

ELVON HAMPTON

Interviewed by:
Sam Schrager

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ELVON HAMPTON

Genesee; b. 1911

farmer

1.8 hours

minute page

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Side B (continued)

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with Sam Schrager

May 3, 1976

II. Transcript

This conversation ith ELVON HAMPTON took place at his home in Genesee, Idaho on May 3, 1976. The interviewer is SAM SCHRAGER.

SS: -- started farming here.

ELVON HAMPTON: Well, he came out at a fairly young age. I suppose he came out probably- maybe twenty-six, something like that. Came to Dayton, over there. It seems like a lot of the early pioneers came to Dayton about that time and he worked there a while and he told me about fishing up in those creeks up in there. And then for some reason or other he moved ^{on} further, out here, and there were several other fellows with him from Carolina, and I know we used to go to visit one, I forget his name now, up around east of Moscow. And of course, in those days they wanted to homestead a little bit up in the timber country. And they tried that, several of his friends did, and probably established a homestead but he said for some reason or other he didn't like that, it seemed kind of slow to him, sitting out there and building a cabin and cutting timber and he just wasn't quite as adapted to the timber life as some of these other men. And so ^{then} he migrated I think right down here in this area and worked on a farm, right just out here just a couple of miles by the highway that come by, there used to be a ^{grease} _κ out there and he talked about plowing with a footburner out there for a few years. And then he happened to travel out east of Genesee again and then onto a place out there that was for sale, by an insurance company. Seemed like in those earlier days that insurance companies had possession of those properties. And he said he bought that piece of ground right there without even going back off of the road to look at it. He said the land looked so good from the road and he just purchased that place there then and started building- Oh, I guess there were some old buildings on it there- but he built up on it and improved on it. Then

he just kept gradually in those days, adding a little more to his holdings there. He was next to the Indian land, the Nez Perce Reservation down there and the Indians could sell their land then and some of the Indians, you know, ^{the property} - well, it wasn't too productive then and they ran a few cattle on it and they weren't too successful. They were willing to sell to somebody who would cultivate it. And ^{then} it wasn't anything like it is today because they had to operate it with horses original and then later with mules that he used ^{there} because of hiring people, as I told you before.

SS: Let me ask you this: Did he ever tell you why he decided to leave Carolina and wanted to come West?

EH: No, I just can't recall, unless it was, I think his family wasn't too large, it wasn't on that basis, I suppose he just was ambitious and it seemed like back there they worked on a smaller scale. ^{whether} he heard about this country, I don't know, but they raised tobacco back there and it was a hard task and a menial job, ^{and manual labor.} And outside of that I just don't really know.

SS: Do you think he probably had the idea of owning his own spread?

EH: Well, I think so. I think that he was that type of a man. He played a banjo; he had a banjo, I know, and I kept that thing. He used to play, you know, rainy days. I never learned how to play that, but there's his old banjo. And it was a five string banjo. And I've been musical. I went to the singing route. And you can see where he just picked it- never did use a pick, I got this pick. But that is a five string banjo and he'd pick that. I remember, well, I guess before I knew about it he probably played out to dances and things like that. And whether he learned to play that back home, I don't know.

SS: Wouldn't surprise me because, because it is an instrument they played

in the South more than around here.

EH: He could sit and play these old tunes, you know, Old Joe Clark, and I remember sitting around the coal stove at home up there at the ranch and when it was rainy days he'd get out this banjo and play it. And he loved that. And he always loved music. I took up the singing and I did a lot of singing and I still do, did that in my life. ^{I refurbished that.} We fixed it up and that's the old banjo. It's an old instrument.

SS: About when do you think he landed here?

EH: Well, I think in about 1886 or '89, something like that.

SS: So there was no homestead land to be had around here, Genesee?

EH: No, it was up in the timber and you had to go down here and purchase it. When you acquired your property then, it was difficult to work it, because you had to travel and we didn't have the mobility that we have today. It's hard to visualize that. We hauled our grain with wagons to town. And in my time, it amazes me that I can think back that we did that and we traveled by sled in those early days. I never got to town, like now, unless we got to town, you know, on the Fourth of July or some special time. Hardly ever went out for lunch anyplace. That would be something.

SS: Why would that be?

EH: Well, we was so busy then, those days, unless you went for a purpose then. If you took your surrey and your team you went to town to buy groceries or else in the fall you took your wheat to grind it at a flour mill. ^{they had one down here.} And so in those days, you went for a purpose. You didn't say, "We'll just go in and get the mail." Or, "We're going in and get a quart of milk." You didn't have to get milk then, because you had milk cows. I milked a cow even after I was married. ^{In my family.} And we butchered our hogs, our pork. We had our bacon and cured all

of that. Made our lard and made the soap. There was a lady down here, Mrs. Crane, used to come out; and I can see her in the yard yet, we put a forked holder up and put the^{is} big round pot in that to boil that lard, stir it; stir it, you know, and it'd harden.

SS: She would come over to make the soap?

EH: Yeah, she was a woman that lived in town here, a German lady, and she knew how to do that. And so we'd always get her to come out and she would take charge of that. She was a specialist, you might say. And we'd cut this meat up, you know, and had no refrigeration and no place in town, you had to cure it and can your meat. And then in the summertime when we needed meat, we'd kill a lamb, we had sheep, ^{we'd} kill a lamb whenever we needed some fresh to eat. We'd maybe kill a beef that would cure out in the cool of night, you know. Of course, the hog, we butchered in the wintertime when it was cold. Used to butcher a dozen or more hogs. Of course, we had men, in the summertime, quite a few men and it took a lot of food. ^{lot of} Baking; baked all our bread.

When I talk about that, I think a fellow- the guy's talking through his hat! The difference. I've often recall, how I think back how this change has come. I told you about something the last time you was here; there's a picture of those mules and the combine. That's in '31. Well, '31, that was two years before I graduated out of college, and I was driving a team there, and then you see how we progressed when we had this, and then this one back here, you see, we started with the tractor. Had a tractor; that was a smaller one and we just experimented with that. And we eventually, here a little later, the last year after this one, I think in '33, why we used six mules back here and we put this tractor up in front and we cut off all these mules, ^{up here} trying to get changed over to a mechanized system.

SS: Would you explain to me again why it was that your father preferred the mules to the horses. He was in the minority of opinion down around this country.

EH: Yes, I don't suppose there were too many. I can't think of too many more, except there used to be a fellow up around Moscow, Boyds, were big operators; generally, ^{you} had to be bigger operators. And he did that because, I think- I have some pictures of horses down there- that the casualty rate in horses was pretty high, because they're more of a personalized animal. You had to look after 'em, you had to not get 'em overheated or watch their food; for instance they'll founder, whereas this mule won't do that. He'll take care of himself. If he's too hot when he comes in, and you've been working him hard in the field, he won't ^{drink} water. And when you take him up to the barn he won't- you never hardly find a mule that'll founder. He won't just jump in and eat all that grain that he's got there. He'll ration himself.

SS: Did this have to do with his thinking that with a ^{lot of} hired men it would be easier to look after mules?

