HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON First Interview

Interviewed by: Karen Purtee

Oral History Project Latah County Museum Society I. IndexII. Transcript

I. Index

HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON

Troy; b. 1899		
school teacher,	homemaker	r. 2 hours
minute page		
Side A 00 1		Born in Minnesota; a little about her parents. Living in South Dakota: first memories, swallowing a barley straw, the first pair of shoes. Living in Orchard tract south of Spokane, dairy farm in Valley, Washington, play, school drills; father works in machine shop in the city and had troubles.
		Discovered Troy; train ride to move to Troy with pets in boxes, Scandinavian lumberjacks on train, arrived April 1, 1912; stayed at Greer Hotel, Griff Torance who has sold them his farm comes for them in a wagon hub deep in mud on Main Street. Description of farm. James Pence builds barn in 1917.
15 6		To school, disappointed to be put back a grade; walking 2 miles; snow 6 feet on the level the first winter, crust in Spring, coasting and skis. Creek had fish; why it no longer runs year around; going to school by bobsled, by horse and ending up walking. School lunches, lard buckets around the stove, tobacco cans for better lunchboxes. Early boyfriend with bicycle.
24 10)	Water on the farm, well and creek, cistern on hill piped water into the house; going modern with tub and toilet. House- hold duties: dishes, breadmaking, ironing, the wash and how it dried in winter. Working with Dad, milking, haying.
Side B 00 13	13	Little sister at the stream nearly drowns; first fifle, shooting squirrels, going hunting for grouse, coasting with the dog. Imagination play "fancy ladies", paper dolls.
07 15		Sold cream from dairy, uses of milks, mother sold eggs. Smokehouse for meat, canning beef. Having fun. Pine squirrels for pets, casteroil and Mother Crows cures one and kills one. Sleeping in her pockets, returning her pet squirrel to the wild.
14 18		Grif Torrance has a pet owl, how an owl eats mice. Melvin Marsh's pet ground squirrel, pittingpotatoes and carrots, root cellar made with timber.
17 19		The one room rural school; recess games, Pump-Pump Pullaway, Run Sheep Run, Steal Sticks, snowball fights

Helena Cartwright Carlson

m	iinute p	page			
Side B (continued)					
	(00111111110	,	in winter, spell downs, Clap In - Clap Out, and Musical Chairs. Singing, programs, dialogues (plays), and recitations; community get-togethers, little newspapers, basket socials.		
	27	23	Water in school, bucket with dipper and improvements; wood stove for heat; books, tests, 8th grade state tests, number books, consolidation, independant workers of rural school, teachers read to class.		
Side C					
	00	25	Importance of school to community social life; after consolidation social life at standstill; the literary society, various forms of get-togethers; Big Meadow played Rook.		
	05	26	Games: Poor Pussy, Post Office, Who's Got the Key, old folk dances like Virginia Reel, Gustav Skoll . Her father's disapproval of bona idedancing, Black Bottom and Charleston. Mother had parts in programs.		
	10	29	Big Meadow nationalities; Father looked Norwegian and was well accepted even tho' he was English. Sister has hurt feelings when left out of conversation by Swedish speaking girlfriends. Remembering Austrian family in Valley, Washington The helpless teacher; the father mixing his pronouss. No effort to translate for others by Swedish or Norwegians in Troy, determined to be bad manners. Determination of parents.		
	17	32	A highlight of the year, hanging May Baskets with candy and flowers. Helena and sister deliver May baskets to two Norwegian bachelors in secrecy.		
	19	33	Christmas programs at school and church; dinner with plum pudding. Raising turkeys, owls and coyotes caused trouble. Trouble with beavers.		
	22	34	'Baching in Troy to go to high school; didn't want to teach, but took \$25 loan for start from father. To Lewiston Normal School; teaching on Driscoll Ridge; 2 problem students; teaching at Big Meadow with younger sister Hester in 8th grade.		
Side D					
	00	37	Stink bugs in school; kids were independant workers; dictionary well used. School subjects.		

Helena Cartwright Carlson

minute pa	ge	
13	6	Hays shooting; early Troy; roads; floods. Colvill Reservation.Indians see while the family lived in Washington.To Moscow across country; charging for drinking water at an
10	IS	early Moscow fair. Father's cars: Model A Ford, horse hair, Dodge. Going to Troy. Sunday school at Methodist Church. Fair
4	.5	Day in Troy; jelly judging story. Two Lutheran churches, Swedish and Norwegian; other churches. List of schools she taught at. After marriage they rented
24 4	.9	their house and moved to camp at Elk River.

with Karen Purtee

II. Transcript

This conversation with HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON was recorded at home near Troy on July 6, 1975. The interviewer was KAREN PURTEE.

KAREN PURTEE: I thought it would be nice if we started back where you said you were living before you came here and why your father decided to come here, and then about your train ride and all that was part of that. HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON: You mean clear back to Minnesota?

KP: Sure, why not?

CARLSON: Well, of course, I can't remember much about that. But I was born in Minnesota and my parents moved- oh, in fact, I guess my father lived in South Dakota, and he was courting my mother in Minnesota and he came over there. And $\frac{1}{\Lambda}$ when they got married they moved to- I don't know how come I was born in Minnesota, if they were living in South Dakota; that's a good question, you see I can't remember because I was too young.

Apparently.

CARLSON: Anyway, we were in South Dakota. About the first instance of anything that I can remember and that was the time I swallowed a barley straw. We were on the way to church and it was in the winter in a bobsled and what I had a barley straw in my mouth for, but anyway, it got a hold and it commenced to crawl down and crawled and crawled and mother said, "Don't swallow, don't swallow." And got the team turned around and headed for home. And you know what I did, I just swallowed and swallowed just as hard and fast as I could and finally I said, "It's down, it's gone!" But it was too late so we just kept on going. And then I remember of getting a pair of shoes. It must have been there and I was so tiny I can't remember, but, except they said, "How do

they feel?" And I was a little bit of a kid sitting there, "Oh, fine."

And father missed me

went outside and when he came back I'd gone back inside because I wanted another pair of shoes. Those $d_1d_{n'}+f_{i+}$ apparently.

Then we came out West and settled in an orchard tract south of Spokane. That orchard business wasn't suitable to my dad, he didn't want to raise fruit, so they bought a place up north of Spokane at Valley, Washington, where he wanted to raise cows; dairy. He was interested in dairying. So they had a large herd of dairy cattle and amongst them were some wild ones, wild cows and the only one that could handle them was my dad. And so when he'd have to be gone he'd have to get someone else and they had 'em all- oh, timbers to hold them so that when anyone would milk them they'd have to sit on the outside and reach underneath these timbers cause they kicked like anything mules. Fought like fiends, you just can't imagine that was as wild as those cows were. But they weren't all wild. But anyway, we were there I think it was four years. And that's where I started to school. Well, when I was south of Spokane I had got old enough, I guess, but my mother had taught me so I could read and I'd learned a few lessons in obedience there, because that's when I had the little doll buggy and my sister had a doll buggy and we were wheeling it around the field and we wanted to go over to the neighbors and she said we couldn't, so we wheeled around the fields and wheeled around the fields til we got real close, we got to the fence that was separating us from the neighbors and we decided as long as we had got that close we'd just slide under the fence and go in just long enough to say "Hello." and Mother found out, She Said no, leave. Which we did. But when we got back we got a good paddling. So we didn't try that anymore. (Chuckles) But anyhow- after we'd moved to Valley, I went to school there and it took me six weeks to finish the first grade because my mother had done a real good job of teaching

me, so I ended the first grade. I suppose maybe we got clear to the end of the term or something, anyway, I was very shy and very fearful there. And we had a teacher- I suppose I would have been in the second or third grade and we had a little teacher, her name was Tillie Cole, by the way, and she was one of these, I think she'd made a resolution that before she finished that term of school she was going to give everybody in school a good licking! And I think she did. She missed me someway or other, but I got threatened if I ever did another stunt like I had done, which was just- we were practicing a drill for a program and I stopped too soon in the drill, I was supposed to have gone clear around the room, instead I stopped at the end where I was supposed to wind up and she said, "If you ever do that again, you're going to get a whipping!" $T d_1 dn't do t A gatn.$

KP: What kind of a drill?

- CARLSON: Yeah, a drill, oh, I suppose there were about ten, twelve kids and they lined up and I was one of the little ones at one end, there was another girl, a little one at the other end, and they divided, see, and they'd go like this and they make fancy movements-
- KP: Oh, it was a walking drill?
- CARLSON: Yes, a walking drill. And I was at this one end and we were supposed to go and meet like this, see, some way or other and I was supposed to wind - go clear across and wind up at this end and when I got to that end, I stopped. And that spoiled the looks of the drill, I stopped, yet I was supposed to have gone clear around and come back.

KP: Did you do that to music?

CARLSON: Yes, to music.

KP: Yes, to music, huh?

CARLSON: They'd put on drills, that was one thing they used to do in school.

That was one of their fancy things they did, was put on fancy drills. They'd dress 'em and fix 'em up real pretty and they must have been beautiful. I'm sure they were.

KP: For their parents to come and see?

