

EUGENE SETTLE
Third Interview

Interviewed by:
Sam Schrager

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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EUGENE SETTLE

This third conversation with Eugene Setttle takes place underneath a big willow tree in the backyard at his home in Moscow, Idaho on August 4, 1975. The interviewer is Sam Schrager.

SAM SCHRAGER: Used to be all those orchards around here.

EUGENE SETTLE: Yeah, we used to have lots of orchards out here. Now, you take out here on Orchard Avenue, that runs out through there now; clear out there for two miles out there, and that was nothing but, _____, all orchards. And our place was just over from Orchard Avenue. We owned a place, that's where I grew up. And that was about 1912. I don't remember when they started-- it must have been right after World War I was when I think they started it. Early '20's. We used to have a vinegar plant here on North Main Street in the early days. In the fall of the year they hauled the apples in to this vinegar plant. They didn't sell 'em on the market, they just hauled 'em in, wagon loads of 'em, haul 'em in to the vinegar plant here. Seems like the ^{vinegar} plant burned down, I'm not sure about that. Got fire, and I don't think they never did repair it. It was right in there where the tractor company is there now. Right in there.

SS: Do you know where they sent that vinegar?

ES: No, I don't know where they did. I imagine they shipped it all over. I don't know. I don't know whether it was like the pea-- you see Moscow is supposed to be the dry pea capital of the world. And somebody was over in, I don't know whether it was Sweden or Norway and they bought some split peas and they was packaged here in Moscow. Then we used to have a flour mill down here. That had quite a wide range of flour. I know the fellows talk about buy^{ing} Blue Stem flour-- the flour they made was Blue Stem, they called it-- and a fellow said that he'd been up in

Montana, and said you could buy it up there just as cheap up there as you could right here at the mill. So since I put in about twenty years in the grain business I found out why they market like wheat-- if you go down to one of these grain elevators and sell a load of wheat and then you turn right around and buy two bushels of it back, to this cost, what you paid for it, the freight to the coast is added to the price of it. If you buy it back, why they add the freight to the coast, it's just up that much. And so that's the way it is. Well, the same way with-- When I was down in Virginia, I guess it was in '62, I went to a lumberyard down there, my brother he was doing some building, and this knotty pine lumber was cheaper down there, I could buy it cheaper down there than I could right here in Moscow.

SS: Do you think that the shipping trouble was a big problem? To get it to markets from here?

ES: Well, it cost 'em something to ship it down there and that was added to it. But I think in that ^{case} though, I believe that it was just the dealer margin was higher here, and you just get a bigger rakeoff here than down there.

SS: Was it Western white pine?

ES: Yeah. It may have come from ^{the} ^{mill,} Lewiston. That's why I priced it. Western white pine on the board there, and I asked 'em where it was from and he said it was shipped from Lewiston. And I asked 'em what the price of it was and ^{when I} come back home and priced it here, and it was cheaper-- it was a little cheaper than it was here.

SS: Do you remember where the markets were when your father was farming? Where they were shipping their grain to?

ES: I don't know where they were. But I imagine it was pretty much like it is now, because I know that when I was a little kid, they used to claim that Russia controlled the world wheat market. They ^{claim} when

russia had a big crop our prices were down in the States because we was competing with Russia. I guess it was the low cost of labor and one thing and another, like it is now. But I heard that, if they had a big crop in Russia, why to look out for us.

SS: By the way, have you heard anything from your daughter about that old records that you made out?

ES: No, I haven't. I wrote to her about it. We bought a car for our granddaughter and they was supposed to come after it around the first of this month, and I wrote and told 'em to bring it with her if she found that, but she hasn't showed up yet.

SS: Could you tell me any more on your grandfather, because we didn't talk about him hardly, because of that. And if you don't get that soon, I'd really like to know something about-- I know you didn't know him.

ES: No. I never knew my grandfather on my dad's side at all. And I don't remember my grandmother either. She was still alive when I was a baby but I don't remember her. I talked to my sister down there in Portland here about a month ago and she said she remembers her grandmother real well. I don't know whether she remembers my grandfather, my grandfather on my father's side or not. Of course, we left my grandfather's and grandmother's place, ^{to come out here,} when we left ^{that country} we came by and stopped at my mother's folks and waited for the arrival of one of my brothers before we came West. My father's people, I don't remember-- I remember one of his sisters-- we met his sisters when we were on our way out here, one of his sisters. And then I met one of his cousins, first cousins-- two of his cousins down in Los Angeles, I was down there in '52, I believe it was, visiting

SS: Do you know about how old he would have been when he got freed from slavery?

ES: How old he would have been?

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SS: Yeah.

ES: No, I don't have no idea how old he would have been when he was freed, I don't know. I am sure he was just a young man. I presume in his early twenties, I don't know about that.

SS: Do you think he stayed---

ES: I don't think my dad-- I never did hear him say how old his father was ~~was~~ in his twenties when he was born.

SS: Do you think he stayed in the same area, or did he go someplace else then?

ES: Well, after the Civil War ended, he was in North Carolina, and after the war ended, he got a job in a little ^{old} one-horse sawmill in the hills of North Carolina. I don't know what place it was, but that was his first job after he was a free man. He went to work in this sawmill in North Carolina. And my grandmother, she never was a slave because she was Indian. But she was kind of a little maid there for the sawmill owner, just to help ^{ed} around the house, and ^{she was kind of a mistress} took care of the kids. To look after the kids around there, I don't know how long she had been with them. But, anyway, that was her job, she lived there with them and took care of the kids.

SS: So that's where they met?

ES: Uh-huh. And then they married, and it seems they left there right away and went to Mississippi. I don't know what the attraction was to Mississippi to take 'em from North Carolina, but anyway, they went to Mississippi. And my mother lived not too far from Corinth, Mississippi, and they wasn't too far apart. And there they raised-- let's see I think there was-- I think there was about three boys and four or five girls in my father's family. And I know that he had one brother that was older than he, and I don't know how many sisters. Anyway, they was living in Mississippi. The family grew up there and raised their family

in Mississippi. And then after they had raised a big family there, that's when my grandmother, they was pretty old people, they must have been old people, then when she put in for her allotment in the Indian territory. And that was just about the time when my dad and mother married, a little before that, I guess. When my grandfather passed away out there, we went out there, my dad and mother, they went out there to live with my grandmother to take care of the place. And my sister was, I think she was pretty near two years old when they went out there, because I was born after they went out there.

SS: You were born in Oklahoma Territory?

ES: Yeah. I was born in the Territory.

SS: You think that your father went out maybe because your grandfather had died, to take care of your grandmother?

ES: Yeah. That's why he went out there. He went out on this place there. My sister was talking about it when ^{we} was down there-- He worked there, you see all the good land was taken by that time, because it was thrown open I think in 1868, I think. So about all the good land was taken, 'course there was oil on the place, ^{that she had there} but that wasn't even discovered until about 19--- must have been about '17 or '18 or maybe later than that. Anyway, my dad stayed there about a year or better when my grandmother died. He left the place-- he'd left it before my grandmother died. Just a rock pile, he called it, he couldn't make a living ^{there.} on . . . He had a good team and wagon, so he went to Arkansas; Fort Smith, Arkansas. Then my grandmother passed away and we went out there. And then from there-- that's what I told you about-- he heard about the great Northwest and he went West from there.

