

Willa Cummings Carlson explores the views of American Ridgers: what men and women talked about day-to-day, their attitudes about politics, differences between Northerners and Southerners, and prejudice towards Negroes. She reports a rumor of an early vigilante hanging, a mirage of Kendrick's Main Street ablaze on the sky, a fire that burned down the Carlson house on Burnt Ridge, and typhoid fever that struck the family.

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# I. Index

## WILLA CUMMINGS CARLSON

American Ridge, Troy; b. 1896

schoolteacher; farm wife

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## Side B (continued)

30            113            Vigilantes on the ridge go after a horse thief in the early days. (cont.)

## Side C

00            114            (cont.) Two boys sitting in a tree heard the men underneath planning to hang the thief there. The boys never knew for sure ~~that~~ the suspected the act had been carried out, and called it the Hanging Tree. People were tight-lipped about vigilante activities.

04            116            People tried to protect the unclaimed land, occasionally by squatting. New arrivals usually had some connection with those already there or nearby.

09            118            Charles Cummings bought 40 acres from Al Roberts, who had gone in debt by co-signing for others in the hard years of the '90's.

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11            119            Peter Carlson (her father-in-law) was practically a socialist in his beliefs, but was a Democrat. Manfred Harland had keen evaluations of issues, such as responsibilities of county commissioners.

15            120            Few women went to political speeches at the schoolhouse. As a child Mrs. Carlson sees through the false flattery of politician Merriweather Lewis.

22            123            Political party made no difference in the men's concerns on the ridge. Charles Cummings put his money in the best stock for his farm. The old Roberts house. Political differences were kept quiet because the people were neighbors.

27            125            Her husband Paul and his father supported the IWW's because they understood the need for industrial organization. Ridge farmers who did well were usually against them.

30            126            Mrs. Carlson was wholly accepted by the Swedish people on Burnt Ridge.

## Side D

00            Problems on the family farm.

06            The fire which burned down the Carlson home. The tasks that had been done that day. When the fire breaks out, her first concern is for the children. Saving things from the house. Fire caused by cinders on the roof.

## II. Transcript

WILLA CUMMINGS CARLSON: (She is discussing the State of American Society:)

This is, as I say, an interesting time. It's an interesting time. It also is I think pretty well inlaid with tragedy.

SAM SCHRAGER: When you say that you think we can go--what did you say--we can go down to the finale or--

W C: Well I said which will we go? There's going to be--if it's a climax, and I think it's a climax, and it's been building and building--all right now, when the climax breaks, it goes over. We don't stop, things go, the wheels turn. Well all right--in anything, comparing it to any of life's crises, after the climax there's a finale. Now are we going down towards that finale, or will we start building toward a new finale? That's going to take engineering.

SAM: Well when you say if we have the edifice, what do you mean by that?

W C: What I mean is this. I don't know where I get the idea, but I think of anything that we build in the way of a skeleton government of any kind, that it's been built, hasn't it, by human hands? And after it's done--you know many of the edifices with which we deal are not seen by the eye. Don't you think that, that there's an edifice been built? Well is it built on solid ground, is it built on rock, or is it built on sand? And just as those that we have, all the signs, all the similes that we've given in literature and everywhere else--well don't think we're not building them all the time ourselves. And what are we doing? I used to try to teach my children that. You're building all the time. Now where are you building? Are you building solidly? Oh well some of the kids, some of my own, you know some of them, you probably see which ones mostly. Oh, what do you know about it and how can you tell? Well you can do what you want to, and you can tear down and build up again. You have to build with repairs, and of course that's true in many cases. And they always think they're engineers of their own building, but they're not always. If they can interpret and see what's coming, go with it or against



it, solidly, I think they're better off. Have you read The Late Planet Earth?

SAM: No.

W C: Well, now you're of a--you've had, you say, a Jewish background, which interests me, because the Jewish background, with the few Jews I've been privileged to talk with about the their background--Ordinarily, those that I know, they've had it and that's it, and they don't want to enter in any--  
(Break.)

W C: I think so. And history bears this out. All countries have come to those crossroads.

SAM: What do you think that his crossroads is? Is it a crossroads of moral fiber, ethical--what is it?

W C: Largely. Largely. That's caused the downfall. There is a tremendous effort to get them back on a road of strict morality. But a part of it is looseness. I deplore the tearing down of--now I believe in constitutions, don't get me wrong. I'm liberal in a lot of views. But when it comes to living, I believe in law and order (chuckles), much as I deplore the kind of laws we make and the decisions that we come to sometimes. But nevertheless I believe in order, and at heart I am a conservative, in a way. I don't believe in reckless waste of human energy nor human power in any way. And as far as all this business of racial contention and one thing another, it's been terrible and still we had it. We should have known! And you look back at history, of course our hindsight, the hindsight of all of us is so much better than our foresight naturally. We've had that told to us many times, and I for one have accepted it because I can see the truth of it all around me. But now we should know as we look back over history that--and I think it is significant in our history, and I don't hear very many making anything of it, and I know I've mentioned it several times, and even historians say, "Well that's one of

the accidents, just an accident." Naturally when things are going on they'll come at the same time, but look what happened: now back in 1619 happens to be the year in which the House of Burgesses, which was a stab at getting self-government, real democratic government of the people in Virginia, the new colony in the new world. I speak of 1619 and I'm talking about the new world of the United States, not because I belong to the United States all together, of course that's why I am looking at it naturally, because I happened by accident to have been born here. Accident? No. I don't believe things happen by accident. And that was that year anyway it started, and all the world had turned their eyes on the colonies. And here was this colony over here going to try an experiment in self-government. And at that time there were several patriots that had come in, and they had made their speeches and made their stabs for this particular sort of thing. And then that same year was the year when the Dutch ship landed with a cargo of Negroes, slaves that they had brought from Africa, in Virginia. And there were these colonists, many of them those that had gone up here to establish self-government, out there elbowing each other out to get the best slaves. Buying the slaves and introducing them into Virginia, the very same year in the very same colony! They were introduced, and it was a Dutch trading vessel, that brought in. I've always pointed that out too to the English, who were so proud of their record, that it was a Dutch trading vessel that brought the Negroes, the first Negroes into the colony of Virginia. There was also a small attempt made to quash some of the drinking that was going on there, because there was a lot of that. We forget that sometimes in talking about the colonies. There were <sup>ing</sup>bring/up a lot of--you can be sure that licentiousness prevailed in some of those places.

SAM: I'd like to ask you now to look at the Ridge in the old days. This is very interesting to me. What were the attitudes that you remember towards

race on the Ridge?

W C: Towards race?

SAM: I mean the Negro problem.

W C: You mean the Negro problem. Well (chuckles), I'll tell you. I was a child and of course I didn't know the big things. I didn't know the big overall things. I hadn't philosophized. I hadn't taken into consideration the religious aspect that I learned to have later. I had to learn that, I didn't come born with it. My people were not even religious people, and of course they wondered where I got my ideas when I'd come home with them, and many times I was shut up because they didn't want me talking about such things. So I didn't know too much when I was little. But I did know about the Negro problem. I was afraid of Negroes. Now I must have gotten that fear from people around me, because no other place. My mother was from Missouri and she knew a lot of Negroes. And the Negroes that she knew, she was perfectly at home with and talked about them. But, she had the idea of all the white people--now for instance, she trained me to always say Mister and Missus, and to this day that was good training. After I grew up even, I realised it was good training, because a lot of people thought, they said to me, "Well you must have had pretty good training, because you always say Mr. and Mrs. to the older people, and you're quite polite." And I was complimented for my politeness by some very rough talking people, people that never thought of saying anything but your first name. And I still have that notion that if the people are strange to me, I'm one of the last ones to start calling them by their first name. That seems to me to be a little more familiar than you ought to be with strangers. But my mother's reason now, coming back to what the training would be, was that you called the Negroes, the servants, by their first names, because after all, they didn't have any other names. No, they weren't permitted, as I learned when I grew a lot older, that they weren't

permitted--They had their own marriage rights, a lot of them did, and they married in those old rough cabins, but they weren't given the right of sanctity in marriage. They weren't allowed to go to a church to be married, no sir. They weren't permitted anything. They weren't given any legal rights. And when it came right down to it, look at the Dred Scott decision, that a Negro slave was property and should be treated as property. He had no more right than a horse or a cow.

SAM: Do you think the attitudes on the Ridge were in the abstract? How did they come down to a guy like Joe Wells, who lived in the area and was a Negro?

W C: Well, I'll tell ya. I wondered about that too. But I knew a man, we know a man, and you probably have run into him too--old Elmer Wells, he still lives down at the Idaho Hotel. Well that's where Joe Wells got his name. The Wells family lived back in North Carolina along with these Mixes that are here--the old Mixes, the ones that came before them. I didn't know any of 'em, but I just know of the family, the Mix family. And Elmer Wells practically worshiped at the feet of old Gub Mix and his wife, that they called old Gub Mix and his wife here, he came here as a young man. And my husband knew him and worked with him before he died--of course he was a lot older than my husband. But he came here as a young man, and was interested politically and one thing another, he came from North Carolina. Well Elmer Wells had known them back there, but they'd been poor compared to the Mixes. But still some of the Wells had wealth enough to have slaves and they loved their slaves. They were very lovable people, some of those, but still they weren't recognized as people. Even in the Constitution! It took three-fifths, three-fifths of the Negroes were counted as people. So you were only three-fifths people, a person, as a slave clear back in the Constitution. A lot of people don't know that now, because a lot of people don't know what the Constitution says. I think there are lots of people that never read the

Constitution. I'm not very conversant with it now because I (chuckles) haven't read it in so long, but when I was in school I was very much interested in government and I surely read the Constitution, and I learned that we didn't have a lot of rights that we thought we had. But then we treated the Negro shamefully and always did! And couldn't somebody see that that was a terrible way to treat those people?! Isn't it something terrible to think that our ancestors didn't know how to do and that they could look upon human beings as being three-fifths of people? Isn't that awful? It's ridiculous. And I've been talking about that ever since I learned it down in grade school.

