

NORLA CALLISON
First Interview

Interviewed by:
Rob Moore

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NORLA CALLISON

Kendrick; b. 1903

American Ridge farmer

1.4 hours

minute

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Side A

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1

Born on grandfather's homestead. Old family doctors served Kendrick and surrounding country. Grandfather Sam came to area from Lacine, Kansas in 1888. "Pastures were greener out here." Friend of Al Roberts in Kansas. Sam had fiery temper. Life in Kansas, selling catfish and prairie chickens, hard weather and hunting antelope. Sam hunted and fished more than he farmed. Breaking bunch-grass sod with a footburner plow.

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Land here better in the early days than now. Farmers raised wheat, oats, flax. Stopped raising flax because ground got "foul" and wild oats came in. Flax for seed and linseed oil. Hand seeding took teamwork, grain drill was improvement. Wild oats came in from California.

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Old hand-feed machines, grain and bean thrashers. Nick Brocke's bean thrasher and how he worked it. Operation of thrasher. Farmers sometimes stacked beans and covered them with straw so they could thrash in mid-winter.

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Norla's father buys thrasher in 1915 with five other men, "company machine" runs until 1933. Combines start to come in 1935. Change from sacked grain to bulk. Company machine worked on shares. In 1926, Norla's father goes from horses to trucks for hauling.

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Raising beans: problems with erosion. Thrashed beans, fed waste to livestock as hay. Bean farming stops because area can't compete with irrigated beans in Southern Idaho.

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Hunting and fishing in early days were "second to none." Trout and salmon in creeks, family would salt excess. Creeks used to run year-around: much more timber in headwaters. Grouse and pheasant were plentiful. Feeding quail. Norla thinks grouse died out because of disease, not hunters.

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Socializing in early days. Literary programs at old schoolhouse, oyster feeds, socializing after church. Not much visiting with neighbors anymore. People were more self-sufficient then, and had more time to visit with their neighbors. Big apple and prune orchards and prune dryers in the area. Standard price for prunes was 5¢/pound.

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Side A (continued)

- 36 17 Neighborhood "butchering bees." 12 or 15 men would slaughter and butcher all the neighborhood beef and hogs. Done at one man's place, worked co-operatively, assembly line fashion, several day job. Women cooked a big feed for the party afterwards.
- 38 18 Skating parties and coasting parties always ended up with oyster stew feed. Card parties and sleigh-ride parties. "I think people were happy, enjoyed themselves. It's quite a change." Neighbors more helpful then. More neighbors: over 60 families on American Ridge at one time.
- 44 20 Runaway team scared by yellowjackets. Runaway common. "Fiery" horses would get scared by thrashing machine.

Side B

- 00 21 Runaways frequent while thrashing. Bundle-hauler had to handle horses and load grain. Farmers provided haystack to feed thrashers' horses. Work on thrashing crew: feeding horses at night, sleeping on hay in field with horses, swapping stories around campfire.
- 04 23 Early personality of Juliaetta, Kendrick, and Troy. How Juliaetta and Kendrick got named. Olson and Johnson store in mostly-Swedish Troy. Towns were similar. Kendrick flood caused by wrecked train diverting creek.
- 07 25 One-room school. Everyone walked, sledded in winter. "Characters" gave teacher a hard time. Norla's wife Mabel taught one-room school 3 years.
- 10 26 Martin Thomas, the feist, and the wolves. More coyotes today than in early days. Bears give trouble only in orchards.
- 13 28 Early apple raising. Three packing houses on ridge, stored apples in sawdust over winter. Apples both sold locally and shipped. Area changes from fruit to grain. More insects as area developed, too much work to control them in orchards, couldn't compete with Yakima. More insect pests now than before, balance of nature upset by pesticides.
- 17 29 Norla starts farming on own in 1935, uses both horses and mechanized equipment. Father buys first tractor in 1933, retires in 1935. New machinery makes farming

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Side B (continued)

faster and more efficient. "Tractors don't get tired." 7 or 8 horses pulled two-bottom plow. Length of workday depended on daylight. Cut wood in winter. Farmed 240 acres with father: beans, field corn, pigs, cows, horses, chickens. Fed horses and milked cows before breakfast, then did field work.

23 32 Horses took awhile to "toughen up" in Spring after Winter rest. Horses got up to 12 or 13 years old. Care and use of horses varied with owners, some were good and some were mean. Most men proud of horses and took good care of them.

25 33 Norla rode own mare to high school in Kendrick with other boys; girls usually boarded in town. Chores during high school years. Country kids couldn't get as involved in school activities and sports as town kids, didn't have time.

28 35 First did farm work with father at 12 years old, did man's work at 15. All farm boys started working young.

with Rob Moore
29 August 1973

II. Transcript

NORLA CALLISON:

Norla Callison was born in 1903, on the same farm where he still resides. His Grandfather Sam was a banty rooster of an Irishman who moved to American Ridge from Kansas. Norla talks about hunting and fishing, early crops, farm techniques, Nick Brocke's bean thresher, cooperatives, socializing, butchering bees, one room schools, predators, woodcutting, growing up on a farm and the ways that times have changed. (Rob Moore, interviewer)

ROB MOORE: You were born on this place, weren't you?

NORLA CALLISON: I was born right here.

RM: When was it?

NC: Oh, May 9, 1903.

RM: You were born in the house?

NC: I was born in the old house that set right where this one sits. We moved the old house across the road and built this one in 1965. Started in in August and we got moved in- moved the stuff from across the road out of the old house into the new house. We got the final moving job finished Christmas Eve. Santy Claus, I tell you, was awful tired that night, he didn't do very much! Yeah, it is quite a chore to move stuff. Course, short move but nevertheless, we moved; carried most of it.

RM: Was there a country doctor that came out here?

NC: Oh, yeah. When I was born Doctor Hunter was at Kendrick and he was the family doctor at that time. I don't know whether Doc Hunter died or whether he left. He had a ranch over on Potlatch Ridge, we can see it from the yard here, and then Doctor ^{Rothwell} was the family doctor for years and years. He was in Kendrick. And before he finally died there was a Doctor J. E. Hoyt, he come here, two of 'em had all they could do in Kendrick, and ^{Rothwell} died. He was a Nova Scotian. Talked with quite a Nova Scotian brogue. And he was a great doctor

with kids. He could throw his voice, and he could just charm kids. He ^{could} throw his voice, you know. And he'd get some kid that was not too sick, you know, and he'd get throwing his voice, you know, and he really could get next to the kids. (Chuckles) And then Dr. Hoyt, Dr. ^{Rothwell} died and Dr. Hoyt stayed here a few years and he moved away and went to Spokane and set up practice in the Paulsen Building and he's dead now, been dead a number of years. Then we've had a number of doctors since that. Most of 'em didn't stay very long; just a few years. Dr. ^{Christensen} was here twenty-five years, wasn't he?

MRS. CALLISON: Longer than that.

NC: Well, Doug, you know, the oldest son was a baby and he carried him in his arms.

MRS. C: Well, he was here practically forty years.

NC: I guess it was about forty years, here in Kendrick, and he quit last-
well, he quit the last day of December, ^{he} finished out the year. ¹⁹⁷² The
thirty-first day of December, he quit practicing. He still lives here.
Him and his wife, Irene retired and lives just out of Kendrick.