SS: You were telling me-- or mentioned that you did a lot of hunting in those days.

ES: Yes, he was quite a hunter. He had lots of hound dogs. I remember

when we was in Arkansas there, we lived -- he farmed along the Arkansas River, and he had I don't know how many dogs, he had ^{quite} a bunch of hounds and he hunted a lot. And then people'd come out from Fort Smith, businessmen and their wives would come out and pay him so much to take him his old dogs to go ^{coon hunting and} possum hunting along the Arkansas River bottom down there. And every so often a bunch would come out and go hunting at night. He was quite a hunter. And that's one thing that excited him about coming West, ^{we know}. He thought that there was lots of game out here.

SS: Did you go hunting with him very much when you were growing up here?

ES: Oh, yeah, we hunted here lots. He brought hounds out here with him. ^{all over Paradise Hill and back in the mountains here.} We used to hunt coyotes. We did lots of hunting after we come West, that is for coyotes. I don't believe he ever did go deer or elk hunting, he never did, I ton't think. He used to hunt coyotes.

SS: That sounds like that would be pretty hard kind of hunting to me. Those coyotes are pretty wily animals.

ES: Yeah they are. But we'd get after 'em with dogs, and the idea was, after the dogs'd get after one, you get out on some point or another and wait for 'em to bring 'em around in gunshot reach. Sometimes they'd take 'em clear out of the country, sometimes the coyote'd run in a circle, in different ways, you know. I know, my dad, he hunted ^{he used} with his dogs he never had nothing but a shotgun and ^{number six shot,} so you know you gotta get pretty close to kill ^{an animal} with number six shot. But he just kinda learned how to--. A lot of Moscow guys used to get ^{and days} my dad to go out hunting, and they used to come out on Saturdays ^{in the} wintertime and chase coyotes. It was quite a sport then. Then different ones around here, ^{they} got different dogs-- I don't know whether you heard of the Weekses or not, they were Southerners and they had hounds and they did lots of hunting. Henry Weeks, I don't know whether he's

the last of that generation, he had hounds, I don't know whether he's still got any or not. I haven't seen him for a long time. He always had dogs.

SS: When you would go hunting, would you go for a day, or would you camp out?

ES: No, just go for a day. 'Course I was about the only member of our family that went deer and elk hunting. I used to do that and go up in the Selway on the Lochsa River. We'd go up there in the fall of the year and camp out for a week at a time, there in the woods, hunt elk and deer. The last elk and deer I hunted-- well, I've hunted 'em just around here quite a little bit. You take Joel out there, south of Joel's, south and west of Joel back up in there. That's pretty good-- those whitetail deer, they're kind of a-- they're not a domesticated deer, but you might find a whitetail deer out here in some farmer's field, up along the creek where there's brush, you know. They're kind of an open country animal, you're liable to catch ^{them} any place. They have come right downtown in Moscow here. You can see their prints in that store right across-- down Washington Street on the building, right on the corner of Washington -- Third and Washington, right across from the post office there. The store, Oberg's used to own it there. One come down and got on Washington Street there and they tried to hem it up there and it tried to climb ^{one side of} that building, and it's hoof marks are in that-- on the corner of that building there, where that deer tried to get away. Yeah, there have been several right here in Moscow. About two years ago there was a deer right out here south of town out there by that implement snowmobile dealers out there. And then come out there and went out there towards the cemetery just between town and the cemetery there. A fellow tried to shoot it right out there by the fairgrounds. I guess that was the winter we had--

in '70, I believe, '72-- '71 or '72. '71, I guess that was the first winter I had lost my legs.

SS: Did you do much with your brothers when you were growing up?

ES: Oh, yeah. We did lots of hunting, chased around. You take it on week-ends, we was all in school the four of us, on Saturdays why we'd all get our guns --- we was quite outdoorsmen, all of us. We liked Chased around a lot. the outdoors, liked the hills. We did lots of hunting. We didn't hang around town too much, til we was pretty well grown. We just liked the outdoors and we all had horses and travel around.

SS: I wanted to ask you about the sports that they did in school.

ES: Well, there was only two of us boys, myself and my second brother; we were the only ones that you might say took part in sports in school. When I was in high school I was on the track team and I played some football, but of course, I was awful small, I was about fourth stringer, I didn't play very much, but I played some football. And then my brother next to me-- my second brother-- he was on the Moscow High School track team. And then I had a nephew that was on the high school football team when they won the state champions. And then he played freshman football up here at the university and then he got hurt and then he didn't do it anymore. My younger brother, and the one next to me, they never took no part in any sports in high school or otherwise.

SS: Was track your favorite?

ES: Yes, it was.

SS: What was it like-- sports those days when you were going to school? I mean like for track? Did you guys have uniforms and go around and play the schools?

ES: Yeah. Uh-huh. When I was in high school-- the Moscow High School was track just beginning to come to it's own in because up until 1912- til

they built the Whitworth-- on the same side as the Methodist Church
 there-- that was built in 1912 and ^{that's when} I started there. And up until that
 time there was one building there that had the junior high and high
 school and I don't know how many smaller grades, was in the same build-
 all
 ing, see, because practically ^{all} the kids in those days, up until 1912
 they had a Prep ^{dep't.} at the University and they all went up there, you see.
 So the high school didn't even amount to much until they built the new
 high school. And ^{when} they built the new high school and then they cut out
 the Prep department at the University there, and so the kids they had
 to go to high school ^{here:} but before that, when they had the Prep depart-
 ment at the University there, when they finished the eighth grade why you'd
 go there and you'd take you four years of high school and then go right
 on through college, right there on the hill. But when they built this
 new high school, then they cut the Prep department out. ^{That's when I came in.} And so they
 just started an athletic program when I started, just begin^{ing} to take
 hold. I know in football, why, we had to furnish our own uniforms.
 And then, of course, after that, athletic^s began to grow in then, of course, they^{got}
 athletic ^{departments.} Of course it's a big deal now. They have everything, they
 have football and track and wrestling, tennis, lots of sports, the whole
 category of sports.

SS: What did you compete in?

ES: I was a distance runner. I held the high school record for the mile,
 for I don't know how many years. Anyway, my brother, he broke it while
 I was in the Service.

SS: At least, it stayed in the family.

ES: Yeah, uh-huh. In those days, you did pretty good if you run a mile in
 five minutes, that was pretty good. I think the record I set in high
 school was 5:05, I ran it a little better than that ~~at~~ one time, but I

wasn't in competition. I was running with the--the kids was running the 880 and the half mile and they run me in the 880 with them, and then they ran with me in the mile. That's when I had my best record, but 'course that wasn't competition then. It was 5:03 something. But the record I set was 5:05. 'Course they run the mile now -- they run it in 3:- something now!! (Chuckles) So you see, it wasn't very fast!! Had lots of fun though.

SS: Did you do a lot of---? (End of side A) (cassette)

ES: In the wintertime, we started early in the spring-- you see we didn't have no regular coach. They didn't hire a high school football or track coach-- they got some junior or senior at the University to work us out. The athletic program wasn't much. They didn't even have their own coach, they just got a kid from the University, junior or senior at the University to handle it. And they fixed it so in the early spring, why we'd go up to the University on certain evenings and use the girls' gym up there for our training indoors, in the wintertime. And we did our other training up on the University field. Of course, we played our football down here at Gormanley Park, down on West Sixth Street there, that's where we played football, down there.

