

MAECI GROSECLOSE NYE

Interviewed by:
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Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

I. Index

II. Transcript

I. Index

MAECI GROSECLOSE NYE

Juliaetta; b. 1895

farmer, teacher

1.5 hours

minute page

Side A

- 00 1 Foster School of Healing. He healed her mother's cancer. Juliaetta prospered because of all the people who came for the cure and lived in boarding houses. Foster moved the school to Clarkston after he broke his leg in a fight.
- 05 3 After that people set their buildings on fire to collect the insurance. Her father's business was burned out. Rebuilding the town.
- 10 6 Foster was very civic minded and generous, and gave regular lectures to the community. He invited her father to move to Juliaetta when they met by chance in Spokane.
- 12 7 Her grandfather was a millionaire who owned the Atlantic and Pacific Oil Company in Kentucky. Her mother was sick, so came west with her husband. People came from all around to Foster: a man who waited too long for help. She helped her father's undertaking business. He got his license through a correspondence course. People often preferred to keep the bodies at home. Churches and preachers. Germans couldn't hold services in German during the war; many Germans were in the country.
- 21 11 Patients. Mrs. Foster could be seen standing in the window of their home for many years after they moved.
- 23 12 John Gorman arranged to be buried overlooking Juliaetta so he could put a curse on the town. He was a disappointed spiritualist; they had dug for coal without luck above town.
- 27 14 Foster's departure finished Juliaetta. Indians in Juliaetta.

Side B

- 01 16 Fear of Negroes as a child in Kentucky. Caste society in the South compared to equality of opportunity here. Her grandfather's mansion.
- 05 17 She took the problems of her children home from school, so she disliked teaching. Her teacher training at Ellensburg Normal - students were part of the town, but weren't in Lewiston. She went to Columbia College, a Methodist school in Milton, Oregon. She wanted the kids to be

Maeci Groseclose Nye

minute page

Side B continued

perfect. Teacher's responsibilities. She's opposed to tenure for teachers.

18 23 Juliaetta celebrations. Fourth of July. Decline of town. Performance by a famous opera singer in the hotel. Elections. Juliaetta's saloons, brewery and winery – the whole town drunk on wine. Local option. A woman saloon-keeper.

27 27 A girl killed by a rock while gathering honey.

29 28 She started farming in 1920, farmed for forty years and moved seventeen times. She farmed more than three hundred acres by herself and paid off the place completely.

Side C

00 29 Women can do anything if they're capable. She was too independent for her own good. Her mother wouldn't work and went away for the summers, while she did the work at home.

05 31 Rough going in the early days.

08 32 Juliaetta tramway.

09 33 Abraham Adams and "The Castle". The government caught up with his mail order sale of wheat. His death in Florida. Her mother was a social doer.

16 36 Juliaetta officials; local power then, but no longer. Horse and cattle thieves stole from local people.

23 40 The Depression was very rough – no money, but enough to eat. Young people don't understand it. World War I rationing was worse.

28 41 Juliaetta's weather is close to Walla Walla's and better than Kendrick's. Water is precious; Juliaetta doesn't have enough for the sewer system they're putting in.

with Sam Schragger
March 11, 1976

II. Transcript

MAECI GROSECLOSE NYE

This conversation with MAECI GROSCLOSE NYE took place at a home in Juliaetta, Idaho on March 11, 1976. The interviewer is SAM SCHRAGER.

MAECI GROSECLOSE NYE: Down the street there, they called it the Foster School of Healing. And he had seven or eight doctors under him.

SS: That big?

NYE: Yeah. I've got the names of all of 'em down here. The doctors.

SS: What did the Foster School of Healing do?

NYE: Well, I'll tell you what they had was a cancer cure. And that really worked. Because my mother lived to be ninety-four, and when she was about eighty, about the age of me, she had cancers come all over her face, and Doctor Foster healed every one of 'em. And that's what he was, was a cancer doctor. And this town had, oh, you know, boarding-houses; one on the corner there, one down the street, a big one up there, and there was people from everywhere came here. Do you know aⁿ old fellow that's got a store at Pullman? A big store, name of Gismore? Well, his father had a store at Kamiah, and he came here in early days to be doctored, him and his wife. And that's the history of this town, having all these people here. Everybody's house had somebody a boarding in it or staying.

SS: To be doctored?

NYE: Yes sir.

SS: Well, what do you remember about what kind of cure they had?

NYE: Well, he had this cancer cure. Well, course, I don't think ^{that} he claimed to cure 'em after they got really-- like you know-- medicine doesn't cure 'em now after they got going-- but when they was first come on he could cure 'em. You never heard of him?

SS: I heard of him, but I didn't know anything about what the Foster School of Medicine did.

NYE: Well, they called it the Foster School of Healing. And he built that big concrete building down there. Nothing's in it much anymore, it used to be a store. And this town was a good sized town. And they had all kind of buildings that went to the depot down there, on both sides of the street. And then this street that went this way and one that went that way.

SS: But so many doctors! With all those doctors they must have had an awful lot of people gathered here.

NYE: You bet they did! This town was a big town in them days. People'll tell you ^{that wasn't} it ^{isn't} so, but it is so.

SS: Besides cancer, were there cures for other illnesses too?

NYE: Oh, yes, yes. Doctor Foster treated all kind of ailments, it didn't matter what, and all these doctors that studied under him. He had his from the Palmer School of Healing somewhere in the Middle West, that's what he graduated from. And I'll tell you what made him leave here. This old E. W. Porter that we was talking about-- well, he had this little one-horse bank down here, and they moved it across the street over there, that was the First Methodist Church we ever had, we had in that poolhall-- and, anyway, he built him a new bank building on the corner. And, well, he was kinda crooked, Old Porter. He got to be a bank examiner, so you know. Well, anyway, he and Foster got into it something or other in the bank about him a stealing off Foster's bank-- which he did-- and they got in a fight and he knocked Foster down and broke his leg and the next week Foster left here. He went to Clarkston and built him a beautiful building down there and had his school of healing in Clarkston til he died.

SS: Did that some of the life of the town with him, like that?

NYE: Oh, it ruined it. It ruined The businesses just couldn't make it so they just set a fire and burnt 'em. This whole side of this street from that old church clear down there was all full of business buildings, and they burnt every one of 'em. And they burnt all of this side, too.

SS: When you say they burned, you mean, they just caught afire?

NYE: They just set 'em afire! They just set 'em afire! And, of course, this town didn't have much water, they had that big spring on the corner up there, my dad piped to town, that little round reservoir, but that wasn't a drop in the bucket, you know, to-- half the town burned.

SS: Did they know who set the fire?

NYE: Sure, they did! They paid the insurance to 'em. I could even tell you the names of 'em. (Chuckles)

SS: Well, you don't have to tell me. We can forget about the names. But what happened is what's important.

NYE: Well, that's what happened to 'em. They had three hotels. That old building that Chuck Noble's got his store in, was the Palace Hotel, that's what it was built. And they had a brickyard down here by the railroad track, and they made all these bricks. And this town made all these concrete blocks, too, that they built the houses out of.

SS: When that fire came, was it just one fire?

NYE: Oh, no, no. No, it was different times. Whenever the insurance got too heavy, they set the fire. They just set it afire.

SS: And the town was built in wood and not in brick then?

NYE: Oh, yes. It was all wooden buildings with generally a little, you know a little porch out over 'em, a little kind of a sunshade built

out.

SS: They never got-- Now, if I lived in town and I knew that somebody'd set fire and burned down part of my town, I wouldn't be too happy about it. I'd probably want to, you know, do something back to 'em.

