

MARVIN LONG

Interviewed by:

Rob Moore

Oral History Project  
Latah County Museum Society

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# I. Index

## MARVIN LONG

Kendrick; b. 1894

owner of mercantile business in Kendrick

1 hour

minute page

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with Rob Moore  
July 3, 1973

## II. Transcript

The following tape was recorded on the third of July, 1973 on the porch of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Long. The voices on the tape are those of Marvin Long, his wife Martha, and Rob Moore, the interviewer. The Longs live in the residential section of Kendrick, Idaho, in the house built by the original draftsman of the town plat for Kendrick, a man named Kirby. The background noise is the traffic on the street outside the Long home.

MARTHA LONG: ...and he had a number of what we call his youthful business ventures that are real interesting, considering his age.

MARVIN LONG: Well, I don't...

MRS: Now your junk business, you know that is. Is that on now?

ROB MOORE: I think so.

MRS: Oh.

ROB: Let me see. Yeah, it's going.

MRS: I'll try and stay out of it, though I might have to remind him a little.

ROB: Tell me about your junk business.

M L: Me?

ROB: Yeah.

M L: Oh, let's see when was that? Back in...what year was that I was sick? Anyway I was sick a year. I'd been working store all...

MRS: You were about twenty-one.

M L: ...twenty-one and I was sick a whole year. I had a nervous breakdown.

The first time I got up and put my clothes on I weighed a hundred and one pounds, so you might know, by the size I am now...

ROB: Right.

M L: All I had was debts. But when I was a kid I had bought junk and sold it.

I started out and I had, let's see, did I have a horse? Yeah, I had a horse.

One horse. The neighbor over here, he's gone now, he had one of them democrat wagons. Do you know what a democrat wagon is? It was one of those small,

just a small wagon.

ROB: Why was it called a democrat wagon?

M L: Yeah, the little one.

ROB: Why was it called a democrat wagon?

M L: I don't know. I don't know. That's the nickname for it. It's a small one. You know there was two types: there was the big ones they haul grain in with a four horse team, you know, then they had this little one for light work and run-around. These little wagons. Well anyway, I went over there and leased, rented this wagon. I had a horse. I rented this horse. I think I paid him a dollar and a quarter a day rental. 'Stead of renting a car I was renting a horse...

ROB: Right. Right.

M L: ...And a wagon. And I went out buying junk. I made this whole territory, whole country. I must have made three hundred dollars, anyway, when I got through.

ROB: What kind of junk were you getting?

M L: That time it was hides, horse hair from the farmers that they saved when they curried (that was a good price but you didn't get much weight out of them.) Hides, brass, copper, and rubber, old rubber, junk. I was a regular junk dealer.

MRS: Wool too, wasn't it?

M L: Yeah, wool. Anything I could get a market for. I cleaned up and paid all my expenses that summer. I owed three hundred dollars.

ROB: Where did you peddle the stuff?

M L: Standard Fruit and Fur Company, they're still in business in Spokane. I had enough that the buyer came down every Saturday and picked it up, bought it and shipped it to Spokane. I had a good market for all that stuff.

MRS: How long did you stay out on these trips to the ridges?

M L: I stayed out a week. Go out on a Monday and come in on a Friday.

ROB: Would you usually travel along one ridge on a trip?

M L: Yeah, I'd take one ridge at a time. I worked them all. I worked everything around Kendrick. I didn't miss any places. I got a lot of free good meals out of it and a lot of sleeps. I didn't sleep in the wagon every night. They'd invite me in. One place I stayed a whole week, **one** ~~blooming~~ place. They wouldn't let me go anywhere else.

ROB: How long did you stay in that business?

M L: That summer. Until I got out of debt.

ROB: Then you went back to work in the store again?

M L: Yeah, I went back in the store. Yeah, just to get out of debt, I couldn't owe a dollar. Yeah, people were good to me though.

MRS: And then the outdoor was recommended, you know, for his health...

M L: I weighed a hundred and one pounds. Well you know it must have, you know...

ROB: Was this store a better business than the junk business?

MRS: That is when you went to school, wasn't it?

M L: Yeah, I was just a kid. I was working for wages in the store. I never got in to this one...when did I get into this, in with my folks? I come back here in 1920 wasn't it?

MRS: Uh-hm.

M L: I come in '20, 1920. I was 26 years old when I went in with the folks. I went in the grocery store, in business. 'Course I stayed with them until I was the last one left. There was three of us brothers and my dad there when we originally started. 'Course we had...we did farming, had cattle, slaughter house, butcher, grocery store, dry goods and meats.

ROB: How did the store business change over the years, you know, like as as cars came...

M L: Well, when cars came in people came to town oftener and bought smaller orders. And competition become more keener, you went to other towns, you know. They

didn't drive to Lewiston and Moscow or where ever they was at in the horse and buggy days, but when the cars come. And you had to get more competitive. 'Course they didn't go like they do now. It don't matter where you're at nowadays with cars and stuff. The distance from Moscow to Kendrick is the same distance as it is from Kendrick to Lewiston. Did you know that?

