

EUGENE SETTLE  
Fourth Interview

Interviewed by:  
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Oral History Project  
Latah County Museum Society

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# I. Index

## EUGENE SETTLE

Rural Moscow, Aspendale; b. 1894

farmer, warehouse superintendent.

1.2 hrs.

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## EUGENE SETTLE

Rural Moscow, Aspendale; b. 1894

farmer, warehouse superintendent.

2.1 hrs.

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## II. Transcript

4th interview

EUGENE SETTLE

This conversation with Eugene Settle took place at his home in Moscow, Idaho on December 19, 1975. The interviewer is Sam Schragger.

SAM SCHRAGER: The idea is to find out how much stricter it used to be in those days. It seems like there was a lot more discipline and kids were expected to toe the line a lot more than now. Is that right?

EUGENE SETTLE: Well, that's the way I feel about it. I feel like the kids ~~were~~ more disciplined than they are today, but maybe they're not. But it seemed like-- Now, you take over there where I grew up, there was a bunch of us little kids would get together and travel through the forest and around, but it seems like when a certain time come, why, we had to depart. We were supposed to be home by that time, you know. There was a time set for us to be back home, if we left home, seems like there was a time set that we should be back. I know that was very true. And, we just didn't just take off without our parents knowing where we were going. They knew where we were going all the time. Course when we'd get to another kid, we'd travel a lot, through the timber, like kids do, but the parents always knew pretty well where we were, and about what time to expect us to get back home.

SS: Did they have lots of chores that they expected the kids to do?

ES: Yeah, there was quite a bit of chores, <sup>for us to do.</sup> Now you take that-- we had cows to milk and such as like that. And we worked in the garden quite a little bit, when we were younger. And we always had a certain amount of chores to do, to take care of on the farm. And, of course, as we got older we got more responsibility. The calves-- we fed 'em on skim milk. Milked 'em and then separate the milk, you know, and then feed the calves and feed the pigs and all that. Yeah, there was al-

ways plenty to do-- for the kids to do, and then, of course, we started working in the field at a very young age, you know. When I was eight years old I was driving a team on the plow. Lots of boys, of course. And when I was a kid, In the <sup>country</sup> school, they only had about five or six months country school, because, <sup>practically</sup> fact is, all the boys was working on-- helping on the farm, see. 'Course, all these kids going to school was seventeen and eighteen years old, <sup>going</sup> to a country school at that time, because they never got to go to school very much, a few months out of the year, and they just went and went 'til they was grown, <sup>you could say</sup> pretty near. I know when I first started to school, down at that Aspendale school down there, <sup>see there</sup> <sup>was</sup> kids down there that were young men; fifteen, seventeen-- gues' they was older than that, eighteen years old, I wouldn't doubt. Country school, we only had about four or five months a year of school and so you didn't progress very fast.

SS: It must have been on the teacher.

ES: Huh?

SS: Must have been hard on the teacher, so many kids. It must have been pretty hard on 'em, going to school at that age.

ES: It didn't seem to be. Well, I'll tell you, it didn't seem to be hard on 'em, they seemed to have much fun as the rest of them there. But a lot of 'em-- course, you might say, during the winter months was when they went to school, you might say. They had about five or six months of school a year. Six, sometimes they <sup>finally</sup> got it up to seven and eight. And then I guess when they started consolidating the districts I guess they was getting up-- a lot of 'em had seven months. They might have had eight, I don't remember. I know when I first started to school, I don't remember, but I think it was about seven months of school. They might have had eight, I don't know by that

time.

SS: The classroom inside the schoolhouse-- did the teacher maintain a lot of-- did they have to work to keep order?

ES: All the grades were in the same room, and it was just like anything else, there was always one or two kids, in the eighth grade now-- there was always one or two in there that kind of likes to have fun and they cut-up. But that's the way it was when all the kids together-- there was probably one or two that the teacher had to keep an eye on that were always up to some kind of mischief and one thing and another. But one teacher, she disciplined the whole classroom. And whenever the class recite, whenever the different grade recite, they then, they come up front, they recite there before the whole rest of the school.

SS: It's real hard, I think. It's hard to imagine anymore what it would be like to have all eight grades in one room.

ES: It doesn't seem possible, hardly-- I'm like you-- it don't seem possible, but that's the way it was. And it didn't seem to be no problem, either. Didn't seem to be no problem, either. She'd dismiss one class and they'd go back there and she'd call up another class-- And it just don't seem possible that the teacher could do it, and handle 'em. But, I remember that they did it, and it doesn't seem like there wasn't no big problem, either. And now especially at this Aspendale School, when I went there, I think there was about eighty-- over eighty kids that went to that one schoolhouse. And only one teacher.

SS: Gee!

ES: Uh-huh. Yep.

SS: The kids--

ES: That's right.

ES: With that many kids, I'd think it would be rough to learn very much.



