

NELL WOOD SMITH

Interviewed by:
Sam Schrage

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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I. Index

NELLIE WOOD SMITH

Bovill; b. 1892

homemaker

2 hours

minute page

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with Sam Schragar

September 10, 1975

II. Transcript

This interview with Nellie Wood Smith took place at her home at Bovill on September 10, 1975. The interviewer is Sam Schrager.

Do you remember much of what Bovill was like in that very first days that you were here? What were the first impressions you had?

Well, I think about the first thing I remember then why I said, "What's that they're building?" "Well, that's the depot." So, the road used to come in instead of coming right straight up this hill from Main Street on from this street, I mean, straight up the hill across the track, why it used to make a turn up there just - oh, - just not far from the bridge, about even with that cedar mill, you know, across the road there. The road used to turn to the left and go over almost to those big barns there. And then it came right straight down Main Street coming into town. The road has been changed since that. And when it came into there ^{come} right straight across the meadow, you see. The first good look you got of what was supposed to be the town was - they were just building the depot. It was, oh, there was a barber shop here and there was a men's clothing store - it was a little bit of everything - but it was supposed to be lumberjacks' supplies mostly. They had their logging boots and things of that sort and tin pans. Mr. Parker had his - E.K. Parker from Princeton - had his store, that men's clothing, and then A.A. Anderson, he was from Tennessee. And he was running the barber shop. Well, there was a restaurant; I think the restaurant was in working order at that time. He was one of the early ones anyway. But I don't know for sure. By the name of Lester Smith was running the eating place.

You went to school there in 1907 ?

Here?

Yes, in Bovill.

Well, it was a room a little bigger than - well, they made it as long as this area into the kitchen, too. And it was one room and it wasn't any wider than this. And that was our school. We had a lady teacher and her name was Mame Rodner. She was a Moscow girl. She died just a few years ago. I went to see her when she was in the hospital. But that at the time was - well, ~~no~~ oh, I don't know - there might of been 18 or 20 children here at that time. But they - the school building was right over there at the foot of that hill where it starts up the hill. And the people over there by the name of Malorey - they've lived there for years now. The people that lived there before that too, yes, and those people that you want to know about. There was a fellow ^{here} by the name of Hughes.

Bert Hughes?

No, it was Shadduck.

Another Hughes?

Um-hum.

Shadduck and Hughes, I've heard about them. They had a meat market.

They had a meat - and Mr. - I think - Shadduck bought our school house from there and moved it over here kinda by this ways a little^{WAYS} and kinda behind the school house, where the schoolhouse presently is. And then this teacher was Mama Rodner and that's ^{that she} who the kids had. She had charge of -

What was the school like compared to going to school in Troy?

It didn't compare. I hate to have these things go down in record because -

Well, it's the truth.

But I was going to say that she didn't have - this girl, I don't know if she was a new teacher or what - and she didn't have any control of the kids and she just wasn't cut out for school teacher, I guess. Because well, we^{all} did as we pleased mostly, then the kids played around. And if she told you to do something you didn't want to, why they didn't do it. And so you know, what you learn in a school like that. Not very much. A little mischief probably. And anyway, in the long run, why - and then I was taking 8th grade, at that time, I had been taking sixth grade at Troy. And well, I was doing 8th grade work - with the 8th grade, too. I ^{taking} ~~was~~ mixed 6th and 8th. There wasn't anybody in the 7th so I had came there with the intention of being in the 6th grade, but when I got to it I was part 6th and part 8th. And when I came up here then I started the 8th grade and went through that first year. At the end of the year, you know, they used to send out their examination papers with questions all came from Boise from the State Superintendent. You had to take that exam from the state of the county - whichever - the state, I think it was at that time. So when we took the examination, there was not one of the class that passed. So you can see what they learned. And I was always a way ahead of the things everywhere else. And we had good schools. And believe you me, the one we had in Troy just before that, we didn't play around. Boy, your nose was right in your book.

Did you not pass it either?

No, not up here. No, I didn't pass it! I didn't know nothing.

Were you real disappointed about it?

Disappointed! I was disgusted because I knew that I could do better than that. But the kids all played and well, I fell in line and acted - well, I didn't do so much but

we just didn't study. But it was some of the kids - couple of the girls that were pets of the teacher. She'd gotten a week or two start with them. Well, no, she had a couple of months because we didn't move in until October, the end of October. But she just thought those girls were the cleverest things that she'd found. Oh, they just were so wonderful. And the best little spellers, they would just shock her, you know, that they were so - And I kinda got on the ball crossways with her right off the bat because she was raving about those girls, and my sister and I were just about the same ages as those two girls she was talking about. And I told her - and I said, "Well, I like spelling too, very much." Well, I said, "In fact I just got through" - of course, the teacher ^{there} had let me out because I was ready for passing anyhow, you know, had let me out the first - another month more of school I was suppose to have there before I left. But she gave me my pass and said I had fully qualified and so -

But she was playing favorites.

Yes, so when I got to her she was bragging them and I said, "I just finished school down there" and, "I said, "The teacher offered a prize for the one who won the spelling contest." Usually about every other Friday he'd have spelling and then the odd Friday in between, he'd have some sort of entertainment of games or something like that. And so he offered a prize for the one that had the best spelling. He had marks for over the whole term, we had marks for spelling. And ^o whoever was ahead at the end of the day, why he got the head mark for that time. Well, there was another boy and I that were running a hot race - the rest of them didn't ^{try to} quite keep up. It was just tit for tat, just he and I. And then when we got to the end, he liked me pretty well anyway, and I think, and it was rather ~~unusual~~. And he was just a fine kid and I think, he politely kinda missed a word / ^{maybe to} let me have it the last day. 'Cause we were just first one ahead and then the next. I don't know whether he did that or not but I always thought maybe he did to favor me. But he was awfully good. But I told her - I told this teacher, I just got through with it and I said, I had won the spelling contest ^{there} three years in succession. And I thought that I would just hit hard ^{and let her have it.} as I was so vixed at her for bragging and then let her show what they can do. "Well, all right. That would be a good idea," she said. She would give a prize too, she said, for the head marks and she was going to put me in my place, I guess. So that pleased me too. So we started. I came home with the prize that year too, over her pets.

Did you miss a year of school when you were on the homestead?

Um, hum. At the homestead.

Did you regret it - not going that year or was there enough to compensate for it so that you didn't mind?

You mean after we got home?

No, when you were up there.

We were there, we just kinda more or less ignored it – the idea – we just had that to do when we moved out there to gain the land and we didn't make any fuss about it. But Mother and Dad were kinda making a fuss about it. He finally said, "We just got to get out of here for these kids or they won't do anything pretty soon. We got to get them in school." So that's about all there was to it, you know.

Is that the main reason that your father decided to move into Bovill here?

Um, hum. Well, he was working here all the time and he'd have to hike then on the weekends. He'd hike clear into our homestead and I think that was 8 miles, it's six or eight miles. I don't remember which it was. But I think, it was either six miles or eight miles due south of Bovill. You see, the Boise Meridian runs ^{right} through Bovill and it just cuts our homestead in half – in the middle down that way.

He had to hike in from here to get there?

Um, hum, he'd hike home on weekends. And be home for the weekend and be back in Monday for the work. He was a carpenter, was working here, building – the buildings were all going up then so –

~~A~~ lot of work.

Well, quite a bit of it because there wasn't too many carpenters around. Most of the fellas were working in the woods with the logging business.

Did he continue to keep the homestead when you moved into town here?

Well, he did for a while but you see, you had to live so many months a year on that homestead in order to claim it.

For five years.

Un, huh. And well, he decided ^{rather} – Mother than – to move back and forth each year or something like that. They decided they would commute the homestead and turn it to Stone and Timber. Then you could pay it off. You see, you could finish buying your land then instead of living on it. So that's what they did. They commuted on the homestead and turned it into Stone and Timber and then they didn't have to go back anymore. Then they sold it after a while. Potlatch wanted it for the timber and so they sold it to them.

