARD: What was in the house at that time, Link Hutton's house?

ELAINE: Well there was an old wood stove.

EDWARD: Any furniture?

ELAINE: Well I don't believe so, because my mom had all her furniture.

EDWARD: By the way, where did you guys come from?

ELAINE: Bly.

EDWARD: Bly.

ELAINE: My dad had a ranch at Bly.

EDWARD: Went to Wagontire.

ELAINE: Yeah, I thought oh god Dad, what have you done now.

EDWARD: I imagine. Did Hutton have any cattle there of his own, do you recall, when you guys came there in '46?

ELAINE: No, I don't believe so. But Jim and Mickie were still alive.

EDWARD: Right, James Sutherland.

ELAINE: Uh huh.

EDWARD: You know Mickie didn't die until 1964.

ELAINE: Yeah, I was in Burns when she passed away.

EDWARD: Any other things you recall about the Hutton, Link Hutton's residence when you first came there? Was it empty --- I mean it was just there.

ELAINE: It was just there, just an old big white house.

EDWARD: It was white?

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Now ---

ELAINE: Two story.

EDWARD: I need to show you a picture. I hope we're talking about the same house.

ELAINE: Oh, I've got a picture of the house.

EDWARD: I can tell you in a flash. Because Sam and Caroline's house too --- That was his father and mother.

ELAINE: Link's?

EDWARD: Yeah, it was up on the hill.

ELAINE: Oh, yeah. Here's the house.

EDWARD: Yeah, that's Link Hutton's house. Gee!

ELAINE: This was my dad, and we were up on top of Wagontire Mountain, and he was acting silly. You can see all the desert, and there is the house.

EDWARD: Oh, up above, he was --- Yeah, that --- This is Boss.

ELAINE: And there is ---

EDWARD: God dang it was white.

ELAINE: Here is part of the house.

EDWARD: Oh, it's a Chevy or Pontiac.

ELAINE: A Chevy. And this is my dad's horses down in the field.

EDWARD: Boy, now that grass is a lot --- oh I know exactly, that big field goes off ---

ELAINE: Yeah. And this was taken in front of the house, and that's the old --- here is the gate.

EDWARD: Is this your mom?

ELAINE: No, that's me.

EDWARD: That's you?

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Well you look like my first mother. Well those were the days, you know.

ELAINE: Yeah, those were the days. This is my nephew, and I took his picture out in front of the house here, and the yard.

EDWARD: Boy, boy, boy. I'll show you some pictures here pretty soon.

ELAINE: That's the house.

EDWARD: Now that doesn't look like sagebrush, that looks like something planted in front there. It looks like some kind of ---

ELAINE: I think it's a bunch of weeds. (Laughter)

EDWARD: Oh. Now, your father went there to take care of that place.

ELAINE: Oh, he had cattle of his own.

EDWARD: Oh, he did?

ELAINE: Uh huh.

EDWARD: Boss did?

ELAINE: Yeah, and he was running them.

EDWARD: Did you ever go up the hill to where the old big, big house was?

ELAINE: Well are you sure it was there when I was there.

EDWARD: Yeah.

ELAINE: Oh, you mean where Jack --- yes, I've been there.

EDWARD: Yeah.

ELAINE: Uh huh.

EDWARD: See that was Link Hutton's.

ELAINE: Yeah, that's the one that burnt down, when Jack West was there.

EDWARD: Yeah. That was the original Jack and Caroline Hutton's house. It used to be the West Post Office, and a stage stop, built in 1890. Big, big, big. Do you recall what was there then in that house?

ELAINE: Well there wasn't anything before Emma and Jack came.

EDWARD: It was empty?

ELAINE: Yeah. And you know they had to fix it up.

EDWARD: Yeah. They added to it.

ELAINE: Yeah. We shivareed Ray Blassingame there.

EDWARD: Oh boy, oh boy, those were the days weren't they? Now I'm going to stick with these houses for just a tiny bit. Did you ever go up the road towards the Burnt House?

ELAINE: Well now what else is it called?

EDWARD: It was the old Dobkins place.

ELAINE: Yes, my sister and her husband lived there when he worked for my dad.

EDWARD: What was their names?

ELAINE: Lorraine.

EDWARD: Lorraine?

ELAINE: Lynch.

EDWARD: Lynch. They lived in that --- do you remember the apple trees?

ELAINE: Yes.

EDWARD: And that house was, set right in the middle?