EH: Yeah. You know, he just ^{couldn't} be out there every day to caution the men. He'd hire a man and say, "There's your six or seven mules, you go up there and harness them." And the grain, we'd have the bulk grain in the bin, "And go feed them, you know." You know how a man would come in, if he was a careless man, he would come in and take a bucket and maybe dump a couple of gallons instead of one gallon in one box and maybe not so much in the others. Well, if you did that to a mule he wouldn't be sick the next morning. And ^{I imagine} that ^{he found out when} happened and when the men went up there to work he'd probably say, "Well, here, I got a sick horse." And that probably held up his

unit all day. And it was quite a problem. And not only horses-
 they were temperamental. I remember him telling about a nice, ^{pretty}
 big horses and they would come in here during the week, and they're
 balky. You get a nice, big horse, you know, they call a "cold
 shouldered " horse and he just wouldn't hit that collar. And the
 fellow, ^{held} come in and he'd trade that horse off and you'd think
 he was a nice one, well, the next morning, or the next Monday morning
 hooked him up to leave town or something and they had a road, that
 horse wouldn't pull. *And there he would be.*

SS: What's "cold shouldered"?

EH: Well, he just wouldn't hit that collar, you know. Put a big old
 collar on him and he was cold shouldered, he just wouldn't hit it
 he'd just back up, just sit there a little bit and just back right
 up in the traces. I've seen 'em do that; ^{pretty,} great, big horses. They're
 just what you'd call- they're balky.

SS: So if you would trade for a horse, you were taking chances.

EH: So lots of time my dad would ^{tell about how held} come in, he'd get stuck, you know, and
 he'd have to wait till the next week, ^{maybe} he'd have to substitute some-
 way, he'd bring this nice, pretty horse back and fellows would come
 by and they'd probably be in the same spot that he was, nobody knew
 what was the matter, so they'd trade horses. That's what they call
 horse ^{traders}. That's where horse ^{traders} got the ^{ir} name. And they
 would look around and trade, and he'd come back smiling and say,
 "When that feller ^{hooks that horse up} he's going to be *in trouble.*"

SS: Do you think this had something to do with why he preferred mules?

EH: Yeah, that's right, they were more reliable. ^{And less a risk} And they had a man
 to work a team and he couldn't go buy a horse or replace him; ^{we} gen-
 erally had two or three mules who were extras, you know, get hurt
 or something else. And another thing, they're not a nervous type

of animal. If they ever get in a wire fence they'll stand there ^{til} you come and get 'em, and a horse'll just tear himself apart. Seen a horse get in there and just get excited and just cut his legs off, on a barbwire fence. So you can see the advantage of that kind of ~~an~~ animal.

SS: I take it that he started with horses and decided to turn to mules.

EH: Yeah, I remember when they had horses, I could show you a picture of that- all those horses lined out. But he switched pretty early in my life, I was a young boy then.

SS: Do you know where he went for his mules?

EH: I remember he would go- you see, you have to breed those, they won't reproduce; mules won't reproduce, ^{you} have to breed a jack with a horse, and there was fellows that would raise ^{those}. Like I said, this Boyd up here, they did that and they kept a bunch of brood mares. I remember one time when he went to Montana or someplace and ~~we~~ bought a bunch of yearling to two year old pretty mules and my dad left me there with another hired man to tie these up, you know. And they was pretty, they had some bay ones, they were different colored you know, generally they're brown, but you see there's some white ones there. And they were pretty fellows and we had a lot of fun tying those things up.

SS: Did he get ribbed about having mules instead of horses by the guys around here. It's so unusual.

EH: No. No, I don't think anybody ever did that, because they knew the advantage of it. But, you know, you take a fellow, if he was an individual farmer, he took pride in his horses and watched 'em and took care of 'em. He could get by a lot better, you know, because he knew just how much to feed 'em- any particular horse- but where

you had five or six fellows working, you know, maybe one man would leave you for somebody else and you had to break him in. Of course, it didn't change too much in those days. If a man was a mule skinner, what they call a mule skinner, why, he'd stay for maybe year after year.

SS: I'd like to talk about that some. But I'd like to talk about the operation, itself. First, maybe you'd tell me how he went from being a small farmer to a pretty good sized operator.

EH: (Pictures) Here's my dad standing on a stackpile. See, that's when he used to have those threshing machines. Now here's one out at the place where they had these mules, see, they'd all come in here to drink, and here's the fellows that's lined up there working on his place. And here has to be a picture of the crew that summer, shows you there. There is my dad, there I am and my brother and here's a feller that worked for ^{us for} many, many years. And here's what I say when they had these horses, they'd have colts and stuff, and that was in 1904. I think there were six or seven ^{to a} team, six, I guess. And here's my homestead originally where I lived and I was born in that house. Here's a picture of a combine we took when we had, later on with the tractor.

SS: What was the means by which he built up his place?

EH: He was quite a trader. He raised livestock. He would have some sheep; we had quite a few sheep, hogs and everything, you know, self-sufficient, you know. And grain, as you know, wasn't too productive a thing, the yield wasn't too high then. And he was a good manager. Whatever the land produced, he protected that and was able to come out on it. We didn't lay away a lot of money. And of course property wasn't as high then, you didn't have a big cash flow. And ^{you just} didn't

buy gasoline or stuff like that. You just put it into what little labor you had then. And lots of times he would provide you know- I've known some fellows that would just come out there and work for their board; chop wood for the wintertime, maybe and keep the place together while we were in school.

SS: Did he save up enough money to put it down on more land and buy more? Did he expand?

EH: Oh, yeah, he would save a little and he would always borrow at the bank down here. There was a fellow name of Breshler, who was a good banker and he would stay with him, and he would loan him the money, lots of times pretty near all of it. And maybe he'd have a crop of wheat or barley- and like I say- the cash flow wasn't very great and ^{your} expense was great, you had a lot of labor and you had to handle it with sacks and sew 'em and haul 'em. It was slow, but what you did was comparable, more so than it is today, I guess.

SS: Did he mind being in debt and being extended?

EH: No, I guess he saw the opportunity was great and people weren't too anxious to- it was hard to have a crew and horses and stuff like that if you're willing to go on, and opportunity was there, you know. I know that in those days you had more land than you wanted. ^{practically} You ^{just} had more land than you wanted just scattered around; nobody seemed to want it. *To farm it.*

SS: What's the Driscoll part in the partnership?

EH: He was a man here that had been a schoolteacher and was a slight type of a man, not a farmer type, but a financier. And he ran a hardware store down here, and he saved his money and looked around and he went in partnership; my dad helped to finance him. And so Dad did the operation and he paid him a salary and he made the living. Even in

that early day, he did it from a financial standpoint. And so my dad knew the farming end of it so they formed a partnership, just like lots of times you form a partnership.

SS: Did this mean they had separate land holdings at the same time? Your father had his own land-

EH: When he acquired land- like ^{where} that team was- that was on his place there, you see- why, he would buy a piece of land- he bought a piece of land, what they called the Troutman place, and from then on they ^daded each one; he had his place over where this homestead was, see, and he lived there. It's about a mile from there. And then when property would come up, why, they would buy- take maybe a half of an eighty that laid next to them, next to their property, which would be more convenient, why, they'd buy it that way. And when Indian land came up my dad more or less bought that down in the Nez Perce area. I don't know of Driscoll ever buying any of that. Why he didn't, I don't know.

SS: So once he got going, how much land was he actually farming?

EH: Oh, ^{they each had about 1,000 acres.} when he was farming there they had around, just about 2,000 acres. [^]

SS: About where would this have been?

EH: Oh, that would have been in the '30's- well, up to the '30's- '35. And then when Driscoll died- he died first- his daughter went in partnership. They had a partnership and I ^{went in} a partnership with her and we farmed for quite a few years.

SS: Do you have much of an idea of how many years it took your father to be farming ~~that~~ much? He probably started with what? 160 acres?

EH: Oh, yeah. Oh, well, I suppose that they bought- I suppose he started in about 1895 and it took him thirty-forty years.

