

Oral History - Jack & Mildred Smith

Interviewed by Cara Doyle

March 8, 2004

This is Cara Doyle and what's the date today? March 8, 2004 and I'm sitting here at the Smith's house and tell me about how you got here to this ranch , which is just beautiful.

Jack: My folks was here from Wyoming in 1918 and it happened to be March.

Why would they move here in March? That seems like a funny wintertime to move.

Jack: I don't know, the snow was hip deep in here, I remember that.

So you were born in Wyoming then?

Jack: I was born in Nebraska just over the Wyoming and Nebraska line.

What town in Nebraska?

Jack: Mitchell, Nebraska.

Mitchell, okay. And what's your birthday?

Jack: 12-12-14.

Okay.

Jack: 1914 I was born.

And why did your folks move here?

Jack: Oh, I don't know. I mean, my dad homesteaded in Goshen County, Wyoming and it was all open for homestead. Well, eventually it was all homesteaded so he was stuck there with just his homestead and starting back, I should have started this first – my folks from (inaudible) up here at Jefferson, Colorado

How did they meet?

Jack: Well, my dad was (laughter) he was always drifting around and my mother's dad was the section foreman on the Kenosha on top of Kenosha and she lived there and she worked some for the ranch right below Kenosha. It's right under the hill. The old Case place. And she worked for these people and he come in to the park at # 2.27 hand time and she's working for him and they got acquainted there.

When would this have been?

Jack: In '99.

Okay, 1899.

Jack: They was married in Denver in '99.

Okay and so he was still though, his place was in Wyoming...

Jack: No no, this is long ago. As I say, this is the beginning of the story and then they lived in Pine that winter. You know where Pine's at?

Mm-hmm, I do.

Jack: And they lived there that winter, my dad worked in the ice plant there. They had an ice plant there.

Now which ice plant would that have been?

Jack: It was down by Pine somewhere. I don't know – I never worked there.

Okay.

Jack: And they stored that ice and these big ice sheds, packed it in sawdust, then in the summertime, they shipped out on the railroad to Denver and he worked there that winter, putting up ice and I don't know whether it was that winter or they stayed there another winter, I'm not sure. Then they moved to Colorado Springs and this is 1900 see, a year later. And he worked in different jobs just like everybody did in them days. He had come from eastern Nebraska and his dad was a pretty wealthy farmer back there in the state of eastern Nebraska, that's when that was first settled or it was coming to that and he's just the kind of a guy that didn't want to stay home! He wanted to see the country. He'd been everywhere and...

Huh. That seems kind of unusual to me. It seems like people more stayed in one place.

Jack: Always (inaudible) but he left, when up in Wyoming, into Colorado, worked on the railroads, he's done everything. Worked in the timber and...

And now what was his name?

Jack: W.J. was my dad.

Your dad, W.J.?

Jack: Uh-huh, William. William Joseph Smith is his name.

What was your mom's name?

Jack: Lula.

Lola?

Jack: Lula. L-u-l-a.

What was her maiden name?

Jack: Whitaker.

So then they moved to Colorado.

Jack: To Colorado Springs.

And ok.

Jack: Then for how long he worked there I don't know how long. Then he moves up to Ft. Collins.

My goodness.

Jack: Yeah, he was a drifter.

Hmm.

Jack: And we spent some time in Mitchell before. Then when this homestead opened up in Wyoming and at some time he homestead up in Wyoming. It's not far across the line there, about fifty miles or less from Mitchell to Tarrington.

And so then what brought him here? The homesteads - - you said that there were homesteads all around and was that too crowded for him? Or was there not room for the cattle?

Jack: Yeah, see this was Forest Service. They didn't do that here and he wanted to run cattle, he run cattle up there and it was open range here. They called it open range. It was then and well... she had a sister her- well, two sisters at one time.

Your mom?

Jack: Yeah.

And one of them lived – he homesteaded over here in the valley – I can't tell you where it's at. We know the people that's got it now and I guess maybe that was how they got contacted anyway, it wasn't' the reason and ...

Jack: And so the place we're at now; is this where he settled or is this a different ranch?

Jack: He bought this. Yeah, this was already settled.

So how did he start out here? What did he have?

Jack: Cattle. He bought a bunch of cattle when he first moved.

And was there a certain breed he was partial to?

Jack: Oh, there was – actually it was mostly dogies at that time.

I'm not familiar with that term. Dogies?

Jack: Well yeah, they come from the doggie – you know what a doggie cow is.