ROB: Um-huh.

M L: Well, there's a little...what I'm getting at, there's a little business sense to that too, see. So much between the two points, you know, how far it is back and forth. Well, I had quite a few people here that went to Lewiston. Everybody goes to Lewiston works a job. You don't have to ask them where they're working 'cause they went down and worked for the Potlatch Forest. That's all, that's their payroll, see. Well, I got a bunch that I knew went down there and they'd come up on Saturdays, and got so it kept increasing. And they'd come up on Saturdays and want their work paid off, out of Lewiston. See, that works both ways, see. If you're not scared of the big town, see.

ROB: Right, right.

M L: You got to outfox them, see. It can be done, I found that out.

ROB: Well, when people started traveling more and you had to compete more, did you kind of change?

M L: You change the way you do business.

ROB: Did you change your line of goods too?

M L: Sure, you change your way of doing business. You had to get competitive, see. You had to watch your buying.

ROB: Like how?

M L: Well, just not get stuck with anything, that's all. You knew what people wanted. Now there's just certain things. They come up here from Lewiston and there's things I was specializing on. Was work shoes and gloves. See?

I had to know what they wanted, those boys from the mill.

ROB: Right, right.

M L: If you carried it and you had your price. Most of these business firms, even Penney and all those guys, it's a one-way street, you know, on their mark-up. It isn't flexible, you know. That's why if you find out what their mark-up is and how they're doing it, you can beat 'em, see. (Laughs.) Find out what they're making a profit on just used to tickle me to death, even Penney's. Find what they're making a profit on, all them chains, you know. Just get under 'em. (Laughs.)

ROB: Right. Slip under 'em a little ways.

M L: Give them some of their own medicine.

ROB: Right. In the early days, did you usually buy most of your things locally or was it all mostly brought in from other parts of the country?

M L: Well, you had to bring in from wherever your wholesale houses happened to be. Your groceries were all from the nearest points, you know, like Lewiston. Well, of course there's a lot in Spokane, too. 'Course Spokane would meet your freight, or something on it. They'd have to in order to compete down here. Competitive proposition.

ROB: You bought your cattle and things locally and shipped them out?

M L: They went out. Sure, when we'd buy cattle. We've been out of that business for years. Well, other people went out, too. This isn't a cattle country like it used to be.

ROB: How long was this cattle country?

M L: What do you mean how long?

ROB: Until when was this cattle country?

M L: Well there was more cattle raised around here ...there's still big cattle range back here in the mountains. Still lots of cattle but not like it was in those days. They used to ship out of here. They don't do that any more.

It's all trucked out to Lewiston. Lewiston's our market instead of Spokane. That's about the biggest change that's been made. They truck to Lewiston instead of shipping freight to Spokane. Which is so much easier, see. They don't get the shrinkage and it's a better deal. The buyers come into Lewiston, see.

MRS: How many depressions did you survive? Two, didn't you?

M L: Two, three I guess.

ROB: What was it like here in your store during the Big Depression?

M L: She was a barter deal. If you couldn't barter, you couldn't trade, why you was out of the picture. You just couldn't make it. There wasn't any money see. You just had to...you had to have a certain amount of money, but it sure was a trade deal.

ROB: What kind of trades were there?

M L: Well, here we'd trade for anything that we could sell. Anything they'd have. 'Course it was mostly livestock in our business. We'd trade for beans, or wheat, or peas, or whatever. There wasn't any peas raised then, it was beans. It was beans, and grain, hay, anything. Anything we could turn. Anything you could sell, you would trade for.

ROB: Right, right. Then you'd usually trade that on again to somebody else who wanted it?

M L: Or used it or sell to somebody. That's the reason we could do it. We had the feed lot out there and we had the cattle, you know. And one time dad even used to feed hogs. After he got out of it my other brother didn't want to have nothing to do with hogs. I never was the outside man. I was always the inside man. I run that.

MRS: Then you used to ship your excess lard and chickens and things to Spokane and to Pullman...

M L: All over the country. Bought poultry and shipped it. Which ever way they

wanted it. If they wanted it live we'd ship live, we'd ship dressed.

ROB: But you kept going through the depressions just by...

M L: Trade.

ROB: ...by trading?

M L: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, that's right.

ROB: Was Kendrick a pretty quiet little town back in those days or was it pretty...

M L: Kendrick's always been a good little town. It's been a stable town. It don't have these ups and downs, you know. You've got a certain amount of people that you deal with that pays their bills and you can depend on them. Then you've got that other class which never pays, that never pays their bills, you know. You got that. But if you know your stuff why she's alright here. There's lots of businesses in Kendrick yet. We have a good hardware, we have a good general store. Well, we don't have a general store like I had. But they have a good grocery, two groceries, meats, they have a good dry goods. But I had an old fashion general store. That was dry goods, meats, groceries, everything, see.

