

LORA BRACKETT ALBRIGHT

Second Interview

Interviewed by:  
Sam Schrager

Oral History Project  
Latah County Museum Society

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## LORA BRACKETT ALBRIGHT

Potlatch River, rural Juliaetta; b. 1898

state legislator; teacher

1.5 hours

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with Sam Schrage

May 25, 1976

## II. Transcript

Second interview

LORA BRACKETT ALBRIGHT

This conversation with LORA BRACKETT ALBRIGHT, took place at her home <sup>en Peeth+th</sup> Creek, below Juliaetta, Idaho on May 25, 1976. Interviewer SAM SCHRAGER.

LORA BRACKETT ALBRIGHT: -- spiritual kids with a grandfather that was a preacher in that, oh, I was going to <sup>spy</sup> Baptist, but they were Nazarene. And so, the school was divided. Here were the people who could go out and play with ~~Dallas~~ and here were the others. Well, sometimes the kids with Dallas <sup>u've</sup> doing things with the ~~Wyba~~ Kids, and the teacher, of course, was in betwixt and between, see.

SAM SCHRAGER: You mean there was a division between those two groups of kids?

LA: Uh-huh. I kept them on an even keel, but I worked at it, and if I hadn't been the oldest of ten children and had the training in my own home with an ill mother, I don't think I could have really done a good job with it. But, I kept them on an even keel. Nobody went out of school. There was only kid that I never taught anything to, and that was an Indian. See, I had my first Indian kids in that school. And Clarence Mox-Mox was a retarded kid, and in those days, especially the Indians, they didn't know what that was. The kid was there and he had two eyes and feet and what have you, you. And he was just a lazy no-good. Well, then he had to cover up because it was hard for him. Well, these are some of the problems I worked with.

SS: How do you deal with a kid like that, who is-- nowadays, they talk a lot about special education.

LA: Yeah, I had special education and Clarence didn't always ~~have~~ to go home. And so-- I mean right away-- and so I made it my--so I went over to his folks and I said, "Now, Clarence needs," -- and his mother couldn't talk English-- and his father just a little bit-- now this

was a long time ago, you know. The Indians lived up here.-- And I said, "Would you like me to give him special reading lessons?" They were concerned with the English language-- I said, "If he can stay fifteen minutes after school, I will do some special work with Clarence." And so the mother muttered something and turned around and went in the house, but the father looked at me and he said, "Just what would you do?" And, I said, "I think that Clarence's trouble is in identifying the words. He looks at those words and I suppose that his eyes are right," but, I said, "it's a slow comprehension. It's a slow understanding. Do you think you know what I'm talking about?" And he thought a little bit, "Uh-huh. If I teach you Indian language, you'd be slow." And, I said, "Yes, I would be slow, because, I would have to learn what the words meant. And this is what Clarence has." And he said, "Okay. You do ~~him~~." And so then I said, "Now, it's liable to get dark and in the wintertime it's getting darker now--"this was just before Thanksgiving-- and, I said, "could I bring him home from school?" And, he said, "How you bring him?" And, I said, "Well, I have to walk like Clarence does." "No," he says, "I come get him horseback." I says, "Okay, then you be down here by four-thirty and we'll be ready." And Clarence, I don't think I ever really taught him anything, but he just loved that special attention. Because, you see, he had been missing it. And, so, he would stay fifteen minutes after school every day. And then, two of my white kids felt that I was being unfair and they asked to stay, too, but they were fifth graders. Clarence was supposed to be a second grader. He was ten years old and in the second grade. That showed they just didn't do anything for him. And, so the other kids stayed, and they stayed because, when they went home their father sent them ~~out~~ to buck wood and all this sort of thing, and



they didn't have a chance to study, so they stayed and studied, and then I gave them some reading, too, because they were used to-- they'd look at this word and say, "every", and then look at the next one, "four," "week," and each word, you see, instead of seeing a sentence or seeing\_\_ it was just each one. So, then I started with placards with two or three words. I said, "What did you do this morning when you went out to milk the cows?" "Shovel snow!" I said, "Okay, Nevlin shovelled snow. Nevlin shovel<sup>ed</sup>ed snow." I said, "How do you know you did?" "Why," he says, "everybody knows how to shovel snow." I said, "Okay," I said "that's what those words mean." Nevlin, which was <sup>the</sup> boy, "Shoveled snow." "Oh, that's what it's all about!" I mean, it's amazing. And, of course, that's why I loved to teach in the first place.

SS: Was it hard on the Mox-Mox boy, in terms of the other kids, being ten years old and at the low level--

LA: No, in a small rural school, and this was a small one, there were only twenty pupils there, and I had six grades, I didn't have the fourth grade and I didn't have the seventh grade. I put the seventh and the eighth graders together, I only had two. And I found that the reading and the spelling could be correlated very well. And in a small school-- I didn't have any of that trouble, thank goodness. After I got Dallas kind of calmed down a little bit- it was fine. But his older sister-- this youngster that was just thirteen years old, was keeping house for her father and a bedridden grandmother and the four brothers and sisters in that home and coming to my school. And one of the things that Clarence liked to do was to sing, and so he would come early, so that I could play the organ and sing. I mean, this is what you call rapport these days, I suppose, because I had to earn the respect and the liking and whatever of these youngsters, because I don't think any

teacher can teach youngsters that doesn't have their respect, and their liking. And in the rural schools we were much closer to our pupils, because we were there all the time, it wasn't like going to a class for this and that and the other. And so, I liked it. This was the second school that I taught, and was really an easy school, in a way, because I had to learn about the Indians and I had some of the Groscl~~ose~~ children and I do not like to call names, also, were handicapped, because their folks came from Virginia and for generation upon generation had intermarried because they would not marry out of their family and out of their class, and so, some of those youngsters were retarded and were handicapped. And so, I had this problem, too, -- And one of those girls now has caught up with me, she's not only a great grandmother, but one of my great friends, and lives in the Orchards, Helen Groscl~~ose~~ was Helen Steinsman in those days, her father was <sup>the</sup> clerk of the school board.

SS: You say though, for instance, that there were kind of two groups of kids; one the Groscl~~ose~~ group and the other the Wibark. Did that reflect parents and the families, or was it the kids themselves that divided themselves up.

LA: Yeah. It was just one of those things. And in the old days, the teacher was supposed to be the center of the school, which was always the center of the community. And, every community exercised-- and I use this from voting to parties to what have you was in the school, and the teacher was expected to do this. A Literary every Friday night! Finally it became so heavy that I said, "Now, rather than have a sketchy one, let's have one once a month or at the most, twice a month, and then all of you take part. And if some of you want to debate," - and, oh, dear, don't get me started on debates-- and so, by doing it this way-- by reaching out into the community, I had a wonderful opportunity.

That's when I learned that Sam Waters, which was a young Indian man about twenty-three, twenty-four played the piano beautifully, and sang, why, he could go way up in G and sing soprano, and go way down to the bass and sing the bass down there. And so, I had made the remark, I said, "I've been sitting here playing the organ with my back to everybody, how can I preside at a Literary and do this?" And, I said, "Doesn't anyone else in the community play?" "Yeah, there is Sam." So I went over and Sam, now, is a retired fellow who lives down here at Spalding, we've been friends all these years. And then, we had the groups-- the grownups and Levi Grosclose, who is now dead, and was Dallas' father, and the father of some of the other youngsters, wanted to debate, and he was a lawyer in Virginia when he came out here. And, so, of course, he wanted to debate! So, my goodness, we had hot and heavy debates. And I learned about debating, listening to it-- to the community debates. I mean, this is what we did. And then, Sam would come and help play and we would sing the patriotic songs. And if you are up against it, you can do an awful lot of things if you have to.