NYE: Well, I'll tell you about my father's business. He had a nice store down there, and there and there was a dance hall ~~down there~~ between him and where Chuck Noble's brick building is. Well, two men had this dance hall rented. It belonged to Howard Hotchison, and they had a piano in there and they insured it for fifteen dollars, and they set the fire and burned it and got the fifteen dollars. And how I know that, my dad had a great big old iron safe in his store, well, they saved the safe and this old woman that lived down on Water Street, I forget what her name was-- Well, anyway, she wrote a letter to Ritchie, that was my dad's partner, and said, "Well, we guess we got even with old Grosclose and Richardson. We burnt the place down." And she signed her name to it! And they kept that letter in that safe. Well, when they burnt them down, they burnt the whole block. They burnt everything but Chuck's. And the reason they didn't burn it, it was a brick building and it was a hotel, so it didn't catch afire. And there was a great big apartment building on this corner, they burnt it. They burnt my dad's store; they burnt the whole block, only that one building.

SS: What happened to your dad then? Did he lose a lot of money through that?

NYE: It just broke his heart. So then he moved his stuff in there and bought that whole big building that Chuck's got his store. He had a store in there. And then the upstairs, he had his undertaking business upstairs.

SS: So he had a store, too?

NYE: Yes. And then my mother had a millinery shop in the front part of it.

SS: Oh. Well, did he lose a lot in there? Was he able to get anything from his insurance on the place?

NYE: I don't think so.

SS: That just must have been terribly rough.

NYE: Oh, it was awful. And, you see, this whole side over here all burned but that old brick building that Doctor Bournes built. They burned everything. And that Shable hall that burnt on that corner was a big three story building. They lived in the bottom. They had a place where they walked out on the ground, the third floor, you know. Then they had this big kind of a-- I don't know what kind of store it was-- I don't remember, but I think it was a furniture and paint. Then they had the Odd Fellows Hall upstairs. Oh, yeah. This town really got set afire.

SS: Well then, at that point, did they rebuild it in brick?

NYE: No. huh-uh. No, they built that church over here in concrete blocks. No, they never built another brick building in this town. I don't know what become of the brickyard. It was down there where the warehouse sets now, but then, they never had another brick building. They had the concrete building, that old museum out there, they built it out of concrete blocks. And they built the church and they built this house, and they built that house out there on the corner that Mike Hender owns. And a little house down on State Street, too. A little concrete block house.

SS: Well, you know, when you were talking about Foster a little while ago, and I'm wondering-- Besides being the doctor, did he take a very active part in the town, besides that?

NYE: Oh, yes. My land, he was so generous with his money. It didn't matter who wanted, he'd give it. And he had this school of healing, and he had lecturers come from other towns, and then they would have these meetings once a week up there and lectures. Yes, he was a really a man that was-- well, business minded man, and had interest in the town. He really believed in it. That's how we come to come here. My father come from Kentucky to Spokane, and he met Foster up there accidentally, and he invited him to come here. And so, my father came here.

SS: No kidding!

NYE: Yeah.

SS: That's really interesting.

NYE: Yeah, that's how he come to come here.

SS: That's how he found out about---

NYE: Well, we had four trains a day, we had plenty of ways to go wherever we wanted. Wasn't like today. Today you can't go anyplace. You have no way to go any place.

SS: So, your father came, and you, came directly--

NYE: From Kentucky.

SS: And came directly down here from Spokane? When he came out here then, he didn't know for sure where he wanted to go? Just knew he wanted to settle in here some place?

NYE: No. No, but Foster ~~want~~ wanted him to come here because he wanted to build up this town. And so, my father went into this furniture business, this store business, and then he bought out this R. H. Porter's undertaking business. And then, they had the telephone in there, too, for all the rural, before Schupfer had it.

SS: What had your father done back in Kentucky?

NYE: Well, that's another story. My grandfather was a millionaire. And we lived in Kentucky. He had oil wells. The Atlantic and Pacific Oil Company. But my mother's health failed her and he made up his mind that he would come West, because it might help her. And it did. It cured her of everything she had and she lived to be ninety-four.

(Laughter)

SS: Well, how old was she when she came West?

NYE: Well, I don't know how old she was.

SS: Was this her father coming out with her?

NYE: Her father never come to--

SS: Oh, her husband?

NYE: Yes. My father. No, my grandfather died in Kentucky.

SS: So, he and your mother came out?

NYE: My father had a lot of money for those days, see, when he come here to invest. But, I'll tell you Old Foster had a big interest in this town. When Porter knocked him down and broke his leg ^{he moved} and the town went, you know, right now.

SS: Well, sure, a little town to have something like that; must have been the biggest thing in the world for them. Bringing all that business.

NYE: Yeah. I've got the names of all the doctors down and ^{everything.} I've kept track of it all.

SS: So, with all those people-- there must have been a lot of people coming in from other-- How far away did they come from? Did they come from as far away as Portland or Seattle?

NYE: Oh, yes. They come from every place. South Idaho, everywhere. I can remember one old man, Foster talking to him, I was a kid and stood around and listened to everything, you know. And he was telling him about this cancer on his lip and Foster said, "Well, why didn't you

come before you came? We could have cured it." He said, "Well, I had ^{the} hay to put up."

SS: Hay to put up?

NYE: See. He could have cured it if he'd a come when it first come there. But it had eaten away part of his lip time he got here. Oh, my father buried all them, gee whiz. You know I used to help him and I have nightmares ^{til} yet, looking at them poor fellows. My father didn't have too much education, so when he had to get this license, he had to take a course, you know, in all this. Well, I did all his writing and learned it all; all the undertaking business.

SS: You did?

NYE: I was twelve. (Chuckles)

SS: To help him?

NYE: Yes, and I helped him, too! And he buried the Indians, and he got forty dollars for burying 'em. And he had to furnish the casket and dig the grave and furnish the music and everything for forty dollars. And then he had to go over to the agency at Lapwai to collect his money. I always went along and furnished the music, and did the singing and played the organ. Had them old-timer organs, you know.

SS: When I was a kid, I was afraid -- the idea of a dead body--

NYE: You was?

SS: Well, the idea, just of course-- I never had a death in my family when I was a kid.

NYE: I was raised with it. You know, when I got older, I quit going to funerals. I don't care who is buried, I don't go. I just got, I don't know, ^{just} too old to have anything to do with so many.

SS: But when you were a kid, you didn't find it scared you?

NYE: Oh, no. No, it was just part of your life. Just apart of you.

NYE:

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SS: Well, how would you help your father with the bodies? Did you actually help him prepare them ?

NYE: Why sure. He always had what they called a cooling board. He had two of 'em. And usually, they made him take 'em to the house and lay 'em out in the house. But he had a room in his house down here that he brought 'em home if they'd let him. And then he had these trocars and these big bottles of stuff and he drained all the blood out, and then he put the embalming fluid in and did body cavity work. He got fifty dollars for that; if they had the fifty dollars. But you had no burial permits or anything, so you didn't have to call the doctor and they could kill 'em and bury 'em, and it's all right!! Nobody cared. If they did, they couldn't do anything about it. But then he got his license in 1910. He had to take this course; correspondence course.

SS: Was it kind of like it is now with the time between the death and the burial and the services? Is it pretty much the same?

NYE: Yes, about the same.

SS: But they were less likely to use the parlor and more likely to leave the body at home, and have 'em decked out at thome?

NYE: Well, some of 'em did. They wanted it left at home, so you left it home. But when he moved in that old brick building down there, he had several rooms up ^{there} for caskets, you know, on display, then he had the rooms to lay 'em out, you know. And you could go there and see 'em. But lots of people wouldn't let 'em move 'em from their house. And sometimes you had the funeral in the house. Yeah.

SS: Were there many ministers here to conduct the services?

NYE: Oh, yes. This town had churches. They had a Catholic Church, a Lutheran Church, a Presbyterian Church, a Christian Church-- well, I

don't know how many. I've got 'em down in my history.

SS: Quite a few.