ROB: All the way down the line.

M L: Yeah, well I didn't carry ready-to-wear.

ROB: You didn't carry what?

M L: Ready-to-wear, dresses and that. I didn't go into men's clothes and that stuff. Ordered suits and that, stayed out of ladies stuff.

ROB: You carried hardware and equipment and stuff too?

M L: No, no. I didn't have any hardware. No, that's a business of its own.

ROB: Yeah.

M L: We got a good hardware store in town here now. There's always been a good hardware store here. 'Course it's a good country for hardware.

ROB: Right, with all the farmers. How about the social life here? I was talking about a quiet town. Was there much to do? I know Mr. Schupfer there had that

movie theatre for a long time.

M L: They don't...you see that played out on account of television, done away with that. Who's going down there and set in an old movie when you can see your pick of anything you want on the television set. See we get all the cable. We're cabled in and we get all the good programs. We got an awful good cable system here. They look after it.

ROB: I know up in Potlatch once a month they had big socials, all the people in town would come. I think in the Grange Hall there they'd have big socials...

M L: No, they don't make much of that here. The Grange still have theirs. That's all the social life there is, isn't it?

MRS: The school is the center of the social life for the young...

M L: Schools your center...

MRS: Summertime it's the swimming pool.

ROB: I was wondering about earlier on, back when you were a kid, what you'd do to...

M L: We'd have our regular dances, you know. That's us young kids.

MRS: Skating, there was big roller-skating rink here.

M L: Roller-skating. Yeh these public dances was quite a thing. Getting so now they have one or two a year. That's about all they ever have, isn't it?

MRS: Fourth of July was a big event in the small towns, you know, they had Fourth of July celebrations.

ROB: Did you have parades around the Fourth or what?

M L: Oh, sure. We still do. We'd have parades and bands, still do.

MRS: We have ours on Locust Day in May. That's our Fourth of July.

M L: Fourth of July. It's better than having it on the Fourth. 'Course nowadays they go picnicking you see, on the Fourth, they don't have celebrations. That's a thing of the past isn't it, unless it's a rodeo or something...

ROB: Pretty much.

M L: ...some special events. What?

ROB: Pretty much a thing of the past.

M L: Outside of rodeo's. That's about when the rodeo season starts isn't it?  
'Course this isn't much of a rodeo town. (Chuckles.) Yeah, quite a few  
though.

MRS: There's riding clubs, it isn't exactly a rodeo. At first in those early  
days these little towns all had saloons. Kendrick had its share.

M L: When we come to Kendrick it had three.

ROB: Yeah. How long did they keep in operation?

M L: As long as the law let them. You know Prohibition come in. Now you don't  
know it, see, now of course prohibition is nothing. Now you don't know it.  
There's one place in Kendrick that serves liquor. And there was two other  
places served beer. There's this one place that still serves beer. You  
don't even know it that they serve liquor down here anymore.

ROB: Right. It isn't a gambling hell anymore.

M L: Saloons.

ROB: Yeah.

M L: You never hear about it. Don't they serve drinks...?

MRS: I don't know. I don't go there.

M L: I don't either.

ROB: Do you think the business community, the market has remained the same over  
the years in Kendrick?

M L: I think its been pretty stable. Stayed about the same. Oh no, it's went  
down of course.

ROB: I mean the kind of market. Are the goods and things still about the same  
class?

M L: Oh yeah. A town like this always specialized on the staples anyway, you  
know. It's based on what the farmers need. It's based on what the farmer

needs, what he buys.

ROB: What were your hours when you used to work in the store? Did you have to be there the whole time the store was open?

M L: Well, somebody did. (Chuckles.) No, I didn't have to be there. Well I was there pretty steady, wasn't I?

MRS: You mean in the early days?

ROB: In the early days, yeah.

MRS: ...when you were a clerk. What hours did you have to keep?

M L: Well, I never had to keep only regular hours, you know.

MRS: How long were those in those beginning years?

M L: Well, we opened at eight and closed at six. Some of 'em used to stay open nights you know, six days a week.

ROB: What were wages then, when you were clerking?

M L: When I first clerked? A dollar a day.

ROB: A dollar a day, for a ten hour day?

M L: Why you, from eight 'til six. That's nine hours isn't it?

ROB: That's ten hours. Was the first store you clerked in also a mercantile store? Is that different than a merchandise store?

M L: It wasn't. With me you see they farmed me out. There was four of us brothers and we was too many. One brother I had he never would work inside. He had a what you called in them days a dray line. And he hauled all the stuff from the depot and did all the hauling there was in town. And in fact made the store deliveries. And then the other brother worked in the shop, I wasn't in the business then. I was out working in the dry goods store. One of them run the shop and the other one with Dad bought cattle and done the butchering.