- ES: Well, just like any other classroom, there were some bright ones and some not so bright. But they done alright.
- SS: Did you and your brothers feel the same way about going to school? Did you care for it very much?
- ES: Yeah. We never thought much about it. We never went to school any other way until after--- well, I guess I was through the eighth grade when we moved over here, when we got the ranch northeast of town, and we moved over this way, why then, -- 'Course I was going to high school and then I had brothers in the eighth, seventh and sixth grades when we came to town. And up til that time we'd always went to a one room schoolhouse.
- SS: Did you have to study?
- ES: Oh, yes, you betcha.
- SS: You had to study outside of the classrooms.
- ES: Yes, yes, we usually brought home school work. We brought home school work, outside of the schoolroom, we brought home school work. Most of us did. Study at home. We usually had work to do at home in the evening. <sup>us kids,</sup> Us kids, ~~case~~, we had a booksack, we called it, either I or one of us carried, over the shoulder, kind of like-- just this little sack, that Mother make it out of cloth or something. And then when we got ready to come home, if any of us kids had books to bring home we put it in that booksack and one of us'd carry it. And then later on, of course,-- And in the later years we used to have, what they called these book straps; had a little thin strap about half an inch wide and a buckle on the end of it, and then you'd just buckle that around your book and then you'd carry it that way. Called a bookstrap and carried it that way most of the time. But in the beginning we had a sack to put 'em in, and then after a while we got the bookstrap.

And, there was <sup>no</sup> going home for lunch. Everybody had their lunch and stayed on the schoolground all day long. Had lots of fun; play ball and different games, and in the wintertime they'd eat their lunch and the kids'd bring their sleds and go sledding down the hill; that was before skiing time. But they always had a hill close to school <sup>where you could</sup> coast. Then at Aspendale <sup>there was a place there</sup> there was a creek grung right by the schoolhouse and a lot of time they'd <sup>could</sup> skate. Kids'd skate. Very few of 'em had skates, most of 'em would just skate on their shoes. Very few pairs (of skates) in those times, of course, later on a few kids had skates. When I first went they didn't have skates, very few.

SS: What about getting to the school and back in the winter months? Was there some problems?

ES: Yes. Well, even in the summertime down there, kids had so far to go to school, there was a lot of 'em came horseback. There was a shed down one corner of the schoolyard, down there, where you could tie horses in there. My sister and I, we rode a horseback to school there for several years. See I was three years younger, and when we first started we rode horseback in the wintertime.

SS: Rose horseback in the wintertime?

ES: We rode horseback in the summertime, too, quite a bit. We rode a pony to school. Then lots of time in the wintertime, why, somebody way down at the end of the district would come along-- get a sled and bring his kids and he used to catch all the kids along his route, you know. We did a lot of that. 'Course we did a lot of that after the kids started to the city school here, we lived out there, and we had horses, some of us take the team and come to school, bring some of the kids to school, then we just pick up all the kids along the road. And that's the way it was at the country school. Some farm-

er had to hook up a team to his sled and he'd start out with his kids and before he got to school he'd just have 'em loaded down. Pick up kids all along the road, those that walked. And just before nine o'clock you could look up the road or down the road or this way or that way, over the hills, and see kids coming to school. There was a lot of 'em didn't come by the road at all. Some of 'em lived too far to come around on the main road, they just ~~met~~ across the fields. Lots of them did. Lots of kids just come across the fields. Just walk across the hills, it was so much closer.

SS: If the snow was pretty deep, you could still ride a horse, or did you have much snow?

ES: Oh, yes. It never got too bad to ride a horse. After the wife and I was married, we lived out in the country, there was days there when the snow was so deep that you couldn't get-- couldn't hardly get through with a team, til they got the roads kinda broke out, you **know, after** early morning for the kids to get through. **Fa<sup>u</sup>'is**, with the school buses now, they have to close the schools 'cause the busses can't use it now. Well, in the early days there was places where you couldn't get to town for a day or two, 'til we got the roads kinda-- made home-made snowplows and pull 'em with horses and get the roads broke out. It drift so bad. The snow would drift so bad.

SS: I never did grow up when you had to use horses in the winter, but I would think that if the snow got deep enough it would be too hard for the horses to-- they'd have to break trail as they went along.

ES: Yes, yes. Well they--

SS: They can do that pretty good.

ES: Yes, pretty good. Yep. They do that pretty good. The horses'll break a trail through some awful deep snow, if you just give 'em time. They



will break through a lot of deep snow. Uh-huh.

SS: How far did you have to go to get to the school?

ES: Well, I guess we were-- must have been-- I'd say we were two miles from Aspendale School, I think so. I'd say it was two miles.

SS: You generally did take a horse and didn't walk, most of the time?

ES: Well, in good weather we walked. But, as I say in the wintertime, in bad weather, we went horseback quite a lot of times. We rode horseback in the summertime quite a ~~lot~~<sup>bit</sup>, too, when we wanted to. Course we had a place down there to keep our horse, so lots of time we rode our horse. But it was most of the time in the winter; it was in the wintertime that we rode horseback, we didn't ride much in the summertime. Unless we got kind of a little late start, you know, then we'd get our pony and ride.

SS: One kid on a horse?

ES: No, my sister and I we rode together, the horse carried double. Then after we got larger, after we got more of us kids start to school, we always walked or Dad took us-- take the team, and as I say, take us and pick up all the rest of the kids along the route there.

SS: Did the kids have good warm clothes?

ES: Yes. They used to take the all wool long underwear and ~~they wore~~<sup>wore</sup> over-shoes; yes, dressed lots differently than they do now. And lots of the big kids, when I start to school, they wore what they called German socks. They're heavy things, and you put 'em on just like a shoe, a boot, and then wore rubbers over. -- I got an old Sears Roebuck catalogue from 1900 catalogue the other day-- I ordered something and I got it free, and it showed some in here. The first ones I've seen for a long time.

