Recollections: People and the Forest

Oral History Interviews

Volume II: The Applegate Valley and Siskiyou Mountains
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PREFACE

This collection of oral history interviews is the second volume in the Rogue River National Forest's series, "Recollections: People and the Forest." Within a single cover are gathered five interviews with people who lived -- and helped make -- the history of southwestern Oregon during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The geographic focus of these interviews is the southwestern portion of Jackson County (and adjacent parts of Siskiyou County, California), in particular the section of the Rogue River National Forest situated in the Siskiyou Mountains and the Applegate Valley -- from Mount Ashland/Wagner Butte on the east to the Applegate/Illinois divide on the west, and from the Jacksonville/Ruch area on the north to the remote Siskiyou Crest to the south.

These interviews concentrate on the time period from the turn-of-the-century (including the Blue Ledge copper mining days) until World War Two, with some discussion of the post-War years as well. Ranching and mining, school-days and social life in the then-isolated Applegate Valley, the area's solitary prospectors, Civilian Conservation Corps activities, and life as the daughter of a long-term District Ranger; these are just a few of the topics that are covered.

These interviews were conducted by Janet Joyner during the mid-1980s. Ms. Joyner, presently the Forest archaeologist for the Siskiyou National Forest, at that time served as the archaeologist for the Applegate Ranger District.

Additional oral histories will be gathered during the 1990s. This will be done as part of the Forest Service's commitment to protect and share the historical heritage of the Rogue River National Forest.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS WITH:

Pearl McKee Byrne

Frances Port Clark

Arthur Jeldness

Guy Watkins

Robert Webb
Pearl McKee Byrne can trace her family's roots in Jackson County back to the 1850s. Raised on a ranch along the upper Applegate River, she recalls life in the Applegate Valley during the early decades of the twentieth century - one-room schoolhouses, dances and other social occasions, the Blue Ledge copper mining boom, some of the solitary prospectors and other local characters. Mrs. Byrne was interviewed in February 1985 at her home near the mouth of Palmer Creek, on the Applegate River. Her recollections give an indication of the remote, rural pace of life in the Applegate Valley before good roads made it a "short" drive from the main population centers of Jackson County.
Janet Joyer: Let's start with you telling me a bit about your early background, such as where and when you were born, and who your parents were.

Pearl Byrne: Well, I was born just this side of Butte Falls, on Butte Creek. The folks came here when I was four years old, to the Applegate.

JJ And where did they come from?

PB My dad, Amos McKee, was born at Logtown, and my mother was born in Illinois. My dad was a miner, so we moved around a lot. Wherever there was a cabin someplace, where he could mine, that was it.

JJ Where did he mainly mine? On the Applegate?

PB Well, he mined right down here [lower Palmer Creek/Applegate River area], when I was maybe five or six years old. And I remember so well -- maybe I was a little older than that -- but people were great for dances. Some of the fellows put up a platform where they could dance. It was on the Fourth of July -- I remember that.

JJ Where was that?

PB Right just about here [near the mouth of Palmer Creek along the Applegate River]. It was Fourth of July, and it's always pretty hot around the Fourth of July. They had it framed up in boughs all over the top, to keep it cool enough. They also had horse races through here. And they had ball games here -- it was a baseball ground. People from different places would come here and play ball -- from Jacksonville, and local people.

When I was young we moved here and there. And the last place we lived was on Palmer Creek, about three-and-a-half miles from the mouth of Palmer Creek. My dad was a partner with a mining company, and he sold out when my sister was a year old -- she's eleven years younger than I am. (This would have been in 1908.) And then we bought the place. And then we bought the farm on the other side of the river and this place is part of that property. I think it was homesteaded by a family named Silva. It's been in the family all these years. My son [Morris] now owns it. I own this part, and we sold that part when my husband was poorly and he knew he couldn't farm it. Anyway, when we bought the property, we lived just down here a little ways [gestures downriver], and he [her father] mined right out here. You can see all those rocks [tailings] along out there, where he mined. [gestures out window]
JJ Did he have partners, or was he on his own?

PB Well, he was pretty much on his own. After he sold that mine up Palmer Creek [at Bailey Gulch; mine later known as "Ray Mine"], I don't think he mined with anyone else, as partners.

JJ Did your father build the cabin your family lived in, up Palmer Creek, at that last mine?

PB No. No, it was already built. Quite a nice house. It was a log house, a two-story house. Really nice. And we lived there -- I don't know -- maybe two or three years. My sister was born up there.

JJ You went to grade school....

PB Down here at -- it was called Palmer Creek School. I've got a picture of it.

JJ How many other children were there in your family?

PB There were four of us, after my sister, Claire, was born. I had two brothers -- they're both gone. One of my brothers worked with my dad in the mine up there, until we came to the ranch here, and then he stayed on the ranch a few years and then he finally went to work for the Hubbard Brothers [Hardware] in Medford.

My grandparents did live here, you see, at Logtown. Where the "Logtown Rose" was. And they sold that -- it was all mining around there, at that time -- they sold it and moved to Butte Creek. [About 1892 or 93.] I don't know how long they were at Logtown before we moved over there on Butte Creek. And my dad said that -- this is always funny -- they had to have a house, so he had to build one. And my grandmother kept saying to him, "Well, you've got to get that house built before that baby comes!" [laughter] I always say I was born in a "green log" house!

JJ At the Palmer Creek School, were there quite a few other children besides your family?

PB Oh yes. I think they had all grades. I forget how high it went [eighth grade] -- they had several teachers. They had school just in the spring and in the fall. They didn't have nine months of school. My brothers both went there to that school, too. I don't think my sister went there. After that, they built this school over here by the [Jackson] campground [Beaver Creek School]. She went to that one when my folks lived up here in this house. She graduated there. I don't know whether she went to high school or not. If she did, she only went a year or two, I guess. Schools were different then, than they are now. And the only way of going was to walk. I rode a horse. It's about a mile-and-a-half from here. It was down in that little flat just before you turned up this road [Palmer Creek Road]. So, I had a horse that I rode to school.

JJ Did you have any classmates who were your special buddies?
PB Yes. Of course, they're all gone...Aletha Buck was one of my very, very good friends. And, of course, I had cousins -- I had several cousins.

JJ Would you get together on weekends, or other times other than school?

PB Well, I'll tell you, things were different then. The kids always had something to do at home.

JJ So you mainly played with your brothers and sister?

PB Oh yes. My younger brother was three years older than I am. We were great pals. We had a lot of fun together.

JJ What kinds of games or activities did you have -- you and your brother?

PB Oh, I don't know. It would be hard to tell. Mostly I remember when we lived on Palmer Creek there. There was a lot of snow in the winter time, and we had a lot of time to play in the snow, because there was no school in the winter time when there was bad weather, so we did a lot of that. And climbed trees.

JJ Did you go to high school?

PB No.

JJ You would've had to go to Medford?

PB We'd have had to go to Jacksonville.

JJ Since it was too far to commute, did people board there, then?

PB Yes. You'd have to live with somebody there. No, it was different then. Now, the bus goes by here twice a day and takes children to Medford.

JJ How did you meet your husband, John?

PB He lived up Squaw Creek. His family lived up Squaw Creek, and we lived here, so we just kind of grew up together, really. He was about six-and-a-half years older than I am. And we were married when I was about nineteen-and-a-half years old. We raised three children. We lost one little girl, three-and-a-half years old. I'm so lucky now, two of them live here and one in Medford. He [John] was a farmer -- one of these little farmers.

JJ What was it like having babies in such an isolated place? Did you have a doctor?

PB Yes. We had a family doctor. Two of my children were born up Squaw Creek, and one over here with my mother. The other one was born in Medford. Then later, we sold the place, and moved into Medford and that's why my youngest daughter was born in Medford. Before that, he decided he'd go logging -- logging was pretty good then -- so, he went over to a place in northern California. That was how we lost our little girl. There was a sickness going around -- it was intestinal flu. She just took very sick
and we lost her before we could even get a doctor. So that was it over there. He went back, but I didn't go. I stayed here. Later, we had this other little girl, which was a great pleasure. She's been a wonderful pleasure to me.

JJ Were there any doctors up in this area, or did you have to send to Medford?

PB Oh, no. He came out. The doctor came out and delivered. Oh yes, in Medford you could call doctors into your home and they'd come. But not now. Now it's altogether different.

JJ But the doctor was able to make it in time -- before the baby came?

PB Yes. Oh, yes.

JJ By then, was there a telephone going up the valley yet?

PB No, telephones came after. I'm not sure just when we got our first telephone. It was before I was married.

JJ I'd like to ask you about a few specific people and places...Did you know Knox McCloy?

PB Oh yes! When we were married, my husband had the post office, the Watkins Post Office. And, of course, we had all those old fellas coming after mail. And P.J. Sullivan is another old-timer. Bruce Buck. Those are the old prospectors, miners, who lived up in there.

JJ What was Sullivan's story?

PB Well, he was just a miner, and I forget now just where he lived. He and Bruce Buck lived together. They lived -- must have been pretty close. They were probably like we were -- just wherever there was a cabin.

JJ Bruce Buck was related to Charles Buck?

PB Yes. A brother. And Charley Buck had another brother, Clarence. We went to school together. They were all about the same age. And Aletha was his sister. Yes. They were very good friends of ours.

JJ Do you remember any stories about "Knox" McCloy?

PB Yes. There have been funny things told on him. And I guess the cabin now -- I saw a picture of it not too long ago -- where he stayed, was built around trees. I don't think I've ever seen the cabin. Well, he was a character. He was a nice fella. Yes, they told some awful stories on him. And, of course, Lee Port's [early District Ranger on the Applegate] son and my son were quite pals. They were about the same age and they visited together, and went together quite a bit.

JJ What was Lee Port Sr. like?

PB Oh, nice! My husband worked for the Forest Service then. We all liked Lee. A nice fellow. And Maude. We went to their place many a time. It's
bad...Lee went...wasn't too old...and Lee Jr. either. That's bad, too bad. Maude, Mrs. Port, was the sister of a dear teacher I had. Peacheys from Ashland. I think the Peacheys lived in Ashland. And she taught this Palmer Creek School.

JJ You must have known Mrs. Crow?

PB Yes.

JJ Do you know much about her early story -- how she got to this area?

PB No, I don't. You see, they lived up there [at Copper], and we lived here. But I have been at the store, and I have been at her home. But she and Mr. Crow...I don't know whether he died here, or whether he left here and died. She was a widow a long time. She used to come to our dances. The hall -- our Grange Hall -- was right down here. At the junction where you turn off down here, where the [McKee Bridge] store is now. Right across the parking lot from the McKee Store, where those buildings are there. That was our first Grange Hall.

JJ When was that used?

PB That was in -- it'll be fifty years in October. And then it burned in 1955. And then we built that other brick building down there, this side of Little Applegate.

JJ You used to have a lot of dances?

PB Oh yes. That's how we could build our hall. The first thing they did, was they got the piece of ground. And then each Granger -- men -- cut poles, so many logs and so many rafters. It was all donated. And they got the platform down, so they could start holding dances and make the money! Then they finally got the hall built. I have a picture of the old Grange Hall somewhere. It was a nice hall. We're celebrating 50 years in October.

JJ Were those dances usually a Saturday night affair?

PB Yes, most always a Saturday night. At that time, the C.C.C. [Civilian Conservation Corps] boys were camped up at Camp Applegate. And they'd come down for the dances. And I think some of the boys helped with the building too. And then they built that park there [McKee Bridge] too, you know.

JJ So the CCC crews did a lot of socializing with the local community?

PB One of them married one of our girls here. They still live down at Ruch. She was a Harr. The Harrs used to live right there at the dam. The dam took in our place and their place. And the Swayne place. The Swaynes had four girls, I think, and they lived here, but then they heard about this dam going in, and they said they never wanted to see it. They said they'd never come back. That's changed everything an awful lot up there. Yes...I don't know...maybe for the better. Progress has to go on, you know. But we hated to see the change.

JJ You said there was a post office at Watkins...
PB  The first post office was at the Watkins' Ranch, that's across from...well, it's all changed up there now! Well, just before you get to the lake, Watkins' had a home this side. It was on the other side of the river, though. They had a ranch there, and there was quite a family of them. And they had this post office. Well later, they didn't want it anymore. So I think it went from there to our place. That was before I was married, though. And then my husband didn't want it anymore, so it went on up Squaw Creek to Harrs'. And then later, they didn't want it, so it went up to Crows'. It was called Copper then. Watkins and then Copper.

JJ  I heard that at one point the Watkins Post Office was a mile up Squaw Creek. That would have been when Harrs had it, then?

PB  Yes.

JJ  And where exactly on Squaw Creek were you? On the south side?

PB  On the west side. It's under the dam now, but you'd go up French Gulch and turn and go around and over the hill and head up Squaw Creek. It was a little less than a mile from the [Applegate] river. I used to walk down to the road to get the mail, so it wasn't very far.

JJ  Did you ever know a fellow named Mengoz?

PB  Frank Mengoz? Yes, I have his picture. He used to come down to the Byrne's, where they had the post office, to get the mail.

JJ  What was he like?

PB  Well, that was before my time.

JJ  Do you know where his cabin was?

PB  It was up Squaw Creek, but I don't think it was right on the creek. You go up Squaw Creek and you turn off and go...well, I'm just not sure anymore.

JJ  Did you ever walk or ride along the Penn Sled Trail?

PB  No, I don't know that I was ever at the Pennsylvania Mine. About all I ever rode horseback was to school. So I really haven't been around up there too much. I did go to Cinnabar Springs [on the Klamath River side of the Siskiyous] along the old trail. I wasn't feeling very well and my son was about six years old. A friend of mine, of the family, wanted to go into Cinnabar Springs for an outing. So my husband took us on horseback. Some walked and some rode. We spent, oh, maybe a week or ten days there. It was kind of nice. Finally, not so many people were going there. But for awhile, it was quite popular, quite popular. People went, I think, more just to get away. I don't think the water ever did 'em much good, but anyway they had a lot of fun, I guess. It was mostly before my time. There weren't many there when we went camping.

JJ  Did you take a tent along to set up?
PB Yes, we did. And we cooked on an open fire.

JJ Did you ever know a fellow named Henry Harthon?

PB Henry Harthon? Well, that was before my time, but the name is familiar. Those were all miners. And Collings'. They lived up there next to Watkins. Watkins were farming. And Collings', I think most of their income was mining.

JJ Collings Mountain was named after them.

PB Yes, the Collings were always around, whenever we had a dance or anything like that. They furnished all the music for the dances here. They had a violin and an organ. For other entertainment, people would go on picnics -- you couldn't go very far. There weren't any cars, you know. No cars at that time. And lots of times they had dances in people's homes. My folks used to have dances where they lived. One time, and maybe other times -- it was not a very big house -- they'd take out the partitions between the bedrooms, and have a dance! And at that time, I don't think they were playing ball here [in the large field adjacent to Mrs. Byrnes' present home]; they were playing where my son lives now, on up the river [Nick Wright Flat]. They wanted to get suits for the boys to play ball in, so they had this dance to help raise money. The team also needed a name, so each person thought up a possible name for the club. A teacher [Christine Hara, who taught at Watkins School] suggested the "Blue Jays" -- the suits were going to be blue -- so that's how they got their name. And at that time, Ruch had a ball team, and so did Jacksonville. So they would play each other, either in Jacksonville or Ruch. It was usually on a Sunday. It would take all day. By the time you go there, and they play the game, and you come back, it was all day!

JJ When was that?

PB That was in about '13, '14, '16, something like that. They played up on what was called Nick Wright Flat, where my son had his turkey ranch.

JJ Who was Nick Wright?

PB All I know is that he used to live up there somewhere, in an old cabin just this side of where my son Morris lives. There was a house there. I remember seeing it, but that was so long ago. And then they'd play down on the Applegate. They had a park down there where they used to play. Baseball was about the only game they played around here. There was no football or basketball or anything like that. It was all baseball. We were living up Palmer Creek when they played here and we would walk down from Palmer Creek -- three miles and a half! My mother would fix a lunch and we would come down about half-way or more and have our lunch, then come on down. My dad always liked to play ball. Then we'd walk back and I tell you, the walking back was a long ways! Once in a while -- you see we didn't have a ranch or any field, so our horses ranged -- once in a while we could catch them and ride down, but that was just if we were lucky.

JJ What year were you born?
PB 1894.

JJ Did you ever go up to the Blue Ledge Mine while it was going strong?

PB Oh yes. I didn't get up there much when it was going full swing. My husband worked up there. There wasn't much money to be made on the ranch, so he worked at the Blue Ledge Mine, in the kitchen. My folks had a ranch over there on the other side of the river, they put in a big garden. When the Blue Ledge was going, they'd come down and meet the stage at McKee, at the old bridge. The stage people would come out from Jacksonville and the Blue Ledge people would come down to McKee. When they'd come down from Blue Ledge, they'd have an order for vegetables, and we'd gather vegetables and have them ready to send back up to Blue Ledge. We had corn and berries and other vegetables. My youngest brother hauled ore out of the Blue Ledge Mine when they were mining up there. By that time they had trucks. A second cousin of mine who lived up here, Stevenson, had four or six head of horses which he used to haul ore into town, to the railroad. They had bells on those horses' manes. There wasn't any road on this [west] side of the river, so you could hear the bells on those horses coming up the other side of the river. And Mule Creek up here, the road was so narrow, you could hear if someone was coming. It wasn't as if you could turn out and let someone pass! And then later they got the trucks, and the horses went.

JJ Do you remember the town of Eileen?

PB Yes, I think I remember being there. Of course I was young then. I was there when some of the things were still there, but I never was there when it was going really strong. A man by the name of Watson -- Harold Watson from England was working someplace and heard about the Blue Ledge Mine. He went over the hill to the Blue Ledge Mine and married my husband's sister!

PB They had a "trolley" because most of the children lived on the other side of the river and the school [Palmer School] was on this side. Why they built the school on this side, I don't know. There must have been more miners' children [who would have lived up Palmer Creek, on the west side of the river]. My uncle's family would go across [the river] down there on the trolley, and we would do that too. I have a picture of that trolley.

JJ What was the trolley like?

PB Just a box, on a cable, which went from one side of the creek to the other. The box was probably six foot square, something like that. We'd get in there, and then we'd pull a rope and that would take us across the creek. And then if someone on this side wanted the trolley, they'd pull it back. I have a picture of Maude Harr [Ditsworth], who was the teacher at one time, in the trolley. Two of my friends were with her.

JJ While the tape recorder was off, you told me about a mother and a daughter who taught at Beaver Creek and Watkins schools. What were their names again?

PB Stoker, Ina and...I forget her mother's name. They lived together just this side of the dam.
JJ Do you remember other teachers who taught in this area?

PB Yes, they changed teachers fairly often. I went to Miss Kate Buckley.

JJ Why was there such high turnover for teachers? Did the women come with their husbands to the area and then leave when mining didn't pan out?

PB They hardly ever taught when they had a husband. They were just girls. But this Ina taught. She taught after she was married. And after she had Ethel, she taught at the Ruch School. I don't know how many years she taught, but she was a good teacher.

JJ Some of your very oldest memories, then, are from when you lived in the cabin a quarter-of-a-mile or so down the river here?

PB Yes. I was pretty young when I lived in that cabin. But I do remember going with my brothers to school. Some of the teachers used to board at my uncle's. And my mother used to keep some of the girls. That was after I was married.

JJ Can you remember what that house was like, that you lived in down here on the river?

PB It was a log cabin. I have a picture of that cabin. There wasn't much money to make off that mining claim. If you could do a little work, you could hold it, but it wasn't worth it. So the Government took it over. That's where the campground is [Flumet Campground] at the upper end, just after you come over that hill there, down next to the river. There's a flat back in there. There's an old rose bush there, right where the cabin used to be. And they used to dance in that old cabin when we lived there. And, of course, Mother would cook, bake bread, and everything like that. And they'd have a midnight supper.

My mother was a busy woman. She had us four children. She made all the bread and washed everything by hand. Things had to be ironed then. And when we lived up at the mine there [Ray Mine], she kept the partner of my dad -- he boarded with us. And it seemed like they had another fellow there that boarded.

When we moved down here to the ranch, Dad raised red Mexican beans, and I don't know how many years he raised them. They had a thrasher -- that's a whole lot different than now. In the winter time then, that was a job. You'd have sacks of beans there and put them on the table and sort out all the beans -- sort all the rocks out. That was a winter job. Then when they'd get a load, they'd take them into town. We didn't get to go to town very often.

JJ How often would you go to town?

PB Well, three or four times during the winter, I suppose. And they always bought food in quantity -- flour, sugar, and bacon. And we raised our own vegetables, of course. Everything was prepared right at home. Those were busy times on the [Butte Creek] ranch. And he had cattle, too. He said
that he and his brother-in-law used to go and saw down a big fir tree that had a lot of moss on it, and that was feed for the cattle. We had a little acreage there, but it was that sticky soil, and you had to farm it just right, or you couldn't raise anything. Things would grow if you'd get them in at the right time, but it was hard. My father would work over here at Logtown, mining, and then go over there to the ranch every two or three weeks. And when he'd come home, he'd be so glad to see me, and, of course, I'd be so glad to see him! Those were pretty tough times.

JJ Do you know much about your father's family?

PB They were a big family. I think there were fourteen children, but they didn't all live to grow up. And one of my dad's brothers had thirteen children. That was a lot of work for those women! Of course, the children all helped, as soon as they got big enough. They helped take care of the other children, and helped with other things.

JJ Did you ever meet any of the Chinese miners who had stayed on in the area?

PB I've heard my folks tell about when my grandparents were living down at the Logtown Rose, that Grandma did have a Chinese man helping her. And I do remember seeing Chinese with the long braid. One time, when my grandfather was working down there he had a blacksmith shop, he sharpened picks for the miners, and there were a lot of Chinese around then.

My grandparents came here with two children by covered wagon from Missouri. The first place they stopped was around Phoenix, and there were Indians here at that time. They were "on the war path" at that time. The Army had a station there and my grandparents had to stay there several months [near Roxy Ann Butte] because it wasn't safe anyplace else! My grandfather had a place over across Bear Creek in what's now a wonderful orchard [now Hillcrest Orchard]. While they were living there [near Roxy Ann Butte], my grandmother said an Indian came and wanted something to eat. She wasn't afraid because by that time the white people had them pretty well under control.

My grandfather came over to Logtown because there was a lot of mining here. He built a log house there. And that's where most of his children were born and raised. My grandfather was John McKee. I don't know how long they stayed there, but the children were all pretty well grown when they moved over to Butte Creek, near Derby. My mother's folks lived on Elk Creek. Sometimes we would go to see my other grandparents. We'd do that about once a year. In later years, my father's parents came and lived with my folks [former Silva Ranch]. Grandmother died over here. My grandfather was staying with my aunt over on Butte Creek when he passed away, a long time after that.

I remember, when I was just first married, Indians living up Squaw Creek from where we lived. I remember an old squaw with "a hundred and eleven" on her chin. And that was something new to me! They were nice people. [It was customary in the Western Oregon and Northern California Indian society for the women to be tattooed with three vertical lines on the chin, which looked like the number "111" to the white settlers.]
JJ What year was that?

PB Well, I was married in 1914, so it was right around that time. Later, those people moved out and I think they lived in Jacksonville until [the Arrowsmiths] they died.

JJ Do you know what they were doing up Squaw Creek?

PB Oh, probably mining. Most all of these people, it was about the only way they could make a living. There wasn't anything on the ranches. They'd have little ranches, but just for themselves; there was no money in it. One time after my parents had moved to Butte Creek, one of my cousins took my grandparents out to Logtown. He had an automobile at that time. It must have been something for them to get into an automobile! When they got out there (now this was told to me), there was a horse or cow in the house, which was about down, with its head sticking out of the window! Grandma said she never thought she'd see that!

My grandfather loved to dance. He was quite a dancer. They had an upstairs, because they used to dance upstairs. That's how I know the house was two-story. I don't think I was ever in the house -- they were gone by that time [to Butte Creek]. He taught school at Logtown for awhile.

JJ Did you ever hear anything about the Chinese man that Sinn's Bar was named for?

PB No. But I remember a fellow named Edwards had a store up at Joe Bar. He married a Watkins girl. And it seems like we went up there to a dance one time at the store.

JJ Joe Bar used to be quite a busy place, I guess?

PB Yes, I know quite a few people who lived at Joe Bar. Probably three, four, or five families lived there. I think Edwards was from England. Frank Edwards.

JJ Did you go up to the town of Steamboat very often?

PB Yes, oh yes. One of the Culys married one of my cousins and lived on the Steamboat Ranch there. Maude Harr, one of my teachers, also taught up at Steamboat. The school wasn't too far from the Culy Ranch. My husband was stationed not too far above Steamboat when he worked for the Forest Service [at Sturgis Guard Station]. I'd go up and stay with him for a few days at a time. I don't know exactly when that was, but it was after we had a family. Around 1930s. He worked for the Forest Service for quite a while. He worked at a station over on the Little Applegate, and then he spent one winter up at one of the lookout stations [Tallowbox]. My husband worked there and I worked there at night. Later I worked at the Star Ranger Station. A couple of us [women] would change off. This was during the war [Aircraft Warning Service during World War II]. They had to have people at the lookout stations and they would phone in to the ranger station. Maude Zeigler and I would trade off. Sometimes I'd go down at midnight and relieve her and sometimes she'd relieve me. I remember I had my family then.
JJ Was the Depression rough on people in this area?

PB Well, in 1918, we lived on the ranch and we didn't notice it much because my husband raised potatoes and we had a garden. I guess it was tough for other people, but it wasn't tough for us. We had cattle so we always had milk and butter. But we would hear of other people. No, I think most of my tough time was before I was married, when we were moving around, with the mining. Of course, kids don't know much about it--I've always said I don't remember being hungry. We always had plenty to eat. Mother would always fix something. And my dad was a good provider, and what they had, they made good use of!

Most of my enjoyment was going to dances. I love to dance! We'd go to dances near the Applegate Store. Leave here in the middle of the afternoon, and we'd get back in the middle of the forenoon next morning. [laughs]. Well, that's a long way to go -- and dance! We'd leave there about three or four o'clock in the morning. They had supper down there at the Rose Hall. It was just after you go across the bridge there at the Applegate Store. The buildings have all changed now, but they had a dance hall. You'd dance 'til midnight then eat supper, then dance till three or four. In fact, that's one of the tunes they played -- "Four O'Clock in the Morning" (laughs).

JJ So you wouldn't spend the rest of the night there?

PB Oh no. We didn't do that often, but I can remember doing it. That was before I was married. Then later, they had what they called a "community hall," and that was right across the road from the Applegate Store. It was quite a large hall. The Applegate Grange was in that hall. My husband and I joined that grange before we built this hall up here [Upper Applegate Grange]. When we'd finished building the Grange Hall here, we dedicated it, and then it burned. And then we built the other hall down there and we had a nice dedication for it.

END OF INTERVIEW
Frances Port Clark was born in 1919 to Lee and Maude Port. At that time her father was Ranger of the Applegate Ranger District of the Crater (now Rogue River) National Forest, a position Lee Port was to hold into the mid-1940s. Residing at the Forest Service ranger station on Star Gulch during the 1920s-30s, Frances Port Clark spent much of her girlhood on horseback, accompanying her father during his official travels into remote sections of the Siskiyou Mountains. Interviewed in February 1986 at her Eugene home, Mrs. Clark recalls many of the people, places, and incidents that made her childhood an unusual and memorable one: prospectors like John "Knox" McCloy, hydraulic mining on Sterling Creek, rides up into the high rangeland country each summer, community get-togethers at Palmer Creek School. Her memories provide much information about the early Forest Service era in the Applegate Valley.
Janet Joyer: Mrs. Clark, I'd like to have you explain a little bit about the background of your parents and your grandparents, as much as you can remember of where they were born and when, and other details of their origins.

Frances Clark: Okay, starting with my mother's people, whose family name was Peachey, my grandfather was born in Michigan. He was the youngest son of the family. All of the older brothers were in the Civil War. Two or three of them were killed in the war or died immediately after from war wounds. My grandfather was just too young to be involved in it. He ended up being a school teacher. He moved to Kansas eventually. I believe he married my grandmother in Missouri and lived in Kansas briefly and they eventually ended up in "Indian Territory," which is now Oklahoma. My mother was born in Indian Territory, and soon after that, the Indian nations were thrown open for settlement by white people, and her parents went into that territory and secured a ranch. My grandfather taught school and ran a little family ranch that managed to support them. They were "private subscription" schools, although school buildings as such were furnished by the community. My grandfather maintained a record, which I think maybe we still have, where he was paid off in so many bushels of corn, or fresh pork, or sweet potatoes, or something like that, in lieu of tuition.

My father's parents were married in Oklahoma, although my grandmother came from Massachusetts, and my grandfather had come from Cincinnati. My father was named after the town of Lee, Massachusetts. He was named Lee Chapin Port, and Chapin was a family name on my grandmother's side. Soon after he was born -- he was still a very small infant -- his parents moved to Mexico City and then to Seattle. I think the family records indicate he was into land speculation and he lost the family fortune in Seattle. [laughs] They ended up back in Indian Territory, and they established a small store and pharmacy [pharmacy run by her grandmother, a pharmacist] at - well, I guess you wouldn't call it a cross roads, but it was on the cattle trail, where cattle were driven by into Kansas, so it had some population that came and went.
So my parents grew up as little kids in and near the little town of Port, Oklahoma -- or Oklahoma Territory. My father's sister, who was older, married and moved to Jacksonville, Oregon. She wrote back glowing letters of all the "milk and honey" that flowed in the Rogue Valley. [laughs]. My mother's people started for Oregon, driving wagons, and it took them into the second summer. They stayed the first winter near Boise and then came on to Jacksonville the next year. And they were followed in a few years by my grandmother Port and my father, who I think was about fifteen at the time. So their friendship was all renewed again, and that meant that at that time, my mother was thirteen or fourteen and my dad was fifteen or sixteen, so they were eventually married in 1912. My mother had gone to Southern Oregon Normal [School] until the State Legislature put it out of business and closed it down. She had taken the State teaching exam and was a schoolteacher. She taught at Forest Creek and Ball Creek. Ashland Soda Springs, I think perhaps, was her last teaching position. My father went to high school in Jacksonville. After school, he was an apprentice blacksmith at Applebaker's. And I'm not sure but what that blacksmith shop turned into an auto repair shop, and it may still be in Jacksonville, for all I know. My father also mined on -- I believe it was Daisy Creek. He also mined right in the backyard where they lived, which was up on Hill Street. In fact, we still own that property in Jacksonville.