ROB: And you worked in a dry goods store?

M L: I worked a general store.

I come back here...1920 I come back in N. B. Long & Sons, we bought out a dry-goods store and I come back to run it. He kept the meat market and I kept the groceries, dry goods. And I quit five years ago.

MRS: Tell him about the dry goods in that first store...how big it was. Yard-age, ready-to-wear for women, and mens tailored suits that were ordered and all that was done right in that store. Big business.

M L: I've told him all that.

MRS: Millenry, they made their own hats.

ROB: What was the price of things in those days? Like what was the price of a tailored suit, say? If I walked in and I wanted to buy a tailored suit.

M L: If you wanted to buy a tailored suit and you was a plutocrat we'd want to sell you something up around fifty or sixty dollars. But if you was just working out here for wages and stuff we'd stick pretty close to a twenty-five dollar suit.

ROB: You'd get me in quite a suit for twenty or twenty-five dollars?

M L: Oh yeah, twenty, twenty-five dollars, you could buy. Most any price you wanted to pay, but generally the guys that wanted a good suit, the guys that wanted an expensive suit, they generally come in and wanted you to order 'em tailor-made suits. Measure 'em up, get 'em a tailor-made suit. Clothing was really pretty high them days. It was high for them times, you know pretty much in line the way it is now. Well it wasn't as high of course. Shoes and stuff was this high. Here's where the shoe business went to. Fifty per cent, I'd bet you, rubber soles ain't it? Right there. I had so much trouble with my feet and I couldn't get anything to fit me I could wear. I got broken arches until I got to wearing these. By gum, I don't know I have any feet, so I just kept on wearing 'em.

MRS: Families, you know in the fall families would come in and buy all their winter clothes for the whole family, they'd bring their kids in. Except one

man. Tell him about the man that didn't bring the kids and got shoes.

M L: These boys got families raised and growed up. I see 'em and see their kids. Oh he was close. I don't know whether you'd call him stingy, but he was tight. 'Course he had a large family, he had five or six boys and they were just stair steps, teenagers. And he'd come in and...I think there was five or six boys, wasn't there?

MRS: Uh-huh.

M L: They're all grown now, and these kids have got families. Anyhow he brought these sticks in. Each stick meant a boy, the size of his shoe that he could wear. Well he'd get these sticks, you know, long enough. He never brought any short ones in. Too short and he'd never come back. And he'd work that stick in there and pick out his shoes and get the right ones.

ROB: Why didn't he bring the kids in?

M L: They just didn't have decent clothes to come in and he was that kind of a guy. He was paying for them shoes and he was buying 'em. He didn't give 'em a chance.

MRS: No argument that way.

M L: No argument. You'd have to know him to know that. And they all turned out good didn't they, Martha.

MRS: Yes, sure.

M L: Clemenhagen, in business here in Kendrick. Some of 'em farmers, yes sir I could never forget it. I think during the Depression there we was selling shoes and he come in and fitted them out I think it was, believe this or not, shoes were down to a dollar ninety-eight a pair. These kids' shoes.

ROB: And that was mostly in barter too wasn't it?

M L: What?

ROB: And that was mostly in barter too wasn't it?

M L: Well, he could barter a little, but he couldn't barter too much on that one because that was a good price and he couldn't reach it anyway. I didn't make too much on them. But I had some of 'em that I sold to him. Dollar ninety-eight cents a pair. So you know they had to be awful cheap.

ROB: Right.

M L: Nail shoes, the soles was nailed on instead of sewed on. The leather was what we call strip leather, it wasn't full grain leather.

ROB: What...it's kind of hard to hear with those trucks rolling by.

M L: Does that go on there? The traffic.

ROB: Oh yeah, probably. It doesn't hurt anything. What other kind of characters were around? Any people you remember in particular that you had any odd experiences with?

M L: The characters that come around in those days, we called them box car bums. They was the characters. And they were box car...they come in on these empty box cars, you know. And they'd come in here and sleep in them, too, in jungles. We had jungles around here. We called them jungles. Hobo jungles.

ROB: Was that around the Depression times?

M L: Yeah. It was back there when we first come to Kendrick and up to the Depression. The Depression, I guess that's what done away with it. 'Course there's never been any since. They got stricter rules on the railroads, I guess. Well, no, this Social Security done that. Got work for people. See, everybody gets a certain age they get a minimum, anyway. They get something. That Social Security was what done away with that.

ROB: Did you ever have many dealings with those box car bums?

M L: Yeah, every morning.

ROB: How's that?

M L: Well, when they'd come in and bum. You'd give them a little. Anything

that you had stale around or something. Scraps, you know. They'll take anything. Make up a stew, you know, go over to the jungle and put it all in a pot.

ROB: Yeah. Yeah.