SS: Do you think that sport was as important to the school then as it is now?

ES: Well, as I say, when I started there, it wasn't very important. But, of course, they built up from there, and it is very important at the present time. But it didn't amount to much when I started to high school. Because all the kids went to the University up there. There was nobody there to--until they built the high school from 1912 they started building up and by the time my nephew got in high school, why it was a big deal then. And then we played-- well, we played schools like Colfax and all these little one-- Troy and

horse towns, Genesee. 'Course, now, Moscow it plays on a different league altogether, they don't play nobody smaller than Lewiston. They play Lewiston and the Spokane High Schools and Coeur d'Alene and places like that; but when I went to high school, we played Oakesdale, all these little town around here, Colfax and Troy, wherever they had a high school.

SS: Seems like now-a-days they're big community events, too.

ES: Yes, you bet they are. You bet they're big community events.

SS: I wonder, did you have a lot of fans come along to root in those days?

ES: No, in those days, it wasn't nothing more than the student bodies. Oh, unless we had kind of a interstate track meet. Now, we had the District Track Meet-- like we had at Lewiston. The first time I was ever in Lewiston, I was down there for a track meet, that was in 19-- the spring of 1913. The Lewiston track meet. They had schools there from Boise -- That was a big event down there then. And I ran with a kid down there on the Lewiston Normal ^{Hill} -- Lewiston Normal is the State College now-- he was from Grangeville in 1913, and in 1919-- and then on May the 30th 1919 I ran with him in Paris. We ran at a relay race from Chateau-Thierry to Paris, that's fifty miles. And we had about twenty-five guys on each team, and the team I was on, I ran the last two miles, and my last two miles took me right in the heart of Paris, because we finished at the Arch of Triumph, in Paris. And I ran the last two miles right down the streets in Paris. The main streets of Paris. This kid was with me.

SS: You say that's the first time you'd ever been to Lewiston?

ES: Yeah, 1913.

SS: I guess kids didn't travel around very much in those days.

those days, remember.

ES: Well, in those days there wasn't any cars, You went horseback or you went in a buggy, drove a team. My second automobile ride, was I came

from Lewiston, from that track meet, I rode back to Moscow with a kid-- his dad was -- worked for an implement company down here in Moscow, set^{up} set^{up} machinery, and he had an old Model T Ford that he went around to set^{up} farm machinery with. And he came down to the track meet in that old Ford Roadster and his son and I rode back with him. That was my second ride in an automobile. And my folks got their first automobile in the fall of 1919 after I got back from WWI. That's when I learned to drive a car in 1919. They bought a car.

SS: Do you remember that second ride you took? Was that up the Lewiston Hill?

SS: The Lewiston Hill, uh-huh.

SS: I imagine that must have been thrilling.

ES: I'll say so. Well, you know, going down the hill where that spring is down along-- there used to be a little store sit there. And in the early days, the first of the Model T Fords, they used to have to get up that high and then they'd have to change the carburetor on 'em. (Chuckles) Fill 'em up with water again and change the carburetor on 'em. Thin it down or open it up, I forget^{but} what, the old Model T Fords, you pretty near had to stop there and change the carburetor.

SS: They had to reset 'em.

ES: Yeah, reset 'em. I don't know what they did, whether they opened them up or closed 'em.

SS: High altitude.

ES: High altitude, yeah, that's what it was. I remember they used to get up that high and they'd just be some of 'em steaming, 'course that was after that. Just be aboiling coming up that hill, and there was no five percent grade there like it is now, some of it was pretty steep. And it was just every so often along there that you could-- a

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place where you could pass anybody.

SS: What do you think that people thought of cars when they first came in?

ES: Well, I'll tell you--

SS: Did the people think they were here to stay or did they think--?

ES: Well, I guess-- I know one thing when they first came in, they figured there was just certain times when you could drive 'em, because you see there was no rock roads or no paved roads or nothing, it was all dirt road. In the summertime the dust'd get that deep and when it rained, why, it was muddy and slick and they couldn't drive. When the cars come in then the road improvement program started. That's what brought our good roads was the cars. They got to rocking 'em and sanding 'em, and then they got to paving 'em, course that's what brought good roads. And then when Roosevelt got in, he started-- he really hit it on ^{this road program} he started what they called farm to market roads program. The first time I rode in a car to Spokane, there wasn't no pavement from here to Spokane, it was dirt road all the way, that was was a Model A Ford. I never will forget it, there was a kid lived-- a bunch of us young men went up to Spokane to file on some land over around the Moses Lake area over in that dry country. We went over to register for ^{the} a drawing, and I didn't go up with 'em, I went up on the train and I met these fellows there. They lived over here ^{the hills} near Blaine and one of 'em's dad was pretty well fixed, and he brought four of 'em up in his dad's old Model A Ford-- Model T Ford--I guess it was. And so I met 'em in Spokane, and they liked me to ride back with them. So I came back with 'em; five of us came back in that Model T Ford. And I think it took us pretty near half a day to come from Spokane out here in that thing. I don't think we traveled over twenty miles an hour, maybe twenty-five. But I know we was on the road a long time. But that was my first long ride in a ^{was} car, from Spokane to Moscow.

SS: Did you get seasick?

ES: No.

SS: The first time in a car, I can't imagine what I would think, anyway if I was already grownup. A brand new experience for those days.

ES: Well, my first ride in a car-- we lived way out here in the country, and we went to a country school here, and diphtheria broke out in the school, and so they closed the school down til they got all the kids vaccinated. That's when I got my first ride. The doctor come out, the fellows that run Gritmann Hospital down there then, he came up and vaccinated us kids and the neighbor¹ kids down there, We kind of lived off the main drag, and after he vaccinated us, he give us a ride up the road about a mile in his car. That was my first time in a car-- I don't know but that was the first car I ever saw. 'Course I lived out in the boondocks, I never come to town, hardly, very seldom only for a circus or something. And he loaded us all up, took us all up the road, for a couple of miles. He had the brakes out on the running board, maybe the shift was out there-- no, no, I guess the shift wasn't out there, the shift was down in front, I guess. I know there was the emergency brake and things out on the running board. And the runningboard had a big tool box on it. (Laughter) That was my first ride, that was my first time in a car. That might have been the first time I^d ever seen one.

SS: Was that a bad epidemic? That diphtheria?

ES: Yeah, it was pretty bad. Some of those kids come up with the diphtheria and so they closed the school.

SS: Was it in your country school?

ES: Yes. They closed the school until all the kids that were going there was vaccinated. And the doctor come out there. I know when he was out to our place, he vaccinated three families up where we were, close to where we were. I don't know ^{when} they vaccinated the rest of 'em,

whether they took 'em to town or what.

SS: Did the boy die?

ES: I don't remember, I don't think so though, I don't think he died. He was pretty sick but I don't think he died.

SS: Did they shut the school down for a long time?

ES: No, not for very long. I don't remember how long it was. Seems to me like they-- the kids got vaccinated and then it seems to me like they disinfected the school, then they fumigated the school, and then they let us come back to school. Oh, probably a week. I don't remember. Those are the good old days.

SS: Diphtheria in the school.

