

This is an interview with Emma Cook in Elk River on June 5, 1975. The interviewer is Isabel Miller.

IM: Your full name?

EC: Emma Christine Cook. Do you want my maiden name?

IM: What was it?

EC: Fromm

IM: Do you have a nickname?

EC: No never have.

IM: And your box number is?

EC: 172

IM: Your date of birth?

EC: 1906, September 13.

IM: Where were you born?

EC: I was born in Warden, Washington in sagebrush country.

IM: Did you come directly to Elk River?

EC: My folks lived in Farmington, then he went to school in Pullman.

IM: When did you first come to Idaho?

EC: 1930

IM: Were you married then?

EC: Yes

IM: Why don't you start back and tell me from the time you were born, where you moved to.

EC: Then my folks moved to Farmington and went to school there and then I went to Lancaster, Wash. where my dad was mail carrier. Mom got the mail from the people at the post office and my dad took it out on the route then. I took care of the kids because there was eight of us.

IM: Were you the oldest?

EC: I was the oldest so I took care of the kids and we lived there for a long time and when I turned 17 we got married at Colfax and then we moved from Lancaster to Deer Park, Wash. We was there three or four months, John was making posts. We lived out in the timber. We just had the little girl, she

was about 2½ and then we left Deer Park, was gonna get a job and we went to B Idaho and John was going to the mines and he had to have \$13.00 for house rent and he had to have I don't know how much money for a hat and a flashlight and we had \$2.00 to our name. He says, "well I've got to get this job." I said, "you can't get a job without going inside the earth, there's just no sense in living." We went to Spokane and he got a job at Moeba Hill. A woman was cooking for three men, which would be my husband and two other people, this was in 1930. He went to Moeba Hill and we did all that, I think for about 8 or 9 months. Our little girl was about three when we came to Elk River, John got a job here. He was only 22 years old when he come here. When John was working for the Potlatch he worked quite a few years with Potlatch and during the depression when Norma June was born . If there were jobs men had work, half the time there were no jobs. As a rumor, there's always a will, there's always a way. Times got a little bit better and then a little later on he went to work for Diamond Match and he worked several years for that. Him and I wanted to tear the old back porch off and by scratch we built it all by ourselves, 12x24. It had a nice bedroom and a dining room. In the meantime I was canning, did all that canning and was helping and we did it all by ourselves. He was taking care of his garden and we just barely got it built and the camp shut down and I think that must of been in the late 50's, I think. As time went on John got some maintenance for the city for about five or six years until he got a stroke then he had to quit. But he was past retirement age. He was in his 70's when he quit then. Then I got a job out here at the fire patrol, I worked out there for about four years.

IM: What kind of work did you do?

EC: I worked in the kitchen with the girls. Like if the girls were at the stove making breakfast I was helping peel potatoes and getting vegetables

all ready and things like that and I was really the salad girl, that's who I was. A lot of different things I helped them. My transportation was so bad, later on I couldn't work there because I had no way of going in and no way of going out. It was funny I went out here; I think we had breakfast early. I had to come in about seven or eight and then we had to go back for dinner and then go back again for supper so that was six trips that I had to fight for and at that time I didn't have no way of going. Part of the time I walked and that's a long ways to walk when you get up so early. At that time they didn't have things so convenient like they have now. We had lots of fires and it would get to hot and we'd make about two or three hundred sandwiches but I loved making sandwiches. This would be for the firefighters from all over. I'll never forget the times they took it in the plane and when they dropped it down it went in the river and lost everything. I wish now I would have made a diary from the time I started to work because there was a lot of things that went on that I could've said that I may not have forgotten. I worked with two nice gals one is passed away now and I think the other one may go back this summer. Who she's going to get to help, I don't know. I could've worked there longer if I had the transportation. They was always telling me to get a bicycle but that was out of the question, I never rode a bicycle in my life, I wasn't about to start now.

IM: Would you drive if you had a car?

EC: I used to drive all the time but my husband had a stroke and we had to get rid of our car because I couldn't trust him with it and he couldn't trust himself. I always said that it was to bad that we didn't keep our car, then I would have transportation. I think if we had a car I would've taken up driving. But that's all in the past now. I really did enjoy working out there with the girls, it was early in the morning and late at night but it was something I could look forward to. I'd come home

at eight o'clock in the morning and I'd be through out there for the morning and come in and do my work in here and h lf the time they would be sleeping, maybe the average would be getting up at eight o'clock and I already had my work done so it was nice. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

IM: What time would you get up to go out there?

EC: It all depended but most of the time I'd get up at five and sometimes I got up at four because I had to be out there. They had different shifts that they had to get going and sometimes it was firefighters and stuff and it seemed like we had an awful lot of fighters for some reason when I was working. Now they've got everything much more handier in the kitchen. Like seating tables and different things and at that time they didn't have much of anything to work with.

IM: You had to cook it right there and then get it to their table?