M L: Well no sir, we haven't had any box car...there hasn't been any...that's when that went out was Social Security. That's about when that started, '30's wasn't it.

ROB: I think '38 wasn't it? Something like that around there.

M L: Yes sir, that's been a wonderful thing. These young people don't realize that 'cause they're the ones that's paying for it.

ROB: Right.

M L: You guys, did you ever think...

ROB: I know. I don't worry about it.

M L: No, I know. But it is what's keeping the country to going. It's what put money in circulation. Name anything else.

ROB: Nothing.

M L: You can't name it can you?

ROB: Yeah.

M L: That's ever put money into circulation like that has.

MRS: An interesting pioneer story is his father was in the freighting business before he came to Kendrick. Leland and...he freighted out there. It deals with Latah County, did he tell you about that? About the freight business?

ROB: No I don't think you did.

MRS: That's before he bought the store.

M L: That's before I bought the store. Before we come to Kendrick. At that time before the railroad was built up to the (Camas Prairie). You know where we call Arrow junction down here where the forks is that you go up towards Orofino and then the railroad come to Kendrick. Well, that's as far as there

was a railroad, there was no railroad any farther than that. There was none up the river. See, Orofino had no railroad. I mean, all that prairie country had no railroad of any kind. And this was the closest point, Kendrick. You see from Spokane and went across here, if they went down they'd pay more freight going down and they'd have more going up. This was the shipping point...

(End of Side A)

...and they hauled it out of here. Well, they made Leland, this little town of Leland up here up the hill seven miles, well they'd get down here and load up and then go up there and that's where they'd stay all night.

ROB: What were they shipping from here?

M L: Everything. All their groceries and dry goods and hardware and everything come in here from Spokane to Kendrick on the railroad. And that's as far as they could go with the railroad.

ROB: The farmers would come down here and buy it, or you'd ship it to the retailers or what?

M L: No, no to the merchants up there.

ROB: Right.

M L: They run these freight wagons and they all had to have their lines, see, to haul it up there. They had these freight lines.

ROB: Did the merchants usually own the lines or were the lines independent?

M L: Well, they could be. Some of them, but they had to see if there was a line. If there wasn't they'd have to get it, get a freight line. No there was freight of course, a'standing.

MRS: This was teams, horses and...

M L: Yeah, I know. That was what they called the freight lines, with teams, four and six horse teams.

ROB: How long did your father do that?

M L: Well he didn't do much of that. I think when winter came...

MRS: I know he freighted from here over to Pierce.

M L: Yeah, Pierce. Well, that's up this way. Pierce and Weippe up the hill in this country but this country that I'm talking about, is over across Clear-water River.

MRS: Pierce and Weippe are above Orofino, you know.

M L: Yeh, they've back out in this other country. He didn't cross the Clear-water River to get over there. He went from Orofino up to Pierce and back. He used to freight up there.

ROB: Was he freighting to the miners up around Pierce at that time or what?

M L: No, everybody, homesteaders I guess. Lots of homesteaders. There was stores up there and they had to have this freight hauled from here.

ROB: About how long would a trip from here up to that country, from Leland up to that country take him?

M L: Well he come down here to Kendrick and he'd get his load and he'd get back there that night and then I guess the next night...that would be one day. Then they'd have to go as far as Orofino, that's two days. It would be a three day trip.

ROB: Um-huh. Three days over and three days back?

M L: Yeah. Just about. You know a team can only go about so far a day. It was quite an activity around here when they was freighting back in to all the country, they was just opening up that country. Kendrick was a pretty busy place. 'Course when they built that railroad out there 'course that did away with all this. This was the nearest point they had. Yah, I wasn't very old in them days. See I was about...

MRS: You helped put the teams away, didn't you?

M L: Oh sure.

ROB: Did you ever go with your father on any of those trips?

M L: Nope. Never had time. We was too busy staying home.

ROB: Doing what?

M L: Chores, milking cows, feeding hogs, taking care of some horses.

MRS: Tell him about your cows you used to take care of here, in town when you first came to Kendrick. That's an interesting story.

M L: Well, them days when we first come here. There was no dairies. There was no place to buy cream or milk or anything. And everybody had to have a cow, most everybody. If they had kids they'd have a cow. And all these places had a barn or access to a barn, used to be a barn back here. And we had a pasture out here we leased on the hillside. We'd always had a saddle horse or two. And I think I had twenty or twenty-five I guess head of cattle. They ran the pasture and I...No I got a dollar, a dollar a week, wasn't that it?

MRS: That sounds like quite a bit. A dollar a month a cow, wouldn't that be nearer?

M L: Yah, I made about thirty dollars a month. A dollar a month a cow. For taking them to pasture.

ROB: How old were you then?

M L: Well, lets see. I was fifteen and sixteen, just a teenager.

ROB: You had to take them out in the mornings and bring them back in the evenings.

M L: That's right.