ES: Diphtheria in the school. I believe that's the only time that I remember anything broke out there in the school, where they closed it, in the country school. Or any epidemic.

SS: There was that bad flu epidemic at the -- during World War I.

ES: During World War I, yeah, the flu. Yeah, that was about 1918, 'cause I was in France. My folks all had it, all except my mother. My brother next to me, he was the one that brought it home. He came home with it and he just about died, too. They thought sure they was gonna lose him. And then they all got down ^{ok}, except my mother.

SS: Were they still able to take care of themselves during that time?

ES: No,-- then we had a neighbor down this way from us- he was a Methodist minister and they run a little one-horse laundry, down about a mile between us and town. And he came up there and got the ^{ir} laundry, took it down there and did the laundry for Mother. Then there was a fellow that worked for my dad on his haybaler, just a transient, and he was coming through the country. And, well, of course, he figured, "I go out to Settle's and I'll get a meal or two." ^{Before he moved on.} He went out there and my mother wouldn't let him in the house, she told him, "We ^{was} all down

with the flu.** And he asked 'em, "Well, who's taking care of the stock?" We had four or five horses and three or four cows out there on the place. And she said, "The neighbors come up and take care of 'em." ^{and bring the milk to the door.} "Well," he says, "you tell Mr. Settle if he'll give me enough money so I can buy me a quart of moonshine whiskey, I'll come out here and stay and take care of the -- do the chores for you." She says, "You can't stay in the house." "Well," he says, "Just so I get some old blankets and something so I can sleep up there in the hay." And so she went in and talked to Dad. So Dad give him some money, and he went downtown and, I don't know where he got it, but he got him some whiskey and he stayed out there in the barn. And Mother would cook his breakfast and meals for him and give 'em to him. He'd take 'em from the door, he'd go out and eat 'em outside. ~~They~~ wouldn't allow him in the house. He stayed there for-- 'til I think my dad got on his feet, one of the boys anyway, 'til they ^{to} got ^{to} take care of theirselves.

SS: How badly were----?

ES: And he left and we never did see him again. And the folks often wondered-- he was heading down towards Lewiston where it's warmer-- and they often wondered-- he coulda went down there in the Lewiston Jungles and got the flu and maybe died. They never did see him anymore. Never did hear from him.

SS: They must have really appreciated that he did that.

ES: Uh-huh. Yeah, they worried about that guy quite a little bit, talked about it many times afterwards, wondered what ever became of him. They always would have liked to heard from him, found out about him. 'Course, He'd been up to Spokane; he was he was just a tramp-- a transient. ~~He headed~~ down for the lower country, they called it- down to Lewiston, down that way, where it's warmer. They wondered-- probably went on down there, and after he left us, maybe got the flu and he may have died, but we never did hear.

SS: And he worked for your father many times before that?

ES: No, just worked for him that fall. That summer before on this haybaler. ^{always had}
He worked for him that summer while they was baling hay and they [^]baled straw late in the fall. But he worked just through the haying and he didn't-- and then he left there when hay season was over-- he left there and went over in the Yakima country to take in apple harvest. And then that winter he was heading for Lewiston, down to the valley down there where it was warmer, I think it was in November, that's when he stopped ^{thought he'd} there, [^]come out to the folks to get a meal or two before he went on.

SS: How long were they down with that?

ES: I don't remember, they must have been down a couple of weeks, or maybe longer. Some of 'em longer than that. Seems like my dad, ^{ones that had it lighter, some} he had it worse than others. My brother next to me, he had it the worst of ^{an} any of 'em. They didn't think he was going to make it. But my dad and my other brother, I don't think they had it too heavy, didn't really have it too heavy. I imagine a week or ten days, before they could get out and kinda help themselves.

SS: Was your mother able to nurse the family?

ES: Yeah, she took care of 'em; all of 'em. As I say, this family that ~~ran~~ the handlaundry down there, they always come up every day and got the sheets and bedding, kept the laundry up for her. She didn't have nothing like that to do. That's all she had to do. And then til this guy come along, he'd come up in the morning and feed the stock and she'd set the milk bucket out on the porch and he'd go and milk the cows and then bring it back and set it on the porch there for her. And then this guy come along and he took care of it.

SS: That swept through the whole country.

ES: Yes, it sure did. Lots of people died here in Moscow, that epidemic.

SS: Did you hear about all the military boys stationed here that got the

flu~~q~~ during that time? I heard they got it really bad.

ES: No, I don't-- They had a unit here at the University. I know there was a couple of kids, I think we used to be ² ⁵ ~~little kid~~ ⁶ together-- one of the boys died up here during that time, at the University up here. Kid by the name of Clyde Madison. And I think there was several of 'em died up here at the University. But I don't know in ^{the} other camps, and I don't remember-- like Camp Lewis and those places-- I don't know whether it was bad out in those places or not. I don't remember. I know we didn't have it in France. I had it, I think it was the first or second winter I was home -- after I got home, I had it. But not very bad.

SS: Were there many guys passing through the country who were tramps like him?

ES: Oh, yes, yes, there was. ^{Lot's of 'em here} Lots of 'em. ⁶ You go out ⁶ in this country or if you lived along by the railroad track, you'd see the fellows with packs on their backs. Lots of tramps. You see a freight train going through, why, there was usually two or three tramps on the top. Lots of tramps. Used to be a farmer come to down during harvest time, looking for a man to work, he'd go down along the jungle, down along the railroad tracks, you could pick up a good man. They just kind of followed the harvest around, you know, and they'd camp out down along the railroad tracks. Most of the time, you know, there'd be a dozen men down there, camped along the bank of the railroad track down there, ^{hippies.} Of course, once in a while you see 'em packing. Of course these transients. But now, there's no freight trains for 'em to ride. ^{kid} Times go better. When I was a ^{kid} even way ^{every so often} off out in the country, ^{some bum} come to the door looking for a handout of some kind.

SS: Did people usually give it to them, or turn 'em away?

ES: Well, my mother was pretty good about that. If she had something, she'd always give 'em a sandwich or something. Some would offer to cut wood

or split wood or something.

SS: I wanted to ask you, 'Gene, a few more things about racial prejudice. I've heard about it and that it existed around here. I know it did, and I figured that what you would have seen or experienced here would have been a good measure of whether and how much there was. You said to me the last time I was here that it was worse in the old days than it is now.

ES: Yeah, it was worse in the old days than it is now. But, of course,-- as I was raised out in my case I grew up on a farm, you might say-- a kid on a farm, and went to a country school, and of course, naturally, it isn't like being when you hobnob with so many different kids. in town. I came to high school here though, I was the only black in the school system at that time. And, of course, when I came into school, all eyes were on me. And it wasn't long before some of the kids were would speak to me, while others would just kind of shy around me like -- But ^{was} it a very short time, I guess they found out that I was just like anybody else, only my skin was dark. ^{Why then,} The kids started falling in with me and I was very popular while I was in high school. They invited me to turn out for football. I didn't know nothing about football. I turned out for football and then in the spring I turned out for track. I played basketball a little-- that is interclass. But I never did play basketball too much, too small. ^(End of side B) But whether or not if I'd went into different restaurants and been turned down or not, hotels of a night whether I'd abeen turned down or not, I can't say, because I never had that experience.

SS: When you left the area-- let's say you went other places or left Moscow was it any different? I don't mean in France, just around here.