EC: We had this fire school and there would be hundreds of boys and they would be at least five deep, a long string of them and it was cold and rainy and they couldn't go in the kitchen they had to go outside or in their cabins or something because there was too many of them. But I enjoyed it, I got to see a lot of different places from all over. I don't know if it even still going on like they used to have.

IM: How long ago was this when you quit?

EC: It was in the late 60's I think. I guess they have all my records down there, you know.

IM: So they must of really ate big meals.

EC: Yes we fed them good. They don't cook it like they used to. We had even a butcher shop. They had a certain man taking care of all the butchering anything that they wanted, there wasn't nothing that they wanted that they couldn't have. I really enjoyed it.

IM: And they started from scratch then on everything, the freshly killed.

EC: They'd get it in but we'd have f esh chicken and stuff. We always got

a half a beef or half a pig or something like that and then he'd cut it up.

IM: I imagine they use a lot of frozen stuff now.

EC: Well now I presume they do, yeah because they don't have that fellow out there anymore cutting up. It's just different. They've asked me to come out but maybe one of these days I'll walk up. It will be kind of interesting.

IM: Yes I would think so. Now where did you first come when you came to Idaho?

EC: We came to Neva Hill; it's between Elk River and Bovill about 12 or 13 miles out. They used to have a schoolhouse there and a depot. We came into Elk River in 1930. We went to Neva Hill in 1930 in May and then we come into Elk River I guess that fall.

IM: How did you travel?

EC: We had an old Maxwell car. The cutest thing was when we were coming into Neva Hill to get this job from Spokane and we had just Maxwell and we had a little trunk in the back, we got lost and we stopped the car and we got out and we took all the bedding out and put it under a tree. He says, "Ok you and the baby come out now, I've got the bed all made," and I said, "I'm not going to go out there with my baby, the bears will get us." He said, "C'mon you are so tired," I says, "no" and I wouldn't get out of that car for money. He just rolled it all up stuck it in the car and when I woke up I was really tired, I had a husband on one shoulder and a baby in my arms and I was all cramped but we made it ok; when we drove into Elk River but we were lost and that was out by Deary, the other side of Deary, and when we come here John got a job here and we've been here ever since.

IM: So you came with your husband and baby daughter?

EC: Yes she was about three then.

IM: What was your mother's maiden name?

EC: Her name was Christine Dormier.

IM: Do you know when she was born?

EC: She's twenty years older than I am so that would be.....

IM: Is she still living?

EC: No, she passed away about four or five years ago.

IM: So she was born in 1886, that would've been twenty years ago from you.

EC: I know she was 20 years old when I was born

IM: Do you know where she was born?

EC: In South Dakota.

IM: Did she ever have an occupation or a job?

EC: The only job I know was she took the mail from the depot to the post office every day and then from the post office down to the depot to go on to the train besides taking care of the eight children.

EC: My dad was a rural mail carrier, this was her job. She had one of these little wagon things that she used to take, it wasn't too far away.

IM: How old were you when you were old enough to take care of these eight sisters and brothers?

EC: Oh dear I was 10 or 11 years old. At that time I could do more than the girls could now at 16 or 17. I had more responsibility. I even had to cook, she told me what to do.

IM: How long would she be gone?

EC: Oh an hour or maybe a half hour. She wouldn't be gone too long and they were pretty good kids and that was only once a day she was gone like that. She never left us with very much. I did the boys work because my dad, I had two brothers and I was the oldest. My dad was a mail carrier and he had to have hay for his horses so often in the summertime I'd have to go out and help him cut the hay, raise the hay put it on the rack and bring it in and put it in the barn. He had to have feed for the horses, for some reason I was the only one that was available to do it because the boys were too small and I'd come in and help mom. We went to bed early and got up early and we just didn't have the things like they do now.

Many times I'd be out there raising hay and stacking hay and it would be the 4th of July, I didn't get to do the things like these kids do now. Kids would come by and say, "come on Emma lets'go to St. John's, there's a big doings there but I couldn't go because I had to help my folks. For a long time I kind of held that against my folks but now I understand that they had to have me to help them. I suppose dad could of got someone else but the money question.

IM: It would've been money out.

EC: He knew that I could do it or he'd teach me how to do it and so that's one of the things I did. Nowadays kids don't do that, especially girls. It didn't hurt me. I can understand why money wise and stuff why I had to do it, you just kind of resent it, I guess.

IM: You must of wanted to go.

EC: Oh I wanted to go so badly with the boys and girls, the school kids. I was thirteen, fourteen years old and I couldn't go. I didn't get to do any of that stuff. My dad was old fashioned he was you do your work and if you don't have time to go anywhere you just don't have the time and if it's to late, you just don't go, and that was it.

IM: What year did your mother die?

EC: I think it was '69; just before Xmas.

IM: Do you know what year they were married?

EC: I think 1905.

IM: What was your father's name?

EC: Henry Fromm

IM: Is that German?

EC: Yes very much so.

IM: Do you know the date of his birth?

EC: He's six years older than my mother, that's the only way I can tell ya.

