

NELL WOOD SMITH
Sixth Interview

Interviewed by:
Sam Schragger

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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NELLIE WOOD SMITH

Bovill; b. 1892
homemaker

1.5 hours

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with Sam Schrager

January 23, 1976

II. Transcript

SMITH

This conversation with Nellie Wood Smith took place in her home in Bovil, Idaho on January 23, 1976. The interviewer is Sam Schragger.

NELL WOOD SMITH: Well, when we first got to going out to, is that your book?

SAM SCHRAGER: Yes, it is.

NS: You got you one of those things, didn't you? I was going to say, did mine fall out? It's in one of these boxes. I left it there.

SS: No, it's mine. I brought it in. I didn't know how long you was going to be. I thought I'd sit and take a little look at it. You were saying you knew them from?

NS: Well, her father was a ^{drayman} when they first moved on to Helmer and those kids were little, May and None. And so they, I don't know, I've got quite a bit, and then another family that lived there. ^{to} The

SS: The Miller's were there for a while, weren't they?

NS: And the Lawrences. But this other family was the Smiths. A few years later why see, he came out here, out west. And he had, he and his brothers ^{he had} come out. And then the brothers, they worked a while and he sent money back for his family to come out. And so they came then and they settled ~~there~~ in Helmer. There was a house then right almost where the store stands ^{down there}. Possibly a little bit further to the west. That's where they lived. And then this other family, Grannis family lived there.

SS: I spoke to Mrs. Grannis in Lewiston recently.

NS: She married Earl Grannis. But at that time she was Kate Price. And so, but we got acquainted, well, I went down, we knew some of them, this Smith family. See, we had gotten acquainted ^{with them} down there and knew them and all. I don't know, several families, we got pretty well acquainted with them. With all of them in Helmer. In fact, we knew everybody ^{that was} there. And they used to have what is it? These like get together meetings of an evening. Kind of a study project or an entertainment project.

SS: Where?

NS: Well, in Helmer. We used to, it was kind of a thing like we'd have, literary

society. I think that's what they called it, literary society. Used to meet there every month. I think every two weeks or something like that. ^{maybe} every week.

SS: In school?

NS: Uh huh. At the schoolhouse.

SS: You'd come down from the homestead to that?

NS: That was more after we moved into town, I think. Because I don't think we ever, the only time we came down from the homestead and visited, came down for a visit ^{while} we were on the homestead, I was about fourteen or fifteen. But anyhow, mother, she was kind of ^{packed in there}, she was kind of like I am now, kind of shut in, couldn't go anywhere. And we had no team or anything like that. So she said, she and Blanche Dinsmore, another cousin was, Blanche was out there working at this big barn where the big barn and the big house is. You turn right there after you ^{leave} to Helmer, turn and go across the railroad tracks, there's a large house there. The trees have kind of shut it off from the view from the road now. If you notice it. My cousin Blanche was working there for Uncle Henry, ^{and mine} her uncle. [^] And his wife had died and she was working there. He had let his employee go down to the other Mrs. Dinsmore that lived down there by Troy. And so, but Blanche was kind of shut in too. She was there. He had some men working for him. And he took care of the place and the eats and everything. So...

SS: On their place?

NS: ^{on} Uncle Henry's place. The place [^] then belonged to Uncle Henry. All that big meadow and that building and all. It was just a log house there then and there was a barn and some things. But finally dad, he got dad to build him a house. And so my dad built that big house that stands there. ^{now} They all called it by the name of one of the fellas that lived there. It was really not should have gone by that name. But it did. Anyhow, it was arranged so that mother could get out for a little while. She hadn't seen any of the folks or visited with anybody ^{or anything} for so long out there and it got kind of [^]

tiresome. I don't know, I guess through letters or something, Blanche, this was the girl that was working there for Uncle Henry. And they I guess, probably through a letter ^{got it} planned, why couldn't they send me out there to help with the work and then she'd come in and visit ^{at} mother ^{is} for two days. And have a good visit together. So that's the way that she got on the horse, one they called Old Dancer. They ^{called him} most of them, his name was supposed to be Dancer, but they, I think they, the old flunky guy, the man that did all the chores and kept up the wood and everything around there, he was Uncle Bill White, I think his name was. But anyhow, he called him, "Come on Lazarus get going." He called him Lazarus.

SS: So she took the horse ?

NS: She took the horse on up there to the homestead. And I got to, proceeded to get on the horse and go back down. I wasn't much of a rider either, but I got there alright. And I knew just about what all there was to do. I had stopped there I think once before, because I got away once in a while for a day or for over night or something. ^{When} somebody was going out and I got a chance, why, but mother didn't, she didn't want to send me out to them to be there taking care of things.

SS: She wanted you to stay home and help?

NS: No, she didn't like to leave me alone up in there with, to go out herself for a visit. But they'd arranged so they'd split up, you see, and change jobs and then I could take over, that's what she figured. I'd get along alright there. So I did. I was taking care of the pans and pans of milk. And cream and the meals and things. ^{like that} Well, there was another lady staying there too. Her husband was working for Uncle Henry, and she was staying there too. She was helping. He had quite a lot of work to do. And she was staying there, I'd forgotten about her. She ^{was} Myrtle Compton was her maiden name.

SS: She was there at the same time you were?

NS: Uh huh. She was there when Blanche was there too. And ...

SS: How much work was there for you to do?

NS: ^{No} Just to keep you busy. I guess maybe that she could handle it alone, but I wasn't used to that. But I kept it going, Myrtle and I. Kept it going. And ^{we} had ^{the} milk, take care of the pans of milk in the buttry or pantry. And skim it up and take care of the cream and churn and all. It was one of these round, barrel churns that you set on the table and you ^{turn} the wheel, you know. It comes out butter and buttermilk. Mother just loved buttermilk. She wasn't there. But anyhow, Myrtle liked buttermilk so well too. And so she said something about, "Oh boy, that's going to be a nice bunch of buttermilk," or something. So we decided that she should have some of that when we were through churning. After we got it all turned into a big lump of butter, why I said, "Do you want this buttermilk?" She said, "Yes" ^{It was ready.} I said, "Okay, it's ready. I'll draw some for you. " I put my glass down under the spout and pulled the plug, and it squirted right out here. It squirted all over the floor. It was such a mess that we did have. (chuckles) Both laughing and yet we had an awful mess to clean up. She didn't have much buttermilk left. But they didn't miss it anyway. Sometimes I guess gave it to the pigs if there was any left.