Do you know how he did on that as compared to what he had paid to buy it as Stone and Timber?

Well, I suppose it could be figured up, I might be able to figure it up, but, you see, they take that 40 acres and they pay so much each year and then the next year it's just that much less and dwindles down to the last year and they pay it off. They've got 40 years

I think it is to pay it in.

It doesn't really matter. But I just wondered if he really got ahead, you know, by selling it to Potlatch.

Well, he sold it for cash but I don't know how much. I think he only got 1200 or 1000 something for it. I don't know what, I don't remember. I did know at the time, but I just wasn't particularly interested, I guess, in that and so ...

Well, did you know the Bovills very well?

Oh, yes - very well.

Well you tell me what they were like?

Well, the two Bovill girls were my sister and my chums especially. They were very nice girls. Oh, I was interested because they had a lot of things to tell about their travels, you know, before we met them. And they were about our same ages. And they had been, the folks had been living here in this little settlement for -oh, I don't know, a year or two or two - three years maybe. But the girls had to be in school so they would send them to - the girls' school anyhow, in Spokane - each year. It probably doesn't matter what name the school - I did know the name of their school but I've forgotten now. I think of it once in awhile. The girls had gone to school up there and then when they started a school here, why the girls went to school here. And they were lovely girls.

And what did they have to say about their experiences before they ever came to Bovill?

Well, they didn't say too much. They were kept close in the school they went to over there. I guess just a matter of a different school and then they'd come home. And not much excitement. But their parents - these girls might of been, I don't know just how long they had been going that back and forth. I don't know how long the Bovill's lived here before they started a town here. But it had been a few years, I know. And maybe longer because they bought it from - I think there's a piece of land up north a little further here that they homestead^{ed} too. And, oh, there were several people lived here. Well, there was a lot of people taking homesteads about that time, they had their - there was a lot of the surveyors and things on the job - locators, you know, that just made that their business. There was some of them came out from Troy and all of it. And would take the people up and locate them, show them their land. Find their numbers and locate it for them. Then they'd go back and file. And one of them was Hayes, lived next door to us. He had taken his homestead and right about the same time as ours. And so was Miller. Miller and Hayes and McGary and Hollenbeck and Felts and lot of them in our group, you know, kinda a neighborhood. And ...

Did the Bovills seem - he was called Lord Bovill - did they seem aristocratic to you?

No, not especially. They were very common. They were, you know, you realized they were people that knew their way around and knew what they were doing and had - educated people. But they didn't make a fuss about it. They were just very - very common. And she had taken, well, I don't know whether she had taken special training or not but she had studied a lot in her own books and all about in doctoring and nursing and such like. She had, you know, there was no doctor here for so many months or years. There was no doctor to fall back on and the closest would a been Troy or Moscow or somewhere out like that. And when you got in six foot of snow and somebody got hurt or got sick, why, it was quite a problem. So it fell to Mrs. Bovill, she became a nurse here. And when anything happened to anybody, why they generally call on her. And she would give them the instructions and tell them what to do or ^{go} out on a call with whoever came in. And I know - they run the post office, you know, at that time, they had a - the post office here. And Charlotte was her name, his name was Hugh. I know that one time I was in the post office there to get the mail and I was awfully tight - my cold was an awfully tight one and I was just coughing and feeling pretty bum. And she said, "Look here young lady. Come here a minute and let me see that throat." You know, and she said, "You just better go home and get to doctoring that throat or its going to wind up in pnemonia." And anyhow, she told me about it. And I told her, well I think my mother had been using turpentine and lard and all to grease you with like they did in those days. But she said what she had to use for her youngest girl, was - Gwen and the older was Dorothy. And so Gwen was subject to quinsy every so often and she'd just pretty near choke to death. But she finally found out that with her whenever she got that, she'd just pret-near packed her in ice. She'd put the heavy big bandage of ice cold packs around her throat and then wrapped in wool, a blanket or something. Put her to bed and I don't know whether she gave her any warm drink of anykind - I don't remember. She couldn't swallow hardly anyhow. And she'd just pile the covers on and make her fall into a sweat. And she'd thaw out and come out of it. So she told me what she wanted me to do 'cause she said I was headed for pneumonia. And so I went home and told Mother what she said to do and well, I got packed into a good cold pack and ^{then} the heavy woolen on the outside of it. And it loosened it up - down in my chest and all, it loosened right up.

And then so many of the men got hurt in the woods, they'd get out or broken legs or something, and she was the only nurse around at that time, so she'd help with whatever was needed. He was with the surveyors more and he had horses to take care of and they all had their riding horses. In the spring when the snow would go out, and that would leave that meadow across here by this bridge all just a lake. And so they had some boats out there and they would all boat ride around on that lake. Of course, more or less a resort to them. And so that was the things that I remember hearing the girls talk the

Well, they used to tell about – they were connected with the royalty in England some way or other. I don't know just what the connection was, they told me but I didn't remember it. It was Greek to me. So they told me about their, what is it? Their – the sign, the signals – the coat?

The coat of arms.

Um, hum. Coat of arms – I thought of it just in time. ^{Their} Coat of arms. They showed me what it was and told me about it but I didn't remember it, of course. But they used to tell me a few things like that, they'd talk about. I don't know whether they came here with the parents when they first came here – and I think, they did come because Gwen's picture – they had a picture of Gwen taken up here at this place when Gwen was quite small so I think they lived here several years before they got the school started here.

What did the kids, the girls think of the change in the town? The fact that what was once just a resort turned into a city?

Well, I think they just enjoyed themselves. They'd go riding once in a while on their horses and then they'd like to tramp around through the brush in the woods and just enjoy it.

I read in John Miller's book or I heard that the Bovills were really rather sad about the coming of the lumber company to change the town so much. Do you think that's true or do you think they wanted it here?

I don't really know. But I know that they were instrumental in – well – building the town as it was going on. And they had it incorporated and, I don't know, then the things – they purchased a lot of this land from the – I think, it was the Milwaukee Railroad or the WM Railroad Company, or something. It was all purchased. I don't know. I think they must have been more or less in favor of it. Then they had the town – reserved the right to name the town after themselves. And, I don't know. I don't remember – I didn't know much about their opinion or their desires in that line.

Did you hear much about what the resort had been before the town came? I've heard that a lot of people came out here.

Yes, it used to be – that was before my time here – I didn't know much about that. I heard after I got here, that people used to come here, oh, just any amount of them. The way they found out about the place, you know, some locator would bring someone, you know, in to look at ^{the} land. And they all thought it was kinda – well, way out there in nature's ~~home~~ garden. And they decided it would be fun to hear – or to see. And so they would come back, you know, after, oh, you know – some ~~time~~ ^{when they had kind of} on vacation. Oh, they'd just hop in their sled, wagon, or whatever it happened to be and they came up this way. There were quite a few people who used to come up and spend a little time just at the hotel. The

Bovills then were running a hotel up there where the Bovill hotel is now and – but they just strung along a few all the time kind of. But I've heard quite a lot of them that were in here. Then you see, up about two miles from here or three it was Collins. And there were people up there that were homesteading, most all the Fries had their homesteads up there, right around that meadow. And they kinda got in early so they got to pick and choose. It was Jake – Jake and John and Ed, ^{all} those were the Frie men. And I don't know whether that's all of them or not. Anyway, in the long run, they had a little school up there in their corner of the woods. Too then for a while, up at Collins. And the school-teacher they had up there was a – I ^{don't} ^{I'm} can't think of what I was going to tell ya. Miss Somebody-or-other was the teacher and as time went on why, this – it was Jake – Ab was another one – but I guess, Jake was the one that they were mostly young fellas – and he married the schoolmarm. And they made their home up there. And then her sister was a teacher so they wrote her and she came and got the school. They kept it up as long as they had the school up there.

She didn't marry one of the Fries too?

No, she married a fella down on the ridge here. I think – I think he was the one who is a carpenter at Deary now. Holstein, was the name.