Uh-uh (negative) I don't!

Jack: A wild (inaudible).

Okay, I didn't know that's what they were called. Is that a nickname for them?

Jack: I don't know.

(Laughter). Dogies, huh. Okay. So now would this have been an area that they were raising hay in?

Jack: Yeah, hay and potatoes and ... potatoes and oat hay was the only two crops that were doing good here every year.

Was that because of the temperature or the water?

Jack: Well, there wasn't the water gone at that time. We didn't think there'd ever be short of water here back then.

Was this irrigated or was it naturally moist?

Jack: Well, it was - - yeah, it was ?stream? Colorado this valley here, all kinds for... when I was a little kid, I didn't think it would ever die out but we saw it so damn dry that.

It is, isn't it?

Jack: Yeah. It's died since then.

Huh.

Jack: But anyway, he bought this place and this place that's to us here was all open. That was homesteaded after my dad bought this.

Mildred: Yeah, where you see that lower gate down .

Okay.

Jack: And they homesteaded right in front of him here and of course he didn't that would ever happen. He didn't think it could be taken up. He, you know, just the idea was all dry the water on it. All the water was here. The people that filed on this place they filed on such a way, they got all the water in the valley.

Now who got the water? This one? (pointing outside).

Jack: Yes.

Okay. This ranch had the water (pointing).

Jack: Yes it did.

So it impacted his grazing but water-wise, he was okay then?

Jack: Oh yeah, water-wise for years, for you know, five or six, seven years he didn't know what any shortage of water was.

Tell me about being little here?

Jack: I just was.

Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Jack: Yes I did.

And what were their names?

Jack: Oh, I don't want to tell you the names I guess, but I had four older brothers older than me. I'm the youngest boy, and then two sisters. There was seven of us and I was – the sisters younger than I and I was the only one that was ? alive?. If I am alive.

You look pretty hopping to me!

Jack: So wait – you said seven total, but I’ve got four older brothers and three sisters. Well, I was including myself.

You’re including the (inaudible). So three.

Jack: Five boys and two girls.

How many sisters?

Jack: Two.

Two. Okay. Plus you. Okay, what did you do for fun when you were little out here?

Jack: We just had fun all the time.

Did you play games or what did you do?

Jack: Oh no, I suppose we mostly rode the calves and... it was all cowboys – every one of them. And we rode the calves – of course my older brothers you see was he was about fifteen, fourteen years than me and he worked around here (inaudible) for the bigger outfits for years so and then he went to Arizona. He went to Arizona in 1920 I think. Maybe 1919, I’m not sure.

What was his name?

Jack: That was Burt. He was the oldest, and he stayed there, died there.

You must have pulled pranks. That many boys in the family; tell me the good stuff.

Jack: * 8.14 (inaudible) The things we did.

You didn’t pull anything on your mom or ...

Jack: Not much. We’s you know, our dad was pretty strict about that. We all helped her but...

What kind of chores would have to do as a kid? What would be a kid’s job?

Jack: Wood was the god-damn chore! Wood! You get wood!

You had a wood stove for heat?

Jack: Well, yes. If we had heat, we had wood! And if we had wood, we had heat.

Mildred: They didn’t put the propane in ‘til 1992 I think.

So you had a wood stove up until then.

Jack: It was all wood stuff. We had a big wood heater in here, twice as big as this (gesturing) so...

You gathered wood - what else? Did you have to feed calves?

Jack: Yeah, we had chores, take care of horses and my dad would treat him almost better (inaudible) my horses here. He's hell for horse. Of course, was you know, an important thing. All your power was horse power.

You mean like for doing farm chores?

Jack: Well that, or if you rode horses or anything at all - horses. Your transportation was all horses.

So you'd ride a horse to town?

Jack: Well, not to the Springs but yeah, they were everywhere but the Springs then. The few trips - - see, there used to be a railroad train going north and it went to Leadville and I heard since or read that it went clear to Grand Junction. I never knew it 'til lately.

Mildred: Well, we took teams to town to the Springs before.

Jack: Oh yeah, before when they was married.

Mildred: I thought after you kids - - I thought after they came later that they'd drive the team just to Florissant.

Jack: To Florissant, yeah.

Mildred: Oh, I thought they did Colorado Springs.

Jack: The railroad was still running then there.

Mildred: It was.

Jack: Then they pulled that railroad and just run it to Cripple Creek. It turned into to the wye to the closest field.