SS: Buttermilk is what's left after you make the butter?

NS: Yes. It all comes out, mother said she could just drink a gallon of it. She just loved it. But it's so much nicer, different, richer flavor, ^{then} the buttermilk that you buy from the store. It's, what do they call it? It's kind of ^{patent made,} factory made. There at the stores. And they say it's lacking something in flavor.

SS: What was buttermilk like? Did it taste like butter?

NS: Well, it has ^{that} a rich, buttery, creamy flavor to it. And it looks awfully good, but I never did like sour milk. ^{really} And mother loved clabber. Clabbered milk. Where she'd take a bowl of it. Let it sour, get it in a big solid bowl and then she'd take a tablespoon and dip that out and it, She just

loved the sour milk. Some people do like it, but I never did. Some of them eat the clabber with maybe salt and pepper on it. ^{But} Some of eat it with sugar. Sweeten it down with sugar.

SS: Clabber is milk that's let stand? It'll sour and then go solid?

NS: Uh huh.Yeah.I see you're no farmer from way back.

SS: No, I got to admit I'm not.

NS: Because as you let a glass of milk stand on your table in the kitchen or anywhere where it's kind of warm and you leave that maybe to the next day or the next couple days, it'll turn to solid cake or clabber. You can just slice it off. ^{Just} Like butter or something. But you leave it stand like that. And then, til it gets clabbered, and then you put it on a stove and cook it. And it comes out clabbered cheese or cottage cheese. It cooks a certain length of time. Doesn't have to cook very long, but just so it's scalded through. Then put it in a strainer, a collander or something and let it drain off the liquid off of it, ^{it'll} be just like water, the liquid that come off of it and you've got the curd left for cottage cheese.

SS: You don't have to cook it if you don't want to?

NS: Yes. But if you want some cheese, just put ^{the} clabbered milk on to heat.

SS: Is that the way people made cottage cheese?

NS: Uh huh.Yep. While we were living there on the homestead, we had a neighbor by the name of Felts. Mrs. Felts was a long, lean, lanky woman. And she had a short, fat husband. They were kind of an odd couple. And she was German, had been. But she didn't have any particular German brogue or anything like that. But she just once in a while you'd hear a German-like expression. And so they just lived, I don't think it was more than a block away from our house, but just kind of around a little corner, you had to go through a gate,out there. Millers lived closer to us and she just lived on the other side of the fence a little ways from where they were. And so she had, they had a cow. They had a baby then about eight or nine months old, I think. And little boy. Anyhow, they kept this cow because they had to have milk

for the baby. So then she had more milk then she knew what to with. Just him and her and the baby. So she told mother, "Any time you want any milk or any skim milk for anything, why send one of the kids over and you can have all , I just have lots of it to throw away." And mother said alright. So she sent Edna, my sister over there one ^{day} to get some milk. She was going to cook something she wanted milk for. And she sent her over there and they were just eating dinner when Edna got there. They were all up to the table. And she asked her if she wouldn't set ^{up} and eat with them. Edna said, "Oh no," she wasn't hungry. And she was kind of timid anyhow. And especially around strangers. She probably said no, ^{if} she was starving pret'near. And she said no she didn't care for anything. And Mrs. ^{Felts} said, "Do you want some of this cheese? Do you like ^{smear} case?" And Edna didn't know what to say 'cause she didn't know what in the world ^{smear} case was. So she didn't answer for a little while. Something about we have some ^{smear} case here. Would you like some of that?" And Edna said no, she didn't care for any. She wasn't hungry or something like that. When she got home she said, "What in the world is ^{smear} case?" (laughs) She said she looked around and the baby was just messy stage and he ate with his hands and poked it into his face. Smearred it all over the face with both hands. She looked around a while and she said, "^{smear} case." She asked, "Shall I ^{smear} case?" She didn't know what to say. She said she looked, the only thing she could see was the baby was the worst smeared case of anything else she saw. (laughs) She went home, "What in the world is ^{smear} case?" Mother told her that was the cheese that she had made.

SS: When I was talking to Floyd Lawrence, he said the ^{Felts} were in bad health and they were poor and had a hard time.

NS: She'd get out with an axe and saw and work away with him. He was in poor health. He couldn't do much of anything. I think he was so fat that it was crowding his heart a whole lot I think, and it was a reason for his being

careless about working much. I think he'd just do a little bit and have to stop. He didn't get much done, but she'd go ahead and work and she was like a whipcracker, just tall and lanky. And but, and she'd laugh and talk and go right on ahead with ^{every} thing. She was one of those goodnatured people. And after they went to the homestead. The Millers were here, and we would go up here, turn and this was our place over here. And ^{Felts'} was on over this way. ^{still further} So when they were going to move up to their homestead then, they decided, they called a houseraising. All the neighbors all around got busy and went over there and put up the house, the log cabin for them. They got the log cabin, they ~~kind~~ of getting things ready beforehand. Put up the cabin and kind of a barn for 'em, woodshed or something like that. Got them up some wood. And we lived, I don't know if it was six miles or eight miles. I can see that map up there. At the courthouse. You can pull that one out at the bottom there. We took our dinner, everybody took their dinner with them and they put that all in a bunch and they had enough to feed the crew. Big dinner there, hot coffee and everything.

SS: At the house raising?

NS: Uh huh.

SS: Did you go over to that?

NS: Oh yes. I went up there. It was, I think, two miles further up from where we ^{lived}.

SS: Did the whole neighborhood turn out for that?

NS: Yeah, everybody round the, they passed the word around. Everybody got together, then they could throw it up in a hurry.

SS: Would they do that for anybody? Or because they were in bad shape.

NS: Well, they knew that they were. They knew that they needed help badly. But anybody that was going to put up their house like that. They were just people in there with nothing to do on or nothing to help with. Just making something out of nothing, you might say. So they pitch in and do anything ^{for anybody.}

just all get together, just give a day, busy, and then all talk and laugh.