And they'd have the program for the parents to come. And so, CARLSON: Yes. I just remember that one. And my little younger sister, I remember she got whopping! She was daydreaming, sitting looking out the window thinking of things outside, I guess, and she got threatened once, I believe she was threatened once, the next time she got it! (Chuckles) I felt worse than she did, I guess. Anyway then- My dad said if he could find a place- No, he decided that he'd sell out, he didn't like it there, so after we'd been there for four years, why, he moved to, oh, it must have been- moved to Spokane, in transition from one place to another til he found another place. So we lived in Hillyard and he worked in the machine shops. But he wasn't cut out for a machineshop man. They had more trouble that winter that we were there, I'm sure, than they 'We ever had. He was sick and got hurt. And everybody was sick and terrible things happen to them. So, my dad then started out and he said if he could find a place where they could raise grain and hay, he was going to get it and go back into the dairying. And I don't remember how it happened, anyway how he happened to hear about Troy. Anyway he came to Troy and bought, I believe it's an eighty acre farm out here and he came back. And we were all so thoroughly delighted because we were going to move back on we were happy as larks to get the chance to move back. And while we were in Hillpard we had acquired a little kitten which we named Tommy and a little brown pullet, chicken had come there which turned into a

Lot of those,

She pullet. was just a chicken when we got her; how we acquired her I don't know. Anyway, she had grown up to a nice pullet and we couldn't bear to leave and not take our kitten and our pullet with us. So that was our livestock! They fixed us each a box so my sister carried one and I carried the other and we boarded the train carrying our livestock with us! And we came on the train to Troy and there were a lot of men on the train, and they were talking a language we never had heard. We couldn't understand what they were talking about and a lot of 'em got off at Troy. And afterward, we heard that they were lumberjacks, and they had been to Spokane for a weekend or something, I guess, which was the big highlight of the lumberjacks at those times. They'd then they'd go and have a gay time in work and earn some money 01° the city! And apparently these were returning from a gay time in the city. And they used to say that the trainmen couldn't understand them either, but they thumped their hip pocket and if they felt a snuss can or hit a snuss can they threw them off at Troy. See, they were Scandinavians. Well, anyway, we arrived April first 1912 in Troy. And we stayed all night in Greer Hotel, which was located where Jamie Arnetts- on that corner. There was a hotel there and we stayed there all night. And Griff Torrance came down to get us the next day in a lumber wagon, practically hub deep in mud. That was Main Street at that time. Mud everywhere. And he was an oddball of a guy with a funny Talked real funnyvoice, which we got quite a kick out of. He had a squeeky voice. But he took us out to the farm and there we were! And the house still looks just like it did at that time. It may be a different color, I'm not sure, because it's had two, three coats of paints in the years, but it's a big square house; two story house sitting on a knoll and there it still sits. Only at that time when we got there, the trees

came clear down to the back of the house. Out of the eighty acres, I hate to say how many was in cultivation, but the flat wasn't covered with trees, the meadow, and that's about all that wasn't I think. The rest was trees.

KP: Did your father do the clearing then?

CARLSON: They cleared. They cut trees and cut brush and piled sticks Yes. and burned. And we had a real good time doing it and hated every minute of it, I suppose! Us kids. But since then, I've learned to like that kind of work. You know, I thought it was real nice, but all of us, we worked out there and cleared land. In 1931 the big fire went through out there and took the trees over across the creek and so that has been cleared since. Most of it's in cultivation now, except one little section, I guess still has trees. So it doesn't look quite like it did. We left a grove up back of the house for our picnics and things like that, which we liked very much to do. And then we raised carrots for the cows. My dad went into cows, of course, Jerseys. And we raised the cows- in fact, Mother used to say that those cows, she said would wade belly deep in water to get over to Tim sure they did the pump where Dad would fill the tub for them. (Chuckles) Anyway, they had a barn- they built the barn, James Pence, his name was, he lived up there, built a barn and it's still standing sturdily. They claimed he was one of the best carpenters around. 1917 I believe the barn was built. Wish they'd put a nice coat of red paint on it and make it look pretty. It was painted but it needs a new coat again.

KP: Who owns the place now?

CARLSON: Melvin Marsh. Anyway, while we were there went to school and we were quite unhappy when we went to school because because we had gone to this city school in Spokane and we thought we were quite smart. And

when we got down here they set us back a grade because we weren't up to where they were. And that was a blow to our ego, of course! I think I was a fifth grader or six grader, I thought I'd made the sixth grade up there and I got chucked back into the fifth. I think maybe the main reason was because they probably didn't have a sixth grade out there and they didn't need an extra grade. (Chuckles) That's the way they did in the rural schools. I know we had a young teacher when I was supposed to have been in the seventh grade and she didn't have any other seventh graders so I was put in the eighth grade and missed the seventh grade, and that was not the thing to do because the seventh grade lays the foundation for the eighth grade in those days, so I had to take the eighth grade two years, which was a blow also to my ego. Anyway, then we had about two miles to school, I guess. We walked to school. And we walked there across some -- when the road was good and the weather was good enough, why, we walked and we did a lot of walking. But in the winter when it was real bad and snow- that first winter we were there it was six thev did have feet on the level. And I remember how excited we were when that snow was on, we tunnelled- we just had more fun in that snow. We never had heard of such a thing before, like that much snow. And when it started to thaw in the spring, why it crusted over and made crust, so it made the best coasting you could ever imagine. But our first experience with it when it had crusted over- I remember yet how excited- we were almost in hysterics and we went out, \ldots Th e moon was shining so bright and we'd just gone out there and we found out we could walk on that snow it was so hard and crusty. And I can just remember my sister and I just practically in hysterics, we just screamed because we could walk on the snow. We came in yelling at our parents.

"Oh, we can walk on the snow!" And here we were. You just can imagine YOUN9 kids just galloping around out there. Then we found those two out that it made wonderful coasting and I tried even to do some skiing but my sister and I didn't get too well along on our skiis because our skiis weren't weren't trained, one wanted to go east and the other one west and north or south. We spent most of our time falling down. But I know the folks used to go out and coast with us. We had nice coasting hills and they'd go coasting too and that was fun. But, anyway, back to our school- or should I mention about the creek going through the meadow? We had a beautiful creek through there. It's still there when the water's high, there's still a creek there and it was lined with the trees and bushes and it was beautiful. And it had fish in it. We had a neighbor that had a boy our age and he just spent most of his time on that creek fishing. And that was one of the pleasant memories that we have of that creek. And we played in the water and we played the creek and just had bark boats and leaf boats and all kinds of boats that we could float down this creek and then fish besides.

KP: Does it still abve fish?

CARLSON: Naw. After while they commenced to take the trees and one thing and another and progress, I guess, the creek dried up in the summer and the fish were gone. So no more fishing and no more water in the summer. They went to the source and took it to the towns using the water. Sad day. But anyway when we went to school- as I said, we had to walk to school but when the weather was bad my dad would hook up the team to the bobsled, which is the forerunners of the long sled and we'd wrap up in blankets and cover our faces to keep the horse hair out and away we'd go for school. And he'd take us to school. But

some of 'em instead of taking their kids to school, they used to send them on a horse and some of 'em would ride a horse to school and then when they'd get there they'd turn the horse loose and it would go home. So, my dad decided rather than to take us he'd let us try it because we had an old gray horse there and he knew that she'd come home. So he parked the two of uson the horse and we had to go- our house was situated and we had to go this way and then across the meadow and then follow the meadow on that side, there was no way of going across it, so to stay on the road we'd go like this. So he put us on the horse and we went down like this and we crossed the meadow and then we got about half way across the meadow on the other side of the meadow and I don't know why, that I can't remember, why, but I think I was the one that for some reason or other slid off the horse. Whether I did it to see if I could get back on to practice or why, I do not know, but of course I couldn't get back on. We couldn't find a place to pull the horse up so I walked to school. And my sister rode the horse. And I remember how angry my father was. He thought we were so dumb. We never got a chance to try it again. And we carried our lunches. We didn't have hot lunches in those days. But I was talking to Elmer Vim over here in the resthome and he said, "Yeah," he said, "we carried it in lard buckets. Ten pound lard buckets." I don't remember that I had a ten pound lard bucket, cause mine was about that high and I think it was a five pound lard bucket. We carried our lunches. And the nearest to a hot lunch that we had was that it froze on the way to school and we had to set it by the old, big heater in there to thaw it out! So all the dinner buckets were sitting around the heater there to keep from freezing. If we'd a left them out in the anteroom where the coats were they'd have frozen

anyway, I guess, it was that cold. So we had to park around the Another heater. Anyway, we seemed to thrive on it. reason why those were nice buckets, too, they made handy if the boys got fresh, why, we could bat, 'em on the head with those buckets. It didn't hurt anybody but they served as a warning that they must not get too close! And eventually we did fall heir- somebody gave us a real treat, they got these tobacco cans that were quite long and shallow and had a lid that lifted up on a hinge. So we fell heir to tobacco cans for lunchbuckets, we could arrange our lunch in there very neatly and pile it up instead of having it all poked in one bucket. So we thought that was a real treat to have tobacco can for a lunch box. When the weather was good and the roads were good, some of the kids rode bicycles to school. And I tried desperately to learn to ride a bicycle. I remember there was one boy that I kind of liked pretty well had a girl's bicycle too, and he let me try it. But after putting my foot through the spokes and things like that and falling off a few times, gave it up as a bad job. Guess he was glad, too! I can't remember just how we- where we had water when we came out to the farm, but I remember one of the first things that they did was to drill a well. Then we had a well right by the house; had a pump in it. But they had drilled quite deep and then there was sand down in there or something and it caved in, so we never had a very except house use deep well and never had water enough really forand of course, the creek went through so we had water for- because we had a creek down across our place and another place, too, there. And it was a kind of a spring apparently, it stayed water in it all the time, for the cattle. And they were down in the flat where the creek went so they had water that way. Eventually, the folks decided that they would put a cistern. They had put an orchard up on the

hill then where they had cleared land and raised fruit up there, raspberries, and had a real lovely garden. Everything just about that you could imagine and raised a garden. So they built or dug^{or} made cistern up there and dug a well down by the creek and piped it up to the cistern, so then we had piped water into the house and we went modern! Before that we had these little outhouses out behind; we weren't modern people then. We had to travel out in the weather! (<u>Chuckles</u>) But anyhow, we had- they put in a bathroom. We had a bathrub and we had indoor water, hot and cold. They put in a hot water tank so we had hot and cold water. And they had water enough so they could irrigate to help the gardens. And that was a big boost too. And we were happy with that.