SS: Whooof! That is old looking stuff.

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ES: Yes, that's in 1900.

SS: I wish you could still order that.

ES: Yes, Sears Roebuck. Now, it showed some of these German socks that the kids used to wear when I was a kid, and I think I see some of them in here, if I can find 'em. There they are. And what do they call 'em there?

SS: "Men's combination felt boot and rubbers?"

ES: Yeah. That's what they were.

SS: Finest quality. "This combination is composed of strictly all wool felt boot, made with <sup>calf</sup> stays, and the lumbermen one buckle rubber ankle boot. Both are strictly first quality. Guaranteed to give perfect satisfaction."

ES: Yeah. A lot of the kids, <sup>older</sup> the boys, they wore them and when they come to school they'd just take the rubbers off and then walk around the schoolhouse with the felt boot.

SS: That's called German-- ~~socks~~, they was.

ES: Uh-huh. That's what they called 'em in those days. German socks. I don't know why they got that name. And then the girls, a lot of the little girls, they'd wear those leggins'. Those little felt leggins' like that there.

SS: Uh-huh.

ES: Keep them warm. 'Course, they was no such a thing as a girl or woman wearing slacks or overalls, in those days. (Chuckles) That was a complete ~~ly~~ out!!

SS: It's changed.

ES: Sure it's changed, you betcha.

SS: You know eighty kids in one room, is awful hard for me to imagine. Eighty kids in the same room, learning from one teacher.

ES: Yeah, to think about it, you'd think so, but I can -- I think they

had just as good discipline, or better, those days in the school-room than they have in a single grade now. Of course, I never did go to a single grade room. When there was one grade to a room, I was in high school then, and I didn't have any of that experience. But I know <sup>that</sup> I heard my brothers talk about it. There was always that few kids, that the teacher had a little trouble with, but it wasn't bad. And the same way when I went to school, there was about eighty-five kids, there was ~~only~~ one or two kids that give the teacher any trouble to speak of. And one thing about the teacher, when recess come or noon, the teacher went outside just the same as the kids did most of the time. ~~Most of the time~~ The teacher was out at the playground ~~around~~, she wasn't sitting in the schoolhouse. She kinda knew what was going on outside, too.

SS: Did you have anythings that you liked to study in school? Anythings that took your fancy?

ES: Well, I think that history and geography, I liked those better than anything. And I was pretty good at English. Spelling was my worst, I know that. (Chuckles)

SS: Well, I heard that you had a lot of drills-- spelling drills.

ES: Yes.

SS: Practiced spelling.

ES: Well, they didn't have so much-- but you take they used to spell, when it came to spelling class, the kids would form a line right in front of the teacher's desk, you see; there was always a platform in one end of the schoolhouse, and her desk was up on that platform-- and then in spelling classes, we would just line up in front of that platform there, and she give out a word. She started with one kid-- the kid would stand at the head of the class and if he couldn't spell



it, why then, the next one he had a chance at it, and the next one, so on down, until she got to the kid that would spell the word, well, then he'd go up to the head of the class. Ahead of those that mis-<sup>it</sup>sed, My sister, she was good at spelling. She got several prizes for spelling. She was a good speller. And every day that you stood at the head of the class, I think you got a star, if I'm not mistaken. There was a star in there for spelling.

SS: Could you have the different grades doing that? Or just one grade at a time?

ES: One grade at a time. One grade at a time.

SS: Did the teacher have a chance to work with the kids-- a single kid, like if he had problems or something-- would she have a chance to work with him?

ES: Yes, to a certain extent. But that was the worst of it. See, you take if a kid-- you take a youngster that was slow, why, the teacher couldn't have too much time to put in with somebody that was slow. The slow kid, he didn't progress very fast, because the teacher just didn't have the time to put in with him.

SS: With all those kids, it's really understandable that she wouldn't have the time.

ES: But if you just wanted to ask her a question or something like that about-- she always had time to say that, but, you know like the slow kid, he takes lots of time, somebody that's slow. 'Cause I know when I was in the first grade, there was kids in my first grade there with me that was twice my age or bigger, just slow learners and hard to get do anything. While there was others just the other way. And as a general rule, the kid that come out of the country, like, ~~were~~ would come to Moscow-- town to go to school, they'd find themselves-

they usually went backward. They usually set 'em back at least a grade. Very few kids, if he was in the sixth grade out in the country and then come to town, why, there was very few of 'em that could do sixth grade work. They usually set 'em back to fifth; and there's a few of 'em that went the other way, too. But, the majority of 'em, they'd have to set 'em back a grade to keep up. There was just that much difference, so you can kind of see what the difference in-- where a teachers got too many kids-- but that's <sup>usually</sup> ~~only~~ the general rule. Now, when we came to town, my youngest brother, they set him up a grade. And, I think the brother next to me, why, I think he was in the seventh and they set him back a grade, and my middle brother he stayed-- he held his own. Any my youngest brother, he went up a grade.

SS: <sup>What did they do to you?</sup> What did they do to you?

ES: I was in high school then, when I started town school. When I got out of the single one-room schoolhouse I had finished the eighth grade. Of course, in those days-- I had to come to town to the courthouse to take my eighth grade examination. The county superintendent gave the eighth grade examination at the courthouse. And all the kids from there the country had to come in and take the examination.