And they had a good visit while they were at it. So...

SS: Did the women bring food from the different houses?

NS: Yeah. They all ^{took food}, bachelors and all brought whatever they could and then put it all together. I don't know, makeshift table or something, I guess. That they had up there. They fixed it.

SS: I wonder if they had all those logs cut beforehand?

NS: I think they had a lot of it...

SS: Sort of prepared.

NS: So they could throw it together.

SS: I wonder if men went and helped them get those logs?

NS: I don't know. They might have. Of course, they didn't know much about the preparations. But I know we all went and did what ^{we} could. They were soon in there and settled in their own home then.

SS: It seems kind of rough that a family that wasn't in good health would go out and homestead.

NS: That was one way I guess of figuring that they ^{would} have a home that belonged to them, a piece of land that was their own. And I don't think they knew that he was as bad off as maybe as much as he was. But 'cause he'd work awhile and then he'd have to sit around and rest a while. And eventually after they moved into Bovill, he died. Suddenly. The dogs got, they had a dog, one of the neighbor's dogs got into a fight out there in front of the house, and he ^{kinda} started to go and separate 'em and he got excited and just collapsed. And I had just been married just before that. So as soon as he had passed away, his name was Hampton ^{Felts}. As soon as he passed away, she ^{just} began ^{to} making plans to go back to Huntington, Indiana, where she came from. She had two youngsters by that time. That was the ^{smear} case. I was going to say, I helped pack all of her dishes for her when she left. Wrapped 'em and packed 'em and all. And I bought some of her things from her. I bought a table, I was just starting, ^{housekeeping} I didn't have any furniture of

anything. I didn't care. It didn't have to be something new and shiny. I just wanted something to use until we got so we could buy a nice piece or two. Then we'd soon get stocked up with something a little nicer. I bought a table and I think some chairs. A couple enormous big washtubs that were like brand new. ^{Everybody washed with} The original kind in a boiler.

SS: A boiler?

NS: Uh huh.

SS: She didn't think of staying out here and trying to find another husband?

NS: No. She went back. Her father was still living back there. ^{in Illinois} His name was [^]Freehafer. Her maiden name was Freehafer.

SS: Mr. Lawrence remembered her coming into the store once. And his father saying that he couldn't give 'em any more credit. Because they didn't have any money. She broke down and cried. So he broke down and gave her what she had to have. It must have been real hard on 'em.

NS: There was no income, of course. We just didn't even have social security or anything like they have now. And no income, they just got set out there and the winter comes on, you see there, and you couldn't raise anything. Had no chance making a garden right now and having it ready to use next day. And it takes quite a while to prepare ground and raise a garden. So anyhow, after they got moved up to the homestead, ^{she had} her other baby, ^{then} he was a boy too, [^] was I guess maybe about a year old. And she'd walk in from the homestead. And see, we were six miles out to our homestead. Or possibly eight, whichever it was. And ...

SS: They were two miles further?

NS: They were two miles further. That made eight miles anyway, or possibly ten. And she'd strap that baby on her back fixed to a pad and she'd strike out for Bovill. She'd come in here and get her little bunch of groceries and she'd be here by the time we had breakfast. We were living right over on the corner over there. You can see the spots where my folks were living in.

I wasn't married at that time. And when we first had moved into town, we'd been there quite a while now. But they hadn't moved in yet. And she'd walk in there and carry that baby on her back. And stop at the house a few minutes and see how we all were. "Well, I've got to get back. Hamp has to have his dinner at a certain time." She'd go up to the store and get her groceries, a pack~~sack~~ full of groceries and then she'd start back and we'd try to get her to eat her dinner before she left. "No, I've got to get back and get Hamp his dinner." And she'd come in there and walk back that eight miles, or ten. And take *Cookie* his dinner. So it wasn't all fun. There was work to it as well.

SS: Think she probably had to do a lot of the work?

NS: Yes she did.

SS: That maybe he could have done if he was well?

NS: Well yes, if he'd been well he could have done most ^{all} of that work. But he just wasn't able to do it. He'd work a little bit and ^{then} kind of play out. It was his heart was bad and so he just couldn't do it.

SS: She probably had to do all the chores.

NS: And he couldn't even walk ⁱⁿ as far as town. If he didn't have any errands, he could only go a little ways. He'd have to sit down and rest a while. And if he was going anywhere, I don't think he ever tried to come up. I don't know whether he did. Maybe he did, but taking their time, I don't remember. Seeing him.

SS: She must have had stamina.

NS: She was just like a piece of haywire. You could bend it and work with it til your fingers are raw and still it would be good. Tough as wire. And she would go ahead. And she had, the first time I saw her was when we moved to the homestead. We came along from the McGary place way down at the fork~~s~~ of the Potlatch. Came up this way and you turn, go over the bridge that went over the creek and then you come up this side of the river, the creek you might say. ^{And follow} up this way...

NS: We were going to our homestead that goes up there, but when we got about here, the ^{Felts'} it was his nephew, Mr. ^{Felts'} nephew, Ed ^{Felts.} And he was, had his son, I've forgotten what his name was. But he was about fourteen, fifteen years old I guess. Maybe sixteen. And just a ^{young} kid. And Basil. Basil ^{Felts}. They lived here and then you just go around across this, through this gate and through this fence. And Mr. Miller lived over here. And we lived up here. We hadn't built ~~our~~ place yet or anything.

SS: That was the first time you saw her?