When you were ...

End of Side A

typed and transcribed by Karen Purtee

Sam Schrager: You p^layed around together? What was there for you girls to do here when you first came?

Nell Smith: Oh, nothing particular. We'd just make your fun as you go, usually, at least at that time, you know. Well, there was always walks in the woods and the beautiful flowers here that you could gather, you know, in season. We didn't do much hiking around but we did, you know, take walks out a little ways once in a while. But my sister and I - well, the folks usually found something for us to do and it wasn't hard for them to find a job for us. We had the yard to ^{rake}rack or the dishes to do or something like that quite a lot. But we could always have time with the girls up there. And they had chores to do, too. Now these other two girls who turned out to be the teacher's pets, why they tried to be chummy with the Bovill girls too, but I don't know. I don't think they were quite so chummy as - I don't know, they were kind of - I don't know how - what you'd say here. Kind of, oh, pretty much to yourself, you know. Just a little bit, I don't know, just a little bit stuck up or something and they didn't have anything to be stuck up over, particularly. They didn't have very nice dispositions and their father run the saloon here. And so there wasn't anything to brag about anywhere that I could see. It was just their own way of acting and finally, well, when we were going to school they were so - well, I guess a girl got jealous of me after we'd been here a while and we began to get acquainted and finally there was something for everybody to do. I don't remember whether the local girls took in any of those parties or not. You see, had the folks kept them in pretty close up there at home and then the town/kind a gathered, you know, and built out down on this end of it and the people decided to get kinda cabin fever and they decided they'd get together, you know, for an evening of fun or something. Well, one evening they'd come down to our place and Dad played the violin and I had the guitar and we had the mandolin, too. Edna had - my sister - had the mandolin. So they'd some down there and play and ^{we'd}sing and play games and pop corn and eat apples

and pull taffy and such things as that. And then that would be our entertainment. And maybe they'd strike up a tune or two and they'd move things back and dance the quadrille or a square dance or a waltz, you know. And that was the main part. But we had a lot more fun than kids have nowadays, hunting entertainment.

S.S.: What kind of songs did you sing? What'd you play?

N.S.: Well, it was popular and all. Red Wing was very popular at that time. Oh, Home Sweet Home and Old Black Joe and all those old timer songs. Mostly that kind. And once in a while we'd set a hymn and you might end up, you know, with a hymn.

S.S.: Did you sing songs that you came out with from Missouri? That your father had - that your folks had learned back there?

N.S.: Well, not in particular 'cause I wasn't old enough to sing much but I remembered some of 'em. My granddad, my father's father, would play the violin and he had a voilin too, and he would play. And he'd play some of those hoe-down kind, I think they say. Like Turkey in the Straw and Sailor's Horn Pipe and some of those real fast ^{things} ones. And some of those had little tunes to 'em. And I was singing those ~~ones~~ ^{once in a while}. But that's about all. But when we got to Wyoming, then to Larmie, I would - got there I think in the - it ~~must~~ ^{I think} of been right around ^{near} time for school or may be school had already been going - I don't remember what time of the year we were there. But we became acquainted with the ^{Wickter} ~~Victors~~ across the street from where we lived. And Millie Wickter was - ah, I was just a little kid when we were there. And she was, oh, I think, about 15-16 years old and maybe in high school. And so mother asked her if she'd care to take me to school with her in the morning, it was quite a little - oh, it was several blocks. And she said yes, she'd be delighted to go with me. So I was under her wing for getting started to school.

So I went to the first - they put me in the first grade, of course. I had never - well - been to school much. I had gone to school in Missouri with my aunt who was still in school. But she was 17, maybe, or 16. And they'd take me to the school - that was in -

that was around there, once in a while. And the teacher would – I had already learned a lot of it at home. I knew, from asking questions and trying to read books, you know, I knew my ABCs and count and all that pretty well before I went up there. But they took me to school with them, so I was the only one that size. But the teacher got kinda of a kick out of it, I guess. He was a man teacher. And so then he'd call Nellie to come up to recite and he'd take me on his lap and ask me all these questions. And I was so embarrassed 'cause I thought I was quite big and that he shouldn't take – I should just sit in a desk like ^{the rest of them} everyone. I was just real embarrassed that he had to take me on his lap like I was a baby. I can remember that part of it. But anyhow, I just went – oh, I didn't go no more than a week or two, I don't think. When the weather was bad...they just took me with them once in a while. But I learned what school was all about.

S.S.: Nell, do you still sing songs – old time songs?

N.S.: I'd love to! But my voice is giving out on me. I guess I'm getting old and don't like to admit it. I don't know. Well, I've always of later years here, I'd sing – there's a bunch of us that would sing and ^{maybe in} make a choir at the church but they don't really have a regular choir. But once in a while somebody'd stir up a choir and we'd do some singing and then blow over again for a while. But I sang specials these last several years.

(Break)

S.S.: ...at camp meetings – did they have those around here at all in the summer?

N.S.: Well, –

S.S.: In the early days.

N.S.: Not really like the camp meetings they used to have in the East, I don't think. But they have had summer camp for the children. But, you know, their camp – but not in the earliest days. But they got so they did have them when my boys were small. They'd take them up to the Coeur d'Alene area. Long Lake or Rock Lake or someplace – I've forgotten what the name of it was. Rocky Point, I think, it was called. And they'd spend a two weeks' vacation up there. And get their Christian training.

S.S.: Was there church activities here when you first came in 1907?

N.S.: No. No, but it wasn't long before they decided well, there's enough people here. They ought to have a church. There was enough of them to make it interesting. So they did build this church up here what is now the Presbyterian Church and began to build that church. And it was called the Community Church. They figured that this was too small a town to segregate this little bunch and that little bunch - all the different groups, and so it was just to be a Community Church and everybody that wanted to use it was free to use it.

I started then as soon as it started - the church started, and I was very active in that. I was their secretary and treasurer and then finally then I was teaching one of the smaller classes for a while and, well, I was busy with the ladies aid and all too. Mother went to it. But after a while it kinda changed. They began to get more people coming in and then quite a few Catholics had moved into town by that time too. And they - I think they had the building a time or two for meetings. They had to pick their days, you know, during the week. They picked their day that they wanted to so they didn't all want it the same day. And that stirred up a confusion between them and some didn't think that - well, their idea was that the Catholic religion wasn't according to the Bible or according to God's teaching as they figured it. And that they shouldn't - we shouldn't let them have the church. And well, the Catholics said, well, they donated on the work that built the church and they thought they should have it too. And it began to grow and kind of hard feelings between them and all. And finally they said nope. They wouldn't ^{rent} lend it anymore to the Catholics and it kept on until they got it fixed so that they could handle it through the Presbytery. Well, the funds were not coming in too fast to keep it going and then they thought well, by turning it over to the Presbyterian management, that they would draw some money from them - from their group - to help keep it going. And it's turned out eventually to be a Presbyterian Church.

S.S.: What did the Catholics do when they couldn't use the church anymore?

N.S.: Well, I don't know. It seems to me that they met someplace else. But they built a church of their own here in a short while. I don't remember just how soon it was but they built their own church just kind of across the street from the other church, up there.

S.S.: I imagine they must not have been very happy about it.

N.S.: No, well, I wasn't – well, a whole lot of people weren't very happy about it because if that was built for a congregational church – everybody's church – well, everybody should have been able to use it. I figure, regardless of their demonination and if it'd been decided in the first place that it was to be a Catholic Church or it was to be a Presbyterian Church or something, then it should have been that. But...

S.S.: Then the Catholics were singled out and all the different Protestant groups could use it?

N.S.: Well, I think they had some – a few in mind, that if this one or that one wanted it, they wouldn't let them have it for certain meetings or certain things that would come up, like, ^{mostly} the Catholic religion.

S.S.: Who made the decision about that? Was it taken as a vote of the whole – of everybody that used the church or were there certain people who had the decision – the power – to decide?

N.S.: I think it might have been more that. That the elders or whoever they were decided, I think. I wouldn't say for sure.