SS: To build up to that? That 2,000.

EH: Yeah.

SS: But they were doing some kind of partnership by 1900, already. Because they had the threshing crews; joint crew.

EH: Yeah.

SS: So your father, from what you were mentioning before, he looked at himself as a manager. That's what he wanted to do.

EH: Yeah, there's a picture of him up there. Very stern. I never can think of him driving a team. He was always the man that was out managing.

MRS. H: Tell him about the ? idea when he showed you how to drive.

EH: One time when I was young and we had these push binders. You drive with six mules and there's a beam and it more or less came closer to what these combines are now, you know, because the binder would go ahead of your team and the reel would cut that, although the bull-wheel would knock down your wheat. And so I was a young fella then and I remember starting up the road with this team, and if you had a green team it was ^{a little} hard to hold them in a little bit and you had a rudder, it reminds me of these outboard motors, you could just swing around, but this rudder had a seat on it with a wooden peg in between it, you'd guide it like this, just swing, like this, you know. I think you understand what I mean. I don't have a picture of one of those. And so my dad was along the road one day and I was coming along and I was diving in and out like this trying to keep my team in and one thing and another, and he was telling me what to do; a very patient fellow, though. And finally I jumped off and I said, "You take it." And he said, "No, Son, I don't know how to do it but I know how it should be done." So I got back on that and I stayed with it. I thought that was good enough for me! Course,

he had done some earlier work when he was a young fellow, Dad worked hard. But he was a good manager. Good to figure. He never threw anything away. Treat his employees as good as he could. And he was always a fair man.

SS: What kind of dimensions, as far as the size of the crew and the amount of stock, did he need to farm 2,000 acres?

EH: Well, he just probably needed- there's lots of times he wouldn't get it plowed or done and the pressure is great. I remember even in a partnership to produce. This Driscoll was a fellow who could come out and take a look ^{at things.} He'd take a drive around and inspect and see well, have you got it seeded right. He wouldn't know how to seed but he would know the end result.

SS: By the size of the wheat growing in the field.

EH: Yes. I know that one time- he would come out- and it would make you kind of nervous after you'd been working and I remember my dad said that he came out and looked at the crop and he says, "It isn't going to make very much." I don't know whether he said twenty bushel or something, and my dad said, "I'll buy your share out of that."

And he said that shut him up, he never said anymore. (Chuckles)
^{that's the way he had to get along. So}
So, it's not a easy life.

SS: A lot of responsibility.

END SIDE A

EH: For his own good and the good of his partner. ^{For his part of it.} He would get wages. [^]

SS: Do you know what kind of wages he got?

EH: Oh, it wasn't very much. Maybe he'd get \$2,000 at the most.

SS: For the season's work?

EH: Yeah, that would a been a pretty good salary. I remember we were working- just like those ^{drivers} that worked for \$2- \$1.50 or \$2 a

day and furnish him board and room and we'd in harvesttime get a little more, but I worked lots of days for \$2.50, thought that was pretty good. Worked hard, too, lots of days, lots of hours.

SS: What kind of day was it, when you were working? Was it a twelve hour day?

EH: Oh, yeah, we would get up at five o'clock and go up to the barn and feed those horses, ^{those} mules, and harness 'em. Lots of times we had lanterns sitting up there, it wouldn't be in the morning, but at night, hanging on the peg and we had to light that lantern to feed 'em at night. But we would go up there and then when we got 'em harnessed and fed, about eight in the morning, we'd go down and eat breakfast. We had this lady cook, and she cooked for us many, many years. She'd just operate that house. And we would go down there and eat and then we'd go back and take our teams out and go out in the fields then come in at twelve at noon and feed 'em and water 'em again, put 'em up in the barn and maybe lay down a little while at noon, where right now we'd have to go back to work, we'd lay down and maybe have a little nap, fifteen, twenty minutes to give the team time enough to eat. And then we'd get back in about six o'clock at night. Of course, when the fall would come it would get dark^{er} quicker. We kept regular hours. We had a crew, we had to keep regular hours. Be in at mealtime so the cook would know ^{when} the men would be in, not straggling in. Very disciplined. ^{program} And then you knew what to expect of everybody. That's the way you operated.

SS: How hard would you consider the work was? Would you be working really up close to ^{your limit} --?

EH: Oh, no, when you were plowing or standing it would be a tiresome job, sometimes when you're haying it would be a more difficult job

but nothing slavery about it. Gosh no, a fellow could stand it and enjoy it. Everybody enjoyed it. But, you took a lot of time. You just couldn't hurry the thing; ^{you had} so much time. That's why you had to be out there, and get that much work done.

SS: Did it call for a lot of teamwork on the part of the crew?

EH: Oh, yeah, just like you saw with those horses there; there would be a man- the feller would be the leader and it was ^{his} res-ponsibility to get out there and get the teams to going. Just like the feller [^]wo[^] was the head one, maybe the other fellers would sit around, lay around a little, but he's got to jump right out of the bunkhouse. We'd sleep in the bunkhouse- what we called a bunkhouse for the men. And he would have to get out and he would have to be the first one out, ^{there} they'd depend on him and sometimes they'd pay him a little more for being the leader and not sitting down out there or something. So you had incentives.

SS: What did you usually do in the harvest? Did you have one job you kind of stuck to?

EH: Well, when I was younger I worked with this older fellow, like I tell you there, why, we put up hay. I was a little bit too young, I guess to be out shocking. Then's when we had shocking. Then I finally graduated- when I was smaller I carried water with a team, two mules and a buggy to the shockers. We'd have maybe fifteen shockers before we had a combine. But of course, when we got up to the combine stage, of course, that was just practically late, you might say, up in '28 or '29, but before that from 1918 on ^{JP}in there I did the menial job, or I drove derrick on a haystacker. And actually that was hard. ^{as} a man's job, but that was a kid's job, a man wouldn't hardly do that, you know. Tedious, just backing a team up, back 'em up, back

'em up. Just wear the grass out where you'd do that. And I know I used to hate that worse than anything else because it was a tedious job, but I stayed with it.

SS: Because you were a kid, you were expected to do that?

EH: ^{It was a} Light enough job, but a tedious one. I couldn't handle a fork or something like that, but I could do that. Now ~~that~~ that'd be automated.

SS: How old were you when you first started to work at the farming?

EH: Oh, I started in course before that. I herded sheep, I herded cattle and did ^{ever} ~~any~~ thing like that when I was old enough to ride a horse. And then of course, automation started maybe in the '20's, and of course I learned to drive an old Ford truck about those times. Just barely could look over the dashboard. But there was always work, I could rake, ^{use} ~~rake~~ with a team. I remember I used to rake hay and you could work in the hay. We did a lot of haying and we put in about thirty days of haying because we had to provide all the feed, fill the barns to feed those animals all summer and winter. And it just took a lot of that. And I did chores, milked cows. Feed pigs. Always had pigs. Fatten up the hogs. *Selling them.*

SS: What was the idea when you were a kid that your father had about paying you for the work that you did? When did you start in getting paid for the farming?

EH: Well, he always paid us some; we just didn't work. Another thing, I always had an incentive, I would work in the summertime and have my own money- when I went to school, I had my own account. He didn't expect us to provide for the system. Of course we were ^{in it} ~~a~~ different than in a family thing, we were in a partnership. We- providing work for this other, so naturally I'd do work for my family, but then why should I work for the other fellow, you see.

SS: For your family then, that was more chore work.