SAM: What was their attitude towards Joe Wells, though?

W C: Well, Joe Wells was like so well by Elmer Wells. They came out here some way, that family of slaves followed the Wells out here. And I don't know, I never did know that story because I didn't know them, I didn't live in that neighborhood. And not until long afterward did I know that he'd got his name from Elmer Wells' family. But Elmer worked for my husband for awhile. He was old but he could still grub brush, and my husband was a fiend for grubbing brush by hand, even though the tract of land that he cleared wouldn't ever produce enough to pay for the wages of clearing it. But that's the way my husband was, that's the kind of an economist he was. And he did not know how to manage money. An awful good fellow in many many ways, but--I'm sure Elmer Wells would have thought that, because he was a good Democrat though for Elmer Wells. And Elmer Wells was a very good Democrat and he went around making an awful bad noise with some ugly words about the Republicans. That was his style of being a Democrat. But he liked Joe Wells. But still, Joe Wells was a Negro. He was not up-to-date with them. Now I understood that when the Wells came down here--I don't know this for a fact, and I'm not telling it as a fact nor even suggesting it's a fact--

SAM: Hearsay.

W C: Yes, it was pure hearsay, but I did hear that he would be invited to eat with Mixes, but he didn't eat at the same table, they always set another table for them. I don't know about that. But a fellow by the name of Thompson ran the Moscow Hotel, and he said, "Well, old Joe Wells can sure eat here." But at that time they had a rule in the Moscow Hotel that no Negroes could stay overnight in the hotel. So a group of singers came in here, quite a long time ago. And I was young and out on American Ridge, and I had no influence and had no way of doing things. And my father wouldn't have thought of mixing in anything like that. He wouldn't have thought of it. He didn't think it was right, I don't mean to say that Poppa thought it was right. He said, "They've no right to do that to those people, lock 'em out of a hotel or refuse to feed them or give them housing." But there'd be people here around town, here and there, that would take them in for a night's lodging, and feed them, and that's the way they did eat. Well they went over to Pullman and Pullman wouldn't take 'em in either for awhile. But Pullman and their main hotel over there, Washington Hotel, admitted the Negro to the hotel before they did over here at the Moscow Hotel. Now at that time there was only the Moscow Hotel in question, because it was the big hotel here, the only building that called itself a hotel. Anything else would be boarding houses or lodging houses, but there were no other hotels at first. I can remember the time when that was the only hotel. And a lot of people thought that was right: "Why the idea of a Negro thinking he could go there!" And there were just lots and lots of people wouldn't think of letting a Negro sleep in their house!

SAM: But evidently there were some people who did because they got places to stay.

W C: Oh yes, there were some who did. They were divided. Now the people on American Ridge even, who were good people, and I think that for the most part they would have wanted to see a Negro get justice--I think. But we had the South Methodist Church and the North Methodist. And when I was a little girl,

I said, "Why is it the M. E. Church South is up here on the north end of the Ridge?" And I could ask that, oh nobody--"What do you care!"--nobody paid attention to me among the younger people of course, and the older people didn't want to talk about it, I'm sure that was the reason they turned me off. But I did ask that because it was a question to me. But my question wasn't on Negro subjects, it was on why was the South Methodist Church on the north end of the Ridge, and why was the North Methodist Church down on the south end of the Ridge? Two Methodist Churches, and the people that went to 'em. Now here and there was a family that'd always go to the other end of the Ridge to go to church because it was the right kind of a church. Well finally, I suppose it was Mrs. Roberts that told me--I wouldn't say so, but I think so--that, well, the people on the south end of the Ridge were all Northerners, so they had a North Methodist Church. And on the upper end of the Ridge, there were quite a few people that had come from the South or Southern sympathizers, or from Kansas where they had Southern sympathizers, so they were Southern sympathizers, and they named it the South Methodist Church. But they brought it along with them from the East where they'd come from because they were all from the East. Now this was not completely true, because the lines weren't that clearly defined. There were people that went to the church because it happened to be the church where they were set up. And they realized that they didn't have any Negroes out here so they had no Negro problem. But was the reason that it was separated in the first place, it was the North and South Methodist Church. And so I found out.

SAM: To what extent do you think that the differences between northern and southern parts of the country did play a part in the lives of the people on the Ridge?

W C: Oh, it played a part, not a big part. They talked, well it was understood that this fellow, they say that he fought in the Confederate Army, they'd say.

Well he was an old Confederate soldier. Well, they nodded their head and looked around; they didn't shun him but didn't trust him completely either. There was that feeling, that feeling of distrust about the Confederates.

SAM: On the part of the Northerners...

W C: On the part of the Northerners, of course, and vice-versa. I don't know about that, I didn't happen to be around enough Southern people to hear them say. And there was a Negro came to town once. I don't mention this and don't tell it, and I wouldn't write down anything about it, because I do not know, at this late date I don't know what the real facts were. And I am just indebted to the people who were around me for--and they had only hearsay. Those were people that weren't in town. This happened in Troy, and of course we lived out in the country, and I heard scraps of conversation, and I heard everything because I listened. And this man, a Negro, came to town. I don't know what he did. I don't know what he was. I think I knew at the time what he was there for. But just a common, poor workingman. And I was very, very young. Oh I was down in the lower grades, eight or nine at the most was what I was, 'cause that's been a long time. And there was a widow woman had come into the country, but I don't remember when she came, so she'd come before I ever went to school or anything. Mrs. Clemm--she kept house for her brother in the country, and she had two sons. And they were rough ones I guess, both of 'em, they were drinkers and so on--Bob and Walter. Well I learned to know Walter Clemm real well, and he reformed his drinking, and he has a family of seven children I think, and they are strung out over American Ridge, and of course they wouldn't know anything about their father's dealings, and all these things happened before Walter ever had the family. But I learned to know Walter Clemm real well, and like him, he was a likeable fellow. And he had this brother Bob, who was not so likeable, I'm told, and I never knew him. I knew him when I saw him. And he had a wife--Walter wasn't married at that



time, he was much, much younger--he had a wife and a daughter. And the daughter was just practically a baby when this happened. But there was a cafe in town, and it was run by they said a Southerner. And of course he was a Southerner that knew Negroes and had been around them and wasn't one that hated the Negro, not by any means. And he let him eat at his cafe. So he ate at this man's cafe, and I don't know what about his lodging. There was a question about that. Well he and this Bob Clemm got into a fight one night, drunken fight, brawl, in the cafe, and the Negro was killed. Now wait a minute!

SAM: I've heard that a Negro was killed in Troy.

W C: Now wait a minute. Was the Negro killed or Bob Clemm was killed, I think. Maybe they were both killed. I think Bob Clemm died that way. So then they were going to hang the Negro, that was the talk. "Lynch him. Lynch him!" And there was that talk was all around. And I remember I've heard since that there were cool heads that stopped a lynching party. But maybe they both died. But I remember them saying, well it was good riddance to bad rubbish if the Negro got killed, everybody was in favor of getting him killed. And he hadn't done a thing, I heard that, hadn't done a thing wrong. Only go down there--I suppose he was carousing, same as Clemm was. You see I don't know the particulars of that, and so I can't tell them at all. But I do know that there was this terrible fight between Bob Clemm and the Negro. Now whether they were both killed or one was killed and the other wasn't--But I think Bob Clemm was killed, because oh everybody sympathized so with his widow. And I'm not so sure she was so deserving of sympathy, but there was a lot of sympathy expended on her.

SAM: And you don't have any idea what eventually happened to that Negro, whether he was himself died or tried? He wasn't lynched, though.

W C: No, he wasn't lynched, and I'm sure he wasn't tried. I'm pretty sure he either was killed or died from the effects of it. I'm pretty sure of that.

You know I haven't thought of that for many years, a long time. I'll tell you, my husband's father could have told you all about it, because oh my he was incensed by it, and by the treatment of the Negro, but he'd come from Sweden and HATED SLAVERY! And my father-in-law was certainly no moderate about anything.

SAM: Why did he hate slavery so much?

W C: Because he didn't believe in it! It was part of his religious upbringing too.

SAM: In Sweden?