SS: Did you have party games, too?

LA: Yes. But not the pairing off kind. Because we had little bitty youngsters and grandmas, too, you know, and some of them would want to sit and look and listen and be entertained. And so, when we had some of the party games, why, we'd -- I would select certain leaders -- for instance, well, let's see, -- what are some of them we did? In the summertime, of course, we had the singing games, like, SKIP-TO-MY-LOU, <sup>my Davling</sup> out there. In the schoolhouse, it wasn't possible because, we didn't have a special room. And so, we had to have BUTTON, BUTTON, Who's got the button? And then I would make it over like-- oh, some of the others, and I'd have some of the little youngsters pass the button,

you know, and then we'd guess who had the button, and everybody would laugh, and then we'd get up and play SKIP-TO-MY-LOU, and sing the songs and then I'd have a contest, who could make up the best verse- and you'd be surprised what would come out of those. The only thing that I laid down the law was, "Its got to be decent, we've got the kids here." (Chuckles)

SS: Would all as well as the kids take part in this?

LA: Yes.

SS: You know talking about the role the teacher took in the community, it is very interesting. I'm curious to know more about this. Do you consider this to be more or less the position of intellectual leadership in the community? Would that be fair to say?

LA: Yes, she was expected to, as a teacher, she was expected to be intellectual. She was expected to sometimes have a opinion that would be acceptable in the community. Now any teacher, man or woman, and many times the men were teaching out there, if they wanted to <sup>be</sup> controversial all they had to do was just go against the common **culture of the community**, and they were just simply ostrasized, that's all there was to it. They wouldn't be effective as teachers. How could they, if they didn't have the respect of the people, and the children and so on?

SS: When you say that, how would that kind of situation come about, where a teacher would wind up going against the grain of the community?

LA: I don't like to---

SS: Don't use any names. but I'm curious to know how a teacher could offend a community so that he was no longer effective? What would be going beyond what was acceptable to the people?

LA: Well, there's two things: A teacher can be so very intellectual and so very high and mighty, and I will say she, because I was a teacher,

would not listen to her school board, for instance. Because they were plain men and they thee and thou'd and oh'd and didn't use good grammar and she would reflect this in her dealings with them. And, when you get a school board and a community-- she usually lived in the community, and boarded with some of them, and any family will do things that is strange to a girl that goes in. For instance-- I mustn't tell this, because everybody knows me and they know my history-- will you turn it off and I'll tell---

SS: Isn't there a way that we can-----machine was turned off--

LA: Working for his Uncle George, in his George Albright's bicycle shop, that turned into a car mechanic, and Dr. Gritman and some of these that were some of the oldest---

SS: Oh, yeah, you mentioned that to me, that he worked for him.

LA: Yeah, and he drove for him, and he taught himself the mechanics of this and did fine until his health broke and so I'd heard all about Raleigh Albright up there, but I'd never really met him until I'd come down here and this Aunt Susan's home was just around the bend up here, and that white house, the Johnson house was the Albright house, that's where Raleigh was invalided home. So, he talked his mother into taking me in, because he was afraid I was going to go home, and I've been here ever since. Fifty-nine years this fall.

SS: Well, okay, we talked about--

LA: Literary things-- and just thoroughly enjoy it. And her husband who was clerk of the board, felt that he was quite the King's man, and he would lead many of the debates, in the community. And I'm sorry in a way that many of these rural schools are passing, because the youngsters in the lower grades learned from the youngsters in the upper grades. How do you carry on seventy-five classes a day in seven grades with

from five to six subjects in each grade and do it in six hours, or four hours or eight hours? And we didn't have a lunch, the youngsters would bring their own lunches, but I made it my business to see that there was hot water and cocoa and things that we would have. We didn't have <sup>actually</sup> school lunches, but we did have this because the children had to eat and some of the youngsters didn't have decent things, they would have-- bring, raw carrots and just eat raw carrots. Well, when it's cold and some of those youngsters didn't have clothing like they should have had. And so, we had to-- sometimes I would take extra food because when I stayed at Mrs. Albright's she realized the situation, and, in fact, she held herself quite aloof from the rest of them, because poor white trash from Virginia <sup>just</sup> wasn't up her alley and she was going to make her family American, or know the reason why!! (Chuckles) And, I already knew I was American, I didn't have to worry about making myself American!

SS: You say that Mrs. Wybar~~k~~, she called it outside culture? Is that what she called it?

LA: Yes.

SS: What do you think she meant by that?

LA: Well, I think she meant-- she had struggled up through her sixteenth year, and finally got through the eighth grade, and that's as high as she ever got and she would have loved to have gone on to high school. And it wasn't possible. And so, she married and then had this large family, and she was just so thoroughly thrilled and in the singing, for instance, I'd say, "How about singing a part? Can you sing a part?" And she couldn't read a note, you know-- and she said, "If you'll learn it to me, I can." And so, I would sit down and we would pick out the-- and like say, the alto in just an alto tune, and she'd learn that tune and she could sing it. I mean this sort of thing. So it was good for

her. She wanted to do this.--- Phone rings-- and then the tape resumes with some interruption.

LA: -- the river, half way up that hill over there. And we were in the shack-- you haven't seen the picture of the little shack?

SS: I've seen it.

LA: Did you? Yeah. And, I had to get some lunch, and I thought, "What will I give that fellow for lunch?" I just ~~do~~ n't know what to do, and I was out here and it was so hard do anything with it-- And so I went down to the river to get a pail of water, and I saw these dandelion buds, it was just about this time of the year, it was a little earlier, and they were coming up and they were just great dandelions in the grass, you know, like this, and there was those buds and I thought "Well, gee, I don't have any lettuce, but if I had-- I can get some of those -- I'll make a hot salad." So, I had some old, dried, hard, home-cured bacon that was so salty that we couldn't eat it for breakfast any more, <sup>very much</sup> we were tired of it, we'd had it all winter, so I cooked up that, and I had some homemade vinegar, and I dumped the vinegar in it and I picked two cups of dandelion buds and a cupful of the tender little leaves that I cut up and put in there. ~~Then~~ I washed them and put them into a dish and I went home and I cut up this hard bacon, which was so hard that nobody could eat it very well- but you see, I didn't have salt . . . the stuff, and I decided that the vinegar was too harsh, so I put a little water in it, and then, I had a lot of eggs, thank goodness, so I broke three eggs in there and scrambled 'em all up and thickened it a little bit and put it over those, and made some home-made biscuits and when that man came, I gave him this hot salad. "This is dandelion bud salad, and I hope that you'll like it, Mr. Shelafield." And, he said, "Well, I think I will. My mother used to cook dandelion greens." And, I said, "This is not <sup>the</sup> boiled greens, this is a hot salad."

And he just ate that, and he said, "My goodness, that's wonderful. Where did you get that recipe?" and I said, "Oh, that's <sup>been</sup> an old family secret for a long time." (Chuckles) And he ate those hot baking powder biscuits and dandelion salad with the meat in it and that's all he had for lunch. Oh, yes, he did, too, I had some canned pears. But I'll never forget that, because I-- And so, the family has eaten dandelion bud salad ever since. When you can go out and pick enough. And, you'd be surprised, this little lawn out here, I can pick a cupful of those dandelions in season quite easily. And another thing that--

SS: Excellent. This is really tasty.

LA: Yes, isn't that good?

SS: What kind of berry?