NS: First time we'd seen her. We got out there, we were coming out. Snow was kind of like it is now, it was nasty and we were going in there, but you had to be in a certain ^{not let a certain} time elapse before you had to get back to the homestead again. You had a certain date to make or you're liable to lose your claim on it. So we were going into fulfil our agreement, or whatever you call it. My brother then was just a baby, year, year and a half old maybe. And we were going up in a sled. I don't know who took us up there. I think maybe somebody from the mill, down at the Dinsmore mill. They were relatives of ours. We had been living there, we were going to ^{live} there anyway. Been just going up there for the time being, I think. Just to stay a few days, establish residences. So we got just even to ^{Felts'} place and driver told us that ^{Felts} lived there. And about that time, the sled turned over. They had us kind of in a wide, flat bed, you know. ^{Just a} Side wall I guess about that high. And we had a batching outfit, enough stuff we could live while in this extra place of ^{Millers}. And we had groceries and all the necessities that you could get by with for what time we had to be there. And the sled turned over and turned it all out in that snow there. And he was a baby and it made him cry. ~~A~~ and she came running up there. She just, I guess ^{maybe} a little further than from here to that log house from the road. And far as the second house over there. And she was there and that's the first time I met her. She was tall, lean and lanky. And just nothing to her but skin and bones looked like hardly. And then she'd start coughing and she'd cough and

cough. I was scared. I told mother when we got up here, I said ^{that woman} must have t.b. I don't know what she's doing out in that snow. And they all said the same thing. And I looked for her to pass away anytime after we got there. ^{outlived all of us.}
 And doggone, she pret'near ^{After} she moved back into town and he had died. She went back to Indiana and married another man. I don't know what became of her in the long run. I think she finally died back there. But i don't know whether she outlived another man. She had married another one before she married ^{Felts}. That shows the strength she had. She just looked like she'd be dead within the next day or two. She had that funny, rattley cough. And it wasn't just a cold that hung on for days and then left. She just had what you call, a permanent cough.

SS: She came out, was she helping you get the sled righted again?

NS: No.

SS: What happened.

NS: I think that the man that was taking us up there, he had straightened out, we had to get unloaded and get up and straighten ourselves out and they tried to take everything for a short stay up there. And one thing, my mother had put in a box of matches and they come off that, there was matches all over the snow. Spilt the matches all over. Anyhow, she wanted us to come on down to her place, to come on in and get warm. They said no, they'd go on. That we didn't have far and they had to get settled in before night caught them and all. But there wasn't any of us hurt or anything. Just spilt ^{out} in the snow.

SS: You were living then at Millers extra house?

NS: That's where we were going to stay all night.

SS: You hadn't built your own house yet.

NS: No, we hadn't.

SS: Was this house of his on your...?

NS: No, it was on his land. Just up on the raise. Just, it might have been as far as from here to that barn over there. Pret'near a block. Up the hill.

Then he had built his big house down by the creek so they could have that running water.

SS: You didn't have a team at the house?

NS: No that was just a team from the mill. Somebody from the mill took us up there.

SS: Did that make it pretty rough for your family? Not being able to get around? What about your father?

NS: He worked and built the house and built the road and all like that and got that done. He came out here to Bovill and got work. He was a carpenter. And Bovill had a building business then. So he came out to work carpentry. He would get back in each weekend. And so...

SS: He built the house without horses?

NS: Uh huh.

SS: And the road too?

NS: Yeah. I think he brought in a load of lumber to him. I don't know whether Miller's mill cut that lumber or not. He might have got lumber from Miller. He had a mill out there, but I don't know how much it did or what kind ^{of lumber} it did cut. And...

SS: He built the road too without...?

NS: Well, we had a team for one day. And they had worked on the road, got it built up until they come around a bend. We wanted to go on around, had to cross a little creek and then go ^{on} up around to our house. We got to this creek. This man that we knew came in to visit the Millers. It was during the day, or maybe the night. And dad asked how's our chances to rent his team for the day. To plow. He had the stringers for the bridge that's going across the street, he had the stringers in. And all. They were going to put a corduroy bridge, there's a lot of little black pines there. ^{they were} just put that kind of a top on it you see. When he got around to it. But he had just gotten those stringers in so far and didn't have any more. So then he

got the team, he had plowed the side hills down so that ^{we} could work on them, he got them leveled off into a road. Til he got to the bridge. And then that stopped us. And the peat was only, the water only about that far, but it was marshy and muddy and sandy. And dad had plowed that down til he got to the bridge. ^{then} He wanted to go, I think we were going to eat lunch then, but he had to take the team across there and tie them up on the other side ^{of the bridge} and go to work and we were going to eat our lunch. Nobody was there but he and I. I was working with him that day. And so he took one of the horses across the water and it was just a little stream with about that much water. But anyhow, he got, he said, he gave me the reins for the other horse. He told me to, he told me something or other. What he meant was for me, and I didn't understand him, ^{was for} me to hold the horse until he went over there and tied that other one up and then he'd come back and get that one. And that would have been alright, but I thought he meant he took the one and he wanted me to bring the other one on. I was kind of scared but I didn't let on. I'd ~~back~~ almost anything. So when I got ahold of that horse, well honestly, I didn't come only about to his shoulders. It was one of those big, like you see on the tv. The big beer signs.

SS: Percherons.

NS: Kind of that kind. They used to log with those enormous big horses ^{here}. And that's the kind the man had. Great big enormous things. Great big feet like that. Anyhow, I kind of waited til dad got out of the way. And I started with my horse. But I got a hold of the reins clear up under his bridle. The harness somewhere so I could, I figured, kind of hold him better ^{if} I had to put a short rein on him, the tight, he wandered around much. So, and finally had him hold up there. And he was that much higher, his head, you know, ^{way up} higher than I was. And he of course was working for himself doing best he could. He knew what he was doing and I didn't. So he started lunging, hurrying to get, like a horse will, to get over that wet spot before he was ^{kind of} mired down. Each step he'd take he'd go down. He'd get a

quick to get through, to get out of there. It made sense. But when he was doing that, stepping here and there, why it just made a whipcracker out of me. (laughs) I couldn't control him at all. But I was hanging on. And he stepped ^{over} this way, I stepped I had to step that much to catch him. He caught me with my feet crossed when I stepped back. Anyhow, when he stepped back then, on the other side I just smashed that foot right down into the dress and into the sand and gravel and mud. And I ^{held him. Dad came by.} "Well why in the world did you start with that thing? I told you to wait for me!" I said, well I thought you said bring him. He said, "I was coming back after him." I had a nice black and blue foot for quite a while. I guess it injured it. Somehow it never did get quite over it entirely, it's always been weak. But it's pretty good.