NYE: Yes. They did. Oh, and, too, there was lots of-- oh, what do they call them-- they've all quit here anymore--well, I can't think of it now. We had a preacher lived across the street here, was one of 'em. You could hear him preach, he preached in the Odd Fellows Hall down there-- you could sit here and listen to him, he talked so loud you could hear him here. His name was Hoskins. (Chuckles) Oh, this town had plenty of preachers! Plenty of churches, too. And the German Lutherans had one up there on the corner, and they preached in German. And during the war they made 'em quit. We didn't have any Swedes here but we had Germans.

SS: What do you think it was like for German people during the first war? Do you think they were kind of a little scared about what might happen to them?

NYE: I don't think they were scared, but they sure wanted everything for themselves. You know. They wasn't for the United States during the war, they was for theirself.

SS: I guess they stopped teaching German in a lot of places. In schools they stopped teaching. You couldn't teach it in schools.

NYE: Yeah. They had a German school at Cameron. And they shut it. But I lived next door to an old German woman and I learned to talk German when I was little. Then when I went to school, at Walla Walla I took German, you know. Then when I taught school at Big Bend I had to know it, because that's all they ever talked over there. So it's a good thing I learned it, wasn't it? (Chuckles)

SS: Yes. I didn't know there were so many German families over there.

NYE: Oh, yeah. German-- Russian German.

SS: Oh, that's right!

NYE: You see, in the early days, they give every other section of land to the government to homestead. Well, the Russian-Germans come and took it up. This town had lots of Germans.

SS: I think about this Foster-- were there many people who died in town who weren't cured because they were too far gone? And then probably your father buried some of them, too.

NYE: Oh, yes. Yes, because these roominghouses, ^{as} I remember, they were full of patients, and some of 'em were bedfast and some of 'em were crippled, you know. Some of 'em had different things than cancer.

SS: I wonder if there were many jobs then for young women, or older women to be nurses when the hospital was here?

NYE: I don't remember. ^{any young women nurses} Now, Foster's wife was a nurse. And I'll tell you something about her and you can take it or leave it or ^{believe it or} think I'm a liar!! They lived in that old big house up there, and there was a window that opened onto the porch, there was kind of a round thing, and as long as that window was in that house, you could stand out in the street and look up there and see her in that window. That's so! And the people that bought it, Greens, they moved there after Foster left, and they had the window taken out and different glass put in and it didn't do a bit of good! She stood right there! (Laughter)
That's the truth!

SS: Could most anybody in town see her?

NYE: Why sure. Anybody could see it that looked!

SS: Boy!! Huh!!

NYE: It got to be just commonplace, nobody thought nothing about it!!
But Greens took the glass out and put a new one in and it didn't do any good!!

SS: I heard a story about-- now, I never got it right-- but it was kind of garbled the way I heard it, but it had to do with a baby getting killed and something to do with a nurse; maybe the nurse was killing the baby or something. Was that there?

NYE: No. I never heard that.

SS: Maybe that was in Kendrick.

NYE: I never heard it. No. Maybe it was.

SS: But nothing about a baby who died, or got killed?

NYE: No.

SS: That must be something else. Well, what about-- Mrs. Agers said that I had to ask you to tell me the story about the big, fat man that hated Juliaette.

NYE: (Laughs) Yeah, Old John Gorman. He homesteaded all that land that lays up there on this side of the hill, you know. At one time, long after he died they had it all platted off and was going to build a asylum there and then they didn't. But anyway, this ^{old} John Gorman homesteaded all of that and this town had a lot of people that was spiritualists. You know, the Snyders, they named the town after Juliaetta, their folks ^{were} ~~are~~ all spiritualists.

SS: Now, what are spiritualists? I've heard of that.

NYE: Well, it's a kind of a religion, I guess, I don't know. But they believe in having seances and seeing all these things, you know. And so they had a big seance at one time and all of 'em set together, and the spirits told 'em to dig a coal mine over here on top of the hill so they did. And they dug on it for years. They said there'd be coal, but there ^{never} ~~was~~ no coal there. Never was. But this Old Gorman, he homesteaded there and these spiritualists, they got discouraged with theirselves so he left here and he went to the Salmon River, over

on the ~~Dumac~~ someplace.

SS: Did other spiritualists go with him?

NYE: No, no, they all lived here. But he was one of 'em. He was one of the main ones. And, anyway, he had a young man that worked for him, I've got his name written down, and they went over there to live, and he had lots of cattle and lots of land, this Old Man Gorman, So he got sick in the summertime and he died. So he made this young man promise to bring him back to Juliaetta and bury him up on that hill so he could lay a curse on Juliaetta! So he died in the summer-time, in August, and they hauled him out of that Salmon River country to Grangeville and got him a casket. Well, he'd swelled up so big that they had to rope the casket around him and they brought him in a hack-- oh, he smelt (smelled) by the time they got here! And they buried him up there in the field and piled a lot of rocks on him and put an old wooden cross there. And it stood there for years and years. And here, a year or two ago, oh, it's been ten years, I guess, now, the Washington Water Power put a big pole right at the head of his grave. And I asked 'em to put his name on the pole, but I don't know if they did! (Chuckles)

SS: I think Gussy told me that the pole went through what was left of his head.

NYE: Oh, no, it did no such a thing, but I'll tell you, the people that farms the place have moved the rocks, and I think they farm him! And there was an Indian graveyard there above the sand bank, and they farmed it, too.

SS: Why did he want the curse on Juliaetta?

NYE: Well, because he was discouraged with all these things that the spiritualists had decided that Juliaetta would amount to, and it never

amounted to nothing! And the^r coal mine run out, and so he just washed his hands of it, put a curse on it, and it lays there, and I guess it's on it, too!!! Never amounted to nothin' since!! (Laughs)

SS: Well, I'll tell you, Juliaetta's no different than a lot of small towns, they've got the same troubles in that way, because it's just tough the way the cities go, it's just tough to--

NYE: Well, that's the way Genesee^{has} done. You know Genesee used to be a big town. It had the railroad before Juliaetta ever did. It had lots of things, but it's gone to the dogs.

SS: Do you think that when the Fosters moved that that was the end of the high times for Juliaetta?

NYE: You bet your life! That finished it. That finished Juliaetta. And he took all his doctors with him. They went to Clarkston, too. Oh, it finished this place!! And then, everybody^{else} that had a business here went broke, so they burned 'em off! Oh, my dad, he really thought a lot of this place. He sure buried lots of Indians!! (Chuckles)
And he got forty dollars for it, too!

SS: Did you get to know any of the Indians around here?

NYE: Oh, yes, I still know some of 'em. But, you know there's hardly any fullbloods left. Old Johnny Woods and just a few of 'em. They're all mixed any more. We only have about one that lives here; Shores, Bob Shores, lives up here on the hill. About the only Indians we got. But the reservation's down here just a mile.

SS: Well in the early days, didn't the Indians use Juliaetta a lot? Didn't they come into town here a lot?

NYE: I'll say they did. My, I'll tell you, we had the Indians for every-thing. And they went to our church, too. The Indians. Lot of 'em were smart people. Fine singers and everything, you know. They went

to school up here, too. We've had lots of Indians. Oh, gosh, China-men and Indians, but we've never had a nigger. The only nigger I ever remember coming here was one ^{Nigger} name of George, and he lived down in the canyon with the Indians. He was a bronc rider, he won the money at Pendleton one year.

SS: I don't think I've heard of him, that's interesting. I don't think I've heard of him before.

NYE: That's the first and only nigger we ever had that I remember of that stayed here. And where I was born and raised in Virginia, we had five hundred niggers to every white person. But we didn't have any at Juliaetta, and I was glad, too. Glad to get shut of all the niggers.

SS: How old were you when you came out here from Virginia?

NYE: Seven.

SS: Just seven?

NYE: Came from Kentucky. Yes, I was seven. People ask me how I remember all this stuff; I remember all about when I lived in Kentucky, too. Why can't you remember it?

SS: I don't know why you can't. I've known some old-timers that have good memories, clear back to the beginning. You can remember.

NYE: Sure, you can remember it, if you was little, what's the difference?

SS: If you thought about it a little bit then, I think it helps.