SS: Was it a hard one?

ES: Well, it was pretty hard. But I found it very easy. It wasn't as hard as I expected. I was worried about my mathematics, and I got my highest grade in mathematics. I don't know how it happened, but it just seemed like I did lots of work on it, reviewing mathematics. Course, when I went to school, the teacher, that's when the teacher would come-- my teacher at that time, she lived ~~there~~ right close to the schoolhouse, and she told me any time that I wanted to review, call her, and she'd meet me over at the schoolhouse and we'd do arith-

metic. That always worried me, and then so, for quite a while, several nights before that-- and in the back of the arithmetic book there was a review section of problems from clear through, you know. And we'd start work on those and work on those, and by golly, you know when I went up to take my exam, most of the problems that she gave me was some that I had just previously went through, and I got ninety-five in my arithmetic, my highest grade.

SS: Did you take her up on her offer to help you?

ES: Oh, yes. That's what I say, I'd go down to the schoolhouse- call her and she'd <sup>come</sup> go over there-- and go down there at nights, and we'd work on those review arithmetic problems, you know, and as just luck would have it, when I went up to the courthouse to take my examination, why, those problems that we had just reviewed, <sup>had worked on lately,</sup> was practically all-- all the hard ones-- course, the common stuff, there's always some common ones, -- I'd just recently had 'em, so I did real good on arithmetic.

SS: Were there many kids taking the exam, with you, the same year?

ES: Oh, yes, there was lots of 'em. Come from districts all over the--

SS: No, I mean, in your schoolhosue? Were there many kids at Aspendale who were in the eighth grade at the same time?

ES: No. No, I wasn't at Aspendale when I took the exams.

SS: Oh, you'd moved?

ES: No, I wasn't living there then. We'd bought a ranch closer to town than Aspendale.

SS: I was just wondering, mainly, whether the teacher spent a lot of time with the eighth graders, getting them up for the exam? You know what I mean?

ES: Uh-huh.

SS: Spent a lot of time drilling the whole class?



ES: Well, there was one boy that took the exam when I did was out of our school and he was having trouble with his grammar. And he did a little overtime work <sup>down</sup> there at school. He used to come down, too, and work. Mine was arithmetic and his was grammar, and he worked on it. And spelling was ~~by~~ bad stuff, but I didn't-- spelling and arithmetic but I just studied my own spelling. Took my speller home and studied. I didn't get a very good grade. I think it was eighty <sup>five or something</sup>-- that was my lower grade.

SS: Was it very important for your parents for you kids to get a good education?

ES: Yeah. <sup>It</sup> ~~Was~~ with my parents. When my sister, she finished the eighth grade, we was down at Aspendale when she finished the eighth grade and well, we was way out -- about twelve miles from town, and she couldn't go to high school-- she wanted to go to business college, is what she wanted to go to. She wanted to go to Spokane. I know the folks tried every way to get money to send her to Spokane, and she wanted to go to business college in Spokane, but she never did make it. The folks couldn't afford it. And then, after we moved over to-- bought this place over close to Moscow, she went to work and she wasn't too much interested in school. And, of course, as I say, when you finished the eighth grade out in the country, you was about two or three years behind the kids here in town. That's the way with me. I finished the eighth grade-- I finished fairly early, I finished when I was, I guess ~~I~~ was fourteen-- the summer of the year that I finished the eighth grade in the country. And then, it was two years after that before I got a chance to go to high school. So that throwed me to a pretty good age-- I think I was sixteen when I was a freshman, right here at high school here.-- (End of side A)e)

- ES: Draft age-- I had plenty of time to finish my high school- though I didn't think I could. And, of course, when I got out the army, there no GI, nothing then for you. So that kind of put an end to my education.
- SS: The two years that you weren't in high school, were you just working on the farm?
- ES: Yeah, yeah, I was on the farm. Yeah, we was living on the farm.
- SS: Did that have anything to do with why your parents decided to move to town, so the kids -- were they thinking at all about the kids going to high school?
- ES: Yeah, -- When they couldn't send my sister to school from there, they wanted to get closer to town ~~where~~ the rest of us could go to high school, further our education, and go to high school or business college, ~~or~~ something. When I was a kid, so many of the kids didn't even finish the eighth grade, you know. 'Course if you got old enough to plow and do farm work, why then, he usually-- that's about it. My parents, they wanted the kids to have an education. But in those days, it seemed like the farm kids, they wasn't so much interested in education until after, oh, -- 'course it got more so as the years went by. 'Cause, I know my brother next to me, <sup>he was</sup> three years younger than me, and after he got out of the eighth grade he never went to school much after that. ~~Guess~~ The folks never pushed him. He went out on his own. Anyway, he got by, ~~by~~ hisself. And then my next brother--he finished college, he was the first one of us boys to finish college. And then my second brother-- fourth brother-- he died when he was in high school. He didn't get to go to college. And all the college work I did was-- I did some short course work at the University <sup>up</sup> here. And then I took some grain grading after I was a grown man and working for this grain company, I took grain grading up at the college there.



SS: What happened to your brother that died?

ES: He had scarlet fever.

SS: That was not uncommon in those days, was it?

ES: Huh-uh.

SS: Kids did get that.

