JENNIE HALVERSON DRISCOLL
First Interview

Interviewed by:
Sam Schrager

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

I. Index

Tape 53.1

JENNIE HALVERSON DRISCOLL

Genesee, Leaville, Driscoll Ridge; b. 1888

homemaker.

1.5 hours

	minute	page	
Side A			
	00	1	Father came from Norway to Astoria; Mother was happy when he decided to farm instead of fish, because he might have drowned. They bought land near Genesee. They traded their gold watches for lumber to build a bedroom when she was expecting a baby. Norwegian community nearby.
	09	3	Walking three miles to school. 1893 depression – roasting barley for coffee, praying for rain to stop in church, giving last dime to the preacher. Mother's work. Nowadays women are spoiled.
	16	6	Mother died in 1907 after a miscarriage, when Mrs. Driscoll was just twelve; afterwards she took care of the family. She gave up going to Pacific Lutheran Academy because her grandmother wanted her to stay and help at home.
	23	7	Story of settlement of Driscoll Ridge by her husband's father and his relatives. Cooking for threshing outfits. Vollmer foreclosed during the 1893 depression; father ripped his picture out of the History of North Idaho. Father lost his grain after the warehouse burned, although his grain was on the train.
Side B			
	00	10	The Rosensteins were wonderful people. Her cayuse wanted to turn back with the Indian ponies; she was scared of the Indians. She went to town to pick up The Scandanavian, a Norwegian paper from Chicago. Father's family background; he never farmed before coming to Genesee, but prospered quickly. The children left their newly bought home because it made them lonely after mother died.
	13	14	The children had to mind or they got it from father. People are not nearly as happy now. Good crops with summer fallowing; sale of the home place.
	19	16	Learning to sew by working at the dressmaker's in Moscow. She knew her husband from their youths; their happy marriage. He was county commissioner for eight years, a Democrat.

Jennie Halverson Driscoll

minute	page	
Side B (continued)		
27	**19**	Her move to Driscoll Ridge wasn't big. Goodness of Troy bank. She eventually became a Catholic like her husband. Norwegian Church.
Side C		
00	**20**	Neighboring. People were less independent and social-climbing, more equal. Her family got through the depression by living off the land. Feeding hobo camp near Troy. Advancing wages to hand.
09	**22**	Dances at home and in Genesee. Literary, games and midnight lunches. Learning her ABC's in English. A Swede who worked for the Driscolls was shocked to meet a "Swede Negro", a Wells boy who spoke Swedish. Hired help lived at the Driscolls.
22	**27**	Although she wanted to become a nurse, she stayed at home while her younger sister trained instead. Caring for her father. He had the first windmill and hack in the neighborhood. Lack of wood in the area; abundance of water. Little turnover on farms.

with Sam Schrager

Feb. 17, 1976

II. Transcript

This conversation with Jennie Halverson Driscoll took place in her home in Moscow on February 17, 1976. The interviewer is Sam Schrager.

JD:My father came from Norway and he was a and he landed in Astoria, Oregon. No, he landed in Chicago, because he lived at the boarding house there, there's where he met my mother and they were married in Chicago. And then he loved to fish, he was a fisherman. He heard that there was homesteads out in Idaho and so they came out to Astoria, Oregon first, and he stayed there and fished and worked on the Columbia River as a fisherman.

SS: There's a pretty good sized Norwegian community in Astoria.

JD: Uh-huh. And my mother was so afraid that he would drown because the news would come in at evening that so many fishermen had drowned and...

SS: It was common? Pepple were drowning when they were fishing in those days?

JD: They were just in boats, you know, just in rowboats and fishing and he made a good living fishing. So Then they heard about the homesteads up North that were being opened up. So my father decided that they'd go up and get a homestead. So my mother was happy about that. So they came up to Genesee country and everything was taken but this one, there was one man by the name of Peterson that he was disatisfied and he sold his rights to my father. He sold 160 acres for seven hundred dollars. A wonderful 160. And it was just a cabin on it. Just a cabin. Oh, my mother was so happy with it. Because she got away from the water. So, but they had no money to do anything with, see. He had enough money, he bought a plow and team of horses, walking plow. And I can remember when part of that farm wasn't even under cultivation. Just Sod . Then, she was going to have a baby and oh, she wanted a bedroom so bad, a lean to off of the shack, the house, you know. And my father said,"Well, we don't have any money. We can't build any bedroom on here 'cause we don't have any money." And pretty soon she said,"Well, I have a gold watch and chain, and you have a gold watch and chain, maybe we could trade that for some lumber." So, "Okay, if you're willing to do that, I'm willing." And He said,"When we get to be able, when we can make money, I'll buy you the nicest watch I can find in Pine." So he went up north of Troy, I think it was the Erickson's saw-mill, I'm sure it was, and traded their watches there for lumber. Well anyway, they

got the lumber, built the lean to to the house, it's still there on that house, on my father's farm, but they didn't get it finished by the time the baby came and while she was in bed there came a big snow storm and a blizzard and a drift of snowing on her bed. And but they lived through it and they were happier, 'cause they got a bedroom.

SS: Was the lean-to there when he got there or did he build it?

JD: No, he built it...

SS: There was no building...

JD: It was a cabin on there, just a one room house, a cabin and they built the lean-to, and that's still there on that house, they've been building to it, adding to it and we were all six of us were born in that bedroom. And then when I was about eight years old, I think I must have been about seven or eight years old, my father went to Spokane and he brought her home a beautiful gold watch. And I can remember so well, she was so happy, she cried over it. Over this gold watch and chain that he brought her. I've had it up to just last year and I was afraid somebody might pick it up, it's a beautiful watch. And I gave it to my daughter to keep, I gave it to her to use. So I don't have it but I had it for years. My father gave it to me when I was confirmed, he gave me that watch and chain for me to wear. But I kept it all the time, but I was always, moved around from apartment and to the farm and around and I was afraid that somebody might pick it up you know, so I gave it to my daughter and she's got it. That was one story that....

SS: By that time he'd done well enough that he could afford to...

JD: Oh he'd had a couple three crops you see. And oh that place used to produce 60 bushels to the acre. That place is still, it's only been in two hands, my father's and a fellow by the name of Berger bought it. It's still there, still six miles north of Genesee. Well he bought another 160 acres across the road. From another homesteader. Name of Dygas, George Dygas. And he bought that and then he had 320 acres of land.

SS: What creek was it on?

JD: Creek?

SS: Yeah, was it near Cow Creek?