ES: I know what you mean. Well, to tell the truth about it, I never went anywhere. Now, like when I was in high school I went with the track team. And I guess Lewiston was about the only place I went then

where we stayed all night.

SS: Do you think that you would have to prove yourself more than a white would because you were different?

ES: Well, ^{Sam} that's true to this day, ^{now-} in this respect. Say for instance-- on the job market. Say you and I applied for a job. Well, the only way that I would have a chance against you of getting this job, is that I had a far superior record than you had. ~~It~~ On the other basis, if I was inexperienced and you was inexperienced, why, of course, I wouldn't get-- you would get the job. But if I had a record ^{very} superior to yours, why, I would probably get the job over you. But if we went in on ^{course naturally} the same level, ^{of} I'd be the guy they'd turn down. You take the black man today, he's got to have usually a superior record-- outstanding record before he has any chance at all against a white man on the same level.

SS: Can you ever remember running into that up here?

ES: No; after I finished high school I took my first-- a business course ^{the first} year in ^{asked} commercial bookkeeping. I tried several places here in Moscow, ⁱⁿ different places for a chance to get a job, but I never had no luck getting any work. 'Course, I don't remember many of the kids in my class that did get any ^{work}. But I just tried out a time or two for work, but I never got any work. 'Course they didn't tell me it was on account of my color, but they just told me they didn't have anything for me. There was some people thought that I was so well known around Moscow that I might have a pretty good chance of getting a job. But I didn't get anything. But as I say, I don't remember any of the kids in my class that graduated that did go to work around Moscow at the time. Maybe they did. I think there was two of the girls went to work for the telephone company, such as that.

SS: When was this?

ES: That was just before World War I. And after I come back from the army, ^{the} there was no GI Bill, like they got now for ^{the} returning veterans. And so, after a year or two I decided-- There was a doctor in Spokane, colored doctor, black man, he was a meat inspector, and besides that he

was a-- he took Civil Service exams and then he got to be a railway mail clerk. And he came into Moscow a time or two, and I never met him down here, I met him in Spokane after that. And a friend of mine was working in the post office, and he was telling me about this fellow, this black man was a railway mail clerk running out of Spokane down to Moscow. And so I just thought, well, by golly, there is a chance for me, I might get me a job, going into Civil Service. It's no discrimination. ^{I studied} I went to the library and got Civil Service books and started brushing up on it, And I took the examination. ^{Of course} at that time I was going with my wife here. After I took the examination, I told ^{had} her wife about it, what I did, and I thought she'd be very happy about it. But on the contrary, she didn't like the idea because she said, "If you go on the railroad you'll be gone half or two-thirds of the time, you won't be home, you'll be gone." And she said, "I would and went to farming, and then she said," we can much rather that we rent a farm, and make it together." So I rented a farm that fall, and then the next summer we was married. And I guess it was a month or six weeks after we was married I got my call, but I turned it down. And a kid that took this examination with me the same time, he got his call. And he went, just like I was supposed to do, I was supposed to report to Spokane ^{terminal}. And he went to Spokane and they kept him around the terminal there just ^{for} a short while, you know, then they put him on a run. He made two trips up to, I believe it was Cutbank, Montana and back, and ^{then} they thought they'd put him in the terminal, and he put in his whole time ^{at Spokane} in Spokane, right there at the terminal, he retired there. Just made two trips on the railroad and then he worked in the terminal the rest of the time. I don't suppose I'd a been that lucky ^{he was} but he. He made just two trips up to Cutbank, Montana, went up one day and back the next, and then they put him to work ^{ing} in the terminal.

SS: That was where you sorted the mail out on the train when it was---?

Yeah, that's when the trains carried so much mail, every train had a mail clerk on it, every passenger train had a mail clerk on it. 'Course the mail come into the terminal. He's told me that, some of the guys come in there that-- never was on the-- took the examination for mail clerk and they got a job in the terminal and they never did have to go on the road, stayed right there. So I might have been that lucky too, and then, I may not. But, anyway, my wife she didn't like it, so I never ^{ed} follow through with it.

SS: Well, do you think then that because you were living in the country and farming most of the time that that meant that you were protected from having to put up with things?

ES: I think I missed a lot of prejudice and discrimination. I think I did. Well, I ~~knin~~ ⁱⁿ I did, because ^{I know I did, because, now you take} fact of the matter, my daughter, she went to school in the country and then she went to school in Genesee, and then she finished up here at Moscow ^{High and} ~~at~~ the University and all that. And she went to California and applied for a job as a teacher. She got a job as a teacher in the Berkeley schools and she was in her 20's and her, herself, she didn't experience so much discrimination, but she could see it like ^{that} she had never saw it before, she could see it in action in the city. And she got her first eyes open ^{about so much discrimination} after she left home and went to the city, ^{that's when} ~~then~~ she found out. And of course, the way she was situated, she didn't notice it so much, but she could see it in action from where she was at. It kind of opened her eyes to the fact. Of course before ^{she got there} ~~that~~ discrimination wasn't noticeable to her. As soon as she got out of Moscow, got away from home, why then she could see it. Before that the most she knew about it was what she could read and hear. She really saw it in action when she got away from home ^{to} in the big city.

SS: But, for instance, when you were thinking about your career and what

wanted to do-- well, you had to take that into consideration that you had to-- you'd want to find something where you wouldn't be-- have a better chance of getting-ahead,

ES: That's the way about the Civil Service business. I suppose that if I had a got a -- that's supposed to be graded on ^{your} the exams-- I don't think, now I don't remember, but I know I had -- my wife's cousin, he got a good job on the highway patrol in California, and he told me; when he went in, took the examination, he said you didn't have to put ^{down} on race, ^{you see} so they didn't know what you was. I don't remember, ~~I don't know~~ whether I did on my examation, ^{up there or not, whether I} had to put on the race or not. 'Course, I didn't take it but once, but the fellow that give it to me said, "Well, if you don't get a high enough grade ^{to get a call} the first time, try it again." He said, "You'll make it after while." "Try it again til you get your grade up ^{when you get your grade up at the top, high enough,} there ^{at the top,} you'll get a call."

SS: Like among the young people that you knew when you were growing up out in the country-- I imagine, like you say, when you went to school, they all knew that you were black. Did they rib you about it, or joke about it?