JJ At what point did your parents marry? Was it after he started working for the Forest Service?

FC Yes, I believe he may have mined the first winter. They were married at Christmas time and I think he may have mined that winter. Very soon after that, they were at Mosquito or Lodgepole Guard Station or Ranger Station [on Butte Falls Ranger District]. And he was at Sterling on the Applegate. I think the next move was to Hutton [Guard Station], which at that time was a separate Ranger District from Star. My brother, I think was four during that period of time, when they would have been spending their summers at Hutton; then they maintained a home in Jacksonville during the winter time. I think it must have worked out pretty well for them to do that.

JJ At what point did they move up to Star Ranger Station?

FC Well, I'd need a little better documentation, but it must have been either 1917 or 1918. (I was born in 1919.) The precise point when they moved to Star was when Mr. McKechnie got transferred to Alaska, and I think when he vacated that house, they moved in. And, as Forest Service houses go, it was an elegant house. It had a bathroom with a shower and wash basin, but it still had a trail outside that ran around the side of the house to the outhouse, but it was considered modern for those days. And I'm sure my mother was delighted to be that much nearer civilization, and to be able to get out a little more -- to have the good life, so to speak.
JJ How often would she go back and forth to Medford?

FC In the summer, very little. I would imagine that at any given point, she had two months' supply of groceries on hand. The house was later modified to have a good-sized pantry, a walk-in pantry with all kinds of storage space. She purchased things in case lots, and flour came in 100-pound sacks, and sugar in big sacks, that went into a big bin. And the cellar was always full of home-canned fruit and meat and various things. The town was not a necessity. When you did go, you went with absolutely everybody's shopping list. And you went and spent the whole day, and you ran the errands from one end of town to the other. The last stop was in Jacksonville at the meat shop, because with no electricity and no refrigeration, fresh meat was a real treat in the summer. Hopefully you got home in time for dinner so that it could be cooked and used without further delay! Sears and Roebuck and Montgomery Wards catalogs were very precious volumes, and used. The mail came up the river three times a week. The road went up the east side, so to get across, we had to walk across a swinging wire footbridge, down at the mouth of Star Gulch. That meant you had to stagger across the bridge carrying whatever you picked up, or the mail. She could call to Goddard's Grocery Store in Jacksonville, and they would box up everything and take it across the street and put it on the mail, and it'd come on up the river. So one of my jobs as a little kid was often to go get the mail. There was a big canvas and leather bag that it would come in. I don't think I ever lost any in the river, but you know the possibility was good! That footbridge was about three feet off the river, as I remember it; it was "wiggley," and was not my favorite part of the trip.

JJ Continuing with your early childhood, you mentioned that you attended Beaver Creek School, which was located about a half-mile above Palmer Creek on the east side of the Applegate River. The class was very small; when you entered first grade, you were the only first grader. What were the family names of the other children in the school?

FC There were some of the McKees and Alice Snyder, Ada Carroll. Later, the Byrne family moved back to the Applegate after having been in town for awhile, and I was in the same grade with Gladys Byrne. Evelyn Byrne was younger, but I believe she was there at the same time. Also, Rosella Offenbacher, Lance Offenbacher's daughter. She was younger. There were three of us that graduated by the time we were eighth-graders. I think the school had grown to about thirteen kids. Gladys Byrne, a Fletcher -- I want to say Bob Fletcher, but I think that was his father -- actually, I think there were four of us. We almost wiped the school out when we graduated! There was a girl called Anita, who was a niece of George Peck, who had a little farm about a mile above the Ranger Station, back off up on a side road. I believe this family had come to stay with him for the winter or something, but she was a relative of his, and they were there for just that one year.

JJ Who were your best pals in grade school? Did you have girlfriends you chummed around with?

FC Well, not really, because there were so few of us the same age. If you wanted to play baseball, the big kids had to tolerate the little kids in
order to get enough people to shag the ball. And if we had any kind of
game that took choosing sides, the little kids were divided up and parcelled
out equally so they'd be handicapped in the same way. But some big kid
would come along and grab you by the hand, if it was a running game, and it
seems to me I can remember flying along with my feet hitting the ground
occasionally, with the big kids really keeping you going. I don't think
that at school we had people divided into groups to that extent. Of my
same age, it was Gladys Byrne and Leah McKee.

JJ  Was your brother more of a playmate, then, than any of the kids at school?

FC  He tolerated me. I was little and tagged along, and he tolerated me. But,
also I was a warm body, and I too could chase balls, so there was a place
for me. I recall thinking that if I lived long enough, I'd get big enough
to beat him up, but the day never came, and finally he was pretty nice to
me, and I basked in this new status, and we got along in the best sort of
way.

But I recall the pleasure of having people come visit who had children
anywhere near my age, and it was the highlight of any day to get to play
with another kid that was anywhere near your age or had your interests.
For a year or two, besides this boy by the name of Fletcher, who was in our
grade, he had two sisters -- Katherine, who later married one of the
Straubes [Fred], and they all lived across the river from Star and down
towards the old Cameron Bridge. And she had a younger sister, Audrey. I
think they left the river soon after we got out of school.

When it came to really long-time friends, Maude Poole Zeigler, who lived
across the river, was a very special friend. She made doll clothes for me
and did ever-so-many really nice things as we were growing up. She went
swimming with us every day in the swimming hole down at the Ranger Station,
which I hope is still in operation and appreciated by other generations.
We also did a lot of swimming right at the mouth of Star Gulch. There was
a big hole with a big rock down there. We spent a lot of time there. But,
Maude Zeigler was a very special friend. She was old enough to be
considered "responsible," so we would occasionally get to do things with
her that we would not be allowed to do on our own.

JJ  How much older was she?

FC  She might be as much as twelve or fifteen years older than I am. She was
not married at that time.

JJ  So, sort of a "big sister?"

FC  Um-hmm. A very special friend.

JJ  It was somewhere during those years that you began accompanying your father
on his pack trips through the District?

FC  Yes. The family story he told me -- and I think there was a picture around
here someplace -- when I was about ten months old, and he took me to
Tallowbox Lookout on his horse. [laughs] The trip to Tallowbox was kind of
an all-out effort -- it was about ten miles. Really steep for part of
that. So it was a big trip! I can't remember not having a horse and I can't remember learning to ride and I can't remember my first trip. [My father] enjoyed our company and was very patient. We soon learned to be pretty self-sufficient in terms of riding and taking care of our horses, and being able to take care of ourselves. He was very supportive in the idea that we should be independent, try lots of things. He thought we could do them, even when we didn't think we could do them. [laughs] He was sure we could do them. It was, as I look back, a very happy time of growing up. In fact I look back on it as a very special childhood. I didn't think of it as a special childhood then, because we lived out in the boonies and we didn't have nice things like electricity and some other things that maybe people in town had. Now, I think it was a very special childhood. We also -- and I do appreciate this fact, that perhaps wasn't shared by everyone who lived out there -- is that we had the resources to not feel locked in. That we could enjoy being in the woods and in the hills, but we could also enjoy, on any given day, some of the things that went with not being out in the woods. My mother, every now and then I think, had a sudden feeling that her children were missing out on some culture, and she would haul us off to some place, expose us to something else. For two years of my grade school, I went to the "Lab School" at Southern Oregon Normal School. It was Lincoln Grade School built for a "Lab School." You would have a regular classroom, then off the back of it were three small classrooms, so there would be maybe twenty-five or thirty of you in a grade with a supervising teacher, and then three student teachers would man those little rooms, so you'd end up with eight or ten to a student teacher for a particular subject and then for the next subject you'd be shuffled into little groups in the rooms with the student teachers. We thought it was really neat. But I was homesick and missed being home. I boarded with my grandparents in Ashland for fourth and fifth grades. Then I went home to finish grade school. And then went back to Ashland for high school. Then I went to Oregon State as all good Forest Service families do! [laughs]

JJ What was your major at Oregon State?

FC My major was Home Economics. I graduated from what they called the "Professional Curriculum." There didn't seem to be any place to go when you're twenty years old with a new Bachelor's degree in Professional Home Economics, so I went back the next year to Graduate School and picked up enough Education and some other graduate courses to qualify for State Certification. Then after World War II was over, Harland and I both went back to school and I got a Master's. My particular field of interest is Child Development and Childhood Education. So...Oregon State feels like home. My brother also went to Oregon State, in Forestry.

JJ Did you, at any point, wish that you could go into Forestry, even though, as you mentioned earlier, the attitude was quite closed toward women?

FC Oh...it never occurred to me that it was a possibility, and I didn't waste too much time worrying about it. I was never shut out at home. I can recall, in the fall my father used to start writing fire reports and determining locations and I always got taken along to pull the chain. And I learned very young that it was kind of fun to plot fires and figure azimuths and things like that...so I thought I knew quite a bit about
that. I probably knew as much about the country as anybody except my Dad. I loved it. But I also discovered somewhere along the line that there was a great big world out there that I didn't know much about. So that was another challenge.

I worked one summer in the Medford office of the Forest Service, when they started requiring entry permits during World War II. And then after Harland and I were married and he was in the South Pacific, I worked a couple of years for the State Board of Forestry as a dispatcher at Medford for the State Forestry Department. I had to get a "restricted radio/telephone" license, which I finally did by dint of a very nice technician in Salem that kept supplying me with study material, which included a lot of old questions from a lot of old exams, so eventually I knew enough about the radio to be licensed. The FCC was really on our case during the war. [We were] monitored very closely because there-was always the suspicion that it would be used for -- I suppose treasonous activities, so your radio conversations were very brief and to the point. No small talk, except that a very elaborate code emerged; if you heard on the radio that "the old man needed another bale of hay," you knew that the steelhead were running in the traps. If, on the fires, they were ordering onions, "twenty-five pounds of onions" meant twenty-five cartons of cigarettes. The FCC had almost constant monitoring. For a couple of years, I was "The Voice of KRDP - Medford." [laughs] That was a new idea, but I don't think you even have to have a license anymore to do that. It was interesting and fun.

JJ Getting back to those younger school days, you mentioned that you felt you got a high quality education out on the Applegate because of all the young teachers who came straight from the college in Ashland, would spend a year, and move on.

FC Yes, they were delightful people. I think they were very good teachers. They were energetic. They gave us everything they had. And we -- at least in my case -- I always adored them. I thought they were so nice. And my first school teacher was Elizabeth Meyers, who later married Otto Heckert of Jacksonville. I'm sure she couldn't have been much older than the oldest kids in the school. She was probably two or three years older. She was really nice.

JJ Do you think these teachers you admired so much are part of why you chose a teaching career?

FC Well, I think most little girls at that point all thought they were going to grow up to be schoolteachers or nurses because we couldn't think of anything else to be. And that turned out to be mighty close to the truth when you got yourself educated -- that was about all people were willing to let you be. Also I saw teaching as a way of getting experience in the field. However, after a couple of years of teaching in the public school system, I didn't think it had to be that direction! There were some limitations there. On my first teaching contract in Ashland -- I wish you could have been there and seen it - typed in big, all capitals, across the bottom of this contract, it said, "MARRIAGE VOIDS THIS CONTRACT." There still was this prevailing idea that married women did not work. Somehow, I guess you were not [believed to be] willing to devote your entire life to
teaching. There was some implication there that you had divided interests. But World War II did away with that.

JJ When you were in grade school, did school run year-round?

FC Yes. September to May. Small schools were constructed to be within walking distance for children. We had horses and I rode a horse to school. And some of the other kids did too, from time-to-time. We were about three-and-a-half miles from school. When I was five and six, I rode on the back of my brother's horse, and then after that he was gone and I rode my very special old friend Bonnie to school for years. I think when I was in about the fifth, maybe the sixth grade, Rosella Offenbacher started to school. They lived up the river about a quarter-mile. So I would get old Bonnie caught. That was the morning chore. Catch the horse, get her saddled, and get on your way. And I would stop at Offenbachers and Lance would come out and give Rosie a boost up on the back of the horse. He very often supplied [Bonnie] with a treat -- a little sack of oats or something, so at noon, old Bonnie got her lunch too. So Rosie and I rode together for maybe three years, 'til I finished school. I don't know what happened after I left, though she did have younger brothers coming up.

I think my mother's last words, as we went down the road, were "Don't run that horse!" So old Bonnie would plod along about the first quarter-mile or so...but we'd occasionally have a little fun on the way to school. Some of the people who lived along the way were pretty sure we were going to kill ourselves with the horses. Coming home, if it had been a whole day, and she'd been standing under the old cedar tree all day, you wanted to be sure that when she felt your weight in the saddle, the stirrup, or any place, you wanted to make sure you were pretty well on your way to getting aboard, because she was not going to wait. She got pretty difficult for me to handle for awhile because every time I'd touch the stirrups, she'd whirl. I had to make sure I had the short rein in my left hand so that she would move into me instead of away from me to get going. But anyway, we made it home from school in a very short time. It took much longer to go.

JJ How long did it take to ride the three-and-a-half miles?

FC School started about 8:30 AM or something like that. I think my mom tried to get us started a good hour before. Going was pretty slow, and if you stopped to talk to your friends, it took longer. It was a fair-sized distance if you were afoot.

In 1927, we had a flood, a fantastic flood, a really spectacular flood! [laughs] It washed out the approach to the McKee Bridge, and the rest of that year, my mom drove us in the car as far as McKee Bridge. They had put some tall, tall ladders from down on the bedrock up to the edge of the bridge that was left and we climbed the ladders and walked the mile-and-a-half that was left to school. By the next year, the approach had been put back. But it was quite awhile before we could get back to school because many of the fills between Star and McKee Bridge had washed out. And the approach to Star Gulch Bridge had washed out. So we were pretty stranded for several weeks, so school just wasn't held at all.
Another interesting thing I recall is that somewhere back in there, I think when I was in the third grade, there was an epidemic of polio throughout Jackson County -- maybe it was other counties too -- and children were not allowed to travel across from one county to another. Somebody in the family that boarded the teacher had come from someplace where they had been, theoretically, possibly exposed to polio. And so, that teacher, I think, was not allowed to teach. It was a real scary thing. And, of course, school was closed down for awhile. It looked like it was going to be closed quite awhile, so my mother made arrangements for us to go to the school at Little Applegate for several weeks.

JJ Did you know any people who actually died of polio?

FC No, it was just a fear. Nobody knew what caused it, and it was so devastating that it was very, very, frightening. So, that was my brief sojourn at Little Applegate. But, people weren't vaccinated. One of the ranchers had smallpox. We were all hastily rounded up and taken to Jacksonville to the Public Health Office to be vaccinated, and yet nobody had considered it important enough to have it done prior to that.

JJ I'd like to get more into the actual trips you accompanied your father on around the District. Can you tell me again the story about the incident where your father was injured in the field which led your mother to have you accompany him on more subsequent pack trips?

FC I was pretty small at the time. I don't know how small, come to think about it -- five or six or seven, something like that. But he was in the hills with a gentleman from the Portland Weather Bureau Office, and I think they were over on the side of Yellowjacket, and there was a slight skiff of snow. They started across a little clearing, and the mule that Dad was leading apparently pulled back, and the horse fell off its feet, and slid down the hill. Dad's leg was caught under the horse, and by the time they got untangled, his leg was pretty badly mangled. But they got back to Perk's Pasture, eventually, that night, and stayed all night. And then the next day I guess he didn't feel much like travelling, but eventually, they rode out over Maple Dell and down by Squaw Creek and out French Gulch. Mother and I went up to meet them, at the end of the French Gulch Road, which was about two miles up to Helms'. Helms' place was the end of the road in those days. It was dark when we met them, because I can distinctly remember we were there waiting and it was really spooky, and kind of lonely. We could hear their horses coming quite a ways before they got there, we could hear the sound of them. I can't remember what happened -- somebody else must have gone up with us to bring all the horses back, because this fellow from the Weather Bureau was not an outdoorsman of any description. I mean, he literally had to be put on a horse and taken off! So I'm sure somebody went up and picked up the pack string and the horses and brought them back. Mother and I hauled him out to town. But after that, Mother was concerned about him being alone. And I don't know that she had a lot of faith in me, as a little kid, but she had a lot of faith in my old horse! [laughs] And, I'm sure I could've gotten to the next telephone, or the next Guard Station or whatever. As my brother got older, he found that going to town was more exciting than going to the hills, so then I got to go all the time in the summer, on these long trips, where we were out quite awhile. We had a little -- World War I, I think -- field
telephone. And various places we would go, where there wasn't a telephone line, we threw a rope over the line and pulled the line down, and attached this little telephone, and we had a buzzer on it. At Star, in the hallway, was a buzzer built into the telephone line, somehow, and it made quite a sound when the signal came on. So there was a few places we'd call in from out in the hills. And I don't know if I could have done that as a little kid. I certainly could have gotten back to a lookout, or a Guard Station. I'm glad it was never tested, because I don't know....

JJ Earlier, you talked about two main routes you would follow, one on the western side and one on the east.

FC One route would probably be going back from French Gulch to Squaw Lake and through Maple Dell and down to Perks would be the start of that kind of a trip. And then maybe staying at Perks for several days, and taking short trips out of there into Alex Canyon, Wards Fork, Dog Fork, Donomore, and on occasion into the Klamath, to Dry Lake Lookout -- that's a place I was at a number of times. Then, when that area had been pretty well covered, we would go on to Dutchman, sometimes staying a day or two at the old Silver Fork Cabin -- stockman's cabin. As I recall, there was a telephone line from there that went over the hill to Donomore, and very often that telephone line had come apart someplace and that would entail another day or so. From Dutchman, we would go around by Big Red Mountain, through Split Rock, often staying at the Freezeout Cabin, and Dad would check grazing in that area. And eventually we would get to Wagner Butte. Occasionally, I can recall spending an extra day over towards Mount Ashland. Bonds ran sheep in there, and I can remember being at Bonds' sheep camp -- at least I think that's whose camp it was, and eventually down to Wagner Gap. And we would come home by coming down the trail to Cass Ranch, then hitting the gravel road on Little Applegate and heading home. And that was a good long trip from Wagner Gap. It was one thing to ride on relatively soft trail, but it's another thing to put in fifteen or twenty miles on county road that's packed hard. My horse had the kind of gait that kind of waltzed along a bit and just kept you bouncing all the time. My Dad always rode some big monster that had tremendous strides, so he was just walking his horse, and my horse would be bouncing along behind. On those trips, very often we might start out with a packer going too, taking supplies to Perks Pasture and to Dutchman, and then at some point he cut loose and went back. We just had one pack mule then, that we would take our gear on. That trip was a fairly common one.

JJ How long would that take you?

FC We were gone occasionally as long as a couple of weeks, probably ten days in any case. There were always favorite places of mine that I can go back to in my mind, like -- is there a road up Alex Canyon now?

JJ Are you thinking of Alex Hole?

FC I'm not familiar with the name "Hole", but it's a large slide-out area, that looks almost like a glaciated cirque. There was a waterfall out of it, and in a little meadow up there at the top of the waterfall were quaking aspen, and one of the very few places on the District that aspen were found. That aspen patch was ...almost like a fairy tale. A change
from the brush! [laughs] It was a place that was hard to get to, and you never saw anybody else there, and it was just like our own special little hidey-hole. And there are a few places around the country that I can remember that I had that special kind of feeling for.

JJ What are some of those other places, for instance?

FC Well, Donomore was always a favorite, to ride out and find all that grass.

JJ And you'd stay in that old log cabin?

FC I have, yes. It was always exciting to read the names and dates of everybody who'd stayed there. I recall finding on the Donomore wall once when we went, that Hoot Gibson had stayed there. He was a really early Western movie actor, so (sigh) the place was touched with greatness! And I adored Tamarack Meadows because I had never seen trees [lodgepole pine] like that before. And the water was just oozing in running little rivulets through that flat -- and it was just very different.

JJ Was there a cabin there at any time that you know of?

FC No...And then, of course, Silver Fork Basin was always spectacular. Perks Pasture was a very special place too. I think, you know, it was all kind of special maybe, but... Sometimes we rode out on a ridge that separated Elliott Creek from Squaw Creek [Elliott Creek Ridge] out on the ridge where there was an outcropping of talc rock, and we always sawed off a chunk. I still have a pair of bookends made out of talc rock from there. There was always something special about many of these places. And a very special place was near Split Rock. Not too far from Freezout Corral, by the creek, was a really huge flat rock. A round rock, smooth rock, maybe as big as this living room. And I can recall that by that time we were getting pretty grimy, and I remember at times going over there in the morning and washing my clothes, and the cattle were all around and I got up on this rock and spread them out. This rock was so smooth and the wet clothes stuck to it so tight. It was reasonably hot so when we got back to camp that evening, I went over and took a bath in the creek and those clothes were just like they'd been ironed, and they were hot, clean...it was a marvelous feeling. I was pretty grimy, being away from my mom for so long.

I think in that country, I can remember...I wouldn't say I can remember every spring -- I mean, water spring -- but there's something a bit miraculous about water in that country. The spring at Wagner Butte I always remember as being very special. Somebody had planted some rhubarb there and the cattle didn't eat rhubarb, so it was still there. Water holes and little lakes and potholes around...

Another trip -- we'd approached it in several ways -- would be up Middle Fork, where the old horse bridges were across the creek. There were three or four of them at least. They were quite high off the water -- far down. I know my horse never really wanted to walk across it.

JJ How were they built?
They were built with the floor being split -- I think the proper name is puncheoned -- a puncheon floor? A half split-out plank nailed cross-wise on some pole stringers and there were some barricades or railings on each side. I suppose they were six or eight feet wide, maybe, or six feet anyway.

They bothered the horses?

It bothered my horse! [laughs] Which bothered me! She didn't want to walk across. There were several ways we approached the Middle Fork. Occasionally, we went up Cook and Green and then into the Red Buttes and camped at Elk Lake which was very near the top of the Red Buttes. Kind of a little scooped-out place where there was a little mudhole -- water-dogs and water lilies. Then we would work our way around through the headwaters of Fort Goff -- that goes into California some place. Let's see, one day up Cook and Green to Elk Lake, and one day from Cook and Green to Azalea Lake. Then we would often go over the ridge and down into Middle Fork and up to Fir Glade, and go to Whisky Peak, and come back out, occasionally out Cougar, and sometimes out Sutton Gulch. And sometimes we hit the Middle Fork by going directly up Middle Fork, and we might end up, after being at Fir Glade for awhile, coming back out Butte Fork or going into Azalea Lake and coming out by Cameron Meadows and down by Frog Pond and out by the Mohawk Mine.

And another trip, we'd go from the gap between Carberry and Thompson Creek and up Grayback and into Bigelow and follow around the Boundary Trail. Green [Swan?] Mountain and so forth, until we were pretty much into the head of Steve's Fork. Then to Fir Glade, then all the side trips and Whisky Peak. It was exciting. And my dad always hit all the side trips, you know, like Lake Peak and Hinkle Lake. Dawsons ran sheep into Steve's Fork, so we always went where the sheep were and the cattle -- in Sweaty [Gulch] and over into Azalea Basin.

There were shorter trips. Tallowbox was always a one-day trip. Cinnabar was a walking trip from home -- up and back. Take your visiting relation for a walk! [laughs] Some of those other places we got to on a more restricted basis. And as roads became available, and as my dad in later years had a pick-up and horse trailer, well, you could drive out someplace, take the horse out, and do the same thing in a day, and come home again.

On these trips, you would deal with ranchers and miners...

More or less everybody. I can remember being in Silver Fork Basin, and there were cattle that were into the larkspur [a plant poisonous to cattle]. And I also recall one day he roped a steer down, in the basin, that had a face full of porcupine quills, and he pulled the quills out. Always something going on! And occasionally we'd have a horse that would get poisoned, while we were out, on larkspur in one of the pastures. So it seemed as a little kid, that poison plants in the grazing allotments was a concern for lots of people. If they got the cattle on the range too soon, and there wasn't enough grass, they'd eat larkspur.

Can you describe for me what the Bigelow Cabins looked like?
Well, I hope I can find a picture for you. The interior was more or less square I guess. The roof was extended out in front with posts on the corners to hold it up and a porch area. I don't recall that there was a floor in it -- there might have been at some time, but as best I remember it was just a dirt floor. And it wasn't a very fancy cabin, but it was good enough when it was a cold wintery day! Even though it was the middle of summer, it could be cold and wintry. It was just one room. It was probably twelve feet by fourteen feet, something like that. Big enough for a good-sized hunting party or several cow men, too, getting out of the weather. I don't recall that it had a board floor. Most all of the cabins in the early days were pretty simple log structures with dirt floors. So, my earliest house-cleaning included scraping the mold up off the floor and dumping it out. At Silver Fork I did that lots of times. When we went there, I didn't have much else to do, so I cleaned house and threw all the cans and bottles out the window and scraped the floor, and scraped up the bark and wood chips that had accumulated. Silver Fork had a bigger cabin. One whole wall was bunks, double bunks. The bunks were filled with a coarse, heavy grass [beargrass?] that grew up in the basin. I don't think horses or cattle ate that kind of grass, at least not willingly. They might eat it if they were starving in the winter. But it had been cut, allowed to dry and put into the bunks. And they are a reasonable place to roll out your sleeping bag. There were probably at least six of those bunks there, and you had to share your quarters with a few packrats, and a porcupine or two out on the porch. It had an enclosed porch that was enclosed on all sides, except just an opening left so that if you came in there with horses or pack animals, you could get your gear in out of the storm. Those cabins were used a great deal by the stockmen, you see, and the fall and the winter were really rough, as they were gathering cattle, and sometimes they'd be up there in some real bad storms. So they weren't elegant.

By enclosed, do you mean it was enclosed by screen?

No, it was covered, and then the sides were enclosed with, I think, shakes. It was enclosed except for just an opening. So, you went into this enclosure and then the door opened on into the cabin. And the cabin had a heating stove or a little barrel or something in addition to an old cook stove, so it was really fancy -- two stoves! Cold weather! I presume now they've got a country estate up there...[laughs]

There has been quite an evolution of cabins up there. Very little remains of the cabin you knew. A second small cabin was built by Fred Straube in 1951. Now a third cabin is about to be built!

I think it was the Offenbachers who finally built a new cabin just down the hillside from Perks Pasture. It may have been Offenbachers and O'Briens and probably several others. Probably in the 1930's.

Did you travel along the Penn Sled Trail much?

No. About the only time we ever went over that ridge was at Maple Dell. That was the main trail at that time. That trail I think also went on through to the Grubstake Mine. Perks Pasture in those days was just a single room cabin with an extended porch. That must have been "Early
Applegate Style." That they just ran the roof on out and made a porch on one end. Perks Pasture had the advantage of a pretty good spring. The water was good. And then a large enclosed pasture for pack stock and horses. From there, we made many, many side trips.

JJ Did you know of any really old cabins at Perks Pasture?

FC Yes. The Perks Pasture cabin I'm describing was old when I was a little kid. The conventional board houses [the present cabin at the site] came in the CCC days.

JJ Where was that old cabin, in the pasture?

FC Just about the same place [as the present cabin]. And I suspect the reason for that is that it was just down the hill from the spring. And when they built the new one, they wanted it downhill from the spring for the same reason -- to get running water. And then there was a pretty decent corral there for catching horses. If he had to catch them, why, he could catch them. And that was kind of nice because a lot of these other places we stayed, it meant hobbling the horses, and they got pretty cagey and travelled around, you know, if the grass wasn't very good, and they had to travel to get it. And some mules especially, it seemed like, didn't mind being hobbled at all. They managed to just travel pretty well! So I can recall my dad -- sometimes in the morning he'd have to walk an extra mile or so to get everybody rounded up.

JJ Was Squaw Creek very often your route up to Maple Dell?

FC No... I don't know why we didn't, but we almost always went up French Gulch and then down into Squaw Creek. The road went on up to Squaw Lake, and we went out from the big lake to the small lake, where the Phillips lived -- the ranch that was at the head of the kind of flat place above Squaw lake. And the trail went up the hill from their ranch.

JJ Do you remember a cabin up that trail, not far below Maple Dell Gap?

FC I don't recall any cabins after you left Phillips', and I don't recall anything on over until you got to a well. I presume there's something at the Grubstake Mine.

JJ Oh, yes.

FC But the Slotiks -- these were two brothers that mined at the mouth of Wards Fork and they had a cabin there. Then, as their mining took them on up Wards Fork, they built a new cabin on up the creek. They were very successful miners. The biggest nuggets I have ever seen came from the Slotik Mine. They were always delighted to see my dad. They'd hear us coming and they'd come flying out of the cabin, and it was always, "Get down, come in, have supper" -- in that order. And Henry was a pretty good cook. Joe built the fire and did the dishes and Henry did the cooking. Often, with my dad, we were still travelling as it got toward dinner time. He didn't see any point in stopping if you still had daylight. He saw nothing wrong with travelling after dark, out in the woods. So, often we did; we "got down, came in, had dinner" with Henry and Joe. I think they
were pretty closed about their mining interests. I can recall Henry stopping at home one day, early, and he was on his way to the bank to ship to the mint. And he had it in a mayonnaise jar [laughs] -- and I don't even know that I got to see the mayonnaise jar, but I got to see some of the bigger nuggets. My dad tells the story of being at the Slotik Mine, and he had this gentleman with him from the Weather Bureau in Portland and he wanted to know how you mined. And so Dad picked up a pan and just skiffed some dirt off the sides of the rocks and said "Well, this is how you do it," you know, and took it out of the creek, and panned out a nugget about the size of your fingernail! I think this poor man thought that that's all there was to it, you just scrape some dirt off your rock and put it in your pan -- I think he just about threw the weather gear in the creek and stayed! It was a fun kind of thing, but that was one of the few mines I was ever around where they really mined gold!