IM: So that would've been 1880.

IM: Do you know where he was born?

EC: I think it was Russia, I'm not sure, but I think so, I'm just guessing.

He came to this country when he was about six months old with his family.

IM: So he really was an immigrant.

EC: Well at that time I guess when your folks came over and they got a citizen before you were a six years old, you were a citizen. That's the way it was, you see he was an american citizen because he got a government job.

IM: I think you are right.

He was a mail carrier, did he do anything else?

EC: Always a mail carrier.

IM: What year did he die?

EC: He's been dead for quite awhile; I'm gonna say '62, I'm not for sure.

IM: You had seven brothers and sisters?

EC: I had two brothers and five sisters.

IM: Could you give me their first name?

EC: My sister next to me is Adeline Porter, Ray my brother, he's passed away and then there's Benny, he's in Florida. Then I got twin sisters, Clara and Elsie and Thelma Morash and she lives in Sacramento and Julie Anderson in Walla Walla. My twin sisters, Clara is in Clarkaton and Elsie is in Spokane.

IM: What are their last names?

EC: Elsie Gray and Clara Weeks.

IM: Your husband's name?

EC: John Cook

IM: When was he born?

EC: 1892

IM: Where was he born?

EC: Austria

IM: How old was he when he came to this country?

EC: About 19 years old.

IM: He's held quite a number of different jobs.

EC: He had jobs before he even came here. He was a powder monkey and just all kinds of different jobs. He worked on the roads, made new roads and logging.

IM: I think I remember you telling me that he damaged his hearing by the dynamite.

EC: Yes he did and it makes noise in his ears, he can't hear very good.

IM: Where were you married?

EC: Colfax, Wash. in 1923 Christmas Eve. We had our 50th anniversary in 1972 and it was beautiful and everybody was so nice. We had our vows again, it was so beautiful. That's something I don't know about the Catholic people.

IM: I would think that different rules would apply if you were just repeating your vows.

That was really nice for you.

EC: Oh yes, they had music all kinds of good people. My sister even came from Sacramento, Calif. and from Walla Walla and all over. It was really nice.

IM: So you have three daughters.

EC: Norma June.

IM: She was born in Elk River?

EC: She was born right here; she was the middle one.

IM: What was the date?

EC: Jeannine was born in 1925, Norma June was in 1931 and Marilyn was born in 1940. Jeannine Southworth, she lives in Spokane.

IM: Does she work?

EC: She used to work at this place where they sent out papers, mailing house. She hasn't worked for awhile, she's just a housewife.

IM: The third one?

EC: Marilyn Boles; she was born in Endicott, Washington.

IM: Where was Jeannie born?

EC: She was born in Lancaster, Wash. They were all born at home.

IM: Did you have a midwife or a doctor?

EC: We had doctors that came right to our house.

IM: Does Marilyn have an occupation?

EC: Yes, she's in Troy, Idaho and she's what you call a postman, she works in the post office. Every Saturday she works in the post office and any other time when one of them leaves she fills in. And on Saturday she locks the post office at 11:30. I'm kind of proud of her to think she took this civil service job she had to take an examination. She said there was forty of them and she happened to be the one that got that job. I'm pleased and proud.

IM: Did you go to high school?

EC: I went to the eighth grade.

IM: Did you ever hold a job before you were married?

EC: I worked in a store once in awhile for about four or five months clerking in a store.

IM: Since then lately you have been a cook.

EC: Yes, taking care of my husband; I crochet all the time.

IM: I think your daughter told me you made a lot of clothes, sewing.

EC: I love to do it; and quilts, I'm just crazy about making quilts. I went to Spokane and I made two there for Jeannie. I bet you I've made seven quilts in the last six months. Now I got one started for our younger daughter.

IM: Are these pieced quilts?

EC: Yes, I'll have to show them to you after awhile. I really enjoy it and then I'm making flowers out of beads.

IM: You made all of these?

EC: Yes I wished I lived somewhere where I could just go and get the stuff because I love to make pretty things.

IM: But you do need the supplies?

EC: Yes and you can't buy it down here and Moscow doesn't have too much of a variety.

IM: Isn't there some mail order housing?

EC: Maybe but I just like to go to town and pick it up and come home to make it. In Spokane we just went to town and I bought all that stuff and Jeannie did too and we come home and put it all together and its' fun. to make pretty things. One time we got some different things and we made little Easter rabbits out of them; just everything we could find and maybe little baskets and put feathers in it. I really enjoy making with beads. I'm not too good with it but I'd like to learn more about it. At xmas time I made Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus from the soap containers.

IM: There's all kinds of things like that you could do.

EC: It's hard to get anything like that in Elk River. They can't carry all that stuff because they don't have enough people wanting the stuff we need. If I want something maybe somebody else would want it and the bigger stores would have it.

IM: If there's more people to buy. Are there any other jobs you've held besides cooking in a lumber camp?

EC: No that's about all I could handle.

IM: Have you ever gotten any awards or ribbons?