RM: Well, this was your father's place, right?

NC: It originally was my grandfather's place; Sam, S.T.. He came out here from Kansas, settled here in 1888. I think it was the twelfth day of September that they arrived here. And Granddad and the family lived here until 1900, and Sam, that's my granddad moved to town, moved to Kendrick. And my dad then, and my mother got married and they lived here. And Sam lived in Kendrick til he died. He died in 1925.

RM: Well, why did Sam leave Kansas?

NC: Because the pastures were greener out here. And he lived over in the north east part of Kansas, little town called Lacine, on the ^{Marquette} ~~Marquette~~ River, and that was a tributary of the Missouri. And a neighbor of

their's come out here with Al Roberts, that lives up here across the road from Melvin ~~Fellers~~ ^{Fellers}. They had been out here a year or two and they were neighbors back there and he wrote back and kept telling my granddad what a great country this was. So, the folks packed up and they moved out here and Al met 'em in Moscow. That was the end of the railroad at that time; and ^{he} met 'em out there with a wagon and they come down here and that's how they settled on American Ridge.

RM: Sam was quite a character, wasn't he?

NC: Well, he was an Irishman. He never come from Ireland but his ancestors come from Ireland. And ^{he} had a fiery temper, nobody could deny that! He'd fight at the drop of the hat! Pretty good fighter and when ^{he} was young ^{he was a} pretty fair wrestler. Used to wrestle professionally. And he put up a pretty nasty scrap. If he couldn't lick 'em with his fists, why, he'd tie into 'em wrestling. (Chuckles) He was a pretty good man, he ^{licked} a lot of men bigger than he was. But he had a buzz saw temper.

RM: Did he get along with all his neighbors out here?

NC: Oh, yeah, he had no trouble with his neighbors. Somebody try to put something over on ^{him} that was ^a different ^{story}. ^{He was never in trouble with his neighbors.} Pretty rough making a living in Kansas in them days. He used to fish in the ~~Martize~~ ^{Martize} River for catfish and in the fall and winter, why, they used to hunt prairie chickens. There were thousands of prairie chickens there and they used to hunt prairie chickens and ^{they'd} sell 'em on the market. ^{they'd} Kill prairie chickens and sell 'em. Ship 'em to Kansas City. And of course, they used them in the hotels and restaurants there. So they used to ship prairie chickens ^{back there}. Didn't get a fancy price out of 'em, but gave them a little money. They got two and a half a dozen. Two dollars and a half for a dozen ^{for twelve} prairie chickens. They done that for years. And

the other neighbors did the same thing. They had to have something to live on. Most of 'em only had just a few acres around their farmstead that was in cultivation. ^{the country was} all tall prairie grass. And they had lots of thunder and lightning storms there and also ^{lot of} cy-clones. And if that country ever got afire they didn't have any way to fight it. And that's why they had the farmstead in the middle of where they cultivated their land, so that the other would ^{n't} all burn out. Most of 'em didn't have over five or ten acres in cultivation. And they lived a pretty simple life; they done a lot of fishing and a lot of hunting. And they used to hunt antelope. Go out there about two day's travel from where Granddad lived, or Sam, and ^{there was} him and Al Roberts- I've heard Dad- and I can't think of the third guy- and J. B. Barriton, and he had a son living in Moscow. He used to be superintendent of the schools down here at Kendrick, years and years, along about 1908 and '09. I know I had a niece that graduated when he was superintendent.

MRS. C: Cousin, you mean, not niece.

NC: Yeah, cousin. And he come out here; him and Al and there was just a kind of a bunch of 'em from that little community, they all migrated out here. They was all neighbors out here for years. Things was so much better out here that they moved West. It's human nature if you think you can better yourself, why, the pastures looked greener out here and they all come out here.

RM: Did they homestead when they got here?

NC: Most of 'em homesteaded. Quite a bit of this land was already taken up. My granddad bought a- this place was an Irishman, Jim Perkins, had homesteaded about a year before they come here, and he took TB and was dying of TB and granddad bought his preemption and finished

proving up. The old shack- or the old sod shack^{set}, across the draw over here; he had a fireplace made out of rock, just river rocks, and for years there we was always working one of them rocks out every once in a while, where the house set. That's how I come to know where the house used to be. And it was pretty^{tough sliding} here in the early days. Lots of prairie chickens here. Thousands of 'em here and they^{ate} chicken all winter long. You had a corn patch. Everybody raised a few acres of corn and had some cows and two, three broodsows and they farmed with a footburner walking plow.^{three cayuses, four} And if you didn't shuck your corn, if you left it out all winter by spring there wouldn't be nothing to shuck, because, because the birds they eat it all up. They walked along on the snow and the snow was just the right height so they could just peck the ears. So everybody ate chicken.

RM: Corn fed chickens, eh?

NC: That's right. And boy, they were good, oh, brother!

RM: So Sam Took up farming when he got here, too.

NC: He farmed some and done an awful lot of hunting and fishing. Coyote and pigeons hunting and coon hunting^{and} and elk and deer hunting. Grandad was just a boy ten years old and him and his dad kept a plowing it up and putting more in cultivation. And my father. Then it was all bunchgrass sod. And my dad then broke most of this place up with three Indian cayuses and a footburner.

RM: Didn't have to clear it, did he?

NC: Most of the timber was on the north slopes, in the draws. Like this draw back of the house. There's still trees back there but that come further up the hill. But most of this ground was all bunchgrass sod.

RM: Do you think that the ground was better ground then?

NC: Oh, yeah, it was better ground. It's been farmed all that time. They used to. Didn't raise any ^{fall} crop at all. And they used to raise

wheat and oats and flax. Lot of flax. And flax takes good ground. But they got the ground so foul that they had to quit raising flax. Flax would make, oh, twelve, fifteen bushels an acre. And it was pretty good money in those days raising flax.

RM: What was the flax used for?

NC: Oh, mostly linen, wasn't it, Mom?

Mrs. C. Well, did they thresh--?

NC: They threshed it; sold it; sacked it.

MRS. C: Well, what you had must have been for seed, because they didn't use any of the fiber- you never sold that. *Your dad didn't.*

NC: Well, Granddad did.

MRSC: Did he sell the fiber?

NC: Sold the finished- the threshed seed.

MRS. C: Well, that was for seed to plant somewhere else.

NC: They could take it and process it.

MRS. C: Well, they made linseed oil out of it, for one thing. But you ^{*didn't*} take, the stocks is what they use to make linen. Had to take that and-

NC: Well, that flax was the slickest stuff I ever saw. You ever see any flax? Hold it in your hand? It's so slick! It shines just like it'd been polished or oiled or kind of ^{*waxy*}. The slickest stuff you ever saw. Yes, they raised flax and hay, their crops was all spring crops, til the ground got to foul with wild oats they ^{*had*} to quit putting a spring crop in, then they started raising fall grain. But ^{*they didn't*} use fertilizer in them days, and shucks you could just plow it up-- when they first come they seeded by hand. My dad seeded for years there- they'd get a little hack, or like a buggy and take the top off and one guy'd drive the wagon and the guy that was ~~s~~eeding, he'd get in the back end of the wagon and set down and have a washtub- they

had grain in the washtub, and this guy that would drive, he could see the marks ^{from the time} where he went around before and they'd seed with both hands; this way. Just reach down and get a handful and just seed and heck a guy could seed twenty-five or thirty feet a strip and do a good job of seeding if the guy driving didn't drive ^{too} far and he missed. It depended a lot on the driver, if he tried to take too big a swath you was going to leave a strip that wouldn't be seeded. They seeded by hand for years. And then they finally got a drill. That's quite an improvement when they got a grain drill.