ES: Uh-huh. And then the brother next to me, he died as a young man. He died in his early forties. He had a ruptured appendix. Died on the operating table, they didn't know he was dead until they started to cut the incision in him, and there was no blood come. <sup>They examined him</sup> And he was dead.

SS: Did your brother who got scarlet fever, did he go to the hospital, or did they just keep the kids at home?

ES: He was at home. No, he was at home.

SS: In your family, who had the authority there? The mother and father-- who made the decisions? Your mother and father. Was your father altogether the boss, or did they share it?

ES: I don't think he was. I think it was kind of a partnership affair. I don't remember my mother and father ever having any arguments-- about if one made a decision <sup>whether</sup> if the other one didn't like it or not. Their thinking seemed to be pretty much along the same line. I know their thinking about discipline was for sure along the same lines. And, the same way about religion. Now my mother and father they were dyed-in-the-wool Baptists. Of course, when we came <sup>lived out in the</sup> here, ~~we~~ <sup>this</sup> country, there wasn't very much church to go to, but they always told us that regardless, <sup>because</sup> they were raised Baptists, that that was no sign that we had to join the Baptist church, <sup>but</sup> they made it very plain, we get affiliated with some religious organization. Didn't necessarily need to be the Baptist, but they <sup>sure</sup> insisted on us getting affiliated with some sort of religion.

SS: Were they very strict about the Sabbath?

ES: Yes, they was, especially when they came out here, but 'course, after they got westernized-- they were pretty strict about it. At that time it was very seldom that they worked on Sunday. <sup>Sometimes</sup> I know my mother used to get after my dad about-- he always had a large garden, you know, and lots of Sundays he'd put in his time working on the garden-- Mother'd get after him about it. "Well," he said, "when the ox is in the mire, it's no harm working on Sunday!" (Chuckles) That's the way he'd put her off. She used to scold him about working on Sunday, he'd say, "When the ox is in the mire, it's no harm working on Sunday." They were pretty strict about that. And, another thing my father did, he's a man that never used profane language. He did a lot of smoking, and stuff like that, but very seldom did you ever hear my dad use any profane language. And, I assure you, we kids didn't use any <sup>either</sup> around him, ~~either~~. He was very strict. ~~He didn't go to church~~ <sup>they</sup> after we came West, ~~we~~ never went to church, ~~with them~~. As I say, we lived way out in the country; there was no church around. There ~~was~~ was the Lutheran Church, Scandivanian, but they talked in Scandivanian. There was a little church out here at Joel, they had a minister there just every so often ~~that come~~ <sup>out there</sup> and hold services, and us kids used to go over there to Sunday School, <sup>a little bit</sup> Ride three, four miles over there, ~~when we were over there~~. But we never went to church regular until we got moved over to town.

SS: Did your parents give you any Bible teaching at home?

ES: I think that's very peculiar. My wife and I <sup>have</sup> discussed that quite a little while now. My father and mother, they did an awful lot of,-- when we was little kids, they read the Bible an awful lot, among themselves. And they discussed <sup>the Bible</sup> among themselves, but they didn't seem to pass it on to us. They taught us our prayer every night before we

went to bed, the whole family'd get down before their chair and say their prayer and all that, and they read the Bible, alright, but then it <sup>come</sup> to Bible discussions, it was chiefly among themselves. And I've thought about that so many times, that they didn't discuss it more with us as kids, but they didn't. But they read it and they talked the Bible a lot,

SS: I wonder if they thought you kids were too young?

ES: I think that must have been ~~that~~ it. They just figured we was too young. 'Course, I told you a while ago, my mother always insisted--"You don't have to be a Baptist, 'cause we are, but be affiliated with some religious organization." So, I think that must have been their theory. They had an old hymn book, and us kids, in the wintertime, we'd get to cutting up and making too much noise round there, why they'd get up and get this old hymn book, and we'd set down and sing until bedtime. That's the way they'd quiet us down, we got to making too much noise, why, they'd get up and get this hymn book and we'd all start a singing-- sing hymns. But as far as teaching us the Bible, they didn't do it. I've thought of that so many times. <sup>It's strange, but they didn't.</sup> They did a lot of reading among themselves, and they'd discuss the Bible among themselves, <sup>a whole lot.</sup>

SS: Do you have any recollection of what parts of the Bible were important to them?

ES: No, I do not.

SS: But they taught you quite a few <sup>n</sup>hymns?

ES: Oh, yes. They taught us quite a few hymns. <sup>always did.</sup> We sang hymns. We a lot of singing.

SS: What kind of prayers did they teach you?

ES: Well, of course, the first thing they taught us The Lord's Prayer. That was the first thing we ~~learned~~ learned, the older ones. Then the others had this regular kid's bedtime prayers, such as that. And the older



ones they taught us The Lord's Prayer. And that's what we always said, the older ones. Mother was very strict about it, us saying our prayer before we went to bed.

SS: Did you kids ever go to a revival or camp meeting, when you were young or growing up?

ES: No. I remember just before-- I must have been about four or five years old-- four years old, I couldn't have been five--I remember just before we came out here. We went to a camp meeting, it was out in the woods, the timber, and I got to go and I got lost. <sup>that's why</sup> I remember I started to follow somebody else along, and just about that time, this woman looked around and she saw me and she says, "Who are you, little boy? What's your name, little boy?" <sup>I looked up.</sup> "Where is your mother?" I thought that was my mother until she -- and then just about that time I heard my mother. She'd missed me, you know. That's <sup>why</sup> first I remember the camp meeting. That's what they told me it was. I didn't know what it was but, they told me afterwards that that's what it was. We was at a camp meeting when I was a little kid.