KP: Did you help your mother around the house a lot? CARLSON: Yes. I d.d.

KP: Or did you mostly help your father?

CARLSON: Well, I did both. In fact, I remember that we took turns doing dishes and I had the breakfast dishes; my sister had the supper dishes and we usually fought over the noon dishes! We were supposed to have taken turns, and I guess we did pretty well on that one. And I learned to make bread, and must have done pretty well, I've forgotten how since, for some reason or other. But anyway, I used to make bread and I liked to iron. My mother hated to iron, and so she said that worked out just right. She didn't mind the washing, but I remember I did the washing, too. And that was in the days when we had a little washing machine that had the thing that you grabbed it and run it back and forth, like this, like two washboards, they were rounded, like this and then you rubbed it back and forth, like that. Never had a wringer, she had to wring out by hand. We set it outside

on the ground and we washed. We had a hydrant out there so we could have cold water and we had to heat the water in the house. To begin with we heated it in a boiler, in fact, I think my mother usually boiled the white clothes so we always heated a boiler full of water and that's how we got out hot water to wash. Even though our stove had a reservoir on it. So we had hot water there, too, but we had to heat extra water when we wanted to wash. And we washed and hung our clothes out on a line. And for some reason or other, seemed like we had quite a bit of ironing and I remember I used to like to iron. I don't know where I lost that flavor! (<u>Chuckles</u>) I don't like to iron now! But anyway, we had to clean our own rooms and clean the stairsteps.

KP: What did you do with clothes in the wintertime when you had to wash? They froze dried. CARLSON:

KP: They went out on the line?

Uh-huh. Yeah, except when we'd bring them in we had a clothes dryers CARLSON: that we'd maybe have to finish 'em up like that. Hang 'em out there they'd freeze dry. It was cold hanging 'em out though! For sure. But really, I preferred working outdoors, so I did work with my dad a great deal. In fact, I milked. I helped milk and helped in the hay. And drove the horse on the hayfork and helped load the hay. I rode the hayload and my dad would throw it on and I would spread it out on there. And I did that for a long time until finally it seemed to me \tilde{t} that the timothy got me and I had hay fever so terribly that I had to quit. And that was a sad day. I didn't like having to quit in 1 Cause the hay. I liked it. And we had to weed. I guess maybe the thing I hated the worst of all- the folks a couple or two or three years decided to raise carrots for cows. the They raised stock carrots. Great

big carrots. And we had to get on our hands and knees and weed and thin the carrots. I remember we just groused and howled and complained about that so fiendishly that finally the folks gave $up_{\Lambda}^{\mathcal{H}e}$ carrots.

KP: The cows liked 'em?

Oh, yeah. I don't know, maybe it made the milk creamier, I don't CARLSON: know, but it was supposed to be good. Maybe it improved their eyesight! So they could find more grass! I forgot to tell you about the time that the little girl when we first came here, we were down there playing in the meadow. We had her along with us, that when we first came here, she was about a year and a half old I suppose, and we had her with us and we went down to this stream in the meadow at the time and we were just playing around down there and we came to this p^{η} ace that was too wide for her to get across, but we seemed to be able to manage to get across, so we got across and we couldn't reach her to reach her across, she wouldn't cooperate or somehow or other, anyway, we got the bright idea of tossing her over. And my sis ter got ahold of her and threw her over to me and I missed her; she fell in the water. And of course, it was deep enough in that spot, so I guess she went under. Anyway, it didn't hinder her bellering though! She could be heard clear all over the district, I'm sure, she howled so hard! Mother was up there at the house and she heard her. She couldn't help but hear her. Anyway, she came down to rescue her- no, she didn't come down, she started down but in the meanwhile we'd grabbed her out of the water and started her home dripping wet. And of course, we were kind of scared because we were responsible for having been in the water, but we figured since she was making that much noise she couldn't be too bad off! But I think she kind of still holds it against us to this day. She said ,

"I know you tried to drown me!" (Chuckles) Before I got done, maybe I had, I don't know. (Laughter) We had the, oh yeah, that's when I got my first rifle, too. I just looked forward to the day when I could have a rifle, just like the kids today, apparently. And I got a rifle and went out to shoot squirrels. There were lots of squirrels in those days. We trapped. That's how we made money. Dad gave me a penny or two for every squirrel we could catch. And then I got the rifle and I went out to shoot the squirrels. But my aim was not too very good, I'd probably wind up throwing sticks at the squir-rels to make them go in hole br_A shut up. But then I decided I was going hunting, and we had grouse in those days out there and pheasants. Wild in the woods, you know. And I went out and I shot one, in fact, I shot two and I had to run 'm down, and I felt so sorry for 'em $_{1}$ I never went hunting again. We ate them, but I decided that wasn't my I didn't like to hunt. meat. But the squirrels I didn't mind, if I could have shot the squirrels. I did shoot some, but they laughed at me mostly, I think, because they knew I was a poor shot. Oh, too, then we played-- I never did tell you about the dog we got. That was way back, that was for reason or other after we came here. We always had a dog, though, He'd run down the hill with us when we'd be coasting. And he just loved to go coasting. He didn't ride coasting but he'd run up and down the hills all the way with us. I think we had more fun coasting. That was just loads of fun and my sister and I, had just imaginations that were out of this world, just about. We played- we had what we called fancy ladies tht grew along the creek, and they'd be big like this and a flouncy skirt. We had hollyhocks, we'd made hats for them. And these fancy ladies were our playthings. And the hollyhocks; we made things out of the hollyhocks. Made our playthings, we didn't

have fancy playthings. We didn't have money to buy things. I don't believe they had things to buy, that I remember. We didn't seem to miss 'em, because we made our own fun. And paper dolls. Catalogues, we cut paper dolls out by the hundreds! And we fix their houses. We played outdoors and we'd fix regular houses and have our paper dolls. We'd have different families and they'd go visiting each other and everything. And my sister, especially had an imagination that was just hard to believe, she could just make regular stories. I wish I had some of 'em that she made right now. But I think- when I got older why she and my younger sister, they did it and I was kind of out then. I don't know if I wanted to be or if I was just naturally the third one, anyway, I was the one that wasn't in on the imagina- $\downarrow_{O} \rho^{|\alpha|}$ tion playing, but my sister was real good with the younger one, and I wasn't so good, apparently. She and I didn't hit it off too good. What did your father do with his milk from the dairy?

KP:

CARLSON: We had a separator and separated the cream from the milk and he sold the cream and fed the milk to the pigs and the calves and to us! Of course, we made cottage cheese and used milk in cooking a great deal. And we churned our own butter. Many a time I remember running the old churn up and down, making butter. And Mother used milk and cream. And she had eggs, too, because she had chickens. And the eggs were her pinmoney and the cream was my dad's. So we had chickens and raised our own chickens to eat and she sold the eggs and he sold the cream. And calves, we raised our own beef. I think they'd get a pig or two and raise that so's to have- and they smoked it themselves. They had a little building and so they smoked their own meat. KP: Do you remember what that looked like?

CARLSON: The building?

KP: The little smokehouse?

CARLSON: Yeah, it looked like a little outdoor toilet! (Laughter) It was right out behind the woodshed and they built a fire down in the bottom on the ground, hickory smoke or whatever kind of- apple trees made good smoke, too, I remember. And then they'd close it up. It was quite tight and they'd close it up and keep the fire going a certain number of days so's to smoke it. And when $\int_{A} \psi(t)$ got done, just really super smoked meat.

KP: And they did that just with pork, or did they use other me at? CARLSON: They just did the pork as I remember. Now, beef - how did they keep I think canned beef. Yes, she did, she canned it. the beef? Quite a bit. Because they had no way of keeping it otherwise. We had a cellar underneath the house, which was always cold and they kept their milk and cream and things down in that cellar and their canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned meat. Just ha real supply of all kinds of food that way. After working real hard at it, why, it was there. I marvel how these country women could get as much done as they did. really, supply things like that. Nowdays, you have your refrigerators and your automatic this and that and other things. No automatics then. And yet, I think maybe we had more fun. I remember Dad downed a tree right close to the house there and it had a pine squirrel nest in it; had several little pine squirrels, and I remember I adopted two of them. I guess the others were killed maybe when it fell, and they were sure cute little pets. They got sick and I doped one of them with castor oil and the other one I gave Mother Crow's, 'cause they had diarrhea, and one of 'em died, but I don't remember which one it was, if it was the one that got the castor oil or the Mother Crow's, but anyway, one of 'em didn't survive and the other one did. And I had it there until Mother said I'd have to do something about that squirrel because he started to gnawing the stairsteps!