RM: You said the wild oats came up.

NC: Well, the wild oats got started. Them wild oats, they got some seed from California, was how the wild oats got started in here. Got the seed from California and got wild oats started. And of course, they just multiplied, just like nobody's business. And when they got fouled like that- course they didn't have alfalfa them days. They cut all this wild oats, patches where the wild oats was thickest, cut that for hay; cut it green for hay. Made good hay. But it just went from that, you know. Had an old threshing machine here, an old handfeed. I can remember seeing 'em using that thing, you know. They'd haul it in and put the bundles on it. The first heading they'd lose, you know, lose grain, and then they got to binding it and they had a handfeed machine, had a handfeed grain machine and they had an old handfeed bean thresher. And Mr. Nick Brocke, the father of the Brockes that have the seed house down here, he was the man that owned the bean thresher. And I've seen him time and again stand up there, he had a ^{long} black beard, he'd have a corncob pipe in his mouth and it was just as apt to be upside down as it was like it should be, and most of the time wasn't lit but he had the taste. And he'd stand there that dirt aboiling out of that thing right in his face, and he had

a peg in his left hand and he'd reach over on the table there, the table they set the beans on, he'd reach over this way and bring one in and push 'em down in the cylinder, see. And do that all day and that dust just aboiling right out in his face. He'd get just as dirty as a man could get. And he was a nice old gentleman. Fine fellow. He lived down the road here about, oh, he built about two miles.

RM: Did he hire that bean threshing rig around?

NC: Oh, he owned it and then he charged you so much a sack for threshing your beans. Most people in them days didn't have- well, if a man had twenty acres of beans he had quite a crop. And a big day's run was, oh, seventy-five or eighty sacks a day. ^{was pretty good} That was a good run. And he done a good job of threshing, too. Clean. Little old threshing machine wasn't any longer than from here to the wall.

RM: Was it run by horse power?

NC: No, it had a big gas engine that they pulled with a team of horses. It wasn't selfpropelled; hooked a team on and pulled that engine. Run it with a big gas engine.

RM: You'd bring the beans to it, wouldn't you?

NC: No, just set the machine you see, set this up and this big gas engine ^{that's what} ^{ed} furnish the power on a belt.

RM: So the horses would pull from job to job.

NC: Whenever you moved, you had to have horses on the separator as well as on the engine. And then when they got to threshing grain they got the traction engine, where they got through they'd just throw the belt off and run out and turn around and hook onto the separator and take off. They didn't do it like that at first, they had to have a team on the separator and on the engine, both.

MRS. C: We brought the beans in from the field--

NC: Oh, then sometimes they stacked 'em. Sometimes you hauled them with

a wagon, and the wagonrack on the wagon and haul beans and lots of times they'd put 'em in a stack. And they couldn't thresh 'em for a while so they'd go through the sweat. They'd go through a sweat and then dry out. ^{When they was wet you couldn't thresh 'em.} But most of the beans was threshed out of the field, because quite a few stacked, because you could thresh them anytime and cover 'em over with straw and you could thresh them in the middle of the winter. I know one time I threshed beans for Clifford Davidson down here- George Davidson owned a separator and he was a brother of Cliff's, and there was ^{Carl} Anderson and Andy Cox, you remember Andy down on the Ridge here where the white barns is, and another fella and two and myself pitched beans on New Year's Day. And cold, man, it was cold! ^{Prettiest day you ever saw.} Bright, sunny day- we had to work hard or freeze to death. (Chuckles) Threshed 'em on New Year's Day.

RM: Did you follow the threshing crews around the country?

NC: No. My dad- there was six men bought- ^{a company machine} and my dad was one of the six. There was George Davidson, he was the separator man and he was the man that kept the machine going. We bought a separator had an old ^{Titan} gas tractor, and it was the kind that you hook on the machine and it was the traction. You'd hook on the separator, and we ^{had} an Alden-Taylor threshing machine. And there was George Davidson and Frank Roberts and Walt Bigham and Wade Keene and Byron Davidson and my Dad that bought that first company threshing machine. And they ran that thing for years and years and once in a while one would drop out and somebody'd buy his share. But they used that- they bought it in 1915 and they run that company thresher ^{machine} until 1933. That was the last year we used it then we went into combines. 1935 was the first year of combines. Company threshing machine busted up and ^{they} pretty near all of 'em bought a combine or two guys'd go

together and buy a combine between 'em. Then pretty soon each one of 'em had ^{a combine}. The places kept getting bigger.

RM: When you were threshing with the company threshing machine, could you stay with sacked grain?

NC: No, when we bought that company threshing machine we went to bulk grain. Each man that had a share in the machine, why, he had a wagon and a tank- a wagon with a boattank bed on it, and they ^{usually} ~~would~~ haul from a hundred to about a hundred and forty bushels. Usually five horses. Each rig would haul to Kendrick oat mill. They had a concrete elevator there and that's the only place that would take the grain. That's how the sacks went out here and ^{the} bulk came in. Of course, everything's bulk now and has been for years and years.

RM: Did you ever drive wagon?

NC: I never drove a grain wagon in my life. I was on the pitching end. I was with the machine, my dad drove the grain wagon. I started to hauling when I was twelve years old. And I hauled until 1926. ^{I've hauled in every field on this ridge.} Hauled the bundle wagon. ^{Had a boatrack on it.} And when we got through cutting our grain if a neighbor wanted us to cut for him, we'd cut for him. But always cut for everybody in the company first. And they'd start in at one end one year and at the other end the other year. We were kind of strung out on the Ridge here. And that way nobody had to always be last every year. We'd rotate. And in 1926 Dad bought- they bought a one ton Chevrolet truck. ^{went to a bigger truck} And I got elevated from a bundler hauler to a truck driver. I drove that old Chevy. And there was part of 'em that was hauling with a wagon for a year or two. Then they all went to trucks. And of course, the trucks got bigger. The old one ton trucks didn't last very long. ^{went to a bigger truck} And that's about the way it was. Of course then we quit raising beans. Beans, we quit them years ago.

Beans was a good ground builder, but the worst trouble raising beans was you had to get your ground in shape to hold your moisture and that encouraged the erosion. Wouldn't have been so bad if you could have put the straw back on the ground and worked it in like you do peas. But they hauled the beans in and threshed 'em in the stack and they made excellent cattle feed, and they fed 'em to cattle. Cattle is crazy about bean ^{straw}. Good feed. So they just quit the beans because we couldn't compete with South Idaho irrigated beans. We'd get well, five, six and seven sacks here was a good yield, dry land farming, you know. And in South Idaho, why, they can get twenty sacks to the acre. ^{Irrigated beans,} We couldn't compete with the price, we didn't have no volume. We had to go out of business, that's all. Between that and being bad for the ground to erode, if it kept it up long we wouldn't have no farm. Just wash away.