MRS: Deliver them to every house?

M L: There's one thing about it I never had to...this pasture was pretty small and pretty well pastured off. But it was a place to keep them out of town in the daytime. One thing about it I'd get 'em out there in the morning and never have any trouble with them as that feed was out there in that pasture, see. At night they was always up at the gate coming in. They'd get fed here

at night. That's why I didn't have to go out and hunt up cattle.

ROB: Did you have any trouble getting the right cows to the right houses?

M L: Oh no, they all knew their places.

ROB: They knew where they lived, huh?

M L: They was smarter sometimes than I was. Yeah, they knew where they lived.

ROB: What other odd jobs did you have when you were a kid?

M L: I told you about the junk business, didn't I?

ROB: Yeah.

M L: That was the biggest job, there. It made the most money.

ROB: Right. When you eight, ten, twelve, what did you do for spending money?

Did you have chores, jobs or go out...

M L: That's what I was telling you. That's what we was doing. We had these jobs.

Dad was always good to us. He'd let us keep our money and wouldn't take it away from us.

ROB: Oh.

M L: But we bought our own clothes, see.

ROB: He'd pay you for doing the chores around the house?

M L: No, no, no, this was outside. He didn't pay us for doing any of his chores, we done them for free. But when there was cattle, well he always had one or two cows too. And then that's the reason we'd take them. We took care of all these others and we got paid for it. We didn't get paid for ours but there was many that come in here. We had the dray line and they had the delivery business, see, in town. We hauled everything. And that kept us busy.

MRS: You raised beans at Leland one year.

M L: Well that's when I got sick and couldn't work, inside. I went out here and rented a bean ground. They used to raise a lot of field beans here. These white navy beans, they planted at first. I went up there and leased

over twenty-five acres.

MRS: He hired his sister and the other girls to pick them. What do you call that? Picking, sorting.

M L: No, a few had to be hand-picked. Clean them up if the cleaner don't take it out. You had to take it out by hand in order to make them...there'd be clods and stuff in there and certain beans would go through that wasn't edible. You couldn't get them out with the cleaner. And so you'd have to hand-pick them. Gee, people here...I remember these women, these widow women especially, picked beans. Take beans to their houses they would. Haul them to their houses, they would. And they'd pick beans all winter, hand-pick those beans. Why I guess they still do it yet, don't they, when they raise beans and peas for seed, don't they?

ROB: I think so.

M L: Hand-pick that stuff? Still do.

ROB: They haven't come up with anything better, yet.

M L: To get certified seed I still think they have to do it don't they? I don't know I haven't been around, but I don't think they have.

ROB: After you'd gone out and made this money what did you usually spend it on?

M L: Well, I'll tell you. We wasn't getting very big money. Dad was pretty good to us. He wouldn't make us...unless we was working on some good job you know or something. He wouldn't make us pay board. I paid board a whole lot, you know, when I was working steady in the store. Getting paid for the month. But when I was sick and buying that junk he never charged me. Time you bought your clothes and paid board if you was working out, you didn't have too much to worry about. (Laughs.) And 'course we always had to have weekends every week or two. There was dances and places to go to.

ROB: Did they have fiddlers come down and play at the dances or...

M L: Oh sure, they had orchestra's, regular orchestra's. We had a lot of good

music here in town. It was pretty fortunate.

ROB: Mostly local people?

M L: Oh yeah. See we had a Thomas family used to live right over there on the corner. They was all musicians. This Walt Thomas he went to Spokane and he's been a leader up there during the army. He wanted to enlist in the army in the band. Well they said they couldn't take any enlistments 'cause they didn't have any leaders, they didn't have any band leaders. They couldn't take any enlistments. So he says, "I'm your man." He says, "I'm a band leader." He took his examination and he led this band all the time and went overseas with them, didn't he?

MRS: I don't know. That was World War One wasn't it?

M L: Yeah. War One. He went overseas with his band.

ROB: What kind of music would they play for dances?

M L: Mostly violin, piano.

ROB: Square dance type tunes or polkas or what?

M L: Well, not much square dancing in those days around here. Mostly, when I danced, it was mostly waltzes and two-steps. And about every so often they'd have a quadrille or whatever you called it. What did they call that, do you know? Martha, what did they call...quadrille?

MRS: I think so, in your time. They probably still do.

M L: (Motorcycle drives by.) No. They didn't have any motorcycles in them days.

ROB: No. It was quite a bit quieter back then too wasn't it?

M L: Yeah, it was.

MRS: Dirt, mud streets, dirt streets.

M L: Horses.

MRS: Big high board sidewalks right along the tops...

ROB: The sidewalks were that high?

M L: Yeah, come right up to the edge here.

MRS: Come out of the mud.

ROB: I guess it was a lot quieter then too wasn't it?

M L: Quieter, oh yeah. Until they had a shiverree or something. Or a bunch of drunks in town.