The Slotiks were from what's probably now Yugoslavia. They had left home, both of them, different ways when they were younger, and lost track. Just sort of wandered the world. And they met in the elevator of a coal mine in British Columbia! So they teamed up and started looking for a place to get back to mining and they ended up at Wards Fork. They moved -- I presume the gold finally started paying off, and they were getting older -- they moved down to the coast and they used to come by and see my dad, as long as they were still travelling.

These kinds of relations with the people who lived in the hills, my dad really treasured that; it meant something to him personally as well as professionally.

JJ Yes, I'm sure it did. Without exception, I've heard nothing but wonderful things about him from people who knew him.

Do you remember ever getting up to a place called Lowden's Cabin, up at Slaughterhouse Flat? It served as a guard station for the Klamath early on.

FC Just vaguely. I don't remember it. There was an old cabin at the head of -- I've forgotten the name -- Big something. Big Lake? Either in the head of Wards or Dog Fork, over on the Klamath side, a stockman's cabin that we stayed at. The only Forest Service station that I recall on the Klamath was the Dry Lake Lookout. And it was a raised tower maybe six or eight feet tall, with the bottom enclosed, and then a catwalk about eight feet off the ground. So it looked very different from all the other lookouts I had seen before, and I've never seen another one quite like it. And it was out on a big, flat kind of ridge, where the wind just -- I was never there except when the wind was just howling through there. That's the only one I remember.

JJ Do you remember hearing about a couple of brothers who were draft dodgers in World War I and hid out for several years in Swan Valley?

FC Yes.

JJ Did you ever meet them? Do you know their names?
FC No. I might be able to resecure that out of my memory sometime, but I've forgotten. I recall my dad telling me that they had supplies like dried beans buried in glass jars all over the countryside up there, so that if they had to move out from their cabin, they had supplies stashed. They were apparently there for quite a long time.

JJ Did you ever see the cabin that they lived in?

FC No. I don't think so. I'm not sure that it still existed...I'm trying to think... Some of those old cabins back through the years had burned, but I'm not sure about that one -- I just don't remember. It was apparently not near the trail, and it wasn't a place where we stopped. When we were on that Boundary Trail, we were mostly travelling, you know, not slowing down too much along the way.

There were some little cabins up Star Gulch. Going up Star Gulch, there was kind of a ranch-type house maybe a quarter-mile up there. Kind of open fields, that was always called the Burton Place. Beyond the Burton Place used to be a structure to the left of the road, between the road and the creek. That was the water supply for Star in the early days. There was a spring in there that was piped a long, long ways to get to the Ranger Station. Then there was a cluster of cabins maybe a mile or mile-and-a-half up. There was an old man that lived there by the name of Benson. At about the three-mile mark, which in the early days was the end of anything that could be recognized as a road, there was a cabin that had been there many, many years ago, and it was now molding down. This would have been in the 1920's, and it was disappearing.

JJ Was it connected with a mining operation?

FC It could have been. I think all those gulches were mined. There was a lookout at Yellowjacket in the early days, that was a tree. Then there was a cabin several hundred yards away, that was an old log cabin beginning to mold down when I was a kid. It had been abandoned and was replaced by Dutchman, as perhaps a better lookout.

JJ You were mentioning the Culy Cabin earlier...

FC I don't recall that there were any more cabins on that side, but Knox McCloy apparently had some camps over there occasionally. And I think his camps were pretty much related to where horse feed was available. I think there were several places where my dad said, "Well, Knox sometimes is over here". But he had a very interesting cabin at Frog Pond on the other side of Middle Fork. My brother had an oil painting done by Ken Brauner, who did this [gestures to a painting of the Yellowjacket lookout tree], of Knox's cabin. The State Board of Forestry people gave him that painting as a retirement gift. And I think my sister-in-law wondered what she was doing with a picture of Knox's cabin on her family-room wall, but it had many fond memories. He also had a cabin down below at the Mohawk Mine.

JJ There are the remains of two cabins at the Mohawk Mine, I believe, which one would this have been?
I only remember the one that had the fire...fire...fire pit in the middle of the house. [laughs] With a sort of a C-shaped rock wall that went all the way up, and there was a big opening in the ceiling where it went out. Knox cooked with everything in another half-circle around him, where he could reach everything.

But, the Mohawk Cabin, I don't recall it had a board floor inside, with this sort of firepit in the middle, but the porch as I remember, had a floor, a handmade floor. We stopped there several times. I don't think I ever saw Knox at the Mohawk. I think he travelled around quite a bit. He always had several horses, and the story goes he spent half of his life chasing the horses! Trying to find out where they were, and going after them, and bringing them back.

Do you know the story behind the cabin at Frog Pond? One version is that he built it for a friend who was newly-married.

No, I hadn't heard that story. The trouble with the Knox stories is that he became a legend without knowing it. And it was sort of a one-upmanship for people to share Knox stories. To see who had the best one and the latest one. You'd try to filter out what was man and what was myth. And I think he just didn't care a whole heck of a lot about being close to people. I think he and my dad were on reasonably good terms. He was at Star once -- I remember we came home from town, and he was at Star and it got to be dinner time and Albert Young, who was the Protection Assistant then, had decided to cook Knox some dinner. And when we got there, he had some dinner on the table for Knox, and he had opened a jar of my mother's preserves -- I think she put them in about pint jars -- put them out in a bowl. This I do remember, when Knox got through eating, he had eaten the whole bowl of preserves! He liked it, and he ate the whole bowl! And when he would come in, he was...you know, he lived out there with low amenities and he obviously needed to stay all night, and my mother was wondering to herself "How are we going to do this?" And finally, Albert said to him something like "Oh, Knox, I know after you've lived out in the woods all summer, it's really hard to come inside and sleep in closed air where you don't get any fresh air." and he said "I'll fix you a bed down by the old warehouse where you can sleep out under the stars." Knox said "That'd be fine," so my mother breathed a big sigh of relief. She wasn't sure how she was going to pull this off - what she was really going to do about it! So, he stayed all night. In all the years that I was around in the hills with my dad, I never saw him out in the woods -- always saw him at Star I think, or, on the rare occasions when he went out to town. When my parents were at Hutton, he apparently was at Joe Bar, and had some kind of a cabin and camp there. They had seen a good deal more of him when they were there.

Did your father ever find out just how he got to this area? Supposedly he was jilted somewhere back East...

That was the story, but I don't know whether he ever said that or not. But he had some family in California, a nephew or somebody. And especially in the later years, I think that he would sometimes in the fall or the winter, go down to California to spend the worst part of the winter, get out of the snow. When he was at Joe Bar, he had a three-legged dog named Old Willie that became, you know, all the stories about Old Willie and Knox such as
Knox cooked -- my dad swears this is true, again it's this one-upmanship, I never could quite believe it -- but he cooked a pan of fried potatoes and when he got through he put a little stick across the middle, and one side was Willie's and one side was his. And if Old Willie reached too far over, why, he took the stick and rapped him on the nose. The other story about Old Willie was that Knox was telling Dad about how he really, really liked Old Willie. He was really a good dog. But there was just one thing about Old Willie he didn't like. He would sneak back to camp and eat the bacon out of the beans [laughs]. Anyway, the Knox stories just went on from there. I think he did a little mining, but had these horses, and I think very often in the fall, he packed hunters in and out, so he had access to a certain amount -- small amount -- of money. And I suppose that the deer and the huckleberries and whatever it was, got him through the winter. It must have been slim pickings. But eventually, the State of California had an old-age pension. And of course, since he lived in the California part of the Applegate, he was eligible for it. Finally - and I think this is gospel-truth -- during World War II, the Yreka paper published the results of some kind of a War Bond drive - you know, people who had purchased over "X" amount of dollars in War Bonds -- and Knox had made a substantial purchase, and his name showed up in the paper. Somebody from the California Welfare Department that administered these pensions -- the assumption is he didn't need the money, if he could afford to buy all the War Bonds - so, some social worker came trying to find him. She got as far as Copper, and Mrs. Crow, I guess, didn't know exactly where Knox was, but she directed her on up the trail towards the Mohawk Mine. And the woman found this cabin that didn't speak much for living the high life. So, she couldn't find Knox, but she went back and said to Mrs. Crow, so the story went, to tell Knox to go out and try to buy himself some decent clothes and blankets and things that he really needed. So, eventually the message got relayed and Knox went out to town and I think Mrs. Crow was trying to talk him into buying a good, warm overcoat. And he came back from town on the stage wearing a bathrobe with a tassel tie! And that was supposed to be a truthful version of what went on. It could well be that he would find a bathrobe, felt comfortable, it wasn't too heavy, the price was right...but you can't tell about those stories. He certainly was a colorful character.

He had a sister from back East that arrived to find him. She came with a chauffeur and the whole bit; that just set the valley on edge! Wow! Knox was supposed to meet her some place and she got there and he wasn't there. And I guess they waited maybe a day or two. I don't know how long they waited, but he didn't show up. She knew something terrible had happened to him, and so she was trying to get a party organized to go find him and look for him. I think she came to the Ranger Station during that time and tried to get the Forest Service to mobilize a search party. Everybody knew Knox better than that! So they tried to placate her, and I think my dad or somebody finally talked her into going out to Medford and waiting a few days and coming back. I think Knox -- the horses had disappeared and he had to go find the horses. It was another week or so before he got out. That was the kind of stories that went on all the time. Apparently she went back up Middle Fork with him. I don't think she ever came again, as far as I know.

JJ Do you remember where Woodpecker Spring is?
FC No.

JJ It's between Yale Creek and Glade Creek, on the ridge. Up Dog Fork of Yale Creek.

FC I remember Dog Fork, but I don't think I remember being up in the head. We walked up to Anderson Butte one time from someplace along Little Applegate.

JJ From just below Cass Ranch?

FC No, it wasn't that far up, I don't think. But the trail was absolutely straight up for about three miles to get there [it probably followed Muddy Gulch].

JJ Do you remember ever going by the Brickpile Mine, above Little Applegate?

FC I remember the Brickpile.

JJ Do you remember cabins in that area?

FC I really don't.

JJ One cabin that was supposed to be in that area was at the Horseshoe Chrome Mine.

FC I don't remember it.

JJ Do you remember the Beeson Cabins on Glade Creek? There was a lower one and an upper one possibly.

FC I remember they were there, but I don't remember many details. It would not have been a cabin I stayed in, or came by at night or anything.

JJ Or Twin Cabins on Glade Creek, where Hendrick's Creek comes in, two miles above the Little Applegate?

FC No, I don't remember that either.

JJ Do you remember on the Little Applegate, just above where Glade Creek came in -- and this is really off the beaten trail, so again you might not have seen it -- there was something called an inverted siphon across the river, that was installed in connection with the Sterling Mine and the long ditch that headed on Glade Creek, then crossed the Little Applegate and on down to the mine. Do you remember seeing that siphon?

FC I was there, at Sterling, when the hydraulic nozzles were running, and it was pretty spectacular. And I remember them talking about the inverted ditch or tube or whatever they called the flume, but I didn't get beyond that.

JJ What year was that, approximately?

FC I would guess it was in the late 1920's. They really tore up a lot of landscape with that mine. There used to be a little town or post office at
Buncom, I remember. I think it was a building with a false front, right there in the forks of the road. And I think that was the town. There may have been some other cabins, but that building was the post office.

And, of course, there was a post office at Watkins, and then [it moved to] Copper. It served that whole end of the valley. And a post office at Ruch. That's all I remember in terms of post offices. I don't think there was ever a post office at Steamboat that I remember anybody mentioning, so I suspect that was it.

JJ Do you remember a cabin at Jack Flat?

FC Jack Flat...no, I really don't. There probably was, because at one time that part of the country was pretty well crawling with people. Some of those old cabins that people were living in -- it was somebody's house, you know. I didn't think of it as a cabin that was...to be remembered. There was a cabin, I just remembered, on Elliott Creek at Carlton Pastures.

JJ What do you remember about that?

FC Practically nothing. [laughs] Bill Zeigler, Maude's husband, when he first came to the Applegate, lived at Carlton Pastures a year or two, and I think he fixed it up a great deal. He had quite a garden. He had his own vegetables and that kind of thing. He must have lived there a year or two or three.

JJ Just in the summer times?

FC I think he was there all winter. I think he just snowed in, put in a supply of groceries. A lot of the miners tended to do that, if they could get enough groceries ahead to make it through the winter.

For the miners and the other people during the Depression who were just living, I think the Applegate was relatively kind, in that venison was reasonably plentiful, and along the river anybody could pan out a few "colors", and if they followed it with any degree of vigor, they could end up with enough to buy say, flour and beans, something to supplement the meat.

JJ So they were able to get enough to scrape by...

FC All the old miners' cabins along the river, that were in a state of disrepair -- there'd be half a roof left, you know, really tumbling down -- during the Depression, almost all of them were occupied. Families would have an old car, and they'd just head up the river from who knows where -- California someplace. And if they found any old cabin that offered any kind of shelter, they often stayed. Some of them had families -- little kids. Occasionally there'd be a school-age child, who would be in school for a few months. I think it was pretty...slim pickings. But...they were still alive. And they had space -- they weren't crowded. So, any cabin at all, I think, during that Depression time, that was standing in any form, got an occupant. Some of them who were on old mining claims, filed new claims. And some of them just moved in. There was no problem with that. So the population picked up -- and the deer population went down a little!
And the law, I think, for the most part, did not bother people who hunted for their own use, when times were that tight. If word got out that anybody was selling it, though, then they usually got picked up and thrown in the pokey, and the whole works. The Blue Ledge telephone went up the valley. After the mine closed and the farmers had it -- some kind of a legally-formed company -- if there was ever a series of little jingles on the line, everybody ran and picked up the line, and pretty soon somebody would say, "There's a big wind blowing up the valley" and then it was "click, click, click" and everybody hung up, and went and did whatever they needed to do. So I'm told. It meant the game warden was on his way up the river! So it served to alert people about the necessity of getting it out of the house -- taking care of it before he got there. Certainly those cabins were used.

JJ The area you described as being the location of the Slotik Mine, at the confluence of Wards Fork and Silver Fork, is called Nick's Cabin. Do you know exactly where the original "Nick's Cabin" was?

FC I think the Slotik brothers lived in Nick's Cabin. I may be mistaken, but I think that was Nick's Cabin. It was old then. It was an old pole cabin as I recall. It was silvery colored and had been much repaired. The Slotiks were a very energetic kind of people and they tended to keep everything put-together.

JJ Do you know how the original cabin got there? Anything about Nick?

FC That would have been way before my time. I don't know that. There is also a flat -- it's above Finleys' old ranch [on the Applegate River, south of McKee Bridge]. It seemed to me it was called Nicks Flat. There was an old cabin on it. But I may have some mis-information and somebody else's flat. But there was mining in the creek there. [She is referring to Nick Wright Flat. See Pearl Byrne interview.]

JJ Do you know who the "Jens" were? There's a "Jens Cabin" along Elliott Creek, about at Dutch Creek. I believe it was homesteaded. Did you know them?

FC That's not a name I remember, but there was a family up there, beyond Joe Bar, a couple-three miles. They had a little farm up there. The family was Tennesseans or Kentuckians. They had a daughter at some point, that married Bill Harlow, who used to have a house above the Poole ranch, across from the Ranger Station, up Boaz Gulch. Bill Harlow and his recent new bride were up at the old folks' cabin and had some kind of a horrendous family row. And the old man whipped out a knife and stabbed them both, very, very badly. And I don't know why they kept living, but somebody hauled them out on horses to the end of the road, and I remember my dad going up in the middle of the night and meeting them at the end of the road and hauling them into the hospital. One of Bill's lungs had been cut into several slashes through the ribs, and he was really on the tattered end of nothing! And she was pretty badly stabbed in the arms. She had done this [lifts her arms to protect her face] and her arms were all chopped up. They were in the hospital quite awhile, but you know, nobody seemed to think much of it -- it was just a family row. I remember my brother went with my dad that night. It was about 1928 because we had a new car. I
remember that because we didn't have many new cars, and Lee [Jr.] was saying, "Don't let 'em die in the brand new car, Daddy!" [laughs] But, you see, by virtue of the upper end of that District being in California, the law did not touch it, because somebody would have to come from Yreka, through Ashland, Medford, Jacksonville, up and around. When this big knife fight occurred up Elliott Creek, there were never any charges, or any investigation. Eventually, the people healed up -- and that was it! The battle was over. And I don't know that they were close friends and relatives after that, but at least they were no longer about to kill each other.

My dad was always running rescue missions or hauling somebody to the hospital, or, in many cases, bringing cadavers out of the hills. He had a personal pack mule, that would pack bodies without objecting. Some of the animals, you could no more put a cadaver on than... [laughs] I recall a sheep-herder died up in Steve Fork, who Dad packed out. And back in there somewhere, a plane went down [in Butte Fork Canyon]. It started a fire. In fact, the fire was started by a search plane that located it and dropped a flare. So they had to go in with a crew and fight fire, but in the meantime, they found the plane and all these bodies. They buried three of them in a common grave and the pilot was buried separately. I think at the time they went in, some member of the family's estate was there. Some attorney had gone in with Dad and said, "Oh, this is beautiful! God's country! Bury them here! And, of course, that's not what the family had in mind. So, at least the pilot's wife insisted that her husband be dug up and brought out. And so Dad, once more -- Dad was a pretty good friend of Morris, who was the coroner. So once again they trekked in and dug him up, and once again old Dempsey packed him out. [laughs] But this pack mule was a very special one. He was not to be trusted. You didn't walk around him. You watched every move you made. But once he was packed, and once you were on the trail, he never drug a pack, or pulled back on the rope. He walked right up. He was an absolute favorite of my dad's. But he would pack out cadavers! So, between Dad and Morris, they packed out quite a few!

JJ How did some of the others of them die?

FC Heart attacks. Just old age, I guess. Fights. Accidents of all kinds. We had one very memorable case of the lookout at Whisky Peak, who allowed his gun to slide out the door when he opened the door. It slid down the stone steps, and finally it hit in such a way that -- it had a cartridge in it -- it shot him.

JJ Who was that?

FC James McClain. He was a young fellow and it was really touch-and-go. The guard at Fir Glade about killed his horse getting over there, you know, to give him some first aid. And he called on the phone and he was fading fast. And they went in with about twelve or more men -- a big group of men -- to pack him out. By this time it was dark. They packed him out and down Cougar, in the dark, and that took practically all night. The guy lived, but he had to have his leg amputated, because the tourniquet had cut off the blood supply to his foot.
Jj Were there doctors up on the Applegate? They probably came up from Medford...

Fc Well, in this case, they met him with an ambulance and took him to Medford. But occasionally, throughout the years, doctors did come out, and I remember one time some lady was having a baby at Steamboat and the snow was really deep. This doctor came out, and my dad met him up by the Culy Ranch and they went up Kinney Creek and up over the ridge and down to Steamboat, because the woman having the baby was in trouble. So, doctors did go.

So, there were always various rescue missions and my mother was the "first- aider" for all the surrounding territory. Anybody that got bucked off a horse got patched back up by my mom.

Jj Did she have any nursing training at all?

Fc Oh, no. All she had was a concern for helping and lots of bandages and tape, and soap and water. And a telephone -- she'd call the doctor, "What'll I do?" "Well, try this and try this." But many, many people would not even have -- those were the days before Band-aids, of course -- you know, they had no medical supplies at all. We had, for quite a period of time, one of the favorite sports for the weekend was an impromptu rodeo down in the corral. And the losers usually needed quite a bit of taping back together! There were always some onery critters, that somebody would watch for awhile, and decide that they could indeed ride. So everybody would line up on the corral fence and we'd have a party. So there were always some interesting things -- that had an element of danger.

Jj What other kinds of things did people get together to do?

Fc When I was a very small kid, there was a community hall -- it was called Palmer Creek Hall. It was not on Palmer Creek -- it was on the other side of the river. This hall had been built with community labor on private land, you know, on somebody's property who said, "Build'er there." Then, as the years went by, that little farm changed hands, and finally it reached a point where it was no longer agreeable with the owner to have the hall there. So, for several years, they had no place to get together. So, when the Grange first started, they met in the Beaver Creek schoolhouse. And then they finally built the Grange Hall at what we called [Poppy?] Flat there, at McKee Bridge. A stockade-like log building, a beautiful building. I believe it burned. And then the Grange eventually rebuilt off down towards Ruch. So, Saturday night dances were either there or at Applegate.

Jj Pearl [Byrne] was talking about "midnight dinners"...

Fc Right. All the music stopped about midnight. And there was what amounted to almost a complete meal sometimes, like chili and sandwiches and cake. And then about 1:00 or 1:30 a.m., the music would start up again, and they would play until about 4:00 a.m. You'd make an all-night affair of it.

Jj And then head back home when it was over -- or would you spend the night there?
FC Oh, no. You'd go on home, Be home by daylight. These parties were notorious for homemade liquor, and fights. Almost always fights. Men and women. Some of the most vicious fighting you can imagine was apt to be a couple of women.

JJ What would they fight about?

FC Who would know? I guess maybe somebody said something, or somebody didn't say something. You know, whatever struck their fancy. In fact, it was almost as if people saw fighting as a social interchange, and the spectators almost cheered them on. There was just nothing like a dance, unless there were a few good fights. I can recall being down at Applegate, and we were in having supper. There was an extended, deep stage that was used for tables and benches. The voices around us were getting loud and on the ugly side. All of a sudden, a plate or a mug or something went sailing by, and my mother said,"That's it. We're going home." [laughs] And my father was saying, "But the party's just getting good!" I think we went home.

In the days of the CCC's, when they were allowed to go to these community dances, they were always chaperoned by Forest Service personnel. That had some interesting side-effects, and sometimes the Forest Service people would get pretty well battered up in the process.

JJ I've heard that there was still some "North" and "South" factioning among the CCC enrollees.

FC Well, when it wasn't North-South, there was a bunch from Chicago or that area, some Polish lads, and there were some racial or ethnic kinds of problems. And the Georgia kids always thought they could gang up on someone else. "Good clean fun." [said sarcastically]

But community dances was the main thing, and then, for a time, I remember especially as a little kid, sometimes on Sundays, the community would meet at an impromptu baseball field, that was up toward Mule [Mountain]. I think that flat was called the Nick Wright Flat. And they had kind of a baseball diamond. They had chicken wire on some poles that served as a backstop. And everybody either played or cheered people on. It was fun.

If anybody got married, it was the occasion of a "chivari" -- good old Appalachian-style. It's a big surprise. You go bearing food, and there's lots of noise -- banging on tin cans, and beating on a drum, if you had one, or else an old washtub. Everybody saying, "Surprise! Surprise!" and all that. Then there'd be lots of rather good-natured rivalry, and then everybody would eat. No matter what sort of community function it was, you ate -- any time of the night or day. So, every time anyone got married, there was one of these "chivaris."

So, chivaris, dances, community work days of various kinds. They would all get together and work someplace. Like the Grange Hall, as I remember, was built with all volunteer labor. And school yards were fixed. Occasionally a house would be raised for someone who'd had a fire, or a barn, or something like that. There was a community non-sectarian Sunday School.
For a long time we went up to Watkins, and it was at Watkins School, and then I think it was at the Grange Hall for awhile.

JJ Aside from the Sunday School, then, there was no church available?

FC No. There was no church. Sometimes there'd be a funeral. A minister would be brought out from town for funerals at Logtown or some of those other small cemeteries, [such as] Steamboat. This non-sectarian, Protestant Sunday School movement was part of some kind of a group that underwrote it, and the man that served a whole big area in Southern Oregon was a minister by the name of Randall, and I believe he was a Quaker.

I mean, talk about an eclectic group! We'd have a few Catholics and a few...whatever. And then this Quaker minister! But it was only little kids and women who got consigned to Sunday School. I can't recall that men came to Sunday School.

During the Depression, there was a number of community parties, as such, that were organized on a community basis, in which -- oh, people sang songs, and just kind of recreational get-togethers, and played games.

JJ Was there a lot of local music-making?

FC Anybody who could play anything -- not well, you understand, just play. There were fiddles. I can't remember guitars, like we see now. Oh, there were little small local orchestras that could be hired for very little money, that would come and play for six hours -- and their supper. We did just lots of gathering. And we had lots of gatherings at Star because people during the fire season were pretty-well confined there.

JJ Do you remember your father ever telling any stories about the remaining Chinese in the area?

FC He said when he came to Jacksonville, there were still some Chinese there. By and large, the white people mined out the best mining. And what was left, the Chinese made a pass up those creeks, and did a great amount of hard labor for a very low amount of gold, and really sort of cleaned it out. By the time we were there, that was all finished. The Jacksonville Cemetery had, I believe, some Chinese graves, though I think it was the custom to ship the bones back home to China.

But there were still -- I remember Dad saying -- a few Indians. Especially women who were married to white men, who were around Jacksonville when he first came. And he mentioned one woman in particular, who lived up Daisy Creek, who still had tribal tattoos on her chin.

JJ She wasn't named Arrowsmith, was she? They lived up Squaw Creek.

FC I don't remember her name, but I think they called her Aunt somebody. But I'm sure there was more than one. Like many places, people did not want to remember that they had Indian heritage, because it was not an appropriate thing to remember. Now, I'm sure they wouldn't feel that way about it. But at one time, you see, there was an Indian land settlement or money settlement, and those people who had kind of forgot that they had Indian
blood, were actively seeking it out -- seeking out the records and that sort of thing.

But Squaw Creek... there used to be a big Indian encampment, so my Dad said. It was kind of a permanent camping place for Indians as they travelled through there, and that's why it was named that. In fact, once the local vigilantes were pursuing Indians up the river, and I guess they got to Squaw Creek and found this encampment. When they got there, it was all women and children and old men, and so they proceeded to pack them all up and take them back to Jacksonville and put them in jail for the winter, expecting that the men of that particular band would come back, which they didn't. And so the city of Jacksonville, supporting them all winter in the jail -- the Indians thought it was great! They had shelter and food. I guess when spring came, they finally turned the women loose, and they went back over the hills and out into California. But they'd had a fight with some of the braves and someplace, somebody had been killed, and they were pursuing these Indian men. So the story went.

Not only was Squaw Lake named for that, but Mule [Mountain]. Apparently some mule fell off the bluff as they were chasing them.

My Dad was really interested in Oregon history. He was a real buff when it came to searching out local history and he enjoyed that very much.

JJ I know your father named some geographical places. In the Cascades, on the Butte Falls Ranger District, he supposedly named three peaks for his wife and two daughters: Maude, Ethel and Ruth. Maude would have been his wife, but who are Ethel and Ruth?

FC And then there's Lee's Peak. I think that Mom and Dad were there at a time when -- would that have been the U.S. Geological Survey, or some Government service -- was busy naming places. Ruth, Ethel and Maude were named, so I've heard, out of a hunting trip. There were several couples together on this hunting party, and it was my mother and those other two women that the peaks were named after. I think it was out of the same party that the one was named "Lee". That's interesting because they didn't spend that much time over there, but they were there at the time the places were being named. I remember hearing at one time what the rest of the names of these people were, but I think they were all up there hunting.

JJ They were just a group of friends out hunting together?

FC Yes.

JJ Did you know a man named Mengoz, Francis Mengoz? He had a cabin up above Squaw Creek, just below Elliott Creek Ridge, about halfway up Squaw Creek toward Squaw Lakes, above Dividend Bar?

FC I think that is the old cabin that had a clay and rock fireplace that was by the old Squaw Creek road, not too far up there.

JJ This one was at least a half-mile above the creek.
Hmm. Maybe it's not this one, then. There was, above Big Squaw Lake, an old, what used to be a homestead originally. It had an apple orchard or a few apple trees, and a good spring. But the old house had just about melted down.

I've heard there was a graveyard up there too.

I haven't heard about that. We made a lot of trips up there. When we were camping at the lake, we'd go up there to get water. I remember the old fruit trees.

That name you're saying, Mengoz, sounds familiar, but I don't think that was a place that I ever got to, or knew anything about.

Did you know a fellow named Henry Harthon? He was a miner in the 1930's, in the area.

I don't think so. Was he up Squaw Creek?

Yes.

No, I don't think so.

Do you know anything about Mrs. Crow's early story? How she got to the area.

She and her husband came there. I don't know what led them to that particular place. The old Copper Post Office used to be there. There was that little flat that had a nice garden soil. It was kind of a picturesque little spot. They bought that place and built a new house, a start-from-scratch new house, and that little store. I remember him, but I can't remember how long... He wasn't with her most of the time she was there. I think he had died. I don't know whether he lived three years or four years or five years, but he was there some time. And after he died, she just stayed on. Guy Watkins worked for her for many, many years as I recall, in the store. And, of course, it was the meeting place at the end of the trail, so to speak.

It sounds like it was a real "hot spot" for all the comings and goings in the area.

Well, the mail stopped there and, for example, I think all those people who lived in California that voted, I think the ballots came there. I'm sure it was where all information was exchanged. Messages were left, you know, like "the next time Knox comes through..." And Mrs. Crow must have run a pretty stable ship, to keep it all under control, without a lot of local friction from all of those people. And she must have really enjoyed that location, because she certainly didn't leave there very much, that I knew anything about. She must be dead now...

Yes, she died before I came to the area, but not long before. Maybe ten years ago.
FC  That was about when my mother died. I guess Mother died in 1971.

JJ  Did you ever hear of the "Crepsey" or "Crapsey" Cabins up Yale Creek, below Deadman Point a ways?

FC  No. That's not a name I recognize.

JJ  Do you remember there ever being a cabin at Cameron Meadows?

FC  Cameron Meadows...I was never quite sure why they called it "meadows," or which part became the "meadows," but up on that ridge, there was a lot of open space, and I think that whole area was called Cameron Meadows. I'm not sure which Cameron was honored by his name being there. I don't recall any cabin being there. We usually came over from Cameron Meadows down into Frog Pond, coming that way, rather than going back, because it was extremely steep. And I don't remember ever being on a trail. There might have been one, but being with my dad, you'd never know! It was very loose dirt with lots of rocks in it, and when the horses would come down, there'd be rocks and stuff, kicked loose and rolling, and the horses almost sitting back on their haunches, sliding down. So, I'm sure that's why we never went the other way on it. We always went over on Butte [Fork] and came back through Cameron Meadows and down into Frog Pond. But I don't recall a cabin.

JJ  What was the term you used earlier, during dinner, when you were saying that your father always preferred to navigate cross-country, rather than following trails?