EC: No; somebody said if I sold what I make what would I charge and I don't know, I've never made a thing in my life and sold it where my husband makes baskets and he sells them. I think it's because when I make something or it's a birthday coming up or if someone says "that's beautiful" then I just give it to them. Whereas I suppose if I lived out in the bigger city where there was more demand, I could sell stuff.

IM: Maybe when your husband goes to things like the Renaissance Fair, you should take some of your quilts along.

EC: I thought of that.

IM: You could demonstrate how you do it.

EC: You know what makes it bad; if you had a car of your own where you could just take your stuff; but you have to bother somebody else and you hate to leave it in their car and there's your throwback of not having a car of your own. We wish we could sell our house; well I wouldn't even mind Troy because you could get out once in awhile to Moscow or to Lewiston and I think we're so isolated and I don't think there's so much snow there either. But my husband is not allowed to do any shoveling and I don't care nothing about shoveling because I don't have the health like I used to have either. I like snow but I don't like all the snow that I have to shovel. I do love my home and there are lots of advantages and disadvantages of living in Elk River. The younger generation, they got their car and they got their own thing and they do what they want to, where they; when you get older you can't do the things you'd like to do. I like to be independent; I always have been and that makes it tough.

IM: Are you a member of a club?

EC: I belong to that birthday club, I belonged for quite awhile. I used to belong to Rebekah, I just now resigned and I wish I'd of never done it. The only reason I did was because they took our Rebekah Lodge out of here and took it to Deary and as I said before there's no way of going down unless you bum a ride. I could join anytime I wanted to if I wanted to go back again; until we do find a place to live I can always reinstate. I belonged to the lodge since 1948; that's a long time. This birthday club is the only thing I belong. There was a grandma club but it fizzled out.

IM: Do you help with the community church?

EC: No; we go to church once in awhile but they never ask us for anything but I would like to help if they needed it. I helped in the summertime for two weeks with the children in Bible School, I have helped with that which was

nice. I didn't this year or last year either. It's a problem sometimes; they get different ones I presume to work with.

IM: Like other places they are always hunting for people to do this.

Ok that takes care of the data and I've got a lot of other stuff at the same time. I'll go through these questions and some of them you have already answered. You talked about the disadvantages and advantages of living in a rural area and how it was hard to get out because you were isolated.

EC: It really is, as I said before, my husband was real sick one night and you know he was all by himself, of course, thank God for the phone but I was just thinking if a person lived close by you could call up the doctor and he'd come to your house or you could go to the hospital. So far, thank God, with all prayers and stuff, whenever you need him to help you, there's always a will, there's a way. He was real sick here not too long ago. It seemed like he'd get these dizzy spells which he kind of scares me which I know he don't feel good but otherwise I do love it here, it's cool.

IM: It certainly is pleasant today.

EC: It's not noisy but in other ways; our daughter lives in Spokane in the valley and we'd like to live there but we wanted a trailer with about three acres but for some reason they don't allow nice trailers there.

IM: They've made a regulation.

EC: Evidently; I like to just get one of those trailers that looks just like a house and I thought well maybe someday I'd go and talk to those guys.

IM: So you've then spent some time in Spokane.

EC: Yes just to get away from Elk River for awhile. It's just nice to get away and it's nice to come home, too.

IM: Did your family do anything for recreation?

EC: The only thing they did for us was get up in the morning; no, no recreation. When I think of the kids now, they've got so many nice things to do but my folks didn't do anything to make it pleasant for us children; all they

thought was work. I presume that's what they grew up with, was work. I swore if I had fifty kids they wouldn't do the same things I had to do. If my girls wanted to go to a dance at 12 years old I went with them and we had a good time but my folks wouldn't let us go to the dances, they wouldn't let us take cars. With my girls I say if they want to have a bunch in and make ice cream I wouldn't care. They could have the kitchen and they made a mess and that's home and they had all their family there. When I'd sit at home they wouldn't let us do that. They just didn't believe in it. You were just mad to be honored for your work and that was it. I had a different viewpoint for my children. They all three graduated, which I'm so proud of. I think we did a real good job raising our children.

IM: Your husband spent time away, didn't he?

EC: Yes, when our last girl was born in Endicott we brought her home she was three weeks old, I think. This house when he bought it, it was nothing and I can remember we had a bed out here in the front room and the other two girls were afraid to sleep alone because their daddy wasn't home, it was just me with an air tight stove and I was chopping wood once a week and when you chopped wood it don't last a whole week. I'd have to chop my own wood and take care of the baby and get the children off to school and it was a hard life to do all that stuff and then raise your kids. He'd get home Saturday night and leave Sunday afternoon.

IM: That wasn't very long at home.

EC: No, it wasn't; he'd be home just long enough to split some wood and do some things that he'd have to have done and I'd do his laundry and stuff and he always had a bunch of guys go back with him in the pickup. It was hard for both of us.

IM: How many years did this go on?