JD: It was about five miles from Cow Creek. Cow Creek is where all the Norwegians lived. It was a regular Norwegian settlement, Norwegian Lutherans, that settled down along both sides of the creek you might say. And my father, when they organized the Lutheran church down there, my father was one of the charter members of that church.

SS: There were two weren't there?

JD: There was two. There was two Lutheran churches just a half a mile apart.

SS: Which one did he belong to?

JD: The one that's on the cemetery. But then they consolidated after a few years.

SS: But he didn't live close to them, he was four or five miles away?

JD: Yes, from Cow Creek. He was between Linnville and Cow Creek.

SS: Did that mean that the family had to travel over there to get to go to church on Sundays?

JD: We used to go in a lumber wagon. I can remember as a little girl. And then he'd, he was the first man to have a hack. First man to have a hack and it was a only hack, only vehicle that could carry a casket in. Every funeral he was the hearse, in this hack that we had, two seated hack. Before he got that we used to go in the big lumber wagon. Oh, I can remember so many things. But we were as happy as could be. Neighbors and all of us. I used to walk three miles to school. You know, I sit here and I watch those kids climbing in and out of buses and I think how lucky they are. I wonder if they understand and realize how lucky they are. Here I was only six years old and I walked three miles to school in the morning and three miles back home and carried my lunch pail. We all did.

SS: Was that hard, three miles is a long way.

JD: I didn't,that didn't bother me one bit. I guess that's why I'm living to be eighty-eight years old. Because I didn't baby myself. We had a lot of fun. We had neighbors that lived a mile beyond us and those kids walked to our place and we all went to school, they walked four miles to school.

SS: You kids walked together?

JD: We went in groups and we went by ourselves, whichever way we happened to...

SS: How long do you think it took you to get to the school?

JD: We left home at eight o'clock and got there by nine. Plenty of time to play awhile.

SS: Did you play on the way?

JD: No. We didn't play on the way. We just walked. And the schoolteacher used to board with my mother, at our home.

SS: Lady or a man?

JD: Her name was, lady teacher, I forget what her name was, I can't say her name. But I have a country schoolteacher's picture of the school. I guess I was ten years old when I was in that picture and my brothers...

SS: Was it many kids?

JD: Wewere, I imagine, around twenty, twenty-five. Eight grades. From first grade to the eighth. I don't know, I can remember we haul the wheat, you know, and pasture the my mother used to cook for the thrashing crews, you know, these would thrash for the, heavy stacks, you know, that had a header. And they had these long headed stacks. And in '93, it started raining the fifth of September and it never let up all winter. And everybody lost their crop. And some of those poor homesteaders had their places mortgaged and they foreclosed on their grocery bill. And I can remember my mother, oh of course, she'd churn butter and she'd she raise chickens and she had eggs and we had beef and we raised everything we ate, you know. We didn't suffer for anything to eat. And she'd buy green coffee beans and she'd roast them and then she'd take half barley and roast barley with the coffee and that made nice, brown coffee. I can remember that part of it.

SS: Your father must have lost his crop too that year.

JD: Yes he lost his crop, he lost a big crop.

SS: How did that leave him?

JD: Well, I don't think it(noise) it didn't leave him in too bad a shape. In the spring there was about two feet of spoiled grain and he, I can remember them pitching that all off of the top of the stack off and they thrashed the middle, right in the middle of the stack. They'd save that.That was taxes and

some money for different things.

SS: You're eighty-eight now?

JD: I'm going to be eighty-eight in June.

SS: What year were you born in?

JD: 1888.

SS: So you were five years old...

JD: I was six years old, just old enough to remember all of it. I remember it all. I can remember the rain and how they'd go to church and pray for rain, you know. I know one Sunday morning, and you know, it's funny, some things like that stick in a kid's mind. And I felt so sorry for my father because my mother said,"Now John, today there's an extra offering, we have to give little extra money for the church so we can keep our minister." And he put his hand in his pocket and he took out,"I've got ten cents, that's all I've got." I can remember, oh, I felt so sorry for my father, to think he only had ten cents. That's all the money he had. So, she says,"Well, give it."(laughs) My mother said,"Well, John, give it." Oh I tell you, I can remember hard times and you know, now when I think about the way young couples, the women demand, oh boy, do they demand. The poor husband. No wonder they can't get along. They so hard, but still the women demand, they must have! They must have every electric appliance!

SS: How did your mother get by? Did she get by without much?

JD: We had an old, we had a stove, just an old fashioned stove, cookstove. And we had a small heating stove in the livingroom. Kept us warm. And she churned butter, she sold butter for ten cents a pound. And she sold eggs for ten cents a dozen, and my father always raised a beef, butchered, and they made sausage out of that and they made dried beef they used to make. Oh we had plenty to eat, plenty chicken,lots of other things. We had good food. My mother baked all her own bread.

SS: How busy was she kept working? Was she working all the time?

JD: No. She got her work all done, she'd sit down in the afternoon crocheting, did all our sewing. Even to the shirts for the boys. But she died when she

was forty two, just a young woman. And left the six of us. I was not quite twelve. And the little boy wasn't quite two. And I finished the eighth grade, that's as far as I could go to school. And my grandmother lived with us for eighteen years, my father's mother. And she was seventy three and she lived with us. Between grandmother and I, we did the work, housework after mother died. And she died then in 1907, she died and then I did it all. I've raised my little brother, I took all care of him from the time he was two til he was a man. I dressed him and took him to school, took all care of him. Now the poor fella's sittin' in a wheelchair in Spokane, had a paralyzed stroke. I had a brother sixteen when my mother died and one fourteen and one ten and I was twelve, so you see, we were quite a family. So my father had quite a struggle. But he was a good manager.

SS: How did your mother die?

JD: She had a miscarriage and doctor didn't know his business and she got infection and died. She wouldn'ta died this day and age. That's what happened to her.

SS: You think if she was cared for better...

JD: Oh, it never wouldn't have happened. No, never would have happened.

SS: Not because it happened at home?

JD: It happened at home and we had a doctor in Genesee and my brother had to go horseback to Genesee and get him and he came horseback up there to take care of her, but he didn't know his business, and she got an infection and died in a week. But we always had, my father was a good provider, always had a nice home.

SS: Another man that I was talking with told me that when his wife got sick, he was really worried what would happen if she died and left him with the kids.

JD: Well, my father was worried too, I'll tell you, but he stuck with it. He bought, he paid seven hundred dollars for the homeplace and he bought the place across the road, just across the road from us for four thousand, 160 acres.