W C: Yes. He had that upbringing, I know that, and so of course it was partly that. Oh no, he hated that, and yet (chuckles), I remember him saying one time--I shouldn't be telling this--but he considered himself an authority on religion and politics, and he brooked no interference from his family. And of course I didn't know any better than to take a stand against him a time or two, but I learned to keep still and just let him go and let him believe what he wanted to believe. But I do remember him saying, well the Negroes couldn't go any farther because the Bible prophecy was that. And I said, "I didn't know that you had the Mormon idea. That's the Mormon idea too." That was only hearsay with me; I didn't know that the Mormons had it. I hadn't studied Mormonism or anything at that time. But they do have a pretty black image of the Negro in there as far as that's concerned. But then I read the Bible and get something entirely different to my father-in-law. And I believe in the Bible, I have great faith in it, but then there are large parts of it that I admit I don't understand, so that I wouldn't think of arguing with. I read them and take it into consideration and I ask 'em questions, "Is that what you believe?", but as far as me starting to argue and say, "No, no, no," and all that, I don't do that, on these people who have interpreted it. But of course you know it does say in there that the sons of Ham

shall be the hewers of wood and the drawers of water in the camps of Shem, of course--Shem's and Japeth, too, as far as that is concerned. And Shem of course they say will always make a slave of the Negro. Well of course if that were absolutely true, then Shem is no more to blame than anybody else--if it's a curse on Shem, he's got to put up with this hewer of wood and drawer of water, you know? Now that's a place to which these people who are arguing that don't want to go. The Bible certainly doesn't put Shem to blame for it. It was leveled at them, according to the Bible. Now that's quite a mystery to me. And it's been a mystery, a lot of other things are mysteries to me. I believe that there is that element of absolute truth in them, but that we have it, I don't know about. And I certainly didn't know if my father-in-law had it either. Paul's father lived, of course went on Burnt Ridge, he didn't on American Ridge, and most people were beneath his favor of even talking with 'em, because he didn't think they knew much, you know. And there were a lot of ignorant people (chuckles) among the early settler, as far as that was concerned, but I'm not so sure they were as ignorant as he thought they were. But the Swedes out on Burnt Ridge were very religious, they were all brought up religiously. Not Paul's father's way--as I told ya, he was of a reformed--oh my, he would've bounced up and shaken his fist at me if he heard me say reformed, but I consider that the Friend's Service in Sweden was a great reformation, even on top of Luther's. And Luther, by the way, was a--

(End of Side A)

SAM: What kind of effect that had, whether you were from the North and South, on the political beliefs of the people?

W C: Well it had some. I don't think that after they got out to American Ridge and they had to dig hard for a living--I think it began to mean less and less to them than what it meant when they were back close to the war. You see they

didn't come out here until well after the Civil War. And yet some of the gold from the Pierce mining district--I can't say this for a fact, now, but somewhere in my notes had a little in about some of that gold was taken out and shipped to the war. And some of it went to the Confederacy. But whether it was minted, I didn't trace that. I don't remember what that was. I know I didn't do the tracing of how much it was or whether it was minted or not. I don't know, because by that time the country was getting so torn up that their regular system of minting the money wasn't very well known. But I do know that that was said, that here was this note that actually, even though the country wasn't settled up out here, there was some gold going in. Of course the California gold was taken, a lot of that was taken into the Civil War. But 1861 to '63 there--Pierce discovered gold at Orofino in '63. Orofino is named by him. Of course "Gold I find," or "Ore, gold ore I find." I don't know whether I got that into Blake's (Mavis Lee Utley's son) head or not when he was studying, but I think so though, about Orofino. He's so fond of Orofino.

SAM: Well listen, did it tend to shape--would you be more likely be Democrat if you were from the South and Republican if you were from the North?

W C: Yes, that was said on American Ridge. I've heard the oldtimers say that. Well it was mainly the Democrats. But that wasn't true on American Ridge--the Democrats didn't all gather on the southern end of the Ridge and the Northerners, the Republicans, all gather on the--I was going to say the top of American Ridge--on the northern end of the Ridge. But actually they were nearly all Republican up around Bethel, that was the Northern Methodist--or Southern Methodist on the northern end of the Ridge. I get my norths and souths all mixed up here, you'll have to kind of remember that.

SAM: Are you saying that they were really all Republicans in the Northern Methodist Church--or the Southern Methodist Church?

W C: No, that's the Southern Methodist.

SAM: Well that seems unusual since you were saying that was the Southern Church.

W C: Yes, yes, I know it does. But somebody told me and I think it must have been Mrs. Roberts. She was mainly the one that was catching a lot of those things. They were Republicans of course, and they came from the North. They were Republicans, but then they didn't belong to the Church either. That is Al Roberts didn't, but his brother was a regular, oh my yes, he was a rip-roaring Methodist.

SAM: What do you remember about politics from the Ridge country and around Troy when you were young?

W C: I don't remember very much. It was local politics. I remember quite a little bit about local politics, they were very much interested in local politics. And at that time, Moscow, although it was the logical center--you see we didn't have an organization whereby we had a central area like Moscow in those days, and the politics of the county were spread all over the county. And consequently it was not until oh I was coming up to high school age practically when they began to get more. And it was after the University came to Moscow that it became a center...Now I have that timing put out in one of my notebooks. Did you get it?

SAM: I don't remember saying it was the coming of the University that made Moscow.

W C: Oh I probably didn't say it, but it's implied. Of course I by reading my notes know that the implication was there. That's what I've said about a lot of the things in my--I'd almost have to explain a lot of them.

SAM: Well, that's what we're doing.

W C: Uh-huh. That's it. I would understand the implication.

SAM: OK, what is the implication then?

W C: Well naturally when the University came there were more and more of the young men and women were coming up to the University and getting ideas, taking

political science and learning about it, and thinking that they should have people that knew a little bit more. And a boy from our ridge down there, American Ridge, George Davidson, he was the first one that I knew of to graduate who lived on American Ridge, southern end. Well his father was a Republican, Joe was a Republican. But he'd come into the country. I don't think Joe Davidson was either Northern or Southern in views, because oh he was of Scottish extraction I believe and had come by way of Nova Scotia to this country, and had lived in Nova Scotia, and he came here I don't know about his political affiliations. I didn't know the older Davidsons very well; knew them, but I never talked with them about it. But he was a very good friend of Mr. Roberts and I'm quite sure they were Republicans. Well George went to school, and I think he was the first boy to graduate from college. And well my goodness, the farmers all around, including my father, said, "Well, it was possible to send your kid off to school and he'd get so much education he'd be an educated fool." And that's what George was, he was an educated fool. He'd come out there and telling them how to farm, and telling them how to do this and how to do that. And oh yes, he knew all about politics and everything else. Well I never heard George talk politics. I never was around. I never knew George until I guess after he graduated the University and he got to going with somebody that I liked awful well, and then I saw him a few times, but they weren't talking politics. I remember that I met them when they were on their way to be married. Fern Carlton, and she was my ideal. When I grew up I was going to be like Fern, I was going to teach school like Fern. And I met them coming in this rubber-tired buggy, and oh George did sit up and he did think he was somebody. Anyway I remember that I agreed with everybody around the country because he--But I thought he was too, I sort of agreed with George, he was somebody. It sort of made me believe that, you know, the way he looked. Most other people didn't. However, I

liked George afterward.

SAM: Was it going to college that gave him these airs?

W C: I wouldn't know, but I suppose so. I never knew him before. So I suppose so. His brothers didn't go to college, but they went farther than the eighth grade. They went to Kendrick and took all that Kendrick had at that time in the way of a high school. It wasn't a full high school, I don't think. And they were a family who knew quite a little more than just an ordinary rural family. They believed in knowing something. But they didn't enter politics at any time.

SAM: Talking about local politics, you're saying you remember local politics. What kinds of local issues were there?

W C: Oh they didn't have issues and talk issues! I didn't learn that until I got in high school a long time afterward, about issues. I didn't call them issues. I didn't know what they were. But they talked about it--they called it "talking politics". They talked about what man did this and what man did that, and whether to change the road from the southern end of the county to someplace where it'd connect a lot of places, that seemed to be the idea. And well, they would have to contend with some rich farmer who would try to get the road over his way, and that wouldn't benefit these smaller settlers. But they all sort of tended toward leaning toward the rich one, because he could do more for 'em and give 'em more time to the road to make the road, and things of that sort. Now those were the things that they were discussing. And then of course in the matter of politics, what the men talked about and what the women talked about--the women would always say, "Oh the men, let 'em go out in the other room, or go out on the porch. They just want to talk politics." And they called a lot of things politics that had no politics in it, as I can look back and know. But I liked the men's talk a lot better than I did the women. The women talked about the chickens, and what kind of chickens

they thought were the best, and how many eggs they got from their chickens, and how much money they got for their eggs during the winter, and how to make butter and all that stuff, and then how to take care of the babies. And some of 'em were wise enough to get a magazine that had some late lessons in it and they'd discuss them. Well that was their politics--the babies and chickens and early gardens and all that.

And when the men met with any of the women, came in, they did stop to start talking to them. To my father--he was a gardener, and I tell you a professional gardener, the best gardener on American Ridge, I'll swear to that. He was, and they'd ask him, and he was an authority on it, and still it wasn't from book learning. But he was a natural observer. I wish I had his eye for observing everything. And of course in the process as he had grown up in Michigan, his father before him and his mother, they'd been great believers in the stars and the moon and so on. So he planted his potatoes in the moon. So they'd come by. "Whatcha doing, Charlie? Mighty cold day for you to be planting those potatoes. They won't come up. Planting them in the moon, I suppose?" "Yeah, I'm planting them in the moon," Poppa'd say. He had a certain moon to plant 'em in. "Well, they won't come up--I'll plant my potatoes about a month later and I'll have better potatoes than you." "Okay," Grandpa would say, "we'll find out." And my boys will swear to it that Grandpa's potatoes were the biggest and the best (laughs), and they were. Grandpa always had the garden, and the women would all say that. "Charlie will have the best garden, you all know that. So you go home and get the garden ready." And they did! They didn't plant in the moon, they planted after Charlie. All the good gardeners that wanted to have good gardens tried to plant 'em when Poppa did. So when the men got together, they would talk to the women, because the women had an awful lot more to do with gardening than the men did in most cases. Not in our case--Grandpa did it, and then we



children had to garden. Oh I hated it when I was a kid, but I did learn it and learned it right, and right now and I'd rather garden than do housework. So the men talked about that, and they did talk about the kinds of chickens that they thought laid the best. And Poppa was always out for hints on building chicken houses and things like that. Well now that was their politics, and that's what they talked.