EH: That's why in a partnership everybody had to participate some way and had to be an expense out of it. Gardens, and stuff like that, the home garden, wouldn't mean nothing, you know, but when I was old enough to go out there and take a job and do something along with the farming operation, it was paid for.

SS: How many men would he usually have working there? I'm sure it varied from season to season.

EH: Of course, it would vary. Take in the spring there would be five or six men. And of course, during harvest- before we got in the harvesting and we was threshing, I remember, why then that would take fifteen or twenty men for twenty-five or thirty days. Like when we got into that combining then we would have about ten men.

SS: For the steam threshing they had their own outfit.

EH: That was contracted.

SS: That was contracted?

EH: Yeah, he didn't own that. There was fellows that would go threshing and they would just do that. They would move. Because you couldn't have that big a outfit and just go and do ten, twenty days, move to another place, ten to twenty days and they did that on a contract basis. And they would provide everything. And that was their management problem. You had to bind the wheat and shock it, put it in a shock, then the thresher would come down and pick it up and everything else and put it in that pile, that sack pile. And then when it was sacked we would haul it to town.

SS: So everybody had their own men to do that?

EH: Yes, had their own crew.

SS: So the crew on your place would not be-

EH: No, after that, you know, only for your shocking. Oh, a threshing

crew like that would probably be twenty men.

SS: For the crews that were working for your father; how long would those men be employed? Would they be there from the spring till the fall or how would that work?

EH: Oh, yeah, they'd be there from spring until clear on through ^{the} fall, keep those fellows there.

SS: This would be probably eight, ten men?

EH: Well, not quite that many, I'd say at least six, maybe. ^{have} He'd [^] six or seven teams, you know, like that. I don't think we had any more than that. And of course, in the wintertime, there wasn't too much to do. I think those fellows, I don't know, some of 'em would go home, I guess or live with their families. I know they wouldn't have too many in the wintertime; two or three men maybe.

SS: Would these be local men?

EH: Yeah.

SS: They would be local?

EH: All those longer term men would be local. The other men, like when you had this shocking and stuff, they would be transient[?] They would be fellas that would come in here on the train. Just like apple pickers that come down in the apple country and they'd work and that's when you'd have the problems. You may take a man- you'd be busy, you ^{may} [^] come in ~~and~~ pick up a man and take him out and maybe just take another man back to town, wouldn't work, wouldn't be good he'd be alcoholic or ^{stuff} like that. You run into all these things.

SS: Would it usually be different men that your father would pick up every year or would he get the same guys from year to year[?]

EH: Oh, they would generally be different men.

SS: This would be on these transients?

EH: Yeah. They would probably never get back in here unless he was a specialized man. If he was a sacksewer or he was a specialized- if he was just an ordinary laborer you could never depend on a repeat.

SS: So, I take it, that made some of the biggest headaches that you would have during the-

EH: Personnel was a great problem then. Yeah, you just never knew whether they would produce for you or not. And some feller would maybe just come out and get a good meal then quit.

SS: That sounds like the old camp inspectors in the logging camps. They used to call these guys that go from camp to camp for a meal and a place to sleep.

He would find these guys right in town? That's where he would pick 'em up?

EH: They used what they called a jungle down here where this Cow Creek ^{RUN^s} down there, and there's a bridge down there, I cross it every time I go out to my place, and the train would come in there to the depot, the train would come in and these fellers would camp in there. Lay their blanket down have their pot and some guy would have something to eat. There'd be somebody- I can remember as a kid- there'd be somebody in there ^{pretty near} all the time, maybe as the camp tender. And we'd pick those people up right there. You'd have to be a judge of a man to go in there. And you'd pick some good men, some wouldn't be worth a--

SS: You mean he would just talk to one individually?

EH: Yeah, conduct the interview himself there. That's about the only way you could employ people.

SS: There was a big difference between these fellows and the guys that

were regular.

EH: ^{the regular fellows,} Oh, yeah, [^]they were local fellows. They was trained, family men, you might say. Yeah, I can remember. And some of those people would come from back in the Carolinas. Some of those boys that came out here and he gave 'em jobs and they worked here and they eventually started farming for themselves. I know several.

SS: Do you think they knew when they came out that he was out here?

EH: Oh, yeah, I think they knew he was here, in fact, quite a few of these fellows were from back there.

SS: Carolina?

EH: Yeah. One, two, three, four, five, six; there's six guys were back there from Carolina. This old feller was a feller that came back quite a few years. He was a good mule driver. He drove the combine before I ever drove. And this feller was a sacksewer.

SS: So in that way, he was helping these fellows to get started.

EH: Yeah, they came out here and wanted to get a start. I can't think of those fellers that farmed, there's another feller before that.

SS: Do you think that for these guys that were doing that work- from what I understand about it- working as a hired man was certainly less desireable for a man than being able to farm his own place if he could do it. I'm wondering, do you think that's what most of these people had in mind?

EH: Oh, no, they came out here, and most of those fellers went back.

SS: To Carolina?

EH: Most of those, except maybe one or two. They wanted to see what the West was like. ^{They'd come out here.} [^] And my dad was patient, he would train 'em and they could work.

SS: Would these fellows be there year after year?

- EH: No, just the summer. Most of those fellers just stayed there one summer.
- SS: Would you say in general that these hired hands were a different group each year then?
- EH: Yeah, pretty much so. Like those fellows there was five or six of those that didn't ^{come} back. A couple of them stayed over the winter. Of course, in the wintertime we didn't have anything to do, we'd just feed 'em, didn't cost much to feed 'em, didn't pay anything, just keep 'em maybe a month or two.
- SS: How was it, your idea, if you are a foreman and in charge and have good relations with them? Did he find it easy to having everybody working together, and them doing what he wanted them to do?
- EH: Well, yes, he really didn't- outside of a leader he never had a foreman per se, he was the foreman. But he would have- for instance if he had a leader, ^{fellow to get the team out,} outside of that he'd give every man his job and he'd always be available and operating. He did the foreman work. He didn't delegate outside of a temporary leadership.
- SS: I guess what I'm thinking is how well do you think that those guys would get along? Would they do just what he wanted them to?
- EH: Oh, yeah, there was no problem. You just couldn't find jobs. Didn't make it ^{too} tough, made it just as pleasant as possible. Had a job to do and there wasn't any arm twisting, you know. When you get on with a group, and you can see ^{there} they had younger fellers that are capable and willing to do, are willing to learn, you know. Well, in those days you couldn't fall back on food stamps or welfare and nothing else, I guess that was it. You didn't make that, you didn't get a fare back home. But ^{that wasn't held over you.} fellows had pride in their work then. The ones that you knew and you had a longer time. Like I say, some of

the transient people, that was a different problem. And it wasn't quite so widespread, because you were busy during those times. Of course, it seems like we got over those periods in a few years. You start in the war times, 1918 on up to '20- for ten or twelve years in there it was pretty tough.

SS: They said- I know that in the logging camps during World War I, there was a lot of trouble with the strikes and the IWWs were in the camps, and there was some concern for a while at the time that they were going to try to ~~do some~~^{things} in the fields, too, in the farming. Did you ever hear about that?

EH: Oh, yes. The IWWs, they talked about those down in here and they were concerned about ~~that~~^{that} at the time, but it never got to the point where it was dangerous. But I remember them talking about that and concerned about fellows and ~~naturally~~^{naturally}, if you go down here at the jungles and pick up a guy, if he's dissatisfied with something, he could drop a match out there and burn you up. So, if a fellow went out there and wanted to eat maybe you'd give him a meal and you'd probably be mad about it, and he'd want to go back to town- you'd better take him instead of letting him sit around the bunkhouse and make him walk.