LA: They're the Himalaya blackberries that the Grosccloses brought from Virginia long, long ago, and they have taken over the countryside. These bushes are clear up to Kamiah, they're all around Spalding, they're all over. And they started from the Groscclose farm, which is by the Johnson house-- it's up here <sup>before</sup> you get to Julieatta. The <sup>white house where the</sup> Johnson's <sup>live</sup> used to be the old Albright place. Just around the bend on this steep bank is where the <sup>Susan</sup> Groscclose house was. And there were two brothers that came: Levi Groscclose was the lawyer that was a young fellow that came from Virginia, and then Uncle Jim was his uncle that came and then there were brothers, and that's where the Grosccloses <sup>se</sup> came so long ago and from there they have spread out over the state. And they brought these Himalaya blackberries with them. And the old walnut tree that's on the left hand as you go back, it's an old, old tree. Bessie Groscclose, Bessie Shrewsberry, <sup>she was married</sup> planted that and all of the walnut trees in the country have come from that. We've planted a lot of them out here



and the children are planting them again.

SS: So the walnut trees came from the Gros<sup>e</sup>clo<sup>s</sup>es?

LA: Yes. -- Look out there, can you see that magpie that's on the roof there? There now, he just flew. Well, I have to feed my cats on the roof to keep the dogs from getting them, so the magpies are eating the cat food. I have to feed them after night when the magpies go to bed. And it makes me feel real badly because, after all the magpies have babies that they have to feed, too.

SS: There aren't many people around, that I know, who come from the South, like the Gros<sup>e</sup>clo<sup>s</sup>es. It's interesting to me that they have brought some of those things out with them. And that they have kind of taken root, and done so well.

LA: Maeci Nye of Juliaetta, you've met her-- you see, her father was the undertaker, Old Uncle Joe, Aunt Laura was a very fine, nice person. Uncle Joe was nice, too, but he was right on the borderline and Maeci's father gave the land for the church there and helped build the church a long time ago. And that was the other side of the picture, see. They were so dedicated, Christian people there. But at the same timme handicapped by the lack of education. Although, he was a businessman and sharp and he was an embalmer, and he had graduated from this embalming school. Didn't have quite so much in those days as they do know, but he was our undertaker up there until he passed away. He had a store there, not the grocery store, but the furniture store, because that fit in with his embalming business, you see.

SS: Could you talk a little bit more about the role of teachers in the community? One thing about this, in talking to people about the old times, a surprising number of the women that I talked too, did teach.

LA: Yes. I think that this was really true, because, <sup>the</sup> teachers would come

into a community and they were always outsiders, and they were well educated, naturally, and they were usually responsible persons, and you couldn't blame those young men for trying to marry them, if they could. And this is true. When I came down here, 'course my story's a little different, too, because I was engaged at the time to a doctor and had looked forward to perhaps being a doctor's wife, and feeling a little bit put upon because I wasn't sure I was ready to be staid, I thought a doctor's wife had to be very dignified and very staid, and I was such a happy-go-lucky, and I had this wonderful horse, and I wanted to be myself, after all. And so, I broke my engagement and fell in love with Raleigh, so I'm here ever since.

SS: But you know--

LA: This is the story of a great many teachers coming into a small community. And I think that you'll run into this more and more. You've already spoken about it.

SS: I've been thinking about that lately and thinking that it must have been, for most women, the best opportunity that presented itself to become highly active in the early communities. Now, maybe I'm not correct, but I have had that impression because of the roles there.

LA: I think that maybe-- I would like to say it this way-- these girls, these young women that would come into the community mostly had been to college and had had more opportunities than those on the local level, and so, of course, they represented something that the local people were happy to have, for the most part. It wasn't always true, sometimes teachers would get off on the wrong foot, and then they would say, "OH, she's a stuck-up young thing, and I can't be bothered with her." and so on. And these are the unhappy ~~tales~~, because many teachers couldn't bear the responsibility of the-- and you go into a school-- Now when I

taught at Lookout, I had seventy-eight pupils and some of those big boys were as old as I was, and I had gone to school with some of those boys. Adn, how do you keep discipline, and how do you say, "Now, look, this is ~~the right thing~~, Sam, you're not doing it right, because you don't know your multiplication tables. Now you learn your multiplication tables." And you have to watch it. I did two things, as I was thinking back, it's been so long ago --- but one of the boys that went to my school, wanted to be an auctioneer, and the auctioneers that I knew at the time, they just started out and were auctioneers, you know. They worked up a patter, it didn't make any difference if they put a few cuss words in, and what have you, well, that was accepted; but this youngster had brains and I tried to find out and I made it my business to find out where there would be a school and where could he go and learn to really be an auctioneer. And I did it through the libraries-- ~~now~~ this was one of the things-- and you haven't touch on this, Sam, either. And the rural schools had the opportunity to build a fine library, and there was a certain percentage of taxes that went into this, that was a library levy, and if the teacher did right by the community, that library was open to the people. And so, I wrote to the county library, in this case, and I said, "Where can I get material for an auction school?" And, I got all kinds of things back. And then this lad went on and earned his spurs, and is down South now-- he went back to his people-- and he had built up a big auctioneering thing there. Another one of the boys wanted to be a veterinarian, and I didn't know anything about it except how he could and I went through the same procedure. Made it my business to find out to help this youngster. And, his folks, when they got the brochures from the school, his folks couldn't possibly have sent him. And so, I

worked with this youngster and he had an old typewriter and he wanted to learn to type and I said, "Well, I'm not sure how good you are, Dirk, but maybe you could get some work addressing envelopes or something, let's look into it." Well, what he finally got was an assistant janitorship in a city school, you see, because he'd had the experience there. And so, the teacher's role in the old days, and I expect it's true yet, in the rural schools that we had, this outside culture, so called, this outside <sup>really</sup> contacts that they wanted to know how to do, see, and if the teacher was as responsible as most of them were, they would find out how to do this, you see. (End of Side A)

SS: Library? You're quite right. I don't know about libraries in those days. That's something I hadn't thought of.

LA: Oh, you hadn't thought.

SS: What was that situation?

LA: Well, there was always-- every rural school had a library. And there was a special levy, a certain amount of the percentage of the tax, that was allowable. And our little Pilot Rock up here was <sup>very</sup> fortunate, because, we had the railroad, you see, we didn't have people that would vote against a library, because, they felt the Union Pacific and the Northern Pacific was paying an awful lot of taxes there anyway, which was true, and so, I could spend the limit on this. And one year I know, I spent a hundred and eighty-five dollars on the books to get them. And then, many of them wanted just novels. Well, I couldn't see this, you see, and so we had a PTA, oh, my goodness, and I talked to them and I said, "I'm getting ready to make this order for books, but we must have school books, and we need reading material badly that will fit into our lower grades. But, I am perfectly willing to get at least four books for the general public, if you will

tell me which ones you want." And, some of them opted for novels, and then others wanted some of the university books, I mean, one on soils, <sup>I remember</sup> one of the young farmers wanted a book on soils, and I said, "Well, we can buy it, but it will be all of seven dollars--" And in those days, this would take up an awful lot of the money-- and, I said, "I think that maybe I can borrow, and I'll see if I can borrow from a library somewhere and see. Somebody else may have it, and I'll make it my business to do it." So, I didn't get the one he wanted, but I got some others. This is what you did. And the teacher had to be the librarian, naturally.

SS: What would you say, roughly, would be the composition of the library? What would its makeup be?

LA: Some do-it-yourself pamphlets, and I got these and the classics. Now <sup>some</sup> like this Levi Groscost that I talked about. He felt real badly that I wasn't putting on Shakespeare plays. Well, you can't put on Shakespeare plays very well with the kind of youngsters that I had and do a decent job. <sup>that would do something</sup> And so, I wrote to my-- my County Superintendent was Miss Redfield, and I wrote to Miss Redfield and I said, I have had a call for some special how-to-do-it books; and they weren't as popular in those days as they are now, is there any place where I can get them? And because Ethel Redfield had some Southern people in her background, she says, "Let me write." And she wrote to Arkansas and Missouri, as I remember and they had some books that were put out by a composition of authors in the Mississippi Valley, that was above Greening, as I understand it. And I borrowed those books, and they sent them out here on her-- Miss Redfield says, "Miss Brackett will be responsible for them." And we borrowed them for six months, and they practically wore them out.