RM: You said Sam Callison did a lot of hunting and fishing around here?

NC: Oh, yeah, he went everywhere. Sometimes I think he done too much. He should have stayed home and tended to business a little more, but he had a lot of fun hunting and fishing.

RM: Was the hunting and fishing pretty good around here?

NC: Oh, boy, it was second to none. Second to none. They could kill deer right here on the ranch when they first come here. And then there was a while when there's wasn't many deer around here and they went way back in the mountains to hunt deer and elk. The fishing was fantastic. Right ^{down here} down here in Bear Creek, I used to ride down there of an evening with a cayuse, why, you'd go down there and catch oh, fifty, sixty trout there in an hour, hour and a half. They weren't big, just nice pansized fish, you know. Dandy fish.

Mrs C:

No limit?

- NC: No limit. Everybody caught what they needed, they didn't waste 'em. There was lots of fish.
- RM: Did they smoke the fish or dry the fish?
- NC: No. Well, sometimes we'd can 'em. We'd can 'em. But if you want real good fishing, well, you go up above Kendrick about three miles above the mouth of Cedar Creek there, there's a little creek called Rock Creek. Go up on Texas Ridge usually about four fellows; I got in on that the last two, three trips up there- I was a kid- they'd take a couple of teams and hacks and go up there about four men, two to each rig and they'd go up on the old Van Lantle place and set their rigs about a mile and a half past where Roy Glen lives now, and unhitch ^{the} horses, and pack our beds and what little eats we took along and go down the canyon there, the Potlatch Canyon and we'd camp out one night. We'd fish in the evening and the next morning you'd come home. Well, we used to buy coal oil in five gallon cans and we'd usually come back with about ^{two} five gallon cans full of trout. And Salt 'em. We'd have fish all summer. They were bigger trout than what we got down here. Well, they was just about the length of a table knife, as I remember when I went ^{up} there. Once in ^a while you'd get a heck of a big one. I know Dad one time got one up there, a four-pounder. He was a dandy. Most of 'em were just about eight, ten inches long. And lots of 'em. You throwed a hook in a hole there and three or four come out after it. There was thousands of fish. ^{Good fish.} There was lots of salmon come up there them days. Unless you keep the spawn coming, you know, just come up there to spawn, you know. Them trout were small salmon.
- RM: The creeks were much steadier than-
- NC: Oh, yes, they ^{near} run nigh full of water all summer. They didn't go

right down dry, like they do now. There was timber everywhere ^{around}
That country
the headwaters. up there around Helmer and between
Troy and Deary and oh, where the highway is now, that was right back
in the wilderness them days. They was just starting to clear that
up in there. Just a few sawmills starting to operate in through
~~that land~~
. But that was all heavy timber country. And this creekal-
ways run a nice stream of water all summer long. Lots of grouse and
pheasants here. Go around the canyon here anytime and get you a
grouse or two. They've been awful scarce for quite a few years.
Just about the same as gone. There's a few natives, a few brush
pheasants yet. But the grouse, they're just about the same as gone.

RM: There's a covey right down the road here, isn't there?

NC: You mean quail?

RM: They might be quail.

NC: I see them every day. Well, there's a family of huns down there-
there's two families of 'em. One family down ^{here} toward the canyon here
they're pretty near grown. And the other'n down the road here is
about half grown, but between here and the end of the road there's
three or four coveys of quail. You see 'em pretty near every time you
go down there. They're all the way from- well, some of 'em's just
little fellows, they'll get up and fly off, but ^{they're small,} are some of 'em
you can't tell from the old ones, they're full grown. They get up
and go right off with the big ones. Lots of quail here one time.
I feed 'em down there in the haybarn. They're not afraid, you know.
And they'll come right in and eat and I take the wheat down there
and gravel, grit for them and I go down ^{to} feed the cows I ^{every once in a while} just take
along oh, a gallon or two of wheat. And I feed 'em inside because
the snow won't cover it. It's ncie and dry in there and they just

Board and room the same place, right inside the barn. And the dog, course she has the fun to flush 'em up and they fly up in the barn and set there on the crosspiece and look down at her and squeal and chirp, you know. I'll bet they get about as much fun out of it as she does! (Chuckles) The bob-white quail, we had thousands of them here in the early days. They're gone, I haven't seen 'em- a bob-white^{quail}, I don't think for the last ten years, but there was thousands of 'em in here. I don't know what was the matter, whether they just couldn't stand civilization, or what. I don't think the grouse- I don't think it was the hunting that done it, I think there was some disease that got into the grouse. Over on Salmon River, we used to go over there deer hunting and we'd kill all the grouse we'd need to eat. And there were thousands of 'em; I'm telling you, you get around a spring in the Salmon River Country- you know where Salmon River Country is, over there around Riggins and back in that country- and you'd get around a spring there in August or September and there'd be a hundred or more grouse there. Our dog would just run in- why, he'd get so excited he'd pretty near run himself in fits. And they'd just fly up in the first tree they come to, if it was a dead tree, it didn't make any difference, they'd fly up there and sit there. They'd look at the dogs, they weren't afraid of him. Tame like chickens. You go over there now and you won't hardly find a grouse. It wasn't hunters that got 'em. I'm satisfied that they got some kind of a disease, because the hunters never got 'em. That country wasn't hunted near as much as here and if it had a been there would have been grouse there when there wasn't any here. But they got some kind of a disease. Killed 'em off. But the brush pheasants- we called 'em brush pheasants- pheasants or natives. The Game Depart-

ment calls them ruffled (ruffed) grouse) It's the ones ^{like} you have there where you live. You go down in the brush, you'll see 'em.

RM: What did folks do here in the early days besides hunting and fishing?

NC: Oh, in the wintertime, why, we had literary over here at the school-house.

RM: What was that?

NC: Well, they'd get together and have a program. And somebody'd sing and they'd play games and tell some story on somebody you know, maybe dance a little bit, you know. Have an oyster feed, you know. People visited more in them days than they do now. Now they're so busy- people work hard now. But they don't visit with their neighbors. We used to go to church over here and the neighbor'd ask us home for dinner on Sunday or we'd ask somebody ^{home} with us. They don't do that nowadays. We haven't had church her for- For years and years- people nowadays, why, when Sunday rolls around, why, they get in the camper or Saturday night, you know, get in the camper or car and drive way over here somewhere or over there. Somebody over there comes over to visit you. As far as your neighbors visiting with your neighbors, you don't see 'em less you call 'em up on the telephone or pass him on the road and wave at him. When you're on one side of the fence and he's on the other side, why, you'll wave at him. But to just stop and visit, they just don't do that.

MRS. C: If you get sick.

NC: Oh, yeah, if you get sick, they're the best people in the world, or if you have a fire and burn out or something like that, you know. But people's so busy aworking that they don't have time.

RM: Weren't they busy working in those days?

NC: They didⁿt farm near as much.

RM: Do you think they work harder now than they did then?