NYE: Yes. And I think I was that type of person that put everything down. Everything. Even when I was little, I wrote everything down. Some people don't do that.

SS: Well, when you-- what do you remember from Kentucky? I'm curious. What do you remember from before, when you were even seven?

NYE: Boy-- I'll get you a picture of the house we lived in, then you'll

know what I remember. I've got it here someplace.

SS: I'd like to see it. (End side A of cassette tape)

NYE: Nowadays they try to teach 'em sounds, but they don't get 'em. They're in these books.

SS: I see. This looks like a good way to learn, to me.

NYE: Well, it gives you a good foundation. Something to go back to.

SS: Mc Guffy's stories had good morals to them, too.

NYE: Yes. Well, ~~well~~, they got good morals in that book. But this is an old Mc Guffy's spelling book that I had. I don't know what grade I was in. I have no idea. I went to school in Kentucky. But in the South you didn't have public schools. You went to a private paid school. You wouldn't dare go to a public school with the niggers. They went, but you didn't. You'd a got killed! I wouldn't have lasted a day.

SS: They were really dangerous?

NYE: Well, little kids wouldn't a had no chance with a bunch of niggers! I never went to school only to a private school, when I was little, til I come he re. And here you could do as you please, in this country. You had your own school. You had your ~~own~~ church. You could go to anything, and you was free. Different setup. I never wanted to go back to ~~that~~ country. And they've got, in that country, they've got-- I called it a caste system. You know, where if you're a lawyer or you're a preacher, or something, you breathe different air than these other people down here. Well, that's why my mother never washed or never did any work, she wasn't born to it. I learned how to work when I was little.

SS: So, the idea was that the people who were the upper crust, they didn't even associate?

NYE: They're still that way, too. ^{In there too.} They're still that way.

SS: And they weren't supposed to associate with the common people?

NYE: No. They called 'em poor white trash. That's what's different. In this country, ^{YOU WAS} everybody's free. Everybody was the same. Here it's according to what you knew, and if you had sense enough you could make it. And it's still that way in this country.

SS: That's interesting. I never thought about that. 'Course I never was in the South, but it sounds like a whole different kind of world.

NYE: Yes it is. I never want no part of it.

SS: But then it must have been kind of nice for your mother to have a rich father and not have to do anything.

NYE: Yes, yes, she was a lady! You betcha. She was a lady. Well, I wasn't and I was glad of it. (Chuckles)

SS: How big was this house, again?

NYE: It had four stories and fifty-two rooms! And it had a fireplace-- there was a long hall like this on every floor, and the rooms opened into the hall. And every other room had a fireplace, and it had a little brick-- iron grate in there-- and they burned coal in every one. That's the kind of heat you have.

SS: It sounds almost like a hotel. Fancy old hotel.

NYE: Well, I gues, you'd call it that. I don't know. That's the way it ^{were} ~~was~~! I never liked that house.

You know, I couldn't teach school. It wasn't because I wasn't a good school teacher, but I took home all the problems of my kids every night. And I couldn't sleep and I cracked up under it. I couldn't leave my problems at the schoolhouse. I didn't like school teaching. Oh, I taught retarded children, too. I majored in that. And that was the wrong thing for me. I didn't fit in that kind of work.

- SS: Well, is that because the problems that the kids had, really did get to you?
- NYE: Yes, I took them home with me every night, and I shouldn't. I couldn't do anything different.
- SS: Well, maybe it just mattered too much to you.
- NYE: Yes, it did. Yes, I just couldn't teach school. I could have been a supervisor or something, but I just quit. I'd rather farm.
- SS: What kind of problems did the kids have that you found--?
- NYE: Well, most of 'em were too old for the grades they were in, you know. And they didn't have the power of reasoning. Maybe they'd have the mentality of a little five year old, and they'd be fourteen years old. That was the problems you had.
- SS: What could you do with a kid like that? He didn't have a chance to--
- NYE: Well, if you had the patience you could teach him something, finally. But it took a long time. *Do the same thing over.*
- SS: How come they would have gone for so long without ever learning anything?
- NYE: Well, they didn't go to school, I guess. You know, they didn't have much opportunity back then. I think I graduated from Ellensburg in '17, anyway, at the end of the war. The First World War, not the Second World War! *(Chuckles)* Yeah the first one.
- That sure is a nice book, isn't it? Boy, do you sell these?
- SS: Oh, the trouble with this one is that they sold out that whole issue.
- Recorder was turned off for a while at this point.
- NYE: ^{By} Park --
- SS: One hundred sixty acres of timber.
- NYE: Of timber land, if you was twenty-one.
- SS: You know, I was curious about how you came to-- how you decided that

you were going to teach. And then how you wound up getting there, getting the learning to do that. To teach.

NYE: Well, I went to Walla Walla to school. I went to Columbia College two years. And then, I come home and I wanted to make my own living, so I went to ^{the} Lewiston State Normal. Then I went to Ellensburg State Normal, and then I taught. And you had to teach five years to get a life diploma. So I taught five years and got a life diploma in the State of Washington. And I could still teach in Idaho because I had my other diploma from the Lewiston Normal, two years. So that's how!

SS: Did they train you good for the classroom? Or did you have to learn most of it when you got in the classroom?

NYE: No. No you trained. At Ellensburg you took special ^{lessons} ~~methods~~ in all of it. And then you had to do your practice teaching in the city system over there, too. So you had it all right there in front of you. And Ellensburg was a fine school. And one thing I liked about Ellensburg-- Now at Lewiston, you went to the Normal-- you wasn't any part of the town, you wasn't anything. You went to the Normal at Lewiston-- at Ellensburg, why, you was a part of everything that went on in that town. And that's the difference in the two towns-- ^{and the} ~~the~~ schools.

SS: I wonder why they were different.

NYE: I don't know.

SS: I wonder why.

NYE: I don't know. If you went to church in Ellensburg, why, you played the organ or the piano, which ever they asked you, and you was always in the choir. You was a part of the town. And we edited a kind of a paper at school, and then if you had any business managment about you, or anything, why, you went around to all these businesses and they gave you their business ads to put in the paper, and they was

interested in you. You were somebody! Oh, that Ellensburg, that was a fine school!

SS: Where is this Columbia College?

NYE: Well, that was a Methodist school, and it's been closed up for years.

SS: Where was it?

NYE: It was Milton, Oregon. Yeah.

SS: Was that kind of unusual? I didn't think many kids got to go to college in those days. I mean, that actually went to college. Did many kids around here go, besides you?

NYE: No, huh-uh. Nobody went but me. They went to the Lewiston Normal, quite a bit. That was nice, but I had to get through the high school before I could go there. And this junior college had all that, you see, and two years of college. So that's how I got along so good in Washington, ^{Idaho} and Oregon.

SS: All three, it's true.

NYE: Yeah.

SS: What was going to that college like? Was that a place where you learned a lot?

NYE: Oh, yes, it was a wonderful school. Yes, it was. They had dormitories, you know. A big enrollment. And they had music and they had business courses. They had everything. All you had to do was have a little money to do it. And my brother called me up here night before last and said my voice teacher at Columbia had died that night before and she was ninety-five. Mrs. Thompson, her name was. So you had a lot of things that you could take up, you know, you didn't just have to-- you could take businesses course, or music course or anything.

SS: When you started teaching, where did you teach?

NYE: I taught the first year up on ~~Fix~~ Ridge, at the Union schoolhouse.

And, I'll tell you something, and you can believe it or think it's a lie, but I got two hundred and forty dollars a month!

SS: A month?

NYE: Yes. That's right. And I'll tell you why, because, it was during the First World War. And when I taught down at Pomeroy I had three- well, there wasn't any teachers, hardly, and I had three country schools in one!! Had that many kids. That's the way it was out here. I had kids older than me! Everybody wanted to go to school, didn't matter what district they come out of. ^{icause} There wasn't any teachers and they did the best they could. Oh, my kids they run away and got married in the middle of the school! (Laughter)

SS: Did you find it hard to teach?