SS: Did your mother have a midwife there as well as the doctor?

JD: Oh yes, she had a neighbor lady was all. But she, that was a pity.

SS: Could you have gone to school after the eighth grade?

JD: I was going to go to school, going to Tacoma to boarding school, all the girls in our church, you know went to Tacoma, there was an academy there, Pacific Lutheran Academy and I was going there and I had my trunk packed and I was going to go and my grandmother cried both day and night because I was leaving, and I said,"I won't leave you grandma, I'll unpack my trunk and stay home." And I shed a good many tears because I couldn't go but I loved my grandmother so I didn't, we didn't send our old people to the old folks home at that time. We took care of our own. That's what I think is so awful now. The young people, they could just as well take care of some of those old people in their home. Why send them out there and take all their earnings, everything they ever made? That's why I think these times are awful.

SS: Was your grandmother still able to do very much?

JD: Oh yes. She took care of all the milk and she churned the butter and took care of the cream and oh, she did lot of things.

SS: She was really active then.

JD: She was active and she died at eighty. Seven years ago, in (fumbles for year).

SS: She stayed for a good number of years after...

JD: Seven years after my mother died. My mother died in 1900.

SS: What was the Pacific Lutheran Academy like?

JD: Well I don't know. I couldn't tell you, I didn't go down because...

SS: Oh I see, you wouldn't have started there...

JD: Oh no, I stayed home. I was going to go but my grandmother, she felt so bad about me leaving home that she cried and said she couldn't get along without me so I stayed home. But I've been blessed anyway. She died, her last words were asking God to bless me and He's blessed me. He really has blessed me in many ways, I had a wonderful husband although I didn't get to keep him long enough. And his folks homesteaded on Driscoll Ridge. Have you heard of that place?

SS: Sure.

JD: His father was the first one in there. My husband's father.

SS: Was that John?

JD: No that was George Driscoll. And then his father, after he got out, first he went to Fix Ridge over there and everything was taken. Mr. Fix told him, "Across the canyon, I don't think it's been sold over there." He said,"I think there's land to be taken there." So he went over, cross the canyon over there. No one had been there to homestead. So he had five brothers and two sisters. And he went over there and located a homestead for each one of them. And went back to Canada, to New Brunswick,Canada and brought the whole outfit out here. His brothers and his two sisters, his one sister was Mrs. Cunningham and the other one was Mrs. Dunn. They brought 'em all out here.

SS: They were all ready to come?

JD: Oh they were all anxious to come.

SS: Were they born Canadians?

JD: They were born Canadians but some of their ancestors came from Ireland.

SS: Was it hard to help raise all the kids, 'cause you were only thirteen yourself?

JD: I didn't mind it. We all got along beautifully. We all worked together. The boys did all the outside work. I never worked outdoors, my father would never let me work outdoors. I did the housework. I didn't mind it at all. And my grandmother with her help, but my grandmother you see. I stayed home and did the work til I was married, and I was 28 when I was married.

SS: What did the women cook for the thrashing crews, and the procedure?

JD: Oh my land, sakes alive, they were good cooks, my goodness, they made their own bread and biscuits and roasts and mashed potatoes and brown gravy and sliced beef and just much better than they do now. And lot of fruit. We had all kinds of fruit, all kinds of berries on our place and, they had good food, don't worry.

SS: Did you ever work as a cook? I mean on the thrashing crews?

JD: Oh no. After I got old enough to do that they had cook wagons. Cook shacks. The heart of the men that owned the thrashing machine had a cookwagon go right along with, when I got old enough to, you see. That's when my mother was living and I was just a little girl. Then they had to cook for the thrashers but as they prospered, as the farmers prospered along and got more land broke out

and raised more wheat you see then the man that owned the thrashing machine, he had a covered wagon, then, couple of girls would cook for the thrashers. And they had a roustabout to go to town for the groceries, but I never did work for them. I used to visit them a lot. Oh it was an entire different living from what we're living now. They had a cookwagon, men used to eat, and then they had a water, fellow that hauled the water and bundle wagons you know, hauling the bundles. Of course, after '93, they quit the headers, everybody quit the headers because they bought binders and bound the grain and shocked it, see. It didn't have to be dead right, they cut the grain in shocks and wrap it in the shock and if the rain came, those bundles would dry out, you see, in those shocks.

SS: That's why the switched from...

JD: Headers to binders.

SS: I didn't know that's why they had done that.

JD: That happened After '93. You see, '93, all the farmers lost their crop with the rain. And then the binders came in and they bound it in shocks and then they would stack their grain and they stacked it in a way that, if it rained it shed off. The rain wouldn't soak in, see. But those headed stacks, it soaked right into them, see.

SS: Do you remember if many of your neighbors left after '93, because many people did loose their land.

JD: I can't remember. I know they did but I can't remember, don't remember who those'd be now.

SS: I wonder who they lost it to. I heard Volmer...

JD: J.P. Volmer, you bet your life. He foreclosed on them for groceries, he had a grocery store in Genesee and then one year, three people lost their grain and the warehouse burned. I can remember, I was just a little girl, I guess I must have been about seven or eight, eight or nine and my father had a whale of a crop of wheat and he didn't think he could get it into town fast enough so he bought a new wagon so he could haul his wheat, get his wheat into the warehouse. But instead of haul it, the farmers hauled their wheat into

the Wood's warehouse and they gave them the receipt on the warehouse, and they had them pile the wheat on the boxcar and shipped it out. And they had the receipt of the warehouse, don't you see and coming home from town one day, my mother said to my father,"John, did you insure the wheat today?" "No, isn't going to burn." That night it burned. He lost every bit of his crop in the warehouse. His wheat didn't burn because it had been shipped to Portland on that boxcar, he'd had his hired man put 'em on the boxcar.

SS: Did he get money for his wheat then?

JD: Nothing. He had nothing to show for that he had, he had receipts but they were on the warehouse, the warehouse burned. That was another crook, I'll tell ya.

SS: Was that Volmer too?

JD: That was Woods. I think it was, ya, Woods. But, they had a History of Idaho printed, oh years ago and they had John P. Volmer. Course he'd, he made a lot of money. His picture on the front page of the book and he said,"Well that's a fine book." my father said. There was a description of every farmer in there, told a history of 'em. And my father bought the book but he told John P. Volmer's first left out, burnt it up. He said,"He isn't worth being in there.

SS: I'm sure you know the story how Troy was originally named Volmer and they changed the name because they didn't like him.

SIDE B

SS: ...The Rosensteins.