S.S.: Nell, do you remember the railroad's coming in here and that ceremony that they had? What's the story about that?

N.S.: Well, somebody has a picture of that, I think. It seems to me that was at the opening of this railroad – crowning, I ~~kguess~~ guess, you'd say. When they ran a special, an excursion, up from Potlatch and they picked up all the people from Potlatch and Princeton, and Palouse and around, you know. That are – this railroad started, WIM, went from

excursion up here and boy, there was a mass of people here. The excursion was something unusual at that time, up here. They didn't - wasn't having any train service or anything. So everybody and his grandfather hopped on the train and came up that day. It was all free and celebrating in general. And I think that was for the finish of that railroad when they opened it up for traffic.

S.S.: Do you remember anything about the celebration? What went on? Was it speeches or what was the deal about?

N.S.: Well, it seems whatever this was - and I think it was over the railroad, I'm not too sure about - John can tell you sometime. But they did have, and maybe that's - and maybe that may be part of in that book too.

S.S.: It's mentioned in there, yah.

N.S.: But, I think, Mr. Laird and Deary - some of them - that they were. See now, Deary town was named after Will Deary and Mr. Laird was a Potlatch man, he was one of the company. And some of those fellas were speakers of the day.

S.S.: Do you remember that "embarrassment" of one of the Bovill girls that John talks about in the book? She tried to drive a spike or something like that and she couldn't do it.

N.S.: No.

S.S.: He mentions that. And she cried and she was really embarrassed and everybody was looking at her and she was suppose to drive a spike or something like that.

N.S.: Drive the spike - I didn't happen to remember that.

S.S.: Do you remember anything, any scraps^e that the Bovill girls got into or any adventures that you all had when you were first here in those early days?

N.S.: No, I don't think I do. Don't remember anything that they were just common, nice, mild girls. I don't associate them with anything unusual that I can think of. And then - oh, as time went on - now Mrs. Bovill was - as I said - she was the

postmistress, she was the doctor and nurse, and consultant in general. It wasn't one of these people that it goes to their head, you know, just because of that. She was just common everyday people. She just happened to know – be in a place to run some of those things or know about others that maybe the people didn't understand as well as she did, but she wasn't snootie about it. Well, when it came to the war and well, when the war was over and there was so much shouting and – oh, there – like a hallaballou just like it was everywhere. Well, John Groh had – he didn't have – I guess, he got this beer from the saloon, anyhow, some of it. They had kegs of beer sitting on the street corners down there, and everybody – and a big dipper – in there – and everybody helped themselves, and all that sort of thing. People got drunk that night that hadn't drank for years. And everybody turned out and went down to that little park there they have in the center of town. They were all gathered down there and having a celebration. Of course, the men were all drinking their beer. John Groh, I think it said, he furnished the beer. He was the storekeeper here then at that time. So Mr. Tarbox was an engineer here on the old 23 engine and he hadn't drank for years. He had a big family here and grown up children too, some of them.

S.S.: Was this Odin Tarbox?

N.S.: Un,huh. Yep. It was Odin. He started drunk. He was bringing the people in at the time of that fire – that forest fire.

S.S.: I'm going to ask you about that later. That's a big story by itself. What happened to him this night with John Groh?

N.S.: O-K. Well, this night – well, everybody were drinking so heavily. So they kept on they got Tarbox and sidled off and they were all slapping each other on the back and a haw-hawing around, you know. And they got Mr. Tarbox drunk. And he had to drive that engine back to take those fellows back to camp to work when the time came. The camp was way up in here somewhere. And when he got started why someone said – well, Mrs. Tarbox said, something about, "Well, don't let him go out there

stewed like that. He don't know what he's doing and drive that engine." Or something like that. And Walter, the older boy said, "No, Mom, let him go." He said, "He'll be all right 'cause I'll go out with him to be sure nothing happens to him." And so Walter went out with him but part way out here, it was a bright moonlight night, you know, he was heading along on his engine. And all of a sudden he grabs the controls someway or other and threw on the brake and just jolted them all. And somebody said, "Well, what is the matter, Tarbox?" "Well," he said, "don't you see that headlight a-coming there?" The moon was so, bright moonlight, as he rounded the corner it stared him right in the face and he thought it was the headlight of another engine! That's always been a joke - Mr. Tarbox trying to run from the moon.

S.S.: He probably never lived that down. That sounds like it was really a big celebration that day.

N.S.: Un,huh. That was the day that Ernie - no, that wasn't either. No it was another time. He got mixed up in the celebration, but that was fires - there had been several fires and those buildings burned down. Some of them one at a time, and some of them two or three. Some of them cleaned up but there were two men burned in the one.

S.S.: Oh, before we get off the subject of the Bovills completely, you said that she was a consultant too. What kind of things would - do you think she would have information about or could help people about?

N.S.: Well, she was pretty well read on legal material, legal matters. And law procedure, I think. Almost anything like that. She was a very studious woman, you know. She was just busy at the time educating herself. What she didn't know, she was finding out as fast as she could. I think, that was her way of doing. And I don't know, did you hear anything about them coming from England and - there was something there I wanted to get in. He was - oh, they were in, I think, North Dakota in the beginning, and he was quite a man with horses. He was crazy about horses. And she was quite a rider herself. Then finally they wound up down in, I think it was, Colorado for more of their procedure.

Something was right there I meant to tell you about - but it's gone now

S.S.: Did it have to do with her learning and things she knew how to do?

N.S.: Well, yes. In the school, that first year of school, she was one of the school directors, so every Friday afternoon why we would have, well, sewing or sometimes things like that that would interest them, or whatever. But you couldn't very well with them, either. It was mostly the second year. But anyhow, she'd read a story ~~or~~ read a book and we would all listen to that, you know. And she read Freckles and the Girl of the Limber Lost. And some of those interesting stories.

S.S.: Limber Lost?

N.S.: The Girl ^{of} with the Limber Lost.

S.S.: Oh. She would come to school and read those?

N.S.: She'd come after recess. She'd come and then the next year they had the school divided. There were enough children here by that time to ^{call for} start two schools. The building wasn't big enough to accomodate them. So they had to hire another teacher and use a building they got downtown. It was a concrete building there that - no, it wasn't concrete at that time either. That was a wooden building but it was later a concrete building. And in the afternoon they had fixed it so that - well, from the sixth grade on up, I think, was at that school and then all the other little ones were at the other school. She would come over to the school house on the Friday afternoons and ... whatever project they had in mind then, but sometimes it was sewing that they would do. And they had some of the women around town that were good seamstresses and all that they'd help with it. It was kind of everybody's problem - project. I know mother was one of 'em that had to help them with the sewing and engineer it and all, because she was extra good at sewing. And then it'd be - oh, I don't know - other things that we couldn't do maybe, but they all had us a project there to work on. And at the other school, well, there was a man teacher, the new school that they had. And he had his youngsters - oh, he had quite a few of 'em, that had, oh, I don't know, I guess a dozen and a half, maybe or more - but anyhow, he had a little bit of carpenter work and things like that. He

was engineering that. And they were building ironing boards and things for their mothers, you know. Learning to use tools, and all.

S.S.: Besides sewing, for the girls, was there other skills that they worked on in projects?

N.S.: Yes, I think, well, you know, like something they could embroidery or something like that, you know. Or any kind of fancy work or anything handwork that they could do why they would scratch up some new idea every once in a while. Somebody would bring something that they all wanted to do.

S.S.: Well, Mrs. Bovill doing all these projects of hers, she didn't get paid for doing these things – this was just service?

N.S.: No, no. It was gratis work. And none of these people got – they ^{were} all just pitched in to help, you know, to make something of – the best of everything. And she did all – whatever she was doing. And mother and several others, you know, they donated their time too to teach 'em sewing.

S.S.: Well, could Mrs. Bovill do a lot of this kind of thing like nursing and all that because she had more free time and didn't have to do as much work at home?