SAM: But when the men were by themselves they talked politics.

W C: When the men were by themselves they talked what the women called politics.

But as I say their politics included a lot of things. Now it did include the kind of wheat--were they going to change to this new kind of wheat? Well now they understood that up at the University they were trying to create another kind of wheat. Well that was their job, some man would explain to the farmers that didn't know--because a lot of the farmers didn't know, some of the more learned ones would say that that was their research and that was right, that they were searching it out. But that that was how we got the University--as Brigham, who was one of the main ones, a county commissioner from Genesee, and Mitchum, from Kendrick, that got the University, and largely getting it through the Morrill Act, which created the agricultural school at the University. That is also the reason why Boise has not been able to cart the University away from Moscow to Boise as they've tried to do many times and thought they'd do. They thought they'd steal the Law Department. They finally did get Boise College and then kept on adding more colleges until practically they had a university down there. But they couldn't kill the University of Idaho because they had the Morrill Act up here, and so many things had been created through the Morrill Act at the University. So that in 1909, when Teddy Roosevelt came here to speak in front of the University, he spoke on a pile of sacks of wheat that were around in front of Morrill Hall.

SAM: What did the Morrill Act specify?

W C: Well, Morrill was an ag man and he left it to an ag college for the purposes of research and developing the country around where it was built. And here was a fertile field up here in the Palouse country, which is of course one of the fertile spots of Idaho, but it isn't so big. It isn't anywhere near as big as South Idaho, but of course at that time South Idaho was a waste of desert land. And the first crop of people that were to come in and get it started and dig the ditches--after awhile, after everybody had gone broke and gotten out of there because their windmills wouldn't work, they didn't have enough wind to run 'em to get water into their ditches, and they didn't know enough about irrigation. And these people up here were speculating if those fellows ever get irrigation down there--Well, there were two schools of thought as I remember: some people would say, "Ehhhh, they'll never be able to get the water turned on to the land down there in that desert to make anything grow." And then the others: "Oh, you'll just be surprised. That'll make that a fertile garden and someday it will be." "Well, why don't you go down there and take a claim then? You can get it almost for nothing." Well they didn't want to be among those first ones. They felt awful sorry for those people that were in there building it up. And of course they did leave and there were well-improved farms, people that had spent a lot of money down there when they left. Well you see, that's what they did. Oh, I haven't read about the Morrill Act for a long time. I used to know a lot more than I do now.

SAM: Oh that's OK. That makes me wonder, do you think that the farmers that did come to this country, came and stayed partly because it was more like the old kind of farming that they knew how to do? Compared to this irrigated new-fangled kind of farming?

W C: Oh yes, that's what settled this country, sure. They didn't want to come there. It took a lot of legislation, there were men that worked on that.

Finally the Carey Act went through, and they began settling southern Idaho and Wyoming and sections of Montana. And they got in under the Carey Act. Now I'm not conversant enough with the Carey Act to start talking to you about it, but at any rate it assisted with getting irrigation into the country, and getting the streams ready and prepared for it. Of course they had to get down below the source of supply naturally to get the water directed in that direction, and then big irrigation ditches made. And they certainly did dig 'em in those days, and there was work for engineers, plenty of work for that. Some of these long-sighted men were saying, "With this University here, the boys can get trained, we'll get engineers. We have to have surveyors, and this land going to have to be surveyed, and the irrigation ditches will have to be taken care of. The plants will have to be run," and all that/<sup>sort</sup> of thing. And these men were talking about that--what's going to happen to the country?

SAM: The local people?

W C: Local people. I listened to that.

SAM: What's going to happen to the country around here?

W C: Sure, and how's it going to work. Oh yes, and that's what they're going to do down there.

SAM: They weren't thinking about irrigation for up here, were they?

W C: Oh, no, no. No, no, no. Although--

SAM: What did they think would happen to the country around here?

W C: They didn't know, but they speculated. Some thought this was going to be a wonderful country, it just had to have more development--and it did. And then of course marketing was a problem. Lee Carlton was a man, he had a fruit dryer down on the lower end of American Ridge, southern end of American Ridge, at least they were south of us--We had a vantage point right in the middle of the Ridge between Troy and Kendrick. Now for instance, my father had worked for Martin Thomas who lived on the very end of American Ridge, southern end,

and had a fertile spot down there. He'd gotten a homestead and bought out two or three other pre-emptions, had come in with a little money. And a man that came with a little of money could make a lot of money. He didn't have the source of supply that J. P. Vollmer did in the early days. Later on he did--he became the president of the bank down at Kendrick, and he said whether the local people were going to be able to borrow money or not. And of course I guess he borrowed on his own, I don't know about that, I never heard enough to know. But they finally had to get a bank so they'd have the control of some money that kept building and building bigger and bigger farms and getting more and more money. So he was a very wealthy man. And they talked about him and how he was building, the men did, and I heard all this. Men were the ones that were doing the things. They were the ones deciding whether they were going to have big farms or little farms. And what in the world were a few settings of eggs? What difference did that make, you know? And I was never interested in that. And the men didn't talk about things I was interested in all the time, but sometimes they did. I liked them to get into Constitutional arguments and all that sort of thing.

SAM: Did they?

W C: No, no, nobody did. Oh once in awhile somebody would bring up Constitutional law. And they talked about which lawyer was the best. I remember Supager (sp?) was a lawyer in Moscow. Farmers ought to have a lawyer--a lawyer ought to be here so that if farmers had to go to law about anything, he'd be sympathetic. Well what man do you think would be the most sympathetic? Well that fella didn't know anything. Some fella would have had a run-in with this lawyer or that, and they got some erroneous ideas about who that lawyer should be. And I remember that they were very strong for Burton L. French. They hadn't looked into Burton L. French's background. I know that, but I know it from my years of learning afterward. But as I recall it then, well it was good to

get Burton in as a Congressman because he'd told them he'd work for them and so on. He never worked for anybody but himself, he only worked for Burton L. French. He was too narrow minded and too empty minded to know very much about what to do. He just went out, he'd graduated the University of Idaho, and he had worked his way through school, he was to be admired for that. I had his younger brother, Carlton French, for a teacher one year, and he was an excellent teacher. And I believe he knew more in one minute that Burton did in a week.

SAM: Would people realize that Burton French wasn't really doing anything for them after he got in and didn't do much?

W C: Oh I think a lot of people did, and all the Democrats did of course. I had my eyes open, and I was a Democrat long before I ever dared say it.

SAM: Did people believe that--what was their idea of what politics was all about?

W C: They didn't know politics! How could they talk real politics? They didn't know real politics. But they did talk about personalities a lot, who represented politics. And once in a while a man knew more. Now Mr. Roberts, I loved him-- Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, I loved them, they were wonderful people--and I'm not saying one thing against 'em, and I wouldn't write down a thing against Al Roberts for anything in this world. But, like him talking about Frank May who had spent all his life collecting mortgages, well he tried to collect hunting trophies, and had spent days and days tracking across the wilderness. He was in the Selway forest long before any other white men had gone up through there. He met and made friends with the Indians. He was one of the best ambassadors of good will among people. Al Roberts didn't have any, any inhibitions about race. If a Negro had come to his house, he'd have taken him in and kept him overnight. He hadn't known many. They didn't travel up into Pennsylvania and Ohio, so he hadn't known many Negroes. And I never heard his philosophy about Negroes, except that I know his

style. And I do know that old Joe Wells, he would meet him on the street in Troy when he came down there once in a while, and I'll bet he never had a heartier handshake than he had from Al Roberts. And he stayed at Joe Wells' house up at Deary when he was around with the assessing, and told about that--that he'd stayed overnight there, and old Joe Wells and his family, how great they were. And they got out their musical instruments-- I don't know what they played. I don't know that 'cause I didn't know those Negroes. Goodness sakes, I was kept in home, I stayed home. And my mother was very particular about me and when I went to town I had to stay under their supervision very close. And when I got to going with the neighbors, well there weren't any Negroes around town there.

SAM: But they played musical instruments and had a good time--

W C: Had a good time, and sang--

SAM: But you were about to say about Al Roberts' politics, politically.

W C: Yeeeah, he was a Republican, and that's what he knew, and that was Abraham Lincoln politics. It was Abraham Lincoln who freed the slaves. Actually, actually, they were freed by a lot of Southerners too, many Southerners that helped, as far as that was concerned. But then Abraham Lincoln had said as a young man that if he ever got a chance to strike a blow at slavery, he would. And he did, and he had that, and he actually believed he was doing this for the freeing of slaves, and he did go through that. But when you know history you know that right along with it you know the Republican tariff men were running up the high tariffs to protect their industries here at home that didn't amount to very much. And they were doing a lot of things. Of course the Southerners didn't now, because they were raising cotton and they wanted a good price for their cotton, and they didn't want a high tariff on it. And they didn't want to have to have it so that they had to pay the Northerners a big price to get their cotton manufactured and

manufactured here at home. So the Southerners weren't in favor of a high tariff. But believe me, the northern Republicans were! And they more or less fooled Abraham Lincoln, but you know he hadn't had a chance to have an education and he couldn't possibly have known everything. When I first learned that he had some weak spots, I thought that was too bad because I'd been taught too Abraham Lincoln was a hero. Why I'd heard people say, well, if they were gonna worship a man-- They believed that every man had to have somebody to worship. I heard people talking about that. Oh I listened to all these things and took 'em in. I did not believe, I am not born to be a believer of everything I hear. But that was my good fortune, that is, I consider my good fortune. Maybe not, maybe you should believe more.