FC  Well, we'd say, "Hey Dad, where is this trail?" "Oh, it's up here a ways. We'll just go 'quartering'. We'll go quartering up the hill and we'll run into it after awhile." "We'll go quartering down the hill. We'll hit the trail before we get..." But, very often, we didn't hit the trail, and he didn't care. He could care less. Except, there were places you couldn't get through without a trail -- and Dog Fork, off Wards Fork, was one of those! But I think maybe the Dog Fork Trail had a low priority, so it never got very much attention. Some of them were like that. The trails weren't that great, too. The standard of trails wasn't considered to be too important, if you could get through them. But he had sort of a good sense of place built in I'm sure by much experience up there. And so he was never concerned about where he was. He knew he was going to get where he wanted to go. And I don't know about that... As a little kid, it scared me on occasion. I became a little uncomfortable when some of the horses began to go off their feet, that sort of thing. It didn't leave me feeling very good at all. I wanted out of there!

JJ  Your father had a heart attack out in the field once -- can you tell me about that?

FC  It would have been in 1945, I guess, in the fall. There was a fire in Dutch Creek, I think it was. Dad was already in the hills, and he was up on the top someplace, where he could eventually see the smoke and he drove to some point where he was directly above it. It was about three miles down into the bottom of the canyon, so he went down, and it was a very hot fire, moving right along. The reason he went down was because he just
thought it would take too long for fire crews to get there, to do any
good. That it would be a big fire by then. It was a very hot day and he'd
been working very, very hard and he passed out at the fire and eventually
came to and decided that it was the heat and the smoke that had gotten him
down. He apparently had pretty-well contained the fire when he passed out,
because it didn't go anywhere. And the crews finally came in. After they
came and took over, he walked back out of the canyon. In fact, he had a
little terrier dog called "Spotty" with him. By then, Spotty was about
eight years old. Spotty got his feet burned in the fire! Somebody on the
crew gave him their canteen, so he carried some water, but he also carried
Spotty, looped over the canteen because Spotty couldn't walk very well.

Dad thought he [himself] was going to be okay -- he didn't realize he'd had
a heart attack until he had another one. But he really was ill, I guess,
early in the next year. It took quite awhile for everybody, like the
doctor, to decide that he should retire. He had a lot of sick leave, and
it took a long time for all the paper work. [It was decided] that he
should go to a hospital in San Francisco and have a lot of tests done, so
he went to that hospital, and it took a lot of time. He didn't really
leave Star until late in the spring, when it all came together. Then they
stayed in Medford for a few months while he recovered. And then the house
in Ruch was for sale, so they bought it and moved back. And they lived
there another ten years until he died. Then my mother -- she was ill at
the time -- came home with me here [Eugene], and in about three weeks, her
brother died in Ashland. So I went back with her, and then we went out to
Ruch and pretty much sorted through and moved out, and stored, and disposed
of a lifetime of gatherings. Which was pretty hard to do. And then she
came back up here. Ruch was a nice place for them to retire to. It was at
the crossroads, you know. Farmers who came up the way stopped to see my
dad. He sat on the front porch, and he could command the traffic going
both ways (laughter). So, it was in many ways, an appropriate place to
retire to.

But my dad maintained an interest in -- he had learned to do this --
blacksmithing. He did a lot of blacksmithing for the farmers -- repaired
their moving machines. He loved that kind of thing. In fact, I think my
dad would have made a good second-hand store operator, or a junk yard
owner! Because he could fix almost everything, and he loved doing it. And
I think he was the only person -- I may be down playing somebody's role --
I think my dad was about the only one that could shoe horses, take care of
the stock, and so he eventually got to do it for the whole Forest. In the
fall, they brought all the stock from everywhere, out to Star, and Dad
would pull off the shoes and trim their feet and get them ready to go to
pasture. He'd wait till I'd come home on the weekend -- I was in high
school then. The mules would follow my old mare, so I always got to lead
the pack, and we'd take maybe eighteen or twenty. For several years, they
pastured them down below Applegate. So we'd line this bunch of mules and
horses up. He'd bring up the rear, and I'd take off and we'd make pretty
short order. That was quite a ways -- about eighteen or twenty miles.
Riding on the highway, once again it was that pounding, pounding. Old
Bonnie! But [my dad] could put shoes on any mule, no matter how ornery
they were, so he always got to do it, or help. And he made the
horseshoes. And for him, that was fun. The Forest Service always had
something that was falling apart, too. So, it was a useful skill, but it
was a hobby, as well.
It seems like I have a lot of horse-type stories, but there just weren't that many roads. If you wanted to go someplace, you could walk. In later years, when I no longer had a horse, I did just that. And I took a lot of pride -- I finally got to the point where I could out-walk almost anybody I knew. It was sort of like my own special badge of courage! In 1940, I spent the summer at Camp Tamarack -- over the Santiam Pass -- and when camp was over, another girl who was there with me, we joined forces and we walked the Skyline Trail to Crater Lake! So we thought we could walk anyplace. When I got home, I decided I needed to see the Applegate one more time on my feet, so I gathered together Rosella Offenbacher and a CCC kid who was the telephone operator at Star, and walked up Middle Fork to Fir Glade, back to Whisky Peak, out and down Cougar, all in one day! And I almost left two people in bed for a week! Rosie couldn't move for two or three weeks, and this other kid could hardly breathe the next day. But I had been walking all summer, doing a lot of walking, and it was probably the last time I was truly in shape!

One other time, during the war, I went to Fir Glade, mostly on my feet. We went on a hunting trip with Dad and did a lot of walking. Oh well, that's something you do when you're young and impetuous - and not too bright!

[laught]

JJ So, the "end of the road" up Elliott Creek was at Joe Bar?

FC Yes, Joe Bar was pretty much the end of the road, for all practical purposes. The Carberry Road was built somewhere back in there.

JJ 1921.

FC So, there was the Carberry Road, and then it finally pushed in from Thompson Creek. So that loop was there. But other than that, the road to Squaw Lake was not a road that -- I don't remember anybody driving to Squaw Lake, until much later. And yet we used to get there. Dad had an old Model T that had been cut down to a bug, and we used to go fishing. But there were some holes in that road that you could literally disappear in. With that schist kind of soil, if it had been raining, you were living dangerously, to try to get in and out of Squaw Lake in those days. So, when I say that the end of the road was at Helms' Ranch, well, what I consider the passable road was to Helms' Ranch. There was still this road of sorts to Squaw Lake if it hadn't rained lately and if and if and if. But other than that, I can't remember very many roads. There weren't that many cars, and having a car was a real luxury. And if you didn't have a horse, you walked.

* * * *

JJ I keep eyeing that box of photographs that we haven't even touched yet.
I've gathered out some. The development of the Ranger Station, if you're interested in that, was essentially in three stages. Originally, it was a small structure -- the little old house. That was the original station. And then the house that became our home was built at a time that there was a restriction on the amount of money that could be spent on a field building -- the hard amount of cash. And the story as I heard it, was that that house was built by a little subterfuge that involved three possible field buildings, that turned out to be one residence. And that was, at that time, about the only semi-modern house that was around. So there was the house, there was this little old station, and then there was a barn with a shop and blacksmith, plus a big hay shed, where baled hay was stored to feed the stock. And that was it. There really wasn't much more in the way of any kind of construction until the CCC's came, and then that triggered a whole wave of construction. The construction of the modern warehouse and such. Are the trees still down there by the warehouse?

Yes.

Okay. My dad -- I hesitate to use personal kinds of things that would ever hurt anybody's feelings, but Fred Koppel's barn [on the small ranch immediately south of Star Ranger Station] was always a sore point of contention to my father. [Koppel] never hauled off the manure. It always got in a big pile and the flies were thick and the smell! It wasn't that he was any different from any other farmer. He probably wasn't. But, there it was. And in the winter, it was knee-deep in muck. So my dad had gotten these silver-leaf maples or something like that, and he had planted a few, in two or three rows, and they didn't look thick enough to him - he wanted instant coverage [laughs], so I was home one weekend and we went down to the Cantrall ranch--Miles Cantrall's ranch. They had some huge black walnuts in their yard, and there were seedlings throughout their garden, in the vegetable garden and in the lawn, and we dug a whole bunch of seedlings. There had also been a grove of locust trees there, that had a lot of suckers that we dug. We came back with all these trees, so we planted more trees and more trees. The last time I was at Star, it looked like an absolute jungle of huge trees. All that [planting] was in the early 1930's. I think Fred said something to Dad like, "Golly, if only one tree out of every five or six lives, you're going to have lots of shade!" But, my dad wanted trees, and I guess he got trees. Anyway, when you plant a tree, you know, it doesn't seem like it's very productive, because it's going to be so long. But, here we are fifty years later, and those trees...

[The CCCs] built a barn up on the hill, by the bunkhouse. The supervisor came out and walked up through the brush and said, "Build 'er here," you know, so that's where the barn went. I think, some months later, he came out "Gosh, why did you build the barn so close to the other buildings?" "Well, because, Sir, you said, 'Build it here'." [laughs] The bunkhouse and the office and an Administrative Assistant's house up on the hill -- a small house and a new water system, and a lot of things got built, and the old barns and the old hay shed, of course, were gone. Cleaned up and neatened up and gravel put on them and stuff. And then sometime later, they realized the barn was so very close to everything else they'd built, so they moved the barn down the hill and across the ditch and planted it down in the field. But somehow, the Powers-That-Be were trying to preserve
the character of the fields -- they didn't want houses down in the field.
And I know the next Ranger's Residence was way up on the hill, way up on
the flat. And then they moved the old Star building. The old house was a
very comfortable, nice house. It had wainscoating on it. It was kind of
dark, but a nice stairway, and all those things I liked. I'm sure that
somebody would not have found it good enough. And for many years after the
other Districts developed, Star remained without any development at all.
The only change that really occurred is, my dad bought a used light plant
[electric generator]. It was only big enough for lights. It wouldn't run
appliances. So we had electric lights there for a long, long time before
electricity came. But that was his personal effort. I don't know why they
didn't feel inclined to build Star up. As soon as my dad retired, the next
Ranger insisted on, and got, new quarters and stuff like that. I guess my
dad would not have made it an issue, and thought they had other places they
needed to use their money. But the CCC's of course built new lookout
houses and new guard stations and Perks Pasture [Guard Station] was new.
And Hutton [Guard Station] was new, and one after another they got
replaced.

I don't have too much of an order to these [photographs]. I just sorted
these out of several different sources.

In 1931, and I know that's the date because it's on the back [chuckle], a
landscape architect was imported to inspect Government buildings and make
recommendations, and so there are two (*1 only) pictures here by him, dated
and with comments. This is where the warehouse is now. That's Fred
Koppel's barn. And the end of the hay shed runs back along the road, here,
but this was the barn. And the stock were fed down there, in the winter.

*Originally, it [the Ranger Station/Residence] was just dark brown,
unpainted. This is what it looked like to start with, then it was painted
battleship grey somewhere in there.

Here's a winter-time picture [of the Ranger Station]. After the CCC's
came, there was a pole fence put around it. A lot of fancy *rock steps,
rock and concrete steps, going up the bank. Rock walkways [were also
constructed by CCC's].

*This was the first and only "wild horse round-up." And that's what the
hunt yielded, a few little knobby-kneed, half-starved ponies.

JJ Where was this particular fence?

FC Up the Little Applegate. I don't remember exactly where it was, but they
built a big, heavy corral with big wings. The corral was in the bottom of
the canyon, with the wings going up the side. And then all these ranchers
got their horses out, herded these horses, and got them started down this
canyon, and they were going to run them into this corral. Well, I think as
they got down the hill, most of the horses turned back up and disappeared. So it wasn't much of a... Except, you know, let the good times roll! We were all there!

JJ And these were the horses at Star?

FC They were probably headed for Tallowbox or someplace. I don't know where they were headed that particular day.

*This is Donomore [cabin].

That was my dad's horse called "Old Grayback." Old Bonnie, and Old Grayback.

Well, there I am in a much earlier time. That was not a cooperative critter, either. I think I was just on it to have my picture taken.

This is Tallowbox.

This is Wagner.

This was the cabin at Fir Glade. It was made with such huge logs. Paul Garrison built it.

*This is Perks Pasture. This would have been in the late 1920's. It was the old cabin. The CCC cabin was built right "on top" of it.

*I think this picture is printed backwards because I think this is the old Freezeout Cabin, but it should be slanting the other way. That could well have been one that my dad printed, and it could well have been reversed. [Frances says that as a child, developing film was a family project. They would sit around the kitchen table and each family member would be responsible for one step in the process.] This was a shelter that was built I think at Green [Swan?] Mountain. It was on that Boundary Trail, and I think there were a couple of them up there that were built by the Siskiyou [National Forest].

JJ Was it at Sucker Gap?

FC *Could be...could be. That must be about where it is. I think that that just might be the old cabin at Yellowjacket. I may be mistaken, but it was like that.

*Somewhere back in there, in the middle 1920's, towards the late 1920's, Whiskey Peak Lookout burned. The water tank was the first thing that was replaced. I think they packed it with snow because it was quite a ways to water.

This is an old cabin at Fish Lake. When they put the dam in there, they flooded trees and cabins and everything, and that's a picture my dad had taken.

This, I'm pretty sure, is the lookout at Dry Lake, on the Klamath [National Forest].
I think this is the cabin under construction at Fir Glade.

This is the old, first building at Star. When I was a little kid, it was "the warehouse", so to speak. Everything was there - the fire tools, everything. And then when they got new warehouses, and such, it became a tack room, and was not quite so jammed full.

Somewhere in the early 1930's, a fire camp was started at Star, that I think was the first fire camp in the region. There was a lot of attention given to it, and they got a bright red real fire truck! Really neat and nifty! And they could haul three or four mules in it at one time and oh, just all kinds of things. It was pretty spectacular for its time.

That's Morry Byrne when he was a kid.

That was my mother and my brother and me when I was very small.

*This is a very poor picture, but that was Bill Fruit. The child was the child of one of the guards that was up there.

That was Maude Zeigler in another time and place.

Here, I think we're at Squaw Lake.

And that was Rosella Offenbacher who lived on the ranch up above Star.

That, my dad took at Cedar Basin, and it was my first "hotcake-flipping". I don't know why it got put down in black-and-white!

Here, I'm holding a couple of not-quite-dead rattlesnakes, on the way to Tallowbox.

*This is a picture of Silver Fork Cabin [?]

*Now this cabin you didn't mention, so I assume it's already disappeared. But this is the Beaver Ranch. The old cabin was fascinating because it had been papered inside with old newspapers -- I mean really old newspapers, like eighteen- something. And I always stood on my head and read newspapers when we were there! When they finally got a road up there, this old cabin stood on the right, and kind of out into the back side of a meadow. I don't think there were any other structures there.

Here, I'm standing on the log fence that was built by the CCC's at Star. It was kind of an attractive structure, so I thought.

I'm sure among my father's stuff [which are currently in the possession of her sister-in-law, Jewel Port], there's more variety of better pictures. This is just a hodge-podge of leftovers.

That was when I got to the end of the trail at Crater Lake.

This was hamming it up at Fir Glade, during the war. It was a hunting trip.
*That was Albert Young, who was the first Protection Assistant. He died in about 1940 or 1939 or something. He'd been out in the mountains for a long time -- they'd been building trail. He came home and wasn't feeling very good -- thought he was getting the flu. And he went to bed, and when his wife got up in the morning, he was dead! He had bulbar polio, from the autopsy. And nobody could figure out where he could possibly have gotten it -- he'd been in the mountains with just three or four men for weeks -- where could he have been exposed? Of course, now you wonder if one of them happened to be a carrier or something? But nobody else was sick. And he wasn't sick long. He came home, didn't feel well, and by morning he was dead. It was really fast.

*That's Tallowbox. And that's Albert again. And that's Maude Zeigler. And one of the women that had been a teacher.

That ought to be familiar to you. That's Silver Fork, with snow on it.

Let's see -- it's mostly just junk here...

JJ What are you considering "junk"? I might not agree...

FC Harland and I were married at Star [Gulch], in the garden. So you see, Star was a real part of my life.

That's me -- and my big brother -- at Star.

*Here's a classic. This is me at Freezeout Corral. [laughs] Fugitive from home! That was one of those places where we got in after dark, and the only thing that got done was you always hang up your saddles before the porcupines could chew them up into little pieces, on a pole that's been arranged for that.

This is the house that was built on the hill up behind the office originally. And at this time, these two kids who were CCC telephone operators lived there.

I don't recall which pack this was. I think it was when they were building one of those air raid warning [Aircraft Warning Service] cabins or one of the lookouts. They had everything from boards to fuel oil to whatever. It was a tremendous packing job getting all those places ready for winter. My dad hated packing fuel oil because any leak would just ruin a mule's back. They used big heavy leather or canvas pads with straw in them over the pack saddle before they put the oil on. They couldn't afford to have any leaks. It was quite a task to keep the mules' backs protected. But it was quite common to see six or eight or ten mules lined out with everything from literally the stoves to the doors to what-not.

This was one of the school teachers who was up there, and that was Bonnie. Old Bonnie.

That was me with a little dog, at Star, in the yard back in the early days. There was just nothing on down the hill. No office -- no anything.
Here's the flagpole in front of the house. We were supposed to run a flag up if Dad was home.

JJ So the road was about where it is now?

FC No, there's a bank off what had been the lawn. The bank resulted when they put in the county road. And there was a tree in here, a good-sized tree, a huge tree. A cypress probably, or a cedar or something, that was planted in there all those years ago.

This was the Slotik Mine up on Wards Fork. This is all white water gushing through there. They put the creek back in a tunnel, and took it out here. The water all gushed out.

And that was a friend of my mother's, on Bonnie. I had a pet-lamb at one time. I had a pet everything. My Mother despaired!

*My grandparents were on Tallowbox for awhile, and that was my brother and myself.

This was in the yard at Star.

That was one of the "downriver Smiths" [earlier, Harland and Frances had talked about the "upriver Smiths" and the "downriver Smiths," two families who were constantly feuding] who was visiting, and she was on Bonnie, having her picture taken.

And here is the fire truck. And when they loaded it with anything, they backed it crossways in the county road and rammed it into the bank in front of the house, and led the mules up onto the lawn and out into the truck, and away they went!

This was the bank at the swimming hole down there. You had all those bunches of grass growing out of the side of the cliff on the far side.

That was Alice Snyder from up the river. She was my brother's age -- nice to me. She made me doll clothes.

That was a place along the Tallowbox Trail, called the Devil's Chair, or something. The rock formations were cut straight down, and then a ninety-degree angle. One thing about Tallowbox -- it had plenty of rocks. Rocks and rattlesnakes.

Emigrant Lake races -- 1930.

Now that is the first Hutton -- can't see much of it there -- Hutton Ranger Station. The original one. I'm sure I can find a better picture of that.

I think that's Azalea Lake.

Everybody took "one more picture" of Silver Fork. It had to be the most photographed place around.
*Now this cabin...I think that that was probably Perks, before the fence was built around it. It's right -- the hill and the trees and the cabin style and everything -- is right for Perks.

Nobody ever wrote on them, but that's one more pack train.

*Here's a horse with telephone wire, which was a common occurrence.

*Here was a trail crew, departing in the spring. They used burros for trail crews and for telephone line maintenance, because the burros would just sort of wander along, not run away. They would just pack them up and drag them up the trail ahead of them. They would come along.

This was what we called "Old Fox" [a horse], and my dad's dog at that time.

I think that's what we called Hinkle Lake. Hinkle Lake was a very photogenic little pothole up there on the ridge. Everytime we got to Hinkle Lake, somebody took somebody's picture.

*This is True Lewis, and it looks like Jim Winningham. I'm sure this was a poison erradication project in Silver Fork, when they were trying to get out the larkspur -- some of the worst patches.

This is a very common type of picture, and I can't tell you for sure what it is, but one of the ways in which my dad checked grazing, where the cattle were, was we'd ride into one of these places where they'd been salting the cattle, and he'd let out a war-whoop and all the critters would just come pouring out of the brush for miles around and rush down. And, you know, we always had our horses, and most of the cows had horns. The horses didn't like being crowded by the cows. So this was a scene that got enacted over and over and over.

There's a picture of Wagner Butte with a better perspective of the rock it sits on.

Here is Yellowjacket [the lookout tree].

That was Dean Saltmarsh and his wife. Saltmarshes were long-, long-time pioneers up Little Applegate. He was a lookout on Tallowbox for awhile.

END OF INTERVIEW
Arthur Jeldness was born in 1905. His father, a Norwegian immigrant, was a miner in the Siskiyou Mountains, and Arthur Jeldness followed in his footsteps before pursuing a career as a welder on numerous big construction projects in the western U.S. Mr. Jeldness, interviewed at his Medford home in March 1985, recollects the people and events of the southernmost Applegate Valley, particularly that portion located in Siskiyou County, California -- the Blue Ledge Mine, "Joe Bar City," the Bloomfield Mine, "pitchforking" fish out of Elliott Creek in the days when trout were incredibly plentiful in the local streams.
Mr. Jeldness, why don't we start out with you talking a little bit about your parents -- where they came from, what brought them here, the dates, if you are familiar with those, and whatever else you have been told about those earliest days.

Well, I don't know the dates. I think both my father and mother came from Norway when they were about 17 or 18 years old. They came to Minnesota and from there traveled on west. Dad worked in Colorado in mining and in eastern Washington, and finally ended up down in this country. He married Mother in Portland, I believe. [November 10, 1903] I was born in Portland [June 14, 1905].

When did your family move to this area?

Well, I was pretty small. Jean has a picture and I wore "dresses," so I was pretty small. I suppose about the time I could walk.

Where was this picture taken?

Taken at the Bloomfield cabin -- there is nothing left of it whatsoever now. Bulldozed the last of it down the hill.

That photo is on file in the [Jacksonville] Museum.

Was the Bloomfield area one of the very first mining areas that your father started into when he moved to the area?

Yes, in this area. He came through the country in the early days [of the 20th century]. He was familiar with copper veins and he came by the Blue Ledge [Mine]. There was an old man living there at the time. He says, "There are indications of a vein around here, but I don't know where it is." And Dad says, "Well, it's those cliffs right up there." So the old guy located it and Dad was headed for the Red Buttes to see what they were made of. On the way, he found the Bloomfield vein -- that's similar to veins in eastern Washington. So he ended up locating that. What he tells me, he had a six-shooter and a piece of bacon. Didn't see anybody for about 30 days. Weren't many people around the country at that time. You could kill grouse with a rock and the deer laid down and looked at you.
But the Chinamen, of course, had been in and did placer mining in Elliott Creek and Applegate River.

JJ Were there any Chinese still around when he arrived in this area?

AJ Very few. But there was such discrimination against them and all. They were running them out of the country. I know Dad took the part of some Chinamen in the so-called saloon brawls, and they gave him some nice vases -- two large ones and a couple of small ones. Nice Chinese vases. My daughters have them now. But there really was discrimination against the Chinese in those days.

JJ Were the local people upset that he was taking their side?

AJ I don't really know. I don't think he cared much if they did. He felt they shouldn't be discriminated against.

JJ Do you remember him talking about any particular Chinese, any individuals?

AJ No, I can't. They used to send candy, Chinese candy. I remember that, being a kid. Tasted like soap some of it, as I remember. I think they used ginger in their candy quite a bit.

JJ Were there any Indians still around at that time?

AJ No, principally just half-breeds. They'd come over from the Klamath side, a lot of them over in there. I don't mean to run down the half-breeds, as they were just like anybody else as far as that goes, but there were some good and bad, just like everybody.

JJ Where did you live then exactly, when you were a little boy?

AJ Well, up at the Bloomfield cabin [on the slopes above Joe Creek, in the remote, California part of the Applegate River drainage]. That was the home place and so we lived there. During my school years, they'd rent a place out in Medford and Mother would live there. I lived with her and that's the way it was. Then, in the summertime, we spent time up in the hills.

JJ Did you have very many friends up in that area, any little friends your age?

AJ There weren't any. There were no people my age up there.

JJ What did you do for fun?

AJ Well, it would depend on the age, I suppose. I did a lot of hunting and sometimes I would trap. When I was real small, my mother kind of invented a playmate for me, sort of an "imaginary playmate," called Rasmusson [laughs]. But a child raised out that way, I think they get more thinking kinda like an animal -- wild animal -- and there is a difference in the way animals think and the way people think, basically, in society. In animals, it is a survival situation, whereas people have kind of moral codes, a little different.
JJ Did you have brothers and sisters?

AJ I had a half-brother that lived in Medford. He and I were not really close. He operated a beer joint in Medford. I think there was a basic falling out between Dad and him probably. They were not really close. He was much older than I am; 'course he is long dead. There were two half-sisters as well. I think they are in that picture.

J Otto was a full-grown man at that time when Dad was just a baby. The sisters are here and that's Otto and that's Grandfather and Grandmother. That's Dad, so you can see the difference. This is a pack to put on a burro.

JJ So this is probably taken around 1906?

J About that, because he [Arthur Jeldness] was born in 1905 and he doesn't look more than a year. (Looking at a photo) That's Cook and Green Trail. That was the crew that built the Cook and Green Trail, and Dad is the little boy. This is Grand-father and that's Dad. You can identify all of them.

AJ Well, starting from left to right, that's me. That's my dad. This is a fellow named Fruit who worked for the Forest Service, Bill Fruit. That is Charlie Fry, who drew the map on the Blue Ledge Mining District and this is Albert Collings that lived near where the Applegate Dam is now.

JJ Is that "Collings" as in Collings Mountain?

AJ Yes, that's probably named after him. And that is a fellow named Wells -- he left the country shortly after that. And that is Eric Anderson. And this is Sullivan. He used to have the mines on Cook and Green across from Bloomfield Pass -- the road cut the vein there. And this is Lloyd McKee, an oldtimer in the Applegate country. He had this camp at the forks of the creek -- Cook and Green. They were building a road through there. Called it No-see-um Camp -- little gnats that were pretty thick around there. You're familiar with them are you?

JJ Yes, I sure am, I'm afraid.

AJ They get right in your hair...

JJ You breathe them in...

AJ My mother isn't in the picture, but she was cooking for that group. They did have a camp further down Cook and Green first, about halfway between that area and the mouth of Cook and Green. Then this was the second camp that they set up -- so that's the gang that built Cook and Green Trail.

J This is another shot of that crew. That's their camp, their tent. That's a different picture of the same area.

JJ Looks like you were about six or eight.
AJ I don't know, about seven maybe.

J Quite a huge difference between him and everybody else.

AJ I think everybody in that picture is dead except me. Then this is one showing the Bloomfield crew.

JJ Do you remember the names of most of those folks?

AJ This is at the Bloomfield Mine -- it doesn't look like that now. Bull-dozed everything out and it is all clean, but originally it was a little blacksmith shop. Of these men, this is Otto, my half brother, and this is Dad. And here is a fellow that was quite notorious in the mining in those days. "Doc Reddy" we called him. He was a mining promoter.

J Is he the one that Reddy Avenue is named after?

AJ Yes, he lived at the head of Reddy Avenue and this is Lundgren. He was a big Swede -- Lundgren. I don't know the names of these other fellows. They were hired when the original tunnel, the Bloomfield Tunnel, was dug in about 50 feet to the vein and then it followed the vein.

JJ Where did they all live? Did they live right up there at the mine?

AJ Oh yes, there were no roads in those times, just trails. So they lived in tents. Actually they lived up above here -- we don't have any picture of it -- in tents in those days.

JJ How did these guys all get along with each other? Do you remember what the general atmosphere was around there? Everybody pretty congenial?

AJ Everybody got along pretty well, I think. I wouldn't want to say anything bad about anybody. (laughs)

JJ Yes, OK.

AJ I'd be saying something bad about a dead man!

JJ I suppose so. I'd like to hear some of your recollections of what Joe Bar City was like back in those days.

AJ Well, it had a big barn, livery stable as you came in on the right. Then there was a saloon which later became the Post Office. A man named Huff had the Post Office and a fellow named Frank Edwards had a grocery store up at the upper end of the bar. The road used to cross a bridge there at that time, at the lower end of the bar as it does at the present. And across the street, Charlie Fry had a house -- I think a fellow is living in it yet. I think Eric Anderson had a house. And they also had an ice house. They'd haul ice from down here and take it up there. Had thick sawdust-filled walls....

Charlie Fry drew a map of all the claims of the Blue Ledge District at that time and the owners of them I believe. I consider it one of the most valuable momentos of the Blue Ledge Mining District in the upper
Applegate. That fellow that lives there does a little suction dredging now along the creek. I guess he claims Joe Bar and the Forest Service probably disputes it. And then Martha Jones had a boarding house up on the other side of the road across from Edwards. She and her brother had this. They rented rooms and served meals. And that's about the way it was.

JJ I remember one time when I was talking to you on the phone, you mentioned that "old lady Jones" and somebody else didn't get along very well.

AJ Oh, that was old man Huff. He had a mining claim on Joe Bar and Mrs. Jones wanted a homestead audit and the two fought about that their whole life, all the time they were there. It was an undying enmity and that's probably the reason no one has the title to it to this day. They fought that situation their whole lifetime. She was an old maid, newer been married, had a brother living with her. Old man Huff had been married and lived up Elliott Creek, may be a cabin there yet. It was made of peeled logs. I can't hardly describe the place to you. It's about a couple of miles up the creek there. The Blue Ledge vein comes down toward Elliott Creek at what they call, I think it is Park Gulch. Old man Huff at that time had two mining claims on that, while he was married. His wife died, then he later became the Postmaster.

JJ What about this Eric Anderson? I have heard him mentioned a few times -- he was from Sweden?

AJ Yes, he was a Swede. I personally would rather not even talk about him.

JJ That bad?

J Does this go back into old Norwegian/Swede jokes?

AJ There were good Swedes and bad. Good and bad in Swedes too....

JJ What about the town of Eileen then? There was Joe Bar there at the end of the stage run [on Elliott Creek]. Then it was a trail [up Joe Creek canyon] on into Eileen and that was also quite a little settlement.