SS: Do-it-yourself? Do what yourself?

LA: The first composting was one of the things. <sup>there</sup> Well, let me go back a

little bit. The farmers were lazy, and they wanted their winter corals on the creek bank, and there was too many people that was getting water that had come from that creek ~~into~~ shallow wells and what have you. And so, the first thing I did was to say, "Look, now maybe some of these things that are happening, and there were things like St. Vitus Dance--" I never had heard of St. Vitus Dance, and I didn't know what it was. And I found out it was malnutrition that causes St. Vitus Dance. And it was because of polluted water, that some were getting. And this is when I started to do something about water. How do you get water? Well, that's when we heard and <sup>I</sup> learned about drilling-- you get down to the hardpan when you're digging a well with a shovel, and that's it. But with the drills that they commenced to have about that time, why then, we got this good well up here <sup>with that</sup> through three hardpans before we got to good water. And this sort of thing, you see. And, if we could have taught these people, and some of the young farmers did, they could realize that for their own safety they should have a well that was free of the barnyard. And so, how to do-it-yourself. And then the other one was weeding. Now, the Grosecloses that came from Virginia knew about flax and ~~weav~~ing, and about yarn and knitting and about spinning the yarn. My husband's people had sheep at the time and they'd go up and get that wool, and gee, there was burrs in it, these terrible burrs that crinkle all up in the wool, and you can't get it out without tearing it all to pieces and <sup>then</sup> you've got those spurs in the yarn. So, we had to learn about weeds, if you wanted to protect your crops, ~~which~~ it happened to be wool off of sheep, <sup>mutton</sup> then you get rid of the weeds so you don't have cockleburrs. And, then I remember another thing that bothered me a little bit when I was teaching up here was the unsanitary conditions with milk. They would go out

and milk the cows, then forget to keep the milk clean, you know, and there's nothing as dirty as dirty milk. So, I sent to the University, they <sup>they always had</sup> had the dairy up there and the dairy cows, and these people had some good cows, and I said, "It's a shame to just get that milk and then ruin it." Well, two or three of the people kind of felt badly so, I went back to Miss Redfield again and I said, "Can I have some advice about <sup>how</sup> to have milk tested for bacterial count, and for things like this?" And, I said, "Now, we've got the St. Vitus Dance and I'm calling in the county doctor." And I thought as a county school <sup>ma'am</sup> I had the right to ask him. And it was Dr. Elly, and bless his heart he came. But a county doctor is only to doctor county patients. But because the schoolteacher yelled out here, and I needed help, and I told him about the milk situation and about the water situation, and I said, "How can these youngsters possibly grow up with all these handicaps? What can we do about it? Would you come out and would you help me?" And so he came. <sup>bless his heart</sup> Sometimes it pays to be ignorant, Sam.

(Chuckles) But the counter outside culture, to get back to this again, this is what it was; was mostly the know-how and the willing to find out, and to know. Now, I didn't know <sup>where to get</sup> always, but you see, I had people I could rely on. Miss Redfield and then-- because I had been to summer school and the normal, I didn't always get good response from them because they had their own programs and their own work. But, the superintendent of the high school, the Lewiston High School, was still around when I was teaching, ~~that~~ I had been there myself for a year and I had such deep respect for this person that I wrote and I said, "If you were out in a country school"-- and this wasn't up here, it was my first school in Jacks Canyon, which was just as bad or worse than this-- "how would you go about, how could I

go about finding out who to write to?" And I don't know how many hours Professor <sup>Haveland</sup> spent working for me and telling me--this is what the people crave, this is what they wanted to know-- this was working for me and telling me! This is what the people crave, this is what they want to know. This is what they expected of the teacher, to have these outside contacts. Now, I was not too musical, but up here one year, we had a teacher that was real musical and gee, she could play anything from a sweet potato to a hot potato, and the kids just loved it and the rhythm bands came in. See, I didn't have sense enough to have a rhythm band, because I didn't know anything about it. I thought that they had to whistle or sing or play an accordian or mouth harp or something like this, you see, and then we tapped our toes. And, I could have made a drum if I'd been around long enough, but my school was only seven months long, you must understand.

SS: Well, take Jack's Canyon; were the people there that needed a certain amount of assistance, that needed to get some more progressive ideas about how things should be done, was-- why did they have that lack of knowledge in their background? That is what I'm curious to know. Were they Southerners? Were they from the hill country? What was the story there?

LA: In Jack's Canyon it was -- as I think about it-- there were some very fine farmers there, but there was also, what we would call in those days, hillbillies. And they never expected to get beyond the eighth grade and as soon as they could cypher, the boys would go into the fields to earn a living. I mean, it was one of these things. They weren't interested in it. The new thing in the fields at that time, was alf-alfa, believe it or not, It was a new crop, and they turned their cows into alfalfa that weren't used to it and it killed them. And they



figured that it was poison. But you see, it was just because this-- And so, I said, "Well, there must be some reason that alfalfa is coming to the front." And they said, "Well, does your father have this alfalfa?" And, I said, "No, he doesn't. He has timothy and clover, because he was raised in Maine and the crops that he grew up with was timothy and clover." But, I said, "The timothy, you see, the clover will also cause the same thing that your alfalfa is doing, but he puts timothy with it. Why don't you write to the University?" Because in those days, we didn't all have the county agents, you see, in those days, so long ago. This would be - well I'm seventy-eight and I was eighteen at the time, so you can see it was sixty years ago, and it was just starting out. And so they would find out. And silo -- they were tremendously interested in silage, you know. I wasn't <sup>too</sup> interested in it, but I knew where to find the material, and this is the role that the teacher is expected to know.

SS: What we were talking about, there must be a pretty fine line between the people accepting advisory information. For instance, if you feel that the milk isn't as clean as it ought to be, how do you tell the people that the milk isn't clean?

LA: I put it on the souring basis. This goes back a long time. My grandmother was a practical nurse, my Grandmother Lockwood, I had two parents, because my grandmother was only fourteen when she married my grandfather-- my grandfather found her in a haycamp--

SS: Haycamp?

LA: Her father <sup>was</sup> cutting hay for the logging horses in a haycamp in Minnesota out of Howard Lake. He felt that he just had to have that little girl for a wife and at the time, he was driving oxen in this logging thing, a big yoke of oxen. Have you ever seen a yoke of oxen

really work in the woods? You just ought to, because you never-- they don't have any lines on them or anything, they're just a yoke of oxen, and they have a goad, they call it a goad, the one that Grandpa had was about as long as a broomstick, and it had a nail in the end of it and then they'd whittle off that nail, file off that nail and make a prod about like this. It would prod the oxen, if they needed discipline at all, and make them mind, because an oxen is a huge animal and he's strong as all get out, and all <sup>that</sup> he's attached to is this yoke around his neck, and then the chain or the tongue that's between the two of them, you see, and you discipline with the goad and the voice, and you guide them and urge them and sympathize with them, and drive them by the voice, and then Grandpa's had stubbed off horns, they were big tan ones, as I can just barely remember, but anyway, he had a chain around those horns, and if he took them into a barn, they were tied with a chain that would snap into that chain around the horns. But, it's a remarkable thing and I've never seen beasts work any harder, except perhaps the little mules that Raleigh and I had when were first married. The way those animals work for their masters is just out of this world, you just <sup>never</sup> would believe it. But, at the same time, being brutes, they have to be disciplined and they have to respect their master and the master has to take care of them. I mean, after all,--