JD: Oh, we used to trade with him all the time. Jacob Rosenstein. He was a nice old fella.

SS: What kind of a guy was he?

JD: He was a Jew. And he had an awfully nice wife. She was, they used to have dry goods and groceries. They had three or four girls, they didn't have any boys.

SS: Did you think that he was a fair merchant?

JD: Oh, he was wonderful. He was wonderful. I never went into that store unless I got a sack of candy. He was so good to all the kids. He was wonderful.

And when you bought your groceries and had 'em all packed, always the sack of candy. But that was the only merchant in town and then the Folkts came in. And they had a store, the Folkts. But we never gave up Rosenstein .He was a nice old fella.

SS: His wife was probably Jewish too then?

JD: Oh yes. She was Jewish. But she was so good to me. I remember after my mother died, she was so good to me. She'd always give me something, you know. But then, there were people that didn't like the Rosensteins too. As far as I can remember, we all liked that store. I felt so bad when they left.

SS: Were they retiring when they left?

JD: They went to San Francisco. I think that's where they went.

SS: So after your mother died, what did she do that you appreciated so much?

JD: I can't just remember, but she was always doing things for me. She'd give me a nice handkerchief or she'd give me something all the time. And Mr. Rosenstein, he gave us good many sacks of candy.

SS: Did that store have all the goods and merchandise that a family would need?

JD: Oh yes. Everything. Clothing and everything. Yeah, he had everything.

SS: Did you get to go to Genesee very much?

JD: Oh land, I rode horseback to Genesee all the time. I used to go down, my father, I was just, I wasn't even, long before my mother died, I used to ride horseback into town to get the mail. I had a little white pony called Fanny. And it was an Indian pony. My dad bought it from the Indians, Nez Perce Indians. And I'd meet just droves of Indians on my way to Genesee, the were traveling from Nez Perce to Caldwell Reservation. They travelled back and forth from the Nez Perce to Caldwell. And I used to be so afraid of them. Oh, I used to be so afraid of those Indians. And my horse was an Indian pony, had lived, he'd bought it from the Indians and she'd want to go with the Indians, you know. And I used to have an awful time to get her to go through that drove of Indians. And I can still see those old squaws just laughing, oh my, they used to just laugh.

SS: The horse would try to turn in with the pack, with the other cayuses?

JD: Yes. She didn't want to be alone, I guess. She'd been with those Indians. And they'd get off the road, they come up to our place, up by our place and we had a pump right outside the back door and they'd pump water and drink water, and talk and chatter and get on their horses and go. They never did any harm. They'd get off the roads, you know.

SS: Did you get to know any Indians or speak to them in those days?

JD: Oh yeah. They'd speak to me,"Hello." But I was scared.(laughs) I was scared of the Indians. I'd ride down to town to get my father's, he took a Norwegian paper called the Scandinavian from Chicago. It was published, it come into Genesee every Wednesday and every Saturday. And Wednesday was when I'd go down on horseback and get it, get the paper, get the mail.

SS: Would you usually have any other mail besides the newspaper?

JD: Oh, he'd have letters from all his people, you know. Norway and in the east there, he had a lot of brothers in the east. Oh, he had a lot of letters.

SS: So quite a few of his family left Norway and came to America?

JD: Oh, all his family. His father was a shipbuilder in Norway. He built freight boats, freighters and sailing boats and after he died then they all came to America. The mother and all. And she lived with her sons in Dakota, they homesteaded in Dakota, in Minnesota and but my father, he came out to Idaho and he homesteaded, well, he went to Chicago first and he worked on the Great Lakes. He loved the water. But my mother was afraid of it, afraid he'd drown, so that's why she wanted him to go to the homestead, try to get a homestead.

SS: Had he done any farming before he...

JD: No, no he hadn't done a bit of farming until he came to his own farm.

SS: He must have had to learn quite a bit.

JD: He had to learn by himself. He bought a plow and a pair, and horses and didn't have a gangplow, had a walking plow. I can remember when part of the farm was in sod. Natural state of affairs. Sod. It was sod Pasture, we called it our pasture. And he raised quite a few cattle. But he had never farmed. His father was never a farmer, he was a shipsbuilder, you know.

SS: So you figure that the reason he turned to farming was because of his wife.

JD: Yes. She was the one. And he was never sorry. He said he was always thankful that she got him off the water. He made more money at farming than fishing.

SS: I understand that on the Palouse farmland, people did better more quickly than those, say, on the ridges as you go east towards Deary, further in. Was that true, did your father prosper pretty early on the farm?

JD: Why yes, because you know, you take out there in the Troy area on those ridges, they had a lot of timber to cut down and rub out before they could start farming. But that's a wonderful productive country now. My son is farming the greatgrandfather's homestead right now. I don't know but it seemed like my father did, he always made money on his farm.

SS: Did he build new house after too many years of that first house with the lean-to?

JD: No he didn't. He built a living room on to the first room that was built there that shack, as I said. He built a living room on to that, an extra bedroom, and two bedrooms upstairs. And we had that, and then after my mother died, across the road, the house, the place he bought had an awfully nice house on it, real modern, nice house. And we moved over there and there's where my mother died. We were all so lonesome over there that we didn't like to live there. So my father tore that house down and brought across the road there, added it to what the other, to his original house and we had a real nice house. Big livingroom and a big dining room, and a big kitchen and three bedroom downstairs and four bedrooms upstairs, great big house.

SS: So he tore it down and he rebuilt it.

JD: Yeah.

SS: You were lonely at that house?

JD: Yeah, my mother was so proud of that house, course, just a road, just across the road from us, you know, and we'd look at that house and we wanted to go back and be in the little house, we didn't want to live there. He tore the house down. Had a carpenter come, tear it all down and rebuild it. Took the same lumber and built it on to the little house that we wanted to live.

SS: You were lonely because your mother had died there?

JD: Yeah. We were all, we were all lonely over there, we didn't like it because

she'd lived there only one year and she was so happy with that house and she died, you see and we didn't want to live there either. Which is foolish too because it was a nice looking house.

SS: Well your father was pretty understanding if he was willing to move it for you.

JD: Oh yes. He was a good father. Wonderful. We had a woman working for us two years after my mother died.

SS: Was that Charlie Jellaburg's sister?

JD: No, she had homesteaded a place over on Nez Perce and she had a place over there. She had proved up on it, so she came and lived with us for two years. But she's dead long time ago.

SS: Did she do the housekeeping?

JD: Yes. She did the housekeeping.