N.S.: No. Well, she had a maid there at the house that did most of the housework and the girls had their certain jobs to do. You know, that was a little bit of help and the hotel wasn't as big then as it is now – they added another chunk onto it, you know.

S.S.: So she did have perhaps more free time than some of the other women?

N.S.: Yah, she kind of had the engineer, boss, of a lot of things that come up. She had to be instructed about.

S.S.: Was this maid for fulltime?

N.S.: Yes. She lived there with them. And they had her hired, and she was cook and she was just general helper. And – it was – Sophie Bird was her name. But it wasn't so very long – oh, after a year or two or two–three years – she got married to the fella who built the Spokane hotel down here. Dave Ellison.

Sam Schragar: Would you figure that if you were going to say somebody was the community leader that it would have been the Bovills in those real early days?

Neil Smith: Well, yes, I think so. It'd be – she was just kinda natural born leader. It was just natural for her to do those things. And you know, some people – I know lots that'd be too scared to say so –

S.S.: But you still didn't feel at all that they thought they were superior to other people?

N.S.: No, I didn't. No, you see, they weren't that kind. They were just here roughin' it like the rest of 'em were, you know. But she happened to have what was needed here and they didn't all have it.

S.S.: What do you mean "what was needed"?

N.S.: Well, you know, any of that work that she was doing, you know. All those things she helped out with and all. And her nursing and helping with the sick and all. Well, she just happened to have that knack and she kept hunting up something and everytime a new project came along she was hunting it up in a book to find out all she could about it. I know she mentioned something one time and I thought, she said, "Well, she'd have to look that up – she didn't just quite remember." But she had seen it somewhere and she was going to look it up or something or other. And she just – you know, that was kind of her style.

Oh, I know what I was going to ask you. Did you ever see the newspaper that had their entry here or their kind of history of their time here?

S.S.: I'm not sure if I have or not. I may have but I don't remember it. I've read so many things, I'm not sure if I've seen that or not.

N.S.: I have one somewhere. I saved it because it links right in with my early life here. I prized it but now if it hasn't gotten lost. Everytime I think of somebody – you know, run across this kinda paper that looks old and yellow and all, and I think, there's another some of those papers – just throw those away to get them out of the house. Well, seomtimes that happens, but much to my disgust.

S.S.: I was going to ask you, another thing about them. I'd heard that in the summer, rich kids would come from the East or from other places and stay at the hotel as a summer place. Is that true? Have you heard that?

N.S.: Well, I don't know but there was people who used to come, sometimes - some well-to-do maybe. People'd let their youngsters, maybe, some friends of the girls, maybe, who had been chums in their school in Spokane or something like that. But there was - well, the Bovill's knew so many people around Moscow too. Because of these surveyors and the squatters - not squatters but the locators that - they'd become acquainted with their families. You know, sometimes they'd - after - the man of the family in Moscow would come up this way and see it - well, maybe, the next time they'd come up they'd bring up some of the family. They'd bring up some of the family with them until they got acquainted and all, and I guess, there was time^s, I think there was a girl or two, you know, to come along that had become acquainted^{here} and spend some time up here. But, of course, I wasn't around very much at that time. I wasn't up there after school.

S.S.: Did they take a special pride in their horses here when you were here, the Bovills?

N.S.: Well, I've heard that they did, but I didn't know much about their horses. The girls were awfully proud of their horses and they loved to ride but I didn't know much about that stuff. That was out of my line.

There was a special little thing that came about one time. Florence Smith was one of the early - they were early families here and they lived right straight up the street in the next - the second block. Her father, his name was Jim, I think. Jim Smith. But anyhow, and old fellow, a Swede fellow that was - batched, I think, lived somewhere near them, anyhow, He left it up to this Mr. Smith, or the family someway or other, to look after his horse while he was gone. And they could use it if they wanted to. But he was, I don't know, I guess, out in the woods working or something. Anyhow, Florence had to go up to take - she wanted to catch the horse for one thing, and I don't

know either whether she was going to take it, I don't think she was going to take it back with her either. She was just going to take it some feed, I guess, was all. Anyhow, she had a big tin can, you know, and a bucket thing that had been fixed and had that grain in it. And she wanted to know if I wanted to ride up with her. And so I did. Now she took that horse up there - it's getting so I don't remember it hardly - but the horse was to go up there and she was to feed it - take this feed - there was some other horses, I think, that were.... And that's the way of it because we were on that horse, going up there. And she tried to get him - we were up there at that meadow, just out the other side of town, right out there. Well, it was all fenced along there and she got off of the horse or something and went to open the - up the gate, you know, the rail there, to get in. And I was riding behind her. And I didn't know anything about horses, and I was pretty scared anyway. So I had - holding with one arm and my other arm around her. The other arm was my sack of feed, or the bucket of feed. And we tried to get him to go in there and he wouldn't go. The horse wouldn't go in there. And he balked; he stood there. And she hollered at him and tried to drive him and she was jerking on the line, probably, and kicking at him. He just deliberately balked. He wasn't going any further. And finally she, I think, let a yell out of her and hollered at him and she forgot and swore a little bit. She called him a nasty name. And he jumped right quick and went over that thing and we both pretty near fell off. And she sat there and laughed. And she wasn't a girl to talk like that. Anyway, she was so mad, she could have killed him. And when he jumped right ahead and surprised us, well, I hung on for dear life. And when we got to where we were going, got him slowed down, I still had spilled - lost a grain of that feed when we got there. But she said, "Well, you old fool. If I'd a known that was what you needed, I would have called you that a long time ago." She said, or I guess, that's what this other man that owned him - "I guess that's what he calls you."

S.S.: You first met Ernie up on the homestead you said, and you were only – must have only been about 13 or something then. You were 14, you were still pretty young?

N.S. Um, hum. Well, more like 14, I guess, because I don't think we met him maybe the first year we went up there.

S.S.: Did he continue to see you after you came to Bovill, or were you just acquaintances or did he sort of have an eye out for you?

N.S.: Yah, I kind a think he did. But you see after we gave up the homestead, you know, and switched to stone and timber, we moved ⁱⁿ town. Of course, that kinda through – but it was getting into winter time by that time anyhow, and the boys might not have been coming over so often. But they'd come over pretty near every Sunday, the whole bunch of them. It was, oh, I guess, five or six or eight, maybe. And we knew, you know, that one of the families was staying with us, a man and his wife and two little kids. It was Mr. Hollenbeck. And they were working with the mine up there and – but they'd gathered up the crew as they came back. But we invited them, we were always glad to see that much company, you know. It was kind of a break in the routine. Oh, there was Ora Hayes, and I think, John McGarys were there with them most of the time. And a, oh, a fella – can't think of his name now but he was from Iowa – Des Moines, Iowa. Yah, it was Des Moines, I think. And, oh, the two brothers that are from the East, I think, they were from Missouri but we got acquainted with them out here though. Zumstag boys it was.

S.S.: Did you notice Ernie's standing out from the rest of them?

N.S.: Well, I didn't – but they all kept kidding me about him and all.

S.S.: About Ernie:

N.S.: Yah. They'd say something about "He has his eye on you." Or something like that. And the folks told me, said that he had – some of his folks had come out here ahead

of him and they'd written back and said, "You folks come on out to this country. "

They said, "We got a girl picked out up here that we think would just suit Ernie."

Or something like that. So – such things as that. They were....

S.S.: Do you think there was any truth to that or were they just pulling your leg?

N.S.: I thought that they probably didn't know what they were talking about but I guess as it turned out that they did. But, now the boys would come over every Saturday night and probably they'd come Saturday night and stay all night, you know.

S.S.: Really?

N.S.: Yah. They had mattresses there. We didn't have room, you know, for them. But they'd fix a sleeping place, you know, or covers out or take some – spread covers on the floor. And maybe they wouldn't all get there at the same time but most generally they did. And we had a big dinner the next day. And we raised everything in our garden out there. And that's different than batching, then the food they'd have when they're just batching.