KP: Oh, he ran the house?

Oh, yes! And his special play place was me, he thought I was a CARLSON: tree trunk. And those two little squirrels would scamper, they'd run up my skirt and around and around and around they'd go! Up on my shoulder and up on my head and they'd play til they got tired and then maybe each one climb into one of my pockets. And I'd walk around with those two little squirrels asleep in my pockets. And they were just adorable. But finally, after the one died, and the second one of course, was getting bigger all the time, why then he started- he had the run of the house and his place of chewing was the stairsteps, which did not meet with anyone's approval for some reason or other. So, I had to fix a cage for him. And it was fun to because they always wash everything before they eat watch them it. You give 'em a pine cone and they go soak it in a waterdish before they'il work at it. They'd have a pine cone or a cone soaking in a waterdish most of the time. This was after I got old enough to teach, and I had this squirrel and so Mother informed me that she wasn't going to take care of that squirrel, I'd have to do something about that squirrel before I left. So I took it out in the woods and each day I'd take it out there and turn it loose and it would run back to me and day after day, finally I went off and it \checkmark up in a tree and I went home. The next day I'd go out and whistle at it and it would come scampering and play and play, crawl into my lap and go to sleep. And it did that day after day and finally it got a little leary all the time and I'd have to whistle and holler to it harder, longer and it would come up through the treetops and

KP:

still it would come, "chip, chip, chip," you know, a little bit bashful til it would come and then it would discover who it was and then it would play and curl up in my lap and go to sleep. But finally, one day it didn't come. Had something happened to it? Had it gone wild? I'll never know; but the squirrel was gone. (Laughs) You told me, too, the last time about feeding the mice to an owl somebody had.

CARLSON: Oh, yes, this man that we bought the place from, he was sort of a queer guy and he played with a wagon even though he was a fullgrown man. But he had a bachelor- or he had moved into a house farther down the road, and he'd gotten a little owl. And this was the cutest little thing. We used to go watch him twist his head off, but he never did. You know how they turn their head? And we gave it mice. It loved mice and it would swallow the mouse whole, and then after while it would start to twist it's neck and stretch itself and all, and regurgitate, and this mouse's skin and the feet would come out and the rest would stay down. How he separated it, I'll never know, but that was it. And so, we used to like to take mice to watch that owl eat the mice!

KP: Did they have to be live, or did he eat them dead?

CARLSON: We had 'em dead of course when we took 'em because we weren't going to carry live mice then, they were dead when he got 'em. But he was a cute little thing. Little barn owl, I guess it was. That was his pet. Of course, we wished we had a barn owl, too, but we didn't. But this Melvin Marsh that bought our place, he was just a kid at the time, too; he had a ground squirrel for a pet. It hibernated. They had rootcellars, we pitted the potatoes, too, by the way. That's how we kept potatoes. You pack 'em with straw down in the

ground, then you put a lot of it over the top and then you cover it with dirt. Carrots and potatoes both that way. Then when you wanted 'em you just dig in and drag some out. And they had a regular rootcellar, they called it, because it had been made with timber apparently, and they had it covered with dirt and this ground squirrel hibernated in that. He dug a hole and stayed there all winter and in the spring he came out. We wished we had one like that, so we could have had one too.

- KP: I was wondering if you'd tell me some more about the school and the programs you put on. The different types of things.
- In those days we had- well, it was a rural school, of course, we CARLSON: had all the way from one to eight grades in a room and the one teacher and she had all the way from five-year olds on up to fourteen-And she'd have one grade come up to her year olds in the same room. H WAS they were having whether it was desk and she'd hear whatever reading or spelling or arithmetic and she'd make an assignment and send them back to their seats. And we had double seats, so two sat at a desk. And then she'd have the next class come up and she'd spend just a few minutes with that class and while they had whatever it was that she'd called up for them to do and then she'd make an assignment and send them back to their seats and the next one would come and that's the way it went all day. And we'd have our morning recess and we went out and played games like pump pump pull away. "If you don't come, I'll pull you away." Two groups would- let's see- one group would be over there and this one would come over and try to tempt 'em away from their base, and if they could get 'em out they'd catch 'em; if they could catch all of 'em then they'd have to join the other group. So, which everyone could get all that was on this side over to this side, this was the winning side. They'd divide

up sides, see.

KP: Sort of like a tag.

Yeah. Or, one of our favorites then, because there were lots of CARLSON: trees and hiding places around there, we- it was called Run-Run-Sheep-Run. And that we'd divide up, too in two groups. When we'd do this one we'd have captains for each side and we'd have- this one would meet with his group and he'd give 'em colors, that each color would mean something, and this one would do the same with his group. and then one group would take his- this was Run-Sheep-Run- and the captain would- the others were the sheep, see- so the captain would take his sheep out and hide them somewhere and then after they w ere hidden the captain would come back and say, "My sheep are hidden." So this other group would go out, but they always had to stay with the captain, you couldn't scatter out; you'd go as a group because the captain would lead his sheep and they'd go around to see if they could find where this other one had hid his sheep. And if he was getting close to them, maybe he'd say, "Green, green." Or yellow or blue or whatever the colors were decided on. And he'd try, of course, in doing it, he'd try to get his sheep into base without being caught by this other group. And if he got 'em close enough to base so he thought they could make it and this other group had got far enough away, why, he'd holler the color for 'em to go in. Might be "Red, red! Run sheep run." Abd then they'd rush to get there. And then of course, these others then they'd tear to try to beat 'em to it! And we really just had a lot of fun with that one. It was quite exciting. And then Pump-Pump Pullaway- it seemed like there was another, oh, Steal Sticks- that they'd put the sticks out in the middle and they'd come up there and they'd try to grab a

stick, see, without being caught by the other side and the one that could get the most sticks would win. And this other one- what did they call that? Anyway, they had- they ran across- Well, I guess that's what they did probably and one was out in the middle, and they'd run across and this one in the middle would try to catch one and then they'd catch one and then the two of them out in the middel, they would try to catch 'em and then they traded places and Probablypretty soon they'd have them all out in the middle and they'd see which one had the most left. If they'd get them all from one side this one still might have one and that'd be the winning side.

KP: What did you do in the wintertime when you couldn't go outside? Or did you go outside anyway?

We had snowball fights just like everybody else! (Chuckles) And CARLSON: if it was too bad to be out, we had- Oh, one of the things we quite often had was spelldowns; we loved to have spelldowns inside. And Clap in- Clap-out. And to do that you'd sit in the desk and somebody would be "it", and they'd come and they'd sit there and if you were perfectly willing to let 'em, you didn't clap, but if you didn't يوبر بح want 'em you'd clap and they had to go someplace else. But I can't just exactly remember what the object was, it was to keep 'emclap-in clap-out- we'd let 'em in and sometimes we'd let 'em in and sometimes we wouldn't. They'd go and try to find a place where they could. There must have been somebody trying to catch 'em meanwhile, I guess that was it. And if they got caught before they got a place that somebody would let 'em sit down, why be it. I remember Musical Chairs, you probably know what that is. We played that, too. I remember, in our desks.

KP: Did you have a record player, or did somebody sing?

CARLSON: Well, yes, we did, we had a record player; old-fashioned one, too, must have been, you had to grind and crank it to keep it going.

KP: Did you have a lot of singing?

Yeah, that was one of our openings; we did hat quite a bit of CARLSON: singing and our programs- we memorized pieces and when we'd have a program everybody had a piece and we had our dialogues; that was the one that everybody enjoyed that, I think. And they'd put on regular little plays, little dialogues they called them. , Little short plays. And we'd have dialogues and recitations and songs. I don't know if anybody was ever smart enough to own a musical instrument to play except mouth organs. They did, they played mouth organs. And the community; they had, well, they'd call them Lyceums now, I suppose they did, but maybe they called it a lyceum. Anyway, the community would get together and they'd write up a newspaper, I still have one that Ed wrote up in the school and they'd hove drives on people, jokes. They were really quite clever. I should hunt up mine so you could read one that Ed and I put on one time; paper, newspaper. But anyway, that was it and then they had basket socials. And to do that the women would fix a basket of food and they had auction sales, and they'd sell the baskets to the highest bidder. And they'd have to eat supper with whoever's basket they got. It was kind of popular.

KP: If somebody wanted to eat supper with you he had to--bid pretty high CARLSON: Yeah, and if they wanted to eat supper with certain ones, they had to,

KP: And the fellows knew who brought the baskets?

CARLSON: They weren't supposed to. But occasionally we were pretty suspicious that somebody did.

KP: What did they use the money for?

CARLSON: I suppose the library and things like that. They must have. How did they get the libraries because we didn't have a lot of money then, I know. But they turned it in for something I suppose. Oh yes, then we had our tin buckets that we drank out of at school. We didn't have water in the school, we had a pump that we had to go out and pump the water. We'd bring it in in a tin bucket and set it on a shelf, and they had a dipper any anybody wanted to get a drink, you go and you take a dipper full of water and you drink it, and if you have to were nice you dumped it in a bucket and if you weren't you just put it back in the bucket! I saw 'em do that, too. But anyway, that went on for quite a long time, and then they- Maybe they might have used the money to buy that- they got a big container for water and $4 h^{1} h^{2} g^{3} a^{nd} y_{0} c^{oold} g^{0}.$ it had a little faucet. And then they came to point where we were supposed to have our own drinking cups. So that was in the days; they and little folding drinking cups, so we had a little folding drinking cup in our dinner bucket, and we'd stretch out our little folding drinking cup and go and get our own water. Of course, that was quite an improvement over the old-fashioned tin dipper and a tin bucket. You can imagine. And we burned wood in the heaters; in the stove. We had nothing else but wood to burn. Let's what else did we--

KP: What were your books like?