SS: Is that while you were still in school?

JD: That's why I could go to school til I got through with the eighth grade, see.

SS: What was it like to have to become the mother of a lot of kids at such a young age? Seems like a lot of responsibility for a young person to have to show.

JD: I did have, oh I tell you, I had a lot of responsibility. But I loved 'em all.

SS: The kids would mind you pretty well?

JD: They mind me because they didn't dare do other wise because if I told my father, they'd get it. That's one thing I'll always remember about my father, he was so good to his mother. We didn't, either one of the boys or anybody said a sassy word to grandmother, they'd get it in the neck, I'll tell you. So he was a strict father but he was a good father. I can think of him now and he was a good father. I used to think he was awful strict and didn't like it but he was a wonderful father. And, those days, people were much happier in those days than they are now.

SS: Do you think so?

JD: Oh, they were satisfied. All the youngsters, they didn't care if they had any money or not. We had fun without money. Now the kids have got to have money and nice clothes and I tell you, there isn't the happiness in the world today

that there was at that time. Everyone, no matter where he'd go, what home he'd go into, it seemed like it was a happy home. I used to go and stay all night with different ones and they'd come and stay all night with we girls in school. Every home was just as happy as mine. Nobody was disatisfied.But now the kids require so much. It's just like watching the kids here, these schoolbuses coming and going and I think, my land, I know some of them may live around town here someplace but still they have to have a schoolbus to ride on. Course with the country school may be different, you see. There was three or four some different country schools in the area of ten miles out in the country.

SS: Which school did you go to?

JD: I went to the Aurora. Just a little schoolhouse.

SS: Do you remember any of your teachers very well?

JD: Well Dorothy Wether was my teacher, one of them. She's dead now, but she was an old, old teacher. They were pioneers here in Moscow, the folks. And then there was a Clara Wether that taught one of our schools, not our school but a neighboring school.

SS: What would you call fun in those days?

JD: We'd play baseball. We'd play baseball and Run Sheep Run, all kinds of games like that at recess and noon. We'd all eat our lunch together and then we'd start playing games. And then the school bell would ring and we'd all go in school. Well, my father bought a house here in town, we used to come in here in the wintertime after we got older and the younger youngsters went to school here in Moscow.

SS: What time of the year would you leave the...

JD: Farm? Oh we'd leave as soon as harvest was over, after the fall work was done. And those days, as I remember, they didn't put in fall grain, it was mostly spring grain. They didn't raise fall wheat. It was spring wheat. But they used to summer fallow half of it every year.

SS: Half?

JD: Uh-huh. Half of the farm would be summerfallow, then put into wheat the next year. They don't do that any more They farm different, you see. They used to

work that summerfallow all summer long, there wasn't a weed to be found.

SS: That's because it was summerfallow.

JD: Yes. That's why he always raised about sixty bushels or better.

SS: I wonder why summerfallow helped keep the weeds down so well.

JD: I don't know. Theyjust pulled them out so they didn't grow, you know.

SS: He raised sixty bushels regularly?

JD: Between fifty and sixty bushels all the time.

SS: That's terrific.

JD: It was. That is a wonderful place there. had a wonderful farm too. Land laid just wonderful.

SS: You mean it had a specially good exposure?

JD: It didn't have too steep a hills you see. After my father died we sold it. My brother raised it for wheat in it for a while. They didn't like it and so, his wife didn't like the farming so they, we sold it, we sold it for $135 an acre. And divided it out.

SS: What did he do during the winter in town here?

JD: Nothing. He didn't do much of anything except sit in the house and read his paper. And took care of the cattle, raised hogs.

SS: When you were living in Moscow during the winter, would you go over to the university?

JD: No I stayed home and kept house, took care of my kids. And I went to sewing classes and learned to sew.

SS: Sewing classes?

JD: Uh-huh. Learned dress making shop, I worked in a dress making shop. Learned sewing. And then when I had my own daughters I dressed the two of them for the price of one. I made all their formals and all their clothes.

SS: Who taught dress making in Moscow?

JD: They had dress making shops. People would bring their material to the dress maker and she'd make, they had no ready made clothes in those days, but they had dress makers and they would, the women would make their own clothes or if they wanted something extra nice, they'd take it to the dress maker. See.

Calico, five cents a yard. (laughs) That was their everyday dresses.

SS: How did you learn to do that, did you go to work for the dress maker?

JD: I just went there to learn to sew and they taught me and the the thing about it, see and they drafted their own patterns. And I learned how to draft a pattern. And then after you got your pattern drafted, why then you could put on all the frills that you wanted on it.

SS: Did you have to pay to learn?

JD: No. Just apprentice.

SS: So you worked and helped while you were learning?

JD: Yeah.

SS: Did the average person have dresses made or was that mostly well to do people?

JD: Well I think the average people, not very many of them, had hired a, oh the better class would have their dresses made. I just can't remember all of it. Well, some of the farmers wives would have their dresses made. But their everyday dresses they made themselves. And like I say, calico, five cents a yard, that was what their,(laughs) a dress didn't cost very much in those days. That was everyday dresses. But the little better dresses, you see, better material, would be ten cents a yard or maybe twenty cents a yard or something like that.

SS: Where did you meet Mr. Driscoll?

JD: Oh, I grew up with him. He was a cousin of our neighbor lady. And he used to come there to visit and I used to be there, good friend of them, that's where I met him. I knew him practically from the time he was just a young boy, little boy. Yeah. We grew up together. He did about the same thing as I did. He stayed home and took care of his family. And he had a twin brother that was identical. They were Identical twins. He went to college and graduated up here at college. My husband stayed home, took care of the farm and took care of the rest of them. So we just about did the same thing. I took care of my family, he took care of his family.

SS: Is that why both of you got married kind of late?

JD: I never thought about that. I went with a lot of fellas but, and we had one

happy marriage. He never spoke a cross word to me and I never did him. We were as happy as we could possibly be. He was a wonderful man. He was county commisioner here in this county for eight years. Smart fellow. He was a wonderful guy. But he died too young. I was talking to a man from Kendrick the other day, he says,"Well, you're Walt Driscoll's wife, aren't you?" I said,"Yes, I am." And he says,"You know, he had one fault." And I said,"What was that?" "He died too young," Well I said,"He couldn't help that,poor fellow." He had heart trouble.

SS: When was he county commissioner? WAs it before WWII?

JD: Oh yes, oh my yes. It was...

SS: Was it during the depression?

JD: Yeah, during the depression. I know during the depression he was county commissioner.