NC: Welll, I'll tell you, in them days, they done everything the hard way. I can remember people on the Ridge here, a few of 'em made a living on forty acres of ground. Quite a few of 'em on eighty. Well, they'd have of course, their crops and it didn't cost 'em much to live, because they raised everything. They had their own meat and their own butter and eggs and vegetables. Cured their own meat. And sometimes they'd take some wheat ^{and have it} ground you know for graham, you know for mush, breakfast food. And about all they had to buy was salt and pepper and sugar and flour. And they didn't have to buy all their flour because they had some of that they'd have ground. And it didn't cost 'em very much to live because they raised practically all of it. Had their own meat and vegetables and that's a lot as far as getting through the winter. There was lots of apples- several big apple orchards here and there was, one, two, four prune orchards here and three prune dryers. Yeah, one, two, yeah, there were three dryers ^{on the ridge here}. Everybody- they sold prunes, these farmers that had these prune orchards. They'd dry prunes and sell 'em, you know. And everybody had lots of dried prunes to eat and it was very fine. They're darn good eating. I remember the standard price here for years and years was five cents a pound. And they got up- I remember John Johnson, he had the last, or J. L.- he had the last prune dryer here and he finally got up til the last he charged seven cents a pound, and people thought that was getting pretty steep for prunes, you know. But he sold 'em for seven cents a pound. There ain't been a prune dryer her for years and years and years. You go to the grocery store now and buy prunes and see what you pay for 'em! Of course, they're all California prunes, now.

RM: What other kinds of cooperation and getting together and stuff did people do?

NC: Oh, they had these neighborhood butchering bees, you know, there was usually two of them. They had one along Christmastime and had another one along-- The neighbors werent' all ready to butcher at one time. One guy's hogs would be later than another one. Wait til they put on pounds, get up to a certain size. And they used to butcher over at- well, it was originally Frank Benscoter-----. That's the place Dick lives on now. And Dick's dad was Harry, everybody called him Pete. And the old Gentleman^{Frank} Benscoter moved to Clarkston and Pete lived there until he died, and Dick's there now. And that was a meeting place and everybody done their butchering there.^{It was a several day job.} You gover^g there, and twelve or fifteen men and they had it fixed up, everything was handy. And you'd butcher a lot of hogs there in a day.

RM: How would you go about it?

NC: Well, of course, they killed the hogs and one guy he done the sticking and that was about all he done and then you'd put'em in the vat and scald 'em and you had a table on each side of the vat-

RM: Would there be a hoist system or something?

NC: You had ropes up around the hog and you'd stand up on one end of the rope and pull on the other, you'd just pull the hog right out of the vat. There's nothing to it. And you could scrape two hogs- one on each side at the same time, you know. And^{then} just pick a hog up, three or four men and put him on that big long pole there, you know. You could put fifteen or twenty hogs on that, and sometimes they had two poles, if they had more than enough for one pole full of hogs. And then in a day or two- we always done it in cold weather. And then we'd go back there and then they had a big power sausage grinder on a table in the garage there fixed up nice, had a stove in there. And we'd cut them hogs up and grind the sausage and grind the lard and the meat was all ready for curing. Everybody cured their own

meat. And when you took it home, why, it was ready to be cured. They all got together. One guy'd have a heck of a time trying to do it alone. But they all got together and it was kind of mass production or assembly line. Each guy had his job.

RM: Would it kind of be a party, too?

NC: Oh, yeah. We always had a big dinner. The women come in, you know and had a band^d-up dinner, you know. Had swell eats, you know. And while we was cutting all that meat up and doing all that, we done a lot of reminiscing, you know. And the young folks in the wintertime- Pretty near everybody had a big pond, and the ponds'd get froze over, we'd have skating parties. They'd build up a big fire out on the bank and they'd skate a while and then you'd go over by the campfire and stand around the campfire for a few minutes and then skate again. When they got through, why, whoever was putting on the skating party, why, they'd go up to the house and have a big oyster stew. They feed you.

RM: Big oyster stew?

NC: Yeah, oyster stew feed; oyster soup. And then they'd have coasting parties and they always ended up with an oyster feed. Big oyster stew feed.

RM: The oysters were shipped in?

NC: Well, they got canned oysters from the stores here, you know. Everybody had lots of milk, you know. And they had a lot of fun. They'd ski, you know. Most of 'em wasn't too good a skiers, but they had a lot of fun trying, you know. Big bonfires. And card parties. Pinochle parties, of course. And sleigh ride parties, too. Take a big bobsled with the grain bed on there, you know, like they'd take it off the wagon and put it on the bobsled in the wintertime to haul chop to Troy. There was a mill in Troy that ground chop

or oats and steamrolled it. And they never had one in Kendrick that I ever remembered of. And ^{everybody around here} wanted steamrolled oats, they'd load their oats on the bobsled and four horses and go to Troy. And in that same wagon they'd have sideboards- put sideboards above the regular bed and we'd have sleigh ride parties. Put some straw in the bottom there and quilts and horse blankets, you know. Boys and girls would set in there and course, sometimes they had footwarmers to keep their feet warm. ^{Sometimes} The boys was supposed to keep the girls from getting cold, of course, you know! They'd take care of that you know! And they had a lot of fun them days. Fun in them days, you know, kids nowadays probably wouldn't think much - they wouldn't get much fun out of it. I think people were happy and enjoyed themselves. Quite a change.

RM: In what other ways--? Were there barnraisings and stuff around here? That sort of thing?

NC: Not too many, once in a while there'd be a barnraising. But there wasn't too many. They'd get together sometimes and help somebody with a barn. As far back as I can remember, most all of 'em had a pretty good barn. That was all before my time. I can remember back to 1908 and '09 real well. But of course, they was here years before that. But the neighbors if anybody needed any help they'd always come in and help him out. *They're good at that.*

RM: And there were a lot more neighbors around here, too, weren't there?

NC: Yeah , there was over sixty families on the Ridge here at one time.

RM: On the whole Ridge?

NC: On the whole Ridge. Just from Mays down, from the Frank Mays place down, and there ain't a fourth that many now. Well, my dad went to school here in the old schoolhouse that George Haley uses for a garage

now. That was the first school on the Ridge. He went when there was sixty students in school; I went when there were forty-five. And now, this year, there's only five. So that's quite a comedown. And no kids to start; there ain't a kid on the Ridge to start school. There ^{ain't} a kid on the Ridge to start school. They're all in school, no babies growing up to go to school.

RM: Were there many-- a lot of times the early homesteaders were real characters, real kind of eccentric people, fit in a lot better with any kind of a pioneering situation. Was that true in this area here?

NC: I think so. Most of the people here were all-- well, they were all pioneers. They were all pioneers.

MRS. C: Older ones than you.

NC: Oh, yeah, lot of 'em older than me. They've all gone.

RM: Were there any particular characters?