SS: Did you say that-- When you say that they sort of shared the responsibility-- It seems to me like-- I don't know what it was like, but I get the feeling that a lot of families, the husband order<sup>ed</sup> and the wife obey<sup>ed</sup>, is the idea that I get. And that went on a lot. He sort of laid down the law and she followed it. And, maybe her main authority was in raising the kids.

ES: Yes, it was, that's my mother.

SS: Then he ordered and she obey, or did it seem like they just worked it out?

ES: Well, I'll tell you now. My mother, she did most of the-- 'course my dad was out in the field a lot-- all the time, and us kids, <sup>around the house,</sup> and my

mother did most of the--she did most of the punishing of us kids; laying the law down to us kids. And she did practically all the spanking. Very <sup>few</sup> times that my dad ever did spank me, but my mother sure did lots of times. But I know, I never did hear no words between <sup>'em</sup> or discussion between 'em. If my mother told us to do something, why, that was the law. And if my dad told us to do something, that was the law. You better do it! That was it! As I say, I never heard no discussion as to who was going to boss the kids and who wasn't going to boss them, <sup>'cause</sup> they both did it. And I never heard any disagreements about-- if one told you you got to do something, I never heard the other one disagree about it.

SS: Do you think if your mother was going to have anything to do with spending money or buying something or something like that, would she have to consult with your father first?

ES: Well, <sup>Sam</sup> that's something -- I don't hardly think so. I think that she knew what us kids needed and when she went to town my dad'd give her the money and she-- because I know she bought all of our clothes. Of course, I know this Harry Sampson, used to work at David's store down here, early days, she used to buy our clothes. Come in there and buy us kids clothes, overalls and shirts and hats. She did practically <sup>all</sup> the trading, practically <sup>all</sup> our trading, and of course in the later years and when Dad come into town, he'd buy groceries, but as far as buying clothing for us kids, Mother she just about took care of that. I don't remember my dad, I guess he did at times, but--'course my mother always did that. She bought us boys overalls and always bought our clothing. 'Course she was in town lots more than my dad did. He was working here and he didn't come to town <sup>just</sup> only once in a great while.

SS: She did most of the shopping for the house then.

ES: She did the shopping for the house, yes. She did. And, of course, when my dad did go then she'd usually give him a list what to get in the grocery line. But, as far as, taking care of the kids, <sup>and the clothing,</sup> why, that was her job. She did take care of that. I guess that was just a mutual agreement among themselves. As I say, she went to town probably twice or three times to his one. But then after they got older and they lived close to town, why then he went to town lots, Well, as I say, he bought most of the groceries, then.

SS: Did your folks try to be real selfsufficient to have to buy as little as they could?

ES: No. I'll tell you, Sam, when I was a kid, we lived on the farm and my younger days coming up on the farm; you take flour, sugar, and coffee was just about the heighth our groceries. And coal oil, that's for our lamps; coal oil. But our meat and other vegetables, that was all on the farm. Cabbage and apples, But flour and sugar and coffee and coal oil, those were the things we got out of the store. And we didn't get them very often. My dad, when he went to town, he'd <sup>usually</sup> buy two five gallon cans of coal oil and we bought sugar by the hundred pounds. And about the only thing that we bought by the small bottle, <sup>was</sup> and that's coffee. My mother and dad they <sup>take</sup> about the only ones that drank coffee, they didn't drink too much of that, And then we had -- we used -- we had a cereal, and that was mostly oatmeal or kind of a--

SS: Wheat?

ES: Or some other small cereal.

SS: Would they make a wheat mush?

ES: Huh?

SS: Did they make a wheat mush?



ES: No. No, we never ate any wheat mush. I know some of 'em that did. I know some of 'em that did make a kind of wheat mush. But we had another kind of cereal, kind of like cornmeal. Something like that, but I don't think it was cornmeal. And, another thing that they bought quite a little bit in the store, and that's syrup. We used quite a bit of it. My dad he was a great hand, and my mother, too, as far as that's concerned, <sup>and</sup> the South people, they used lots of sorghum. And of course, they didn't buy sorghum, couldn't get it out here, only the kind, that bitter stuff you use to make cakes out of, and so they used quite a bit of syrup. My dad used to like syrup quite a little bit.

SS: What kind of syrup would it be? Would it be corn syrup?

ES: No. He started to buy some of this molasses they have here, but that's this cake molasses, and that's that bitter stuff, it isn't nothing like what he figured, and so he bought Karo syrup. And <sup>then</sup> he had quite a sweet tooth, and lots of times he'd buy five gallons of honey. He liked his sweets, my father did. So he always had his syrup.

SS: What would he use the syrup on? Would he eat the syrup with pancakes and that?

ES: No. No, mostly hot biscuits. Course in the old days, that's what my mother made. Hot biscuits, you know, and syrup. That's what he used that on. In my coming up time, why, my mother didn't make too many hotcakes. That I remember, but I know that after we got older, once in a while she'd make hotcakes for us, <sup>And</sup> ~~Make~~ donuts. Syrup was ate on hot biscuits.

SS: What would you use the honey with? Would you use that on biscuits?

ES: Uh-huh.