ES: No. Very seldom. ~~The line-of~~ Color was very seldom brought up among the kids. Seems like the first jolt is the worst one. Seems like when they find out-- just as ^{if} to say, "Well, by golly, he's just like anybody else, only his skin's black." Seems like when they found that out, why they-- that kind of took care of it. Of course, there was some that actually never would like me on that account, because my face was black, but they were so far outnumbered, it wasn't noticeable ^{any noisy} No, and after I left the farm down here, I got a job in ^{the} warehouse-- No, I worked a year down at Portland down in the defense plant, and then I come home and got a job working in the elevator. And I worked out

^{at}
 there as Joel; that elevator, there's where I started in there.
 And I worked that one season, then that season, the fellow that was the
 foreman that plant out there, he quit, he had a farm down there, he
 quit, and the manager of the Latah County Graingrowers, he gave me the
 job, as foreman. Well, that caused a little hard feelings, 'cause there
 was fellows that'd been there longer than I had, you see, and he passed
 over them and gave it to me. So that's discrimination in reverse. That
 caused a little hard feelings but it didn't last long. Then I worked
 down there as foreman in that place of business. Then the bookkeeper
 for the outfit, the assistant manager-- the manager, he quit and the
 assistant manager, he moved up to the top. When the board of directors
 met to elect a manager, they offered him the job and he said, "I'll take
 the job under one consideration." They wanted to know what it was. He
 said, "If you'll let me have a warehouse foreman, a superintendent to
 look after the warehouse." Well, they didn't see nothing wrong with
 that. And they wanted to know who did he want, and he told 'em me.
 And that made some of 'em's eyes pop out, but they told him, "Well, go
 ahead." And I got the job. Then I worked at the job for about, I guess
 I was there about sixteen years, ^{as} warehouse superintendent. And I had
 as high as twenty-five or thirty men working for me at one time, ^{through the hardest months.} I had
 a warehouse in Moscow, Joel, (?) Troy, Deary, Potlatch, Viola and Estes.
 And so he ^{furnished} got me a pickup, and that's all I did -- I had about as high
 as twenty-five or thirty men on ^{my} payroll.

SS: You were the supervisor over all?

ES: I was the supervisor over all of 'em. I did all the firing and hiring.
 But I had a good boss, he had confidence in me.

SS: What did you think of that work? Of being a supervisor?

ES: Well, I liked it. I'd been a sergeant in the army, I was used to hand-
 ling men. I think I was pretty good at handling men. And to tell the

truth about it, there might have been fellows that didn't like me, didn't care to have a black supervisor-- well, ^{if it was a problem,} they could quit. And I never had no trouble ^{with} keepin' men. Of course, there was one thing about me, when a man come to ^I asked me for a job, I never cut him off at the pockets. I says, "Give me your telephone number, ^{or} ~~and~~ where I can locate you. I'm full handed today, but tomorrow I might be short a man. So you tell me where I can locate you." I never did tell a man, "No, I didn't have ^{nothin'} ~~not~~. I just -- I ^{'d} asked him for his telephone number or where I could reach him if I needed anyone. I never had no trouble with ^{keeping} ~~the~~ men. I always had one or two men standing by where I could go get 'em, if I needed 'em. I had very little trouble. Of course, now I figured that was on account of my boss. If anybody went to him about anything he says, "You go to 'Gene, he's your boss, you go to him." And he never went over my decisions. If I dropped a man, sent a man to the office ^{with} ~~for~~ his time, why, there was no questions asked. He just got his check and that was it. He never went over my head. If I made the decision in my part of the business, why, that was it.

SS: What'd be the kind of difficulty that would make you fire a man?

ES: What?

SS: What would be the kind of reason that you'd have to fire a man?

ES: ^{There's very few fellows that I fired. There's some that get} Well, ^{carelessness} -- I don't believe there was over one or two in my fifteen-sixteen years or twenty years that I was with the outfit there-- I don't think that I never did just fire a man but once that I remember-- we're through with 'em, I fired three guys in one shot. I just told 'em I couldn't use 'em any longer. But if I wanted to get rid of a man I usually laid him off. I didn't just walk up and tell him, "You're fired! Take your time to the office." Only that one instance, and these were transient boys.

SS: Were they stealing from the company or something?

ES: Huh?

SS: Were they stealing or something?

ES: No. These kids, they had been over in the Yakima country and they were Mexican boys, there was four of 'em. And they come in and they was looking for a job and they went down to the main office down there and the boss said, "Well, I don't know, I'll check with my foreman if I can get ^{aholt} ~~aholt~~ of him and see if he needs any help." And so he got aholt of me at Troy, and he told me about these kids, he says, "They're inexperienced, but if you want to split 'em up with the other boys maybe you can get by with them, maybe they'll be alright." And I told him to send 'em out to Joel and I'll go on up there ^{can use} ~~Said I can use~~ some help up there at Joel ^{at Joel} piling peas. So I went up there and these kids come up here and they ~~was--~~ they had on old oxfords, ^{didn't have} ~~they had~~ no shoes. And so I split 'em up with the guys, I think I had about five men out there and I put 'em in with different fellows handling sacks. And, they wasn't used to handling nothing like a hundred and twenty-five pound sacks of peas, like we was handling then. That's where I wanted 'em, up in the peas. They wasn't used to that and they didn't like that. And their hands got--

SS: And their hands got--what?

ES: They thought it was too hard on their hands, and then they had on ~~those~~ ^{low} ~~low~~ oxfords, and they'd get peas in their shoes. And the other fellows ^{on the crew,} they got awful disgusted with 'em. And so, when night come, they didn't have no money, they didn't have no place to stay. So, I brought 'em to town and I took 'em up there to-- I was good for their dinner. So I told 'em, "Well, I'll tell you fellows," I says, "you'll have to do better'n you did this afternoon, or I don't think I can use you anymore." And there's two of 'em-- "Well," he says, -- they was complaining about ^{to know if I'd} their shoes and they wanted buy 'em some shoes. Well, I told 'em

I couldn't do that. And, I says, "I'm sure the company wouldn't stand for me to buy shoes for you." ^{Two of 'em} They said, "We're gonna see if we can get some lighter work, that's pretty heavy work for us." I says, "Ok, you fellas I'll pick you up in the morning around here, ^{at} anyone that wants to work". So, the next morning, I don't know where they stayed, and anyway the next morning I took 'em back out there; give 'em their assignments. ^{they'd} And he'd always come to me agrumbling, ^{about that and the other} this ~~man that was~~ complaining about this and that and the other, that the guys was giving 'em the heavy end of the work and all this. So I just said, "Well, I'll tell you, go get in the pickup and I'll take you to town." So I loaded 'em up ^{and brought} 'em. ^{And that's about} 'em on ^{the} into town. ^{And got rid of} ~~there~~ the only guys that I just outright canned. ^(End of side C) Then I had a father and son working for me. He figured 'cause his dad was working there, working for me, he figured if I fired him his dad would quit too, and that would throw me shorthanded. So in the evening when it got time to go home I told him, I says, "Lester, I'm gonna lay you off, and if I need you anymore, I'll call you." He knew I needed him. "If I need you," I said, "I'll give you a call." And so the next morning he didn't show up and neither did his dad. So it went on that way, ^{until} and before the end of the season was over, then his dad come back and wanted to know if I'd put him back on. So I did. He come back and finished the season for me. But as far as just losing my temper and going out and canning a guy, I never ^{ever did.} did.