SS: So he must have had quite an interest in government?

JD: Oh, he was, he lowed politics. Great Democrat.

SS: It was probably better for the democrats locally when Roosevelt got in.

JD: You know, I ferget, how the farmers got something, but if it hadn't been for the president, I think it must have been Roosevelt, they'd have lost their farms.

SS:Is it the Agricultural Adjustment Act? I heard about that. There was price support gurauranteed for the crop.

JD: Yes, uh-huh. The depression was bad too.

SS: Did he know Paul Carlson pretty well?

JD: Oh yes.

SS: 'Cause he was another good democrat.

JD: Yes, and he was a good friend of my husband. His son's a good friend of my son.

SS: When he was county commissioner, did you have much social doings to attend to?

JD: No. We just led a normal life. Just like always. Course we had to hire a man always to take his place on the farm 'cause he was gone an awful lot. He was game warden too, for a couple of years.

SS: What was the move to Driscoll Ridge like? The Change from where you grew up?

JD: It wasn't too much of a change, course, I'd been over there a lot. It wasn't much of a change. We built our home, our new home and a barn, dug our well all in one year. And I still love to go out there. I've been going out there every summer excepting, I don't know whether my kids will let me go out there this summer or not. I used to get a hired girl and go out there in the spring and stay til fall. I just love it out there, I love it on the farm.

SS: Did you ever have dealings with the Bank of Troy in those early years?

JD: Always. We always had dealings with the Troy bank. The Troy bank was the only bank that stood up under the depression.

SS: Do you remember what it was like to deal with the Troy bank in those years?

JD: Oh they were awfully good. They were wonderful. Frank Brocke is one of the finest men in the United States. I think. Everybody thought the world of him. An Ole Bowen the same way. They helped the farmers, I'll tell ya. Wonderful.

SS: I want to ask you a few more things about the early years around Genesee. What was church like then, did you go regularly on Sundays?

JD: Oh no, We couldn't. It was sixteen miles you see, to church. We didn't go very often. But We did go to church. Course, I was a Lutheran and My husband was a Catholic. But I raised his family Catholic, I was married twenty years to him and I thought, well why do I stay home and cook dinner and let them go to church, so I joined the church too. And that made my husband happy.

SS: Did your father mind that?

JD: Oh my father was gone, but he was very opposed to my marrying a Catholic but he said he was fine man but he said he didn't like his religion. And I said, well I don't have to be a Catholic you know, if I don't want to.

SS: Well you held out for quite a few years anyway.

JD: But I was happy that I went with him once in a while. And I raised my kids, my four youngsters Catholic.

SS: What about the Lutheran church when you were a kid? Did you go there on Sundays?

JD: My mother and father wouldn't miss church. We never missed church on Sunday. We'd go to church every Sunday. I was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran church.

SS: Did you ever know why they had two Lutheran churches so close?

JD: Well there was some little clause. I don't know. It didn't amount to anything, they claimed, in the, I don't know where in the prayer it was, but anyway they got that straightened out and then they consolidated. One was Missouri, called the Missouri Lutheran and the other one was the Our Savior's Lutheran. But that Missouri church, no, I don't think I ever hear of it anymore.

SS: I don't know. You say there was a little clause... was it in interpretation of the Scripture?

JD: In the Scripture I guess, I don't know.

SS: I just want to tell you now, one fella told me, who grew up down there that he had heard that it was over the Scriptural verse that went "many are called but few are chosen." Does that sound right to you?

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JD: I know that this day and age is different from when I was young and grew up.

SS: When you were growing up did you have a lot to do with your neighbors?

JD: Oh yes. My goodness. Now Johnny McGee, he was Irish, he was one of our nearest neighbor . My father and John McGee was the best of friends. They were just wonderful friends. All of our neighbors we were good friends with. We used to have dinners together and the men used to exchange work, you know. Just good friends. They weren't that independence that there is now. One neighbor was ready to help the other one if he needed it. Anybody was sick why the, I know my mother used to go help out anybody that was sick, she'd go out, she'd go and help her neighbor. They don't do that now.

SS: They don't.

JD: But then, everyone was poor. Everybody was the same standing, so I guess maybe that made a difference, I don't know. But I know it is different from when I was a girl, when I was young.

SS: So you think things were more equal in those days than they are now.

JD: I think that's it. There wasn't any society climbing. But I wouldn't care to go back.

SS: No?

JD: No, I wouldn't. I like my life right now.

can live as I want to now. I've got a good family.

SS: Was the depression much trouble for you and your husband, or were you able to weather it pretty easily?

JD: Oh we weathered it. We had a wonderful crop that year. And he went to town, sold his wheat. Came home and he said,"Well Mommy, I sold my wheat." That's fine, twenty five cents a bushel. What are we going to do with the money? Well, I said, the first thing we'll do, we'll pay our hired help. Second place we'll do, we'll pay our taxes. And then you and I and the kids will live off the land. And we did. Yep. Raised everything we ate. We didn't go to the grocery store for anything. I boarded the schoolteacher for twelve years out there and she paid me twenty five dollars a month and that bought all my staples plus sugar and things like that. And we raised our own meat and eggs and cream and butter and milk and vegetables and we had peaches in the orchard. We had apricots in the orchard, we had pears, we had apples, and we had a big strawberry patch, we had a big rasberry patch, we had a big asperagas patch, what more would we want? We weren't unhappy. We lived good through the depression. Didn't have all the beautiful clothes we wanted, but we, I made all our clothes. Kids of today couldn't do it.

SS: I was told that during the depression a man in Troy went into a service station and was going to do away with himself and the other guy told him, "You're crazy." He said,"I'll get in touch with Driscoll, the county commissioner." And he said,"He'll fix you up and see that you get some food." Do you remember your husband as county commissioner having to see to it that people got enough food?

JD: I tell you, they used to have in Troy during the depression, what they call a hobo camp, down the track there, going towards Kendrick, they had a hobo camp there. And I had a crate of eggs ready to take to town, we got ten cents a dozen for them. And we used to make our own bacon, you see, and we had some bacon that was, oh, kind of fat you know, and the kids would like that, they liked it striped with meat, so the hobos and Harry had a warehouse, beans you know. Raised beans, So, I said to Walt, I said,"Take this crate of eggs to the hobo

camp." And yes and he said,"I'll get some bacon and I'll take 'em some bacon. They can have bacon and eggs." And Harry, his twin brother furnished him the beans. And they had a big coal oil can that they cooked those beans in over a bonfire. And the hobos would just come running from all directions you know, to get that food. They used to have what they called a hobo camp there. I furnished many a crate of eggs for them. And we gave 'em bacon, then they had bacon and eggs and Harry produced the beans and they'd put bacon in with the beans and cook them, you know. They had their protein.