SS: We were talking about the souring of the milk--

LA: Oh, yes. I started to tell you about the cabinet-- my grandfather built this cabinet because he was having sour milk trouble in the cellar. They'd shut it up, and it was a big square, as I remember, about this deep and about so wide and about so high, and he put burlap-- gunny sacks around on it, and it had a door on it that opened like a screen door, we have screen now, but we didn't have screen in those days. But

they'd put a dish of water on the top with rags that would come down and soak this, and then it was a cooling agent. Well, because the kids didn't want to drink that sour milk, and the minute, Sam that milk would get sour in a pan, you set it in pans for it to raise, because lots of people couldn't afford separators-- we were lucky. And the minute that milk soured, then the flies blow it and you've got maggots on the top of it. Well, then some of the people were commencing to say, "Oh, that sour milk. That ungodly sour milk." That sour milk, you can't bear it. But buttermilk was acceptable. Why? Because buttermilk was taken care of and it didn't get maggoty, and it was usually kept in the coolest place that they had in this cooler or cellar and <sup>then</sup> ice-- my father, for instance, we had a couple of ponds, we'd call them lakes now, I suppose, but they were ponds, because he'd dug them out with a horse and a scraper, and then we would cut the ice ~~in there~~. Well, since I've grown up and been smart, I've often wondered how many bugs we ate in the ice, because, we took the ice out of the pond where the animals come down to drink and what have you. But my father had this one pond with an outlet that came down into a trough. The animals didn't get around the pond. And so, you took the sour milk because it wasn't healthy and we wanted to keep it clean, because when there's dirt in the milk, there's bacteria there. And some of my kids would even say, "What's a bacteria? Is it a bug?" And I said, "Yes, they're bugs," but you don't do this with kids because-- especially rural kids. They're pretty smart and they'll say, "Well what kind of bugs?" And then you're stuck. And so, I had to find out about germs. And to tell them that milk because of the albumin, because of the constitution and was a natural food, was also a natural food for germs, and therefore, must be kept clean and sanitary if it was fit for human consumption. Otherwise, let it sour and do make your cottage cheese, if you want to.

- SS: It sounds to me, from what you were saying before, you worked directly with the parents as well as with the kids.
- LA: And this Literary thing gave me an entry there. And then, it's always that they invite the teacher for Sunday dinner! Goodness sakes! And we would sing and we would do all kinds of things, and I would go to a conference, for instance, a teachers conference, and when I'd come home I'd at least try to have one new idea that I could share with the women. I mean, they were hungry. They had real fancy stitches and they did all this beautiful hand work and all of this and it's amazing how those country women could make their own clothes and make them stylish and make them look nice and keep themselves clean, and yet, have to scrub <sup>it</sup> on a scrubboard in an old backyard.
- SS: What you were just saying is that there was a great deal of longing for a better life despite the fact that people were living in pretty primitive conditions.
- LA: Real primitive conditions, yes. And they knew the sadness of losing youngsters through measles and whooping cough and dysentery. Now, I know now that some of that dysentery probably was infectious hepatitis and a few other things that we learned later, but in those days, they had what they called liver pills, which was a glorified laxative, really, and they would clean out those poor little kids' systems, and I suppose-- and I'm really surprised that they didn't lose more than they did. Although, the mothers and fathers were really clever, and there are many, many native medicinal plants right out here now that are used very well, like the watercress, for instance. Now, we realize that it's a spring purgative, and so they would get this and then the dandelions for instance and the mallow. And I've got all these Jerusalem artichokes down here. And all winter long those were wonderful things for

the kids to eat. It was preventative medicine, like you eat your carrots and your greens now and your apples, you know, to keep from--

SS: The mallow was also a medicine?

LA: Yeah. The Jerusalem artichokes-- do you know them?

SS: Yes, I think I do.

LA: They look like little potatoes, some of them would be this big around, but most of them were about like this-- and the ones that grow here are kind of transparent and when you chew them, they get just as sweet, because they're so starchy. And the saliva changes them to sugar and the kids just loved it, and it's a wonderful regulator. I've always said that anybody that would eat my dandelion bud salad and my artichokes never would have any trouble with constipation! (Chuckles)

SS: The use of these plants; did that include plants for definite medicinal cure purposes, too?

LA: I don't like to say-- Yes, they use them. How efficient they were-- I know that--

SS: Well, that's another question.

LA: Yeah, that's another question. It would depend on the person that was doing it, and how thoroughly. Now, they made a tea out of yarrow. And you know what yarrow is. Personally, I couldn't stomach it to save my soul. I mean, it's one of those things. But if you're sick enough onto death, why, you'd take what's given to you

and you'd get well in spite of it, as well as because of it sometimes. I mean-- And I don't like to go into this because, I'm-- I don't feel that I am qualified by trial and error method, because

SS: Well, in this case, you're just reporting what the people used, and I'm curious about that, because it's pretty hard to find out it, because there's just so little remembrance of it any more, you know.

LA: This is true.

- LA: Well, I'm just wondering how-- the laxative that they all used was shinnebark, and that is effective, believe me! And then, the whole grains; very often I have boiled the wheat and I learned to <sup>make</sup> the hominy out of the yellow dent corn, and these are real good foods that you give for colds, that are feverish and colds-- you can eat these and rice <sup>when sometimes</sup> with the others-- your fever would just get worse, you know. And I don't like to go on record with this, because, as I say, sometimes I think people got well in spite of them as well as because of them.
- SS: Were these plants used by everyone around here? Or was it mostly the-- only certain people that would use these?
- LA: Yes, the Virginia people for instance, particularly, had this knowledge that they brought with them. And then, my own father-in-law and mother-in-law-- my mother-in-law was Bohemian and she was born in Wseka (?) Wisconsin of this Bohemian-- Catherine, her mother <sup>that</sup> was a bound girl that a family brought from Germany and Bohemia with them. She was an orphan, and orphans in those times had a real difficult row to hoe and Catherine, this little Catherine, was bound to this family. That meant that she was just simply enslaved by the family, they just took her over and worked her and gave her board and bed, but she became a member of the family and they brought her West with them. And into the Moscow area, you see, and she was married and raised <sup>the</sup> family, and among them my mother-in-law, see. She was a Lusk, because this Lusk was a Bohemian painter that came into the Spokane Valley, when Spokane was Spokane Falls, you know. Post Falls. And they were building the university. And then my father-in-law, who was a handsome young devil and a painter, house painter, he decided he'd come down to the University and get himself a job, and he did, and he met my mother-in-law and got married and they came down and bought this exemption and <sup>proved</sup> it up on

a homestead in the canyon. This is the other side of the family history. And, of course, they found a lot of the Indian things,-- like the-- did you notice the little clumps of these beautiful little yellow sunflowers that's all over? Well, the Indians ate that early in the spring like celery.

SS: The root?

LA: No, the little sprouts that came up.

SS: Sprouts?

LA: Uh-huh. And I never could do this, but they used it as a cleansing purge, too. So you kind of absorb some of these things, you know. But I wouldn't like to say, because, my grandmother did some things, but she based her's on camphor. If she had alcohol and camphor she could cure everything from a toothache to malaria fever.

SS: You mention these things and you say you don't put any stock in them particularly, but I think that all the information about the early use of plants is important.

LA: Yes, I didn't use too many of them, but hops; I remember my grandmother used to make a poultice of hops, when you had a real congested cold, you know. Well, I think maybe the hot steam was just as good, but she had the hops, so she put 'em in. I can remember one time that -- I was about sixteen, and I was in trouble and I didn't have any yeast, and Grandmother says, "We've got the dried hops up there, we'll go make some." So, that's when I learned that yeast comes from hops!