SS: That would have hurt a lot worse if you hadn't sunk into the mud.

NS: The mud and sand and stuff. I would have ^{just} crushed a lot of bones in it. If I hadn't been, if it hadn't have been for the mud.

SS: Was your father mad or worried?

NS: Both I think. Yes. He was kind of, he was kind of disgusted 'cause he told me to wait, he'd come back, and I thought he said bring him along. So, and then he plowed, that afternoon the hillside, he plowed that down. That was pretty near to our house. The bridge was. Maybe as far as from here to, maybe a block. And so he got that all plowed down so he could use a shovel and get it all leveled up. That's all the work that was done with horses. In our road. We did it by hand.

SS: When he wanted supplies, would he walk into Bovill to get it?

NS: We always got our groceries at Helmer. And of course, we lived at Helmer, ^{we lived} there at the homestead a while before coming to Bovill to work, just work there and living on the place. He once in a while would go in for something, but we didn't go to, clear into Helmer or something. We'd go as far as Miller's place. You see, that was only oh, I don't know, from one to two

miles, I don't know. It might have been a mile and a half or something like that. It wasn't so very far. And ^{go that far and} leave a note. Whatever it was that they wanted. The fellow, Hayes, up the road a ways, we turned this way for our homestead, but ^{he lived} straight on ahead. He'd leave his what list and Miller would have a whole list of things to bring out for everybody whenever he got back. He knew just about what day we were going. They'd take their list down ahead of time so they'd be sure and have it there when he got ready to go into town. He'd bring back a load of groceries for everybody. We'd go over and get ours.

SS: Your father would pack to the homestead.

NS: Uh huh. Course, after we got our road all finished and our house finished and all, why some of the folks from the mill came up to see us once or something like that. ^{As long as} They could drive up there through the, I think they were up there one time, I know they came up to Bovill on their china anniversary, ^{they're} 25th anniversary. The folks came up from Troy. To help them celebrate.

SS: Your parents?

NS: Uh huh.

SS: The road, was there a main road anyway up there or did you have to build the county road yourself?

NS: No, that had been built by, I don't know who built it, but McGary lived on, it was kind of a promontory thing. It was ^a kind of a cliff thing stuck out over where they built the road down below. And this McGary had a house right ^{up} on the top of that thing. And up at the forks of Potlatch down there. They went in ^{through} Helmer a little way, right across the road, turn at that corner. I mean, straight at Helmer where we turned to come to Bovill, why they went straight on. Across the railroad and a short distance after you leave the highway here to Bovill. McGary lived on that promontory, that butte thing that stuck out there. And across the bridge and then you go over here by ^{Felts} and Miller, they both been living there and they had

teams and I don't know how many more, if ^{there was} any of the rest of them had teams up there, but there was already a road up there. You could go clear up to Hayes'. That was about two miles I think, *from our place.*

SS: So you had to put in from the main road?

NS: We had to branch off of Miller and Hayes' road.

SS: And get into your place. How far do you think that was?

NS: That was only a quarter mile from Miller's place ^{here} up to where we turned. And then we had about a mile and a half I guess and you see, it was about two miles, I think, mile and a half, ^{or} two miles from the Miller place to our place. I could tell by the map.

SS: I'm just trying to guess how much road your father had to put in.

NS: It was about, I don't know whether it was a mile and a half maybe to our place. *Or if it was two miles.*

SS: It sounds like quite a bit.

NS: It was through dense forest. Native, this is what it was now. But that was I don't know, it was less than two miles from our place to Millers. It was only aboutt a quarter of a mile or half a mile maybe up to where we turned off at Miller's road. And then they built the rest of it, you see. And then ours became a ^{lead} road to Miller's, I mean to Brooks'. They, ^{where}, they ^{lived at} our place here, turn to the right and went down to the canyon. On over another half mile or so. Maybe a mile.

SS: And Brooks' built it from your place?

NS: They went in, not from our place, but from up on the hill just a little while ^{'fore} you got to, well just before ^{you turned to} ^{got on} to that bridge.

SS: Before you went down the creek.

NS: And they crossed the creek and went on down hill kind of. And where they went down is later where they put in old Camp 6. They put a camp in there and hauled timber out of there for a long time. And from where they were there, homestead, ^{was usually} they, see, they had part of theirs made on ours and

they didn't have much to do. And they went, they just went right up the hill up to their place, they would come out there at our house. They were just on foot, you know. They'd come up there every once in a while. An old man and his two sons.

SS: Brooks'?

NS: Uh huh.

SS: Did your father do the building all by himself or did the family help him?

NS: We were all ^{men} on that road. My brother was just a year or two old. ^{Just a} little fella. And most of the time, maybe mother'd stay home and make up a lot of stuff and get ready for several days run, you know. And ^{MAYBE} the next day he had something to do, he'd want her help. So maybe something they thought I couldn't do. Maybe something like that. So she'd leave me in with the baby and she'd take care of him and she'd go with dad. Maybe Edna could go out or maybe not. And she maybe be home with the baby and I. And then other days when we'd all go.

SS: And work.

SS: Uh huh, And so he fixed a little two wheeled cart that we could pull him in. Bring him along over the road. And he'd ride along in that and then she'd entertain the baby all day. And anyway, ⁱⁿ the longrun, she was, he was just playing or sleeping or sleeping maybe or something. And she had a little hatchet and she was chopping switches off ⁱⁿ little pieces and she chopped the end of her finger pret'near off.

SS: Edna?

NS: Uh huh. And patch that up right quick. She was alright, you wouldn't know anything had happened. But she didn't chop any more wood after that.

SS: Were you doing that too, would you chop out the brush?

NS: Yes, mother and I. And we'd help him saw logs first one of us and then the other. We'd go into the heavy labor. And just Edna take care of the baby. And so, and we, just native brush, just thick all over. He had the idea mapped

out where he wanted the road, so ^{we'd} take that all out, ^{haves} axes and hatchets there and take out the brush. Saw up the logs and get every ^{bit of it} on the way. What do they call it? Pipe pole. They use it for canthook. To roll their logs with.

SS: Did you work hard on that or leisurely?