NYE: No.

SS: You found it easy?

NYE: Yep. I never had any problems. Never had any problem with the kids or the curriculum or nothing! ~~I~~ Never had any problem with them. Only what I told ya, I took it all home with me, and I couldn't take it! (Chuckles)

SS: That's interesting to me; that you took it home with you.

NYE: Every night, I took ^{every} one of those kid's problems home with me.

SS: When you say that you took the problems home, do you mean you wanted- it was their personal problems?

NYE: Yes, I wanted to iron 'em all out. And I wanted 'em ^{to} all be perfect and do everything just right. (Chuckles) And it couldn't be! You couldn't do that!! Nohow!

SS: Did you find that you were strict in school? Pretty strict?

NYE: Oh, you betcha! Oh, you know it! When you had all kind of kids from every district, big, little, old and young, you had to be strict.

NYE: One winter I had twenty-eight kids and twenty-three of 'em had ^{the} whooping cough and they went to school every day! Now, that's something, too. You had to know how to take care of 'em to keep 'em from bleedin' to death with a nosebleed; to keep 'em from choking to death. I'll tell you, teaching was a problem in those days. And you did your own janitor work, carried in ^{the} wood and got the water and took your lunch. Walked to school, too. No matter how many miles it was.

SS: Were you boarding? With a family?

NYE: Oh, yes. You stayed someplace, wherever you could. Well, with me, school teaching was no good.

SS: How long did you teach before you decided that--?

NYE: Well, I had to teach five years to get a life diploma.

SS: And that's how long you taught?

NYE: Yes, that's how long I taught. I wasn't going to give up after I'd put in all that money and time going to school, you know. But that life diploma was in Washington, it wasn't nothin' to do with Idaho. But I had a teacher's certificate in Idaho. And I read in the paper where they ^{are going} to change everything now. And they can't teach unless they have special degrees from the university.

SS: Yes, that's right.

NYE: Do you think that'll make any better teachers?

SS: No. But it'll make it harder for people to become teachers and now they think they've got too many, so they're trying to make more hurdles in the way.

NYE: Oh, for goodness sake.

SS: That's what I think it is. They keep raising the requirements. Make it harder and harder.

NYE: So they couldn't get a job. Well, I'll tell you one thing that I don't

like about the school system, maybe you do; somebody gets a job at Juliaetta, he buys a house and he lives there and teaches til he dies. I don't think it's right. I don't think it's right. Maybe he's a good teacher, maybe he's not. I think you ought to have a chance to Hire, pick and fire! Don't you?

SS: Makes sense to me, yes. If a teacher's not doing the job, shouldn't have to keep them.

NYE: Well, they don't ever have to quit, don't matter what they do or what they don't do, there they are. And they draw their money in the summer when they aren't even teaching. Well, I'm just an old-timer, but I think that's the way it's wrong. I don't think you ought to inherit the school, and keep it all your life, whether you're capable or not. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

SS: I wanted to ask you about Juliaetta: In those earlier years that you were here, was it even after the town kind of changed around, after the Foster School left, was there very much life in town? I mean, did much go on? Who used the town? Did the countryside use it a lot?

NYE: Well, yes. Things were different, because, well they had Fourth of July and they had big parades and they had a band and they had a standing militia, and they had all this stuff, and everybody came here. See? It meant something. And the trains went back and forth so they could come and go some place. It don't mean anything anymore. Just a wide place in the road, faster you can go through it, the faster it is.

SS: What were some of these things like? Like the Fourth of July? That was a really big affair?

NYE: Oh, my, yes. And you had somebody to come. You know, some big speaker. And they really made a fine speech. It wasn't nothing to have

the governor. I'll tell you, things has sure changed when it comes to amounting to something. You don't amount to anything anymore. I've got an old-timey picture made in 1905 of the Fourth of July parade here, and it's really something. Had a beautiful brass band and the militia and all these horseback riders and everything. No, they don't have anything-- the politicians don't even stop here anymore. Why, I saw President Taft here once.

SS: No kidding!

NYE: Yessir! And I went down to the hotel one night to hear Madame Schumann-Heink sing.

SS: Who is she?

NYE: Oh, she was a fine contralto, opera singer, known, you know, all over the world. Things used to be something! Now you're nothing!

SS: Do you remember anything of Taft being here? Did he say anything when he got to town?

NYE: No. No. But, my, he was an enormous big man, and he had on-- I can remember-- he had on a gray kind of an oilcloth coat, it looked to me like, and handlebar mustache. Well, I don't know, Juliaetta isn't on the map any more.

SS: This contralto singer, was she-- did she pack in the hall? Was there a lot of people in there?

NYE: She didn't have anything at the hall. She ljust was at the hotel and we went to the hotel.

SS: Did she sing?

NYE: Oh, yes. And she had everybody else sing, too! And she invited me to San Francisco to take lessons under her! Yeah. Oh, Juliaetta used to really be a place!

SS: What else went on, besides Fourth of July and famous people coming

through? Were there other affairs?

NYE: They had elections and the men was always the judges and the clerks. The women didn't ever work. I was the first woman that ever worked on an election board in Juliaetta. Oh, the men run the elections and they had big to-dos, you know. And the fireworks and they all got drunk and shoot!! Juliaetta used to have a brewery and a saloon and a winery.

SS: I didn't know that.

NYE: Yessir! Had a big brewery down here, and they had a saloon down at the other end of town and the winery ^{out} _{up} in that end. And they raised lots of grapes; all kind of grapes.

SS: I wonder if the wine was of good quality.

NYE: Oh, yes, it was wonderful. A Frenchman by the name of Eberle made it. Oh, it was good wine. Why, I've seen this whole town drunk at once. The whole town, everybody in it, on wine.

SS: What was the occasion?

NYE: Nothing, they just passed the wine around, I guess!! (Laughter) Even old and young was drunk!! But, you know, we never sold whiskey here for years and years and years, til that cafe down there took out a whiskey license. They had local option here once when the saloon shut (?). And Nez Perce county's right across the bridge, so they just sold the whiskey across the bridge. ^{Didn't amount to much} And the first woman that I ever knew to run a saloon was here, too.

SS: Who was that?

NYE: Her name was Rose ^D Easton. You must know Chris ^D Easton that lived up to Moscow, out there on the highway to Genesee. That was the mother, Rose ^D Easton.

SS: Was that before Prohibition, or after?

- NYE: Oh, that was before they ever heard of Prohibition, yeah.
- SS: So she ran a saloon, herself?
- NYE: Yes, she did. Rose^D_A Easton.
- SS: Well, that's kind of unusual for a woman to run a saloon.
- NYE: Yeah. Well, that was way back there when, too. I think it must have been 1903 or '02. Along there, someplace.
- SS: I wonder if she did alright. Probably she had as good a business as anybody else had.
- NYE: Yes, she did. And nobody thought a thing about it. But the funniest thing, I was up at the fair one fall, a bunch of us old women, and this Rose^D_A Easton's folks live-- there was one woman there-- and they introduced me to her and she just **turned around** and left just quick as a flash. And I thought, "What the hell's the matter with you?" And she knew that I knew her mother. (Laughter) Well, gee whiz, what of it?
- SS: Well, was her mother that different from any other woman? ^{NYE:}_A That's what I thought, "What's the difference?" Well, she's afraid I'd tell all them huppty-hups who her mother was. Well, I wasn't going to tell anything! I didn't care!
- SS: At the time she had the saloon, I suppose she wasn't married? Or was she?
- NYE: Oh, yes. ~~She~~ had **Chris**. He went to school here when I did. His name must be in that little pamphlet, Chris^D_A Easton.
- SS: But not her husband?
- NYE: She didn't have any husband when I knew her. But I didn't think there was anything wrong with it, far as I could see. She was a nice, good woman.
- SS: I guess that when local option came in, it didn't really change things

so much, except that they didn't-- it wasn't sold openly. People still drinking anyway.