SS: You know, talking about sickness--

LA: Since I was-- there has been a county doctor-- information available if you really-- but when it come to giving birth, those families up there, very few of them, and ever thought of going to a hospital, you always had your births at home, and most of the time, my grandmotherr I know was a midwife, she was a natural nurse, I say; General nurse.

And she taught me the things that I knew, and I never went to the hospital for any of my children. I had them at home and I went to her house to have them. And, we helped each other. The last time that I called on the county doctor, for instance, we had this woman up on these hills and she'd had a miscarriage, and there they were with little kids, I mean they were youngsters and her husband, who was very inadequate. Most farm husbands can, but for some reason he couldn't, and so I didn't want to take the responsibility, and I called the doctor and he said, "Mrs. Albright, I don't know how to get up there, will you take me there?" And I said, "Yes, I will." Well, he didn't get there until after he closed his office in Lewiston and he came out here and it was just dusk and we had to walk up that hill, because a car couldn't get up there. And when we got up there, the woman was ill, and the fetus was dead and she hadn't been cleaned up and I had thought this might happen so I had taken my sheets and an old blanket that I had and I thought, well if we had to, and I was feeling sorry for the doctor, because he really didn't have to come. You see, a county doctor is for county patients only, but because I called, he did come. And when we went up there, we found out that she had the miscarriage and she had aborted, and the fetus was immature, and so nature for some reason had chosen not to finish that pregnancy. So the doctor had to do a curettage, you know to clean out the vagina and the womb, you know how this goes. And he asked me if I could help him, and I said, "Well, look, I have had no experience; I can follow directions. Now the first thing you will want will be some hot water." And the husband was there, and I said, "Do you have a teakettle?" And he said, "Oh, yes, and it's got hot water in it." So we boiled the water and then I went out and sterilized a funny looking old washbasin, you see, there was no electricity and no



running water up there at all, and the washbasin outside on the porch. Well, you see, you could get into trouble here, so we had done this to help each other, and it still is done. When one of my nephews-- and when the baby came, a sister-in-law said, "Well, what am I going to do? What am I going to do?" I said, "Well let the baby come, we'll just take care of it." And so, there he was, he was wound up in the cord, and I just loosened the cord. But I didn't cut it because I wasn't sure-- for instance, If I had known I was going to do it, I would have had the sterilized silk cords-- you know how you do. The cord on each side-- I don't know how much you know-- but you tie it real tightly because the blood is pulsing through this cord, the umbilical cord. And then you just take a scissors and whack it off; that's all there is to it. But, they had called the doctor and he was supposed to be on his way up to Lewiston, but he just got waylaid, and so I loosened the cord on the baby's neck and then just wrapped him in a blanket, and he and his mother just laid there in all that welter until the doctor came. And when the doctor came, the mother-in-law was in there, and he thought that she had delivered the baby and he says, "Well, you did a real good job. You can help me any time." And my mother-in-law blinked because she was kind of oldfashioned, and she didn't know whether she wanted to talk to a man about things like this that way or not! You know that old feeling that they have, and she said, "Oh, my other daughter-in-law did it." "Oh," he said, "well fine." So when he come out he patted me on the shoulder and he says, "Okay, I'll remember this." Well, now, if my grandmother hadn't of-- if I hadn't have had my babies in her house, under her direction, I wouldn't have known these things. I wouldn't have known anything about it. So, we help each other. I have helped in births, but nowadays, you know, the

county will even pay for taking them to the hospital. And I can see <sup>a doctor's,</sup> why they should be there because they've got their equipment there. They can meet any emergency there and this is better for them, and yet, on the other hand, I have known of two cases of impetigo that was brought home from infections they caught in the hospital. And they are coming back now to the thinking that home delivery is <sup>just</sup> pretty nice, it isn't bad at all, especially in the towns where you can have your own nurse.

SS: Around here in those first years that you were here in the early days, around this country, they didn't call on a doctor unless they absolutely had to, did they?

LA: Yes, some of them didn't, Sam. Some of them didn't, especially if they wanted me to help, I would say, "Are we going to have a doctor? If we're not going to have a doctor, I don't want to take the responsibility," and, I would make this excuse, "because, I haven't had experience enough, because <sup>to me</sup> a life is precious. And I just couldn't do it." But I've had some tough experiences.

LA: -- --- taught rural schools, because they were trying to save money,-- or make money, ~~and~~ save money to go on to college for a business education or for some other reason. Or, maybe an artistic one-- there was one fellow that thought he could be a painter, an artist, I mean, and-- but he got married and with the problems of marriage he had to get work naturally; and if you can't earn it one way, you have to another. Which is too bad because he used to draw imaginary people on the blackboard and it was amazing what he could bring out. You could look at those characters and you could just see the old reprobates and the <sup>Whiney</sup> Ones-- I mean, he just had that knack of making it.

SS: Did he ever have a chance to develop that talent?

LA: No, he didn't do anything with it as far as I know.

SS: Well, I want to talk about women and the opportunities that were open to them, then. You know, these days, the reason there has been a lot more concern about women having an equal chance and ability to have their own professions and their own careers if they want to-- I wonder how-- what the opinions were in those days, and how you feel about it from back there and the opportunities.

LA: There were two opportunities-- three opportunities. One was marriage and a homebuilder, which most girls, naturally expected to do eventually, but, teaching and nursing were the two main ones. Especially the nursing-- well and the teaching, too. The teaching because the salary was low and most men could get more. In fact, it used to irk me because some of the teachers that <sup>were n't</sup> teaching any better than I was were getting anywhere from twenty-five to thirty dollars a month more than I did.

SS: Men?

LA: Yeah, men. And-- but the way they settled this was because a man usually is the breadwinner, you see, and is supposed to have more than the women. The women are supposed to get married and live on what their husbands bring in, and one of the old adages we had was, if she was inefficient, she could shovel more out the window than her husband could bring in the door. You know, these sort of adages, which was a native intelligence or wisdom coming out. And so, most of us that wanted to have a good home, why, we were careful not to shovel <sup>or throw</sup> more out the window than our husbands could bring in the door. (Chuckles) Oh, dear!! But, the pioneer woman, and don't mistake me, carried a heavy burden, Sam. Because she was expected to keep the house and <sup>the garden and</sup> oftentimes to milk cows, and do all the milking and that meant slopping the hogs because

that was their meat and the hogs were a cleanup source, I mean, they drank the extra milk and they ate the spoiled grain and they ate the spoiled extra squashes and you name it, and the pigs ate it, and then turned it into pork. And then the things a pioneer woman could do with pork you wouldn't believe. I mean, they would salt and dry the beef at times for jerky, and when I came along I canned the meat, and I didn't have to do this smoking and what have you. And <sup>o</sup>ur menfolks would butcher, it is true, and then we would take the carcasses down and have it ~~down~~ commercially, because it was easier and my mother was not able to do it, and I started teaching school. And, I did this because I wanted to go to the University-- I could have gone, but the sister next to me would have had to stay home to take care of my mother and to help raise the kids and I felt that she ought to have her chance, and she, too, was a teacher. All of our girls were teachers but one. And, when the twins were born- we had twin girls<sup>born</sup> Mother was laid up for a long time and had her hands more than full, you see, and so we had to learn to make a garden. This was the first time we girls had done this and milk the cows, 'cause we had two brothers that were older than we were and my father, who came from Maine, he felt that women's work was in the house, you understand. ~~If~~ we had to milk the cows, but I didn't know how to milk until after I was married. The boys were always there to do it, but I could take care of the milk after I got it. And churn the butter and <sup>EVEN</sup> make cheese. But, nowadays, it is done commercially, you know, and you don't have to do this.

SS: Well, the idea of teaching was it seen by most of your contemporaries as simply a waystation before marriage?