AJ Well, when the Blue Ledge Mine was developed, they built the road up [Joe Creek canyon] to the mine, and it went by Eileen. There was an old prospector had a claim there, and I don't think there was ever a townsite. The old cabin was just below where the hotel was, and Bell (that had the Nash Hotel) put in this hotel there. That is, it had a kitchen, dining room, bar, and some rooms upstairs. I was too young to know what was in there. (laughs) I missed all the fun! [Probable reference to story that Hotel Eileen served as a "house of ill repute"] Anyway, they had about, as I remember, about 150 men working at the Blue Ledge then. They had a grocery store and it was across on the upper side of the road. It burned down. And there were a few shake houses around. Families lived in tents and what-not below, scattered around. It was particularly a place where families -- kids and women and what-not -- lived in tents 'til they built the road to Blue Ledge and the mine was operating. They took the cables from the cable cars in Frisco and strung them up there. And they burned wood for the boiler there to operate the compressor and put a line in up
They had a waterwheel, also, that they would hook up to the compressor. But when they started in, they were drilling by hand. The first drills that came in, they threw them over at the dump. There was quite a resentment among the miners about pneumatic drills coming in because of all the dust they made, and I guess it had some validity as far as health is concerned.

[Looking at a photo] That's another part of the Blue Ledge -- one of these is upper and one is lower. I guess that was the blacksmith shop.

Oh, yes, this is an entrance to the upper tunnel at the Bloomfield. At Blue Ledge, ore was hauled in wagons, four horse-drawn teams down and shipped to Tacoma, a smelter at Tacoma, which is now shut down finally.

Do you recognize any of these men in this picture?

Well, this is Doc Reddy and that's Eric Anderson and that's Dad, and I don't believe I can recognize this man.

And that's at the upper operation?

This is at the upper tunnel at the Bloomfield. It's caved in and I bulldozed the dump down out of that, but it is just above the main tunnel.

I think there is a cabin still at the Bloomfield now, that would have been a lot later than the one you lived in.

Oh no, we built that when we went in and bulldozed this all out and opened things up and drove the tunnel into where we had good ore.

I've identified all of them: Alex Lundgren, Eric Anderson were in there. And Doc Reddy and Grandpa. I tried to get information from my grandparents when they were alive, but they never settled down to do much of it and we didn't even have tape recorders like we have today; it would have helped a great deal. I see Doc Reddy has three-buckle boots on, everybody else has got laced boots. See, he had three buckles there on the boots. More important [he was], the more buckles he had on his boots. I guess that was when Nash was down here at the hotel and those guys, speculators, would come in and talk. The railroad brought people in and there were great speculators in those days and they'd meet there and hash it all out down there at the Nash Hotel [in Medford].

Those were great days in mining. Incidentally, I don't know if you have any record of his daughters. One of [Dr. Reddy's] daughters was named Eileen, and then he had another daughter and she became -- there was a big writeup in some magazine -- the "chrome queen" of the United States. She had some chrome claims on the Klamath side over here and she really took an interest in mining. Then she went to Alaska and got some chrome mines during the [second World] War when chrome was in demand. I think it was Life magazine did a big writeup about her, Dorothy Reddy. Eileen was her sister. Eileen town, which is a bunch of brush now of course, was named after the younger daughter, Eileen. She didn't have anything to do with
mining. I don't know what became of her, but Dorothy became, I think it was *Life* magazine, the "Chrome Queen of the United States."

J  How long ago was that?

AJ  During the war. She was one of the girls that kind of followed in her father's footsteps and went into mining.

JJ  Did you ever meet Eileen, the daughter the town was named after?

AJ  Yes. When I first started to school -- I guess Doc Reddy's influence or somebody's -- anyway, they tried to put me in a Catholic school here. Doc Reddy was a Catholic. He had a son also, a son and two daughters. But the only one that became famous really was Dorothy, the chrome miner. It was quite an historical article about Dorothy Reddy.

JJ  And you never heard what happened to Eileen then?

AJ  No, I really don't know anything about what became of Eileen.

J  About how much older was she than you?

AJ  Oh, it was about a year or two.

JJ  Do you remember anything about her? Was she the quiet type?

AJ  I think she was more of the quiet type; Dorothy was more the outgoing type.

J  Dorothy older?

AJ  Yes. Doc Reddy was quite an influential person in the development of mining in Southern Oregon in his day, the early days.

J  Did you know Nash? He would have been right in there with them.

AJ  Yes, I did know his widow, and he had told her to hang on to those claims over on the Illinois River -- gold claims there. He had other mining property too. He was interested in mining but I personally don't remember him.

JJ  What about the town of Hutton -- that was real near Joe Bar wasn't it? Was it essentially the same town?

AJ  That's the same town. It was called Joe Bar originally, and somewhere along the line they started calling it Hutton and then they started calling it Copper and then they finally moved the Copper Post Office down.

JJ  So they never did end up getting it designated as a townsite? I think they were trying to.

AJ  No, it never became a townsite due to the ownership of it.
[Looking at brass tokens from Joe Bar saloon] "Twelve and one-half cents. Good for one drink or cigar."

They had a lot of those in the early days where they would give those in change and then you could buy a drink or whatever.

It's from the saloon there.

Newberry and Campbell?

Yes, well, Newberry was also an innkeeper in the early days in Jacksonville. He also had interest in some mining claims in that country.

Do you have any other artifacts or anything from the town -- pictures or anything?

We have some photographs; not very many at all.

Wonder if we could almost reconstruct from Dad's memories of it? He can draw pretty good too -- maybe he could.

Yes, that would be really helpful.

I recall that Ranger Station they had down there, Hutton. But that is a mile or so below where Joe Bar, Hutton or Copper is -- went under those names during this time.

Yes. So the people at Joe Bar were mostly "support people" for the things that were going on at the Blue Ledge, rather than the actual workers themselves, who would have lived at Eileen? Joe Bar would have been more of an end of the stage road place?

Four miles or four-and-a-half miles away. But Joe Bar, I'm just calling it that because that was the original name. Actually, it has several names. But that was the stopping point for having horses. There was hydraulic mining on up Elliott Creek and so on. They had to pack this pipe, hydraulic pipe, up in the hills like at the -- I believe they called it Knutzen Ranch at the last. Well, that was basically a placer mine originally.

The Boggs Mine?

Yes, the Boggs Mine. It was a high channel mine and a ditch came from Joe Creek. And then where the field is up there, they had a reservoir and the water would fill up there in the reservoir and they'd pipe it down and wash the gravel down. Then later Dad took it up as a homestead.

When did he first start working that Boggs Mine?

It goes back before my time. I just don't know. It was sometime before I was born because I had, I think it was my sixth, either fifth or sixth birthday, at the place. Had a big house there, two-story house. It had a cookhouse and it was made of sawed lumber, and then there were a bunch of cabins around there.
JJ So it was almost a town really?

AJ Well, in those days you couldn't get in a car and drive like you do, fifty miles to work. You had to walk or ride a horse, and it would take you all day to get to work if you traveled right along. In those days, if you were going to do anything anyplace, you set up a situation to take care of the people that you employed, like in bunkhouses or cabins and dining hall or what-not. That's what they had at Blue Ledge, you see, log houses. Most all the buildings there at Blue Ledge were log structures. As you entered into the Blue Ledge there on the right hand, there was the Superintendent's office and then the assay office, a log cabin. There was a barn back in there and then several shake houses. And on the left-hand side of the road was the cookhouse. Just above that was the Engineer's house, and then scattered around were some miscellaneous little houses. Eric Anderson was the foreman up there at the time. He and his wife -- he was married at that time -- had a log cabin. I don't know but what a little of that might be left, just this way from where the Blue Ledge camp was, above the road, in that swampy area there. [Note: this cabin, partially "filled" by a landslide debris flow, was still standing in the 1980s]

JJ Do you know about what year your father had his homestead up there at the Knutzen Ranch area?

AJ Well, you can figure it pretty close, because it was either my fifth or sixth birthday.

JJ Yes, and that is where you moved from the Bloomfield cabin then?

AJ Well, he kept the Bloomfield Mine at the same time. He'd have to go there to do assessment work and all.

J Did he have a homestead, and what happened to that?

AJ He sold it to a fellow, an Italian guy named Vincenati. He had a big house. He got insurance on it. Accidentally, I guess, it burned down. So that was the end of the house and he made a deal with Knutzen on the place, and I don't know from then on, but I guess Knutzen must have made a deal with the Forest Service, or some logging outfit, who traded it with the Forest Service for timber, so that became the end of that.

J [Looking at a photo] This was my grandmother -- and this is a closer shot of her. She had her three cubs there.

JJ This was at the Knutzen -- the old homestead?

AJ Oh, that's up above Squaw Lake, up there on the cinnabar mines -- and that cabin still is there.

JJ Lyman Gulch?

AJ Here is a blowup of that one. We were up there last year and this is what's left.
Right. I've been up there recently too.

Mineral spring about over here. Used to be wild pigeons come to that spring. I don't know if they do anymore or not.

I was surprised that so many of the things were still there -- the basics, you know, fry pans and the stove.

Yes, we did a little scrounging around.

And flour, did you see the flour in the jar that was still OK?

That's what was interesting. It made it seem like it had been used more recently than it was, but then we found a newspaper that said 1935, I think it was.

That's the year I was born. Do you suppose she had my birth announcement in that paper? I wouldn't be surprised. Probably did.

How old were you when you lived here then?

That was like a summer house.

Is that what it was? You didn't spend any time there?

No, I never spent any time there. That's a nice picture of that. I've always wanted to do a painting of that. I had a tent here, you see, down next to the creek. Elmer and I stayed a night there. We went up there and slept there. It doesn't look like that now, I imagine.

Sure doesn't. It is really grown up.

I imagine they will be bringing a road down through there for the timber one of these days.

As a matter of fact....

Oh, no! Is that right?

Up above it about three or four hundred feet.

You got a road there now?

Not yet.

We staked out a mine there. Up on the hill from that cabin.

Up on the ridge there?

That's my uncle Clarence's cabin that's up there.

And that's gone back and forth between us. It's gone round-robin with Grandpa, and then my uncle, and then I got it and I gave it back to my
uncle. It just keeps circulating in the family; nobody wants to let it

It is just kept circulating in the family; nobody wants to let it

Originally, Emmett Phillips set a coyote trap there and the dirt was

so red that he took the sample home. His mother was quite a prospector.

She used to have an old horse she'd ride around the country. She

recognized it for what it was [mercury ore]. So Dad, I think he gave her

$200 or $250 for that claim.

JJ What were the Phillips' like? Do you remember them very well?

AJ I don't know if Emmett Phillips is alive yet or not.

JJ Yes, he is.

AJ You ought to talk to him. They live up above Jacksonville. Well, Emmett

was setting a coyote trap there, on the trail up on the ridge, and found

that cinnabar. Mrs. Phillips was quite a prospector.

JJ What about the cabin? I think I may have asked you about this on the

phone one time but we got sidetracked. There is a cabin down below the

forks of Squaw Creek, below all the Phillips' ranch.

AJ A mining claim in between there. There was Government land there.

JJ Right. There is a little corner of Government land with a house on it, a

nice-looking house.

AJ There was a man and his wife had a placer claim there, can't think just

offhand of his name. He later lived out at Ruch but he had a placer claim

on that and I understand Archy Pearce bought it from him, gave him $500

for it.

JJ When did he have that mining claim? When would he have built that house?

AJ That is a hard thing for me to say, but I imagine that was built probably

when I was in my 20's. I would say I was working for the Game Commission,

I was maybe 20 - 25 years old.

JJ It is in really nice condition for being that old.

AJ He had a nice garden there -- his wife lived there. I might think of his

name later, I can't at this time. Sometimes I go through the alphabet and

remember names.

JJ Do you remember going up to the mining area of Browntown, that area up on

Steve Fork, when that was going?

AJ Not when I was young. No, I wasn't around that area.

JJ Could I ask you about a site that I found on the Upper Applegate where

Glade Creek comes in. There is a siphon that comes down the hill from one

ditch over to the Sterling Ditch.

AJ That's the Sterling Ditch.
JJ Yes, do you remember when that siphon was put in? It looks like it was supposed to shortcut the route from Glade Creek?

AJ It goes down and across there.

JJ Yes, it goes way down the hillside three or four hundred feet and then up the other side. When do you think it was put in?

AJ Oh, that was put in a long time ago; back in Chinaman days.

JJ That long ago, you think?

AJ When the Sterling Ditch was put in.

JJ But then the Sterling Mine has been re-used off and on since then and they've done a lot of work on it during those succeeding periods.

AJ Well, when they opened up the Sterling Mine the last time, this Arizona outfit put in the concentrator there and I was blacksmith and welder. They had to open up that ditch, and then they put in pumps down there to pump the water back up you see.

JJ Pumped it back up the other side?

AJ No, they went down below, just down Sterling Creek and then they pumped the water back and ran it through a mixer. Run water into a mixer and then a very unusual concentrator. The mud came over and they were built like two cones come together. Where the stuff come in was about 10 inches in diameter and when it went out it was about 30 inches in diameter. They had a variable speed control to spin that. They spun that, after this mud came from being mixed with water in a drum, came in to that. A fellow stood in front and watched it so the mud came up in, and fell across that way. Constantly, just like that, inside the drum. The gold would hit and it would penetrate itself right into the "cushion" as they called it, in the "V". The stuff would come over and fall, come over and fall, several times going through this thing, about 5 foot or 6 foot in diameter -- I would say at least 6 foot in diameter. Then it would go on out to the dump. Had a conveyor belt.

JJ So they weren't using the ditch then; they just pumped it up? When do you think the last time was then that they would have used the ditch, and might have used that siphon?

AJ Oh, gosh. Well, I'll tell you who would know all about that... there was a Pierce. It isn't Archie Pierce. But there is a fellow that is my age -- I went to school with him here -- named Ansel Pierce that lives out, last time I knew he lived out on South Fir Street, way out on the right hand side, Ansel Pierce. He is a relative of Pierce's and so I am sure he could bring you up probably more than anybody on the history of the Sterling Mine and Ditch.

JJ Yes. I am real interested in that siphon because it is one of our more significant sites on the District and we are thinking of putting in an
There are some stories up there. Used to be twin cabins up Glade Fork and I remember as a kid those twin cabins joined together there.

Why were they called "twin cabins"?

There were two cabins and then a roof joining them, a common roof, open in between.

Why had they done that do you think?

Well, two different fellows or families or something. There was another one up by the Blue Ledge that was built like that. That cabin may be in existence yet. You know where the main camp of the Blue Ledge was. Well, there was a fellow named Callahan that had an adjoining claim just between the two creeks there, straight up the hill there. It was Callahan's cabin and it was built like that. There was Callahan and his wife, and I suppose they had maybe somebody working there. Had a twin cabin up there.

Do you know who lived in the twin cabins on Glade?

I don't know who lived in there, no. I heard a real ancient story about that area, however. Dan Nass had a wrecking and junk yard out here. He was also interested in mining and timber around the country, so he'd been all over this country. He went to school here. He told me a "lost gold story" about that area there. It seems in the early days, in the time of the Indians, that they were mining on Glade Fork and Indians attacked and this one fellow got shot with an arrow and he took the gold they had and put it in a cast iron bean-pot, something like that kettle on the stove. And he buried it and he never made it to Jacksonville, but he made it someplace down along the line and it's buried up there somewhere around the "twin cabin" area. At the base of a cliff in a cast iron bean pot was the gold. Dan Nass has enough faith in the story that he spent some time with a metal detector around up in there looking for it. Dan wasn't really a gullible fellow, so he must have had it from some old miner. But anyway, theoretically... that was one of the gold stories.

Incidentally, there is another gold story at Maple Dell. Back in the Indian days, when the Indians robbed gold miners out here on the Applegate -- and of course Squaw Creek was kind of a pathway to the Klamath River -- this Indian squaw ended up carrying the gold, and she got up around Maple Dell and buried it under a flat rock. A flat rock up at Maple Dell. Lots of flat rocks up there! [laughs]

Well you know, some of these stories do turn out. Like the one the old guy up at Squaw Lake sold his cattle -- in those days they used gold -- and then died right after that. And everybody knew he had gold -- money -- and later Bert Harr was bulldozing stuff away there for a little road, bulldozed an old rotten log and a rusty tin can. He went out and pulled out a 20-dollar gold piece! So I hear. [laughs] That's the way it goes.

You probably remember Lee Port pretty well.
AJ Lee Port used to go around the hills and saw out logs, and he'd always put his name on them. He'd write on the log where he cut it off, "Lee Port". I tell you, that whole country was covered with the name "Lee Port"! He got everywhere.

JJ Did he have a pretty good relationship with the miners would you say?

AJ Yes, as far as I know. The Forest Service really didn't have bad relationships with the miners in the early days, far as I know. Of course, that relationship I think has deteriorated markedly through the years.

JJ Why do you think that is? New laws that have come along?

AJ The Forest Service is only interested in cutting timber and preserving their bureaucracy, getting as much money out of the timber as they possibly can and making an ever-growing bureaucracy. And that's what apparently the Forest Service is dedicated to. So they are practically a law unto themselves and administratively they put rules and regulations in to harrass the miner. They have done that consistently. I don't know exactly when they started but they certainly have been doing it for quite a while now. That isn't the only thing, of course, that has destroyed mining as an industry. Also, as productivity in relation to value has declined here in the United States, mining has moved out of the United States to other places. For instance, copper. Back when copper was 14, 15 cents, when they operated Blue Ledge, wages were $2.50 a day. Now copper pays 64 cents. God knows what wages are, but you can't mine. You can't pay the wages and mine. Technical advances are not making up for the loss of productivity.

JJ Do you remember a family named Jens who lived on Elliott Creek? They apparently had a homestead at the mouth of Dutch Creek, on the other side of Elliott Creek from Dutch Creek. I've found out very little about them, but their name appears on the old maps, and some of the other people I've talked to can remember the name vaguely, but they just can't remember anything about them, Jens. It's not too far from where your father's homestead would have been so I am thinking maybe the map just abbreviated and it was supposed to be "Jeldness," but other people can remember the name Jens so I wonder if you had heard anything about them.

AJ I can remember the old days, right about where you are talking, there was a big log crossing to cross Elliott Creek and that was there for years. That was just a bottom brush patch where the fellow patented the mining claim in there you know. At that time, why, that was just all a brush patch in there. There was a log crossing there, and there was no cabin whatsoever around there. Not a one. I'm positive of that. This way as you came back down, I couldn't quite describe where it is, where the cabin was on the lower side of the road. It was peeled log, there must be something left of it. In fact, there is a tunnel goes in on the left side. About two miles up Elliott Creek there was a tunnel goes in on the left side and there was a cabin -- quite a big cabin -- on the right-hand side and there were people living there. But from there on up, there was
nobody lived in that country at that time. There wasn't a soul lived up
there -- a blank spot up through there.

JJ I remember looking through some of the old trail logs and right near where
Carlton Pasture trail takes off from Elliott Creek, I believe is where
they mentioned the Jens ranch.

AJ That was mined at a later time. There are some houses there and one of
the fellows killed the other one sometime later. They had that mining
claim down at the bottom there at that time, Pennsylvania Mine. Oh, I'll
bet I know what you are talking about. Dutch Creek comes in, you go up
Elliott Creek a little bit and there is a waterfall. It's the Daffodil
Mine.

JJ Possibly. But that's further up I think than where I'm thinking. What
was at the Daffodil Mine?

AJ Well, you see, that whole country in there dropped from (about a half-mile
or mile above the forks) on up to what they called "Devil's Garden." There
was over a mile square that dropped and so then that whole bottom
filled in with gravel and rock. When it dropped, it went down like that,
so it filled up to this level and then the water here, and that's the
Daffodil Mine. They did originally run a tunnel in there to try to get to
the bottom of this lower level because that's rich in gold all the way up
there. But the tunnel came out above the layer here -- I talked with an
oldtimer that had worked there. They sunk a shaft 40 feet that was just a
terrible hard job. And they still didn't get to the bottom of that. So
there is more than a 40-foot drop there -- that's a big deposit of gold.
But they never figured out a way to handle it.

JJ Was that where Eldred Cobb is working?

AJ No, no, he is at the mouth of Dutch Creek.

JJ So this is a mile above it.

AJ Above there -- that's the edge of this mile square or more that reaches
from there to Wards Fork. Geologically, at Ward's Fork, there was a
structure rose up like that, that green stone, and then this land here
dropped. That's right against the face of Scraggy Mountain. This
geological map shows just how it was, and it is very evident.

JJ Do you remember seeing a grave along Elliott Creek? There is a grave
marker on some of the old maps, up above Dutch Creek -- below Studhorse
but above where Dutch Creek comes in, on the north side of the creek.
There is just a little cross that says "grave" on some of the older maps.

AJ I don't remember about that. I can't tell you anything about it.

JJ Do you know how Slicktaw Gulch got its name?

AJ No, I don't. You ought to talk to Phillips about that. He'd be closer to
knowing that than anybody I know of.
JJ Do you remember a fellow named Mengoz, Francis Mengoz, I think.

AJ I don't know if he put a homestead in there or not. Mengoz' cabin was in there and he had some apple trees.

JJ I've heard a couple of different explanations of just where that cabin was. Was that along the Penn Sled Trail on the way to Summit Lake or was that straight above Dividend Bar?

AJ Straight above Dividend Bar. If the cabin should be gone, the apple trees are probably there yet.

JJ Yes, Dow Lewis told me about that cabin. I haven't been in to see where it was.

AJ They always had a pretty good crop of apples over there. Dad used to go over and get a load of them with his horse or burro or what have you.

JJ Do you remember a cabin that was just off the Penn Sled Trail about, oh, probably more than half way up to Summit Lake from Squaw Creek? It would have been off to your right as you were going up and visible from the trail. It is pretty old, built with square nails.

AJ No, I don't remember that cabin. No, there were some other cabins. When they logged Maple Dell, there at the lower end of the logging there was a cabin.

JJ Yes, what about that one? Who lived there?

AJ I don't know who lived there. Down below there's cinnabar and there's cinnabar right at the gap there. No doubt they were interested in that cinnabar.

JJ There is an adit right below that, and if they didn't log as far down as the adit, it's just into the trees. That's cinnabar?

AJ That's cinnabar. See, cinnabar followed... well, that green strata where you go into Maple Dell -- that green strata of rock that you've seen that slides down and then that goes right over to Wards Fork and slides up there -- that's all gold-bearing, and that's what fed Wards Fork, and fed Squaw Creek too. Along the edge of that out a little ways, that ridge, mercury comes up in fumeroles and when it gets up to the surface, it condenses there into sulphite. So all along that thing is the cinnabar. Now down where Dad's place was, closer to the lake at the forks there, that's the same thing, but that's the end of that green-stone right there. You see, it is a complex geology right in there. Like the mineral spring -- there's cinnabar there, there's gold there, there's every damn thing there.

JJ Down there at the forks of Squaw then, that might have been cinnabar down that far too?

AJ Oh yes, that's cinnabar where the cabin was. There's cinnabar there and there's cinnabar where you mentioned that adit, and there's cinnabar on
top. There's cinnabar that goes clear over to the Klamath -- all along that thing. You see, it's a major fault line in that country.

JJ Do you know any of the folks who would have been mining up the right-hand fork of Squaw Creek?

AJ Well, I knew a fellow that did mine up there and he had a little self-shooter dam built up there. I understood he took out one nugget -- about two ounces. Got $70 for it at that time -- a while ago. [laughs] Gold was $35 an ounce.

JJ That was on the right fork, then, of Squaw Creek? Is the self-shooter near the trail that goes up there, up Squaw Creek?

AJ Oh, that was in the creek. They built a little dam that goes along and then it lets water out. There wouldn't be anything left of it probably now.

JJ How far up?

AJ Well, you go up there a ways and there is a lime spring and then everything gets covered with lime -- pine cones, gold nuggets, rocks, everything so that you can't tell gold from anything else, from that lime spring up there. So he had to quit as far as going on up. You can't mine. There used to be a cabin off, well you know the little creek that goes up to where the folks were. You go up a little further and off to the left there used to be a cabin. Never understood -- the Forest Service burned it down years ago. Some years ago. Down below Dividend Bar there were some of those veins up in there. And cabins were in there too -- burned down.

JJ Did you know who Harthan was?

AJ It has a familiar ring but I don't remember him.

JJ He was a Depression miner on the right-hand fork of Squaw Creek, well, all over the area, I guess, according to Emmett Phillips.

AJ Well, perhaps he was the one that was up on the right-hand fork. Emmett and his brothers did a little mining right where the two forks come together. They had a barn there or something, just a little barn there. I understood he took out about an ounce nugget there or some such. It was about an ounce as I understand it.

JJ Yes, you can see their sluice boxes in the creek there.

AJ See, when the hillside slid in and made Squaw Lake, why of course that bottom all filled up in there and covered what was probably a damn good gold streak originally.

JJ Do you remember a fellow named "Knox" McCloy?

AJ Oh, yes. Back in the old days he used to have a string of horses. He did a lot of packing around the country, and he also had a gold mine on the
Middle Fork. He was quite a character. He was a nice man. He had a string of goats last time I saw him. They followed him around. Yeah, Knox McCloy; he was an oldtimer. He did packing work.

JJ Do you remember Bill Ziegler?

AJ No, I don't know that name.

JJ Do you remember any momentous fires that happened up there? Were you ever called on any fires, to help out?

AJ No. A big fire was over on the Middle Fork up there at the head of Middle Fork. After the fire, I know there was a wonderful crop of blackberries up there. Lots of blackberries and a bunch of bear too. I can remember Dad and Mother and I went over there with a 5-gallon kerosene can on the horses and they picked blackberries, a bunch of blackberries, and I fished along the creek. My God, there was a lot of fish there then! I remember one time Dad and I went there. I just had a little old fly and I jerked them out and Dad took them off the hook. We caught them one a minute.

JJ Hardly even fishing.

AJ Yes, you just catch them like that. Well, there was something about fish that a lot of these environmentalists I don't think are aware of. I worked for the Oregon Fish and Game Commission, also the California Fish and Game Commission around fish hatcheries. That is that dirty, horrible water is a benefit if it comes occasionally to the fish population, the reason being that fish get diseases of the gills and if you don't do anything about it, they multiply and breed and multiply, and this disease gets very prevalent. But if a lot of dirty water comes down, it will clog the gills and they will die and then you have healthier fish. So these nasty old floods are beneficial. Up at the Butte Falls Fish Hatchery, and also in California, when you have the small fry in these troughs you know, and get gill disease in there, take a flour sifter and throw some good clay dirt in there and make that water just thick with mud and all the ones that are faulty will die. But the healthy ones, they survived and they have a healthier population. So having a pure stream is not of continuous benefit.

You take Elliott Creek there. My, God, in those days the fish were just fins abreast. [laughs] There was a tremendous amount. And you take the fish in Squaw Lake and all, there were so many up above. At the forks of the creek, we're talking about. Well, there was a waterfall up on the lefthand fork. There used to be a pitchfork ledge along through the brush there to the side. People would go there and take pitchforks and pitch those trout. I know Dad and I went over with the horses one time and pitched out a couple of gunnysacks full of trout. But what happened there was those trout became inbred. You see, when the slide came down and made the lakes in the mountain there, why, then those fish where imprisoned there. No new stock could get in there at all. When I worked for the Game Commission, we'd take eggs there at the lake and take them up to Butte Falls and hatch them. Then there would be two-headed ones and twisted spines, all kinds of cripples from the inbreeding. You take an
isolated group of trout and that was what will happen to them. They get inbred. So that happens too.

JJ  Do you remember ever hearing about or seeing any of the "wild horses of the Applegate"?

AJ  The damned ranchers shot them. The cattlemen shot them. They begrudge every blade of grass there is out there, and they shot them. Wild hogs got started one time; they do real well up there. They took a cabin and put a rack with holes at the entrance, hogs would go in there. Once a hog goes in, why, then all the rest of them want to go in. One dies, they smell them, and they come and it makes a perfect hog trap. [laughs]

JJ  Do you remember a cabin up at Slaughterhouse Flat, up there above Nabob Ridge, where it joins the Siskiyou Crest? The cabin was supposedly there around 1911. It was recorded at that time and there is still a foundation, or a couple of logs high.

AJ  Do you suppose that could be Johnson Dairy?

JJ  Above that, right on the Crest.

AJ  Well then, it must have been a cattleman's cabin. I imagine that was a cattle ranch cabin. They had a few cabins along there. It could have been some of the cattlemen from Klamath, probably was the Klamath cattlemen. They ran cattle up through there.

JJ  There's another cabin site -- it's pretty old-looking too, there is a lot of old glass around it -- up just below Big Rock. Do you know where Big Rock is, over above Ward's Fork on the Crest?

AJ  Oh, on the top there? Yes, of course; up in there, there could be miners. Did a lot of pocket hunting up in there. See, that green strata that raised up goes through there and there were lots of pocket hunters in the old days. That's almost a lost art now.

JJ  Pocket hunting? By pocket hunting you mean...

AJ  Oh, pocket hunting is... Well, on all mountains, all hills, the dirt gradually moves downhill. And if there is a deposit of gold -- and this country is noted for pockets -- if there is a deposit of gold anywhere, it will start from that and erode in an ever-widening pathway down from that. Well, a pocket hunter goes along and picks samples. Maybe he will take samples and carry them in his packsack to the nearest water, or else he might carry a jug of water. He'll take a little sample, dig down maybe a foot and get the sample, and then pan it. Whenever he'd get a trace of color, two, three, or four, you know there is gold and that it came from up there. So once you get that trace you go up and you take maybe two or three samples up here to get the width of where the trace is coming down. If it is fairly wide, why, it's either big or it is quite a ways up and they go up until they finally come up and it will go into the dirt and there's a pocket of gold. You see, back in the early days that was a regular trade. They would be experts at it and a few would take out as much as a million dollars -- in those days that much money, which would be
many times that amount now. That was "pocket hunting." That's one of the troubles with gold in this country, is that rather than a huge vein, I have prospected like where they built the new road around Maple Dell and there are all kinds of places you can find gold there. You'd just find a little old quartz seam and then that fizzled out -- no consistent big thing, just some little dab here and there. Well, there was pocket gold all over the country, anyplace you care to name. All of these hills here there have been pocket hunters. They became very expert. It is almost an art in that they could walk along and spot where things are. They read the geology very carefully. They are experts at it, used to be. Nowadays it is pretty much a lost art. They can read about it in a book and go out there but they are pretty blind as far as being able to read the geology that well. There were big ones, but the majority of pockets are little things you know, didn't amount to much. Like Little Applegate -- I talked with a pocket hunter -- I remember he said there's all small pockets in that whole area, just little dabs. Like that old guy that took out that one in Gold Hill -- there was a million dollar pocket. And them others off up Cave's Creek or something. They took out that one too. And then that one up in Middle Fork was a good big one. I talked with the fellow that basically found it, about three or four fellows there. What the hell was his name. I can't even remember. I'm getting so I can't remember so well, especially names. But he told me that nobody will ever know how much gold came out of there.