NYE: Oh, yes, everybody made it. Shoot! What was the difference?

SS: There wasn't much difference.

NYE: No. No, there wasn't.

SS: Except that I had a feeling from what some people have told me that people had to be more careful, and watch out, because otherwise they could get pinched for it.

NYE: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yes, I guess they did. But I'll never forget that darned woman up there, she just flew out of there when she found out who I was. Well, what did I care!!!! I didn't care who she was.

SS: There was a story that Mrs. Eggers told me to ask you and to make sure you told me, and that there was a story about a girl who died. Young girl who died. Was she out gathering honey, or something?

NYE: Oh, yeah. Jim Whalen's girl, up this little creek here. Yeah, they had a big rock clift, and the bees had built their nest in there and honey just ran out of that clift, all down the side, and she was there getting honey and a rock fell off the top and hit her in the head and killed her. Jim Whalen's oldest girl. Was up around this Little Potlatch. Is that what she told you?

SS: She told me to make you tell me, because she said you'd tell it the right way.

NYE: (Laughter) Well, I don't know the right way nor the left way!! But I remember about it. You know when this Vassar died down here-- did you read that in the paper? That Vincent?

SS: No, but was he one of the early Vassars that come in this country?

NYE: Well, his father, Clyde Vassar was one of the undertakers when my dad was here. Only he was the county coroner ⁱⁿ Nez Perce County,

Old Clyde Vassar.

SS: Yeah. And that was pretty recent, that he died, the younger one?

NYE: Yes, yes. Last week, I think. Used to be one of 'em undertaker at Pomeroy. I used to live at Pomeroy for years, too. And one of the boys had an undertaking parlor over there.

SS: Well, when did you start your farming?

NYE: Nineteen and twenty.

SS: Was that on the Ridge?

HYE: Yeah. I farmed up there for forty years. Farmed all over the country, and moved seventeen times! (Chuckles) Well, we rented different farms and different houses and some of the farms had houses and some didn't. You know, you moved!

SS: What did you think of the farm life?

NYE: Oh, I loved it. I just loved farming. I was born to be a farmer. I farmed by myself for years. That's how I get social security. I paid it in myself, nobody else did. I was left with one little boy seven, and then one boy, that was during World War II, and one boy was in the army-- in the Air Corps.

SS: Well, when you farmed by yourself-- how much land were you farming?

NYE: Well, when he left home, we had three hundred and sixty, and wasn't a cent paid on it, not a nickel. So I just ^{kept the debt and the land and} paid it. Paid for it.

SS: How did you makedo as far as having to get all that work done. All the crops in and all that?

NYE: Well, I had a boy about seven or eight and he worked and I worked. And I raised hogs to pay the taxes. You couldn't raise enough hogs now to pay the taxes. They'd eat you out of house and home, and you'd have to move away; give the whole thing to the hogs!!

SS: That is very interesting, to me. That sounds like, really a lot of

work to do.

NYE: Why, sure, it was a lot of work.

SS: Especially if you had kids to raise at the same time.

NYE: Yes, I had this one boy. Well, I'll tell you something; you worked but I was a good worker. I raised a big garden, too. We raised our own meat and cured it. We never was without plenty to eat. And, I'll tell you something else I did; I made me a house; put two old houses together, moved 'em, you know. And made me a house down on the highway-- where I lived was three quarters of a mile off, and I couldn't get the REA. But if I moved me a house down there, or had a dwelling there, the REA would build a line to me, and I did. And they built me a line to my house, so I had electricity.

SS: How far did you have to move then?

NYE: Oh, about a mile. Was an old homestead shack and it was a good house.

it was built when they didn't make the floor and put the studdin'
 (End of Side B)

SS: ----Women can't do the same kind of work that men can do.

NYE: They can do anything that they're capable (of). And if they make up their mind to it. Well, I'll tell you about me. I was always too independent for my own good. That's right! But I learned to work when I was growing up, my dad taught me to work. My mother never did anything. You did it all at home. You went to school, and *made* ^{the} _A ^{ing} _A cooked and washed the dishes. Your dad helped you. I never had any help from my mother, because she was a lady!

SS: She was a lady, but she didn't mind if you worked!

NYE: Oh, no. No, no, she went to San Francisco or Chicago or someplace every summer and she said, "Maeci ^{can} _A tend to everything, Maeci'll do it." And Maeci did it. (Chuckles) And we had three boys at home, beside me. I was the only girl.

SS: Oh, then, you must have had to do a lot.

NYE: Sure, I worked.

SS: You had to do all the women's work; you'd have a lot to do.

NYE: And my dad bought a car when I was sixteen, and I was the only one that drove it. I had to learn. And when I took my driver's license last fall up here, they asked how old you was when you got the first car to drive, and I wouldn't tell 'em! I was afraid they wouldn't give me a drivers license.! (Chuckles) And I'll tell you something about that drivers license-- I've had one ever since they had 'em. I've never had a black mark on my drivers license. And that's something. I've been into it with the law with the kids and all, but I never was with me. When you raise a bunch of boys you're into it all the time. (Laughter) But I was proud of my drivers license that I got when I was eighty. I don't go anyplace much, I got sense enough not to drive in town. But I go a little bit. I go to the ranch.

SS: You say that you were too independent and it got you into trouble. Was that true? Could a woman be too independent in those days?

NYE: I don't know, but I was. It don't get you any love from your neighbors or your family or anybody. It gets you where you're going! If you make up your mind where you're going!

SS: I think being independent is one of the very best things about a person to me.

NYE: You do?

SS: Yes, I do. I think independence is the best thing in the world. MY wife is very independent, and that's one of the things I like best about her.

NYE: That's good. Generally the men don't like the women to be independent. No.

SS: Well, I wouldn't have her any other way!

NYE: Well, good! What does she do?

RECORDER WAS SHUT OFF AT THIS POINT.

SS: --- used to be.

NYE: The reason that I say that-- well, you're not loved by your family. You know what I mean? You're too independent, you can do all these things, and they feel like you don't need 'em to help you. You do need 'em, but, then, I don't know-- I'm too independent, that's all.

SS: But if you weren't independent, you couldn't have farmed the farm by yourself.

NYE: Oh, no. I wouldn't a had a acre of land! And I hate to give it to the government, but what else am I going to do? Only thing you're exempt when you're old as me, is thirty thousand dollars worth, and that wouldn't be nothin'! When they value your land at twelve hundred dollars an acre, what would thirty thousand dollars worth be?

SS: Nothing, if you got much land.

NYE: Well, isn't that awful? I paid forty dollars an acre for that land. And to me, forty dollars is more than any twelve hundred now! I've lived my time out! (Chuckles) You think so?

SS: I don't know. Things have changing fast. Things have changed so much since you've been a grown person.

NYE: Well, I heard the President make some kind of smart remark the other night about this people adying and leaving their land to the^r families. Well, they should be able to! He never had any, that's all the matter with him. He never earned any!!

SS: Well, do you think that in the early days it was rough, it was really rough to get ahead enough that you didn't have to worry about having enough to make-do?

NYE: I don't think you ever did. You think about now-- some fella going up to Park to homestead a stone and timer claim and he had to build

him a house and live on it. And how could you have built you a log cabin and lived there? The snow got deeper than that damn house! Huh? Well, that's the way they got the land. I don't know. I was just thinking about that Park and the people ^{that} I knew that lived there, and what a time they had agettin' what they've had. And they had it, too! Them Targesons, my, they had a hard life. You didn't have any telephone, you didn't have any radio, you didn't have any road, you didn't have nothin'! Maybe two horses, and you couldn't raise enough to feed 'em, but they had big meadows where timothy grew and you could cut some in the summer if you had a mower, which you didn't have!

SS: What about ^{Fix} Vic's Ridge? Was it rough going ^{Fix} Ridge, or would it be easy compared to a place like Park?