SS: Did he have to do a lot of logistics- was all this land together or was it spread out enough that-

EH: No, it's pretty well spread out. Lots of times we'd have to move our feeding racks three or four miles way down there, I remember, had another setup way down at the end of Catholic Gulch- oh, not three or four miles, but at least a mile and a half and you couldn't afford to go back up to the headquarters and sometimes we'd even- didn't seem like we took lunches in those times, but they would try to trans-

port some food. But seems like maybe we'd ride back up there. We wouldn't take the team but we'd hook them up to a place and feed 'em and water 'em. I remember several places we had like that. And it took a lot of management to wait on 'em, to have that feed and have hay and have these wagonboxes there, and you just had to be around all ^{the} time. You'd be riding around in a buggy or a horse most all the time; be available. Because if a man wasn't working- he had to have his operation going. ^{It took management.} It took a lot of fortitude to do that, you could just waste the whole thing away, no question about it. If you didn't get your crop in, you didn't take care of your livestock, you didn't use your men efficiently and was careless. Lots of fellows went by the wayside. Of course, there's not too many people ^{were} operating a unit like he was. They had maybe 160 acres, ^{there was} a family unit. A man went out and worked, his children worked, they worked a garden, had a few pigs, had a cow and there was lots of that you see. So actually that's why his system - his unit, was ^{a little} more unique; it was large enough that you had that kind of operation. And people looked to that to be a big farm.

SS: Well, in those days it must have been. Would you say that it was one of the very biggest around?

EH: Yeah, yeah. It was one of the largest in this area.

SS: Do you know of anyone that was farming more than 2,000 acres?

EH: No, no, I don't. I think that was about the largest farm operation around then.

SS: So he was having to work in a whole different dimension. Like when you were mentioning to me a little before about the hog part of it-operation. Will you describe that to me again? You said you actually went over to ^{Wallowa} County to pick up the hogs.

EH: Oh, yeah. In those days they didn't have no marketing program that they have now, like an auction. You go down to Lewiston to sell and buy and people would come in; in those days, like I said, he was the trader, like in horses, and he would go out here to the farm and find out some way- what maybe a feller'd have and he would buy his pigs and set a price on 'em. And he'd even buy calves, didn't take 'em to the sale, didn't have the price to sell, and like I say, when we wanted to get us a few more we got into raising peas and you had quite a bit of waste, you wasted your crops, you know, because you didn't have the mechanization and you had to waste, ^{so} you had to pick that up through livestock. ^{We} had fenced hog pens, ^{hogs} tight fences to hold sheep and hogs in. And so we would go over into- I remember going way over into the Enterprise area, over by Asotin and buy pigs over there back in that country, because those people could raise pigs and they didn't have the grains back in there to feed them out. They could keep a sow and keep that animal and raise their pigs from this. And they had the manpower to do it and the facilities and the weather was pretty nice back in there. Over here it was colder. Lose your pigs in the wintertime, so we would go back there and buy up those pigs and the farmers would sell 'em to us and we'd bring 'em back here and fatten 'em out. Because we had the waste wheat and peas from what we'd harvested and some damaged and ^{stuff} like that.

SS: you would truck over there?

EH: Yeah. That was later, when we had the earliest kind of a truck. It was a small Ford truck, you know, nothing like they've got these days. We'd double-deck sometimes back there. And I remember one time we was back there, and I remember there was so many pigs available

that we built a double deck there, from a farmer way back there in the Enterprise area. Stayed all night with them. Go back there and stay all night with a fellow.

SS: How many would you have brought back on a trip like that?

EH: Oh, we would get maybe fifty, sixty hogs. ^{Maybe more than that, sometimes.} And I remember going up

here to Culdesac, down here to Lapwai. You know you go up in there, there's a little place, ^{Culdesac} up in there. I remember

going up there ^{as a boy} with a feller, and they bought back there before they had electric lights up there, they had gas lights in that little hotel. We stayed in the hotel at night. And we'd buy pigs and gather 'em up, you know. We'd buy 'em, and of course we were that far, we would go back the next day and buy enough, when we'd know how many we had, and we'd go back and pick 'em up and then bring 'em home the next day.

SS: How old were they usually when you picked 'em up?

EH: Oh, they would be about six weeks.

SS: How long would you keep 'em?

EH: Well, we had to keep 'em- ~~that~~ would be spring pigs, we would probably fatten 'em out in the fall. They had to be six months.

SS: So you'd get 'em in the spring; sell 'em in the fall?

EH: Yeah. They'd be two to two months and we'd keep 'em four months.

SS: You'd be turning them out then as soon as you got 'em?

EH: No, we'd feed 'em a while. ^{We} Used to get buttermilk out at the dairy down at Lewiston and feed 'em ^{along in there} and nurse 'em up a little. Get 'em up to what they call feeder pigs. They'd get sixty to seventy pounds. And then we could turn them out and they could rustle. They couldn't rustle that young. You'd have to get 'em up to what they call shoats, feeder pigs.

SS: There was a lot of waste then?

EH: You'd have to figure there'd be ten, fifteen, ^{sometimes} twenty percent, because you had your roads and you had your machinery down stuff, if you had some down stuff, you had high straw then, you couldn't pick it up with the mechanized systems they have now, you'd just have to run over it. And peas- when we were mowing peas we would shatter 'em and you had to throw 'em again, another fork, so you had that much to pick up. If you didn't turn it into meat ⁱⁿ your animals it was a loss. There was quite a complete program, that way.

SS: What about the sheep part of it?

EH: Oh, the sheep, of course, ^{you'd} shear those sheep. I remember shearing- the fellows would come and we'd shear those sheep and we had as high as a thousand head of sheep at one time. And they would live off of- we used to summer fallow, what they called a summer fallow, and there would be a lot of growth in the summertime on that and these animals would pick that off, tumbling weeds and all kind of weeds; they would pick that up instead of spraying. And we had these sheep and we could put 'em on wheat, if it got a little big-

SS: What?

EH: If the foliage got too heavy, we'd trim it down. We'd pasture it down. Do that in the spring. ^{It makes it stool out better.} And we'd keep the sheep on that and we'd put up hay and seemed like there was enough feed to keep those.

END TAPE B

SS: Sounds like they did sort of different things for you.

EH: Yeah, you know, ^{your} sheep would eat the grass and the weeds and all those other things, and the hogs would pick up the matured grain that was lost. And then it got so we was raising peas and we didn't thresh 'em, and we'd have the hogs harvest them for us, completely, you see.

SS: You mean that you'd raise the peas in rotation?

EH: Well, we'd raise peas for feed and we'd just turn the hogs out and they'd eat the peas up. Just clean 'em right up, dig 'em up out of the ground. ^{in the top} And we wouldn't harvest 'em. Just saved harvesting them, see. Did quite a bit of that. Later when the peas became quite a crop, you know.

SS: They weren't that way in the earlier years?

EH: No.

SS: When did they start getting big?

EH: Oh, they started the peas here in, I'd say, around the '30's maybe, not any before that.

SS: Was that a substitute for summer fallow?

EH: Yeah. That something that before that we were just raising wheat and summer fallow. Then we got to raising peas and now that's quite a rotation crop. We didn't have any sprays then. It got so bad after while that the weevil just about ate them up, they'd get so thick in there. They had no spraying equipment or no chemicals to fight those bugs, for a while it got pretty bad.

SS: What was the rotation like, when you were young?