S.S.: Well, besides the meals, what would the visiting be like? Would they play games or what would they do – or just sit and talk or what?

N.S.: Yes. Both – and then they'd talk and then sometimes, I know, they used to get out – some of the boys get out there in the yard. We had the grass all – grassy yard there, you know, and all fixed and they'd get out there and get to – oh – wrestling or what is it you call this?

S.S.: Arm-wrestling.

N.S.: Arm-wrestling, and all those things, you know. Just anything for entertainment. And finally they'd get funny with the dog, get start in laughing. But –

S.S.: How come they picked your place to come to?

N.S.: Well, I guess – I don't know. I guess it must have been maybe through Mr. Hollenbeck. Or McGary because Hollenbeck's family was there with us. Oh, I don't know. Some of 'em come a time or two, I guess, and they got acquainted so we invited them all back. Whenever they got a notion to come, why come on. We always had lots of milk,

we had the cow there. Lots of milk and lots of cream and everything and that was pretty nice. And we had our own vegetables and things in the garden and they thought that was pretty swell.

S.S.: Well, when did you and Ernie actually start courting?

N.S.: Oh, I don't know whether – I never did – well, we'd known each other for about five years, or six. And I guess, he thought he'd claimed me. Always – we was always chummed together, you know, whenever it was convenient or anything was going on, he'd come and take me. But I never considered it real seriously until about the end of five or six years, why we began to plan on a home of our own, I guess, by that time. So, why, after we'd moved in town, you see, why whenever – we went to shows all the time. That was one thing where we started steady, you know. It was the moving picture show here, that was the old theatre ^{up} over there. And, anyway, they always had a serial going and we'd get started on that then he'd have to see that serial. And the fella that run the picture show was – took a fancy to Ernie. He thought he was about all right and if Ernie happed ^{ne} to – didn't get to go to that show that night, he had to work, you know, on some engine or something. He had to work nights lots of times. The man would run that show through the next night again so he'd see it. He didn't want him to miss any of that show. Mr. Anderson.

S.S.: Well, wasn't the town in those first early days really wide open with all the lumberjacks and...?

N.S.: Yes, it was. There was two saloons here to accomodate them.

S.S.: And there were the house too, right?

N.S.: Um, hum. Yes. There were two special houses down here by the tracks. One set right in where the road is now, you know, the highway and there was the railroad here. And it was just right in that corner between the highway and the...

S.S.: Right where the railroad crosses the highway?

N.S.: Un, huh. And the other one was on up, oh, it might of been like about the distance

of a block, I think, up above it right along the tracks.

S.S.: When was it that you went to work for the laundry?

N.S.: Oh, I don't know. I was working there in the summer time when there wasn't any school.

S.S.: Oh, it doesn't matter which year exactly.

N.S.: It was long about, maybe I was 16 or 17, I guess.

S.S.: Is it the story that you came in contact with all their fancy clothing when you were working in the laundry?

N.S.: Yes. Boy, I ironed and ironed fancy pretty things until I could see 'em in my sleep.

S.S.: What were the kinds of fancy clothes that they wore in those days?

N.S.: Oh, just about everything. There was - everything was lacy trimmed and fussy. And they were mostly made of China silk or Japanese - whatever you call it. And they were made up elaborate rather and we would - oh, there was the kimonos and fancy nightgowns and I don't know what all. Anyhow, most all kinds of dainty things. And then they had - What we would be washing their clothes and it would be put then when they went through the washer, and then they would be put then into a tub of cold water and left stand there. And when we got ready to iron the next one, we would ^{ring}take it right out of the tub and iron it right then and there. And by taking that wet, silky thin piece, you know, they were like thinnest of silks, and when we would take it out of that and iron it dry, why that would give it a body to it, you know. And they were kinda just like new.

S.S.: It must have taken a lot more time to do that kind of work than the usual clothes that you went through the laundry.

N.S.: Well, yes. But some of them didn't take any more time, I don't think, than when we'd iron the men's shirts in that day for some of these french-fried-fancy-mothered... like a board in the front of 'em. We had to cold starch that stiff front and polish it, you

know. And I couldn't do that now to save my neck and do a decent job of it. I know I couldn't. But they had to be just so, you know, and just shinny and slick. But everytime I start to starch anything like that anymore I make a mess of it or a wrinkle or a spot or something. And I don't do much of that anymore. Just once in a while, you want to cold starch something.

S.S.: Did the average person in town have his laundry done by the laundry or did he do it himself?

N.S.: Well, most - well, the men that were not living here - were not family men here - they would send their clothes up there to the laundry. And I don't know, maybe some of the families, they might have sent something once in a while, something they wanted specially done or something. But I think, most of them were just kinda short on the money end of it and probably did their own.

S.S.: These ladies of ill-repute, did they, in those early days in Bovill, did they feel any hesitation, let's say, about going down town or acting like anybody else - any other citizen of the town would?

N.S.: I don't think they ever did. I've seen some of them at a distance but I don't think they mixed with the town's people very much. It might be once in a while one of them'd go to town, but I always heard of them just at their own place, down there. I don't know.

S.S.: Did women of the town really look down on them, do you think? Did they sort of condemn them or did they accept them?

N.S.: No, they just sort of ignored them and went on about their business. They didn't consider them in their troop or in their classes, exactly. So we just let them alone. And the others let them alone and got along very well.

S.S.: But people wouldn't have anything to do with them?

N.S.: No, they didn't. Well, I guess they didn't - I guess they knew it too and they didn't push themselves in on anything and the people didn't rush in to make it unpleasant for them. They just each one lived their own lives and that's all there was to it. But I know

one time there was a baseball game going on. It's right over - well, straight up from here and right out in that part of town. Well, it would take in about a block, but right ^{straight} up the street here and back toward the railroad track. And we were sitting there watching the game and happened to glance down that way and here was a girl out on the veranda, upstairs - whatever you call it - upstairs porch anyhow. And strutting around in her red silk - a, what do you want to say - komona, I guess you'd call it. And she was just watching the game just as big as you please. And I know I was surprised. I kinda - well, I thought, well, I'd think she could stay out there if she wants too but it looks like she'd stay in the house. Something like that. I guess I was only about 15-16 years old. Something like that.

S.S.: How tight a rein did your folks keep on you? Did they - being a young woman - did they feel that you had to ^{be} dealt with pretty strictly? That you had to be home and a - did they...?

N.S.: Well, I never had any trouble like that that I can recall. But it was - I always asked if I could go someplace or told mother where I was going, you know. I guess I wasn't - they didn't have any trouble with me. I wasn't hard to manage, or anything. I guess I grew up learning to mind. And that's all and any ideas were the same as there's, you might say. So that -

S.S.: I was thinking with all the lumberjacks and all the, you know, drinking and all that that was going on in town in the early days, whether they'd be worried about, you know...

N.S.: Well, you see, I didn't go downtown hardly unless it was to run down for some groceries or something like that. We didn't mix in much of that business. And then the saloons were down there near the railroad track, right up there behind where the stores are now. They stayed pretty much to themselves. I don't know, nowadays it seems like they would be more apt to mix in with the people. But we didn't have any trouble that way. What few we did see, they were so nice and polite and kind and all to us. They'd never

a word. They knew my folks and everything like that. I know one night we went to a dance here. They didn't take us to the dances very much. And Dad played for the dance that night, so mother and the kids, all of us, we went up with him. One fellow asked me if he could take me home that night and I said, "Well, I'll see what the folks say about it" or something like that. And I asked them if it was all right. I didn't know whether - I hadn't been keeping any company with anybody, anyhow and I didn't know whether I wanted to go with so-and-so. And I said, "Well, this guy wants to take me home from the dance." And I said, "Should I let him take me or should I not?" And I didn't know what I wanted to do. And, "Well, I guess it's all right" they said. "But just walk along with the rest of us in a crowd. You'll be all right," you know. So I did. He walked me home and that ended it. He didn't come back anymore. I don't think he expected to take the whole family. So I didn't care. I didn't care much about him anyhow. He didn't have a very good reputation. Later on, now there was another fellow in town here who was a real pal to all of us around. And well, that group that we kept on and mixed with was kinda like homefolks, all along. Perry Jones was the one that liked me and I kinda fell for. And his uncle was just pretty near the same age-Austin was his last name, I don't remember what his name was. But they would sometimes get us to go with the neighbors to some kinds of parties, you know.