EC: Up til it closed up, I just don't remember when the camps closed up. It must of been the late 60's.

IM:

IM: Quite a while, over 30 years.

EC: Yes all of that.

IM: And that was mostly what men did in Elk River then and you were mostly just women and children here.

EC: Right. When they had that big fire here men were out there all the time and women were here just by themselves. Each family had to take care of their own family.

IM: How long was your courtship?

EC: I went with him when I was thirteen years old and got married when I was seventeen.

IM: Four years.

EC: I was just too young to get married. Off and on I didn't go with him constantly but I was in school and we had activities. I didn't get to the things like the girls do now. Now these kids could go to a soda fountain or something like that but we didn't have a soda fountain. I'd just go to some girls house or to the store. I can remember going to the show and my mother wouldn't let me go by myself so she would go with me. I was only about fourteen years old. Outside of that there wasn't much of anything. Of course she liked the shows, too.

IM: What was expected, did they get you through the eighth grade and that was it?

EC: I think what my dad was worried about was me staying home and working. He thought that was enough, why go to school, you're just going to get married anyway, you don't need that education, he didn't believe in education, although he went to the Univ. in Pullman. But that's a man, see. These German people, they think just the men need the education. A woman doesn't need the education if she's going to raise a family.

IM: Is that true for your other brothers and sisters?

EC: There was eight of us and I think there was four or five us that graduated.

I was one that only went to the eighth grade. None of my brothers graduated. They went to the eighth or ninth grade themselves.

IM: Your father didn't think it was important that they have an education?

EC: No because my younger brother; I don't remember too much about my older brother because he was gone most of the time. My younger brother at thirteen he was driving a hedder box and that's four horses or more and he took a man's job. When daddy expected it of us we expected it of ourselves. We had to do it and he made his own money. I can remember I was about 13 and I had to go to work for this lady, she had a baby and I took care of the baby and did all the dishes and I separated the milk, washed the separator and I think I got \$1.50 a week and my dad took the money, I never did ~~take~~ ^{see} the money and that's the kind of stuff that they believed in. Why should you get the money, you get all your food at home. Nowadays children have to have their own money. I myself, I like to have my own money. I like to say, well I bought it for you but my dad taught us, you don't need the money, you've got all your eats, clothes, sleep, what else do you want. So that's the kind of belief that he had. So there is a big difference

IM: Do you remember what you had in mind when you were getting married?

Was it to escape from home?

EC: You bet I did, a million times I would've left and run away although I don't know where I would've run to but I even told my folks I was going to run away. They said I better not. I wish now I would've had the guts like I have today because I would've run away. I swore if I ever got married and had any children if they said they wanted a dollar I'd want to know what's it for and if it's something that they wanted I was going to give it to them. I believe each individual should have their own say and they should have it but I don't say, "you don't need it" I don't believe in

in that.

IM: There are other needs rather than the basic needs.

EC: Yes I believe that.

IM: Were you pleased after you were married?

EC: Yes I had more freedom then. There were a lot of things I got when I was married that I never had when I was at home and I was really happy. John is a lot older than I am and I'm not a bit sorry I got married. I don't agree with some of the things that he does but maybe there's some things that I do that he don't agree with. He lets me do more or less what I want to do. If I want to do it then I must know what I'm talking about. Maybe I'm right sometimes, but maybe I'm wrong. No, I'm not a bit sorry. I always wanted to get married and have babies myself, I wanted a family.

IM: Your babies were pretty well separated, did it just happen that way?

EC: Evidently because when we had Jeannie, we was married two years, John was there, he was at home and he said there would be no more children and so I said, "well okay,"

IM: They thought this was kind of a hard thing for a woman to have to do.

EC: I could just see him, he had big tears streaming down his face but anyway after she came and everything was so beautiful, we just loved her and then we came here and Norma was born and he just couldn't hardly believe it when we got her oh that was great but he wasn't too happy over pretty little Marilyn, but oh she was a joy. But each one of mine was; it might be nice to have them all together, they are nice to have them that way, too because each one of them have their own way of coming into the world each one could take care of the other one. Jeannie was about 14 years old when I had Marilyn and I knew that I was and I was so; I wasn't embarrassed but we just didn't discuss it because the other two were in school and then here she came along, my little blond girl, she's really something.

EC: But we enjoyed all three of them.

IM: This is kind of a private question and you don't have to answer if you don't want to, how would you have limited your births in those days?

EC: I would like to have more; evidently he didn't want any more. I wanted two girls and two boys. Of course we got the three girls but I wanted a family. I didn't want eight of them like my mother did because I didn't know whether he could provide. There wasn't too much love in our home except that we had a lot of love amongst us kids, we didn't fight like most of the kids do nowadays. If one got in trouble we never rat on the other one. If one got in trouble we were all in the same sack, which was beautiful.

IM: You held together against the adults.