SAM: But they said if you were going to believe in somebody--

W C: --Somebody to worship, you could just as well worship a man. They were more or less athiestic, athiestic till they came to die, or near death.

SAM: And they were talking about Abraham Lincoln as being the man?

W C: Well, I heard it said--I don't know for sure who said it--that if they were going to worship a man in the United States, they were going to worship Abraham Lincoln, because he came nearest to being a god, a man who stood head and shoulders above other men. He did make a great president and certainly did wonderfully well for his background. And I'm willing to honor him, yes! I pay great honor to a man like Abraham Lincoln, who could come out of a background like that and do as well as he did and have the lofty ideals that he had. But at the same time he was a mere man and he had the faults of a man! He had human failings, and they were bad ones, very bad ones, big ones. And George Washington was far from being a man to worship. After the Revolutionary War, I know that I've heard different ones say, historians talking about it, well it appears as though people were in the mood to worship a man like Washington afterward. A leader, a great leader at a time like

that gets a lot more acclaim that what he deserves and probably a great deal more than what he wanted. I'm sure Abraham Lincoln didn't ask for it.

SAM: Well do you think Lincoln was the most popular politician on the Ridge?

Of course he was dead by then.

W C: Oh no, by then he was a dead hero.

SAM: Who were some of the other personalities--you say that they talked personalities--who were some of the others that they talked about?

W C: Well, they talked personalities. When I said they talked personalities I was talking about personalities of the time being, among their people. Well, was Lafayette Keane a good enough county commissioner to be elected county commissioner again? Was Manfred Harland a good county commissioner, good enough to be elected again? Or should they get somebody else in? What would he favor? And there had been cattlemen's associations, and then some people were strong for the law, and other people were wondering about those vigilante committees. We weren't very far at that time from the vigilante committee days, when people used to get out, and they had a sort of a secret committee of vigilantes that, if there was any trouble in the neighborhood, the vigilantes got together. And they said they had hangings. I knew a man a little older than I (chuckles), Raymond Harland, and he told me that he never did get into it, never did find out, but that his father--that was Manfred Harland, he was the neighbor on the other side of us--belonged to, he said he learned after he got to going to school and one thing another, it was a vigilante committee. And he asked his father and his father never told him, he just laughed and joked at him, gave him jokes. But Raymond says, "He belonged to that," he said, "because I went and listened one night, they met in our granary." And he said, "And they talked about there were some horse thieves in the neighborhood and what should they do with them? And they'd caught 'em and they all knew where they were." Raymond said he never found out, and he said he and another kid--he told who



the kid was and I've forgotten who it was. But I didn't dare put that in my notes either.

(End of Side B)

W C: (The boys had climbed and were sitting in a--) tree above where they met, and they were so afraid they'd make a noise so that their fathers would hear 'em. But they got by and they listened to this meeting they had under that tree, big old tree.

SAM: What did they hear them--

W C: Oh they heard 'em discussing, and they decided they were going to hang that man. He didn't know whether they did or not, he didn't know that, but he thought that they did, and he thought they hung him there under that tree. And he said after that, they, the children--oh they were getting to be pretty big kids--called that "the hanging tree." As far as they were concerned that was the hanging tree. They'd listened to this meeting. But his father went away that night, that next night, but he saw to it that the mother had those kids locked in so Raymond didn't get out. So he didn't get to go there, but they would have gone and seen whether they had a hanging or not. But he was pretty sure. He said everybody was pretty solemn about that. That was horse thieves. They caught 'em with the horses. But now I don't know those particulars.

SAM: You say the cattlemen's association. This wasn't cattle country, was it?

W C: No, I said cattlemen's association because I am very well acquainted with Idaho history, Idaho history, and there were cattlemen's associations--

SAM: They were vigilante committees.

W C: --And vigilante committees were all over the state. And you read an Idaho history and you'll find that out.

SAM: I know about it, I mean I've heard of them.

W C: Well I'm sure you would have, in the work that you're doing. If you don't believe it, now I was going to say to you that the reason--you know a lot of people have said to me, "Why in the world," and they thought I was lazy--and I got lazy after I got sick--but why didn't I get all this material put into a book? And I did sort of regret it at one time, and then when I see some of these people coming out with things that are much less--But I don't know. As I say I was interested in the human interest part of it, and I wasn't so interested in the history part. But if you thing there's not Idaho history written, all you need to do is look at one of my bibliographies. Why I did research, my goodness sakes, and read on all this history. I've got all this--I don't know whether you noticed that or not, on Borah?

SAM: I didn't see that particular--

W C: Oh well, here's all this material on Borah.

SAM: Did you hear anything else about vigilante stuff around--

W C: Not around the effects of it in this county, no I didn't. But people knew that it was, but they were pretty close mouthed about anybody that might have belonged. Now Raymond, in talking to me about his father, he didn't expect me to go blab that or put it in any book, you know, that even. And that was carefully guarded, that secret was carefully guarded, and so as Raymond said, "You know they never told anything that you could get ahold of." But I know that that man's wife didn't know anything about it. She didn't bother about any of his meetings.

SAM: Do you think that it had anything to do with what you mentioned--one of the quotes in the newspaper articles that was in your manuscript--that the people in the country were holding the land for their friends? I know that a lot of the vigilante stuff in some areas had to do with land possession. Who would be allowed to take the land? If you were holding the land you wanted somebody to have it, not just anybody that came along. Do you think

that that was at all a factor, it was involved at all? I'm just curious.

I don't know if that would have anything to do with vigilantes or not.

W C: No, it didn't have anything to do with vigilantes, but in some cases I expect it was. For example, you found a lot of good land, as I said in my notes: why were they coming out here? Well they'd heard from these Brillharts who'd come ahead. They wrote back to Kansas and told their neighbors, "Get up" so-and-so and so-and-so--well Al Roberts happened to be one of them--"and come on out, the land is fertile here, and it's here for the taking. But you have to get here before the others do, because there's going to be a lot of people come in." And they knew first come first served. Now of course there were squatters, so they might go over and build a shack or something, and let one of their older kids live in it or something of that sort to fool people, to indicate that they had that land too for a little while, to stall off people coming in and taking it. I've heard of them doing that, but I don't know of anybody who did it really.

SAM: It doesn't really matter to me, the names or anything. I'm just curious about the kind of tactics that people would use. Do you think that they would try to actively discourage people who came out looking and say, "Oh, all the land is taken"?

W C: Ohh yes, if they didn't want them there they did, you bet they did. They discouraged them, and they looked on with disfavor people that came in.

Yes, I'm sure they would do that. I'm very sure that they did that.

SAM: Would you say though that many of the people that came in were unknown to everybody when they came in, and yet came in and established themselves and were wholly accepted? Or do you think that most of the people that came out were in some way related to people that were already there?

W C: Yes, they had some kind of an inkling here was a place for 'em to go.

And it was only later when oh real estate companies began to send out men,

locators, they called 'em. Yes, and advertised that they'd locate you on a claim if you came there; then people came out, and strays would go in and try to get located. And if they didn't suit the neighborhood they didn't have a nice time. That's true of all pioneer communities, I think. But I don't know of anybody being run out and there were all kinds of people that come in. Now for instance Frank May came in from Oregon, and I don't think he had any people here, but he did know some people that lived out close to Moscow. Well, they said, "There's land unclaimed down there." Yes they'd get some of these agents, oh you know how those land sharks are: they were anxious to make money without doing anything, and they would go out and locate you on some land that's left, and they'd keep maps of the country.

SAM: Would you say though that most of the people that came out were related to somebody who was already there, or a friend?

W C: Most of them were, on American Ridge were, yes. But they came out with a whole bunch of them, came together. Now they might have paid some locator, they might have paid some real estate man to give them an idea or maybe a map of a region, but they didn't have them go and locate them. And then they went out and if it was surveyed land they'd get maps from the land office, and it was surveyed up in here at that time. Now that was the reason given for the Russians who camped here at that time. They didn't stay here because they didn't want--they were told, they didn't drive them out, but that they would be squatters on the property because it was not surveyed. And so when they went to the land office to try to find out, they couldn't get clear title. They knew that because it was not surveyed. But you could squat on it and then take your chances on being able to get it when it came time, when it was surveyed.

SAM: Do you know at what point roughly the American Ridge country was closed because it was all homesteaded, and after that it was only sold--if a person

wanted to buy, he'd be buying from a homesteader? Do you know how quickly all the homestead land was actually taken there?

W C: Oh I don't know how fast it was taken. I was born in 1896 and I couldn't be expected to know very much by 1900, could I? (Laughs.) Not about the land. I didn't give a hoot about that.

SAM: Well I suppose that by the time you get to people were buying land, then the land that was available was probably all taken up.

W C: Well there was no more land available for homesteads. And my father-- there was no land available for a homestead for him. And he bought that place, and oh, let's see, he bought the 40 acres from Mr. Roberts. (Oh I got so interested in this stuff the other night that I stayed up reading it till four o'clock. I got reanimated. I told Mavis. I said, "I'm terribly interested in this stuff," and regardless of my eyes. Of course I had to stop two or three times to bathe my eyes, it wasn't steady reading. And I looked at the clock and it was four o'clock. Why I haven't done that since I was in high school studying, absolutely.) And I found that about Poppa in there, about him buying that 40 acres off of Al Roberts' homestead. And then I said--of course I didn't make myself particularly popular in my family by saying it's poetic justice. Because Mr. Roberts had out of the kindness of his heart sold off 40 acres of that land to pay the debts for men who had gone bankrupt and for whom he had co-signed their notes at the banks. And then of course they couldn't pay, and Al Roberts had to pay because he was the co-signer. And the only way he could raise money was to sell some of his homestead, and he sold 40 acres.