ELAINE: Uh huh, that's where they lived. And it wasn't very nice either.

EDWARD: No. Schrodgers were there in 1939 and '40, and so was Carlon' s.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: That was Ray Dobkins place.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Or Ray --- Frank.

ELAINE: Frank Dobkins.

EDWARD: By the way, he doesn't have a tombstone.

ELAINE: Doesn't he?

EDWARD: Just Emma ... Emma and William. Do you know of anybody that would have a picture of that Dobkins place? I cannot find one. It's the only one I can't find.

ELAINE: I can go through these pictures again. I surely must have a picture of it, because my sister lived there.

EDWARD: Oh that would be --- anything. Now this is fantastic. Now it doesn't look like this anymore.

ELAINE: Oh, I know it. I've never been back.

EDWARD: But it would be fantastic. Now we'll move on up the road a little further. Ray Jackson's house, do you remember that one?

ELAINE: The Jackson place, yes.

EDWARD: Do you have any idea; were you ever told who built Ray Jackson's house?

ELAINE: No, no.

EDWARD: That's a long, long story how Jackson got that.

ELAINE: Ray Blessingame worked for Carlon' s for, you know, broke colts for him, and he might know.

EDWARD: I talked to him on the phone.

ELAINE: Oh, did you?

EDWARD: That house was a beautiful house.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Nice.

ELAINE: I was up there a lot when Buck and Laura and their kids were there.

EDWARD: I don't know, Ray Jackson, Ray Jackson originally had where the Dobkins place was. He originally, in 1916, got 320 acres right west of the, behind the Dobkins place on the hill there. Then he got the Ray Jackson house from Egli's. But I don't know who built that thing, and when it was built. Ray was there in '25, but I imagine it was there then.

ELAINE: Oh yeah, probably.

EDWARD: I'm pretty sure it was.

ELAINE: Yeah, he probably knows.

EDWARD: Of course he was found dead, you know, in the upstairs bedroom.

ELAINE: Yeah, I saw the blood stains on the stairs.

EDWARD: You did? Interesting. Do you know who found him?

ELAINE: No. But he was a teacher, and he taught my mom.

EDWARD: He taught school here in Paisley, and Silver Lake. Then he was a Lake County School Superintendent in 1908 to 1910. Then he started the Chewaucan Mercantile Store.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Now I don't know where that was, here in Paisley.

ELAINE: Well I ---

EDWARD: And he started the Chewaucan Bank in 1910.

ELAINE: Well Raymond probably knows.

EDWARD: But I think he got himself into some problems and ended up out in Wagontire in 1917.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: He was in the state penitentiary.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Do you know for what, have any idea?

ELAINE: I don't, I have no idea.

EDWARD: Emma Dobkins, Emma Dobkins, did you ever hear of her?

ELAINE: No, well, you know --- can't remember. Was that Frank's wife?

EDWARD: Sister.

ELAINE: Sister.

EDWARD: Died in 1910 at 30 years old. Supposedly a suicide, but --- she's buried up; the gravestone is up there.

ELAINE: Oh, is she?

EDWARD: Anyway. And then you go on, that Jackson house, god dang, Ray Jackson

got that from Egli. Thomas Hutton owned that at one time.

ELAINE: He did?

EDWARD: Anyway, then you go on up the road and you come to the Egli place, where Jim and America Sutherland ---

ELAINE: Yeah, lived.

EDWARD: There are some apple trees there too.

ELAINE: Oh yeah. And they had a big garden.

EDWARD: They had a garden?

ELAINE: Raised a big garden, Mickie did.

EDWARD: Oh. That place is ---

ELAINE: But before you get there, there is one off to the left, and we called her old Two-Gun Sue.

EDWARD: Harry Arnold.

ELAINE: Harry Arnold.

EDWARD: That cabin is still standing.

ELAINE: Is it?

EDWARD: Pretty good shape too. I found some stuff in there from James Burk, from the state penitentiary, he wrote --- And a pile on the floor, the rat poop ---

ELAINE: Oh ---

EDWARD: But I dug around through there --- I do not have a picture of the Egli place either.

ELAINE: No, I'm sure I don't either.

EDWARD: I have no idea what happened to that place.

ELAINE: And there is nothing there, huh?

EDWARD: Nothing. Part of a barn, that's it, shed, shed, that's all. Okay, oh when you

guys were at the Hutton house, Link's house, how did you get your water?