CARLSON: Our books? Well, we didn't have fancy books like they have now. In fact, when I take up a second grade reader now and look at it, I marvel that second graders could read the books. When you think of the first grade readers, too. And they were must more advanced than what they are now. We did not have any "Jane and Dick" books and "Dick and Jane" books.

KP: They just started out reading adult type books?

CARLSON: Yes, they did. And our spellers- I remember we had little red spelling books, about like that, and they were about that thick and we had spelling words, and we had certain ones, and they weren't all fixed up to have fancy notebooks, workbooks. The workbooks were done by us on our scratch paper. We didn't have fancy paper, either. We had regular tablets and pencils. We used that and we had to do our own sentence structure and everything. And when we had to take a test, we didn't have no true and false tests, either, we had to write out the answers. And when we got through the eighth grade we had to come to Troy and take our eighth grade examinations. In the Troy schools tests, and we had to pass those. Our teacher couldn't be there and no other teacher could be there either; it was up to us alone. I remember how scared we were! We weren't used to coming to town; we rarely came to town. That was such a rare occasion that I guess maybe it was a treat, I don't know. Anyway when you're traveling with horses and buggies and things, you didn't need to go to town for our entertainment. Each community was really a separate thing by Our number work itself. too, that we didn't have fancy workbooks in our number books, we had problems assigned and the teacher would show us how to do it and we went down to our desks and we worked 'em out! We had just plain old number books full of problems. And we were independent workers. And then they started talking consolidation. They should consolidate to give the rural pupils more improvement, better education and things of that kind and they consolidated. Figued they could get the money from the rural districts I guess to help the towns. But it was kind of funny, the valedictorians and the salutatorians were these kids that came from the rural districts. They were independent workers; they didn't have to have their work

candy coated for them because they had been assigned and sent to their desks to work it out. And our library wasn't stupendous like it is now. I suppose we just had one little old library, as I remember with a certain number of books. Our teachers read to us in the mornings. They'd read stories to us. I guess they do that too now. We'd have singing if the teacher could sing and apparently they could a good share of the time because I remember we did have singing and we had singing in our programs. But I don't remember if we had $\mathcal{H}e^{re}$ any musical instruments particularly.

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- KP: Maybe you could tell us a little more about the community and going to the school; how important it was.
- CARLSON: They were all working more together. Of course, the women they had their dinners and they had their coffee parties I suppose somewhat like they do now. But I am glad to see that the communities, after while they realized that they had lost their social life and many of the communities have gone back now and cooperated in working together to have a social life of their own like the Big Meadow Club, KP: This was when they lost their schools?
- "ARLSON: Yes. After they lost their school they were just at a standstill, they were lost because they didn't want to go to town, they weren't accepted in town. They had no interest in hobnobbing with the city people, and yet they had no school to hold them together to call them to have a thing, a program. So there was a while there that everything just kind of stood at a standstill, and finally one community after another said, "Well, why should we just die as a community, we're still here. Let's have our own social life." So one by one it seemed like the communities have done that. And I know the Big Meadow ^{out} there they didn't have a place exactly that

they could gather, but then the women formed a Big Meadows Club and they got together and they would meet. I guess maybe it was once a month they had a meeting and they got together and had a social life. Now, like this year I see they're having a quilt that they're going to raffle $^{A^{\dagger}}$ Community Day. And they used to have picnics; they'd get together for picnics, and the Big Meadow Club, they do, they have family picnic now once or twice a year. Christmas they have a gathering and in the summer they usually have a picnic or two. So they have kind of gathered their own. And I know Driscoll Ridge out there and Burnt Ridge, Burnt Ridge has a Friendly Friday Club and they meet. And they do the same thing, they get their families together once or twice a year, I think.

KP: That's why the little school was so important?

CARLSON: Yes, they met there and their children went to school there and the teacher was instrumental in gathering the community together for the $m{v}$ little programs. And their little programs were not only just the kids, they had the Literary Society and the people in the community and they gathered had a program. And if the community was the kind that played cards they'd get together and they'd play cards; if they were the kind that had dances; they had dances. And the Big Meadow Club out therethe Big Meadow district as I recall, they didn't play cards; well the school was too small really, I suppose; oh, they played Rook, yes, they did. They had a game called Rook. And eventually that was what they'd do because the men were interested in that. But then it seemed like afterward- the schoolhouse had been burned down, tooand after they had the new one built I don't know if they ever met in that one exactly for that, but they'd meet in the homes. And they'd have their own parties. But before when the schoolhouse was

still there they were having it til the kids were sent to town and they were bussed to town and that just kind of left 'em holding the sack up there. They didn't have anything to do.

KP: When did the consolidation come about?

- CARLSON: I can't just remember. That I've forgotten, the year for that one, but it's been many years, of course.
- KP: You were telling me the last time we talked about a game called Poor Pussy.
- CARLSON: About what?
- KP: Poor Pussy.
- CARLSON: Oh, yes! We had that one, too. Somebody would be it and they'd have to go and kneel in front of somebody and very <u>pleadingly</u> say "Poor Pussy." And the one that they knelt (before) was to say, "Poor Pussy." And pet that one, you know. And the pussy cat, of course, was trying to make the one he was kneeling in front of laugh, and if h e could make that one laugh they had to trade places. Some of 'em went around and the meowing that they did was out of this world! I must say! And it took quite a bit of stamina to withstand and still not laugh.

KP: Was this one that the parents played too?

CARLSON: Oh, yes, we did, especially the young people. And of course, they played Post Office. I remember that one. And games like, Who's Got the Key? They'd have a string; they put a string around and everybody stand in a circle and pass the key from - on a string- and the one in the center would try and guess who had it in their hand, you know. And they'd just keep a passing it; you just kept w orking like this, and the key was traveling all the time. And the one in the center would try to guess when a certain person got it, who it was, and if they guessed it, why then they'd get to trade places. And then some of the communities, they liked to play these old folk games like Virginia Reel and Gustav Skoll.

KP: What's Gustav Skoll?

- CARLSON: Well, that was just loads of fun; they'd have- Gustav Skoll- now let me think- I've got to go back and think on that one myself. But it was an old folk dance game.
- KP: Sounds like it was Scandivanian.
- CARLSON: Yeah, it was. And the partners, two partners-
- KP: Formed a square.
- CARLSON: Uh-huh. And they'd sing and go to each other and back and around. And the Virginia Reel, of course, they had the two long rows, you $\int_{0}^{0} \omega$ know that one goes, I guess.
- KP: Most of the community approved of dancing then?
- CARLSON: No, not bonafide dancing. Some ^o did not approve of it. I remember when I was growing up, my folks did <u>not</u>. My father disapproved of card playing and dancing both. But we'd go to the Literary Society and then when they started shoving the benches back to dance, we went home. But they danced. Some of those dances were quite gay, you know! Like the Black Bottom and the Charleston!
- KP: Oh, they did those?
- CARLSON: Oh, they did those, uh-huh! But we never did. We didn't even get to stay and watch 'em very much. When they started in on that, why, we went home!
- KP: You mentioned too about being so proud of your mother when she did a reading.
- CARLSON: Oh, yes, They'd have different ones- well, I think partly they volunteered to have a part in the program. Or they were supposed to GIVE one

and I remember my mother getting up and she had been a former teacher and she could memorize like nothing, seemed like. She'd memorize this and get up there, in a dramatic way, too. Not too far fetched dramatic, but she would give a very good reading. And I remember how proud we were when Mother would get up to give her reading, and she always did a beautiful job of it no matter what 5he didshe attempted to do, she was capable.

KP: Were they mostly Scandinavian people, out in Big Meadow?

CARLSON: A lot of them were.

KP: Were there any hard feelings or difficulties?

- CARLSON: Not that I recall, there wasn't too much there because they were all practically of the same group. There was some jealousy among them.
- KP: No, I mean of an outsider coming into a Scandinavian community? Did your family have problems?
- CARLSON: No, we didn't, not as I recall, in fact, they thought my father was a Norwegian so he was taken in with open arms.
- KP: Even wi**hn** an English name, huh?
- CARLSON: You'd have to call it Cartwright something, I guess. So we felt quite proud of the fact, in a way, because we were in a Scandinayian community. They were all, just about all I think- or a lot of 'em were Scandinavian. Well, on second thought- yes, I believe, they had friends, they weren't all- so there was- I remember now that my sister, her feelings were hurt more than once because she had gone out to work and the others were Scandinavians and they would talk impolite their language and leave her out. They were to do that, that was the one thing, they didn't have good manners. I remember there was a criticism of that; I'd forgotten about that. But you'd go in there and here they would be talking their Swede or Norwegian

and they didn't care if we were there, the folks were there, they did it in front of everybody. They'd just carry on their own conversation and you could be left out in the cold and they could care less.

KP: Did they do it on purpose or were they just--?

CARLSON: It was just they talked that and I don't think they did it on purpose. I would hope that they didn't. Although my sister was sure that those girls did. So she'd go working along there, they were hoeing, I think, and she was sure that they probably were talking about her. I don't know if they were because nobody could understand what they were talking about.