SAM: When was this about?

W C: Oh well it's in here, what year it is, but I know what time it was about-- it was right close to the beginning of the century. It's a way back there. But I don't carry all those dates in my mind.

SAM: No. Do you know how your husband became a Democrat?

W C: Oh his parents were Democrats, very liberal. His father in fact was considered a socialist, was a socialist, but down here where they didn't have a socialist party, why they acted as Democrats. I think my husband was--well, he had leanings toward that line. They were pretty strong that way. They were known in the old country as liberals. Yes, he was always a Democrat, he never was anything else. He didn't come up in a neighborhood where they were Republican or where they learned--Like my friends were Republicans, but however on the other side of us lived Manfred Harland, and Manfred Harland was a Democrat. And I didn't have to get very old to know that Manfred Harland--now for heaven sake, don't ever let this get into my book, in to any notes--there're descendents of those people living--but it didn't take me forever to learn that Manfred Harland was the smarter of the two men. He was more of a leader, and that what he said about the qualities of the men that they were putting in as county commissioners, especially, who had to do with the doings in the county. They decided a lot of things. I don't know what all they did do, but they had to go and write out different trails for roads, they saw to it. And they helped set the taxes, what the taxes were going to be. They found where the schools were going to be, and if the school was big enough or too big, they had to have them close enough together that the children didn't have to walk too far to get to school. And they had to take care of the poor in the county, they had to look out for them. Oh they were lots of things that had to be done, and they needed men to do them. So some of the talk that went on around the porch when I was curled around the post of the Robert's place (chuckles)--I'd be curled around that post, and Mr. Roberts used to wind up by striking out with a glove or a handkerchief or a newspaper at me and saying, "What do you think about it, Willa?" And I always had an answer.

I learned that that was a smart thing to do. And I also learned how to tone my answers, I wasn't to be a flip, I'd have gotten spanked if I had been flippant, well it never occurred to me to be that way.

SAM: Do you remember what kind of answers you might give?

W C: No, I don't remember the answers. But I know they said I always answered. And I lived to learn that by being careful and by knowing what I was talking about that I gained the respect of people around me.

SAM: Well did he have pretty strong ideas then, Mr. Harland, about the difference between the good politicians and the bad ones?

W C: Did Mr. Harland?

SAM: Yeah. Did he have strong ideas?

W C: You bet he had strong ideas. He didn't always air them completely. He kept the neighborhood in pretty good spirit. And I told about the political speeches, didn't I?

SAM: In your book. Do you remember any of those specific, I mean a guy coming out and speaking?

W C: Oh goodness yes, I should say. I went to 'em. The women were invited out of course, but no women went except Ada Harland, who was ten years older than I, and she didn't want to be the only girl there so she'd get me to go, and I was delighted to go. And of course if Ada hadn't been going I wouldn't have gotten to've gone alone. And Poppa thought it was kind of funny because I would tell at home, I remembered much better than Poppa what was said, and he'd ask me if I remembered what so-and-so said. I remember Merriweather Lewis, M. H. Lewis. Of course the Republicans were more favored by Poppa and Mr. Roberts, and it was easier for me to get to go. But I went to the Democrats too when they came. I wasn't old enough, when I went to any of those I was not old enough to discern the differences or to be critical of the differences. But I do remember that Merriweather

Lewis. He was running for state representative, and they atayed all night at Mr. Roberts', Mrs. Roberts wasn't home. And of course he took in all Republicans, they all stayed with him, they made beds for 'em at Mr. Roberts'. And they went down there, but he came up and asked my mother to be sure-- they were just across the road--that she'd give them breakfast, supper and breakfast, and accordingly they did, they were there for that. And of course they complimented her on everything, including my baby sister. Oh I don't know, she wasn't walking, and she was a great big heavy baby. And she became a very good looking young woman, far better looking than I; but nevertheless, she was a homely little dickens at that time. And so he bragged on her, and I saw Momma smiling and taking it all in, and I got close to her and pulled her dress, you know, I just kept pulling her dress. Now I wasn't very tall then, because I kept pulling at her dress, and then I got around, and then I looked up at her and frowned, and she told me oh to go on and do something, she didn't want me there. She ignored what I was trying to do for her. And I remember this was after they'd eaten breakfast that he was standing there dishing out this flattery. I remember that she got into the syrup pitcher and put syrup on. I suppose that we'd had hotcakes for breakfast, I don't remember what we had for breakfast, but it sounds about to me as if we'd had hotcakes. And she had syrup all over her and she was dirty, and she just looked awful. Momma said, "Oh my goodness, what in the world have you been into?" And then she said to me, "Can't you clean the baby's face off?" Well of course I'm almost nine years older than she was. So I was between nine and ten, I wasn't so little. I knew enough to try and hide from him that I was trying to attract my mother's attention. And I did, I took her and got away from there. I was glad to get her away, wash her face and she bawled like a fright. I remember that now when I think of it, I remember her crying so hard. Of course I don't



suppose I was very clever about doing it either. But anyway she got down and I don't believe she walked, I think she crawled back to my mother. Oh Mr. Lewis was telling her that they would have so many things, they were gonna work for the farmers, and envisioned better homes and all this sort of thing. And I already knew that Ford Robbins could build telephones; he came from Chicago and I was all in favor of waiting on Ford and his cohorts.

SAM: --To do it for you.

W C: Yes.

SAM: So in other words this guy, he was flattering--

W C: Yes, and he was false, and I knew it. I said, "I wouldn't vote for that man. I wouldn't vote for that man, he's no good." Poppa said, "Why not? What makes you say that?" That was after Poppa got in. And I told him what she did. And he looked at, and I said, "Momma took it all in." And I said, "She promised him she'd vote for him." "Oh," she said, "I didn't either." My mother was kind of ashamed of it afterward too, because Poppa sided with me, he knew I was right. He said, "I don't believe in these guys that go around in politics, I don't believe 'em at all." But I do remember that this fella that was with him--can't remember his name now but I did know him, and Poppa knew him. And he said, oh he couldn't expect anything out of him. He said, "He's just a bag of wind like his old dad was." But I can't remember his name. But anyway I remember from their speech--I don't remember much from their speeches.

SAM: Do you think that in office that some of them did indeed try very hard to do a good job and--

W C: Some did. Some did. But I'll swear to ya that this Merriweather Lewis who was some relation to Lewis and Clark, that Lewis, who was also Merriweather, he was some relation to him--and I'm sure from my own childish observations that that Merriweather Lewis didn't amount to anything. Why anybody that'd

come around, stand around trying to get a woman's vote, bidding for it, why I don't think anything more of him than I do of Nixon that's handing out the dollars for a vote. Flattery, the same thing.

SAM: OK, there's one more thing about politic's that I'm wondering about, and that is how do you remember the differences between Republicans and Democrats as far as views?

W C: There was no difference! There was no difference as far as that ridge was concerned. They were all concerned about the kind of wheat they were harvesting, whether it was going to rain at the right time, whether they'd have a June rain or not, and what breed of chickens was the best, and how were the horses. And Poppa was an authority on that, because he didn't have a big operation, he had only a small farm, never did get a big one. He had 40 acres to begin with. Well it wasn't very long until they had 80, and he never did get more than--he finally I think worked it up to 160 by including some canyon land that he had for pasture for cows. And he got the best kind of cow that'd hang on the pasture land. They were Ayrshire, and when he got started in them he got full-bloods. And they did hang on the canyon side, and they were very good, they were dual purpose cattle. They were good for beef and good for milking, but they would have been a better beef cow, I guess. So he got them, and he didn't have bull-blood horses or thoroughbred horses, but as near as he could. He had a good mare, I don't know, I believe he said she was seven-eighths Percheron, and then he went to a Percheron stallion and took her, and he bred them up. And he then got another mare some way, he bought one that was also a good one. And never had many horses, but about every other year he sold a team. He got the colts, wonderful colts and mated them in a team and broke them to drive, and he had a team to sell. Full-blood cows, he got nothing but Ayrshires. He had full-blood hogs. Everything he had was good, good stock. He had to pay out for it in

the first place, and we had to do without a lot of things. My goodness, I sure did without in the way of decent clothing and one thing another--as long as we were covered and not too much patched and clean and had shoes to wear on our feet. I don't think he thought so much about anything except that things must be kept up right, the farm must be right and now that. But now not near all the people were like that. And Mr. Roberts, as he said, "Frank May's never had any fun in his life, and I have nothing but fun." Well he didn't care much, they still lived in that old house, and Mrs. Roberts lived all her life expecting a new house. And then when the girls--they married very poor, and they didn't have maney to help them get a house, it was bad enough to get a house for themselves. But they finally decided that they had to tear down the old house and build a small cottage for poppa and momma, and they'd all go together, and they were all going to build. Put the crops in this year--of course it didn't cost as much then to build a house as it does now--and they were going to build a house. And you know we all started in harping "Don't," because this little old brown house stands for so much. Why I thought it would be a landmark we just couldn't destroy. I added my voice to the others. It's gone now, but she lived in that as long as she lived, and then they used it afterwards too.

SAM: Let me ask that a little differently then. When Mr. Harland and Al Roberts got talking politics and your father got talking politics, did they disagree with each other very much because they were one Democrat and one Republican?