ROB: Yeh.

M L: Yeh, pretty quiet, horse and buggy days. Yeah, I seen the first motor cars come in this country.

ROB: Where did they come from?

M L: They was shipped in. Old four wheelers.

ROB: What kind?

M L: You seen pictures of them haven't you?

ROB: Oh sure.

M L: Well, I think the one we had...I think the dealer here was International. I think they were. The International Machinery Company.

ROB: A dealer came into town to start selling cars?

M L: Oh no, there was a dealer here. These hardwares are the ones that sold them, them days. See that then was a four-wheeler and a one-seater. Buggy type, them one-seaters. Did you ever see one of the old ones? I guess you have.

ROB: I think I have. What were people's reactions to the first cars that came in here? What did they think of them?

M L: They were excited, you know. "You'd get killed going up and down these grades" you know and all that stuff. Seems like nobody got killed, the first thing everybody was buying them.

ROB: Yeah. Did the first ones come in by train or did they drive in by themselves, or what?

M L: I don't remember. Well, they were shipped. I imagine to a distributor in Moscow, I imagine. The first ones. The didn't get so many of them, you

know, at first. People didn't buy 'em like they buy 'em now. See a fella got a car to run a...well he was generally some kind of commercial car. He wouldn't be a buying one, you know, just to go out and buy a car. Most of them were commercial cars.

ROB: You mean cars that people run their businesses with or what?

M L: Well for delivering and stuff. When they started to come they come pretty fast.

ROB: About what year was that?

M L: What year would that have been? Let's see we come down here in 1908...

MRS: The very first one was around that time wasn't it?

M L: Well, let's see. War One was '18 wasn't it, '18 to '20. Just before War One, it was, about in there was when it started.

ROB: Did the wars have any effect on life out here, besides having something else to read in the paper?

M L: I'll say it did. War One, pret'near everybody had somebody over there fighting. Gee, Dad couldn't go out to work. He bought cattle here and stuff and he had my brother over there in the front line trenches in War One. He couldn't leave this town till the paper come in about nine o'clock. Get the daily paper and read that casualty list. That's how much it worried him. Just see whether Tom, my brother, was spared another day or not. It was awful what they went through, them parents. Mother seemed to take it a lot better than Dad did. Dad didn't take it. He couldn't take it. Well, it was an awful thing. You know you'd have to have a son over there in the trenches in order to realize it, wouldn't you? With some of 'em, some of them was filling their pockets. That was good business, see.

ROB: Was that even happening out here? Filling your pockets sort of thing?

M L: Why sure. It was everywhere, wasn't it?

ROB: What kind of businesses out here could profit by...

M L: Well, it was what they sell 'em. Raising prices.

MRS: Wheat.

M L: Wheat, wheat went up. They was praying for wheat to go up. The more they killed over there the more wheat it took, see. Isn't that something.

ROB: Uh-um. That's very...

M L: One guy was mourning about his son being over in the trenches and the other was glorifying it because it was keeping his wheat prices up. Yep.

ROB: Did that same thing happen in the second war?

M L: Not as bad, no. 'Course it didn't last very long, did it?

ROB: Oh it lasted about six years.

M L: War Two?

ROB: Yeah.

M L: They didn't do as much fighting as War One.

ROB: I don't think it was quite as intense.

M L: It was casualties. Wasn't as rough either.

MRS: The memorial to the boys in the First World War was the flagpole in the park down here. They moved it just this last year. And the big metal ball on top had a list of the casualties. They didn't replace that. They moved it over by the Second War memorial there on the corner. The swimming pool is the memorial for the Second World War. There's a big box with all the names of the boys on the corner there. This first one, they had them in the copy of the Gazette with all their names was in that ball on the top of the flagpole. They gave the ball to Peter for his Museum, I think, or did they put the ball back? I don't think they put it back. I think he's got the paper, anyway, that was in there.

ROB: Oh, you haven't said much about the time you spent homesteading up...  
Leland.

M L: Dad homesteaded when he come out here, in '08. He come out and homesteaded

up here on Cedar Creek. Took out a timber. They called it them days a stone and timber claim. He homesteaded. He had rights in for that. And let's see...well, he made his living by making shakes and peddling them to farmers on the Potlatch Ridge.

ROB: And how long was he out there?

M L: Well, he was up...how long did I say? He come in '88...

MRS: When you were real small I guess.

M L: Well, let's see. I was born in '94...did I say '94? '96, '97 about '97.

ROB: Why did he give up the homestead?

M L: Couldn't make a living. (Laughs.) To better himself. He come out and rented a farm on Potlatch Ridge.

ROB: That was the apple farm?

M L: That was a grain farm. And he got exzema so bad he had to quit farming. And we went to Leland and got in the meat business.

ROB: Did you prove up a rock and timber claim the same way you proved up a regular homestead?