SS: Sounds pretty good.

ES: Yeah. Uh-huh.

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- SS: I'm wondering what made you folks move from Aspendale to-- closer to town, and then moved into town actually?  
No, we bought a farm out there.
- ES: Yeah. You see my dad was a renter, he rented land; leased land. And then when he bought, he bought closer to town. Close to town, closer to school for us kids. And he bought a place of his own out north-east of town, and then we had a farm out south of the cemetery out there. That's when we first came across the mountain, on this side, why then, he leased a place south of the cemetery there. And he farmed that for a few years, then he got a chance, he <sup>bought</sup> get this place out northeast of town there. And, of course, I was in high school when they moved over here and the other kids was in grade school.
- SS: When you moved into town, was he still farming northeast of town?
- ES: Yes, oh, yes.
- SS: But you lived in town then?
- ES: No, we didn't live in town, we was out at the edge of town. My whole family never did live in town, when I was a kid. We never did live in town.
- SS: Where would it be now, where that place was-- northeast?
- ES: Well, you know where this Moscow Mountain road out here? Do you know where Bendel's Hatchery is out there?
- SS: Yes.
- ES: Well, it's just due north of <sup>Bendel's</sup> the Hatchery, just a quarter, that house on top of the hill out there. There's a new house there now; some pretty good sized trees around it. That's our old home place, that's where most of the kids grew up there. Of course, as I say, when we went out there I was in high school, and at that time I was about fifteen.
- SS: Do you think it made much difference to your parents to be this much closer to town than they had been out there?
- ES: Well, I think they enjoyed it just as much or better, being closer to



town that way. When they got older, they could go more. But I was happy, fact of the matter, I was happy out there on the farm, just as happy as I was <sup>here</sup>. It was better. More convenient. And more conveniences and all that. Out <sup>there</sup> we had our electricity and water in the house and all that. But, of course, that was a haven for my mother, washing for four boys. And while we was out on the farm, most of our washing was did on a washboard. And, all the hot water she had was -- had an old range stove with a hot water tank on one end of it there, hold about ten gallons, I guess. Yes, it was a haven for my mother to get over there. It was a haven for all of us, we really enjoyed it. Of course, that was before-- It isn't like it is now, of course now, there's very little difference between <sup>the</sup> a farm and <sup>the</sup> town now, as far as that's concerned. We got every convenience on <sup>the</sup> farm that we got here in town. and you get in your car and in ten or fifteen or twenty minutes you're in town, anyway. See <sup>the</sup> the automobile and electricity has brought the town and country right together, you might say. Only today, I'd rather be <sup>living</sup> on a farm, than <sup>where</sup> I am now. I'd much rather be on a farm. If I'd a kept my place out there, that's where I'd be-- out there. I wouldn't be here in town. As old as I am I'd be out there on the farm. Course, I lost my legs, , and my wife insisted on getting rid of the place. But if I'd a kept it one year longer after I'd lost my legs, I'd a never sold it. I'd live out there.

SS: Well, there's lots of days when we wished we lived in town. It's ~~Mostly~~ because of having to go into town anyway, having to work in town.

ES: But I liked it this way, Sam, even if I just stayed out there-- of course, in the wintertime, course I don't drive, course the road gets bad and my wife don't drive in the wintertime. But in the summer,

just to stay out, just to have a place to spend the summer, I would have enjoyed it, He'd have probably put us up a trailer house out there; got us a trailer and stayed out there through the summer and had a garden. And I could have had my stock and one thing and another.

SS: That's what I was asking because I was thinking about how-- from what you say about the difference-- like kids out in the country couldn't really go to high school. Well there's a big difference, that's a reason for a family to wonder about whether they should-- could make a go of it closer to town.

ES: Well, of course, now-a-days, you see-- when my daughter started to school, that was way back in '30 something, she went two years-- she went one year to the Aspendale school where I started at; she went one year there, and in that year the school districts consolidated and the next year she went to-- she didn't come to Moscow, though. We were closer to Genesee, and she went to Genesee. And so there is no country school anymore. It's all city schools, 'cause the bus picks 'em up and brings 'em to town. There's no country school any more.

SS: All those neighborhood schools all shut down.

ES: They all shut down. 'Course this old Aspendale School, where I went, still there because it's the farmers they took and fixed it up and they got a kind of a-- made kind of a community hall out of it. You see we was down there a year or two ago -- somebody lived down there had a fiftieth wedding anniversary down there, and we went down there, among our old friends.

SS: Do you think in those days there was much difference between people that lived in the country and people in town?

ES: Yes. Yes, there was lots of difference, Sam. I'll tell you now, this way; when I was a young kid, you'd go downtown-- you'd go to town and you

could just about segregate the farmers' wives from the city wives, and such as that. Yes, you could, you could tell they was farmers. The same with men, pretty much the same way. You could just about pick out the farmers. It isn't the same any more. Since they brought the farm so close to town, you can't do it. But I've saw the time when you could do it.

SS: How could you do it? If you looked, how could you tell from seeing them? Did they dress different?

ES: Possibly by their dress.

SS: The way they act?

ES: Mostly by dress and sometimes by backward action.

SS: You mean, like if people in the country weren't as slick in the way they---?