EH: We, ^{it was} fall wheat and fall barley, primarily and summer fallow. Fall wheat, fall barley and summer fallow. You'd just raise one crop every two years on the ground, just primarily. And then it gradually got into peas, peas, like I say, that was later.

SS: Was there a good hard evidence that you know of that that was the best way to-

EH: That was about the only strains that we had. They hadn't developed strains that would produce or stand over the winter; ^{we} had winter-kill. And I remember we did raise some oats in the earlier days, which we

haven't for many, many years.

SS: When would the planting usually be done?

EH: Well, the oats would have to be in the spring. But the other would be in the fall.

SS: About when would they usually get to it?

EH: Oh, in October. In September; we really seeded earlier then, in those days. Well, the crops weren't so heavy so we didn't have a lot of snow ~~old~~ under it like they have now. But we would seed ~~there~~ ^{the} 20th of September and then we'd go and plow that ground that was harvested, all that fall, we'd plow way into Thanksgiving. We worked longer in those times, I remember plowing Thanksgiving; it was nothing to be plowing Thanksgiving. Now if we ^{think we} don't have it plowed by the last of October, we think we're late. It would be difficult, it would be wet and frozen, cold. *It was tough.*

SS: Must have been because it took a lot longer to do the plowing.

EH: Yeah, and you go out with one of those teams, you see there, and maybe plow five, six acres a day, gosh, it took a lot of time to plow. That was a big job. You really had to make the hours count. *It was time.*
You had to be out there because you just couldn't speed it up, you had to put in lots of time.

SS: How big was the plow?

EH: Two-bottom fourteen inch plows. Those two, like those horses are pulling there.

SS: Then what month did the harvest usually start in?

EH: Oh, harvest would start around the first of September, later than *these other years, than* it usually is now.

SS: The land that you were farming; where is that located from here?

EH: It's east. It's about four miles east of Genesee.

SS: And what about the hay?

EH: Oh, you'd put that hay up- that'd be in June, June or July. ^{Remember} We'd be haying around the Fourth of July, ^{pret'near} all the time. We'd look forward- well, we can go celebrate the Fourth. We'd go down to Pine Grove or someplace, they would have a picnic and some fireworks. And we'd try to get off then, but sometimes we'd have hay down and pretty near have to rake a little. In those days we had rodeos around here. Had local cowboys and they would just make their own entertainment. And we'd go and root for our local men to ride a horse.

SS: On the Fourth, this would be?

EH: Yeah. They'd go and have quite a time, take ^{our} lunch. Everybody picnic, and that's about the only time we could get together.

SS: The whole town?

EH: Well, no. Actually, we'd do it in sections seemed like out in that area, we'd go to the one closest to us. And the people the other side of town- I ^{hardly} ever knew anybody over there, they would go to another place. Maybe to Uniontown. But then up in the North, course they could come over in there. But you wouldn't travel too far. I remember, you was beginning to have cars then, but you didn't go any further than you had to.

SS: Would it be your friends riding in the rodeo?

EH: Oh, yeah, some fellers that maybe was local workers. Some of ^{your} fellers that had worked for you, and some boys- they didn't follow a circuit like they do now- ^{Lenville} a place over here, the local people'd have- they'd get their horses and have races, you know and just have a regular rodeo.

SS: Was Lenville where you would go to?

EH: Yeah, Lenville was one of the places up in there. Pine Grove were

very popular places.

SS: Once a year? Was it just around the Fourth?

EH: Yeah, we never would go out there much oftener than that.

I just can't believe ^{it} I looked here the other day - a feller down here that I know ^{that} had his sixtieth wedding anniversary here in Lewiston. And there's a feller, he's not ^{near} as old as my dad, you know, but he must be eighty or more, - and ^{here} I'm just a novice, you might say at ^{this} pioneering- to know what that feller did you know. And to think during my time I can remember back these things that happened during my time, it's almost unbelievable. You don't know whether the changes will be that great in the next generation, or shorter than that. You just can't hardly visualize the difference and the world changing much, but it undoubtedly will.

SS: You hardly see how it could, just from what I've heard.

EH: Well, it's amazing.

SS: You talk about the rodeo; I'm wondering if there were other opportunities for other farm families to get together. Were there times when people'd get together? I'm sure for butchering-

EH: Yeah, that was quite a get-to-gether. And then, not only that, there was quite a center here- they had a horse show in here and, of course, that would bring people from every area that we wouldn't necessarily know. Mingled too much- I remember the horse shows and circuses; we'd have ^{little} circuses down here. And of course, then Chautauquas came into being. And that was a time, of course, that was a little later ^{in life}, but that was the time we'd come in here in June, kind of try to pick a slack time, and participate in the cultural activities of life. And I remember when I was a kid, that used to be great, I'd come in here and get an ice cream cone ^{in the afternoon} and we'd have

afternoon programs and I thought that was great. And we'd have a tent set up down there, you know. When I was back in Washington this spring, my wife and I went up to- in the Kennedy Center and they had a Chautauqua tent set up in there, with chairs in there and some old pictures and reminiscences of Chautauqua time.

SS: What was the program itself like? What they put on for the people?

EH: They would have a variety. They would have singing and they would have musicals and maybe a band and more or less of an entertainment of a light nature; comedy. Not individual artists, because the people just weren't up to that kind of a culture then.

SS: So, it wasn't really speechmaking?

EH: No, no. And, of course, in the afternoon when the men were busy the women would bring the children in, so they would ^{gear} the programs, the afternoon programs, for that light program. And then in the evening it would be a little heavier.

SS: You were just a kid at that time?

EH: Yes.

SS: So this would have been around 1915 to '20, in there- in that period?

EH: Yeah. I remember my dad, him being a sponsor. They'd have to underwrite this. They'd come through and get people to underwrite this program. And so, they would do it. And I remember there'd be a time when maybe they didn't sell enough tickets to do that. And of course the agent that was out wouldn't want you to sell tickets at a scalp price, they ^{think} it would hurt the show. And when it got down that they didn't have enough, why then, everyone who had been a sponsor ^{here,} he had to take those tickets and they would want them to pay for them rather than to sell 'em. Well, I know my dad said, "If I had a ^{sick} cow and somebody would buy it," he said, "I'd sell it."

And so they didn't let this guy keep 'em from selling, they'd sell the tickets for a dollar if they were two dollar tickets, just get anything they could.

SS: I guess that he would sponsor it because they really wanted to have it here?

EH: Oh, yeah, they wanted to have it for the community, you know. They would get responsible people ^{from all there} as they could, you know. And somebody could underwrite twenty-five or fifty-dollars, maybe, if they didn't sell the tickets. And they figured they had to have that much money to put the program on. And they supported that as a community enterprise. They would run into some problems if they didn't have too good a show, or if the people had a little tough year and all the families couldn't buy their tickets.

SS: Would you say as a rule that most of the families in the area did come to see it?

EH: Oh, yeah, they would make a great effort to come unless they just absolutely didn't have the price. But it was quite a social affair.

SS: I wonder where people usually bought their tickets from?

EH: Well, I think they would go out ahead of time, had advance sale. I think they would have an advance sale, I think they had to have that.

SS: What about the horse shows? They had them all around this country.

EH: Yes, they had horse shows here. And that's when they had these horse-
before
ses; my dad had mules, he had beautiful horses. There was a
~~Nordby~~ out here that had some big Percheron horses. Beautiful horses. And they'd come in and polish 'em up and that was a great show.

SS: Why did they call it the horse show? Were the horses the center of the whole thing?