ELAINE: There was a spring up on the hill; I forgot the name of it.

EDWARD: Bunyard Spring is what they called it.

ELAINE: It was drinking water. And then there was, I think, right behind the house there was ---

EDWARD: Where the ---

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: In those trees?

ELAINE: Yeah, but it wasn't any good.

EDWARD: Yeah, it's not even running now.

ELAINE: Isn't it? But my mom washed ... clothes. Heated water and washed clothes.

EDWARD: That Dobkins place, gone, burnt down or something. Now let's go back. Link Hutton, what did you think of Link Hutton?

ELAINE: Oh, I liked Link Hutton.

EDWARD: Why did you like him, remember?

ELAINE: Oh, I don't know, I don't really remember, I just liked him. And I liked to visit with him. And when they moved to Burns, and I was boarding in school, I'd go see them.

EDWARD: Was he a pretty ... guy? Pretty ---

ELAINE: Well he was pretty old when I ---

EDWARD: He would have been --- he'd have been in the 70's, early 70's. Did he ever tell you any stories about Wagontire?

ELAINE: I'm sure he did, I just can't remember.

EDWARD: Did he like kids?

ELAINE: Well he liked me.

EDWARD: He liked you?

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Did he kind of treat you like a granddaughter or some-thing?

ELAINE: Yeah, uh huh. And I liked her real well too.

EDWARD: Hattie May, Hattie May Tyler. Did he ever mention any-thing about Leona Hutton?

ELAINE: No.

EDWARD: About Harold Bradley?

ELAINE: No, no, huh uh.

EDWARD: Did anybody ever mention anything to you about Harold Bradley?

ELAINE: No.

EDWARD: Are you sure Elaine?

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Well I know what happened, but ---

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: But you liked Link?

ELAINE: Yeah, I liked him.

EDWARD: You say you were in Burns when he passed on?

ELAINE: Yes.

EDWARD: That was 1950.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Did he die in that house, do you recall?

ELAINE: Oh, I don't think so; I think he got sick. He probably died in the hospital.

EDWARD: Interest --- I' m going to get these pictures and bring back --- Mickie Hutton Foster Sutherland was known to be a little short thing, wasn't she?

ELAINE: Yes, uh huh.

EDWARD: Like five two maybe.

ELAINE: Yeah, maybe, maybe.

EDWARD: Maybe not that tall.

ELAINE: She was short.

EDWARD: Well how tall was Link Hutton do you think?

ELAINE: Oh, he was kind of a little wiry man.

EDWARD: How tall are you?

ELAINE: Probably --- I'm five seven, or something like that.

EDWARD: Seven. Was he as --- well you weren't that tall then probably.

ELAINE: Well ---

EDWARD: Was he about five six, five eight?

ELAINE: Well five eight, I'd say.

EDWARD: Five eight.

ELAINE: Five seven or five eight. But he wasn't very big.

EDWARD: What did Mickie, did Mickie, did you ever talk to Mickie much?

ELAINE: Oh yeah. But I used to go see her when she moved to Burns all the time. She wasn't very well. But I don't think we talked about anything very important.

EDWARD: Okay. There's the Hutton's. Okay. I keep thinking of these things. You --- well that would have been '46, Elaine, that you went to the Ray Jackson's house, right?

ELAINE: '46, or '47. This was taken in '48.

EDWARD: '48.

ELAINE: I was out there when Laura, because I liked Laura Carlon really well.

EDWARD: That's Laura Bradley Carlon.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Yeah. Who was living in the Jackson house then, do you recall?

ELAINE: Buck and Laura.

EDWARD: Buck and Laura were.

ELAINE: Carlon.

EDWARD: Did they have electricity then?

ELAINE: No.

EDWARD: No. And you, did somebody point out this blood on the stairway, or did you just see it?

ELAINE: No, I think somebody pointed it out to me. I don't know who.

EDWARD: I've heard that many a time. See Ray B. Jackson in that bedroom, in that photograph there, supposedly propped himself on the bed and used a poker, fireplace poker, and held the gun that pushed the trigger. He was shot in the chest, right in the heart.

ELAINE: Huh.

EDWARD: Most people, and I've talked to a lot of them; say that they don't think it was suicide. Who knows?

ELAINE: Who knows?

EDWARD: Okay. Did you ever meet old Harry Arnold and Two-Gun Sue?

ELAINE: Oh yeah, I knew them real well.