W C: Not a great deal. They shut up when it came to that, you know. Not a great deal, because they were neighbors and they remained good neighbors until the end. And they didn't fight each other very much. At home there were things said. "Oh Al, you know Al. You know Al," he's advocating this guy or that guy, somebody in Congress that they'd heard about. I wouldn't know what those issues were all about now, because I can't remember them.

SAM: At the Harland's house?

W C: At the Harland's, yes. I was given free entrance to all these homes. As I've told you many time, I am a product of American Ridge. They all contributed to my education and to me. They might get mad at the other kids, and I've heard 'em say that so-and-so would never be welcome in their house again. Of course that usually wasn't, that'd pass after a little while. But I was never barred from anyone's house, never.

SAM: What do you remember being said about the IWW on the ridge?

W C: Oh, there wasn't much sympathy for the IWW's. They called them "I won't work." They did not understand industrial organization. They did not understand unionization. And I didn't learn about unions and unionization until I was married. Then my husband knew that thoroughly, and of course he and his father and his father's family, they understood that. But then Paul's father had been a carpenter and belonged to a carpenter's union, and they knew unions from the first time, and he'd come from Minneapolis knowing. He was right in at the outset when unions were organized in this country, and knew they had to be organized. So I heard plenty of it then.

SAM: What was his attitude?

W C: Oh my goodness, he was in favor of them of course.

SAM: So he believed in what the IWW's were trying to do?

W C: The IWW's were trying to put across something which had been forced upon them by the conditions that they had met. Working conditions and things of that sort were terrible, wages were kept down, and they wanted what the unions'd call scab labor. They'd take scab labor because they would work cheaper than these people, and could work cheaper because their homes were there and one thing another. And the workmen couldn't make a living at the wages they'd give them. So they were in favor of unions, my goodness yes, I should say.

SAM: Would you say this was generally a Swedish attitude? Or--

W C: No, I wouldn't say that.

SAM: --Just occasionally, certain people?

W C: It was a workmen's attitude. A lot of the Burnt Ridgers had the same attitude <sup>had</sup> that the American Ridgers/about the IWW's. They were in comfortable homes down there, and they could make a living, and they didn't believe in paying high wages to laborers. And itinerant laborers, they said, "They'll come through and pretty soon they'll run us out of the home." Well I'll tell ya, it got to be about like that in some respects. If the farmer wasn't very good and he hired a man that was frugal, and he had to pay the wages of the time. That man saved his wages, pretty soon he could buy the farm from the farmer. That happened in some cases. Not on Burnt Ridge, not among those thrifty people, not among the Swedes. Swedes aren't like that, they work. That was a good neighborhood. The Swedes on Burnt Ridge, that was a fine neighborhood. I have nothing but the greatest respect for all those old Swedes. I liked 'em. And I fitted into their community when I married and went to Burnt Ridge to live, I became a Swede like all the rest of the Swedes. And they accepted me just as fully as I accepted them. Do yet! They tell me that, the younger ones. Usually when one of the young ones married somebody, they would prefer a Swede coming into the neighborhood. But that didn't make a bit of difference with me. I was accepted I've been accepted all my life. I've never done anything much, nor anything like that. I don't boast of anything. But I am very happy to say that I was always accepted. I've never been, you know, had cause to worry because I wasn't being accepted--

(End of Side C)

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...Bad luck followed us around. Talk about bad luck--I didn't think it was bad luck. I thought it was the natural result of lots of things. I hated it and was sorry for it, but I've never berated anybody for our fires. But at Kooskia I did think it was because of trouble that my husband had had with two or three men, and I thought that it was his fault that he had encouraged one man to be--He was a regular, well he was a bad actor. He had him and even took him back to work after he knew that he'd cheated and everything else. And he didn't like him and thought he was a cheat, he said that over and over again but he took him back to work for him. And that time, I don't know what it was he did--well, I'm not going to go into it, I do remember what it was--but I don't know whose fault it was either. But he was mean and he'd just do anything in the world, and he told about some of the meanest things he'd done to other people. Oh I hated to have him around, and there wasn't any love lost between him and me. And we all got typhoid fever and couldn't imagine why. And there was a tainted spring on the place and an old tainted cistern, but the cistern was locked so that the children never got into it, ever, and we didn't drink any of the water that came from down below the barn. And of course that could have been typhoid, we knew. But Paul Jr. got it first, and I thought he'd gotten it someplace where he was swimming. As I said this was a dry summer, we were expecting typhoid. Even the doctor was expecting some typhoid someplace, but we never thought about it being us. And Paul Jr. took it first, and I'd gone over home to help my father get ready to<sup>go</sup>/on a trip East, and see to it that he got off on a trip to his folks back in the East, and I went on a Tuesday, and then I went back Friday. Yes, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, yes, that what it was, I stayed that long and got back to find Paul Jr. sick. And of course he hadn't had the care that he ought to have had, it just made me sick to think that he hadn't. Well, Paul said, he was a lot better; had him get up and go to the

neighbor's to take a message over there to one of them. I said, "How did he go?" "Well he went horseback." Well I said, "He's been sick, and his stomach bothering him. Don't you know better than that? I'll never go and leave him with you again!" And that was the way I felt that minute. And he came home and he said, "Oh my," he said, "I almost fell off of the horse," and he was as white as a sheet. That was the beginning of the real sickness. If he'd had care in the first place and had gotten to a doctor, maybe it wouldn't have happened...

Well the upshot of it was we all got it, and the doctor sent for this vaccine and didn't get it in time. Well the baby came down with it right away, but he'd played with Paul Jr.. We didn't know it was that. And so he would run, Bruce, he'd run and play, oh he was a fast one to learn. He was only eight months old but he could walk around by chair anywhere. And he'd go to where Paul Jr. was lying on the daybed that we had, I had made a bed for him out in the living room, and pulled the shades down and made it cool in there for him. Of course we had no idea it was typhoid fever. I thought that he had had this stomach trouble and got it made worse by galloping on that horse, because I knew he couldn't be trusted not to make the horse go pretty fast. But the baby got sick. By that time the doctor said, "I'm going to take a test. I've got to take the test." He said, "I think he's got typhoid, para-typhoid." Well that was terrible. He said, "I've sent for this vaccine--"

(End of Side D)

The kids and I all came down with it, we all had it, the rest of us. And Paul Jr. got over it first, got up. And that was the winter we moved into Kooskia, so I'd have them in town so they'd go to school down there. And the doctor said I wouldn't be able to walk for a year, wouldn't be able to do my

own work, and I said, "Oh, just wait till I get out of bed. It'll go fast with the kids to take care of." But he did have a bottle, that was just coming into use at that time, and he heard about it, and he thought, "I'll get a bottle of that, because every year I have a case or two of typhoid, and this dry year I'll have some this year." And he got that in, and if he kept it on ice or in the freezer he could keep it for a long time, he knew that. But six months was the limit, and then you'd be out the \$35--it cost \$35 an ounce. Equire something, made from horses anyway, this equire, what in the world was it called--well anyway, the vaccine.

Well I got bad. So when they were watching for the crisis, the woman that was there with me, she said, "You have to call the doctor," because I was dropping so low. And I knew this but I was too weak to talk, and I didn't want to waste anything talking. I was going to tell them, "Quit worrying about me," I was coming through all right. I'd been having a dream and I'd come out of the dream and I knew that I'd gotten help from my dream. I knew perfectly well I was getting help and I knew the source of the help. Don't tell me there isn't help from above. I have had that demonstrated several times in my life. But I couldn't tell them. But I went to sleep. The crisis had happened and I knew I was through it. But I went to sleep, sound asleep, and when I woke up there sat Dr. Woodward, a good old doctor. He sat on the side of my bed puffing, puffing cigar smoke just as hard as he could puff it. Well I knew he wouldn't be doing that in my bedroom if it'd been--That's the way he escaped infection of course of all these things. And I knew he was excited, I could just tell by the puffs. And I managed then, I could talk, and I said, "Hello doctor." "Hello yourself, thank God!" he said. "You've come through, haven't you?" He was sitting there expecting me to die the next minute.

Well that was our typhoid experience, and oh my I was so worried, I was



so worried about my kids. The living room was a long living room in that old log house. And they stretched out beds there. And there was Mavis, and Keith, and Paul Jr. was out there too--he wasn't well enough to be considered out of bed either. He was there but he was up a little each day. But I listened every morning. And they said I didn't, that I was out. I might have been out a morning or two but I don't think so. There was never a morning that I didn't--that was what I did, that was my occupation, waiting to hear the sound of each one's voice. It was the only way I could tell, you know, I knew that if something had happened to one of those children, they'd never tell me. No it was a horrible time.

And, what gave us the typhoid fever? Well we thought this and thought that and thought this and thought that, and they said, "Well you'll have to take your water off and have it treated." So Paul got, the neighbors came in and helped him do that, helped him clean out our spring, our wonderful, wonderful spring, wonderful water. Did seem like wonderful water, and a log cabin over it for cover, but of course there were big cracks between the logs--it was never a chinked cabin. And the cattle stamped around down below it. Everybody said that Paul should have known that, and I guess we should have known it, that any kind of germs would blow right into the log cabin. But the log cabin was built over it and then the spring was dug out in there, and it was just open, the spring was open on the inside of that log cabin. And that's our drinking water. "Well," Paul said, "we keep dipping it out, and then we dip close to where it comes in." There's a big run-in, it was a big spring. And we did, we'd take drinking water from there, but of course we had cooking water and everything else, and then we'd have water from there once in awhile. And when they they cleaned it out they found some black bailing wire. It had been painted black, and so far as we knew we didn't have any black wire on the place, any painted bailing wire. And these pieces were twisted around something. And two big long pieces of this had been hooked on  
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to something,

that when they lifted it out of the water and put it out to examine it and see what it was--before they got around to examine it, it had fallen to pieces like ashes. And they did save the ashes, then took that up to the University. And it was determined to be the falling apart of meat, some kind of meat. So we thought that this fellow that worked for us, he frequently came up on the ridge yelling and drunk and hollering. He always hollered something insulting when he got past the place, insulting towards Paul. I heard him hollering but I never did listen to see what he said. But Paul had heard him several times and said he was cussing. But he used to stop and go into the spring whenever he came up to get water for his car, that was an old car that could hardly hold together, to get water, because he'd come up that hill. And he'd go to the spring. Of course he knew all about where the spring was. And he'd come across the woods where he got into the spring and get water. But who thought about him doing anything to the spring? Nobody did. But we did afterward, and we figured he did, but we never knew it. And I think Mavis mixed those things up.