SS: Do you have, 'Gene, any idea about your method of handling men? How you think you-- as supervisor a guy should---

ES: Well, that's one good thing about my men-- if the men had a gripe about working conditions or anything like that, why, I would take their gripe to the headman, to the company. ^{I'd ask 'em what they was growling about.} I'd go to bat for 'em, ^{about} I'd take it up with the company, I'd go to bat for 'em. And I figured that ^{was} a part of my duty. If the guys had a legitimate gripe about working conditions,

why, sure. That's one thing I did. Another thing, -- no man ever came to me and asked for a job that I just cut him right off at the pockets. I'd say, "I'm fullhanded today, but I may be short tomorrow. So if you'll give me your phone number or where can I reach you?"--- And you take in the summer-- summertime was hot-- when I come through town, sometimes I'd pick up ^{case of} some cold drinks or a watermelon or something like that and go out and take it out to 'em, and take ^{they'd} the time ^{out} off and eat ^{eat a} a watermelon or have a cold drink, or something like that. But I never did take no beer out, nothing like that out. (noisy) In other words, I always tried to do what was right by the guys, ^{way} and that's the same in the army, I was a sergeant in the army. I wasn't tough, but if I give an order I stayed put until ^{I saw} that order was carried out. And therefore, they didn't take me for no joke, when I give an order. 'Course, I was ^{'em} some of 'em pretty small, and they didn't like that, they didn't figure they had to, but they found out they did. They had to take my order just the same as if I was big as the side of that building. So all in all, I didn't have too much ^{Very few people,} much trouble with the men, people, anybody. I never had any trouble with people. 'Course, One thing why I got along with the boys in the army as well as I did, or anywhere, I didn't let those three stripes go to my head. Some of 'em, they get ^{three stripes, where you'd think they was running the whole army.} three stripes, where you'd think they was running the whole army.

SS: I was wondering, too, whether your parents gave you any instructions or taught you any ways of dealing with racial prejudices of you ran into it.

ES: No. I don't think we never-- they never coached us along those lines. I think that when we ran into it, we dealt with it in our own way. I don't remember of my folks ever-- But I know one thing that my folks was particular about us kids coming up-- when we was little kids-- if we had any trouble in school or coming from school with kids-- complain- ing to 'em -- this kid did so-and-so to me. The first thing that they'd want to know -- "What did you do?" "What did you do to start this ^{instance?}"

They always wanted to know both sides of the deal. Whether it was our fault or it wasn't. I know that's one thing they wanted to find out about. But they was ^{always} ~~yes~~ this way, they always warned us kids about fighting. They didn't want us to start no fight, and they didn't want us to run if it was pushed onto us. They didn't want us to start no fight. Now that's one thing about the Settle boys; there was four of us, and we were all pretty handy with the gloves. 'Cause we had gloves hanging on the back porch and gloves hanging in the barn. And we had arguments between each other, we says, "Ok, we'll get the gloves." That's the way we settled our disputes, and we didn't get mad either. Sure used to knock hell out of each other, to settle arguments, but there was no mad; (Chuckles) 'cause, when first a fellow give us a pair of gloves for Christmas, and my dad told us then, he says, "Well, I don't want these gloves to get you boys into trouble. I don't care how much you use them ^{on each other}. But if I ever hear of you -- catch any of you, using 'em-- getting mad with them on, they go in the stove."

SS: Getting mad with them on?

No sir.

ES: Yeah. He says, "If you want to go out and have fun with them-- but if you to using start ~~se~~ the gloves and getting mad, when you got those gloves on, they'll go in the stove." Or if I ever hear of you starting a fight, ^{with the gloves on,} they'll go in the stove." My dad meant what he said, too. We sure used to do some awful slugging each other, knock each other around with those gloves on.

SS: Were you close enough to the same age and size that it wasn't too unfair?

ES: Yeah. I was about the smallest one, but I wasn't the smallest one when it come to using the gloves.

SS: Would you fight in rounds, or would you just put 'em on and slug it out?

ES: Yeah, just go to it. (Chuckles) No, we didn't have no rounds, we ^{didn't} ~~stop for~~ ^{round.} The round was when you had enough.

SS: You wouldn't have a brother as a referee, would you?

ES: No, no. I used to kind of referee sometimes, when I wasn't in it. We had lots of fun with those gloves. As I say, there was usually a pair hanging on the back porch and there was always a pair out in the barn. And if some neighbor kid come up there, and you thought you was pretty good with the gloves, there was always one of the Settle boys that was just about their size that would take you on. Yeah, we had lots of fun.

SS: When you said to me when we were talking before that that was about the worst setback you ever had when you went in the army, and got into a segregated unit like that-- is that because that was the first time you really had to deal with that kind of prejudice?

ES: Well, I guess it wasn't the first time that I ever run into prejudice, but I think ~~at me~~, but that hurt me worse than any of 'em. But I don't think that was the first time that I ever ran into it. But I think that is the first time that I ever went after something, or asked for something, and knowing that I was turned down just because I was black.

SS: Can you ever remember fighting with the kids over prejudice?

ES: No. You take in these country school--where I used to go to country school down there, I never did have any fights. Now, my brother, next to my youngest brother, he was the hotheadest of any of the Settle boys, I think, and he used to get in fights, but I don't say that it wasn't always the color. He was just that kind of guy. You cross him up-- I don't know what it was. I don't remember fighting, really, I don't remember fighting because of prejudice. But there were different things come up and they make you mad, and the kids didn't do one thing you think they ought to do.

SS: Where were you in the order of the family, as far as age goes?

ES: I'm the oldest.

SS: And then was it your next brother that went to Virginia?

ES: No, it was the next one. My third brother; next to the youngest one.

SS: Was he the one that was the hothead?

ES: Yeah, he was the hotheaded one. Yeah, he was one of the Settle boys. He had more temper than the rest of us. After he got to be a teacher down there in the school, he had a fight or two down there in the school where he went to down there.

SS: I was going to ask you how you met your wife.

ES: Well, her folks were farming down at Dodge, Washington, down below Lewiston, down there, if you know where the ^{Dodge} junction is between Lewiston and Pomeroy, out of Pomeroy. They were farmers in there, when I first heard of 'em-- and then in the later years ^{when} I went to the army, I guess the year before I went to the army, they moved up here above Oakesdale, at a farm up there, and they was living there when I was in the army. And when I went to Camp Lewis, there was a kid from a farm up there, he had worked for my wife's dad on the farm up there. And he was telling me about them when ^{I was in the army.} And then, in the meantime, while I was in the army, my brother next to me and my sister, my brother got an old Model T Ford car, while I was in the service, and so one Sunday they drove up there to meet ---- Then the year after, in 1919, I guess, the next spring after I was home, her dad came to Moscow here for something, I don't remember what he came here for-- I think he was trying to buy another farm up there, and he come down here to the Federal Land Bank, and while he was here, why, he, went out to the house, met my dad. And then in the wintertime after I got out of the service in 1919, I went to Spokane on the Christmas Holidays for a few days, and while I was in Spokane, I met my wife's two brothers, they were in Spokane, I met them. And anyway, the next spring, I think it was about March or April, early spring,-- 'course we had a new car, we got a new car the fall before that-- And we had this letter from--- after the ^{old} man ^{was} down here ^{for} the Federal Land

Bank, he asked my folks to come up and see him-- and so ~~it was~~ right after that we drove up there and that was in March or April of 1919, and that's when I met ^{her} up here on the ^{That's where I happened to meet her.} farm at Oakesdale. ^{Course we} knew each other for quite a while-- I guess about two years after that-- then We saw each other ever so often, and ^{her} brother got sick, and I used to go up there to see him. And anyway, I used to take her out for a drive when I'd go up there, I'd take my wife out for a drive, 'course there was two of the girls, and the other one left and went to California, the oldest sister, she went to California. Just my wife was there with her folks. We just kind of fooled around together ~~til~~ about-- 1924, I guess it was, about two, three years. Anyway, it was from 1919 until 1924 before we got married.

SS: Were you seriously courting for much of that time?