JJ And where was that one again?

AJ Well, you go up the Middle Fork past Cook and Green, and I think there is a cabin that is there now yet, a waterfall in the Creek. It is on the righthand side.

JJ Is that the Ruby?

AJ Yes, they have called it all kinds of names -- Moonbeam and Ruby and what-not. I don't know what they call it now. You see, one of the old-time pocket hunters had found the main deposit up above and so the old man sunk a shaft about 80 feet deep. It got so dangerous nobody would go down there and he hadn't found the gold yet. So then they started digging a tunnel into awfully hard rock. This pocket hunter got up there and there is a quartz vein that cuts across the natural slope of the country this way, and the quartz goes this way. And he thought there ought to be gold down there so he dug there and it was richer than hell. This deposit up above was leeching all the time and the gold was coming down and depositing there against that. When they found it -- there were three or four fellows there -- they all started filling boxes and everything they could with gold and burying it all over the hillsides. Then one damn fool took 30,000 dollars worth into the bank down there, and the bank, of course, broadcast it. The old lawyer up there got ahold of the bank so then the lawyer brought suits and stopped the damned thing. Well, so then they put a watchman there to keep anybody from mining and I guess he stole a bunch of it.

JJ When was all this happening?
Oh, this was back in the Depression, the '30's. Anyway, the fellow that I knew, none of these fellows ever worked again. [laughs] There was only one damn fool enough to take 30,000 dollars and deposit it in a bank; the rest of them kept their mouths shut. Yes, kept their mouths shut and peddled the gold around, but they got most of it out before the lawyers got on them and stopped the whole thing.

So that was the end of it then?

Yes. After that everybody knew there was some gold in there about 50 foot further, but it is hardly worth time through that hard rock to get it. The main pocket was already taken out.

Do you remember the guys who were working on it? What their names were?

I was trying to think of this one fellow who was in on it but I can't for the life of me think of it. I knew him well.

Were they living in those cabins down there along the Middle Fork?

Yes, they were living in the cabins. It was tough times in the Depression and they'd gotten a little stake somehow or other so they could go up there and dig. And they were all there because there was no work and then they ran off with that thing. That's how that happened. There have been some really big pockets taken out around the country.

Do you know where the waterfall is up there on Middle Fork? There is an adit right there, right at the bottom of the waterfall there in the bank at the base.

Is that right?

Yes, and it looks like they had channeled water from the top of the waterfall down through penstock piping. Up until a few years ago, I guess, there was still a big piece of piping down below there. And there was a kind of cement support and a natural little channel cut through the rock up there too, and it looked like it shot the water down into the creek below.

I think they had a little powerhouse there. I believe that somebody at one time had a little powerhouse there; a little electric deal. That was probably before the '30's.

So that was water-generated?

I think so. Electricity, a power station there, just for the cabin. There was quite a place there at one time.

So that might not have been connected with the adit that was there?

I can't imagine what they'd dig for there as far as mineral. 'Course there's gold in the gravel there and you know the placer mines in there.

This is dug right into the rock there, down under the bank.
AJ There is a lost mine off up -- case you get wandering off from that, from where the Ruby is -- off on the hill on the right there. Someplace up that ridge there is a cliff -- a little cliff -- and there is a streak of gold-bearing telluride. Some young fellow found it. He was up in there bear hunting and he found it. Brought a chunk of it out for some reason, and here it was so rich. And I know that he believed it because it's a hell of a hike in there and I talked with fellows that went with him and he was lost regarding it; killed a rattlesnake up there and so on. He took his bearings and could see the Pat Swayne barn, down by the lake. He could see that from there and there was a schoolmarm pine tree up there by it. [laughs] If you ever get up in that country be kind of alert when you get up in there -- there is a little cliff. There is another one like that over in the Red Buttes. You go up Middle Fork way up in there. You know where the Forest Service tool house is?

JJ Yes, I know where that is.

AJ You go down across the creek right there, and up, and there is a flat up there and then there's these big cliffs. There's supposed to be a vein of galena in there on that cliff. I tried to get there one time and it started snowing on me. But boy, was that a game pocket! My God, cougars, deer, and there was bear. Nobody ever gets in there. From that tool shack just bear down to the creek and climb that rocky outcrop up and you will hit a flat up there at the base of those cliffs. I couldn't make it all the way. It started snowing on me up in there. I came out and made it to that Forest Service tool house and built a fire and dried out a little bit.

One thing I think about, that I think is a real injustice, is the Applegate Grange got through a law that if a miner has dynamite out in his cabin, or a fuse or caps, and if anybody comes in there and gets hurt on that, he is responsible for it. Well, the way dynamite is, you have to take and hammer and hammer it or shoot it -- really bestow force upon it. Or a dynamite cap you've got to do the same thing. A fuse you can't do anything to it -- it won't explode. Now, somebody up on the Applegate, somebody butchered a cow right in his pen up there. And I thought about it and I thought that if that fellow while he was butchering that cow had accidentally cut himself, he could have sued the farmer and I would have, if I'd been on the jury, I'd have awarded him anything he asked because they're so similar -- a cow and dynamite. You take a cow and if you poke her and hit her with a hammer and shoot at her in her agony, she's liable to step on you and hurt you or give with her horns or something. Well, the same thing that you do to dynamite is applicable to the cow. There's no difference between the two at all in my opinion. So if somebody goes into any farmhouse there, their barn, and even if the door is locked, mind you -- they apply this to the miner's cabin -- and breaks the lock on the door and goes in and hits and beats on that cow and she accidentally steps on him, according to the precedent that is set, the farmer is liable. It is the same precedent exactly. If somebody breaks into a miner's cabin that has a padlock on it, they break into it and they go in there and find a box of dynamite and they hammer it and they do every damn thing, shoot it and one thing and another, exert pressure on it until finally it explodes and then the miner is responsible for it. So why isn't the
farmer responsible for this guy that breaks in his barn, tortures his cow until she accidentally hurts him? Why, the farmer should be sued. And God, I'd love to be on the jury! [laughs] I would award that thief, regardless of who he was, I would award him the farm at least.

'Course what you are hearing is a miner's viewpoint of a farmer's law. There was some guy in the House here in the Oregon House of Representatives that brought that up. All these guys, politicians, want to be in good with the farmers, so they passed that right through as a restrictive law against the miners. It was principally due to a lazy damn farmer out here on the Applegate who on his own property had a miner's cabin sitting down there that miners had worked in during the Depression. There were a few sticks of dynamite in there and the damn cow ate them and died and that's why he raised hell with the Grange and got that law started and got it in there. It is the most unjust damned law I ever heard of. That poor cow was pretty desperate to eat dynamite. Oh, they'll eat it. Hell, burros can eat it and thrive on it. I don't know what it does to their heart. Like nitro, huh? Keeps them going -- that's one way to get a kick out of your mules! Oh boy, I'll tell you when you are out handling dynamite it'll go right -- if you have sweaty palms -- it will go right through your skin. In fact, they have nowadays a patch. Instead of taking nitro pills, they put a patch on. They put some salve on you with nitro in it. It's a messy damned way. I don't like that but they have it. Women seem to go for it more than men, but I didn't like it because the rate of absorption varies with your temperature. When you start to sweat or something, it will absorb faster than when you are cool and dry.

J 'Course if you are hot that might be a time when you need it more.

AJ Well, I'll tell you the worst I ever had. Dad had a chrome mine originally way up there on the Buttes where that road is, where they did diamond drilling and so on there. Dad had that way back. I went up with him one time to do assessment work and we had a drill and hammer and some dynamite. I didn't like that single-jacking business very well. The serpentine had big cracks in it and if you scraped the dirt out of the cracks and poked a little dynamite down in there and shot it off, it'd kinda widen the crack and then you could get it down further and I was all for doing that. Well, you had to cut the dynamite and break it loose and poke it down in there, you know, to get it in there. It was hot, south slope there and everything. And, my God, we were camped at the little lakes over in the basin and I thought I would die -- the headache I had. I wanted to too! But I really suffered. I'll never forget the headache I got from that. It's terrible.

J From poking it down in there?

AJ From handling it -- the loose dynamite. Poking it down the crack and you just handled that in your hands, sweaty and hot, and God, what a headache I got. I learned a lesson young about what that would do.

J Grandpa's hands were permanently fixed from doing that -- couldn't open his hands or hold them.
You take the hammer, then go like that, turn the drill an eighth of an inch and hit it again, get a cycle going -- they call that "single-jacking." In fact, back in the early days on the 4th of July on the Blue Ledge, they had a contest. They hauled a block of granite from Medford here -- they used granite to build here in the early days. They hauled a big square block of granite up to Blue Ledge and had a drilling contest. That block of granite laid there for years at that mine and they single-jacked it, to see who could drill a hole through it the fastest with a single-jack. And then they had double-jacking where one man just turns the drill and maybe one or two others would strike it with a sledge hammer. That was called "double-jacking." That was part of the 4th of July celebration at the Blue Ledge.

I worked on a powder crew for an outfit one time. There was another fellow and I. He was powder man and I would just pack powder for him and one thing and another. After they get the hold under the stump, then they'd prime it and put a half stick down there, quarter stick, and shoot it off. And he'd just turn his butt to the damn thing. Had a little battery in his pocket to light the cap. He'd just turn his butt to it and touch it off -- it'd go "WHOOM!" and make a hole down in there about that big. I was always afraid that was going to blow up! It never did though. That dynamite is something. I'll tell you the damndest thing about opening up the Bloomfield up there. My daughter, Jane, came up there and we had maybe half a dozen or a dozen boxes of dynamite laid out there on the place, caps and every damned thing. And she comes walking down the little hill through there, and comes in there all hot and bothered. The first thing she did was head for the dynamite box and pull out a cigarette. I was afraid she'd drop the match or something! I walked over to her and then was real careful with her. I just carefully said, "Jane, would you come with me, please?" and got her away from there. There she was sitting on open dynamite boxes and right beside her was an open box and she wanted to rest and smoke a cigarette and that was the best place to sit! [laughs]

When prohibition was on, back in the '20's, do you remember very many boot-leggers around?

No, not up in that country. Bootleggers were off over in Butte Falls, up the Rogue River.

There were some up the Middle Fork too, up by Sutton Gulch and that area.

I didn't know of a single bootlegger up there myself.

Well, I'm ready to start winding up a little bit. Most of your memories of your days on the Upper Applegate are of your growing-up years. And then when you graduated from high school you probably didn't spend your summers up there as much?

No, no, I was away from the country quite a lot. I spent about 15 years in Seattle and so on. Just awhile before Dad died, I got a partner, Ray Taylor, to go in with me and we were supposed to open up the Bloomfield. We took a cat up there and we did open it up, and we brought out beautiful ore. There's nothing left now; everybody carried it away for samples. It
was boronite. It ran about $500 a ton. I had it assayed. It was high in gold. Then Ray ran out of money, and I wasn't about to start in and do like my dad -- spend a lifetime there, hammering away on it, so I deeded it over to Ray. And Ray Taylor still owns it.

J You know what this is?

JJ No.

J A hand-forged mercury flask that Grandpa had, and it was made in Almaden, Spain.

AJ The weight of that filled with mercury would have been enough to be a weight on a ship. It would be 76 pounds, but imagine making that in a forge!

J Isn't that something? Says Almaden on it. They have the Almaden Mercury Mine down in San Jose, California. But this one is from Almaden, Spain, that they named the other one after. That is one of my treasures.

AJ That is practically a lost art to make that in a forge, and hammer that steel together and make it water-tight and all. I got that when we were going to set up at Squaw Creek, that mine on the hill there.

I remember an old-timer telling me the Rogue River Valley was worth more for a dredging operation than anything else. There's gold all over this valley, underneath the valley floor....

I ran up against a bear one time over on the Umpqua. I was walking along a trail that come around the mountain and there was a little gulch there, some trees in there. I saw a bear over across the gulch on the trail. I had a pistol and I shot at the hillside over there and I hollered and I kept coming along and didn't see the bear anymore. I came around into the gulch and out. I was just walking along and, my God, here that bear was. He was actually less than from here to the stove from me. And in spite of me shooting at the hill and hollering and everything as I came along, why, there he was. And he stood and faced me and showed his old yellow teeth at me and the hair on the back of his neck raised up like that. And you know, I could feel the same thing on mine! Prickling all the way down my spine. I had the pistol right in my hand, but I was so close to him I didn't want to shoot him for fear he'd get to me before he died.

So what I did now... I'll warn you on this, don't ever throw anything at a bear. They will charge you every time. I just slowly, very carefully, raised my hands up like this and just said, "Go away." I didn't say it any louder than that either. I just said that about three or four times and I raised my hands up and slowly down again. I think they are afraid you are going to bite them on the butt. I really think so. Bears are afraid that way. Dogs chase them, they bite them on the butt. So the bear, he just turned like that, real quick and faced me again. But he was about three or four feet further away from me. So I kept on doing this. I talked louder and he got away from me like that, making quick turns and facing me. And by and by, he was off 100 feet and I just hollered at him. I was brave as hell then, but at first I just whispered to him.
Well, you'd be surprised how it will relieve your fear as they move away from you. One of the oldtimers up in here, I can't think of his name right now, he got into trouble up in Squaw Creek. There was a bear and he picked up a rock and threw it at him. The bear came at him and he ran through a patch of brush and kept on going. Didn't stop in the brush, kept on going. And the bear, he could hear him thrashing around in the brush looking for him. The bear thought he had stopped in there but kept on going and he got away. Rainier National Park -- I was up there one time and there were a lot of bear there. That was when I broke my knee and I was pretty crippled. I took a walk up to see a glacier. It got dark on me, and I guess I met 15 bears on the way. But there I learned in the camp if you throw anything at a bear they charge every damned time. And just throwing something at them you are not going to hurt them anyway, but you will agitate them. JJ It doesn't scare them; it just makes them mad.

AJ Well, you are attacking so they respond. So just as a matter of safety, be very, very slow in your movements. Don't make quick movements -- just slow so you're not excited. Just talk to them. Whispering would be better.

J Make a lot of noise when you are walking.

AJ Well, that doesn't always help but it is a funny thing -- bears are the most unreliable. Ninety percent of the time they run and they keep away from you. But once-and-a-while you run up against one that isn't a damned bit afraid of you. I have had that experience, and I know that there are some that won't back off from you a damned bit. So those, why, just be very careful. But don't throw anything at them. Whatever you do, don't throw anything at a bear.

J What would happen if you walk away from them?

AJ Well, I'm afraid to. I don't want to get bit on the butt either!

JJ Getting back to your career, you went into the construction business?

AJ Yes, I spent about 30 years as a welder. I worked with the boilermakers, worked for Alaska Steamship for, oh, nine years I guess, in Seattle. After that I joined the pipefitters and I was all over the west, Montana to California -- everywhere on big construction jobs. I retired from the pipefitters. So that's the way that turned out. My hobby has always been prospecting. I got to get out once in a while, out in the hills. I don't accomplish anything though.

JJ You never know when you are going to strike it.

AJ Pretty crippled up now, my knee got rheumatism in it. I can't hike too good.

JJ Well, there are a lot more roads in up there now than there were when you were up there.
AJ There is a road that I wish somebody would, with a four-wheel drive, would come up there. The damned Forest Service put gates on the roads, you know. They did put one at the Maple Dell there and they pulled that out. Somebody with a four wheel drive probably, truck or something. But those gates are for the birds. There is a road that goes down toward the cabin, down there at the mine there, you know.

JJ Oh, the Grubstake?

AJ No, Squaw Creek, headed downhill where we talked about. Where they'll probably continue on across Squaw Creek and over into that timber there. Well, that road that went down there, they put a damned gate on that. I'd like to prospect that down in there, but they got a damned gate there. And I have been so damned law-abiding that I haven't dynamited it or something. I was hoping the hunters, when they come, would rip it out or something.

JJ I'm sure you could arrange to borrow a key to get in there. Well, that's pretty much all the questions I had lined up. I can think of a lot of other things that would be fun to pursue. Do you have any particular stories or anything more you'd like to tell about your days up there?

AJ No, not that I know of. Nothing that's legal anyway! [laughs]

END OF INTERVIEW
Guy Watkins grew up in the southern Applegate Valley, near the state-line. His grandfather first arrived in the Valley to farm and mine during the original gold rush of the 1850s. The Watkins family homesteaded in and around the Squaw Creek and Carberry Creek areas. Mr. Watkins flew in Army Air Corps bombers over Europe during World War Two and returned to the Applegate Valley, where he raised cattle and operated the "Copper Store" for many years (the site of the store is now beneath Applegate Lake Reservoir). Interviewed at his home overlooking the Applegate River in February 1985, Mr. Watkins discussed life in the Applegate Valley during the 1920s-40s. Guy Watkins died in the fall of 1989.
Janet Joyer: To start out with, why don't we get some basic information from you about when you were born for example.

Guy Watkins: No, I don't tell anybody that.

JJ Oh, you don't tell anybody?

GW No, nobody knows. I'm not sure I do.

JJ How about a rough estimate? How about a decade? Give or take five years?

GW Let's see, that would be back in the "10th decade," 20th century.

JJ Does that mean around 1910?

GW Well, between that and '20.

JJ O.K., that would be the second decade.

GW O.K., second.

JJ And you were born right around here in this area in the house that is now under the dam?

GW Well, no, it was tore down before the dam covered it. It was up pretty near where the highway is now at the upper end, right at the mouth of Carberry Creek.

JJ And was that the homestead house that was built around the 1890's?

GW I imagine. I was trying to think the other day. See, those things are hard to date. Nobody around that knew it because my dad was born up there in 1877 and they was living and farming there, but they never patented it, just like the mining claims.

JJ Right, 'til they had to.

GW 'til they had to. Same with the water rights. They used the water 'tillthings changed. Then they had to file for it. So, a lot of them was actually used 100 years and they only by the paper they only go back 50 or something like that. Most of these ditches were dug way back in the turn of the century when the Chinamen was here when labor was cheap.
JJ Yes, then used by ranchers.

GW That's right, or extended or whatever.

JJ Was your father born in that same house too?

GW No, he was born in the house that was inundated below Copper store.

JJ And that was the one that was built by your grandfather?

GW Well, yeah, you'd have to say that but I doubt that he [actually built it himself]. No, he was more a business man than a carpenter. He was a good "manager," I guess.

JJ What brought him to this area, this would have been the 1850's, is that right?

GW Well, it had to be, or before. There is no way -- the only way right today that I would know when he was born or when he was buried would be to go the cemetery and look at the tombstone.

JJ Where was he buried?

GW Jacksonville. Up there on the hill.

JJ So he was a business man.

GW Yes, he was more on the "pencil" end of it. You see he had a store there for years and years.

JJ Was that the post office at Watkins?

GW No, it never was a post office, it was on Squaw Creek.

JJ Just there at the mouth of Squaw Creek, that was called Watkins?

GW Well, yes, it is about a mile up Squaw Creek. There is nothing that shows it -- there is no landmark there, really, now.

JJ No signs of any of the houses or anything?

GW No.

JJ Was there a school there?

GW No, the school at that time was down at, oh, "Swayne Hill" we called it, before you come up out of Squaw Creek and come over the top of that hill and then down into French Gulch on the old highway, the paved highway, there was an old schoolhouse there. The kids...well let's see...from the Dorn place here upstream and all the upper end came here and then from here [downstream] they went to Beaver [School], down by the campground, across the road from the campground -- Jackson Park campground.

JJ Oh, across from Jackson picnic ground?
GW Yes, the one on the pavement.
JJ That was where Beaver school was?
GW Yes [on the east side of the road]
JJ Yes. Do you know where your grandfather came from before he came to this area?
GW England. A hardheaded Englishman. And I don't know how old he was when he came.
JJ Or really why he came, what business?
GW Well, just like you or anybody else, a lot of these young people today, must do something -- right or wrong.
JJ Did he come with his wife do you think?
GW No, he got married after he was here, I don't know how long.
JJ Do you know who he married? What her name was? Anything about her background?
GW No, not really a cottonpickin' thing, outside of she used to flog my butt around once in awhile, then give me a cookie. But she, I'm not sure about this, but as I remember it, she was adopted. See, her mother was a full-blooded Indian.
JJ A local Indian from here, a Takelma?
GW Well, I don't know, they've changed the names. She was out of Jacksonville anyway. Indian, that was a dirty word, like "negro" was 20-40 years ago, so just nobody talked about it. So to her, as far as I know, that was the end of it, or the beginning or whatever.
JJ So they had your father and other children.
GW Oh yes, right quick! Must have been five or six of them. Three girls and two boys I can think of right quick. Four girls, I guess, and two boys. 'Course they are all gone too.
JJ And [your father] got into ranching. Your grandfather hadn't really been?
GW Yes, he was into it, but he wasn't doing [the physical part of it]. I guess that is a mis-statement 'cause you'd have to know something about it. But then labor was cheap and boys come along.
JJ Where was the store that you said your grandfather had?
GW Well, right across from Panther Gulch, thereabouts. [If] you get past the gulch and get on the north side of the Applegate you'd come awfully close to where it was.
JJ Was that the Copper store?

GW No. At that time road building wasn't what it is today, so you could see it from the highway, that bluff similar to Mule Hill, across there on the south side of the Applegate River. So to dodge that, all travel had to ford the Applegate River down there, and get over on the other side, and then come in up above Manzanita. So when times changed, they realigned the road and set bridges and went up the other side. The store was high and dry, you know, across the creek, and so then that's kind of why they started over at Copper, 'cause that was the side the traffic was on.

JJ So your father got a lot more into the ranching than your grandfather had.

GW Well, physically yes, 'cause the two boys took over the main ranch and then Dad homesteaded that 80 acres up Carberry way from there. And then he built the house and moved into it. Eventually the whole thing got [combined] into one, 400 and some acres in there that was inundated by the dam. The rest of the kids, they didn't seem to be interested. I guess they wanted the bright lights and great wages. I don't know -- they didn't seem to be interested. And eventually, as time went by, they bought them out. Well, of course Dad's place was inherited, but the other was gradually bought out.

JJ What was your father's first name?

GW Mark.

JJ So he was Mark Jr.? Your grandfather was Mark and then your father was also Mark?

GW Anybody in this country wouldn't know him as Mark -- it was Anthony. Mark Anthony. He went by the middle name rather than Junior.

JJ So then when he got married to your mother, was she a local person too? Had she grown up here or......?

GW [She came from] over in the Elk Creek area, but then I guess they left for quite awhile and was up in Washington or someplace and came back. And some way, I don't know how, they got together.

JJ Then did you have brothers and sisters or were you an only child?

GW There were six of us, including me but they all, I don't know, childhood diseases, at that time it was pretty hard to get a kid through, you know. Being quite a ways out, and heck, I don't think there were more than three or four doctors in Medford. 'Course Medford wasn't very big. Jacksonville I guess was bigger at that time, when the courthouse and everything was in Jacksonville. So maybe that had something to do with it, I don't know. Yes, they all died young. I guess I had everything that comes along, except mumps.

JJ What school did you go to then?
GW Watkins, Jacksonville, then to Texas A&M.

JJ Why did you want to go there?

GW Oh, I don't know, just did. But another big thing was when World War II was starting and that was a military school like Annapolis. So we just took up some more school and they were very lax about it, I mean their attitude was, what the hell, they was "cannon fodder" anyway. Why not get them through here and let 'em go, so...you know. It was kind of a disheartening situation when they start to tell you you're just cannon fodder anyway, what's the use of... And then from Texas A&M I came back into Santa Monica, Douglas Aircraft plant there. It was school. You didn't do nothing really, just walk around with your hands in your pockets and see how all them was made, and what it was supposed to do and what have you, and 'course at the end they gave you a test for it, to see how much "wide awake" you were, just paying attention to them gals that worked there, cause at that time it was, what, 90 percent women working in the aircraft. Them guys was all in the army and those gals was just as anxious to talk too as the boys were -- now don't you think they weren't. And some of the older women, as I say, like 40 or something like that, and they really tried to shove it down your throat. I mean, they was serious, "You better learn this!" Even how to sew fabric on a wing of an airplane. Have nicknames and cut it off just so and sewed together and shellac that's on these little ones, not the big ones.

JJ So then did you go off to Europe during the war?

GW Yes, well let's see. I got in eight years, I think it was, of Army [Air Corps] time.

JJ And that included your training and all that?

GW Yes, and it was time-and-a-half for overseas. Got "pay-and-a-half" too, which $21.00 plus $10.00 on top of that was pretty big money when you first started. The officers then started getting, you know, up around $100.00 a month, and that was pretty big stuff.

JJ When you went to Europe, where were you stationed?

GW Oh, three or four different places. For quite a little while Blackpool, England, then later on the Cliffs of Dover -- White Cliffs of Dover -- and then down around London. That was just about the time London got blown 'pert near off the map. In France, stayed there quite a little bit after the boys on the ground got it kind of where it was safe. But of course we opened it up for them too. We tore things up more than they could, to get it to where it was safe to get in there.
I'm just going to backtrack a little bit to when you were younger. Let's see, so you went to grade school at Watkins and then you went to high school in Jacksonville. I believe I heard that you were orphaned, that your parents passed away when you were young. How old were you, can you remember that?

In the teens. Like I said, I would have to go back and look up the records 'cause it is history.

Were you old enough by then to pretty much fend for yourself?

You had to.

You didn't have any relatives?

There was none of them that was financially able to....

To take you in....?

Things were rough. A dollar a day, "daylight to dark" if you was working. They had their own [to take care of]. Oh, yes, I suppose there was some, but not very much.

So then you took over your parents' ranch and kind of kept things going?

Yes, I guess that would be the right answer.

Could you get people to help you out with some of the work?

Oh, no, not really.

That's a lot of work for one person to suddenly have to take over on their own, especially when they are a young teenager who's got better things to do.

Well, that's one way of getting rid of that vim and vigor.

I guess.

Well, "he's" [meaning himself] up there, "he" isn't going to the movies or any of the football or baseball or anything else, you know, and his recreation was more or less the mountains.

Yes. Did you have your own car?

Well, I guess you could say that, I don't know. A 1917 Maxwell touring car.

Did that work pretty well or was it kind of hit and miss?

Well, it was an automobile.

Wheels.
GW You know what a touring car is, was?

JJ Was it real large?

GW Well, it was a full-size car for that time, but a touring car was two seats, but you just had a canvas top on it, wide open and then they wised up and put side curtains on them. Didn't know what a heater was. You take like going to Medford, which you had to once in awhile, in a month or two or three. You hit Jacksonville Hill and hit that fog, and everybody wanted to ride in the front seat.

JJ So, did you get together with your friends a lot? Were there a lot of social events?

GW No. Let's see, there was two Collings families, the Swayne family, Dorn family, the Finley family, the Culy family, and a couple others between here [near Mule Creek] and McKee Bridge.

JJ Would you get together once every week or anything?

GW Oh no, not until it got later, back in the 30's, '35 I guess that they had transportation that was getting different. They built the Grange Hall down here [at McKee Bridge], and then they tried once a month, you know, it was a focal point.

JJ So back in those days you had to pretty much go to Medford for anything like a doctor.

GW Doctors would come out then. If they figured it was a real emergency. But another thing entered in on that. I don't know, I guess back in the early teens or maybe earlier, when that Blue Ledge Mine was running up there, and they put a telephone line in themselves from Jacksonville to the Blue Ledge Mine and sometimes you could get ahold of somebody who could get on it. Then when they abandoned the phone line the farmers took it over. I don't know if they bought it or just took it over or what, and they put 20 telephones on it between Jacksonville and, I guess, Copper.

JJ Were you one of the telephones?

GW No, but there was one on the old place, Grandpa's place.

JJ So there was someone on your grandfather's place?

GW Oh, it was always occupied.

JJ By your relatives?

GW Well, yes, back in that time.

JJ So it wasn't just abandoned?

GW No, it was never abandoned -- unless I did! [laughs]
JJ So how long would it take to go to Jacksonville from here by horseback?

GW There wasn't too much of it just done on horseback -- it was a team. Probably one day in, and stay all night, and come back next day, or something like that. They used to tell about Bert Harr and Ed Finley and two or three of them -- man, they could talk! I mean they had a voice that just wouldn't quit. They said when they got on top of Jacksonville Hill, why, they hollered over to Medford and told them what they wanted and they would meet them with it at Jacksonville. Boy them two or three guys there I tell you, you could hear them from here to Star Ranger Station! Just ordinary talking, you had to be settin' away back, you know. [laughs]

JJ Were there any churches in this area up here?

GW Jacksonville, I guess, was closest.

JJ If they were going to go, I guess.

GW No, it was kind of isolated, but the whole of Southern Oregon was pretty much isolated at that time.

JJ So the Blue Ledge Mine business, that probably brought a lot more traffic through the area.

GW Oh, sure. Foot, horseback, wagons. It was all hauled out with horses and mules. I don't remember how long they figured for a round-trip from the Blue Ledge to the railroad in Medford. I don't think it was a two-day deal, I think it was more than that.

JJ So they would stop and spend the night with people along the way, houses where they knew people?

GW Yes, right.

JJ Were there hotels along the way?

GW Not really, you might say boarding houses. Mrs. Cameron, I think, at the junction of Little Applegate and Big Applegate road, they had a big house, least it seemed big to me then. It burned finally, but there was always board and room there for probably four-bits a night, and a place for the horses and whatever their feed was. They had a big barn in Seattle Bar for horses, for the teams. They had one at Joe Bar that must have been company-owned or something, I don't know. I imagine the only one or two that I know that are left that worked there that could be pretty authentic on that would be Melvin Arnold and Arthur Jeldness.