KP: Was there any trouble in school with them adapting to English?

CARLSON: Not with us when we went to school, we had no trouble, \checkmark I recall.

- KP: When the youngsters came in did they speak English? Or did they have to learn?
- CARLSON: There were none that came in but what could speak English, into the school. In that school. One time I was to another school, that was when we were up in the valley, Valley, Washington, there was an Austrian family moved in there and the kids came to school and they couldn't talk English at all. So they came and I remember they were our neighbors and the father talked broken English, but he asked us, Alva dndI, if we'd kind of watch over them so's to see, and I know the teacher-I remember yet how blank the teacher looked when she tried to get through to them and find out their mames and one thing and another about them, and I remember her looking at us and said, "Can you find out for us?" And I remember just how helplessly she was appealing for help. But they must have gotten so they could talk

English before too long, because I remember the father saying, "Oh, Tony, she's doing pretty good, but Annie, he's having more trouble." (<u>Chuckles</u>) And $h_{\Lambda}^{h_{0}\omega}$ it struck us so funny because he got his pronouns all balled up. But out here at the Meadow, they were-- well, there was a mixture out there. There was a family out there that was Strictly English besides us, and quite a few of 'em were Scandinayian, But when they'd get together I remember that the folks were quite perturbed because they would talk their language. And I guess one reason why they did was because that was their native tongue and they could express themselves better that way. And they were, I think, thoughtless and just maybe just kind of poor mannered. If I remember rightly I believe we decided that they didn't have very good manners because right in front of everybody they talked that language and they made no effort to try to translate what they were talking about, either. There was only a few that seemed to have a little better manners. But as a rule, I don't remember -- my folks, in a way, their standards were different. Or should I say -- I don't know just exactly-- if they stood for something, they stood for it. and they held fast. They were no hands to sell out on what they believed and what they wanted to do. And I remember their getting kind of discouraged with some of their neighbors because they were more on the wishy-washy . If someone would come with a better story-- I remember my father being rather disgusted about that. But taking it all in all, the younger generation- I don't remember if we had too much trouble, probably we were just like the rest of 'em! Anyway, we seemed to have lots of fun and didn't think too much about it.

KP:

You were telling me the importance of May baskets before.

31

Oh, yes. Well, that was one of the highlights of the year, was CARLSON: May basket day. And we just really went to $town_{A}$ fancy fancy May baskets and we fixed them up and had candy and flowers in them. We did, and we'd take 'em out and deliver 'em. And there was a couple of old bachelors lived up on the hill and so my sister and I decided that that would be fun if we could go up there and deliver them a May basket, too. And it was quite a ways from the house, from our house, but we went over there with a May basket and took it to the door in fear and trembling, I can just hear my heart pounding yet, I don't know what we thought would happen if we ever did get caught! But we sure didn't intend to be caught. And they had a lumber wagon sitting out in front of the house, otherwise there was nothing to hide us if we hadn't hidden, we'd been wide open to the wide open spaces. They could see us because there was a long road down there from the house, so we had to hide. But fortunately, I guess they didn't know what it was all about, so we hid this May basket and knocked on the door and then we ran and hid under this wagon and watched them. We were just fit to be tied, we wanted to giggle so bad. And they came to the door and they got it, and I could just see their gears meshing wondering what it was all about, (Laughter) I imagine. But they didn't try to find us. I'm sure they never found out who hid those. After they went in the house we took off for home. (Chuckles) We had our fun!

KP: Were they Scandinavian bachelors?

CARLSON: Yes.

KP: So they wouldn't have known what a May basket was. (<u>Chuckles</u>) CARLSON: We got a kick out of it anyhow. We used to go and hide- it would be quite a ways around, too, we'd have to go and hang our May baskets. But that was one of the highlights of the year, was May baskets.

KP: Well, let's see, another highlight of the year is Christmas. Did you have anything special at Christmas that your family used to do? Oh, yeah. We always made a lot of Christmas. Then, of course, we CARLSON: were coming to church in Troy at that time. We came down and they always had a Christmas tree and program at the church. And then the school, of course, always had the Christmas program. And they had a real program there. And in our family, we didn't have lots of costly gifts like they have now, believe me, we were happy if Mother'd slipped around and on the side and made us something to wear or something like that mainly, that I remember. And if we ever did get a toy or a game it would be more apt to be a game of some kind, why that was really cherished because the few things that we got were nice. And another thing that we always had was the Christmas dinner. We had plum pudding. I still make it. It was an English plum pudding but I don't put the brandy over it and burn it; it's a suet pudding, takes three or four hours to boil it. And that was one of our highlights and we usually had a chicken and when the folks raised turkeys, we had a turkey.

KP: Oh, they raised turkeys for a while?

CARLSON: Uh-huh. They raised turkeys- they did that for two or three yearsor three or four years, but the owls would come and the coyotes would come and it was kind of bad because the woods had come so close to the house that we had quite a bit of trouble with losing chickens from those and then there was a small varmint, weasel, I guess, would come in, too. Another thing that the folks had trouble with was beaver; the beaver would be in the creek and they'd dam it

34

up so that they'd flood the meadow. And I remember the folks didn't like that. And finally, I guess they had a county m_{an} - trap the beaver and move 'em_{a}^{+o}lsewhere.

KP: This was like when? What year? What year are we talking about? with the beavers?

CARLSON: This was while we were still at home. Course, I always was at home, I guess, except when I was to school or teaching.

- KP: You were telling me that you went to high school and you had to move into Troy. You waited for your sister and you both moved into Troy. Was this a common thing for kids in the country to move into town and go to high school?
- CARLSON: Yeah, uh-huh. They would come in and bach. A Get a room in somebody's home. Well, quite a few of 'em did it that way, and I remember we did, too. And in the winter when it was too bad so we couldn't go three miles back and forth, we walked back and forth a lot, but during the winter when the weather was bad, the the folks would rent a little room for us and put in a little stove, and we'd carry food from home to prepare. And we'd stay down there, but just during the school days. We went home weekends.

KP: So, relaly that was a lot of freedom for teenagers, then?

CARLSON: Uh-huh. I know, when we came like that- I just really marvel now when I see how things have changed in regard to, you know, kids getting of together, boys and girls I suppose, because there was my sister and I and we bached in this little room and we studied, that's what we did. We fixed our food and we studied, we didn't have all the musical instruments and things like that. And when we got bored and didn't have anything to do, we'd tear out for home. We'd even walk out after school sometimes when the weather wasn't so good! I suppose if we ran out of food especially or wanted a good meal, why,

we'd take off if our studies weren't so bad; and we did high school in three years then instead of four. And when we got done with high school then we- The folks had told us that they couldn't afford to educate us farther than high school, and if we wanted to get further education it would be up to us. So, I said, one thing I knew I didn't want to do- I didn't want to teach. I had in mind then I'd like to be a telegrapher; learn telegraphy at a depot or something. Something else; anything but teaching. But the only thing that seemed to be open was to go to summer school in Lewiston. So my dad gave me \$25, I guess he gave my sister \$25; that's what we started out- that was a loan. And we went to school, I suppose it was six weeks to summer school. In the hottest summer I'm sure Lewiston ever had, and that was in 1923. And was that a hot one, even the enamel on the bedstead melted! I know. After we finished that one we taught the first year of school. I came out on Driskoll Ridge here; biggest school they had just about all the time, I guess! I was scared to death! Went out there and Maudie Hilma's mother was on the school board and she was an old teacher, believe me, and she was keeping close track of things. I was scared to death of her! Had a right to be. (<u>Chuckles</u>) I was so green it was pitiful. But anyway, I remember having trouble out there and I told Mother, I said, "What'll I do? I just can't handle 'em." So she came out and visited school one day and she said, "I could tell you what I'd do. That big kid, about the next time he did something I'd tell him what to do and if he didn't, I'd say, 'Go home." " "And that other one," she said, "that's causing all that trouble, I'd warn him and if he didn't do what he was supposed to do I'd give him a licking." So, the next time this big one got up and wouldn't sit down and was sas-

KP

sing and talking out loud, I said, "bick up your books and go home. 514 down and Either behave yourself, or pick up your books and go home." I had to sit down and tell him because my knees were knocking together so hard I was so scared! But he picked up his books and he went out and he threw something, a rock I guess, at the school door when he left. That's the last I saw of him! And then, I don't know how soon after that this other kid got smarting off and so I had him stay after school and I gave him a licking. Got along pretty good after that. Decided she knew what she was talking about! (Chuckles) I didn't go back there the next year. I had no desire. In fact, when I started out to teach, I said, "I'm not going to teach more than one year in a school. I'm going to see how many schools I can teach in before I quit." And as soon as that school was over I went back to summer school again. I believe it was nine weeks then. And after the nine weeks I got another school. I wanted to stay close enough home so I could always come home weekends. And Dad would hook up the team and take my little trunk and away we'd go. He'd move me to where I was going to board. I guess that one place, though, he didn't. I was up by Palouse that one time, a school up there. Don't think he took me there, that was quite a ways, so must have gone some other way that time. But all these others, he'd come and get me weekends So's to bring me home; take me back on a Sunday. He was real good about that. Abominable horse driver, scared me to death, but we made it! Did he drive too fast?