NS: We kept busy. ^{We were} was anxious to finished up so ^{we} could get into it, you know. And we started building a house. Dad brought in a load of lumber from somewhere. I don't know where he got it or where he got it from the mill down ^{at} Troy. The, our folks run that mill and might have gotten the lumber from ^{right there close} them. Or whether he got it from Miller's where they had the sawmill. [^] But anyway, he brought him a load of lumber one time and of course, he could make all the studding and the things out of the old timber there. If he wanted to. If he had to. So I don't remember whether he used that for ^{all} ^{of 'em} or if he used two by fours wherever he had to. But I know that he didn't think anything about that then. Who did it and who didn't. But mother helped him with quite a lot of that. And she carried shingles I know to ^{put} the rough on. Built a few at a time and hand them up to him. And he'd nail 'em on just as fast as she could bring 'em up. He didn't have those shingles at first. He made those shingles out of cedar. ^{Right} ^{down there} [^] by that little creek where the horse stepped on me. And they had their shingle factory and he made all those shingles by hand. And then he took his draw knife and shaved 'em. So that they were thin edged and wide at the other end. Like the thin end just like the factory shingle. So. I didn't make so many of those shingles, he didn't trust me too much with that draw knife. But I did some of it. But then when he started to build our barn, ^{with} poles you know. We had ^{there was} an awful lot of black pines. Tall thin ones that just grow up to nowhere. Without tapering. They didn't amount to anything. And we had a nice barn. Big barn there. And so I know that we made shakes for the barn. And for the chicken house. Made a little chicken house out of logs.

And I made a lot of the shingles, or the shakes ^{that went} on that. I could make the shakes alright.

SS: Using a froe?

NS: No, use your, what do you call that thing now? That thing that you split the shingles with? It's a blade with a handle that runs up this way. And you set it, use your mallet on it. I've forgotten what they call it. I made quite a few of those shingles.

SS: Isn't that called a cedar froe?

NS: It's a froe, uh huh.

SS: Did he start building the buildings, he did that before he got the road in? Put the road in first?

NS: I don't know, he might have started but you couldn't do much 'cause you couldn't live there til he got the house built with the roof on.

SS: You were still staying in Miller's house?

NS: We were still ^{up} in their little house up the hill.

SS: So it was really after you got the road in that he brought in the lumber.

NS: Uh huh.

SS: How long did you folks work on the road?

NS: I don't know.

SS: Was it most of the season?

NS: ^{We went} every day.

SS: Did you start in the spring?

NS: Yes. I had to stop and think. I couldn't think how was I going to tell.

SS: You started in the spring. And then when did you start in the house?

NS: Well, we started because I left Troy, left school a month I think, before school was out. It was I think ^{Day} May, it was some special day. April. It could have been Easter, but no, I think it was May Day. But it would have been the next day after we left to go to the homestead. And I was worried because I was afraid I'd lose that year's credit. So, at school. And he said, "No I'll give you credit for that because" he said that work was

easy for ^{me}. And said ["]you can do that without any more. You can complete the rest of that year's work without any more instruction. Or study."

SS: Do you remember about when you started building the house? Was it in the summer?

NS: Oh yes. You see we started right in on the road from Miller's place to branch off. We started in to work on that just every day as long as there was good day light, lasted and all. We always took our lunch with us. And worked on the road until we got it passable. It must not have been more than a month or so til we were working on the house.

SS: Did he use that horse and grade the whole length of the road?

(End of side B)

SS: Was he easy to work with?

NS: Yes.

SS: I know a lot of times it's pretty rough for a man and his wife to work together because maybe he's pushy and he gives too many orders.

NS: I don't remember that. And after we got working on it, he'd, I don't know ^{Whether} mother was ^{n't} there that day, I know he used to tell me, "Bring me so and so." Whatever. And he'd be out of his tool box or something out of his tools. And he'd tell me, "Bring me this or that," or a certain chisel or a certain bevel or a certain plane, I knew ^{just} what he was talking about, every tool in the thing. 'Cause I'd worked with him enough that I knew the tools by heart and I liked it. I liked the carpenter work. I enjoyed it.

SS: I can't imagine that there were too many girls that had the chance to do as much work as you did.

NS: No there really wasn't because the Millers and the ^{Felts}, both the ^{Felts'} and the Hayes and all of our neighbors, McGarys and all them, none of them had any larger children.

SS: You mean they had young kids?

NS: The ^{Felts'} had the baby. And Hollenbecks had two ^{little} kids, that's after we

got the house all done though. She lived with us quite a while. And her husband was working out I guess, sort of at the mine. And the men were working at the mine.

SS: ^{She lived}
^ With your family?

NS: Yes. She and her two kids.

SS: Did they have their house up yet? They hadn't built it yet?

NS: I don't know whether they built the house later or whether I don't know how. I know they were living there because I guess they didn't have any place yet to live. Each one ^{would}
^ live with the next fella until he got him a place fixed of his own. I guess that was, I don't know how. But the Hollenbecks, we didn't know them in the east, but we knew people that did know them. They were all friends together.

SS: So she stayed right at the house with them.

NS: She worried mother to death, pret'near, because she would take those kids, she had one little girl, I think about three and a boy about five. And he was a little terror. But either one of 'em was bad enough. Mother was particular about her bedding things. It had to be kept clean. You didn't tramp around over it with your shoes ^{and things}
^ like that. You just had little manners if you were out in the sticks, you're supposed to behave yourself. And so ^{she}
^ laid down, we didn't have enough beds so that they lay the feather beds, my mother had feather beds, and lay that ^{down}
^ on the floor. Fix a bed for her and the two kids on ~~that~~ feather bed. When Frankie would come in to the house from outside and all, he'd just go clompity, clompity, ^{with his}
^ old dirty shoes right across the bed, you know. And it annoyed mother. And he'd have a fuss with her and it just annoyed her to death. I think that was responsible for her, ^{she said}
^ she thought that's what did it for her having an awful sick spell that she pret'near passed away on us ^{here}
^ . She miscarried while she was out there. Forty miles from nowhere. She was in an awful fix. Finally Mrs. Hollenbeck got got things straightened around when we sent for the doctor. She wouldn't let

me go through the woods alone, just to Millers to get the mail. I could take the .22 and go over to Millers and get the mail and come back.