EC: Yes, we knew that dad was very strict. Someone would say "well where's Evelyn?" Well she's out here playing and maybe she'd be at the neighbors and there she wasn't supposed to be there. The other kids would go get her and before anybody knew they had been gone she was there. Each one of us took care of one another. That's one of the beauty things I can think of my childhood life, was all this sticking together.

IM: When your children were small, what kind of medical facilities did you have in Elk River?

EC: I guess we were lucky here because our doctors were in Deary and Troy.

IM: There was a time earlier when they had a hospital here wasn't there?

EC: Yes there was a doctor here and the hospital up on the hill. And Norma was supposed to be born I think a week before he left, he took off to get a car in Michigan and there was a doctor in Bolville. Bolville came into Elk River. I knew she was coming; I went to the neighbors, they had a phone and they called the doctor in Bolville and he came in and we were new and not very many people knew us but they knew the people that we called and we give them their name and everything. I had my baby at home. I have to tell you about John, this was really cute. He was at camp and

I didn't know whether to call John or call the doctor. As the time went on I thought, Now I've got to make a decision because these pains are telling me what to do. So I said to Mrs. I don't know whether to call John or the Doctor. She said to call the doctor so I called the doctor and I called John too. That time they big fires out there, too. This guy that was supposed to bring him in on a scooter was out all night and he didn't have the guts to ask him to bring him in so he ran all the way, I think it was about 15 or 20 miles but he ran all the way and he came in and I was so surprised to see him. Well he went into the kitchen and the doctor had some stuff in the sink, he dunked this stuff out and was going to wash his hands and I guess it was some of this solution that the doctor put in there but it was so cute because he didn't want to come in where we were until he had his hands washed. The doctors says, "you're in there dumping out all my stuff." I thought that was kind of cute of him. The baby was here by the time he got there. And Marilyn she was born in the house too at Endicott. But the doctor was only across the creek there. Endicott was only about 13 miles from where my folks lived in Lancaster and Lancaster is just a wide spot in the road. Do you know where Colfax is, do you know where Lancaster is. Anyway I had a sister in Endicott, I stayed there with them and there was our doctor there. And they said, "are you expecting a girl or a boy,:" and I said, "well I'll tell you I'm really expecting a girl." What's the name? "Oh Marilyn Ann" and he said, "what are you going to do if it's a boy?" Well I might call him John Randell, that was my doctor's name Randell. I might call him John Randell, but it was a little girl.

IM: What did you do for recreation and relaxation when your girls were growing up?

EC: They had lots of parties; they made all their own ice cream and they brought their boyfriends up and they had the phonograph they could listen

and the radio. They had dances at the school and if they wanted to go they could go to the dances. Or if they wanted to go down and have a coke or pop. Norma June was a great one for going to the neighbors house and play with paper dolls. With Jeannie and Marilyn were bookworms, they'd go out and they'd come home and read their books. Where Norma, she liked to have company, she loved company. She'd play paperdolls. They'd get a sears catalogue and cut all these pretty girls out and make their own fun.

EC: At that time the women didn't do to much, they just took care of their children. At that time we had a train coming in here and the mail would come in around two and the girls with their buggies with their babies would go down and get the mail and go to the restaurant or more or less the drugstore or fountain there. They had another cafe, it was real nice where all the families went in. They'd drive their babies down there and get the mail, then go have a coke or ice cream. It was just like a parade. When Marilyn was born they had; i bet there was 15 or 20 kids born at that time. When Marilyn was born there were quite a few children, it was a hard winter, lots of youngsters here. If you wanted to you'd go down and get your mail and come home and write a letter and it would go out around 4 o'clock. (end of tape side 1)

It seemed like it was a different life than it is now, for some reason I thought it was. I didn't like it because he was gone all the time but I knew that was one of the things that we had to live with. If they wanted bread and butter that's one of the things that you had to put up with. and everybody worked for Potlatch except for people like the druggist and storekeeper.

IM: You have friends in now and mostly it's just visinting and going to fairs and things like that?

EC: A lot of times we make saurkraute and we make a dish called Salmas, it's got meat and rice and a bunch of stuff and it's rolled up like little

cabbages. We're a very close knit family and birthdays mean more to us than a lot of people that does at Xmas time. So we always have a big meal at xmas time, anniversaries, birthdays, and have a house full of people and if they can't come while dinner is on the table, if they feel like coming later on or just come in for a snack or a cup of coffee, they come in. That there is a big thing in Elk River. It is a big deal with us. Norma June, they have an anniversary coming up and we're going to do something real great for them too now. Now when we have this anniversary thing for Norma, Sonya wants it at her house which will be tomorrow night. I'm gonna make the buns and she's going to make some ice cream and some cake. We all get together and pitch in and each one of us brings two or three things.

IM: You still do a lot of canning?

EC: If I can get the jar lids, that's the next problem. They haven't had any jar lids for a long time. You can get it but you have to order it back east somewhere. I don't know just exactly where to order them. They say you can put your order in down here at the store and if your'e not there to get it, somebody else will get it. One family got two cases. They were down there when they arrived and they got two cases of it. A week before they didn't sell it in cases.