END OF SIDE C

Nell Smith: Well, we'd all gang up and go up to a house up that way and then have a big to-do. And maybe they'd push the tables all back and we'd play games. Spin the pan, anything, and post office, any crazy thing you could think of. And then the fellas would ^{WANT} walk us home and that was all there was to it. There was no foolishness or no - oh, they weren't the smoochy kind that you see nowadays, ~~some~~ ^{much} it, you know. Nowadays, if the guy that takes you home, why I guess, they think they got a plumb platter and make a fuss around over ya. But I wasn't used to that. But anyhow, then the next week or two probably they'd be some other place. And the old folks - it was always the whole family, babies, old folks and all - and young kids - and that's where we had our fun. Everybody was alike and everybody had fun. And had a good big time.

Sam Schragger: When you say they were "like homefolks", you mean like the folks, like the family left back in Missouri when they first came out? Is that what you mean?

N.S.: Well, just like your own family, like in families. You didn't have to be, you know, sharing some of them because they didn't quite suit your taste or anything. They were just all alike and tried to be the same to each other and all. And I know one time that I was kinda surprised. I was going with Perry quite a lot at the time but then it was just these regular parties, there wasn't any shows or anything. We just all would go from place to place whenever the time came and we'd all get together.

It was Halloween and anyhow. And I don't know to this day who did it, but I guess it was my mother or Florence Smith's - the one who ^{rode} scared the horse with me. But she was courtin' with this uncle Walter - Walter Austin was his name - and I was going with Perry. That is "going" - he'd just come down sometimes and walk up with me to the place. That's how much I was "going" with him. But the fella was just ^{a bit of} fun to walk along, but he wasn't mauling over ya or anything. You felt ^{free} pretty good just going along like it was your brother or anybody else, you know. You didn't have to worry about it. And that's the way things were run then. But anyhow, we just had an awful lot of fun from

just nothing. And anyhow, it came Halloween time and well, we thought we'd - mother knew about it because we were making a pretty basket - you know, the boys were batching. They were living in their aunt's house there close to us and they were batching. I didn't think they fared very well, the way they were batching. So Florence and I decided we'd fix up a nice basket and then we'd slip up there and hang that basket for 'em, 'cause we watched so they were going downtown and then we were going to slip over and hang up that basket or leave it there at the door. So we went along and noticed everything was dark over there - it had been all evening. And we had to go in the outer door to this kind of back porch there and then the other door was just about, oh, four - five feet from it, I think. And we got it all fixed and we pretty good timed it so we could just see where we were going. Anyhow, we slipped up there and put it - put the basket, you know, - kinda right in front of the door where they'd have to run into it. We were kinda whispering and then sneaked on out again - we were going to sneak out and go on home and let them find it. They'd probably know who did it but we wasn't worried. Anyway, we got to fixing that basket there by the door and that door flew open and the boys were in there! And they liked to scared the wits out of us. We started to run and this wasn't all cleared there then. It was brush and stuff and they chased us for, I guess, fifteen minutes, all over the creation and they couldn't catch up with us. And I don't know, I guess, they finally did catch us. We kinda got run down. And I said, "Well, you arnery things, you weren't supposed to be at home."

S.S.: Did you leave the basket when you ran?

N.S.: Yes. We were just fixing 'em. You know, we had them set down and started to tip-toeing away. And then they - and they liked to tickled us to death because they did take advantage that time. They kissed us then. That's why they had to fight so hard then - 'for they got their kiss, anyhow. They got to kiss us. And then I think it was only

on the back of the neck.

S.S.: Do you think in the days when you were growing up that most of the girls ever learned the facts of life from their folks at all? It seems like that's changed a lot in recent days.

N.S.: I know it. Well, we didn't – I don't think they were as wise along some lines as they are now. I don't know, most all of 'em, they just kinda took things as they came along – let them develop. But I don't think – well, they didn't make any special effort to have any lesson sessions on those things, I don't believe. Anyhow, my folks never did tell me much of anything about the ups and downs of things. I just – well, finally one girl passes on to another and just before I came from Troy, why one of my pals down there gave me one little tip that I didn't know. And I thought, "Oh, well, I didn't know that." "Well, didn't your mother tell ya?" I said no, she didn't. Well she said, she will one of thses days, something like that. And so I'd got so I'd drop it there. I thought, "Well, so far so good." And it didn't bother me anymore. That's kinda, I don't know if they were all as dumb as I was or not, but...

S.S.: Well, you sort of wonder whether if being ignorant would do more harm that good when you're getting older.

N.S.: Well, it has its drawbacks and its good points in a way. Oh, I don't know, as compared then with the things we knew then and the things we were told us or that – life as it is now. They tell little kids two–three years old, the craziest – all the facts that – I don't know, it seems to me that it doesn't concern them. But that it kinda takes the, well, it kinda takes the beauty out of living if you give 'em – well, if you get more bread than you're able to handle. In other words – that you're not ready for it, it seems to me like. 'Cause it spoils a lot of things. Now I know, a little girl here in town, I think she was in the second grade, I heard about. Another little girl went to stay all night with her and that little girl proceded to tell her everything in the world she knew on

ever had heard tell of or – everything. And part of it was things that I hardly know myself, yet. And I don't know how she got so wise but she had a pretty good idea of what she was talking about. And the mother of the visiting girl was just horrified when her little kid came home and asked her about all these things. And she said, "Why, where'd you get all that stuff?" And she told her. And she asked her was it true and all. Well, she says it is partly but she said that isn't for little children to worry about yet. The time will come when you will know all this and that. And she said, "And I don't want you to be like she was. Don't tell everything like that, you know, to somebody else. Wait till she's old enough to be told and she'll be told in the right way."

S.S.: Did your folks have a pretty high standard of – well, did they – like did they teach you to tell the truth and things like that?

N.S.: Absolutely. We had no desire to do otherwise. We just grew up that way. We were taught that the truth was to be protected. It was to be admired. That sticks me yet today. And when I was raising my kids, now then maybe something would come up and I'd have to get after them about. Or somebody'd tell me something that they had done or something like that. Then I'd quizz 'em about it. "Well, now, did you do this?" He'd start to say no or maybe did say no. And I'd say – "Now listen, I'm asking you and I want you to tell me." And I said, "I wouldn't punish you near as bad for telling the truth as I did if you lied to me." He wouldn't give in. And so I said, "Tell the truth." And I said, "If you haven't done what's right – if its all wrong why , the best thing you can do is fix it up." And the truth was a pretty high standard around our family at that time.

S.S.: Do you think that you raised your kids just the same way you were raised or do you think you did many things different?

N.S.: I tried to raise them like I was raised, but can't say that they all came out that way. I don't know, I've often wondered where I stumbled and people will tell me, "Well, it's not your fault Nell. It's the kids nowadays. They're under so much, what is it – your

temptation and all, that they do so many other things that they didn't use to do." And things that you have taught them, they kinda ignore it and go ahead and do as they please, you know. But all the training I had to give my kids were – well, I just had one little girl but she passed away when she was a tiny baby. But mine were all boys, see. Well, I had a problem raising them but I told them to tell the truth and usually – until they were, oh, I guess, 10–12–14 years old – they were – I could pin them down and I'd say, "Now tell me the truth. I want the truth about it." And they would. Maybe sometimes they'd hate awful bad to tell me but they knew that it was the truth that they were supposed to tell. And I said, "Tell the truth no difference how bad it hurts."

S.S.: Do you remember the 1910 fires? They were the ones that were mostly up north of here and were burning off so much of the white pine. Some around Clarkia burned too.