EH: Every guy that had a nice horse, he'd bring it in and show him. Had him combed up and cleaned up. And the horse show was the thing. I remember they called those horse shows in Lewiston, even after they got to going out of town and had a big horse show down there.

SS: Was there judges and prizes?

EH: Yeah. Yeah, you bet. When I was in school, ^{yet} up here at the University they had that barn that stands out there yet, used to have great, big Percheron horses, ^{there} and they used those to pull their wagons. I don't know whether they have any left now or not, I doubt it. But I used to go up there and look at those horses. They're pretty.

SS: This show here, was mostly community? Is that right?

EH: Yes, It was a community affair and they would come in; oh, they'd have other things along with it, races and a variety of entertainment; maybe a circus or a merry-go-round or something like that, you know. But the horse show the belle of the (pause in tape) Yeah, and the straw stacks. You saw where that threshing team is? They'd pile the straw up in a great, big stack and that'd settle down and we'd go in there and make tunnels in there. Dig 'em out, you know, just like a house.

SS: You'd do that during the winter?

EH: Yes. And then the next spring, you know.

SS: You'd dig that out and they would hold, wouldn't collapse or anything?

EH: Yes, after they'd settled. They'd have to settle over the winter, I think. They'd get settled down then. (Pause in tape)

When the sisters had to go to high school then, we didn't split up, so we would try to move to town and we'd go to the grade school then for a while.

SS: How did that work out for the family?

EH: Well, we'd have to move every fall. Seemed like there would be a house available. We'd come in here, my mother would and we would bach if they were busy out there, and ^{she was cooking,} we'd come in maybe and bach, you know. The girls would do the cooking, what we called baching and they'd bring food in on weekends. Of course, weekends we could go out there. But I lived in a half a dozen houses around here. I noticed in the Genesee News the other day where the Hamptons moved into the Kemp house, which is down here across from the old hardware store. And I remember living in there, moved into the Kemp house for the school term. We'd stay there till spring. Of course, my dad didn't have too much, like I say, he had a man or two out on the farm and so we would just leave the house out there as a baching quarters and he would be in here most of the time.

SS: I'm surprised- that four miles was just really too far for trying to go back and forth.

EH: Yes, you couldn't commute then with that kind of a thing, you didn't have that kind of ^a transportation. Well, the kids couldn't drive much anyhow, at that age, and nobody had a car, drive a car into school. Now kids drive from here up to school.

SS: Do you think that getting an education was especially important to your parents? I imagine a lot of families didn't move into town, ^{up to} to ^a high school.

EH: Most of the kids went to school. Yeah, people thought it was pretty important. They encouraged everybody to go to school.

SS: So what your family did was fairly common then?

EH: Yeah, there were quite a few. Quite a few others did. Yes, they came in to school.

SS: The small school; which one did you go to? What was it called?

EH: Oh, to Gain school. Yeah, they had eighth grade, we had one teacher. And I think I went there till the sixth grade. And there would probably be between eighteen, twenty students, not over twenty. . . . Fifteen.

SS: Did they have get-togethers at that school? Literary and that kind of thing?

EH: Yeah, we'd have pie socials and programs and people'd come up there Thanksgiving and maybe get together. Quite a center around your school system there; dances, had dances and programs, school programs. Well, that's about the only entertainment, you^{just} never went out anyplace else. If you got ready for that, that was quite an occasion.

SS: You mean, you'd have a party?

EH: Oh, they generally- sometimes they'd get together and have Thanksgiving dinner up there and all go together- try to get together and visit a little bit, and talk over things. That was about the only entertainment. Oh, later on, we'd get to come in to dances, maybe in town. They'd have dances, public dances. That was quite a thing.

SS: Did the school dances kind of stop or slack off by then, when you were starting to dance down in town?

EH: Oh, yeah. Yeah, when they got to coming more in, you know, from the country. Course, they still, I remember they would still- every once in a while they would have a dance, maybe out to Gregg or one out to someplace else, they'd have an occasion and have a dance. Maybe to raise some money or something. Get-to-gether.

SS: Would that be like a fiddle and-?

EH: Yeah, I remember^{they} used to have a fiddle and a woman would be chording at the piano, and maybe have a guitar and a banjo. That's about what

they'd have. And they'd do quite a little drinking; some of the rowdy ones! (Chuckles) The older ones, I guess.

SS: This would have been in Prohibition days?

EH: Yes.

SS: Was there much moonshine made in the country around here, or was most of it brought in? I know there was quite a bit around the timber.

EH: There was some. There was some fellers that would bring it out of the timber country. There was not any around here. Oh, there was some of it.

SS: You said that you didn't ever have too much to do with town when you were growing up; and I'm wondering about that. Was it when you started going to high school then that you started mixing in Genesee?

EH: Oh, yes, more or less in high school. But then I know I participated in athletics. And we more or less, at that time, say from about '24, 1925, then things started opening up more then. This would be before that time.

SS: Well, what about your father, and your mother, too, did they take any part in the town life before that time?

EH: Not very much. I never ^{just} recall of that. No, oh, there would be women's clubs, like in the country, or if they had a Progressive Club. Not any card game, but get together and visit and take some food and that's about all they would do. There was very little social activity. You just didn't have time for that. These people in town-- I recall, there was some dentists and doctors and merchants in there, they probably got together a little oftener and did some things, but we never did participate in them.

SS: I think somewhere I've heard, and I imagine it was the same Driscoll, he and his wife were kind of the social pillars of the town.

- EH: Well, yeah, I'd say that. We just never were in there though, as I recall. But, I don't know whether they would have dinners or what kind of social activities they'd have, but there was some nice families that undoubtedly got together.
- SS: So there was really a pretty strong line between the people living in the country and the town?
- EH: Oh, yeah, in here, you know, you were just right here, that's all there is to it. Maybe there'd be a dozen people- course, they had the lodge here and the churches, but I just don't remember very much about it.
- SS: Your own thinking about farming, is another thing I want to ask you about. You hadn't really planned on it particularly on going into farming when you were growing up, is what you said to me.
- EH: When I went to school I started out in business and then I switched over; and I know I'd always had a yen for music and I always liked music and I did quite a little bit of singing locally. There was a lady here that was interested in opera singing and she taught quite a bit in that field. And so after I got out of school, although I did finish in agriculture, but I took a lot of music. I took some diction and some foreign languages and I studied music all the time, took private lessons and sang. And in fact, I gave a recital up there in my graduation in vocal. So when I started out, finished school I kind of thought well, I kind of want to follow that. And I went down to Frisco and tried out in a few places and sang in some night clubs, and finally decided that wasn't for me, and so I came back to the farm.
- SS: What made you decide that that wasn't what you wanted?
- EH: Well, it was night life; you know, you'd go into these places and

it was at night and I wasn't used to that kind of a life. I didn't realize that was the way- when I was having a lot of fun and wasn't working for any money, I thought that was really fun, but when it got serious that made me make up my mind pretty fast. That night life and sleeping in the ^{next} morning, all day, and associating with guys that sleep all day, just didn't suit me.

SS: This was in the early '30's?

EH: Yeah, that was in the early '30's- ^{that} was '33.

SS: What kind of people were going to the night clubs in San Francisco in those days? Was it very popular?

EH: They had these piano bars, you know and just a small type of-

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SS: So people were drinking again for the first time?