NC: Oh, I don't know whether there was any characters or not. They were just the common run of people. I remember one time, was with a threshing machine and we was moving from ? , he was a member of the company machine, and we was moving from one neighbor to another and Sam stopped-- we come down by Sam Bigham's orchard and Sam Hogard was the guy on a bundle wagon and he stopped to climb over the fence to get some apples and there was a yellow jack nest on the ground, and while he was getting ^{the} apples, just about the time he got back to the wagon why, these yellow jackets got around his horses. He had two horses and a mule on this bundlewagon and they took off and he grabbed onto the back end and he finally got on the wagon and they went down the road from where George Haven's mailbox comes out, they run about a quarter of ~~a~~ mile down that road and there was a sharp turn, a real sharp turn, and this fence on the lefthand

side there ~~was~~- the fence was a bunch of rose bushes and the fence didn't amount to too much, but coming around that turn the horses turned it so sharp and they was going so fast that they got hooked into the fence, and they took that fence out from that corner clear down to ^{Jessup} place. (Chuckles) Cleaned it! And I come along a few minutes after cause Sam give me an apple and I followed up, course I wasn't in the runaway. He couldn't stop 'em, them bees, you couldn't hold 'em, they just went crazy. But he hooked that fence there at that corner right north of the ^{Jessup} place and they took that whole string of fence out, completely, hooked onto the back of the wagon what wasn't scattered up the road. The whole works there had to be rebuilt. That was quite a runaway. But the yellow jackets caused it. The horses wouldn't run away but them jackets got to stinging them and they took off! And he was over there agetting some apples from Sam Bigham and he just got to the back end of the wagon and they took off and he grabbed on and finally got up in the wagon, but he couldn't stop 'em, he couldn't hold 'em. (Chuckles)

RM: Were runaways pretty common around there?

NC: Oh, yeah, we used to have a runaway every once in a while, you know. Horses in them days were pretty fiery. Yeah, I've seen several good runaways.

RM: They just get a notion in their heads or would something scare them?

NC: Oh, something'd scare 'em. They'd be at the threshing machine, you see, standing there, the horses would be, half asleep, you know, if you was pitching bundles in the machine and the noise of the machine and the belt come unlaced and started slapping, popping, ^(End of Side A) And after that belt'd go to slappin' you know it'd wake the horses up and they'd just take off. And by the time the bundle hauler could get

in the wagon, they was long gone, you know. And they was pretty hard to stop. They'd take off, maybe somebody out around the machine or another bundle hauler would jump off and grab the horses by the bits and they'd stop. But I've seen several runaways right around the machine.

RM: Did the bundle hauler have to drive the wagon and pitch the bundles?

NC: Oh, yeah, you betcha! He'd wrap his lines up on the front of the wagon, you know, the Jacob staff they called it, and he'd stand there and the pitcher'd throw the bundles up and he'd place 'em, you see. They was out in the field and he'd haul them into the threshing machine. Yeah, them horses, you know, they'd get scared. Some noise like that'd wake 'em up and they'd take off!

RM: Did they ever run away like when they were hauling a threshing machine or things like that?

NC: Oh, usually bundle haulers. I saw one grainwagon one time that had a runaway. Cliff Davidson down here, where Bob Smith lives, he had a runaway down on the Roy place. And the only thing ^{WAS} the horses got bumfoozled and they started up quite a steep hill and they couldn't run very good uphill, and they run up there and was getting slowed down and the pitcher grabbed 'em by the bits and stopped 'em. But, boy, if they get started down hill or on the level, boy, they was off to the races! They was just long gone! Oh, we had a lot of fun. We worked hard in the daytime and of a night after supper, we'd go out- they never fed their horses their grain til just before we went to bed, because when they'd come in of an evening, they'd be hot and sweaty, and they'd drink a lot of water and we'd let 'em eat their hay and they'd get cooled off and then you'd make your bed down- you know we slept right with your horses, right beside,

just a few feet away. Every farmer always had a haystack for threshers, for the horses, and you'd throw some hay down on the ground and roll your bed out on that and the last thing you'd feed your horses ~~their~~ grain because they was cooled off, wouldn't get sick. You feed a horse oatchop when he's hot and sweaty and he'd have colic. He won't every time, but you stand a chance of it. But we'd go out of a night and set around and talk a while and then we'd roll our beds out and feed our horses and go to bed. Sleep right there, all sleep along together beside of our horses. And if one of 'em got loose of a night or something, somebody'd wake up. A horse once in a while he'd get loose and he might wander off or take off for home.

RM: Sit around a campfire and swap tall tales or something?

NC: Oh, yeah, they used to tell some pretty good stories. I know one night I was over at Sam Bigham's- Walt Bigham- Sam's Walt's dad- It was bright moonlight and I woke up in the night and somebody's horses got loose and he was eating hay out from under the end of my bed, pretty near up my feet! I woke up and there was that horse. He wasn't bothering me or anything, only he was just eating the hay from under my feet; bright moonlight night. I got up and got the horse and tied him up again.

RM: Was there much difference between Kendrick and Juliaetta and Troy? Was there a difference in those towns?

NC: Oh, I don't think so.

RM: Juliaetta, somebody told me, had a reputation of being sort of a hard town. Do you think that was true?

NC: Oh, I don't know, all these towns had some characters in them. Juliaetta, you've heard of how it got it's name?

RM: Yeah.

- NC: Julia and Etta Snider. Two Sniders.
- Mrs. C: Most everybody at Troy were Swede.
- NC: They were Norwegian. The Swedes were at Troy.
- MRS. C: Mostly Swedes. And some of them probably couldn't speak English when they started to school.
- NC: Did you ever see a picture of Troy in the early days?
- RM: Uh-huh.
- NC: And Kendrick was named^a after railroad man; his name was Kendrick. That's how they got the name, Kendrick. He was a Northern Pacific Railroad man.
- RM: You mean it didn't make much difference whether you went to Kendrick or Juliaetta or Troy to do your shopping?
- NC: The prices were about the same, I think, every^{place}. We went to Kendrick and Troy more because, if you went down this way you went to Kendrick, ^{Juliaetta} up further and if we had chop to roll and steam the feed- we used to go to Troy quite a bit. Troy was a good shopping town. Big store there where the school bus garage is now was Olson and Johnson. Big general store there; good store. Yeah, there was a lot of nice people. We liked 'em very much in Troy.
- RM: You were very young when the Kendrick fire happened, weren't you?
- NC: One fire was before I was born.
- RM: There was one in 1904, too. ^{NC:} Well, that was the year after I was born. I've seen pictures of it. ^{It's too far back} Course my folks was here during the flood, they remembered it well. And what caused the flood was the railroad train come down the road with a bunch of ties- a bunch of rails - and the engineer's first trip coming down from Troy and he didn't realize the grade was a s steep as it is and coming out of Troy for a mile and a half or two miles there and then it jumps

off and gets steeper and he was going too fast and when he realized he was going too fast why he couldn't hold it and it got away from him ? and the engineer and fireman, why they went back there in the caboose and cut loose and on that turn right there on the upper end of Main Street there it jumped the track. Filled the creek full of them cars and that's what started the current- Potlatch Creek turned the water right down Main Street. And it was in the spring of the year and the water was high and it just plugged the creek and it just went over the track and went right down through town. That's what caused the flood. ^{that time} Course the engineer and fireman they didn't make it, see, they drowned. The rest of 'em cut loose.

RM: When you went to school, was it just a one room school?

NC: Yeah, ^{over} on the Ridge here, just a one room school.