SS: It sounds like they were hand to mouth.

JD: Well that's it. No work and no money. Somebody had to feed 'em. And we had a fella that worked on our combine, our first combine, and every year he'd come to Troy and he'd be broke and my husband would give him enough money to live until the wheat was ready. Then he'd come out and tend combine.

SS: He'd work off what your husband had given him and then he'd make some more besides.

JD: Sure. So he could live. Then they had the CC camp, CC boys you know, that used to go out and plant all the trees you see planted along the highways, that was planted by the CC boys, CC camp. That was during the depression too. Give the boys something to do. But I know who paid 'em off for that. I guess the county. Far as we were concerned we didn't get very much for our wheat, but the same time, we lived good and we were happy.

SS: Did you ever go into Genesee for social life?

JD: Oh we used to go in for dances.

SS: They had dances right in town?

JD: Oddfellows Hall. We used to dance. Oh, I danced a lot in Genesee. But I used to go with my brothers always. I had two brothers older than me.

SS: So your father didn't object to dancing?

JD: Oh no. I used to go to a lot of dances. We used to have dances in our own home, we had this big house, and we'd just roll up the rug and had french doors between the two rooms and we used to have dances there a lot, lot of 'em in our own home.

SS: Who would play?

JD: Well there was a couple of boys there, young men in the neighborhood who were good who would play the fiddle or the violin real well. They'd play the violin, we'd dance. We, oh a lot of dances.

SS: How far would people come for a dance at your house, just neighbors?

JD: Neighbors from Cow Creek and Linnville. And our own neighborhood. Oh wouldn't be too many, I would be imagine twenty or thirty. Then we had literary society at the school always. And we'd play with the kids all those games, 'Skip to my Lou' and all of that kind of stuff you know, kid games. We all joined in and played with the kids. Literary society.

SS: Playing those games was part of the literary society?

JD: Uh-huh. And they had a program.

SS: Would they have a program first and the games afterward?

JD: They'd have a program, literary society have a program and the teacher was the president of it and then after that we'd play games. We'd bring lunch and have midnight lunch.

SS: Stayed late.

JD: Yeah. We had fun.

SS: Would it be like potluck?

JD: Yes, Oh just, sometimes potluck and sometimes just sandwiches and coffee, milk for the kids.

SS: Would these mostly be Norwegian folks or would they be mixed?

JD: Oh they'd be just a mixture. Mixture. When I started school, I couldn't speak English. All I could speak was Norwegian. You see, my grandmother couldn't speak English at all, she lived with us and I could read Norwegian and spell Norwegian, oh, I could barely speak English. And I always remember that, how the teacher would laugh, and they taught the ABC at that time, ABC you know and I'd get to H in Norwegian is 'Ho' and I'd get to H and I'd say 'ho.' "Oh now, you're not driving horses," (laughs). So it took me a long time to get over that. The teacher boarded with us at home and she used to help me a little bit.

SS: She would give you lessons? At home?

JD: Yes. She just helped me get started reading you know. Didn't take me long. I caught on.

SS: With a lot of Norwegian kids at school, you were probably tempted to speak Norwegian.

JD: No we didn't, no there wasn't. A lot of our neighbors were American in our neighborhood but on Bird Ridge they spoke Swedish over there, all the time. Swedish. When we built our house on the farm why, we had a negro boy haul lumber for us. No, I'll take that back, we had a Swedish boy hauling the lumber and he overtook us, a negro boy on the road, a fellow by the name of Wells, they lived up there, they were awfully nice people. And he couldn't talk English too well and this Swedish boy couldn't, so he just started talking Swedish to him, and when he came home he said,"Walt, something happened today, the funniest thing that I can't get over." "Well, why, what happened to ya?" "You know, I never did know that there were Swede niggers." (laughs) He said,"this man just talked Swede just as good as I could." "I never knew before that there were Swede niggers." Well Walt said,"If you move up there, you'll just have to learn to talk Swede, or you'll never get along." But the kids in the playground, they'd talk Swedish all the time. And the usually had a teacher that was Swedish and they always talked Swede in their own homes.

SS: So you knew of the Wells family?

JD: No, I didn't know the Wells family but Walt did, he knew them real well. But they were a nice family. Everybody liked them.

SS: That's what I've heard. The old timers out at Deary, they've told me, they've got a great reputation.

JD: I never heard anything but good about them. Nice people.

SS: That's a funny story. I've never heard a story like that about the Wells' but it would make sense that they would have to speak Swedish.

JD: Why sure. They'd have to. They learned it up playing in the schoolyard. But this boy, he was right from Sweden, his sister worked for me, she was Swedish.

And he was hauling the lumber for our house, and picked up this boy on the road, and the negro he could see that John couldn't talk English very good, he's Swedish, so he just turned around and talked Swedish to him, and he scared him I guess, at first. And when he come home he said,"I've run on to something today I've never was so surprised in my life. I didn't know there was Swedish niggers."

SS: Then you had hired help that were just over from the old country?

JD: Oh yeah. I had a girl, I had a girl by the name of Anna Lee Berg and John Lee Berg, They were both over from, right from Sweden.

SS: They'd come right out to Idaho from Sweden?

JD: Yeah. They'd have relatives you know, Swedish people right near us there. But oh, they were wonderful people, best workers.

SS: Would they board with you for a long period of time?

JD: They all did, they all boarded there.

SS: How long would they stay?

JD: Oh the girl stayed three years winter and summer.

SS: No kidding.

JD: Uh-huh. And we always had a hired man the year round, the year round, and just think of forty five dollars a month the year round. For a man.

SS: He got his room and board.

JD: He got his room and board, washing and ironing.

SS: What part of the work would the girl do?

JD: The girl, woman? Oh she did all the heavy work, washing and ironing and scrubbing and all that kind of work. I did the cooking ... always. She was neat as a pin. She was wonderful. I don't know. It seems like a hundred years ago.

SS: It sure does seem like a very different time. To have hired folks that were living with you the year round. That's different then they do today.

JD: Well they do yet. We have a hired man out there right now, he lives there all the time when he works there. Has a bed and board and all. But a lot of the farmers now, they don't board their men, they have to take a lunch. But I never would do that. I think when a man works hard he's entitled to a hot meal at noon. That's

changed, you know. But we always had a hired man the year round.