JJ Oh, that's right, he is real familiar with the Joe Bar area. I'll have to check with him.

GW Yes, one of us could be a little wrong after 60-70 years.

JJ A long time to try to think back.
GW Later Joe Bar got the nickname of "Rumpus Walk." They used to have, oh, no shooting or nothing, but just fighting. There must have been six houses there, bigger than cabins, not big houses. They were always into it there about something, where the property line was, the mining claim or something, and there is another one you can throw in there, now I was told this. Going back to the telephone line. There was two Swedes lived there. There were quite a few houses over on the Joe Creek side too, and quite a few on this side, and anyway they got telephones out of it some way. There were houses on each side of the creek here, and the bridge was up here. They was at each other's throats so one Swede would go out and cut the other's telephone line. (laughs) And one day, one of them -- and I forget which way the story went - he climbed up the pole and cut the other one off and the other one come out there with a 30-30 right under him. His partner over at the house, "Oh Charlie, oh Charlie, get over here. Don't go 'round the bridge, get over here." I'll never forget that. I did know the two guys, but not at that time. No, they were old men when I knew them. "Don't take time to go 'round the bridge, come straight across." [laughs]

JJ Let's see, we were talking about your high school days, when we got off on other things. When you were going to high school, how was schooling seen in this area, was it pretty much expected that young kids would finish high school or was that not the usual thing?

GW High school was more like college now. The drop-outs [didn't finish] eighth grade, and they were more like kids dropping out of high school now and not going on to college. That is as near a comparison as I can think of, because there was just an awful lot of kids that [had dropped out] and then went back to high school cause they could stay home and have a meal ticket. And yes, a lot of the boys there had beards and were heavy as they would ever get in their lives. Girls, some of them were older too, but there wasn't nothing else to do. There was no jobs or nothing.

JJ During the Depression, then, did you pretty much depend on what you could get out of your ranching?

GW Yes.

JJ And you had a lot of head of cattle?

GW No, I raised a bunch of hogs. Yes, I raised a bunch of them, but it was different then. See, the first neighbor was a mile and a half away and you just let them run out on the National Forest 'til they got up on the back and damaged the National Forest.

JJ You didn't have them fenced in or anything?

GW No. Oh, we had pens, yes, and we fed them every day but there might be some of them you didn't see for six weeks. But if they got hungry they knew where to come and get something to eat.

JJ Now that was the hogs. Was it the same way with cows, the cattle in the area?
GW Pretty much. They never thought about fencing them in for the winter. If they got hungry, why, they'd come in. If they didn't, well, I think it was about 4 cents a pound for steers, 2-year-old steers, say weighed 800 pounds, what was that, $32.00? 'Course $32.00 was a lot of money, but it still isn't like these five-, six-, or seven-hundred-dollar cattle out here now.

JJ When the cattle were running and the livestock were running free like that, did different people's livestock ever get mixed up with each other's?

GW Oh, sure, same as they do now.

JJ Might find yourself feeding someone else's cattle?

GW Not very long, you know. You take them home or they'd come and get them.

JJ One of the old-time ranchers over on the Ashland District was saying that often, during the summer when they were grazing, they would get mixed up and then people would take care of each others' and then they wouldn't separate them out until they got to where they were being sold in town. I guess there was no way to avoid that really.

GW Well, that was the same way here. Them was all bigger places over there you know. They might have five- or six-hundred head, and four or five more, or a dozen, wouldn't mean too much. But with the smaller herds, 50 or 60 or something like that, four or five more, percentage-wise, [makes a difference].

JJ When you were raising hogs, were you also at the same time growing things, did you have any crops?

GW Well, yes, there was always a few head of cattle and then there was grain, wheat, barley, and corn that fed the hogs.

JJ How many acres of that would you have going, over the summer?

GW Oh, I imagine there was about 45, 50, 60 acres in summer.

JJ And you'd take care of it yourself?

GW Yes, but that was no big problem when you're physically fit and not running around all the time.

JJ Were there any other boys your age that you ran around with in high school?

GW Yes, there was quite a group there. 'Course we always pick out one or two [closer friends], same as the girls, but there wasn't much running around. No, I think at the time the movies in Medford, I think it was a nickel and dime and the only way you got to Medford from Jacksonville then was to hitchhike. You could walk from Jacksonville to Medford.

[Tape turned over]
JJ We were talking about the early politics around the '30's or so in this area.

GW Well, they had them but there is two things that just wasn't too much talked about because you could get into awful good arguments awful quick, and still can today, and that is politics and religion. Sooner or later you are going to wind up somebody getting mad. And 'course out here, the elections were darned near a week old before you knew who was President, you know, or maybe longer than that. Same way with your sports. Baseball was about it in sports. Boxing, and that was about over and ready for another one 'time the papers and what have you got the word from the East Coast, or the West! But they did have their politics and their religion.

JJ Would you say they tended to be more Democrat or more Republican, one or the other?

GW Well, one or the other, yes.

JJ Neither of them was the main one?

GW Well, I didn't never take much part in it, but like I say, you might know a guy for, I don't know, a number of years and never even know whether he was a Democrat or a Republican because he didn't want to start an argument. Sometimes, you know, somebody'd swear he was plumb wrong and ought to come over on his side of the fence and, I mean in politics, not across the field, [laughs] and go the way he is going. And then I guess there was quite a bit as I heard tell about it, that people that didn't care. They'd go -- well, that was a minority -- they'd go to the polls and they'd stick around there maybe all day and somebody would say "Hey Charlie" or something, "I'll give you a gallon of whiskey if you'll vote for so and so." And somebody'd say "Oh, I got a better deal over here, I got something else." You know, somebody else offered him more to vote on the other side. I believe it happened but I never did see it happen. Whichever stakes was the highest, well.......[laughs]

JJ Back at the old homestead, your grandfather's homestead there lower down the river, do you know anything about who was buried in that cemetery next to it?

GW No, the one that was next to it, there was only two in it, outside of there was two or three Indian boys buried there. Grandma I suppose told me, and everybody else, but it went in one ear and out the other. But then there was two, and I don't know whether they was aunts or uncles, but they was, oh, a couple of weeks old or something like that, babies. Then the one down there [Collings Cemetery, now under Applegate Reservoir] about a mile-and-a-half, that was all older people....
Let's see, we were talking about Ranger Lee Port and what you knew of him. He was a pretty easy-to-get-along-with guy?

I don't think he had any enemies, but there wasn't much going on either. Fire was the main thing, and of course Government paperwork, which still holds true today. But, no, I don't think he had any enemies. 'Course we all got enemies but everybody liked him and he tried to help anybody -- it didn't make any difference if it was Forest Service doings or somebody just needed some help, 24 hours a day.

What kind of personality did he have? Was he real outgoing or more of a quiet type?

I'd kind of have to say, kinda down-the-middle-of-the-road. He wasn't boisterous and yet he put out enough questions to keep the others talking. But we were talking about the two of them and her [Maude] going [out on the District] with him a lot, see somebody had to be at the ranger station [at Star Gulch] when they had all these lookouts, in case one of them called in and she was the one that was there, so I don't know if she went too much with him or not. In winter maybe, but at that time it wasn't like this, raining like it is here today, nobody going out there unless they kinda had to. In the summertime she'd be the clerk and what have you.

I'm just going to ask about a few local people that I've heard about and whose names I've seen in the records. I would like to find out from you a little more on who Mrs. Crow was. Some say that she owned the Copper store awhile.

Yes, 'til her death. They came in and started it, and then they had their differences, you know, just like people do today, and he went back to California and she stayed. She was highly susceptible to hayfever and asthma down in Bakersfield, down through that country. When she got up here, after about a month she never had a bad breath. She was just not leaving, and she didn't either. And the two of us, we had our own...one looked after the other, I mean in a certain sense, up until she died. The outside was more mine to take of, my interest. Well, they bought into it, but the interest I'm talking about was, you know, you can't take care of a store 8, 10, 12 hours a day and do much outside. The water lines blewed up, the wood pile went short. Then after she died, it was all in my lap and I was in a pretty hard spot there for awhile, take care of the ranch and cattle, and help was so unreliable, maybe not unreliable, but undependable. It's like some of this younger generation now. You hire one of them and they'd be there at 8 o'clock in the morning today and tomorrow it would be 9 o'clock in the morning and next day it might be noon and then start looking for Friday night and perk up a little bit, and you pretty near have to stick around 'cause you didn't know when they'd show up. There was a couple of girls that stood by pretty good. They worked there quite awhile. But you had to stick around there every morning because that might be the morning they didn't show up. If you wanted to go change the cattle or something you should've been gone by daylight, get to the top of the mountain before it gets hot in August and you never knew, if you didn't wait 'til 8 or 9 o'clock, if they would show
up. She [Mrs. Crow] had an awful lot of friends in this area, in the upper area. 'Course there was a lot of people in there back in that time.

JJ What brought the Crows here in the first place?

GW I guess it was suggested to her by her brother. And how he happened to come here, he was always mixed up in mining and he found the place where there was opportunity, and health-wise too I guess.

JJ Had they been in the store business before? Had they owned a store?

GW Yes, quite awhile before that they were in the trucking business in Oildale. Can't think of the name of it now. He hauled oil.

JJ Do you know about what year they came here?

GW Well, no... '33, '34, along in there. No, I really helped all I could from the day they started. There was a house there and a little bit of a store. Copper wasn't very big.

JJ Was it a post office at that time?

GW Yes... I can't tell you. It was about that time there was a transition. Somebody bought the place and he turned it back but I don't know how long before this. I don't remember. I knew him.

JJ What was his name?

GW I can't tell you right now. No, I can't tell you. I'll think of it one of these times but -- big tall lanky Texan. I know he come in there with a team and buggy and saddle horse, so it was... might be earlier than I think.

JJ Then he started up this original store?

GW No.

JJ It had been a store even before that?

GW Yes, well a 10x12', say, or something like that. Well, flour, sugar and cigarettes, and that's why the Crows could see the opportunity if you put something in there. So that's why they sold out all the trucks and home and everything else down in the Oildale area, Bakersfield.

JJ What were their first names?

GW Roy was his and Gladys was hers.

JJ How long did they stay together after they moved here? How long was it before he left again?

GW I couldn't tell you. It was three, four, five years. It just didn't work out. There isn't very many people in the Service today, Forest Service, that remember her.
JJ I've talked to a few who do. She was out of Colorado originally, then circled down to California and back up here. What year did she die?

GW '74. April 16th, I believe, in 1974. I'd have to go back and look.

JJ Someone heard that she'd been buried in Yreka.

GW That's right.

JJ Why was that? Did she have family there?

GW: Her mother and we'll call him her dad -- he was all she ever knew, and Bill, her brother, was up here. Then they came up and they were getting way up in years, so they came closer to the kids and for some reason they wound up in Montague and Yreka, and they were both buried over there.

JJ What did she die of? Did she have a heart attack?

GW No, I don't really know. I never took the time to go look up the death certificate and there is nothing you can do. 'Course I had charge of the whole thing -- administrator and the whole thing -- because her mother and dad were already gone and anyway it just seemed like she should be with her mother and dad. May have went against her, I don't know, but I don't think so. Her and her mother and stepdad, they were awful close. I don't believe they even fought, so maybe they are not as close as all that. [laughs] But the brother and mom and dad fought all the time.

JJ I heard that she witnessed some kind of a murder up on Carberry or somewhere, and she was in on the trial because she had been the last person to see the victim before she was killed.

GW No, she never did see the victim, no. She saw the killer as he come back.

JJ Sounds like it must have been pretty adventurous being where she was, there at the store... seeing comings and goings and things happening.

GW There was a different type of people, different type of people. More, not natives, but they were people who took up residence, not a floating population like there got to be up there later in the '60's. Yes, and at that time there was no electricity or nothing in there. Refrigeration and all that stuff was propane. Water heaters and all that, so if you went out at night you had a flashlight -- you didn't turn on the floodlights and see what was going on. No, they're trying to get that old [convicted murderer] out of that too. They pretty near paroled him last fall and then something went wrong and he got 18 months more. In another six or eight months I guess it will come up again, I don't know. No, he just shot that gal and threw her over the snowbank. Well, I guess everything went with it. However, she wasn't mutilated, just shot. But she was threwed over the bank there and all her clothes were throwed out there in the snowbank.

JJ Another person that I'm wondering if you knew was John "Knox" McCloy? Did you know him?
Oh, yes, from the time I can remember 'til he died, I knew him.

I was wondering if you had any personal experiences with him that you can remember that stuck in your mind or were especially funny.

Yes, a couple of them. He was way back there in the Middle Fork, up about that last bridge on the trail, and there had been a fire going through there, I think probably about the last of the teens, and it all come up in the wild blackberry vines and, man, he'd be picking by the hundreds of gallons. People used to take a horse and go in there and camp out and pick them. But, anyway, Mrs. Swayne, Pat Swayne's wife -- where they lived is under the reservoir now -- said she wanted some of those berries. So Knox said he'd bring her some. So he did. But Knox wasn't quite as clean as he could be, to begin with, you know, living in a hollow log and what have you. [laughs] So he couldn't find anything to put them in so he took his longhandled drawers and hung them over the horse, then poured the legs full of them, then started at least 10 miles out of there with them ripe berries. I don't think Mrs. Swayne ever used them. But his heart was there!

He tried! Was that Hazel Swayne?

No, it was Hazel's mother, and I can't think of her name right quick, can't think of it. Then he'd come out of there in the winter, down around Joe Bar or someplace. The snow gets, you know, who knows how deep in there -- ten to twelve feet probably, and he always had a couple of horses, you know, saddle horse, pack horse. He'd have to come down to the Swayne place to buy hay and it was loose, you know, not like this baled hay or nothing. He just shoveled it in the barn with a fork and he'd bring the horse down there and get up along side the stack some place. He'd go up the road and all you could see was that horse's ears -- maybe you could see his tail and his rump. It wouldn't weigh nothing -- he wouldn't have a hundred pounds or 200 or something, and here'd be Knox sitting right up on top of it. I'll never forget seeing him do that, time after time! I don't see how he made it [the loose hay] stay on and I don't see how he stayed on there. He was quite a guy, Knox.

He tried! Was that Hazel Swayne?

Another time he was after meat in the wintertime. There was a bear went through there so he took his track in the snow. He figured the bear was going to his den to hibernate for the winter so he'd get him. [The bear would] get tired and lay down under a tree or something, and he'd slip up [on the bear]. It was wintertime and cold, snowy. He did, he caught up with him, killed him, and skinned him out. It was getting kind of dark in the evening and he realized [he was], I don't know, five or six miles from home. So after it was all skinned out he just put the hide over him, you know, just like a bear's feet, arms, and head and laid down there beside a tree or hollow log or something. It snowed like hell that night. He got up the next morning, the hide was froze just like, you know, he couldn't move! He had one heck of a time getting out of there. It was just stuff like a board, you know, frozen. I heard him tell that, his eyes would get big and he'd tell it a dozen times. Golly, wouldn't that be something!
JJ Whatever happened to him?
GW Just died of old age.
JJ When did he die?
GW h, gee, I really wouldn't know. I'd say, well, it was well over 20 or 25 years ago.
JJ What about that house that he built with the cedar, with the eight or ten cedar trees inside? He built the house around it. He built it for a friend, right? One story I'd heard was that he built it for a good friend and his new wife or something.
GW I don't remember. I don't remember any of that. Could be. Off the top of my head, I would be a little bit skeptical about that, on account of the fact that I think Knox -- he always went by "Knox," not as John, you talk about John McCloy nobody knew who you was talking about -- but I think he was a college graduate too, back in the East someplace. I think he had girlfriend problems and took off and, by God, he just stayed out here. I just doubt that he'd had any women, then but that's off the top of my head. Knox was one of those dependable sociable guys too, in a way. He might owe you a dollar and you'd never get it until he got it, but if he got it, you'd get it. Might be five years. Well, he just lived back there. Then later on, he got he got acquainted in some way with a bunch of Frisco hunters and doctors and lawyers, and they used to come up here to go hunting. He'd pack them back in there and they'd come up with a half a truckload of stuff, you know, to stay a week. I mean groceries, bedding, and everything else.
JJ All the comforts.
GW Yes, and when they'd pull out they'd just leave it all. He had dammed near enough food for the winter then. He was eating high on the hog. He got by pretty good there for quite a few years that way. I don't know if he got too old, or maybe those people died off too. Pretty nice old boy. He later, you talk about these stories. Oh, it was after he got pretty well crippled up and he was really depending on California old-age assistance. It was welfare, Siskiyou County welfare. He'd come out every once-in-a-while, once a month probably, payday, and go to town. He'd been up there I don't know how long or what he'd done, but anyway, he come back from town one day and he was pretty much up in the air. He wasn't too much on haircuts or shaving either and he said, "I don't know what's the matter with them barbers downtown. That guy wouldn't cut my hair until I washed my head." Then he said, "He charged me a dollar-and-a-half." Probably at that time, haircuts were 50 cents. "Don't know what's the matter with those barbers, make you wash your hair before they cut it."

Many of the old houses now are gone -- cabins, houses, what have you. Most of them were on mining claims and then they were taken back. But for years and years, whoever bought [their gold], they had to give their name and address. And the only place you could sell it -- the black market was here then too - but the only legal place to sell it was to the mint, but
the bank would go between. You'd turn it into the bank. Then they'd appraise it so to speak, and give you two-thirds of the value, and they'd send it then to the mint and whenever they got the report back, then they'd give you back what they had underestimated. It is surprising 'cause gold was $34.00 an ounce, I think, then. But it is surprising how many people brought in two-bits' worth or something like that to cash in.

JJ Well, I'd like to ask you some more specific questions about some specific cabins around the area where you may have known the inhabitants. Did you know very many of the people who lived in some of those cabins way up on the Middle Fork, not as far as Frog Pond Gulch but, say, just down from there, a few miles down from there.

GW Yes.

JJ There were three or four along there.

GW They were quite a bit later.

JJ Yes, like at Emerald Pool, in that area.

GW I couldn't tell you that guy's name. He was from Klamath Falls. Sometime it will probably come to me. Chauncey Florey and Lloyd Florey -- oh, golly, there's a bunch of them -- Simms and Hixson and George Johnson. Then later, one of the boys from the Forest Service had a place in there. He worked last, I guess, on Squaw Peak Lookout. Webb can tell you -- he was a [Forest Service employee] at that time. He had a heart attack or something and went over in one of them canyons and it killed him. But I imagine Webb can tell you the exact day and hour it happened. Then you come on down to Chisholm's. He worked for the Forest Service on trail crew and as lookout quite a little bit, and Bartlett's ......

JJ Can you remember which cabins exactly those were, are those all on the upper Middle Fork? If I get my map out, do you think you could point to which one is which, because some of these are on the map.

GW Well, but if we are going to do that we better just get one of your maps and some of these evenings get it by a good light after I get my new glasses and mark them out in red or something. Then when you come through I can tell you which is which.

JJ That would be nice to do that. Some of these cabins you find out in the woods, you just don't know the story behind them at all, who built them, what they were doing. Some were mining cabins or this or that, but it would be helpful to know more.

GW There is two or three of them cabins up there that I don't know who built and we have had some discussion about it in the last year or two before this ever come up, and there don't seem to be any of us know who did build them. There is only what -- one, two, or three right quick, about three that's left that haven't been destroyed.
JJ Yes. Right. A lot of times we just find the remains of what looks like used to be a cabin but it is still just important to find out the story behind even the ones that aren't there any more, just because it is all part of the big history picture.

GW At Joe Bar, say, now we was talking about this big, oh, ten- or twelve-horse stables -- stables for ten or twelve horses or more, an average-size barn that they kept full of hay there, and then five or six cabins and houses in there, a big saloon, dance hall saloon. And you go there and look today and you just swear there wasn't room for it. Things change around. Same at Blue Ledge Mine. They used to have, I don't know, several hundred people there and there was cabins on all these flat spots, and go in there today, a person didn't know it, they'd swear there was never a house there, cabin or anything else. Time heals up all scars that Man puts on. They get rid of Man, this world would take care of itself! [Laughs]

END OF INTERVIEW
Robert Webb arrived in the Rogue River Valley in the 1930s. He took a job with the Rogue River National Forest, becoming the Fire Control Officer on the Applegate Ranger District while early-day Ranger Lee Port was still in charge of the District. Mr. Webb's career spanned the time from the Civilian Conservation Corps through the Aircraft Warning Service days of World War Two and on to the initial commercial logging operations on the District. Interviewed at his home in the Applegate Valley near Ruch, Mr. Webb recollects many of the people and incidents associated with those times.
Janet Joyer: When and where were you born? Tell me a little about your life up until the beginning of your Forest Service career.

Robert Webb: I was born on a small ranch about eleven miles northwest of Prineville, Oregon. I had three brothers and two sisters. I was second from youngest. We raised most everything on the ranch, that we needed. Short-horned cattle is what we raised -- for the cream, which we separated out and sold to a dairy. We had kerosene lights. There was no electricity.

JJ What year were you born?

RW 1912. My folks were there for fourteen years. We moved into Prineville when the youngest of us was starting to school. We went to school near our ranch for a few years. There were three or four families. All of them had anywhere from three to six kids. My mother taught the school. And as I recall, I was too young to start school. Then we bought a house in Prineville, and moved in there. We went to school above the dam, between there and Prineville. My mother taught that school too, all eight grades. I went through the first three grades there. I finished up at Prineville. I attended Crook County High School and I started working for the Ochoco National Forest during the summers. In the fall and winter, I did any jobs I could get. One of the jobs I had was pitching hay in a stationary hay baler. There were about six of us working there. You'd get ten cents a ton for hay. You'd get about two-and-a-half dollars a day. You had your choice of about three different jobs in that area. One was some kind of ranch work. They ran quite a few sheep up in that area. You could either herd sheep or shear sheep. Or you had the option of working for the Forest Service. I wasn't too well-qualified for the others, so I worked for the Forest Service. [laughter] During the summers and winters while I was going to high school, I worked for the county. It was just one school district, the whole county; we had the whole area. And during all our vacations, Thanksgiving time, and Christmas time, and the summers, I went and worked for them. We maintained those various buildings, one-room schools.

JJ What finally brought you to this area, then? How long did you work over in Eastern Oregon?

RW I worked there six years, on the Ochoco. In 1934, I went down here to Southern Oregon Normal School is what it was called then. I got invited down to play football and they promised me a job and I got a job paying $15.00 a month. I lived on that for one year, and my second year I got
promoted to a librarian and got $18.00 a month there. I could buy a pound tin of Prince Albert tobacco, cigarette papers and toothpaste and razor blades, and I got by on it. Then I had other jobs. I went there for two years. I taught school in Central Point for six winters. I worked for the Forest Service here in the summer time.

JJ When did you start working on the [Rogue River National] Forest?

RW I started on the Ochoco in 1931, and then it was 1937 when I started working on the Rogue River. My job at the time was a training officer. I traveled all over the Forest, teaching lookouts and firemen how to do their job, and checking their equipment, that kind of stuff. And then I went to a lot of these C.C.C. [Civilian Conservation Corps] camps, training foremen how to teach. I worked one season, 1940, up at Union Creek District, Hamaker Guard Station. Then, the next year, I went to Lake-of-the-Woods as a Headquarters fireman. Then I was given the job of Protective Assistant up there in 1942. Then World War II started and they gave me a permanent job. And I worked on timber sales in winter; marked timber sales and scaled logs; lived in logging camps. We moved three or four times every year. One year we moved six or seven times. That was hard. I had met Alice at school and we never did go together, but she was teaching at Central Point when I was there. We were married in 1937. By that time she'd moved to Medford as a teacher. In 1944, I was transferred to the Applegate District, as a Fire Control Officer and I worked there until I retired in 1969.

[Tape turned off briefly. While tape off, Webb's wife, Alice, said that Webb had been very disappointed when he was not allowed to join the Army during World War II, because he was needed on the District.]

RW We had lookouts on the Lake-of-the-Woods District. I trained 15 lookouts that one summer, and just continually replaced them.

JJ When you got to the Applegate District, there was no more C.C.C. activity, so you went right into Fire Control?

RW Yes. Fire Control and all phases of the work on the District. There were just two of us there at that time. The ranger [Lee Port] and myself. After I'd been there about a year, they got a permanent appointment for Jim Winningham. He was our crew foreman. He had been working about ten months, I think it was, and it was a full-time appointment for him.

We had these Aircraft Warning Service [Stations] one winter. You had to have people [registered] on the Civil Service at that time, so a number of these fellas got Civil Service appointments. The Applegate was very fortunate. They had a lot of experienced people out here -- the woodsmen that were miners that they could get for short-term work. And they were experienced. And boy, it was a relief to get over here with all those experienced people who knew how to get around in the bushes.

JJ Can you remember some of the specific people who did it?

RW Well, on the Aircraft Warning [Service] there was Jim Winningham and Mamie were on Tallowbox [Mountain]. Slim [Robert] Dowell and his wife were on
Dutchman [Peak]. Bill Zeigler and Paul Stibran on Whisky Peak. I've forgotten the name of the man and his wife who were on Cinnabar. You've probably heard the story about Bill Zeigler's dog Two Bits. [plunging from the summit over the sheer face of Whisky Peak]

JJ Yes, That's a remarkable story -- pretty hard to believe! Were there any other unusual things that happened in connection with the Aircraft Warning Service people on the lookouts?

RW Well, Bill and Paul didn't get along too well together. Paul was an old bachelor. Bill had led a rather unusual life, and I think you've probably heard about him.

JJ No...

RW He was in the Marines and was in a motorcycle accident and broke his back, down in San Diego. They discharged him. And to recover, he and a friend of his had decided to, when his friend got out, locate themselves in some remote place and spend a few years. So Bill, when he got discharged from the Marines, he was supposed to go and locate a place to go, for the two of them. He bought two horses there in San Diego and packed one of them, and was riding the other one, looking for this ideal spot. About the first or second day out, one of the horses died. He bought a little cart, or a little wagon -- a kid's wagon -- and put his possessions on that and tied it to the stirrup of his horse and went along up the highway, holding onto it with his foot. And he rode clear up here to Medford looking for that spot. He went into the office in Medford -- the Forest Service -- and they told him that Lee Port would be just the person to see and talk to about such a spot. So he rode out here and saw Lee and Lee sent him up to Carlton Pasture. And he went up there and decided that was the place to stay. Bill stayed there for quite a number of years. His friend came and just stayed a short time. But Bill made his living by packing things into these mines. He'd pack up this old horse he had, pack things on him, and then whatever else he could on his back. He kept a very meticulous diary, on the things he did and how much money he made. He made $150 one year. And he kept track of every nickel that he had, and what he spent it for. He went barefooted most of the time, but if he had to walk to Copper, he'd walk down the road barefooted until he got into Copper, and then he'd put his shoes on, and go on into the store, and get mail, maybe a candy bar or something (laughs).

Bill was working for the Forest Service when I came over. Paul was an old bachelor from New York, I think it was. They got them to go up to Whisky Peak. Paul was working on, let's see -- Anderson Butte. Our boundary then was the Applegate River, and clear up to the top of Jacksonville hill, and over to Ashland -- we had the Ashland watershed. There were, oh, six or eight lookouts, I think it was. We had Wagner Butte and Anderson Butte. [Anderson] later became State [Forestry Department], and Wagner Butte went to Ashland District.

JJ Can you remember where some of the old phone lines went? I have some specific questions about certain lines. I found one running up along Siskiyou Crest between Alex Hole and Wards Fork. Would that have gone out to Sterling Mountain on the Klamath National Forest?
RW Well, there used to be a line that went from the Dutchman line over to Donomore, and I think it went on and hooked over with one of the Klamath lines. It ended at Donomore when I came here. But they used to talk about talking with the Klamath Forest, down at Oak Knoll on the phone. And there was an old telephone line that went up Steve Fork for a ways. I think it went over and hooked up with the Siskiyou National Forest.

JJ Yes. That's another phone line I had a question about. It goes up Steve Fork to Sucker Gap, then north. Where did it go?

RW Well, let's see now....

JJ It looks like it goes up the Boundary Trail, almost to Grayback, but then it's hard to tell where it goes.

RW Yes. I'm not sure where it did go. I think it went off down there [Siskiyou National Forest]. Now, they had those phone lines up in that area so that the firemen...they carried a little portable phone with them. They had a buzzer on them, instead of a ring. The switchboards had howlers -- are any of those left there at the Ranger Station? In any of the houses or in any of the old buildings?

JJ Yes.

RW Well, they had howlers on them. And when they'd push these buttons, on the battery-operated portable phones, they'd activate these howlers. They made a buzzing sound. You could hear people talking over them, if you were at the switchboard. They had a phone line up Seven-Mile Ridge at one time.

JJ Yes, we've found signs of that one too. Now where does that one go?

RW That came down the Little Applegate.

JJ And what about the other end?

RW Oh, I think probably Wrangle Gap. That's probably as far as it went. They had a CC[C] side camp up there, at Wrangle, for constructing the campground there.

JJ What about a phone line that I found which comes up out of Joe Creek?

RW That one would go to Windy Peak.

JJ These C.C.C. side camps...there was one at Silver Fork. Did you ever hear about just where that one was?

RW No. The only one I remember hearing about was the one at Wrangle. They took the buildings there and moved them down to Star Gulch and used them for the Fire Suppression Crew. Old Jim Winningham moved them down there. Then we replaced them with the buildings that are there now. It must have been around 1960 -- somewhere in there -- 1965.
JJ Was that Wrangle side camp the same one that was referred to as the Little Applegate?

RW No. I never did know just where the Little Applegate camp was. But I think it was down in the bottom, in the Little Applegate area.

JJ Was there ever a guard station on Seven-Mile Ridge?

RW None that I know of. They had a tent camp there on the Little Applegate for awhile.

During the war years they manned all these extra lookouts that they had, like Windy Peak and Steve's Peak during the summer, that were never used. They'd been constructed, but were never used as other than a temporary lookout. There was one on Stein Butte, but they didn't use it.

JJ They never did use it?

RW No, they never did. Windy Peak was one of the first lookouts that they had in Region 6.

JJ Windy Peak and Dutchman were both built around the same time.