SAM: As I remember now, I remember Mavis saying he threatened her father, threatened to kill him. I remember her saying that.

W C: Well now that was another fellow, but then that fella, he didn't poison the spring. That was a white man really, but he'd been reared by the Indians. That's a story that belongs to Idaho County. And it is a story, and Howard Wilson is a character. And he liked Paul in the first place and followed him around like a dog. And he came up to the house and Paul always asked him in. And I knew he was a funny one and some people were afraid of him. Well I'm not afraid of anybody, I'm not afraid of anybody unless it's a freak, you know. Of course for you to boast that you're not afraid of anybody and then meet up with some absolute freak or inhuman person or somebody who is insane, you know, that's different. He wasn't any of those things exactly. Of course

he was freakish, (chuckles) I'll have to admit. Oh he was terribly funny, he just did do a lot of funny things. And then all of a sudden he turned against Paul. He worked for Paul and Paul treated him better than most of the other people up there on the hill. But he finally got to thinking that Paul was cheating him I guess or something--I don't know what he thought. But he turned against him anyway, and he didn't want to have anything to do with Paul Carlson. And he'd say things to the other neighbors. But he'd come by there, but it'd usually be when Paul was away. And I didn't dare not treat him right, because I figured that we'd better treat him all right. I wasn't going to go out of my way, you know, but if he came I'd say, "Well, would you like a cup of coffee?" And he always wanted a cup of coffee, so I'd give him a cup of coffee, and if I had anything else to give with it, I'd give him whatever we had. I usually had bread, "That's good bread," he'd say, "that's good bread. You make good bread, Miz Carlson, you make good bread." He was always polite and very nice to the kids. They always came in and stood around looking at him because they wanted to hear what he said. And so I never had any trouble keeping the kids around me when he was there because they liked to hear what he said. And he came every once in awhile. And then he went up to the neighbors on the next side, and he would drink a potful of coffee there, because Mrs. Fitting, she knew exactly how to handle him, but she'd known him all her life. She'd lived there all her life, and she'd known him all her life, and she knew just how to handle him. And he always called her "Millie". Well he guessed he'd have to go up and see Millie (chuckles). And Millie didn't appreciate him, but she treated him all right. And he always did that.

But he hated Paul so that he'd said that he was going to go gunning for him. Oh it was over cattle on the hillside that Paul had. He let his cattle run and the others, they had open range, and all the settlers drove their

cattle over to that spring range, the hills above the Clearwater River. It was over that some way. And he claimed it more or less belonged to him and guessed that he ought to collect money for it or something. I never did know exactly why he turned against him, because he seemed to like him so awful well in the first place. But I said to Paul, "That's your style! You do that to 'em. You don't see through people in the first place. And you let all your reserves down, and treat them so wonderfully well in the beginning, and then when you find they're partly made of clay, like all people are, then you tighten toward them and change and they don't like it." But then what do you do? You don't change the habits of grown-up people. But that was Paul's way.

SAM: So, did he ever--?

W C: Oh Paul was afraid of him but he never did anything. And he knew he had Paul scared and that was another bad thing. When people said, "Are you afraid, you and the kids?" "No, I'm not afraid of him!" I said. "I've never seen anybody that was I was afraid of," I said, "here or any other place. I'm not afraid of 'em unless they're absolutely lunatics or something like that."

SAM: So eventually he--

W C: Eventually he just let us alone. And he was concerned about the typhoid fever. I don't know, he never asked Paul, but oh he asked the Fitting family-- the ones that lived above us--how we were. And he would stop and ask whoever he saw or the nurse that was there: "How are they? Oh I hope they get all right," he said. "Is Mrs. Carlson gonna get well?" Of course the doctor had practically given me up.

SAM: You weren't frightened of his saying that he was going to go gunning? You didn't believe it?

W C: I thought he might for Paul, but I never was scared for us as a family.

There were other things that went on in the community that made me a little afraid for the kids, other things, but not that, never that at all. But I never was afraid of Howard Wilson. No, I wasn't afraid of him. I honestly wasn't. I figured he was a man that was easily subdued.

SAM: Are there fires that you remember about in the early days in Troy? I remember reading that the town had a number of them in the old days before they had all the brick buildings.

W C: Yes, there were fires, I guess. There was one when I remember they said that several buildings burned, talked about it, but I don't remember any fire in Troy. I do remember the one in Kendrick, when Kendrick burned out. That day was a hot day, I don't know what time of the year--I think it was about August. I was going to look that up but I don't know that I ever did. But it was a very hot day, and I'd gotten a chance to go to town, go to Troy with Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, which was an unusual holiday for me, always was. And so they had a funny old hack, Mr. Roberts did, hunting hack he called it. And it was a canvas covered affair, and you could sit in back, and then of course you couldn't see out unless you lifted some kind of a flap. I believe there was one flap you could lift, but if he had somebody in back he wouldn't let ya lift that flap. My goodness. So they took me when I was small and they stuck me in between them. Mrs. Roberts was a little bit of a woman, and Mr. Roberts wasn't too big a man, but he was an ordinary size man. But they put me between 'em, it was a big broad seat in this hack, and three people always rode in it, when somebody was with 'em they'd have three people in the seat. And of course I was just a small one. And so we came up the Troy hill, and Mrs. Roberts said, "You shouldn't have gone home so early, Al." "You want to stay in town all day?" There was always this little banter between 'em. They thought a lot of each other and they were very compatible, but there was always that little banter. And I know lots of people would say,

"Do they do that all the time? Don't they get along?" Well no two people ever got along better really than Mr. and Mrs. Roberts. But they did have that bantering way. I remember that he did that day. "Do you want to stay in town?" "Well," she said, "you know it's hard on the horses when you take 'em out of town this early. It's gonna be hard on them to climb the hill." And of course the hill was nothing like it is now. You went up all the hill and made two or three little crooks and turns in it, and with a team and horses it took a long time climb it. So we got up on top of the hill just to where it got smoothed out, and "Looky there, Fanny!" Mr. Roberts (chuckles) said. I can just remember it! I wasn't very old, but I remember that just as well as yesterday, it seems to me anyway. "Looky there Fanny!" he said. Look at that. There's a fire up there!" And it looked like it was up in the sky to me, as far as I was concerned it was up in the sky. And she said, "Al, that's a mirage!" "Oh yes, I remember we used to have meerages back in Canada, didn't we?" He never would call it anything but "meerage" (chuckles). "Al, that's a mirage!" Well, he said, "Where is it?" He said, "There's Hill's store, but it's upside down." And I looked and I said, "Why everything's upside down, isn't it, isn't it, Mr. Roberts? It's all upside down, isn't it?" Well, "Yes," Mrs. Roberts said, "That's the way a mirage is. It's heat and it's fire!" "Why," Mr. Roberts says, "Hill's store is burning up!" And then he named two or three other places. He said, "That's Kendrick, Kendrick is afire!" Oh whup! He took the whip out of the stall for the whip, you know, and whipped those horses, and said, "We've got to get home, find out about that. My goodness that's awful, I've got to get to Kendrick." I don't know how he went to Kendrick; I guess he got another horse or rode one of his cayuses. But anyway, it was, it was Kendrick burning. And there were eight or nine buildings that burned that day. But it was so hot, and there it was, you know. And that rock wall that they had in Kendrick--of

course it's kind of fallen down since, and then they've blasted out more, and so on, and dug it out. But it was a rock wall, and they surmised afterwards, or they talked about it and analyzed the thing, that the heat beating against that rock wall, the rocks got hot you know and reflected it back, and it just made a spot to reflect that heat and deflect it upward high enough that it got up on the Ridge. And so places that were higher got it instead of the lower ones because it went high you see, went over the high part, I guess. I don't know how far down on the Ridge it went. We lost it. We kept looking for it. But after we got down on the Ridge away, we could see the smoke rolling up. Down home, at my home, the smoke had rolled up, and they'd seen the smoke all the time and they knew there was a fire somewhere.

SAM: You mean you could actually see the buildings upside down?

W C: Upside down! They were upside down, and oh I wouldn't have known one building from another. But Mr. Roberts says, "That's"--not Hill, Hull--"Hull's store, burning," he said.

SAM: It was right in the sky?

W C: Yes. Now that's the only mirage I've ever seen. But my they see 'em over in Montana all the time. Oh yes, I did too, see a mirage once. Where was that? Somewhere I saw a mirage, but it was just water, it looked like a lake. You know that's the common one that they see, is out on a desert. They'll see a lake and they think they're coming to it and they never get to it. Because it was a lake a long way off and got reflected up the sky, they see it in the desert. Have you seen them? Oh, they're really something.

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