SS: Your mother didn't want you to go through the woods?

NS: No, she didn't, she let me go over there to get the mail but for anyplace else. Ora Hayes was about the only one. He was the one that lived on a little further from where ^{our} road joined then.

SS: She was having a miscarriage and what happened?

NS: She was just ^{so} on edge, just so worried and so nervous and she thought that's what did it was that.

SS: Who got the doctor?

NS: She wrote a note. Dad was in to Moscow at that time to prove up on the homestead. And selling timber. I think that ^{is what} the occasion for him to be out there. He'd gone out to Troy and was supposed to be back that day. And well she was just, she just wouldn't have lasted much longer, I don't think. She just would have bled to death. But anyhow she had gotten, she did know enough to lift the ^{foot of the} bed and put mother, I guess had to tell her ^{so as to} to, and put a chunk of wood under the legs under the foot of the bed. [^] Put her head down, you know and stop that hemorrhaging. And so she told me, asked me if I could go over to Millers. And take this note for him to dad. And she wrote a note and told him she sure wished he'd hurry home. She said, ^{and} sent Ora Hayes on down to town to get the doctor from Troy. And she said, "'Cause I don't think I can last much longer at this rate." And down there the other side of Helmer, there's a place, that little house that lives over there where they used to have, a place where you could sleep all night.

SS: The halfway house? Or was it just different? Lawrences had one.

NS: No, it was ^{on} down further. No, not as far as Wells'. It's right there now, right as you go past the place, it's right on the meadow there. And you've noticed that place that has a little trailer house on one side. On your right as

you're coming this way. Well that was the , I don't know what it is they call it now, but they have, I'd know it if I could think of it. But that was the place that now the road didn't used to ^{go} past those houses there. It went ^{on} the other side of that. And then it went up a steep hill. And then you get on over to where you're going on over to our place. And Millers. But ^{that} was a long ways from Millers yet. But anyhow, they had, he was, I don't know if she said so, "Don't go any further and all." I said I ^{could go} on up to Ora's. Orey. We always called him Orey Hayes. And I said, I can make it, I'm not afraid. And she told me to take the gun with me, the .22. And she said, "Take it over to Millers and find some of them that'll go and tell Hayes." ^{I went over there and} "I don't know if there was anybody home or there wasn't anybody and I just skidded. That was the first time I ever disobeyed mother. But she told me not to go there. She was afraid that I'd get lost in the woods or something. I scooted out up there fast, as fast as I could go up to Orey's and ^{took} him that note. And he said, "Okay," he said. "I'll be right over." And he jumped on his saddle horse and took off. And he ^{went} up on that hill, he went down to where he could miss that, you know, he had to go through that awful road and it was muddy and all. Going down that hill. And people would walk, ^{would} go up that hill and climb it because it was shortcut. ^{Ever} so much, ^{then} you could walk clear around that way. And he thought, well, his horse could make it that much faster too. And so he thought he'd guess he'd take the short cut. He took that shortcut and met dad on that. ^{Just} lucky that he went thataway. 'Cause it was meant to be that way. And (someone comes in) he gave dad the note and then he just flew right, just jumped on that horse and flew down to, went on to the Dry Creek mill, that was below Deary. Do you know where that used to be? Well that was the other cousin that owned that mill too. And they had a phone. And he called into Troy to get the doctor up there. I guess he called

the other mill down there at Troy and had them call the doctor and bring him up there. And so they saddled up and got him and it was, ^{up} I don't know, [^] they had to I think it was up in the night, the night before they got there.

hustled right on to mother. And so she come out of it alright.

SS: Did your father go all the way to Dry Creek?

NS: Oh no.

SS: He just went home?

NS: He just went home. He just practically run most of the way home. He was worried about her.

SS: Hayes went.

NS: Yeah, he went on his horse. Of course, the doctor knew what to do. ^{and all} I guess [^] he knew what he was going for and so he took all his materials and pack ^{ing} [^] for the hemorrhaging. But in a few days she was alright.

SS: That sounds so close to being tragic.

NS: It could have been very, if he'd had gone this other way, he would have missed him. That wouldn't have been, course dad would have been ^{already} tired from that hike. He might not have come right on. He might have stopped and tarried some place or other. Rested a little or something. ^{But} When he got [^] that note he didn't stop for anything.

SS: You must have been pretty frightened.

NS: He was.

SS: You too I imagine.

NS: I was maybe fourteen by that time. And but mother and I were pretty good pals and I went with her, of course, this is stuff that you maybe better not be putting all that on if you've got the machine ^{turned} [^] on. (pause in tape)

SS: Probably a big strain on her.

NS: She said that Frankie was such an onery little mutt. His mother, "Now Frankie," she'd holler at him. "Frankie do this and Frankie do that." And Frankie

didn't hear at all.

SS: Do you think that not having a horse made it much harder on the family? So you could have gotten around quicker. It would have been easier.

NS: Well, I don't know. 'Cause I couldn't have taken that horse and ridden down there like he did. He had a riding horse and he just jumped on that and take off. Didn't let any grass grow under his feet.

SS: Your father would have to walk, take a lot longer to get in.

NS: Yeah. We had a cow while we were out there. Father got the cow from the mill.

SS: You were telling me about staying down at his place while she came up and visited with your mother. Did you finish that story? You said that was one of the first times that you were by Helmer?

NS: Yeah, ^{that was} while we lived down there.

SS: Did you get a chance to visit around in town?