CARLSON: No. He just left the lines loose and the horses'd go where they wanted to and I thought sure we'd go off the edge of the bank, but we never did. But anyway, I went to summer school about three summers, I guess and taught like that, when I decided that I'd managed to pay back my \$25 and had some money put by, so I was going to go a whole year and just be a part of the social life of the group and have fun. Because I wanted to have my picture in the annual and I wanted 'em to say something about me in the annual, like they did there, you know! So, I did that. And I signed up for the whole term that time and that midterm, why, Dad called me and wondered if I'd be willing to come out and teach in the home school, that the teacher's mother was ill, I think, or some way she had to go East and had to leave, and they wondered if I'd be willing to quit and come out and teach. Well, I kind of hated to, but I did. And my younger sister was in the eighth grade at the time, so here I came, and of course, she was my sister! And there were three of 'em in the eighth grade. One of Ed's sisters was there and Clarence Ferguson were three of

'em. And the two girls were pretty good, they worked. But Clarence, he was not doing so well. And I worked those kids, did I ever work those kids! To this day Hester says I was the meanest teacher she ever had! But she passed, and so did Alice and so did Clarence. I know when they went to take the tests, they were still having to go down and take the test down at Troy; I said, If Clarence will just be fortunate enough to sit by somebody that knows what they're doing, even he might make it!" He copies. I said, "That's the only way he'll ever stand a chance." But he passed!

SIDE D

CARLSON: This is that old schoolhouse out here, of course, and it was loaded with stink bugs. And the stink bugs at a certain time of the year, they come out of the walls and they crawled all over things. And one of their favorite places was right behind where the teacher's desk sat, and they'd out on the desk, I don't know if they

37

ever fell out on me, but they smelled terrible! When a stink bug would come, you'd know a stink bug was there. And Alice and Hester, \pm hose two eighth graders they sat there and they had a stink bug and they had long hair at that time the girls did, that is, and they'd pull a hair out and they'd tie this stink bug or they'd put it down and then they'd let it walk across and raise it and they kept playing and playing with it, that stink bug. And I got so aggravated at them, because I knew the time was short, I think we only had six weeks left after I got there, I think there was only six weeks left of school, and of course, I just had to get 'em through that eighth grade, I figured. And here they were, playing with this stink bug! One day I got so aggravated that I said, "If you two girls- if I even see you looking at a stink bug, I'm going to make you eat it! And I could have bit my tongue afterwards because I thought, "Good grief, I can't make them eat a stink bug." But I watched 'em like a hawk. And they said they could just feel that stink bug crawling all over 'em, but they didn't dare look to see!

KP: They seemed to get a little more discipline in school then.

CARLSON: Quite.

KP: How many students did you have in each class?

CARLSON: Well, it varied; Aaround twenty and twenty-four. There was twentyfour out to that one and the Palouse school up there, that was a big school, too. Bigger. That was considered quite big, because when you get all the grades, why- Then out here at the home school, they pulled in one on me, because I think I had all eight grades there, too, and - including the first grade, and then at Christmas they started another one, so I really had two first graders; I had a beginner and the first grader that had been through, you know. And one school- I don't remember if that was that one- which school that was, but I had to do a little algebra work too with the eighth grader that was going there.

KP: You had to be adaptable, didn't you?

- Yes you really did have to be. And that is why I say the kids, they CARLSON: had to be independent because when you take that many kids and that many grades, you don't have very much time to spend with each indivi-Kb. dual. Of course, they could progress kind of at their own level, if there were like three kids in the eighth grade you didn't hold Carlson. them all in the same place, they had to work-Well, you kind of had to more or less, because you had just so much time. You'd bring 'em up on the bench in front and you'd hold the class and you'd have that one instruction period that you'd have to teach 'em how they were supposed to do the work that was ahead. And they had to listen, of course they could come to your desk if they got stalled. But they were sort of discouraged to that to a certain extent because I figured if they were listening like they should have been during class-KP: Then they weren't supposed to have any questions?
- CARLSON: Right. Well, oh, they'd have questions and you always had to take time for it. But they were supposed to work pretty independently and they had to listen pretty close. And they didn't have reams of stuff to go through, like they do now. You know, when you'd have a little spelling book, like this, you just had words to learn to spell and to look up the meaning, because you had to know the meaning too. Because orally you'd have 'em give them in sentences, so they'd have to know what they meant as well as how to spell them. But it wasn't all written out for 'em to fill in the blanks. They had to go to the dictionary. Dictionaries were well-used in those days.

I suppose maybe they are now, but they- I guess each kid had a dictionary in his desk, too because they had to look them up and find it out.

KP: What other subjects did you have?

CARLSON: Well, we had just plain old reading, writing and arithmetic. Geography, I want you to know, science and physiology and language, grammar.

- KP: Physiology; what did that cover?
- CARLSON: Well, physiology would be the human body and like that. That was-And current events, which I hated and loathed with all my soul. I didn't pass it the first time, either. Had to go back the second time.
- KP: That reminds me of a thought: you should have been about the right age to hear some of the current events of Troy at that time, such as when Marshall Hays was killed and a few things like that.
- CARLSON: Well, I should have, you know, but to be perfectly honest, a lot of that I got later because in that time we didn't have a newspaper, I guess, and we didn't come to town. And as far as meeting together we didn't meet together often enough to do much of that, so a lot of that I didn't-- What year was this Hays killed? I remember that we did hear about it, but it seems to me that occurred before we came or after we came- I don't know when it did! I don't remember the year.
- KP: You don't remember meeting him either?

CARLSON: No.

KP: Just the stories of him, then?

CARLSON: I remember our going down and they said **t** was behind that stump was where the guy was and there were stumps all over the place, of course, because there were trees and Troy was just hidden in the trees pretty well, I guess. A lot of this that's been cleared since was they had there stump land. And of course, the little old-fashioned stores were there . And I should remember the year that they put gravel on the streets because that was such a <u>wonderful</u> thing. They graveled the street. We didn't have to wade in the mud; slop, slop, slip, slip, the horses! But I don't recall exactly.

- KP: Are you the one that told me the story about the man in the mud?
 CARLSON: About what?
- KP: About the man in the mud in Main Street?
- CARLSON: Mud?
- KP: Yes.
- CARLSON: Well, there was plenty of mud in Main Street, yeah. That was for sure.
- KP: About the man walking across the board and saw a hat down in the mud? CARLSON: No.

KP: You didn't tell me that story? I thought you did.

CARLSON: I don't remember that. And then we had this is hill to climb out. And that was muddy for a long time. It was a <u>long</u> time before they started putting rocks around on the country roads. And the high water; that was quite an exciting time when they'd have- the bridges wouldn't carry the water and would wash out. And the meadow would be under water, you know, knee deep from the washing. So then, that was one of the things we kind of hated to see happen, but eventually, that's after we left there that they cleared the creek out, so the water would go in the channel. Took all our precious bushes and hideaways that we had. We'd walk down the stream and see all the little curves and the bushes hanging over us. One of my most pleasant memories, I guess, is that stream, and I hated to see it go. KP: It's been cleaner and then it dried up.

- CARLSON: Yeah. They've cleared it all out; took all the bushes out; took all the trees out; never could see why they took the one clump out because there's nothing there that can grow; if it grew they couldn't harvest it, it isn't very big and why they didn't at least leave one tree there, I'll never know. Had a cent, I'd go and plant one! And our woods, we had paths going through there. We'd go and find all these wild flowers and wild birds.
- KP: Did you ever run into any Indians?
- CARLSON: What?
- KP: Did you ever run into any Indians?
- CARLSON: No Indians. Not here, we had plenty of Indians up there in the Colville Reservation, though. That's where we saw the Indians. When I was just a little kid up there they liked us because we both had real tow-eolored hair, and long braids. And the Indians would finger our hair. They thought it was so pretty. They talked broken Indian language, you know; "Pretty, pretty." they'd say. And they'd sit squaw fashion. The squaws'd be in the stores and they'd sit cross-legged, and they had furs that they'd sell and Indian blankets and all kids of things that they'd sell. My sister and I were halfway scared of 'em! I don't know why. And then we'd see 'em going with their wagons up to the mountains to pick huckleberries. And they'd be gone a long time because they'd go up there- I don't know if they dried the berries or what they did then they'd come back down and they'd go to the store and sell their stuff. They said they'd stop by the wayside if there was a woman that was ready to deliver, why, they'd just wait long enough til she delivered her baby and then on they'd go. Stop long enough for that just like they would

for an animal, just about. And they had drunk Indians there. They'd they were very Indian go galloping down our road horseback, waving their hat and yelling, "Yooo hoo!" Drunk as they could be. (Chuckles)

KP: I understand that Troy used to be kind of notorious for having a lot of saloons. Were they still here when you were?

CARLSON: They sure did. They had their saloons, alright. When we wanted to go to Moscow, we would have a two-seated buggy; hack, we called it a hack, and that was an allday affair. We'd probably take us a lunch and get in the hack and away we'd go across country, through pandali A Flat up in that area, we'd come into Moscow, spend the day. And we went to the fair; I remember of the folks taking us there to the fair. And one time in Moscow, they had a doings Moscow, have it all lined up and they had all the water hydrants turned off and even charged us for a drink of water. And that was one of the worst things that we could imagine that any town would do!

KP: Public hydrants?

CARLSON: Yes!

KP: Drinking fountains? They turned them off.

CARLSON: Uh-huh, so you'd have to buy your water to drink. And I know it was- in fact, not too long ago I made mention of it and I said, "At least they had the hydrants on so we could get a free drink of water." And whoever it was that I was talking to said, "Yes, but I remember that one time they sure didn't."

