

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #92

Subject: Hazel Mace Culp

Place:

Date: April 10, 1972

Interviewer: Pauline Braymen

Release Form: No

Much of the material collected in this interview was from the autobiography of Frederick Louis Mace found in Volume III of the "Centennial History of Oregon 1811-1911", which is found in the Harney County Library resource shelf and will not be repeated here.

Another paper Mrs. Culp has is a handwritten account of her grandfather's life as follows:

"George W. Mace was born near Salem, Massachusetts August 21, 1828. His parents moved to Illinois in 1883. At the age of 18 years, he crossed the plains with Mud Mace, landing in Sacramento, Velreo, California, where he remained until 1852. He moved to The Dalles, Oregon during the fall of 1852, and was married to Miss Samantha B. Henderson, July 20, 1853, from The Dalles, and removed to Rogue River Valley where he located on a donation claim. He built the first ferry on the Klamath River at the mouth of the Willow... He made his home for a number of years in Ellensburg, Washington, where he lost his wife. Moving to Harney Valley in 1900 and has made his home with his son Fritz L. since 1900. Died January 22, 1914, when 85 years old."

Frederick Louis Mace was known to his friends in Harney County as Fritz Mace. He claims the honor of having been the first man to raise grain in Harney County. He was a schoolteacher, assistant postmaster at Jacksonville, and a miner. He was in partnership with John Hanley and started in the cattle business.

On June 20, 1880, he accompanied William Hanley to Eastern Oregon on a cattle drive. He

arrived on July 4 and went to work for Todhunter and Devine for \$30 a month.

He taught school until May 4, 1884, at the school where the Memorial Field ballpark in Burns is now.

He carried mail from here to Lakeview with a packsaddle in the winter, and a buckboard in the summer, over unbroken sagebrush trail. He cut his own pathway, shod his own horses, and packed his own supplies, and grain for the horses. He built his own cabins along the route. He carried the mail for two years.

Fritz Mace started raising cattle but abandoned it in favor of raising sheep in 1888. They drove the sheep to Huntington to sell. He trailed them as far as Wyoming. They also took three or four-year-old steers in the fall, fattened them in the winter, and shipped them to the Portland markets.

Fritz married Adeline Isabel Parker, a native of California in 1883. They had four children: Myrtle, who died at age 7; Clarence, who died at few years ago; Hazel L. who still lives in the house her father built; and Muriel, who died at age 12 or 13.

The Culp property is located about two miles south of the Grange Hall on Hanley Lane.

Hazel tells ... went out to the sheep camp. All the sheepherder had to eat was beans. He said, "I like 'em; dog like 'em too!"

Mama always had a pot of beans on the stove, and a pot of sourdough, and boiled meat. She cooked enough meat to last all day, and the next day too. She had a girl working for us, and the girl looked in the pot and said, "That kind of meat again?" And Mama said, "I'm not going to cook meat three times a day."

They bought enough supplies in Huntington to last all winter. "If you wanted to eat, you had to cook it yourself." Hazel says.

Her father used to buy fresh fruit from John Day, but mostly they had canned and dried fruit.

Later, when her father planted apple, pear, and plum trees in the orchard near the house, it was Hazel's job to carry water to them. They put coal oil cans around each tree, and she filled these

buckets full each day. The cans slowly leaked the water around the roots of the trees. The method was successful, and today they still grow where they were planted long ago.

Hazel went to Poison Creek School. Hattie Bartlett Miler was one of her teachers. Then she went to school in Burns, and to Behnke-Walker Business College in Portland.

She rode sidesaddle to school, and still has her saddle.

She told about the school on the airport property across from what is known as the Old Experiment Station. It was known as Denstedt School. Others have told of this school, but Hazel is the first to put a name to it.

Her dad was up at four every morning, she remembers, and put in a full day. But she observes of life today, "We're living too fast today, and everyone is in too big a rush."

The first car she remembers riding in was a white Ford that belonged to Bill Hanley. It had bucket seats in front. "I liked it." Thought that was really something, she remembers.

They used to take a four-horse team to the forest and haul wood. Her dad went up in May to cut, and then they hauled it down in October. It took twenty cord to last the winter. "That is the reason I finally put in oil." she says. "You couldn't buy decent wood."

Hazel was married to Charles Culp in 1917. They first lived where Hilton Whiting's house is now. They had the place in oats. Then they lived where Wayne Howes' place is on Rye Grass Lane. They lived there until 1924, when they moved into the Mace house her father had built. All their children were born in this house: Pat Culp, rancher; Fred Culp, Burns Postal Department; Myrtle Christy and Verda Tiller.

The Fritz Mace place, better known today as the Culp Ranch, is a beautiful setting. The house, located back off the highway along the Silvies River, is surrounded by natural meadow grass. Hazel has put in many long hours in her yard and garden, hauling in soil, and building up a beautiful lawn and grounds. The house is lovely too, with large picture windows that overlook several miles of meadow, and Wright's Point in the distance.

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