NYE: It was tough going, hell, the first I was married we had sixty head of horses and didn't have enough to eat!! Yeah, that's the truth. And we lived in a cookhouse. You had to take the wagon tongue up of a night to keep the rats from coming in! Well, things were different.

SS: That's important to know. Just what it was like then. I mean, I think that matters, that's the way it was.

NYE: That's the way it was! That's the way it was. But, I'll tell you something, homesteading that stone and timber claim wasn't no song. If you did you had to sing it yourself! I want to have that one that's got Swenson in it.

SS: You take that one.

NYE: I remember all about that Park. (Recorder was shut off)

SS: It is such an interesting thing to have a tramway going through the town.

NYE: Well, they had a little warehouse built out there in the creek

bottom, and it had a big, ^{windless} ~~windless~~ with big cables and it went clear up to the top of that hill. I could show you out there exactly where it went, by the little quacking asps agrowing up and down that hill. And they had little cars and one went up and the other one, you know, and one got loaded and come down and pulled the other one up. And then they just put on this sacked wheat, and they come down to this little warehouse and unloaded it and pulled it back up. Yeah, I could show you exactly where it used to be.

SS: Did most all the farmers-- Was it all the farmers on Potlatch Ridge that were using it?

NYE: No, just over there on the rim, I think. And the warehouse people was called Lawrence and Porter. That old Porter that had the bank. E.W. Lawrence and Porter. But it worked. And I can remember, there used to be one of them tramways over there at *Walla Walla* that come off of Mayview clear down to the Snake River canyon; one of them tramways. You remember it?

SS: I heard that there were some over there. I didn't know that one in particular. That makes sense, that's a pretty steep canyon.

NYE: You bet your life. That's lots worse than ^{this} little one they had here. Yeah. But they used ^{it}, I guess for several years.

SS: What about that Adams fellow who built The Castle? What do you remember about it?

NYE: Oh, I remember him just as well as yesterday. (Laughter) And, oh, he was kind of a-- I don't know-- he had several children; he had Ben and Evan and Nita, the one that married E. W. Porter. He had several children, but his wife died before he came here and an old man name of, Grandpa Stevens came with him and he raised the children. And then this old man built this-- oh, ~~we~~ we called it "The Castle" when

he built it. He built it out of these concrete blocks and they made 'em by hand. Bu you see, the difference in my house and that castle house-- this is lath and plaster, and that damn thing, it's just finished up on the inside of the blocks. But that old man, he was a card! His oldest daughter, Nita, married a fella and they had one child, and then old man Adams got this thing in his mind-- I forget the name of the man that brought him the ^{le}what that had all the heads on it-- and he sold that seed to the government through the post office. And so, the government overhauled him, and this son-in-law shot himself to keep from going to the pen.

SS: Why was he going to go to the pen?

NYE: Because, they had misrepresented on the post office. The government. See? Oh, he made lots of money out of that wheat. Wasn't so. ^{wasn't} nothing.

SS: What did he claim? For the wheat?

NYE: Oh, he claimed it had seven heads and all this stuff and it only had one. (Chuckles)

SS: Well, did Adams-- did he discover this what, or did somebody discover it, too?

NYE: Oh, yes, he found it in old Tutankerman's (Tutankhamen) tomb or some place in Egypt. Shoot! Big lie! He was a crook, Old Man Adams.

SS: I wonder, did he get by with this for very long time before they caught up with it?

NYE: Yeah, yeah. One summer and they planted a crop and found out it wasn't so, and then the government picked him up.

SS: Well, Mr. Noble told me that he was pushing it off as hard wheat and it was soft wheat.

NYE: Well, that didn't have nothin' to do with it. He said it had seven heads and it would produce all this stuff, which it didn't. Didn't produce nothin' ^{no} more than any other wheat. I don't know. But

this son-in-law shot himself, so he wouldn't have to go to the pen! Then Old Man Adams took a notion he'd go to Florida and he come here to visit my mother and oh, they talked and cried over each other. MY mother was one of these, well, I don't know what kind of a-- well, anyway she built the churchs and she built the houses and she give the parks and you know that kind of woman!! So, they cried over each other and he went off to Florida. And a streetcar run over him and killed him, I think. They brought him back here and buried him, and ^{he's buried} his grave's up in the cemetery. His name was Abraham Adams.

SS: Your mother then, was a real social Southern---

NYe: Oh, I'll say she was! She converted the whole country. (Chuckles)
And she and old Burton French started the Spalding Park.

SS: Really?

NYE: Yessir, they did! Now, they give it back to the Indians! And you can't go there, all the signs is, you can't park, you can't park, you can't park. And they took the bridge out, you have to go to Lewiston and come back to get to it. Shoot! Yeah, she and Old Burton French started that park! Set out trees from everyplace!

SS: When you says she was converting the country, did you mean the Indians mostly or--?

NYE: No, no, all the white people! (Laughter)

SS: What did she convert them to?

NYE: Religion!! She was a great Methodist. Oh, yeah, she was somethin'! That woman! She didn't have time to do anything at home, she was kinda like Mrs. Earl Clyde! You know, she's kinda like that. She's always got her fingers in something! She come down here to Spalding one night and sent me word to come, and I sent ^{her} word I wasn't able . She ^{sent word back that} ~~was~~ more than likely I was, but I wouldn't do it! (Chuckles)

Well, I didn't want to go! Shoot! But that's the way my mother was, she was always doing something for the community. Startin' a church or doing something. She didn't have time for home. Hardly ever learned how to keep house. She never knew. I never knew. I don't know how to keep house, I just live here. But Old Man Adams, he was a promoter, if you know what I mean.

SS: Yes, I know just what you mean. I've heard that word before.

NYE: Yes, that's what he was! He promoted hisself on the wrong side, that round.

SS: Well, it seemed like a pretty bad deal. You'd have to figure you'd get caught doing something like that.

NYE: Of course you would, if you'd have good sense. But I guess his mind was in the clouds. But old Gran^dpa Stevens raised all his kids.

SS: Raised Adams' kids?

NYE: Yeah.

SS: Were they related somehow?

NYE: Well, he was Adams' wife's father. I think they come here from Minnesota.

SS: Was there much of a town government then? I mean, did they have a mayor and all that?

NYE: Sure, my dad was the mayor! Sure they did. And they also had a lawyer and they had a water commissioner, they had a street commissioner, they had a cop that put 'em in jail, and they had a jail!

SS: I've seen that -- is that the same jail that they had--?

NYE: No, no, you never saw this jail. It was down by the warehouse and it was built outta logs and it didn't have a window. It had one door. Boy, and when they put 'em in there, they put 'em in there! They don't have any jail now atall. Juliaetta hasn't any law, a cop can't arrest anybody. He ^{couldn't tell you nothing} ~~can't do nothing~~. Isn't that something?

SS: Well, in those days, there was people put in jail?

NYE: You bet your life, they put 'em in jail! And they left 'em there too!

SS: Did they take local people?

NYE: Yeah, I got in there once!

SS: Did you?

NYE: Yes. (Laughter)

SS: What did you do to deserve it?

NYE: Oh, I didn't deserve it, but I got there anyway. Anyway, I think I didn't, but I got in there. (Laughter)

SS: I don't imagine they kept you for very long!

NYE: No, they's glad to get rid of me! Yeah. Yeah. But they had a really jail. This thing they have down here, years ago, they could'nt a left people and put 'em in there. It was a little kind of a iron thing, you know in the corner, but they took it out and made a beautiful office there with red carpet on the floor and a big, old safe that was in my dad's store. They got everything in there and a town clerk. I asked him if he got paid, and he didn't answer.^{m^c} I'll bet he didn't!

SS: Was drinking the usual cause for someone to get thrown in jail?

NYE: Oh, I think so. I think so.

SS: That's what I would imagine.