RM: What were the school hours , and how long in the year did you go?

NC: Well, it took up at nine o'clock and let out at four. In the winter-time ^{we} took up at nine and let out at three-thirty and only had thirty minutes noon. All about the same, except we just didn't have quite so much time to snowball and coast at noonhour. Didn't have school buses, everybody walked. If it got too bad, why, the folks would take 'em to school on the sled. There was an awful lot of walking done! Them days.

RM: Do you think it was harder on a teacher with those one room schools?

NC: Oh, it was a lot harder.

RM: Did you give her a hard time?

NC: No, I won't say they give her a hard time, oh, there was always some characters, you know. But, she just had more to do, ^{she was} teaching eight grades. And some of them characters, you know was pretty near as

old as she was. And she not only was trying to teach 'em, you know, but she had to run a reformatory at the same time! (Chuckles) And she had her hands full.

RM: You taught school, didn't you? (to Mrs. Callison)

MRS. C: Uh-huh.

RM: Did you teach in a one room schoolhouse?

MRS. C: Three years, I did.

RM: Did you notice much difference between teaching the

MRS. C.: Well, yes. Well, the first year I taught I had twenty-some- I didn't have all eight grades, some of the grades were missing. And then the next year I had about the same number and the next year I only had about six kids, so it wasn't very ^{big} of a job. And then when I went to the city to teach in Twin Falls, I had about forty, but I only had one grade so even that, it wasn't much different. You couldn't give ^{much} individual help to that many than a fewer number and more grades. Then I taught mostly just one grade.

RM: Tell me the story about Martin Thomas and the feist.

NC: Oh, yes, he was my uncle. He homesteaded over in the Genesee Country before he come over here, ^{that} was in the early '70's. He was a bachelor, he hadn't got married. Just him and his feist and they had a little old sod shack; one room shack over there. And the house set up on the ground on blocks for a ways and then he had a board tacked around the bottom. And there were quite a few wolves in the Genesee Country in ^{them} days and these wolves would come up next to his house because they could see the light and ^{they'd} stand out there and bark at it. And this feist he was awful brave, he was inside the house, you know, with my uncle and he'd just bark and he wanted to get outside awful bad to get at these wolves. And one night they got so close that

my uncle decided he'd get the gun and open the door and he thought with the light in the house he could see 'em out and maybe get a shot at 'em. He opened the door and the feist shot between his legs and went on out and he didn't come back. Pretty soon he shut the door and he heard the feist coming. He was just squealing bloody murder and of course, these wolves was just about to get him and he hit that side of the house just kerbang and grunting and squealing and he went under the house. Well, he didn't see the feist anymore and the next morning he got up and there was a hole and the hole wasn't quite as big as the feist and he called and the feist- he couldn't get out. He got through the hole with these wolves after him but he couldn't get out, and he said this hole, the dog was kind of a red-brown dog, he said this hole was just lined with red dog hair! (Chuckles) So he had to tear a board off to get the dog out from under the house.

- RM: Was there much trouble with ^{predators} and animals coming around and bothering the domestic stock?
- NC: Oh, I don't think there was as many coyotes around in them days as there is now.
- RM: Were there bears?
- NC: There were bear here. We was always getting a bear around the Ridge. There were bear everywhere. ^{here} They didn't bother anything. A bear, you know, he eats- he's pretty much of a vegetarian. He eats the berries and-
- RM: Didn't they get into the orchards?
- NC: Oh, yeah, they'd get into the prune and apples, you know. Bear'd tear a tree all to pieces. He'd just set down there and reach up with his arm this way and pull the limb down to get the fruit and he'd tear the limb ^{right} off'n the tree. He pruned the tree, but he done

a pretty severe job og it. He didn't figure on next year. He was thinking right at the present.

MRS. C: We had one kill a sheep here though, not too many years ago.

NC: Yeah, we had one kill a sheep-we had some sheep here a number of years ago and a bear got a sheep down *there in the draw.*

MRS. C: They particularly liked sheep.

MC: Coyotes like sheep too. They'd rather kill a sheep than anything. If you got sheep around, *you'll have* coyotes not far away.

Used to be lots of fruit raised on the Ridge here; apples. There was three packing houses.

RM: Three apple packing houses?

NC: Yeah. Lee Carlton had one, and one over here on the Evans corner and then Chris Myers had one down on the--

RM: How would they ship them out?

NC: They just hauled them to market. Pick the apples and ^{stored} them in this house. They'd have a house there with sawdust in the walls to keep 'em from freezing, you know and they packed the apples in there sell 'em all winter.

RM: Just locally?

NC: Oh, they'd sell local and sometimes they'd ship 'em. Carloads of apples. Them orchards has been gone long years ago.

RM: Why did they stop doing it- a fruit growing country?

NC: Well, I don't know. They just quit the fruit and went more into to farming; crops. Had more cattle and farmed more. In the early days there was lots of orchards.

RM: No particular reason to stop them?

NC: Well, I don't know, ^{MAYBE} except that I think that there was just more in the grain.

- MRS. C: And as the country was developed, there were more insects and things that bothered and they had to spend more time with the orchards, and they didn't have time for one thing to do it.
- NC: And then Wenatchee and Yakima, of course, that's an ideal fruit country. That's an ideal fruit country and they just pulled the orchards out and went to grain and let them fellows raise the fruit.
- RM: Most of them took out their own private orchards,
- NC: Yeah, there are very few fruit trees around anymore. Very few. And it's got so now you have to spray all the time because there's so many insects and bugs and stuff. Scale. And they spray and work with them all the time. A man that earns his living raising fruit or vegetables here, he earns a living, believe me. It's hard work.
- RM: There didn't used to be much of an insect problem around here?
- NC: No, I don't think it was near as bad as it is now. We've got bugs for everything now.
- MRS C.: We never had earwigs.
- NC: It's a continual battle all the time now with the bugs and earwigs. Weevils. We've always had yellow jackets, alright, that's one thing. We've had them as long as I can remember. A lot of these- every year it seems like the more spraying we do the more we have to spray.
- MRS. C.: Break the balance. The aphids used to be eaten up by the ladybug and now there's not ^{very} many ladybugs.
- NC: Well the dusting, you see and spraying. ^{they can really go.} When you upset the balance of nature, that's a bad thing.
- RM: When was it that you started farming on your own?
- NC: 19 and 35. I was farming with my dad, but I went to farming myself in 1935.
- RM: You were using equipment by then?

NC: Yes, it's all horse-

RM: Oh, so you were still using horses?

NC: Well, ^{we bought} the first tractor was a Caterpillar 20- we bought it in '33. The year before I was married. Dad and I farmed for years together after Mother died. In 1935 Dad he moved to Lewiston, and I've farmed ever since.

RM: What differences do you see between the work you did when you were farming with horses and the work you did farming with ~~h~~ equipment?

NC: With a tractor?

RM: Yes.

NC: You farmed so much faster. You could farm a lot more land.

MRS. C.: ^{More} Efficiently ~~too~~.

NC: Yeah, it's a whole lot better. Better equipment, better machines. It's an improvement. You could do so much more. A tractor don't get tired. And a team, you know, you take the gangplow, you know, five acres was a big day's work.