EDWARD: Were you in Harry Arnold's cabin?

ELAINE: Yeah, uh huh.

EDWARD: What were they like?

ELAINE: Well they were kind of weird. (Laughter) But Harry Arnold gave my dad, he liked my dad, gave him a black horse. And my dad could never get him gentle, so we sold him to Christianson Brothers, and they called him Black Boss, and bucked Casey Tibbs off.

EDWARD: Harry, what the hell was Harry Arnold doing up there? How was he making a living?

ELAINE: They had cattle.

EDWARD: But he had very little property.

ELAINE: Yeah, I don't know how he lived.

EDWARD: Very little property, and no money. Did he raise horses?

ELAINE: Well he had horses. I don't know if he raised them.

EDWARD: What was Lovetta ---

ELAINE: Loretta.

EDWARD: Loretta, I mean, Valdez Arnold, what the hell was she like?

ELAINE: Well she drank a little bit, you know. Waved the gun around. Scared my mom to death.

EDWARD: Did she literally, actually carry a gun and a holster on her?

ELAINE: Well I --- she showed me the gun, but I never saw it on her. It was a pearl handled pistol.

EDWARD: That sounds --- it might still be laying in that damn house somewhere.

ELAINE: Well they finally had to move to Burns, and somebody had to take care of them.

EDWARD: Yeah, Harry Arnold died in 1964.

ELAINE: I think they moved them to Bend. She had a nephew or something ---

EDWARD: Bend. He played kind of a role, you see, old James Burk was living with Arnolds when he shot Frank Dobkins.

ELAINE: Oh, really?

EDWARD: 1939.

ELAINE: And Loretta has got a nephew.

EDWARD: She does?

ELAINE: Yeah. And the last time I heard they were in Bend, but see I can't remember his name.

EDWARD: Oh, boy, oh boy. No idea? Boy if you remember it, will you write me, Elaine?

ELAINE: Oh yeah, you bet.

EDWARD: Because I bet you ---

ELAINE: Because I was there. I was trying to help them out, like taking them food. Because they were, you know ---

EDWARD: At Wagontire?

ELAINE: No, in Burns, before they took them to Bend.

EDWARD: In Burns?

ELAINE: I took them food, and old ... Gibson shaved him.

EDWARD: Pretty bad shape?

ELAINE: Pretty bad.

EDWARD: He was born in 1879. Oh yeah, he was in his 80's.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Did they ever argue when you were there?

ELAINE: No.

EDWARD: No. I've heard some ---

ELAINE: But they, I think they did.

EDWARD: Was she much younger than he?

ELAINE: I think maybe she was younger, but I don't know how much. And she wasn't a bad looking lady.

EDWARD: No, I heard she was pretty good looking.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: What the hell he was doing out there, I'll never know.

ELAINE: Well I don't even know how many cows he had.

EDWARD: Not many. You know he got ---

ELAINE: I don't know what he was doing out there.

EDWARD: I don't --- I got some stories about him. But he --- what the hell he let James Burk stay with him, I'll never know. James Burk left this cabin the morning he shot Frank Dobkins. It's a wonder he didn't shoot Homer Carlon.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: And Harry Arnold was with him, they were buddies. And Harry Arnold and Link Hutton were kind of --- see Jackson and Dobkins hated Hutton.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: Hutton hated them.

ELAINE: Oh yeah.

EDWARD: That house, Elaine, up in the attic --- its got to be that deep in books, papers, crap.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: The whole --- I'm afraid to climb up, I'm afraid the thing will fall through.

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: But somebody put a tin roof on it.

ELAINE: Oh really?

EDWARD: Yeah. Oh it's gone, and it's shot.

ELAINE: Well it was never very clean when I was in it either. There was fire all over the floor.

EDWARD: The stove is still there, all the counters and stuff. But the rats and stuff ---

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: --- and chipmunks. Did you recall at the Harry Arnold place, being a trap

door?

ELAINE: No. Where at, the trap door?

EDWARD: Underneath the bedroom.

ELAINE: Oh no.

EDWARD: It went down into a cellar type thing. No?

ELAINE: No.

EDWARD: In that bedroom is where I found, 1938 Dobkins lease in the Couch field, where he eventually murdered ---

ELAINE: Yeah.

EDWARD: I found a bunch of letters from Burk and Harry Arnold, and --- that's all in the pickup. But you can't, you can't dig through that too long, its smell ...

(END OF TAPE)

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