M L: Yeh, if you wanted to take it and develop it, if you had the rights you could. At that time when he come in here if he'd have got out here on the ridge he could have got some of this farm land. If he'd just waited 'til somebody throwed it up, see. You could get a homestead, and a stone and timber, and a pre-emption. I just don't know. You had three rights when you first come in here. They was that eager to get settlers.

ROB: What was a pre-emption?

M L: Well, it was just a...I don't know exactly what it is but some of the best land was taken up on pre-emption. I just never quite understood what that was. Some of these oldtimers could tell you, I guess. But anyway that was what they could have. And some of them got some of this stone and timber, you know, a few stones on it and a few trees. They called it a stone-timber

and got by with it. They got pretty strict on that. But this pre-emption, I don't understand it. I know one outfit on the Potlatch ridge. Well it was these Huffmans, his grandparents took up pre-emptions and homesteads and they got control of a lot of land up there and I guess still there's some of it in the family yet. But that's what they had. That's how eager they was for people to develop this country. 'Course I think that stone and timber was abused, the privilege on that.

ROB: What were you supposed to do with the stone and timber?

M L: You're supposed to improve it a little. You had certain improvements you had to make on it.

ROB: What's the difference between stone and timber and a regular homestead?

M L: A regular homestead was anything, see. This farm land up here was all come under homesteads. But on the edges up there they'd take fringe, that's where the fringes come in, they'd take stone and timber. That's where you was developing stone or timber.

ROB: Oh. Like you're supposed to quarry stone or something...

M L: Well, yeah, it would be stone there if it was that kind of stone. We didn't have any right in here. But there is sections they do have it here. Up around the mining countries I guess there was a lot of that.

ROB: Could you get more land on a stone and timber or what?

M L: Homestead gave you a hundred and sixty acres. All right your pre-emption would be a hundred and sixty acres and your...I give you your stone and timber didn't I?

ROB: You said...

M L: Your regular homestead hundred and sixty, give you three quarters.

ROB: Right.

M L: If you was in a position to accept it. And of course some of 'em was.

ROB: You'd have to develop different things on each...

M L: ...quarter-section. I think then if you pulled some strings or something too. That had something to do with it. I noticed most of them that had all them was pretty badly criticized by the oldtimers. I don't understand it too much. I'd have to...

ROB: Your dad just had just the stone and timber, right? Or did he have more than that?

M L: Well he took up I think under just the homestead right. I don't think he ever took any stone and timber. But there was...that's the opportunities I guess what I was telling you where this come in, that he had an opportunity to get a stone and timber and didn't take it. He's always regretted it, see, that he didn't use up that right. Because it wasn't long afterwards that you couldn't do it any more, see. But he could have had those, you see what I mean? And people did take it. They'd prove up and live so long on this and then come up and get a stone and timber and do the same thing on it.

ROB: Right.

M L: Yeah, there was those three rights wasn't it? What did I say? Stone and timber and homestead and pre-emption.

ROB: And pre-emption, yeah.

MRS: Then you lived in Leland and your mother ran a hotel and what did your dad do there? That's when you had the meat market.

M L: Bought cattle and run a meat market. Peddled meat. We'd cut it up, put up ice in the winter time and these meat wagons was built with boxes on behind, these hacks, and there was a place down at the bottom for ice. We'd ice them up in the morning and cut this meat up and peddle it all over the Potlatch Ridge. And I was just big enough to go around and open gates. Oh, I'd peddle meat, though.

ROB: Would you take one road a day or something? Would you have a regular route?

M L: We had routes, we had routes. We generally make six days a week, generally

have three routes. We make them every other day. You had to make them pretty often 'cause you didn't have any way of keeping meat.

ROB: How would you keep your ice?

M L: We had ice-houses. Did you ever see an ice-house? Did you ever hear of one?

ROB: I've heard of them, but I've never seen one.

M L: It's just a building, shed, any kind of a building, 'course the better insulated the better. But we used to have our ice-houses right over across the alley, right straight across here in a sheet iron building. You just build up your ice in the center and you pack that good with sawdust all around it. The sawdust is what kept it. You had to watch it awful close to see that your ice didn't get any air connections or it would melt. We'd get pretty well through the season with it. We'd have quite a shrinkage at the tail end, after you opened it up you had more shrinkage.

ROB: Yeah.

M L: We kept it in sawdust. We didn't have no refrigerator or refrigeration for it.

ROB: Right. Then you'd pack the ice in the meat wagon and pack meat boxes on top of that or what?

M L: You had the meat on trays and stuff and they had this ice underneath and this meat was all cut and put on trays. And they'd come up to you and buy and we had scales there that we weighed it on.

ROB: They bought by the pound rather than by the cut.

M L: Why sure, by the **pound**. Took me along to open gates.

MRS: What did a beef steak cost and everything?

M L: Every farmer...

Transcribed and typed by Sherrie Fields