KP: Did they just do that one year?

CARLSON: O guess so. They can never live that one down! One was enough! But I remember we were there to that one. And then at the fence, you had to pay for your way to get in and then if you went out you would have had to pay to get back in. And they had no water, except if you buy it. Now that, I felt, was just about going a little too far. Everybody else thought so, too.

KP: A fence into the fair?

Uh-huh. Course, you had to pay for your way in. And I think it CARLSON: took a long time for them to get over that one. No more fairs. They'll never live it down, I doubt as long as there's old-timers to remember about it. When we did go- Later, my sister was teaching school, she made my dad a present of a Model A Ford. And at least so paid part of it or all of it, I'm not sure which. And then they could travel in this little Ford instead of a team of horses, which was a big improvement. But it didn't lessen the dust on the highwayon the roads; it was terrible; still is, when you have the dust to WASN'+ contend with, but it quite as bad as it was when you're behind a team of horses, because mixed with the dust you had horse hair! That was worse! I think that was one of the most unpleasant things of horse travel was horse hair! Mother used to say that Dad just curried 'em enough to loosen it up so it flew good! (Chuckles)

KP: Did your father have any trouble learning to drive his car?

CARLSON: I can't remember that he did with the Ford, no. But later- well, no then they traded this Ford off; they got a Chevrolet and he got along just fine with that one until it broke down; wore out. And he got a Dodge. And that was his Waterloo! He could <u>not</u> learn to handle that Dodge. He could drive it after it got to going, but the motor ran so quiet that he couldn't hear when the motor was going and he wore out clutch after clutch after clutch! And he didn't want to give up that he couldn't start that car; and I remember I told him that I would gladly drive him anywhere he wanted, especially in his and it was foundcar because that was a bigger car. And Mother and I were gone one

44

time and when we came back the Dodge was sitting outside the garageno, maybe it was inside, but there was something the matter and we found out that while we were gone he'd gone down and he'd tried to start it and he burned out the clutch again! So that was it! He never drove it again. That was really a heartbreak to him, he had to give that one up. He managed these others. I guess, I might say it was the same with the car that it was with the horses, because I was always afraid that he might get too close to the edge, but we never did have an accident.

- KP: What do you remember about town as a little girl? You said you didn't come very often.
- CARLSON: Huh?
- KP: To Troy.
- CARLSON: No.
- KP: Do you remember much? Must have been special days when you did come. Yeah, it would be. It was a special when they'd have a doings of CARLSON: some kind and we would come down. But to pick 'em out- really, about the only thing I can remember Sunday School. They had thisand especially I remember the big cement and brick Methodist Church stood on the corner where the bank parking lot is now. And we used to come- Had a long flight of stairs that you had to go upthis long flight of stairs to get into church. Down in the basement they had their youth gatherings and things like that, and they even held the fair when they wanted a fair in Troy- instead of Community Day, we had a Fair Day. People made things and brought 'em down there and they exhibited them in the basement of the Methodist Church. One thing I recall about that that was rather interesting because a friend of mine and I had worked together making jelly and she wanted me to help her make jelly. So she was up here and we had

a big kettle of jelly going and she brought her jars and I had my jars and when we got ready to pour it up I poured it into hers and into mine and back and forth til we filled our jars. And then we both exhibited it at the fair, the same jelly. And we sat back and

just chortled gleefully to ourself watching them judge those two jellies. They'd sample first one and then they'd sample the other and couldn't and they'd look up and they'd look at, figure out which one was better. And they finally chose mine! I never did tell 'em that they were exactly out of the same pot! (Laughter) We got such a kick out of that jelly, all made at the same time in the same kettle! And how they had such trouble trying to pick it out, but we which was a gleeful thought did win the prize! But that was in the old Methodist Church that they had those because it was the biggest building, was right down Main street and a nice place to put things. When the church was condemned that was kind of a sad day because it hadn't been put up rugged enough; must have been put up cheap, I guess. Just couldn't stand the gaff and they condemned it, so they had to take it down. That was one of the original churches there. The had the original Methodist Church, somewhere up on the hill. There was just a little, small building like the Lutheran Church was. They had two Lutheran Churches at that time when we came to town. The Swedish was at this end and the Norwegian at the other end and never the twain was to meet. Once in a while it would come up that they thought they should unite buildings, but not people. And it so happened that the Swedish congregation was stronger than the Norwegian congregation and it was customary in the towns when one would be stronger than the other one that the one that was the weaker church would sort of give in to the stronger church and they would disband. It so happened that the

46

Swedish Church was the stronger one here, we called it Westala . Which is named for a community in Sweden where it originated. And the Norwegian Lutherans, some of them, they never forgave 'em for losing their church. They never joined the other church, either. But finally their church was taken down. It stood down there by Brocke's house, on that corner. They had a minister that camehe didn't come every time- To begin with when they came, they were all in their native language, it was Swedish in the Swedish church and Norwegian in the other church. And then, in order to bend a little bit to take in those - the kids that were growing up and weren't learning their language, they decided they'd have every other Sunday would be in the native language. And then they decided that maybe they'd better have once a month in the native language, or they'd have half the sermon in Swedish and half in English. And finally, they broke down to having it in English and then they'd have maybe a special number in Swedish. Sing. Or they'd have maybe a little bit for the sake of the old people that couldn't understand English very good, they'd have an old one for them. Finally the broke away, so they don't have any. But that went over quite a number of years before they did.

KP: What other churches were in town? Norwegian and Swedish Lutheran.

CARLSON: And the Methodist and the Christian Church up on the hill there, that was there .

went to

KP: Those were more the English speaking people, the Methodist.

CARLSON: Yes, entirely, I guess.

(the swedish)

KP: Entirely. So they kind of stayed to themself as far as the church went?

CARLSON: Yes, very much so. They very definitely were by themselves. And the Norwegians were by themselves. And the Methodists, of course, they were by themselves, they couldn't understand the other languages anyway! And then later, the Nazarene Church came in. And then out in the country, of course, the Baptist Church was out there. And that was out there when we came; that was out in the Big Meadow district. Forgot to mention that at all. They had a Baptist Church out there. And the young people went to that church. And it was quite a- I think it must have been, "Thou shalt do this and thou shall not". But then it closed and Roy Nelson bought it. And then the Adventists were getting stronger, and he bought it for the Adventist Church. And they moved it over to where it is, and they added on and had school- and I guess I gave you that before.

KP: We didn't get it on the tape, though.

CARLSON: What if I don't get it the same as I gave it to you?

KP: The Adventists had a parochial school out there?

- CARLSON: Yes. First they had one room, then they had a two room and then they disbanded and went to the Moscow group. And then, they had no school!
- KP: The Adventists have been kind of strong out there for what? Thirty years.
- CARLSON: Quite a while. I remember when they used to hold the meetings down here in the Christian Church when they'd have a special speaker in. Because I remember Leroy Carlson's mother took my sister and I down there to meetings. We went up to the Christian Church and they had them there.

KP: The Carlsons were some of your next door neighbors?

Carlson: Yeah, they came from South Dakota- North Dakota- South Dakota-Which did we come from? South Dakota.

49

They must have come from North Dakota.

I don't know if they were Adventists when they came or how it wasjust exactly when they were, but it seems to me like they must have been when they came here. And $\frac{+he^{\gamma}}{\lambda}$ used to go to Deary to church. Then they met in the homes. They did that for years. Then they had- Then they got this church over here and put that over there, so they met there in the church. We have the original picture of moved over there it. And then I showed you the other one, you know. And then after they had their church there they decided that since they had their church there; they had lots of kids, they just as well start a school. So they did. And then, of course, they had to build on for that because they didn't have it big enough. And meanwhile, the other school had burned, so the community, I think- how did they pro bably do that? Maybe there was no school after that one burned, they had already gone into Troy, maybe. I would have to look up the dates on that because I've kind of forgotten. I wasn't connected with it by that time! '31. Because it burned in '31. I could look that up because I could when it was built.

KP: You weren't teaching there then?

CARLSON: No.

KP: Where else did you teach besides Big Meadow and Palouse and ?

CARLSON: Let's see, Driskill Ridge and the Union School between here and Moscow and then the Cove School, West Cove School up by Palouse and the Big Meadows School and out at Burnt Ridge and that is where I met my husband.

KP: So that ended your teaching career?

CARLSON: Ended my teaching career for quite a while. Oh, after we were mar-Ed ried, we had the house all ready, had everything in it all fixed here for us to move into. We lived here for just a very short while because he was working in the camps up out of Bovill, Elk River, and so he'd just come down for weekends. And finally, that wasn't any -that fun. They were hard put apparently then as they were now, the superintendent of school didn't have a place to live, and so we rented him our house. And I moved into an apartment downtown until I decided that I'd like to live up in camps, so I moved up to camp and we lived there then- well, we figured that our house had been rentedthis superintendent had it for two years and then after he left why the next one took it and he had it for two years. Then we asked for it because we decided that we wanted to move back. We figured four years of high school was enough, should have graduated, so we'd take then the meanwhile Ed- I it back then, so then we moved back. And guess he worked in camps some after that, but then he decided that he'd like to try something different and so he had got started at doing a little carpenter work; he apprenticed with Harry Campbell down here and Harry taught him a lot of things, how to carpenter and do things.

END OF TAPE

Trans cribed by Frances Rawlins, November 9, 1977