EH: It was pretty rough. Then there was a fellow- I went back as a delegate for my fraternity back to Mackinaw Island, Michigan, Sigma Nu Fraternity, and I sang back there. And they got a great, big resort hotel there and I was at the national convention and I sang back there. And there was a fellow ^{who was a regent} heard me and he thought I had a great possibility and so he said, "You come back to 'Frisko and I'll get you some interviews there." And I did, but I wasn't too successful. I had some interviews and I waited around and waited around and I didn't persevere or nothing and I ^{thought} I didn't quite have the background that I should have had, and I didn't persevere or nothing. And I didn't have quite the background that I should have had.

SS: Were you interested yourself in popular singing?

EH: Yeah, I was interested in that.

SS: Did you get much of a background at the University for popular singing?

EH: No, I had to develop myself, because I had a ^{instructor} who wanted me

to sing opera and stuff like that and he would give me some of that stuff and I'd go down to the Chamber of Commerce and pick out some of the lighter stuff. So we clashed on that basis. He was always trying to keep me up under the heavier classical stuff and I was just practical enough that I knew the people didn't like that, so when he'd ^{send} me out to sing a song I'd pick another one. ^{play that for me.} Have my accompanist.

SS: What opportunities did you have for singing?

EH: Oh, we'd go down and I'd sing in front of the Chamber of Commerce there in Moscow and ^{then} I joined the choir, the Lutheran Choir, I sang in the Lutheran Choir. We went to Spokane and sang over the radio and we took a tour and went down to Olympia, Washington and down the Coast and stuff like that. (Here's my banjo)

I suppose I'd better get out to the ranch.

SS: Oh, okay. Could we take about another five, ten minutes? Because there's one more thing I want to ask you about: How some of the early changes, patterns in farming changed, in the way that you mentioned to me some of these innovations at the time you would see them beginning and they would spread; and I'm wondering if you can describe a few of those changes in farming. There was a couple of things about when peas- there was one invention-

EH: I always attribute this area to be very aggressive around here because we live next to the University. I took advantage of their experiments and new strains of grain. And of course, being as close as we are here, we took ~~adv~~antage of the county agents and we were a productive land here. I just think myself, that we ^{to a great degree.} progressed. Like you mentioned when the peas started in here as a crop, we had a neighbor out there who was an inventor and we did a lot of experimenting around here with equipment. In later ^{years} after the experi-

menting that the old line companies took up, a lot of the patents that the farmers had worked ^{here}, old John Deere done quite a bit of that and they recognized the ability of the ~~s~~hop men around here.

SS: Who was your neighbor who was the inventor?

EH: Man by the name of Charles Schooler he lived next to us. And he was the type of feller that liked to work at working out something like that and he worked out a pickup bar on the front of a combine, one of the first, before Hume-Love ever developed that up here in Garfield and made a national thing out of it. But he worked out this pickup bar that we used for several years out there, in these peas. And we would mow them and windrow them and save this picking them up and putting them in a wagon and hauling them into the threshing machine and this thing would just pick 'em up without a reel and put 'em into this combine. And that was quite an invention at that time. And that was the beginning of the harvesting of those peas.

SS: Sounds like you're saying that a lot of the innovation came from the farmers themselves.

EH: Yes.

SS: Not just from the University.

EH: No. The University didn't bring on the ~~the~~^{the} mechanical things. They brought the rotations of the crops and the seed improvements and those things. But the mechanical innovations, they originated from the farmers. And even they developed a beater, what they call a Moscow beater they could put in these- you know when they developed the self-propelling combine, that they were so steep in there that the grain wouldn't move up out of there, and they developed a beater in there, what they call a Moscow beater, a mechanic up there, and

they used that very widely for a long time.

SS: What did the beater do?

EH: Well, it helped move this grain, straw, up in there instead of backing down into the cylinder and that moved it out of the combine. And some way they just didn't have that developed enough to do that kind of a job. You go down a hill and it ^{would be} so steep there, that you couldn't keep that up, just keep rolling back and had to put this extra piece of machinery in there. And actually when they sold these combines- we bought several- why you had to go and buy that separately and put it in there. ^{Fellow} had a patent on it in Moscow. Fellow name of Crowe.

SS: Did you ever try the Idaho Harvester, out of Moscow?

EH: No. I remember a fellow out here had one out here, Hanson, out here where John ^{Ludke} is now, and that's about the only one I know of- ever knew of around here, and that was that Moscow Harvester. They had a plant right there where Rosauer's ^{and yellow front} is, in that area in there. In fact, I used to take my agricultural engineering in those plants there. After they were dismantled and they quit manufacturing, we used to go down there, we didn't have buildings up on the campus and we'd have to go down there and have ^{our} classes.

SS: I guess what I'm thinking of; overall how much do you think the people around here, the farmers, were thinking about always improving the methods. Was that a real active concern that a lot of farmers were thinking about? Or would it be the rare person, like this one inventor, be thinking about how to do things better?

EH: Well, no, I think there was an incentive for them to do it because everybody didn't have the ability to do that. In fact, I had another neighbor there before the ^{2nd} self-propelled combines came on that we had

these pulled combines, like you saw here, that he and this same feller, Charlie Schooler got together and changed one of these machines over to be a self-propelled. They put a chain on it, ^{they} put another motor on it and they used it for a year or two but it was the beginning of something that was better. And it never developed but they were trying to make some innovations, to make this machine work that way. And it did work for a fashion, but not too good.

SS: How much do you think that this area has characteristics for farming conditions that were unique? It was shared by other parts of the Palouse, too, but do you think of this being kind of a different area from a lot of wheat farming that's done?

EH: I just couldn't rightfully say what motivated that. But I think that the farmers- you look back over the period, saw the ~~need~~, you know. You had to do things the slow way. You had to do things the hard way. There was a waste to it. And you thought, "Well, here's an improvement. We can eliminate some of these things that I mentioned. We'll make it a little easier." And you could see that we were bending toward the mechanized system. And now you look back ^{through} the years, and you can see that- Like I say, we started with those mules and then we started with another combine and then we had mules and a tractor, which was a similar program there with power. I ran across a fellow- was it down here in Portland the other day? I was getting some bark for my son and there was an older fellow there, ^{he was} quite a bit older than I was, and I asked him where he was. "Well," he said, "I lived up in Canada." And ^{here} they were pushing this bark around with the tractors. "You know," he says, "I drove one of those machines with a front wheel on it and I had a track type on it in my early days." And I said, "I know, we had one on our

place like that." And it was very crude, but it was a big, heavy old thing, you know and it had an iron wheel in front and ^{two} track types in the back. But the Holt Company made those. Didn't stay around here very long. Couldn't get it up in the hills, ^{couldn't} turn ^x around the corners, but it was a beginning.

SS: Did you learn much in agricultural engineering at the University that turned out to be helpful to you when you started farming here?

EH: No, I wouldn't say there was. It ^{was} more or less oriented you towards the program and probably instigated you to seek better methods, but as far as just actually improving the mechanization per se, I wouldn't say that it did. Because I don't think at those earlier times that we had progressed to the point where you had the research in engineering that you have now. We were just feeling around for those kind of things.

SS: So most of what you learned then, maybe you learned here from the farming here, not in the classroom?

EH: I just wouldn't discount the educational background, it gives you a background. It gives you an opportunity to ad lib, you might say. But it's hard to beat the practical standpoint. But I think you need both of 'em to progress very far.

SS: Did you take over from your father soon after you got back here, after college? I mean, when you started in?

EH: Yes. I started in. He gave me a piece of ground myself and so I operated independently for a while until he quit farming and then I took over the operation of the larger farm.

SS: About when?

EH: Oh, let's see, it would probably been about '38.

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