SS: Did you find that, I imagine that it would be harder to adjust if you came over from another country as an adult rather than as a child.

JD: I don't know, now as far as housework went, she was, she'd do just as much as I did about it. In fact, oh she was the cleanest person, best washer and ironer. She was wonderful. Course back there now, it's compulsory for people to take English, to learn English in school. I had a girl that was back in Sweden just about four, five years ago, out there on the farm, and she could speak English just as good as anyone. In fact she could speak Swedish and English and French. And she said to me after she got through working for me she said,"My, I'd like to get a job someplace." And I said,"Well," she's a smart girl,' I said,"You go up to University of Idaho, you might get a job up there." They didn't have any for her. And I said,"You go into Pullman, Washington State University, I'll bet you'll get a job over there." She went...got a job as an interpreter in language. And she taught Italian, Swedish and American of course. And she could speak American, she graduated back in Sweden in high school you know, she said, and they told her she could enter college as a sophmore. She was out of high school. So they're different back there then what they used to be too. But she was a smart girl. She married one of our neighbor boys and lives in Seattle now. His a public accountant there.

SS: I should get going.

JD: Well, I don't know if I can give you any information at all but...

SS: I think you have.

JD: Keep my name out of the paper, out of the book...

I was too old.

SS: He was your father.

JD: Was my husband's father that came. And I don't think Mr. Cunningham came with him, I don't know. He went back and brought the whole outfit out here. MY father in law.

JD: Was the oldest and then Hinkel and then me. And then Antone and Ida, Ida, my sister Ida was a graduate registered nurse. And Eddy, the baby.

SS: When you were raising them up, some of them were probably home for quite a few years.

JD: Oh, yes. My two oldest brothers though, they, when they were I don't know how old, I've forgotten now, but they homesteaded in Montana, Devon, Montana. They went up there and took homesteads up there. They were gone then. And my younger brother, one younger than me, Antone, he rented the home place and farmed that. He married a girl from Genesee by the name of Burr. Mary Burr. They're all gone now. And my sister Ida, I wanted to be a nurse so bad. And the doctor wanted me to be a nurse, but I said that I said, "No, you can't get through this work at home, you better go. But if you go and be a nurse, you stay with it. You can't come home, you've got to graduate." And so she went and training for a nurse and she used to write home and say, "Oh, I can't take all these bawlings out." And I said, you take it, other girls do, you take it and stay. Because you can't come home otherwise I'll go and you stay here and do the work. But she stayed and graduated and she was a wonderful nurse. She was a registered nurse. She married a fella in Seattle and, of course, they were divorced. But She has five children and her oldest, the grandchild is a doctor now and the other ones is in medical school and he's going to be a doctor. So she did...

SS: So you didn't try to become a nurse after that?

JD: Oh, no. I couldn't, I had to stay home. But the doctor, in Genesee, doctor wanted me to become a nurse, because he said, "You've done such a good job taking care of your own family and," he said, "I want you to be a nurse." But then my sister Ida she said, "No, I want, I think I want to be the nurse." So I said, "All right, you go on, but you stay with it, otherwise you have to come home and do what I'm doing."

SS: Did you find you had to be strict when you were bringing the kids up?

JD: Oh, not too bad. No. We got along just wonderful. If they didn't behave, I'd tell my dad.

SS: And he was strict.

JD: You bet he was strict. He was strict, at the same time he was a good father.

SS: I've heard from quite a few people that their fathers were pretty strict.

JD: I think in those days, in older days they were, moreso than the mothers.

SS: Did that mean your father punished the kids pretty easily?

JD: I can't remember him ever punishing them, hitting them or anything like that. But They knew enough to mind him. And I did too.

SS: He most have grown to depend on you a great deal.

JD: Well he did. In fact, he didn't want me to get married at all. He was selfish that way and he wanted, but I took care of him after he had his stroke. I took care of him for five months before he died. He hated losing me.

SS: I can understand why.

JD: But I'm not sorry.

SS: I guess that life was harder then and you had to do what needed to be done to get by.

JD: He didn't live to be too old a man. He was just 64 when he died. He had a stroke and died. But he was awfully good to his mother, I'll tell ya. She lived with us for eighteen years.

SS: Did he have timber on the place?

JD: Oh, they Used to go up to Troy and buy cordwood every summer.

SS: Would they cut it or buy it?

JD: Oh, They'd Buy it already cut. Bought Cordwood already cut, you know. And then they'd bring it home and saw it up, you know. Into Chunks and then split it for the stove. And leave some chunks for the heating stove.

SS: There was no wood right around the vicinity.

JD: No. They had to go up near Troy to get cordwood.

SS: Was water easy to get?

JD: Oh, we had water in the house. We had a well and a windmill and pump on top of the hill and it came back and cold water in the house, had a sink in the house with cold water, but not hot water.

SS: You had a windmill.

JD: Uh-huh. Had a windmill.

SS: Did most of the neighbors have windmills too?

JD: No. Take my father. He had a windmill, you know. He was the first one to have everything. He was the first one to have a hack, first one to have a buggy, first one to have a car, first one to have a windmill. And I don't know how he did it, but he did. Never in debt. Never. He never bought anything without he paid for it.

SS: How did it come about that he could even afford to buy at all? He must have had good crops.

JD: Oh, he had good crops and good prizes.

SS: Was a windmill useful to have?

JD: Why sure. We had a wonderful well, it pumped, kept the cattle's trough . . full of water all the time and pumped it, we had a cistern on top of the hill and a pipe back down to the house and had a sink in the house and cold water and then he, we had a bathroom that he fixed and fixed coils in the cookstove on top of the range and we had hot water, we had baths, bathtub. There's a big zinc bathtub.

SS: Was water easy to get in your neighborhood?

JD: Oh, it was awfully easy there to get water.

SS: You didn't have to drop a well too deep?

JD: No. I think they dug it by hand, you know. It wasn't too deep, with lots of water.

SS: Did many of the neighboring families stay when you were growing up? Was there much turnover of the farms?

JD: No. That's about the time that my father quit farming that some of them quit farming and moved to town and some of them sold their place, the Rosenau place was sold. The Dugger place was sold. But the Danielsons, they still stayed. And of course we sold our place to a feila by the name of Berger. And he still has it.

SS: How old were you when your father died?

JD: 28.

SS: All the other kids were grown by then?

JD: Oh they were all grown. All of 'em. My youngest brother was, oh, I think he must have been about 20.

SS: I have to go.

End of tape.