ES: No, we wasn't seriously courting. No, I was engaged to a minister's daughter in Spokane when I went in the service. She wanted to get married before I went to the service, but I wouldn't do that. ^{Her dad wanted her to} She thought she ought to college one year anyway. So, I didn't like this idea of just getting married and going into the service. So, we didn't. And when I got back she had TB. And I saw her twice after I got home, ^{and} then her mother took her to Denver to that high climate down there. She was down there about a month and she died. There was about a year, I just kind of played the field. And then the next year, then I started ^{ing} to see ^{more} of my wife then. Last winter we celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary. This past winter. We was married on December the twenty-fourth. We celebrated our anniversary on the twenty-ninth, we should have celebrated on the twenty-sixth, but the lady that was setting up the deal for us at the Methodist Church here, why, she thought we should have it on a Sunday, so she set it up for the twenty-ninth. So, we celebrated

our fiftieth anniversary on the twenty-ninth of this past December.

SS: When you got married, did you have very strong feelings about having much to set yourself up with, when you got married, or did you feel you could-- it was ok to go ahead and do that on a shoestring?

ES: Well, no, I could-- the rest of 'em could make it, I figured I could too. I always had lots of confidence in myself. But, as I say, I don't hardly think I was raised on a farm all my life, but I really cut out to be a farmer. But I enjoy the farm life, too, but it just seemed, I kind of wanted a blue collar job, something like a mail clerk or something like that. I think I'd a-- but as I always figured though, I always think the farm is the most independent life a man can live. And I know one thing about the farm, I think especially for a black man-- because he don't have to buck this labor market, he's more independent. I think that's one reason that I escaped so much of this prejudice, or all of us, the whole outfit of us, because we was on the farm, we lived a little bit independent life. We wasn't dependent on somebody else all the time for our livelihood. ^{We got it right there on the farm.} That's one thing I think here the Settle family escaped as much prejudice as they did in a ⁿ all white community. ^{got along. Because we were farming} I think that's the way we, if we was in town rootin' around to get a job, why then, we would have felt it a whole lot more. Just ^{got to have an outstanding record, you've} like I ~~would~~ ^{told} telling you a while ago, you've just got to be better and superior than the other fellow in doing this job, or you just don't get it. And the labor market is something ^{that} we didn't buck, we didn't have that to buck. Discrimination. Now like being turned down at a restaurant or a hotel or something like that, why, that didn't bother us either because we didn't stay in town, we didn't have no use ^{to stay} for no hotel, ^{ever} We come to town-- We very seldom went to a restaurant to eat. I don't think I ever did until after my wife and I was married, we used

to go out-- we used to come to town some days-- we'd be in town a day, why, we'd probably go to the restaurant and get something to eat. But I don't remember doing that when ^{we was little kids,} my father-- he used to bring some of us boys to town with him quite often, but we never ^{went} to no restaurant to eat. Sometimes he'd buy some bologna or something like that, cheese and crackers, to eat on the way back home, for us kids to eat on the way back home. So being farmers we missed an awful lot of this ^{racial prejudice,} I think. And as I say about my daughter, she never ran onto it, to see prejudice in action until she got away from home and got to the city, where she saw it. But, now you take, when she went to apply for a school down in California, down there, there was one school there up close to the University of California, not too far from the campus there, they told her-- her relatives, her aunts told her-- there's no use you going up there applying for a job, because ^{they had been} different black teachers had tried to get in up there and they just don't hire you up there. But, my daughter has a head of her own, and after she went to ~~several~~ ^{four} other schools and didn't have any luck, she went up there. And after she talked to the principal for about half an hour, the principal told her, "As far as I'm concerned, you're hired, but it's got to go before the board, and I'll let you know at a certain date." When ^{that} that date come along and he called her and told her the job was hers. So she stayed there for ten years, and could have been there yet if she'd a wanted to, I guess.

(End of side D)

ES:

~~I believe that~~ that's why the Settles escaped a lot of prejudice. And another thing I think is not only that, we lived on ^{the} farm, and if I do say it, there's not too many families that conducted theirself the way the Settle family did, either black or white. They lived a ^{average} better than ^{average} standard of living, ^{adopted that way of living,} a better than average, especially for poor people, like we were. That's one thing about the Settles, they had the respect of their fellow men. They ^{always had lots of} always had ^{lots of} lot of respect.

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care for the Settles,
 Those that didn't, it was simply because ^{we} they were black, that's the
 only thing ^{then} you could say about them, "they are black," but outside of
 that they couldn't ^{say nothing bad about them.} My dad was a poor man. He always kept his head up
 and he saw that us kids did the same thing. He didn't allow no--
 When my dad went to his grave, he left a good name for the Settles and
 I've tried my best to hold it up since then. You don't hear of many
 families, very many people that knew my folks to say ^{bad about him.} anything ^{but} They
 say he was black and that's about all, ^{but} as far as being a man, why, --

SS: I've heard nothing but good about the Settle family. What I've heard.

ES: He believe in that, he preached that to us boys, in his family. He never went
 for no monkey business.

SS: You say conduct; conducting themselves-- you mean the way you treat
 other people?

ES: Yes.

And being honest and reliable,

SS: By the way, do you think that there would be more- that more of the
 people would be prejudiced, would be Southerners out here, I mean people
 right in this area?

ES: Well, now I've heard my dad argue about that-- talk about that. He
 seemed to think, if I remember correctly, he thinks that out West here
 there is so many people-- well, there is people here, kids that grow to
 manhood, you might say, that never had any contact with ^a the black per-
 son. It's just like my sister, now, she grew up here and she went to
 work at a fraternity house over there at Pullman in her younger days.
 Cooked for a fraternity house over there. And she said some of those
 kids would come and talk to her about this colored, racial business.
 And they says, you know we never, growing up in the little towns around
 Washington, you know, they said, we never had no contact with no colored
 person; black person, there was none around. So the thing was with

them they had to learn^{ya} just like I said when I started to high school here, how some of 'em would stand off and ~~stand and~~ stare at you and look, but as soon as they found out that the only difference was ~~that~~ between us was that I was black and they was white, I was still a human being, why then, they'd kind of warm up to you.

SS: What was your father's opinion of that then? You're saying your father talked about--?

ES: Well, he said-- he figured, now ^{you take} these people that grew up out in the West, that had never no contact with a black person, he kind of figured that they had more of a tendency towards prejudice than the Southerners that grew up with them and understood the Negro. But here, they got to find you out. They don't know nothing about you, ^{they got to find you out,} you got to prove yourself. That's the idea, you got to prove yourself. That's just the difference between the Settle family and the Wells family up there at Deary-- there's no bigger hearted family in the country than the Wells family, only they were just a little bit different than the Settle family. They were more of a rowdy and drinking bunch.

SS: This is my wife, Laura, Mr. Settle.

ES: How's the arm?

LS: Oh, getting better. It's pretty good now. I thought I was in the wrong house!! (Laughter)

SS: We like to sit out here in the shade of the tree where it's nice and cool. Isn't this a beautiful tree? It shades the whole yard. 'Gene complains about it, but I think he likes it anyway.

ES: Yeah, I do. It's kind of dirty, when the leaves start falling. See the leaves are falling now, -- I should have it sprayed for the bugs that get on it-- They're not too bad now. I put in a lot of time out here. I do quite a lot of reading... (informal conversation continues)