NS: There was no way of us getting there. We just had to stay and do the work. The cooking and ^{tend to} things. So although I believe I was there one time, must have been they had a little party and, no Blanche was there at the party too. Those neighbors right around close to the, down there at the corner that, the house that dad built. There was a teacher that boarded with them. Was teaching school there. This, can't think of her name now, but a young girl. And she, they invited all the neighbors, ^{all around} sent word to them to come over and have a party. Get together. Had the party and the grownups and a whole bunch of long legged boys and I guess there was a few girls, but mostly boys were there to the party. And we all set in a big ring around on the floor. And played games. We had, did you ever play circus? You use ^{flinch} cards. And they're dealt out til the deck's all gone. So many in a pile, you know. ^{take 'em as you go} And then when a certain sign is given, you, everybody turns a card. And if your card matches the first thing, before they do that, after they get their cards all distributed ^{face down}, why they choose a name of an animal that they would be at the circus. And you flip your card over. If your card matches somebody else's, you call

their name before they call yours. And you get to give away your cards. ^{The idea is} to give away your cards as quick as possible. The one that gets rid of his cards beats. And they get so tangled up. Sometimes you get a dozen around here, all of 'em saying, "Cat, dog, mouse and elephant, and everything else. And two couldn't think of the right name for the right person. Craziest thing, but you had more fun, we laughed til we was sick. Just more fun than the devil.

SS: Did you have to shout out the name of their animal?

NS: Uh huh. And you called everybody else's maybe, instead of that one. But that's fun even yet.

SS: Sounds like fun.

NS: It is.

SS: Is this party while you were working at they guy's?

NS: I think that's when I was, I know I was there. I don't remember of going down any special time. But it might have been that I might have stayed all night ^{there} Sometime when I was coming back from Betty's at Troy there, and might have stayed all night ^{to meet} The folks going back in home, you know.

SS: Did you go down to visit at Troy occassionally?

NS: Every once in a while. And then I rode up with the old mail carrier. He was an old fellow, seventy five I guess. ^{or so} And then we'd stop at the half way house up there by Deary.

SS: Which one? Welles?

NS: Well it was right ^{close to} Welles. Welles had one, but ^{Stockwells} had one. We knew the ^{Stockwells} real well. That though, I believe had, I think that was after we moved up here. Because I didn't know the ^{Stockwells} before. I moved out to the homestead. So it must have been, but anyhow, we stopped there and eat dinner. At the ^{stockwells} Mrs. ^{Stockwell} was a wonderful cook. She had I think eight or nine kids, I don't know which it was. Most ^{Stockwell} all grown up. You saw in the paper the other day where this Mrs. ^{Stockwell}, in the Idahonian, her house burned? She had married the youngest ^{Stockwell} boy,

Carleton. And I went to school with all those kids. There's Metty and Clara and Carleton and Jim and Bessie. Then the rest of them are grownup. So.

SS: Did you know Lou Wells?

NS: Just to speak to her. Didn't get a chance to see them very often. I knew them.

SS: What about Agnes Liner? Did you know her?

NS: Uh huh. She was the one, wasn't she, got shot?

SS: Yeah. Do you remember that happening?

NS: Uh huh. Yes. It was down at the, I was thinking of that the other day. The name of that mine.

SS: Mizpah.

NS: Mizpah Mine. I couldn't think of it. She was flunking down there, hashing I guess for the miners, for the fellows that were working there. This other kid, this Dillman was, I don't know whether he was working at the regular work or ^{whether} he was getting wood and helping with that or what. Anyway, he got her to go for a walk with him. And they walked on down to one of these ^{caverns, one of these} tunnel things. He enticed her back into that and then insisted on a rape deal. She fought him. And they fighting it out, and he shot her. So. He had her pretty well back there where she couldn't be heard hollering for help or anything I guess. I was just wondering about that the other day, about what ever became of him. I don't remember ^{whether} he got sentenced.

SS: I've heard a couple of different stories. I heard that he shot himself. In the mine. I also heard that he got out. That he shot himself and didn't die. Or that he shot himself and did die. I ^{also} heard that he got sentenced.

NS: I don't remember, I was just thinking how it turned out.

SS: Did you know her?

NS: I knew her well. ^{And} I knew him.

SS: Would you have thought that he would do something like that?

NS: Well, I wouldn't put it past him. ^{Maybe} If he had a chance to get her off in a fix.

But I don't think he thought it would come to that final. I think he thought he'd have his own way and it wouldn't come to that, I don't think. But I guess he had that gun, in case, maybe he carried it all the time. I don't know.

SS: Wasn't he married?

NS: I don't think so.

SS: Maybe he was n't.

NS: That went on for years after that and I know we went to, mother and dad, just after we moved into town, dad used to play for the dances up here sometimes. ^{He} Played the violin. And mother and us and the folks, we all went to the dance that night. Then he wanted to walk me home. He wanted to know if he could bring me home. And I didn't know, I kind of remembered something about it had been quite a while since that had happened. I don't know either, ^{now what that is} because I'd heard he didn't have a very good reputation. Maybe [^] that hadn't happened before then. But they kind of doubted, he didn't have a very good reputation. And so I didn't know whether to say anything and I hadn't, I wasn't going with anybody. (phone rings)

SS: Asking you...?

NS: Asked if he could take me home ^{from} the dance.

SS: This was Jess Dillman?

NS: Uh huh. I thought, I might have been, I guess it was before this other thing happened. But I hadn't thought about it at all. People didn't speak very well of him, so I didn't know whether to say yes or no. And I said well just a moment and I'll see what mother says about it. ^{Something like that.} And so I thought it will be one way of getting him out of my hair. So anyhow, I told mother that, I said that he wanted to take me home, wanted to walk me home. I said, what ^{should} I tell him? She said, "Well, I don't know, I guess it won't hurt anything as long as you walk home with the rest of us. With the family, I guess that ^{wouldn't} hurt anything. So I did. I said she said

it'll be alright. So he never did ask me for any more appointments. I think he didn't like the idea of being with the whole family. He thought he'd get me off to one side. ^{maybe} But I just wasn't about to ^{bite} for that. And I'm sure it must have been before this other happened. Because I don't think I knew that at the time or I wouldn't have gone.

SS: I don't imagine he was still around the country after that happened.

NS: That's right. I didn't feel that I wanted to be there with him and ^{be} walking home with him. I thought well, he'll find out anyhow that if he's traveling with that kind of a crowd, he'd got to be a gentleman anyhow. And if he isn't he won't bother any more. He never did ask me any more, either. Didn't say anything about it and I was glad of it. ~~I~~ didn't want him to.

SS: Sounds like he liked pretty girls.

NS: Oh say, I

(End of tape)