IM: You mean the agricultural extension service doesn't come out to Elk River?

EC: Not that I know of.

I'd love to get at least four or five dozen because I do like to cann.

I canned 68 quarts of carrots out of my garden.

IM: Do you have a garden now?

EC: No John isn't able to now but we have our garden spot and we share. I just don't want him to get hurt or anything out there.

IM: So it would be helpful if you could cann this summer?

EC: Yes I love to, I still have carrots left and I give it to the kids and

I still got saeurkraute. I make our saurkraute and then I cann it. It doesn't get quite so sour and not so soft. There's a certain stage and I cann it. We didn't make any last year because I didn't have enough jar lids. If I get some jar lids I am gonna get a few things to cann and this really comes in handy.

IM: When the children were growing up did you ever worry about what would happen if your husband were ever injured did that bother you?

EC: Yes it did and he's been hurt many a times. When he goes to the hospital I just wonder when he'd get to come home or if he ever did get to come home. I relied on my children quite a bit and I think we kind of stuck together, too. The oldest one, I don't know why you kind of lean on them, they are just children, but you kind of lean on them.

IM: What happens in Elk River if a man was killed, what would the widow do?

EC: I don't know, this girl, she lost her husband. Of course she's young she came home to her folks. There's other's that lost their husbands their children were quite big. They just stayed here. Another one, her husband just died of a heart attack but she moved out and won't never come back. She just can't stand to come back. I think it's the individual, however you feel about it. Some can come back and some can't.

IM: Did the company have some insurance or some kind of monitory support?

EC: I don't know but I imagine if you are working for that company they would have to have some kind of insurance. You got to have a supplement of something even if you are on medicare. Medicare don't mean nothing to me because you got to pay the first sixty anyway. Maybe you don't even need it til next year then you have to pay another sixty dollars so you have to have something to rely on.

IM: There wasn't such a thing as welfare in the old days.

EC: No welfare, no food stamps no nothing that I ever knew of.

IM: Did women just have to get housework to do?

EC: Ironing, I did a little bit of that and there's no pay in it though but it was enough to keep stuff on the table. I took in a little bit of ironing and a little washing.

IM: When he was injured and in the hospital, his pay was cut off?

EC: Yes and we'd just go back into debt again, we didn't have to pay cash for our groceries, like in the city you had to pay cash for your groceries. Maybe our bill went up to two or three hundred dollars for groceries. Of course there was a house rent to be paid. That's why he would borrow money to pay that off, see. That's the way it was at that time.

IM: So it wasn't really very secure.

EC: No they have a lot better situation now than they ever had.

(her husband is showing some type of display) couldn't understand what it was.

(her husband is talking about something, can't understand)

(he's talking about making baskets but I'm unable to transcribe, not clear at all)

EC: When my friends come I'd just as soon sell to them. I'm so tickled when somebody comes, especially on weekends because it's kind of lonely.

EC: I think it's nice that the younger generation like to come to the older generation- that's a grand feeling. I always say that when you get old, s you get pushed to one side and nobody cares, you know.

IM: That happens to a lot of people.

EC: Yes it does. I feel like I like to be needed; I don't expect anybody to do anything for me but I like to know that I'm needed. I do something for somebody else because I want to. A lot of times I do sewing and stuff when I'm getting supper, I just turn it down and I can finish with the sewing and they can come and get it and my suppers getting done anyway and I'd have their job done too.

IM: If you knew a young woman that was starting out in the kind of life that you've had, what should she need to know?

EC: I don't know; I would feel sorry for her for one thing. I would hate for anybody else to go through the life that I had to live. Sometimes I wish that all of the things that I did have to do, I wish that I wrote all of it down in shorthand, I wouldn't believe it myself.

IM: You could've written a book.

EC: Yeah I wouldn't want anybody to live like I had to live I want somebody to live better than I did.

IM: But you've learned to cope with a lot of problems.

EC: I've learned to cope with a lot of it. Even since we've been married, there's been hard times there's not been good goody goodies. I have it better today than I did twenty years ago because I have a home and maybe it wasn't as nice as it is today but I feel more secure now for some reason or another. I really think because the children all married and got their own families.

IM: They are not dependent on you but they are here close so they can look out for you a little bit.

EC: Right

IM: There's some certain comfort in knowing that.

EC: That's right.

IM: Do you take magazines or paper?

EC: I used to take the Lewiston paper but my subscription run out. It was an awful lot to put out when you are just getting social security. This paper here somebody is giving it to us. I hadn't gotten any papers for quite awhile. John enjoys it and I do too.

IM: Do you watch Tv?

EC: Yes we watch Tv.

IM: What shows?

EC: I'll tell you my really favorite one is "As the World Turns" and the news. I do like the news. I like "Rhoda" I like all quiz shows, anything that's

real.

IM: Did you and your husband share on making decisions, talk about things?