LA: Yes. When you say a waystation, that means that you come into a waystation and wait. We didn't think about this, but it was our career,

it was an avenue for selfexpression, and when you're teaching a rural school, I've never taught under a superintendent-- I got a school at Tekoa and I thought it would be fun to go in and teach under a superintendent, <sup>you wouldn't have all that, you'd just have your classroom,</sup> but, my mother became ill and I had to go home or else the sister next to me couldn't have gone to college, and so, I went home and took care of my mother with the babies that she had and she was bed-ridden and my father had fallen-- and the reason that he was here, he was a trusted employee of the woods department of the Weyerhaeuser people in Wisconsin, but because, you've heard of that terrible fire they had, why then he was invalided home. So, it was a real touchy situation there, but, while I was there, I learned skills and I learned how to work and I learned how to apply my energies to the best advantage; I learned to cooperate. While you've got the oven heating waiting to bake bread why you baked your gingerbread and your cakes and your cookies and you get it all done <sup>out there</sup> and you learn housekeeping skills. Because eventually, I think every girl wants to be married and have her own home and her own man and her own children. And the better <sup>not housekeeper,</sup> homemaker-- I've never been an A-1 housekeeper, because my mother-in-law wouldn't let my father-in-law come into the parlor and smoke his pipe, because it would get tobacco smoke on the curtains. And, I had seen him come in wet and tired and he would lay down behind the little heater stove that was in the corner and he would be just luxurating in that heat, you know, he didn't have central heat and it was just so warm and he was drying off and he would sleep there and he was so comfortable and then his wife would come in and make him get up off the floor. "Why, it was only animals that slept on the floor. Lay on the couch." And so, my home-making is a bit easy. If Raleigh wanted to lay on the floor, by golly, he could lay on the floor. It was his floor and why couldn't he lay

*Just the difference in us.*

on it, and a pillow would help him. <sup>^</sup>I knew all the time that I was a good American because my family was brought up and I was brought up in a Christian home. And the man of the house is the head, but, oh, the women are the necks and they do an awful lot of turning! (Chuckles) I'd like to meet your wife, Sam.

SS: I'd like for you to.

LA: What does she do?

SS: ----

LA: I've done lots of speaking through church and through other connections, and the women libbers, <sup>they come out</sup> oh, boy, they come out-- "Would I like to be a women libber?" And I said, "I don't have to, I've been a free woman all my life." And they look at me, you know, because most of them know I've done a man's work in the fields and all this sort of thing. And I'd say, <sup>cause</sup> "When a woman is doing what she wants to do--" And they said, "Did you want to go out and hoe corn, and do this heavy work?" And, I'd say, "Yes, I wanted to. If I hadn't wanted to, I wouldn't have." And they said, "How would you have not done it?" I said, "I'd do like the rest of them, I'd just gotten me a divorce and gotten it some other way. But, because I wanted to be married to Raleigh, and because I appreciated him, and because he's been a wonderful husband and father, and all this, I want to stay here. I could have gone on teaching, but I didn't want to do that. I wanted to get married and have a family. I've been a free woman all my life because I do what I want to do." And they said, "Well, you have to do somethings." And, I said, "Sure, so do you. You have to get up and put your clothes on in the morning and you have to get something to eat, and you have to eat it and wash your dishes."

SS: I want to ask you something else. Do you feel that in the early days that there weren't <sup>any</sup> women who didn't have a chance to do what they

could have or to realize what they could have.

LA: Many times, Sam, just like now, because-- for instance, many girls could not go to college, we'll way, or go to school or study to be a teacher. Maybe they would like to, but because the Father said, "Look, you stay home and do this and that and the other." And then, in my own experience, in my own circle of friends, I didn't have any of this, except in one case, where a father's ambition to consolidate two or three farms-- and he made his daughter, <sup>because</sup> she was a lovely girl, she was a pretty girl, and because the other family were social climbers, and so they arranged a marriage for her. Well, now, this is unusual, because most of the friends I had were free, they could marry who <sup>they</sup> wanted to, just like me . As I said, I was engaged to a doctor and when I met Raleigh, I just decided that-- this doctor, Sam, he was a fibber, and he didn't-- and a lie, I guess is a lie, no matter who it is, but to get himself out of a jackpot, to get his own way, or to put another person down, or just something-- he wasn't above stretching the truth; embroidering the truth, and to me it was totally unacceptable. Totally unacceptable. And I knew, because I grew up early, and took responsibility early that the man I married I had to not only respect as well as to love. You see, my head line is right on top of my heart line? (Chuckles) So, I've always used my head. So, when Raleigh came along in my life, I realized that he was getting pretty <sup>serious</sup> about me and I had to do something about the engagement that I had, and Raleigh was a peddler, a vegetable peddler, - have I told you this? Maybe I did.

SS: You mentioned to me.

LA: And my folks were very unhappy. Their daughter marry a vegetable peddler? And, I had to go home and, my birthday is the 23rd of March, and it happened to be on Easter Sunday, that year, and so, I went home to

talk to them. And so, I talked to my father and my mother, and I was a pet with my father because he was <sup>the</sup> horseman, you know, and I had this quality of handling horses, so I drove a six-horse team while he broke up some land and so on and so forth-- so I talked to them and I said, "I do not want to be a doctor's wife, and I do want to marry Raleigh Albright. He is ill; he is hurt; he is a mechanic, I think that he'll not be able to work as a mechanic anymore and lay on the hard concrete. He <sup>has</sup> started an old homestead and we have a fourteen by sixteen foot tarpaper shack and I want to get married and move into it!" And my father practically passed out!! (Laughter) But, I'll tell you what happened: Raleigh was smart enough to realize that there might be this feeling, and so, one day he says, "Come and go with me and see what I do," I knew that he was taking-- you see he had these ton trucks and what have you, and he was taking a ton of <sup>stuff</sup> and going up through Deary, Kendrick, Troy-- you name it-- all these little towns up there where they couldn't get it. And up at Bovill there <sup>were</sup> people out there-- the Simplot works was just coming in-- that clay works was just being, and there was still lots of logging up there. And these women were out there in tents with their children; living out there in tents, and I just felt so sorry for them. And so, I said, "Oh, okay, I'll go with you." <sup>and he said, "Come and see what I do."</sup> And I went with Raleigh. And the first stop we made was in Troy, and Ma Albright worked and she had the tomatoes packed and we had the radishes and we had the onions and we had the spinach and you name it. There was corn and Lord knows what all-- there was even melons, 'cause it was in the fall, you see, and this was getting along toward the last of October. And he went up in the middle of that town-- and there's four streets that come this way, you know, and here come this old truck up there and he turned around and



you should have seen the women come! They just came from all over. And they had the best time going over all this and Raleigh'd say, "Come up here." And he'd uncover this and there it all was. They'd take all this and they would kid around and he'd take in twenty-five or thirty dollars at this stop, you know, and they would get this beautiful fresh stuff. Well, we stopped at one of these homes, and this woman had a sick child out there and she wasn't very happy with her situation, and she bought some things and paid for them, and when we were on our way to Bovill, and before we got there, he said, "Gosh, I cheated that woman out of a nickel." And then he kind of slowed up and I said, "Well, so what?" And he said, "Well, I suppose I ought to go back, she's probably found out about it." And I said, "Well, you've still got your load, why don't you at least get rid of your load and then we can stop on the way back." And he says, "Okay, I will." So we went on to - what's the name of that other little town, Clarkia, that's out there somewhere? I've never been back since. And, it was getting dusk, and he said, "Now I don't want to miss that road where we turn off." <sup>He said, "We have to go."</sup> And, I said, "Do you have to do it?" you know, "Tonight?" "It'll be late, it'll be real dark when we get home." "Yes," he said, "she'll be unhappy. I'm sure she knows. And maybe when her husband comes home he might give her a bad time. We'll finish up." And so he made this special trip back about ten miles to pay that woman back, and she had missed it. She had missed it, and she was upset at us. And she was so relieved, that she wiped the tears away and she says, "Oh, Mr. Albright, I just can't tell you what this means and thank you so much for coming. Do come again." And, I thought, "That's the man I want for the father of my children." Anybody that is that concerned and would do that, and then, of course, before the next May he had proved himself so many ways, that no wonder I fell in love with him,