RW Yes. The cupola style. We put the siding on Dutchman. We had so much trouble keeping paint on the building. We put some of this asbestos siding on it. I don't know if it's still there or not. I put an employee suggestion in for that after we'd had it up there for a few years to save on painting these buildings, and they turned it down. It worked real well up there -- it lasted a long time. I imagine it's still on the building.

JJ It is.

RW They put it on Dutchman and on Whiskey.

JJ Did Whisky Peak Lookout burn at one point?

RW Yes. Before I came, it burned. The fella couldn't get into the house to call in. I've heard this story -- Lee [Port] told about it. He couldn't get back in the house to call in about it. And he just had to stand there and watch it burn. Then they re-built it. I helped pack lumber in for a catwalk around the lookout, and helped build it.

JJ You were involved in that Butte Fork plane crash?

RW Yes. I was the first one in there. Chisholm was the guard at what we called Cook and Green. He lived down there at the mouth of Stricklin Gulch, just up Middle Fork, maybe half a mile. That was a guard station. This plane flew over his house and it was flying pretty low, and he never did hear it again; it sounded like the motor was missing. The plane never showed up where it was supposed to, so they started looking for it. A Forest Service pilot from Cave Junction found the plane, up in the head of Butte Fork [in what is now Red Buttes Wilderness]. He dropped a smoke bomb, so he could tell where it was. It landed a little ways from the plane. Maurice Tedrow from the Medford office and myself, and I think we
were the only ones from the Forest Service, we took twenty-five soldiers from Camp White [WW II Army training base north of Medford] in, in case anybody was injured. We walked in and this airplane pilot was up overhead and circling the wreck. And we found it just right away. The plane had nosed into the ground and thrown all the people forward, and I got up there and looked in, and there were faces and everything scattered all over the generator and other motor parts, and I got out of there; went over and got busy talking on the radio.

These soldiers packed the bodies up to the trail. We walked out that night in the dark. We sent our Fire Suppression Crew in the next morning. The family had decided to bury the people up there -- and [the crew] took grave-digging tools with them. We also sent our packer in to pack the bodies out -- if the family decided to. The kids went in there, and got oh, two-thirds of the way in, and they smelled the smoke from a fire up there. There was a five- or six-acre fire burning when they got there. So they had the job of trying to bury those people and control that fire. I went in that night with some fire-fighting tools. The kids had dug the graves by that time and buried the people. A representative from the Civil Aeronautics Board [CAB] walked in that day, and then a friend of the pilot's. They had decided not to pack the people out because it was in such a remote area. We were all equipped to do it at the time. This friend of the pilot's took a fifth or two of whiskey along with him, and he got loaded, and kept getting on this [CAB] guy. Our packer at that time was Everett Keene. He was kind of a fast-talking fella -- he said he sure had a rough time up there because he was trying to bury those people, and fight that fire and try to keep these two drunks away from each other. That fall, old Lee Port and this [man from] Conger-Morris Funeral Home went in there and they dug up the pilot and packed him out. He was buried in a separate grave. There were two women in the party and they were sisters and the husband of one of them. They're buried in a common grave up there, where that brass headplate is. That was put up by members of the girls' family a year or two later. You can see the depression below the trail where the pilot was buried.

JJ Do you know of any other graves around the District?

RW Yes. There's a number of them. There's one up Elliott Creek. You can see the headstone from the road there. It's just a little ways above the Carlton Pasture Trail. This old fella was a miner, and I think he lived at Squaw Lake, and he had some cattle. He sold them for $500 in cold gold. He started out in the spring one time to go to his cabin up on Elliot Creek -- and his mine. He was found a couple of months later along the trail and was buried there. He had a little income and his family had inherited. [They] bought this headstone and gave it to old Lee Port to put up. He took it up to Jim Winningham, who was at Hutton Guard Station at that time, and asked him to put it up. It laid around Hutton there, for a year or two, and finally one rainy day, he got a chance to take it up there and put it up. In that little flat just above the Carlton Pasture Trail on Elliot Creek Road, where they're mining now, that's right where the Carlton Pasture Trail takes off. About 1/3 mile above there, the road starts to climb a little from the creek. There's a flat and then it starts to climb a little. In this steep place, you'll find a tree about so big with a homemade slat nailed on it, and that's where that grave is.
JJ Do you know who the person was?

RW Yes. His name was Wright, and this happened in 1914.

JJ Was he related to Nick Wright of Nick Wright Flat, above Palmer Creek?

RW I don't know whether he's related or not. There's a Nicks Cabin up there at the junction of Wards Fork and Silver Fork. And then there's Nicks Trail that went down from Perks down to there. We maintained it all the time. The name's on that gravemarker, but I don't remember what it is.

JJ Are there any other graves?

RW Yes. One up there on Deadman's Point. That was well-marked till they put a timber sale in there. Old Bill Zeigler had taken Benton Poole and shown him where the grave was. Benton used to run cattle all the time up there. That's Maudie Poole Zeigler's dad. They lived over where Maudie lives now, across the river. Bill took a bunch of quartz rocks and put them around the grave site. It was right along the edge of this trail. I think Lee Port [Notes on the Applegate] tells about the grave and how it happened. About the fellow going down to some outpost in California to get some grub and came back with a little grub and a gallon of whiskey on his pack horses and he apparently had a heart attack up there on Deadman Point during a snowstorm, and next spring they found all of his equipment and everything, and his horses had gone down to Squaw Lakes, and they found him in the spring up along the trail, and they buried him along the trail.

JJ So Deadman Point was named after him?

RW Yes. And so was Dutchman Peak. That used to be called the Lost Dutchman.

Alice Webb: And he really was not Dutch.

JJ He was German.

AW He was German. That's right.

RW But he was where the name Dutchman Peak came from. It was originally called the Lost Dutchman and they changed it to Dutchman. I can find awful close to where that grave is, shortly after they finished logging that timber sale. But I never could find the exact location. They had drug logs over it -- the markers.

JJ Were there any other graves?

RW There's the cemetery up at Steamboat. I don't recall any other marked graves, that you could identify.

[While the tape was being turned over, we took a short break. Webb began talking about corraling wild horses. Tape was turned on shortly after we began discussing this topic.]
We got six in one bunch up there at Perks [Pasture] one spring. We had to go up by Silver Fork at that time, and down the road alongside Yellowjacket [Ridge]; the Maple Dell road wasn't in there at that time. I had to ride over the snowdrifts to get down there. I went down there -- I was going to move a trail crew in there. I looked around and saw that everything at the cabin was alright, checked the telephone line, and some stuff like that. When I started to ride out, why, I saw some barefooted horse tracks. I rode down and looked over the edge and saw them down below. I looked out the gate at the west end of the pasture -- it was open. They'd come in that way. So I closed the gate, and rode around the pasture to see if there were any holes that they could get out of. There weren't, so I came back and got Buford Wels, Lee Kennedy and told Fritz Offenbacher about it, and he came. We rode over the snow, packed a bunch of wire and ropes and stuff like that in, and food -- we stayed there at the cabin. We tied our horses in the corral on the far side, and then opened the gate and put a rope on it so we could pull it closed, and run that rope clear over to the cabin. Right after daylight the next morning, there was two of these little stallions. One of them went in, and I told this Lee Kennedy to close the gate, but he didn't -- he wanted to get two of them in there. He didn't close it, and then another one of them went in. So he closed it that time, and we had one before breakfast. We went out and roped him, tied him up, then built a fence from the corral over to that garage, and then a take-down fence from the garage back over to the fence that goes up the hill. And then Lee and Buford started working around the fence, to tighten it and raise any places that...And the horses, they kept going ahead of them, and you'd hear this fence squeakin' and squallin', you know, and every time it did, why they'd run up the hill a little ways. I was standing in the cabin watching them and finally they came down and they just stopped. The take-down fence was oh, probably a couple hundred feet long. Eventually they all turned and went over it and I pulled that fence up. They turned and walked right into the corral. I closed the corral gate and after that, it was just a matter of catching them. One of them was deformed. It had a kind of a hump on its back, like a camel, and it was a yearling colt. We disposed of it. But the rest of them, we'd have to break them to leave. And by that time, they were able to get in with a truck. We loaded them up and hauled them out.

Those were Bert Harr's?

[While tape was off, Webb had mentioned that these wild horses were from Bert Harr's stock. They were some horses that had gotten away from him, probably some time in the 1950's.]

Yes, we had between thirty-five and forty permittees on the District at that time. And the District was badly over-grazed. Up there at Silver Fork, there was no feed at all left to speak of, except the sedge, and it didn't matter how close the cattle ate that, but there was always an old cow waiting for that sedge to grow up high enough to get a bite of it, but they always came out in good shape. We replanted the area time after time. That was one of the first jobs we did when I first got here. I worked at it for oh, probably ten or fifteen years trying to get Silver Fork back in grass. And now it's well-stocked. Really beautiful in there. Buford [Wels] was at Perks. He spent a lot of his time at Perks as a fireman up until about 1965. We put a watering system up in there at
Silver Fork; water-developed two-and-a-half acres to see what we could get going, what it took to do it. Eventually we got a good stand of grass in there.

JJ When you first came to the District, were there still problems with the local ranchers setting fires to make better grazing?

RW It wasn't so much the ranchers, as the miners. And they were just helping us out. The problem was that they'd go out on a road or a trail, mostly trails. If there was any logs in it, they'd set fire to them and burn them out! One time there was a great big huge sugar pine snag fell across the road going up to Blue Ledge. And old Eric Anderson who used to live there at oh, we called it Rumpus Bar -- Joe Bar -- he was involved in this copper mining. That was his life. At that time he was an old man. He went up there every day and built a fire in that huge snag -- it was about six to seven feet at the stump. He kept burning on that till that old snag came down into the road. He burned from the top. The top of it was in the road, and he burnt that whole tree up. It kept sliding till the stump and root wad come down the road. They had to send a cat up there to get it out.

And old Knox McCloy, why he thought nothing of setting a log on fire in the trail going up to Frog Pond. So we always got out early and cleaned the trails out. We followed the snow back. That eliminated a lot of those types of fires. As soon as we heard of a rock or a log or something across the road, we'd go up and clean it out just as soon as we could get to it.

I remember reading some of the old fire reports Lee Port had made from 1914 on. He said that, oh, they had some big fires. On quite a number of the reports he had said that the Kubli boys -- Edward and Chester -- had been seen in the area, and they didn't have the best reputation about fires. I've always been meaning to ask old Ed about that. I never did... he died here just awhile back.

JJ Yes. Just a couple of months ago.

RW It used to be quite a problem, though, with these roads and trails, especially the trails. The cattlemen, in the fall of the year when they were gathering cattle, if a log was across one of their trails, they'd set it afire. They've had some big fires in November and December, and even in January -- that's when we had some of our biggest fires. In the late 1940's or early 1950's, we had five of them going all at once -- one there at Perks. It was someone riding through the country, down somewhere near that old stockman's cabin. It took off and it burned clear up around the cabin there at Perks, and the barn. I happened to get a man up there in time to stop it from burning the cabin and barn. Then it crowned out clear up on top of the hill. For many years, there were lots of snags. It killed young trees and it was an awful mess up there to try to ride through. In fact, you couldn't do it unless it was cut out.

JJ What did you do for people when you had that many fires going at once?

RW We got the local people and the loggers. The locals -- they always helped on fires. And they were real good about it, but you could call them up and
ask them if they could go to a fire in their area -- usually a lightning fire or something -- and they'd say "Sure, just as soon as I milk the cow, or change the water." [laughs]

AW And the mill workers too out here, when we had the mill...

RW Yes. We used a lot of them. Hunter and Best ran this mill here [in Ruch] and we used them a lot.

JJ Would people volunteer? Or were they on the payroll?

RW We'd call them up and then we'd pay them regular firefighter's wages. That was back when people were very cooperative. That was one of the things that the Ports did was to...oh, they did so many things for the people that lived around here. And were into every social thing people did. If someone got in trouble they looked after them, and they had a very good...

AW Community spirit?

RW Yes. "Community spirit" of the people around here. There was only one person that I ever recall Lee saying anything about. And that was old Amos McKee, Morris Byrne's grandad. Lee asked him to go on a fire one time. Amos told him he wouldn't do it. So Lee went in that fall, or the next spring at grazing permit time, and he was going to cancel old Amos' grazing permit! And they had quite a fuss and tussle about it for a long time. And Amos, he got a lawyer, and was going to make him give him a permit and everything, but it got down to where he needed the permit pretty bad and he agreed to go on fires after that. And old Lee made him draw up a statement that he would go to any fires or forfeit his grazing permit. But that was part of the grazing permit at that time -- that these people had to go to a fire if they were called....These [ranchers] were pretty independent. If you were fair with them, they'd do anything for you. But if you weren't, well, you made an enemy, and they'd do anything against you that they could. That was true of nearly all the people out here. So it really paid to treat them with the greatest respect.

JJ I wonder if Lee had done something earlier to cause Amos to refuse to go on fires...

RW I don't know...Lee never said anything about that. He just told me about having to make old Amos sign this agreement [laughs], before he'd give him his grazing permit.

JJ On some of the older maps, I've seen the name "Jens" on a ranch. Do you remember a family named "Jens" up Elliot Creek, about at the mouth of Dutch Creek?

RW "Jens?" Jeldness...

JJ No, this was "Jens," but perhaps the map was wrong.

RW I don't recall. I have a map....
This is 1936 -- no, it's not on here. I have a 1930 map...OK, it's right here. It says "Jeldness" here, and "Jens" here.

No...on the older maps, there were so many things that were out of location.

Yes, I've noticed that. Well, it could just be that somehow it got confused with Jeldness.

Well, I remember the name "Jens." Well, just a minute.

[Shut tape off. Webb got out old trail logs to look for reference to "Jens Ranch." Finds Jens Trail from Jens Ranch to Carlton Pasture. Trail logs are his own, Bill Fruit's, and Lee Port's. Copies of these trail logs are in the cultural resource files at Applegate Ranger District.]

Are you familiar with the so-called "Crapsey" or "Crepsey" cabins, up Yale Creek, just below Deadman Point?

No. They were still there when I was here, when I first came, but I never was up to them. I was thinking there were two cabins either up Glade Creek, or maybe it was Yale Creek.

There were two up Glade Creek called the Twin Cabins...

Well, I don't remember exactly where they were, but I can remember riding up through there, by those cabins.

I can show you where they are on the map, if that would help any. Here are the Crapsey Cabins. And here are the Twin Cabins on Glade Creek. This is Hendricks Creek here. And then there is also a cabin here on the trail to Brickpile Ranch. I'm curious about that one.

I don't recall seeing that one. There was an old cabin up in Dog Fork, right where the road crosses Dog Fork, on the Wards Fork Road. Right here. [NE 1/4 SE 1/4 Section 25, T.48N., R10W., W.M. Above road on east side of creek, at confluence with a tributary.] It was right on the creek. Let's see...Federle. Lance Offenbacher and Jack O'Brien and I were cutting the trails through there. They knew the cabin was there, but I didn't. They called it the Federle Cabin.

Federally?

I think it was spelled F-E-D-E-R-L-E. I'm not sure. I never did see it spelled. There was a lot of old equipment there. I remember an old brazer bit that I saw there. And some old fire hose that they'd used. It was on Fruit Growers [Timber Company] land. But it was way back in the brush there. It was a long ways to any road.

And (I remember) Slotik's Cabin.

Slotik's -- at the corner of Wards Fork and Silver Fork?
No, it was down -- you go down Wards Fork Road. You know where the road hits Wards Fork and the bridge is out? Down the road about a half mile, well, it isn't hardly that much, the cabin was above the road there. It was put in way before the road was in. They found a big chunk of gold up there. Jim Winningham said they brought it into the Sunnyside [Tavern, in Ruch]. It was a chunk of gold as big as your hand. It had some quartz in it, but it was mostly gold.

I've heard they were pretty successful miners...the Slotiks.

Yes. And did you ever locate old Bob Vincenti's Cabin?

I don't think so.

It's on the Elliott Creek Road. You know where that rock quarry is up, oh, I think it's below the Penn Mine. Well, that's where Devil's Gully is and that's where Bob's cabin was. I don't think Devil's Gully is on the map, but Devil's Garden, it was called. He had one of these stump-pullers, a hand-operated winch. He hauled some huge logs in and hewed them. He pulled them in with that winch by hand. He was an independent old rascal. He used to live up there, back during the Depression. He was a friend of Bill Zeigler's. He used to walk out the Elliott Creek Road into Copper, every once-in-awhile. There used to be an old fellow who lived at that cabin where the Elliott Creek Road used to end, the last cabin below the road, has kind of a tin roof now -- somebody lives there part of the time. There were some people by the name of Clark that had that cottage down there at that time. Old Clark stopped everybody that went up and down the trail to find out what their business was. Old Bob used to call him "Old Snoopity."

Where did Vincenti come from? He was a Depression miner?

A laborer...he was an Italian, and he still talked with an accent. He was a laboring man; he worked on railroad jobs as a laborer. He was a big man. The Buckleys, back during the Depression, when they had that little cabin down below Perks, they wanted old Bob to cut them some wood for the cabin. He wouldn't do it. They weren't going to pay him as much as he wanted, so he wouldn't do it.

Do you think you can find on the map where Vincenti's cabin was?

Now the trail went right by it. It's a mile and seven-tenths below the Penn Mine. There's a road that goes down right by it. That'd put it down in this area somewhere. Now, there's a rock quarry there; just above that rock quarry, there's a skid road that kind of takes off, and it'll take you right down. When you get down to the bottom, you've got to really look for this cabin. It's back on a little bench. I've got an old single-tree [wagon-hitching post] on my back patio that came from there, that he made out of live oak. He had a horse up there at some time. He made part of the iron for it.

Did you ever hear about that cabin up in Swan Valley?
RW No, I never heard about it. Have you been up to the Knutzen Cabin?

JJ On Dutch Creek?

RW Yes. The trail used to go right by it.

JJ Do you remember seeing any cabins up on the Squaw Creek Trail? Just this side of Maple Dell Gap? There was one that was built in the 1930's.

RW Yes. There's one. Before they logged that area I could find it.

JJ Not far below Maple Dell Gap, about 400 feet or so.

RW Well, it's more than that. It was a good half a mile, down in one of those older patches. Old Val Haskins used to go up there.

JJ Was it right along the trail?

RW No, there wasn't any trail along there. It was off the trail quite a little ways. This was more off to the west.

JJ Hmm... west of Squaw Creek, and half a mile below Maple Dell... So... out in the middle of nowhere, really.

RW Yes. It was. I've been down there a ways looking for cattle. Cattle go down in that area. But I was always in there before the logging was done. And you just naturally went to this place when you got heading in that direction. The cattle went down there to feed. You'd get on one of their trails and follow it down. Then there was another one up there, old Jeldness had. It's someplace up there on the trail from the Pearce place to Maple Dell Gap. You come up from the junction there at Squaw Creek, you come up the trail, and then there's a road that takes off, and I think that's where you go. I was only up there one time, and it's been probably forty years ago. I was riding my horse up there and saw this trail taking off, and I just took off on it and followed it clear up and ran into this cabin, kind of under a waterfall there or near a waterfall.

JJ Yes. Getting back to this cabin that Haskins had -- that was in the vicinity of this one, but on the other side of Squaw Creek?

RW No, it was on the other side of the creek.

JJ By Pearce Gulch?

RW Let me take a look at the map. This won't be exact, but...this trail switches back and forth here, but I'd put it off over in this area. Right around in here.

[Points to the location of RR-537, C.R. Job 420. "Maple Dell Cabin Site."]

JJ Ok, I know the one you mean, then.
RW It's been logged down there for probably 150-200 yards. You go along the road and you can see an alder swamp down there, and it's down in one of those alder swamps.

JJ When did he build that then?

RW I haven't any idea.

JJ Which Haskins was that? "Val"?

RW Yes. Val.

JJ A son of John Haskins?

RW Probably. He was an old man when we came here. I knew him fairly well. He used to mine up there in...Lime Gulch? Back of the place where Norton Smith is now, one of those gulches...below his place...this is off the Forest.

JJ Have you ever heard of Henry Harthon? He was a Depression miner.

RW No, I don't believe I have.

JJ Have you seen a cabin along the Penn Sled Trail? Just below Elliot Creek Ridge? North on the Dividend Bar side? Just a little off the trail...

RW Well, there's one at Ash Flat.

JJ I don't know where Ash Flat is.

RW You follow up this trail. It isn't too awfully far up there, and you're on the trail most of the way. And then you come into a skid road - they've logged this private land here.

[Tape ended, but Webb went on to point out the cabin on the map as being in the vicinity of the corner of Sections 2, 3, 10, 11, T.41S., R.3W., W.M. - a cabin currently filed in the District tickler file. He always heard the cabin referred to as the "Mengoz Cabin". I said I had heard the "Mengoz Cabin" was located in Section 4, a half-mile above Dividend Bar. He said he hadn't heard of a cabin there; that he had always heard this one called the Mengoz Cabin. It was already fairly deteriorated at the time he used to see it.]

[While the tape was off, I asked Webb about the Kendall Cabin at Hinckle Lake. He said it was built by Clint Kendall, who he began to describe.]

JJ So, Clint Kendall bought the Culy Ranch up at Steamboat?

RW Yes. He got a range permit. He and Ed Finley were up there in that area. Do you know where the old Culy/Finley Cabin is, along the trail going to Fir Glade?

JJ Not exactly.
RW You know where the Arnold Mine is? It's just where you turn off the road going up to Arnold Mine -- just on beyond it a little ways, I think. But, Clint, he was kind of a "high roller" and he liked to go up in that area, and he decided to build a cabin there at Hinkle Lake. So he built that cabin. It's fairly new.

JJ Yes, 1955, I think.

RW Yes. I helped him pack some lumber into the old Culy/Finley Cabin, and put a floor in. We packed it through Cougar Gap -- there wasn't any road in there then. The road was up to Cougar Gap, I think. We packed it down over Devil's Climb-out to the cabin over there. We packed enough in to put a floor in.

JJ Was Kendall a rancher?

RW Yes. He had a ranch out there by Central Point, out on the Rogue River. He married Harriet Sparrow. [County Judge Alex] Sparrow was a big-wig up at Crater Lake, I think -- one of the supervisors. She lives up the Little Appelgate. Kendall also had a ranch at the mouth of French Gulch, where the dam is now. He had it for quite awhile. He ran cattle up in that area that Dave Winningham has now, around Hinkle Lake, Fir Glade. Have you been to that cabin at Fir Glade?

JJ Yes.

RW The first time I was there was about in 1937. Old Jim Arnold had made the cabin, as I understand it...Jim Arnold from Arnold Mine. He was a fireman up there, prior to the time I started working here. He was a skilled craftsman. He would make lumber and build stuff. He would hew it out and plane it, and just make it perfect. He made a desk and table for there at Fir Glade -- it was made right from raw wood -- real nice furniture. It was there the last time we used the cabin. But I don't think there's anything left now. He had put a floor in the cabin, when I first went there. He was there as a fireman. He put this floor in, and the shower, and a water tank, and all that kind of stuff, and made it a really nice place to live. I just enjoyed going up there. The nearest road was nine miles from there, clear down at the Middle Fork bridge. The first bridge on the new road down there where you climb up on the switchback going up on the ridge between Butte Fork and Middle [Fork]. Just a little ways above that is where the end of the road was. I rode a mule up there -- the first trip I went in. I got the mule at Sturgis Guard Station. Lee [Port] sent me up there -- I think that was 1937. I was going to Whisky Peak and Fir Glade to check the firemen and the lookout. So I started on this old mule and she didn't want to go, so I took the saddle off and looked at everything. It seemed to be alright, so I got back on. And I took the rope down and I whipped her like that (first one side, then the other, rapidly), and she took off down the road at a fast walk, just a-goin'! I never had a bit of trouble with her after that.

JJ The roads...about the time you first came to the District. Middle Fork road went only as far as just below the switchback?
RW No, to the last bridge that crosses Middle Fork before you go on the divide between Butte Fork and Middle Fork. I can show you on the map (SE 1/4 SW 1/4 Sec. 26, T.48N., R.12W.). There was a road up Cougar Creek -- yes Cougar Creek Road -- it ended off up in here someplace. When we went to Whiskey Peak, we had to pack from here.

JJ That was about three miles up Cougar Creek.

RW Yes. Usually we rode from Hutton [Guard Station], or somewhere in this area. It was about seven miles we had to ride. You couldn't pull a trailer up, and we didn't have a truck at that time.

Steve Fork was a mile-and-a-half long. Sturgis Fork ended down in here someplace. And there was none up O'Brien Creek. The Thompson Creek Road went through, and then there was this road up Star Gulch.

JJ What priorities did they use for extending the roads? Was it timber sale access?

RW Yes. They built most of them.

JJ What were some of the first timber sales?

RW The first clear-cuts we put in were up on Beaver Creek. I'll try and locate them on the map. In this area (Section 21, T.40S., R.2W., W.M.). There were two there. One of them's coming along pretty good -- with the reprod. That was in the 1940's. The priorities at that time, everything was about equal -- timber, and grazing -- grazing was very important to the people in the valley here. We had around thirty-five to forty grazing permits, and now there's only eight or ten, something like that. And recreation was important. But since the dam's been put in, that's become a higher priority. And all these roads and everything. And water, of course, was very important to all these ranchers. Before they put the dam in, the Applegate River was...in the hot summer, it would get to the point where it was just puddles. It seemed like it was hardly moving. I think the dam's been a big help that way, making more flow of water. They were taking so much out, that there just wasn't enough to keep the stream going.

All activities were just about of equal importance. There wasn't any one. It was the most balanced District, I think, in Region 6, at that time, as far as uses were concerned. All functions were important.

JJ So, timber got going in the 1940's -- What was the name of that sale?

RW The Beaver Creek Sale. Two clearcuts and a partial cut area. And then we had one up on Yale Creek (SE 1/4 Sec. 15, T.40S., R.2W., W.M., F.S. road #1099590, north of spur road. Webb drew two circles). There was a clearcut in this area, and another one off in here, and a partial cut. Bill Straube had a sawmill down at the mouth of Shump Gulch here, and he bought the logs. And he built that road [Yale Creek Road] up to it. It ended at about his sawmill. He bought this timber from Pierre -- this section (14) and this one (half of 22), and I don't remember whether he bought this one or not (3/4 of Sec. 24) and he logged those -- "creamed"
them. Pierre had little loggers in there for probably fifteen years after Bill owned it.

JJ In the Beaver Creek area, I'm told there are some signs of horse logging, some trenches. I wonder if you know anything about that.

RW There was... I'm trying to think where they logged. The BLM has a campground down in here someplace. There was a little cabin there, and this logger stayed there and kept his horses. It was just below Bill's sawmill. I can't remember the name of the campground [Kenny Meadows], but it was named after the people who gave the land to the BLM for a campground. It was above Shreve's place. He logged around in there.

JJ Is he the same fellow you think might have done the horse logging on Beaver Creek?

RW No, he was just in here one year. And he was logging on private ground, I think. McIntyre, I think his name was.

I don't believe the Forest had anybody horse logging. I don't recall any.

You can see those clear cuts [on Beaver Creek] from one of those switchbacks. It's just above Beaver Ranch. From the second switchback above Beaver Ranch you can see it, across the creek.

JJ On the Middle Fork, across from the waterfall, is a mine -- the "Lucky Mine," with a road up to it, and I wonder if you've ever seen or heard of it?

RW I don't recall any roads up in there... I don't know of any roads except short ones up to someone's cabin. Old Knox used to have a couple of cabins down there on Middle Fork. He'd go up to Frog Pond in the summer and then he'd follow the snow down and he'd get clear down to the bottom of Middle Fork.

JJ Did he build any of those cabins?

RW No, Frog Pond he built, but I don't think he built any of the others. He got a bunch of goats there [at a cabin on the Middle Fork], one time, and one of his neighbors got to complaining about it -- Chisholm. And we told Knox that he ought to do something about those goats because all his neighbors were getting so mad at him about them. And old Knox looked him right in the eye and said, "You know, I think more of some of those goats than I do of my neighbors." (laughs)

JJ He had the Mohawk Mine.

RW Yes. There was a cabin there.

JJ Were there two?

RW There may have been... when he had these goats, I had old Hess Livettson [...] working on trails and Knox asked him up to the cabin to have lunch. Old Knox asked Hess if he'd like some goat milk, and Hess said, "No thanks,"
and Knox says, "Well, I got milk of different ages strung around [the walls on shelves] in jars." (laughs)

You have heard Lee Port's story about the bacon and the beans...

JJ Yes.

RW In old Knox's later days, I sent Von Stein back up Middle Fork, for some reason. When he was coming back down, he met Knox. Knox was nearly blind at that time, and he had a big pack on his back. He met old Chauncey Florey, who stayed with Knox -- he [Florey] was a person who wasn't too bright. Old Von stopped and talked to Chauncey for awhile. And Chauncey was carrying a violin case. Von asked Chauncey if he could play the violin. And Chauncey said, "Sure!" And Von said, "Let's hear you play something." "Well, I can't put my pack down -- it's so heavy. If I set it down, I can't get it back on my back." So he sat down on a log there, that'd been sawed out of the trail, and got his violin out and played Turkey in the Straw for Von! There on the trail! (laughs)

Chauncey and his brother, Claude, used to get into a rock-throwing fight or shooting at each other in the brush. Claude, he'd get scared and come out, and come up to the Ranger Station and try to get me to do something about it. One time he came by there and he stopped and he kind of lisped -- he was hard to understand -- but I got it out of him that he had run out of food up there, and he only had an apple left. He had a dog with him and he wanted to get some food for the dog. So I said, "Sure, I'll take care of him," and took him down to the service station where the hippies are now [the Outpost Store in Ruch] -- it was called something different then, when Bob what's-his-name had it, before Ryan. And I got him a hamburger sandwich and a pound of hamburger for the dog. (laughs)

But they all [Knox, Chauncey and Claude] wound up in rest homes. Knox got so he couldn't get around. But he lived up in that area too. Chauncey kind of took care of old Knox in the last few years he was up there. He cleaned most of the rocks out of the trail going up to Frog Pond, so Knox could walk up there. He [Knox] was getting blind.

END OF INTERVIEW