EC: I hate to tell you this but it's not true, we don't. I ask him now, "what would you like for supper tonight?" "Well anything you fix is fine." So and so's coming up, what should I do?" Whatever you decide is fine." He never wants to say so I'm really more or less on my own. It's me to make the decision. I don't know whether he can't make the decision or maybe he thinks I make the right one. I don't know what his idea is. I'd love to talk something over with him but he says, "you do what you think is right" It's always been that way. I go get the check and he signs it and I sign mine and I make out all the bills and we have to have stuff for different things and I'm the one that has to do it.

IM: Quite a contrast from your father.

EC: Yes my daddy was very different. My mother didn't have a dime to her name until after ~~he~~^{my} folks were divorced. This is an awful thing to say; they are both dead now but I'd often wish my mother and dad would've had a divorce when we were all at home, I really do. I used to ask my mother, "mother how come you live with daddy when he does all this?" And I said, "How would I support you children?" and I said, "you know what mother, you would be a lot better off in a lot of ways." She didn't have an education she was just like me she worked from the time she could walk around. My mother lived with him until we were all married and then she divorced him.

IM: How did she support herself then?

EC: He had to support her; she found out more things when she was divorced, if she would've divorced him when she was home he would of had to support us too. But this way he only supported her. She married twice afterwards and she was happy in each one. I hate to say this but I had a lot better step dad then I had my own dad. God forg ve me but that's the truth. It's not

the thing to say. I'd hate to have my kids say that but they can't because he's been a really good daddy, you know.

IM: That's German system kind of, of course your husband has a german background, too.

EC: There is a difference, he's very kind hearted and very soft hearted.

IM: Was your father a northern German?

EC: I really don't know. He was just a hard hard man. It didn't bother him He said, You do it or else and I have never forgotten it and I was 17 years old when I walked out. He said something that really striked me and to this day I don't know what it was, he would never tell me. It just seemed like he had to have someone to beat on all the time. Some of those German people, they are just harsh, that's all I can say.

IM: What were the war years like?

EC: 1942, that wasn't too bad, I don't think. Norma was just two years old. John was working as far as I know at Diamond Match. I think the wages were good that time.

IM: I understand that some of the young men were away from the community and the times were better then.

EC: Yeah I don't think we had any trouble at all at that time. There was a lot more money then than there was before, you know. I've never lived in a big city so I don't know nothing about the big city.

IM: So actually you weren't very much aware of the war?

EC: This was always in the bigger cities.

IM: Mrs. Morris has lived her for a long time have you known her all this time?

EC: Yeah I knew her in high school, grand person, wonderful person. I guess they were one of the first ones that came here.

IM: She talked on groups of women making bandages and knitting. You weren't in on this?

EC: No because I don't do any of that stuff. I guess she did a lot of that

stuff but I was never in on any of that stuff.

IM: Well i've asked you an awful lot about your life do you have anything else you'd like to add to it?

EC: I've enjoyed both of you so much.

IM: The reason you always stayed in Elk River was because of his work?

EC: Right he had a job here and now in the last three years he wants to get out and the next question is, we're trying to sell our house, we'd like to sell our house and the next question is could you get enough out of it to go somewhere and buy another house or rent.

IM: You might be better off if you bought a trailer.

EC: I would like to have a trailer. I'd have one in Troy where my daughter is but she lives on a hill, too. I would love to live on a flat once. Although I love this home up here, I'd give it up for a fair price. If this house is sold tomorrow I'd have a yard sale, there wouldn't be very much I'd take with me.

IM: Wouldn't you miss all these friends that you've made?

EC: I'd make new friends. If I move to Troy or Moscow or Pullman, I'd have a lot more company than I would here because I'd say how come you don't come up, I miss you. We've been trying to sell our house and maybe I go about it the wrong way. Someone said I should go through a real estate.

IM: I'd put it in the Moscow paper, a lot of people read that.

I think some of the choice places sell themselves. The problem places they sell with a real estate dealer. That's been the experience I've seen. The people who put it with the realtors are moving right away and they can't be around to see their house, it's easier to sell.

EC: I wouldn't mind putting it in the paper it would just cost a few dollars. That's another situation, I'd have to do it all by myself because my husband doesn't know the first thing about it.

IM: I think your daughter could help write up the ad and you could probably

get a real estate or a lawyer help make out the contract.

EC: I would go to a lawyer. I would go to someone who would know something about it.

IMP You'd want to have it done legally.

EC: Someone said why don't I put it in the California paper because they are the ones that want to come out to Idaho. That's kind of far fetched, I don't know if I want to do that or not. My sister lives in California and I told her she could put the word around if she wanted to. I like to lean on somebody once in a while. I need someone to lean on, I've said hundereds of times, I've got a husband and I sure need a man.

IM: You'd like to be able to talk it over with him?

EC: Right he doesn't understand anything of course he's had a stocke. All he's got in his mind is his baskets. He doesn't understand anything.

IM: Does he always eat what you fix?

EC: Oh yes even sometimes he wants a sandwich for supper. He's very easy to cook for.

(end of interview side 2)