and I broke that other engagement. Well, who would live with a man who could tell fibs, when you could live with a man like that? And, people think that it's crazy now when I go down there and wheel him and give him this-- He said something the other day, Sam, that maybe I shouldn't share this with you, but-- And the daughters went home to the other and I'll never forget, we went down to a PTA and I noticed these men come in and they went and got Raleigh, and I kind of laughed because, I thought Raleigh didn't smoke and he didn't drink and I thought gee, what's going on? And they were out there and they were saying, "Mr. Albright, how come, do you let your daughters write checks on the family?" "Well, sure." And they said, "How do you do this?" And Raleigh said, <sup>How do you know about it?</sup> "What business is it of yours?" "Well, our kids are coming home and demanding the same thing. We want to know, is it an allowance, or how do you do this?" Raleigh says, "No, the family has worked as a unit and those children know exactly how that money is earned. And they all work <sup>with a</sup> willing. We don't have to ever scold or plead or anything about it. When the family goes to work, they all work. The girls know exactly how that money is earned. And if they're ever going to learn how to manage it, they'll never learn any younger." And they said, "Oh, Lord, it's too bad that we're doing whatever we're doing and not on the ranch." And Raleigh says, "It wouldn't work on the ranch either unless you are willing to share with it." He says, "I know that we are well blessed and the children are well adjusted, but it's because they know exactly-- when we get up at four o'clock and go to work, they get up. <sup>If</sup> We work until ten o'clock at night, unless my wife sends them to bed. They know exactly how--." Well, the fathers went off grumbling. Raleigh said, afterwards, "Gee, I didn't know what to tell 'em, except the truth." And I said, "Of course, that's all you could tell them." It's things like this that makes a difference.

As you say, I was so fortunate to run into Raleigh when I did, because I probably would have married Dr. Hall, and if I had, I'd been, I'd never been sure of myself, because I never could have believed what he told me. This has been a lesson to me too, so as not to-- I explain, but I never alibi, because, why should you? Everybody makes mistakes. And if you make a mistake, why not say so? (Chuckles)

SS: I'd like to talk a little bit about the operation. The family operation That sounds awfully interesting to me. Did Raleigh continue with the family's truck gardening business?

LA: Yes. We did that until we got our kids, then, as I said, we went into the turkey business, because it was more lucrative. You see, the war came along, and took James, this husky young-- our youngest one. We lost our first baby because-- I was on the homestead and I uremic poisoning and I didn't know it. Uremic poisoning is the retention of the urine-- the acid in the urine, and the baby, he was a big baby, he was born prematurely, and he was blue as he could be because the heart never materialized, because, here I was poisoning. I knew that I got awfully fat, but I thought that this was just part of being pregnant. If I'd been home or where Grandmother was-- but you see I wasn't-- I was over here on a hillside, and I was doing the best I could, and was canning and doing all these things, you know, and the baby was born in the fall and I thought that all girls probably had this, I didn't have sense enough to realize, and there was no doctors. And when the baby was ~~caught~~ prematurely, and was born in my mother-in-law's and Dr. Rockwell came down, and he worked desperately to-- with it, and did a lot of things ~~as~~ a country doctor-- like putting him into hot and cold water and then manipulating his arms and his little legs. And I laid there on the bed and the doctor was working right here in the bedroom

and my mother-in-law rose to <sup>the</sup> occasion and had the hot water and the cold water and everything that - and Dr. ~~Rockwell~~ worked with the foot for an hour and about an hour and a half, and the baby gave just one little squeak, but Dr. ~~Rockwell~~ afterwards, Raleigh ~~then~~ came in too, because they'd sent for him, he was in the field, you see, and I realized that there was something wrong, because he was just as blue, the baby was just as blue as he could be, he hadn't been having the correct oxygen for a long time. So, he's buried over on the homestead. And Dr. ~~Rockwell~~ says, "Now, don't have a funeral." But I suppose he expected us to go out and dig a hole in the garden and throw the baby in it. I don't know what he expected. And Raleigh came in, and I didn't know what Raleigh would expect either, after all, I hadn't lived with him more than-- hardly a year, you know, and the baby was born. And finally he says, "Honey, what will we do? Pa Albright is going to make a casket for the baby." And so, he went out, he was a carpenter, and a real good carpenter, and so he made a little box with a lid and Ma Albright took the new dotted swiss that she got for a dress and she padded it all inside with cotton and they tacked it and sewed it and they dressed the baby and <sup>I</sup> had baby clothes, of course, and they dressed the baby and put him in there and then my mother had come down in the meantime, and Raleigh took my mother and his baby, his first baby in the casket, in the boat across ~~the~~ Potlatch and along the hillside <sup>three</sup> ~~quarters~~ of a mile and buried him under a big pine tree that was below the homestead cabin. And that's where he's buried over there. And Mother read the verses ~~from~~ the Bible from memory, and Raleigh put the casket in-- Mother told me afterwards, Raleigh never could speak about it, it was awfully hard for him to do that. You kids don't have any children, do you?

SS: Not yet.

LA: Well, when you have a baby, you'll know that it's just a special baby that you have fathered and that your wife has carried under her heart for nine months; a real special person. So, I felt satisfied that that was fine. So, Mother read the services and Raleigh did the digging and they covered the baby and then they got some big stones and put on it. We never did put a stone up. But we did put a little bronze thing on the tree, because he was buried under that big tree. So he's over on the homestead. But it was a difficult thing. And I could see Raleigh walking up and down. I was laying on the outside, the tears running down his face. And I never did find out whether he felt sorry for me or sorry for himself or because he lost the baby. It was a touchy thing for him for a long time, because he felt that he had neglected me, you see, that we hadn't had a doctor before. If there had been a doctor available, close enough--I was getting ready to go to my grandmother's to have this baby-- and so Dr. Gohr would be the doctor up there that we would have, so we didn't have any one from Lewiston, it was too hard to come up. But, Raleigh felt that he had let me down see, and that was what was worrying him. But, he was named Robert and he's entered in the family legends. We didn't have any pictures or anything of him, of course,-- he weighed nine pounds. He had dark brown hair and was a nice fat baby, but just as blue as indigo and he died. So, I didn't know if I could talk him into some children again, but I did. I talked for every one that I had. First, he was just, "Okay, we would have one." So we had James, and he was such a nice baby. Then we had to have a daughter, so I talked him into the daughter. And you know, God's awfully good to me, because, we got Peggy Jean, just what we ordered. And about that time we bought this-- and we were building this house; you've seen pictures of it, the house that we built over here. <sup>as we lived in it.</sup> And then, I thought, well, gee whiz

they're nice, you know, but something could happen to them, and I commenced to talk to Raleigh, I said, "Well, why don't we have another baby?" And, he said, "Well, aren't you satisfied?" And I said, "No. Now look, we've got to have a boy's bedroom and a girl's bedroom and two boys can sleep, and two girls can sleep in the same room just as easily as not." So, God was good to me again, and we had another little girl and another little boy. Then I let him call it quits. And so, we had the two boys and the two girls and they are married now, and we had ten grandchildren; seven boys and three girls. And out of the seven boys and three girls, we had nine great grandchildren; all boys! Wasn't that something? No girls, at all. The Albrights run to boys.

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