ES: Just like those boots I showed you that the kids wore to school-- You see the farmers would have something like that, you <sup>don't</sup> see the fellow living in town, he wouldn't do it-- (End of side B)  
-- put on a clean shirt when he came to town. He'd come in his overalls, and maybe he'd put on a clean shirt, maybe he wouldn't.

SS: Not more than one percent would do more than that.

ES: But, by golly, now-a-days-- you take a farmer come to town, you can't tell him from anybody else. There's no difference. You can't walk down the street and pick out <sup>from nobody else.</sup> the farmer. He's dressed just as good as this feller in the city. Just as well. But when I was a kid they didn't do so much of that. They were just more-- Well, I guess the way they lived, they didn't have no electricity, they didn't have no electric lights. And they lived that difference between the city life and the country life.

SS: Do you think that in the city people were more caught up in getting



- ahead or status than they were in the country, in those early days?
- ES: Oh, yeah. Definitely, they were. As I say, because the city person, their washing was so much of a chore-- I know fellas that used to put on a pair of overalls-- farmers put on a pair of overalls, they never took 'em off until they wore 'em out. That's a fact; take 'em off and wash 'em? Why, no, they just wore 'em until they wore 'em out! Then go get a new pair. 'Course, I know my mother-- she had four of us kids wore overalls, and she washed them just the same as anything else. I know little kids<sup>at my time,</sup> their mother never washed their overalls, they just put 'em on and they wore 'em til they wore 'em out, and then they went and got 'em another pair. Well, it was because they didn't have no electricity, or hot water-- they had hot water, but they used to have to heat it on the stove. They didn't have those conveniences to do things, you know, so they just went along with the tide. While here in town-- their work wasn't dirty anyway--like it is on the farm.
- SS: I sort of had had this idea, but I'm not sure whether it's right or not, but I had the idea that in the country, maybe the farmers, one farmer and another, they didn't have to compete with each other-- but more or less thought of each other as being on an equal basis. I have an idea in town they-- there was a lot more, you know-- trying to get ahead of the rest of the pack.
- ES: Well, it was kind of natural, that's what I say, seemed like the farmer had his<sup>brand,</sup> while in the city<sup>they</sup> were not subject to the filth and dirt like they are out on the farm. Well, now like the farmer he'd work all day in the field<sup>and</sup> in the dust, in the dirt all day long, and of course, he'd wash his face and that, naturally, and probably washed his underwear<sup>underwear</sup> was washed every so often; but these overalls,-- well, he worked til the day<sup>was out,</sup> and then he'd come home and milk the cow, and then he'd get milk<sup>on those</sup> overalls. I've

- farmers  
seen ~~them~~ wear overalls, where when they take 'em off, they <sup>could</sup> just  
about stand 'em up! (Chuckles) But you don't see that anymore. As  
I say, this electricity and hot water <sup>and telephone</sup> have brought the country so  
close to town now that you can't tell the difference. You can't tell  
the difference. But I saw the day when you sure could tell it.
- SS: Do you think they looked down on the people from the country a little  
bit in town?
- ES: Yeah, they did. Call 'em "hayseed"! (Chuckles) Or Punkinroller! Of  
course, there was a difference, you betcha, there was a difference.
- SS: Punkinroller, I hadn't heard that one.
- ES: (More chuckles) Yessir.
- SS: I wonder what country people thought of people in the city like Moscow?  
Maybe they thought they were putting on airs.
- ES: Well, I don't know. Course, these little country towns-- I can see your  
point. I can't see hardly why they should make so much difference,  
but it does, it makes quite a lot of difference.
- SS: I can sure see where it was that way. I wonder about how they thought  
of other people; that's what I've been thinking about.
- ES: Well, they thought of the guys in town just like the guys in town  
thought about them. (Laughter) Yessir, they thought the same way.  
Cause <sup>see</sup>, there was that difference. They <sup>was</sup> just naturally two clas-  
ses of people.
- SS: Well, you probably started to going to school and spending a lot of  
time in town here. Did you miss not being in the country, or were  
you just glad to be---?
- ES: No, just glad to get here. I was glad-- the only thing that kind of  
bothered me-- going to school in town and getting into town here--was to  
have enough money so that I could dress like the other kids. So I

could get rid of this hayseed-- get away from that punkinroller look!  
you could  
You could go to town and pick out the country people and the city people. You can't do it any more, but you sure used to!

MRS. SETTLE: Oh my yeah. <sup>Their</sup> they walk and talk and everything else. clothes.

SS: They talked different too?

SS: When you started going to school in town, did you work to make some money? Were you able to do that?

ES: No, I did not. Well, <sup>not</sup> the first year-- when I first started, when I went to commercial business-- took a business course, I worked for one of the teachers-- fella that was running the--I had to pay a fee, and I worked for him to pay that. And and I got other things, made a little money. That's about the only time I worked. But I worked with my dad the rest of the time.

SS: But you did have enough clothes so you didn't--- ?

ES: Yes, I kept up pretty well. That was kind of one of my worries, though. That bothered me. Because, when I went to high school the kids didn't dress nothing like they do today. Just to show you-- Every day that I went to high school I wore a white collar. I don't know whether you can remember when they used to wear ~~the~~ stiff collars and ties--

SS: I've seen pictures, but I've never--

ES: Well, let me show you the high school kids when I went to school, and you can compare them to what they wear today.  
(recorder was turned off while he looks for some pictures)

END OF INTERVIEW.

Transcribed by Frances Rawlins 03-23-76