N.S.: Yah. They were all up in that area. I took one trip one time up over and you could see over the hills a lot of tall black snags, you know, and stumps that were left from that fire. Quite a few people were burned, I think, in that fire. There was a bunch of 'em that were hemmed in there – were surrounded – I remember hearing of it. I didn't – we weren't exactly connected with that but it wasn't very far away.

S.S.: That was the same fire that the Boles' house was almost burned down – and their little cabin. I think, that was in 1910 too.

N.S.: Who? Boles?

S.S.: Yah.

N.S.: Let's see. I think that's before they moved here. That was when they were living up some other place, and it ~~wasn't~~ ^{was pretty near} – got them and some of the people from that area, when they saw the fire coming, they went out and dug holes and put their silverware and dishes and everything and clothes and things and buried them. And they saved a lot of their stuff that they had time to bury.

S.S.: Although Wallace Boles told me that they never did find their stuff again after they

buried the silverware, when they came back.

N.S.: Here comes my daughter-in-law.

(Break)

S.S.: A picture from Missouri?

N.S.: No, it was a picture of him when he was in Helmer. He was working out near some folks who lived in Helmer at that time and his hair was jet black and his whiskers the same, and he had a mustache, whiskers and all. And if he wasn't a sight! He looked like something that had just dropped in from a foreign country. He didn't know where they belonged.

S.S.: Well, lets see. I was going to ask you about the 1913 fire when Main Street burnt down. The one where they thought maybe that was set.

N.S.: And the men were burned?

S.S.: Um-hum. What did you know about that?

N.S.: Oh, well, there had been a big dance the night before, it was in July, the 3rd. The night of the 3rd, there had been a big dance up there. And everybody was turning out to it, practically. And they went on home. And along about 3-4 o'clock in the morning, something like that, why a fire broke out down at the restaurant. It was clear down at the end of the line near the track about where the Fire Hall is now. And it was pretty well under - what do I want to say?

S.S.: Control?

N.S.: Well, not under control - out of control.

S.S.: Out of control.

N.S.: Un-huh, pretty well out of control when they found it out. And I think one fellow had to get up early and go on an engine or something and had bargained to wake some other guy to go with him or something. He was supposed to wake him up in time, in case he

he wasn't up. And he went - there comes the...

S.S.: (to daughter-in-law) Hi.

N.S.: Did you get any mail?

Daughter-in-law: Nope.

S.S.: You were saying that he had figured on waking up this other fellow - was this at the hotel?

N.S.: At the hotel, un-huh. And he turned, you know, and headed in there. And as he started to go down through the halls, I think he discovered the smoke and ^{the things} saw all the fire in the butt end up there. So he went to where he could and rapped on the doors, you know, and turned on the alarm. Banged on doors and hollared fire and all. But those two places, I think, were already burning and it was pretty bad, and he couldn't get any raise from there. Then he - but he had turned in the alarm every place. And he said - and that's the rooms where the fire started up there. And those two fellas - their bones were found after the fire was put out. It burned clear down. (The light's in my eyes. I can see now though) But they said, you see this one men, Schaffer, Joe Schaffer - was boarding at, I believe they were living at mother's at that time. And we hadn't gotten our house built yet entirely - so, Joe was boarding. She was boarding, keeping the men from the cedar yard right across the road from where we lived there. Oh, five or six men that she was boarding there, at that time. They just had to step across the road to their dinner and that was pretty handy for them. And she was a good cook.

S.S.: This was the - which hotel was this now?

N.S.: The Short House, down near the track.

S.S.: So who's the "she" that you're talking about?

N.S.: My mother. She was a good cook I say. And ^{she} was boarding these men. And she thought she'd could make a little bit that way. And that evening Joe was there. I think he

was there for supper but he had been coming all the time. But he had gone to Moscow - I think it was that day - this was during the summer time, I guess. It would have had to have been, I guess, on Saturday that he went over and made a draw from the bank. And, of course, that would be open on a Saturday, but not the next day. But anyhow, when they found him, they never found any money or anything with him. And he had, I think, it was \$2,500 dollars, on him, that he had drawn from the bank.

S.S.: Joe Schaeffer had? He usually stayed at your mother's?

N.S.: He didn't room there but he ate there.

S.S.: I think I see.

N.S.: He ate his meals there.

S.S.: Why did he have so much money with him?

N.S.: He was going to buy that ranch, ^{right} up by the creek up that way. He was going to buy a fellow's place that had a house - had a little house on it and quite a little land. He was going to see him the next day and close the deal. It was arranged. And the next day didn't come. And the other fellow that burned, he was a Finlander, I believe - some foreigner - and he had been in the hospital. I don't know - for pneumonia or something. He had been in the hospital here and he couldn't - the doctor told him - he was kinda crowded at the hospital - and he said, "Well, now," he said, "I think you'd be just as well, you'd be just as well off if you went down to the hotel and got you a room there. It wouldn't be any more expensive for you than it is here." And he said, "You'd be just as well off and you could come up every once in a while to see me if there was anything you wanted to see me about."

And so he had. He'd taken a room, ^{right} next door to Joe's. And both those men died in the fire. So they figured that somebody knew that Joe had that money that he had gone to the bank that day and the money was never accounted for. But to know just exactly where you put your finger on the right guy... some of them had quite a lot of suspicions but I

guess he really couldn't prove anything.

S.S.: Did they question anybody?

N.S.: Well, I don't know. I think they more suspicioned – the one fellow that they kinda questioned. I think they said he left town the next day or right away, or something like that. It looked kinda bad, but –

S.S.: Is Ernie going to get up again?

N.S.: I don't think so. Hey, Ernie, why don't you sit still?

Ernie: Give me that light.

S.S.: Shall I open it up?

N.S.: Un-un.

S.S.: No?

N.S.: Where are you going now?

Ernie: What am I going to do?

N.S.: I said, where are you going? It don't need that cut.

S.S.: I can just undo it.

N.S.: No, he just moves around and I have to chase him. Or else somebody.

S.S.: When this fire was going on, how did they put it out? I mean, was it a hard...

N.S.: There was nothing you could do but carry water by bucketfuls at that time and it was clear up – a two story building. And some of them got out from the windows and the ladders that the fellas came in on, they brought the ladders and got them out from the building that way. And I guess the stairway was still free to the part of them, you know, to the back, I think. But I know, one of the girls that I knew real well, well it was her mother was running the hotel there at that time. And she had to climb out that window and a nightgown was all she had. And had to climb out through the window and get down through there. No clothes or anything. But she was kinda shut off from the stairway and so...

S.S.: How much did it burn of Main Street?

N.S.: Well, I don't know whether it burned – I don't remember. I don't know whether it had burned any more than the one building or not. I don't know. It might have burned – in some pictures I've seen, there's a little, kind of a short building next to it, I think, was in that area, someplace. But I don't know whether it was joined. Seems like it was joined onto that building.

S.S.: Well, do you think that the general agreement – there was a general agreement that it had been arson or do you think it was – the opinion was very strongly divided about whether it had been set or whether it was an accident?

N.S.: No. They said it was set. Very definitely. Pretty near everybody decided it. *People didn't give him credit for being too nice a guy anyhow.*
'Cause when he was a stranger in town – oh, I don't know. They seemed to think he had – he was capable of doing a little trick once in a while. So – oh, I don't know. You couldn't anybody claim it or prove it but the – we still had a lot of suspicions about him.

S.S.: He was the one that disappeared in a couple of days?

N.S.: Um-hum. In a short while. Joe was a fine man, too.

S.S.: What was he like?

N.S.: Oh, he was a middle-aged man. Kind of – I think he was a well-educated man. And he was polite and mannerly and a gentleman, I would say. He was nice, kind to everybody.

S.S.: Had he been in Bovill very long when this happened?

N.S.: He'd been there a long time. He was working here. (My poor hair is all falling down.)

S.S.: Well, Nell, I think I should get –

END OF SIDE D

transcribed and typed by Karen Purtee