NYE: But there used to be lots of fightin' and shootin' goin' on, you know. Lots of it. And this town had a bunch of horse thieves, my God, and cattle thieves! And they sent 'em to the pen. And one woman was in it, too! Ed Beard's sister, Bertha. And her husband, Old Ed ~~Grant~~, he served her term and his term and when he come out of the pen, she was married to somebody else. Oh, boy, we used to have horse thieves from here to Dayton, Washington!

SS: Well, who's horses would they steal? Would they steal any farmer's around here?

NYE: Yeah, it didn't matter. They had a long rope. And cows, why, gee whiz, they'd steal your neighbor's milk cow and take it down to the butcher's and ^{butcher} sell it. Sell it to the butcher shop. Juliaetta had two butcher shops.

SS: Did everybody know who they were?

NYE: Sure, they did! But, when they picked 'em up, the reason they got 'em, they picked up Old Frank White and he turned state's evidence! He turned 'em all in! And they turned him loose. And there was one kid, and he was eighteen, and they took him to the pen, too. Oh, boy, we had a bunch of horse thieves and cow thieves!

SS: I've heard people whose stock got stolen--

NYE: Oh, you betcha!

SS: How dangerous was it? I mean, was it the kind of thing that probably wouldn't happen to the average farmer, or would he be lucky if he didn't get some of his stock stolen? I mean, how often would it be that somebody would have something stolen?

NYE: Well, if you had anything, you ^{might} be liable to get it stolen any night. They picked 'em up clear from Dayton, here. Mostly horses in that Dayton country; mostly cattle in this country, 'cause ^{it} belonged to the Indians.

SS: Be probably easier to pick off the Indians' stock.

NYE: Yes, you betcha. They stole all the Indians' stuff! And the Indians' horses, too. Oh, boy, we really had a bunch of cattle and horse thieves here once!

SS: And they were mostly local, I mean the thieves were, too?

NYE: Yeah, sure they were. They lived right here.

SS: I'm surprised they didn't get the Vigilantes out after 'em. I mean

the farmers. They've been known to take that kind of action when things get rough.

NYE: No, they didn't. They didn't say a word, they just let 'em steal 'em! Oh, boy, everybody knew who was doing it!

SS: That's usually the way it is, you can't keep something like that in a small place.

NYE: No. Everybody knew it.

SS: I'm just surprised that the community couldn't take care of that better. You know, stop it somehow.

NYE: You know, that's been so long ago, that I've forgot who the sheriff was. I don't know. I never even thought of it before, to wonder. But you know, years ago, they had, I don't know whether you'd call it FBI or what, but you had government men that picked things up like that instead of the sheriff. There was some government man picked all these up. And the government picked up Old Adams, it wasn't the sheriff. You think it was the FBI?

SS: I'll bet it was. It depends on how long ago it was. But if it involved the Indians, then probably the Federal Government could get mixed up in it pretty easily, too.

NYE: Well, I don't know, I hadn't thought about that. I do remember this though; something about Pinkerton.

SS: Oh, yes. They were a private agency, but they worked for the government a lot.

NYE: Well, anyway, that had something to do with it. They sent aplenty of 'em to the pen. And that boy was eighteen, he served a year and a half and cost Old Billy Cox three thousand dollars, in them days, that was his stepfather.

SS: Three thousand as a fine?

NYE: Uh-huh.

SS: Oh, boy!

NYE: He stayed down there a year and a half. (*Pause in tape*)

SS: I was going to ask you a little bit, too, before I go about the Depression, if that had much of an effect around here. You know, in the Depression.

NYE: Oh, yes, my goodness, I'll say it did. People didn't have a thing in the world only what they raised. And, well, I don't know-- it wasn't so hard on people, because they didn't need any money, they had everything in the world to eat at home. You didn't have any clothes, you know. The kids didn't have any clothes, either. So they was all alike. Boy, that was something! But you can't tell anybody about it now, because they don't know what you're talking about. They have no idea. See what I mean?

SS: You mean younger people ~~that~~ never lived through it?

NYE: Yeah. They don't know ^{what} ~~what~~ you're talking about. You can't tell 'em anything. They don't know. They've had everything in the world. You've had everything in your life that there is for you to have. How could you get an idea of doing without everything? Huh?

SS: Well, I certainly believe that it was a terrible time. People have told me that, and I just imagine that it had to have been, but, no, I can't experience it myself unless it happens to me.

NYE: (Telephone rings-- Sam answers it, and gives the phone to Maeci)

SS: I couldn't even hardly even know what it was.

NYE: No, you couldn't. You wouldn't have any idea. Only thing about it, if you had a garden and you had some hogs or something at home, you had plenty to eat. But you had no money. You had no money, and it hit the farmers so bad, because they couldn't pay their taxes, and they took their land that they had homesteaded and lived on all their

lives. You couldn't pay your taxes. You didn't have a cent! Was no money. Wheat was two bits! And you had no clothes at all. But thank the Lord, you had plenty to eat. You know what hurt me worse than the Depression, was Old Hoover, during the war and doing without something to eat. That hurt me worse than the Depression. No sugar, no flour, no nothin'! Oatmeal bread!

SS: That was all kind of a quota? You could just have so much?

NYE: Yeah, that was worse. No sugar, no flour, no nothin'.

Do you want that Juliaetta book, or not? Well, now, I'll tell you it's a priceless treasure. (recorder is turned off)

--- on the weather report. It makes it's own weather. And the nearest town that's we're to, the same weather, is Walla Walla. We're not like Lewiston, we're not like Spokane, or nothin'.

SS: You mean, the weather here is going to be pretty much the same in Walla Walla?

NYE: Yeah. I used to live down there and go to school there, and then I'd always keep track of the weather, you know, a lot of places, and Walla Walla weather was the closest.

SS: I wonder why, it's different here--

NYE: Why Kendrick and us is never the same. No, that place is lots colder in the winter and lots hotter in the summer. You can go up there and it'll be snowing like hell, come down here and the sun's out, ain't no snow! This town makes its own weather. I think that old man, John Gorman (Laughter) had something to do with it! Oh, shoot. ^{He} Sure put a curse on this town, didn't he?

SS: Well, I don't know, I think it's a nice town. I like it here.

NYE: Well, I liked it like it was til they got to digging it up and puttin' the sewer in!! I don't like it!

SS: Did you seriously consider wanting to move elsewhere besides Juliaetta

since you've been adult? Or did you just always want to live here?

NYE: No. I never wanted to live here. I come here to take care of my mother, and when I got old I was here and I stayed. I never even moved my dishes, never moved nothin'! I'd lots rather live on the hill. But you can't, you're just in the way, so you just live here. Make your own life. I didn't want to live here. I hate this old house.

SS: I'll tell you, wish I had such a nice house to hate. And it looks like you got a nice place to live.

NYE: Well, I don't keep it, I just live here! I hire it swept sometimes. When I can find a boy or a girl that'll do it. Some of 'em's pretty good, too. Some of 'em'll sweep the porch, even!! Once they swept the walk. (Chuckles) No, I'd rather left it like ~~it~~ was, I don't want to dig it up and put in a sewer system. Trouble of it is, it won't work when they get it dug up. Haven't got enough water to run it. You know, people use so darn much water, they haven't got a lick of sense! Not a lick! Ain't no sense in it. Gee whiz.

SS: Do you think in the early days they had to be a lot more careful?

NYE: You betcha! All the water I had at the ranch is what I carried there. You know. Oh, I don't think it's right. Just turn on the faucet and turn on the outside water in the summertime. This darn manor down here, this thing they built for the old people; they turn on the water down there in the summertime, and I can't get a drink up here. All the water runs out down there and it just runs down the path. Just runs anyplace.

SS: How far did you have to haul the water on the ranch?

NYE: Oh, man! I lived one place that I had it haul it three quarters of a mile. That's where I moved my house to, where the water was. But, we always had good water. And nowadays they put so much crap in the

water, you can't drink it. Whu, I can turn on the faucet and go out on the porch and smell that damn water!

END

Transcribed by Frances Rawlins, May 27, 1976