RM: You had to rest the team?

NC: Oh, yeah, you had to rest, go up a steep hill, you know, you had to stop and rest at the top of the hill and let 'em get their wind.

RM: How many horses would you work on a gangplow?

NC: Seven or eight. Seven and eight. Fourteen inch plow. Two bottom, fourteen inch plow. You'd use seven or eight horses.

RM: Would you use the same team all day?

NC: Oh, yeah.

RM: And the same team every day?

NC: Sometimes you'd plow all week, every day, unless it was stormy or bad weather. But you didn't put in many hours.

RM: ~~What?~~

CN: I say, you didn't put in long hours.

RM: You didn't?

CN: No. Course, sometimes and then the days were short. You get out there in the morning in the wintertime, you know, and it's just getting daylight at seven o'clock. You get out there probably eight o'clock. Course a guy done a pretty good day's work before he ^{got} in the field milking cows and slopping the pigs, and doing jobs like that, you know.

RM: What kind of work did you do in the wintertime?

CN: Well, we usually cut wood in the wintertime. Everybody cut their own wood, you know, pile it and cure it out and that was his wood for the next year. Dried out in the summertime. Yeah, everybody cut wood. So we always had something to do. Course, you didn't have to work everyday at it.

RM: Don't you think farmers these days work harder or work longer than you farmers?

CN: Well, it's different- it's different work. Nowadays you go out there ^{with} a big tractor you know, and you can go over forty acres pretty fast. This tractor driving now with these airconditioned cabs and all that, that's a lot different. Used to sit out there in the breeze and freeze to death. When you plowed with a team of horses you get cold and you tie the lines up and get off and walk, keep warm.

RM: Was the gangplow a riding plow?

CN: You could ^{either} ride or walk, either one. Just tie the lines up, you know and get off and walk behind. The team knew as much as the driver, they follow the furrow, they didn't bother that way. But it was a slow operation. Everything you done- it was nothing like it is now you know; slow.

- RM: How many acres did you farm when you farmed with your father?
- CN: 240.
- RM: That 240 acres; that was pretty average for what two men could do with horses?
- CN: Oh, yes. Two men, in them days, like the equipment we had and horses you had enough to do. Everybody raised beans, you know. Patch of field corn, had a few pigs, cow, horses, chickens. That was all work to take care of 'em.
- RM: Most people have told me that when they worked with horses, they worked a lot harder than--
- CN: You put in longer hours. You got up in the morning, you had to get up and feed your horses before breakfast; curry and harness them, you know. And if you was lucky, ^{if} you had a boy or two to milk the cows, and if you didn't, why, you'd have to milk 'em. That was all done before breakfast. And you eat breakfast and got out and went to work. You done a pretty good sized day's work before you got in the field.
- RM: Then you follow the usual course of your spring work- being your planting and all.
- CN: It would take about a week to get your horses toughened in in the spring. Turn them out all winter you know and they'd get soft, you know. Had to take 'em pretty easy in the spring, you know. You couldn't go out there and hit the ball right off, you had to toughen them in.
- RM: How long did you keep work horses, how long would your work horses-
- CN: Oh, that would vary, you know. Some horses get colic or you'd lose him. A horse, a pretty good horse, ^{till he gets up} twelve, fifteen years old.
- RM: Could work that whole time?
- CN: Well, from five- about four years, you'd break him at three or four.

Some guys were harder on horses than others; depended on the man. Some guys were good to their horses and some were mean to 'em. Some didn't feed 'em like they should, they'd starve 'em. And that's no good. If you got good fat horses and up and raring to go, you get a lot more work done than if you don't feed 'em anything.

MRS. C.: Men that I knew were all proud of their horses and tried to have beautiful horses. Not only so they'd get a good lot of work out of but they had pride and liked their horses.

CN: You're good to 'em, hitch 'em up and they're foxy, raring to go.

RM: Did you have favorite horses?

CN: Oh, I don't know, I suppose a feller might have one or two favorites. But I liked 'em all.

RM: None that stand out in your mind?

CN: Oh, no.

MRS. C.: Some of your riding horses.

CN: Had an old gray mare used to ride to high school. That's how I got mu education was on an old gray Hamiltonian mare.

RM: You mean- how you got your education?

CN: Well, we didn't have school buses in them days. I rode her to Kendrick to high school.

RM: *through the bad season?*

CN: *Yeah.*
One time it got so cold- oh, we boarded in town a while- got down twenty-five below zero and that's pretty cold to ride horseback to high school. But Walt May and I rode four years together and Jack May rode, he rode part of the time. Jack was younger, so he didn't get in on the first of it. Yeah farm kids, the boys- the girls- the folks would board them in town with a family and the boys, we had to ride horseback. Every barn in Kendrick was full of horses.

You had a barn to keep your horse in, that was something. The boys would- when school was out, they'd get on the horses and go home. They didn't have to worry about having something to do.

RM: How long did it take you?

CN: Oh, it was four miles and a half. Oh, it'd take you, oh, better than an hour. You couldn't go down hill too fast or you'd have Stiff. stoved your horse up. Couldn't run down hill, that's bad. But haul hay down there and grain, you know, before the bad weather for the horses. The boys they all rode horseback. Come home at night they usually had three, four cows to milk. And get up in the morning you had to milk them cows before you ^{Went} to school. Get up and feed your horse, and saddle the horse and milk the cows and come in and eat breakfast. And after breakfast, if there wasn't anybody else, you'd have to wash the dishes. Then you had to clean up and go to school. Nine o'clock rolled around pretty fast.

RM: You do that for four years?

CN: In the wintertime there was a time or two ^{there} it got awful cold, I boarded for a month or so. I got my high school education on a horse! The rest of 'em all did the same way. We was all in the same boat. Boys all rode horseback.

RM: Didn't that kind of get in the way, like if you wanted to go and play on the baseball team?

CN: Well, it didn't help. Or basketball or anything like that. It was pretty bad that way. Country kids didn't have much- didn't have an even break with the town boys.

MRS. C.: You used to play though.

CN: I used to play some. But we didn't have the chance that the town boys ^{did}. We didn't have football then around here. Just basketball

and baseball.

RM: What would you do to make up for it?

NC: Well, we had work at home. Took care of that. Unemployment,

We didn't have to worry about having something to do. We had things to do.

RM: When did you start working with your father? When did you start helping him out with the farm work, and just doing chores and stuff?

NC: Oh, I don't know. First bundles I ever hauled for the threshing ~~team~~ was in 1915. I was twelve years old. And from then on, why, I done a lot of work. ^{right along} Course, I didn't go out and do heavy work, lifting sacks or something like that, you know.

MRS. C.: In the summertime you did.

NC: I pitched a lot of hay, done a lot of hoeing in the garden and I plowed of course in the summertime. Plowed. Plowed beans, cultivate beans.

RM: How old were you when you first started taking a man's load of work on around the farm?

NC: Oh, fifteen. I was as tall at fifteen as I am now, course, never got very ~~ta~~ll. I was always short. The rest of the boys done the same thing, too. The farms boys always started working when they were young. Took the place of a man for a long time, us kids did.

End of transcript.

Transcribed by Frances Rawlins, November 1, 1977