Now when would you take the train? Did you ride the train or did you get supplies from it?

Jack: I rode the train coming here, yeah. Is that what you mean?

I'm just wondering about as a kid, I think that would be kind of exciting to take the train to Denver.

Jack: Well, I remember riding the train coming here yeah, a few incidents. It come in - - course, it come clear through that (inaudible) they shipped a bunch a stuff here with them.

So you mean when you moved her from Wyoming.

Jack: Yes, yes.

Tell me what you remember from taking the train.

Jack: Well, I don't remember much, just a couple of incidents. I remember - - I knew I was doing some kind of gymnastics on the train and they had to stop me from doing that.

See I could tell, he has a twinkle in his eye. I knew he must have done something!

Jack: And they stopped that and I don't remember 'til we got to Florissant, that's where we unloaded.

Did you want to move? Were you excited?

Jack: Oh, I didn't know.

Mildred: He was about four years old.

Pretty little?

Jack: Yeah, I didn't know. We's going, that's all I cared.

What about school? Where did everybody go to school?

Jack: Well, we went to school to Tarryall over here in that school house.

Okay.

Jack: I did and a couple of the older boys went there awhile.

Now that would be a one-room school house.

Jack: Oh yeah.

How many kids would there be at one time?

Jack: Well, it was anywhere from- -they had as many as I think eighteen there was at one time.

That's quite a bit.

Jack: Yeah, it was two ?months? for one teacher in each grade.

That would be tough!

Mildred: Mom says the history of hers as I was reading it there was twenty-five there. Margaret was the first house.

Jack: Well that's when I started so I suppose that's ...

Now you say mom – was that your mom or his mom?

Mildred: My mom.

Did she teach there?

Mildred: No , she didn't . No she didn't She went to school (inaudible) She was a little older than him; about eight years older than Jack. Jack's twelve and a half years older than I am.

Jack: And her name is Margaret...

Mildred: No, that was the teacher, Margaret Gibson.

Margaret Gibson was the teacher.

Jack: Yeah, she's- - that's the first teacher I went to. She's dead now.

Mildred: Oh yeah.

I think I've heard about her. And what was your mom's name?

Mildred: Juanita Patton.

Juanita Patton?

Jack: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mildred: Then Barr after she was married of course and when she went to school. They moved here – they come here in about 1918 also and she went to school there, went to school at Tarryall, too.

Did your families know each other when you were growing up?

Jack: Oh yeah.

So you've known each other a long time.

Jack: Well, I didn't know her, but I knew the families. Her mother's family.

Jack: I was more about Tarryall I guess I'm getting in here, but...

No that's good. I like that! You grew up in the Tarryall. Where was your family's place?

Mildred: Well, it was out ... the old ?Loud? place but after my mother was married, then she moved to Lake George and she came back to Tarryall when I was born. I had an older brother and he was born at Lake George then she came back to Tarryall and I was born over there then.

Jack: It seems like in such a small area you would have met each other.

Well...

Was it just you were an older kid and you were off doing things and ...?

Mildred: Oh yeah, I was - - yeah. That was it. In the meantime we planned to move to Manitou and all the (inaudible) came back here and I met him, but I knew about him and I guess he just (inaudible).

Jack: Not me!

(inaudible) but anyway...

They're talking about the older boys. So I'm going to catch up to how you got together. So you're a little kid growing up here and you went to school at the Tarryall school and Margaret was your teacher?

Jack: Margaret Gibson was my first teacher over here, yeah.

And was she pretty strict?

Jack: Oh, she couldn't be. I mean, it was - - you know, there's boys eighteen, nineteen years old going to school.

Mildred: And she was only about sixteen! (laughter).

Jack: And she was sometimes...

Oh my goodness.

Mildred: She was a young gal and she was...

And she was trying to teach all those kids at once.

Mildred: Yeah.

Boy, that would have been a ...

Jack: And they give her hell. Everybody did and I look now, I think she did a pretty good job.

How much schooling did most kids finish here?

Eighth grade.

Jack: Eighth.

Eighth? And then did you go on to somewhere else after school?

Jack: Some of them did; some of them didn't.

What did you do?

Jack: I didn't.

Okay. What did you do?

Jack: Went to work – of course!

Doing?

Jack: Anywhere I could get a job.

So you didn't come back to the ranch to work.

Jack: Oh yeah, I stayed here, this was my home, but I worked out at different places. All of us boys did. Not only our family, but everybody.

Was that a money thing that you were trying to provide more support?

Jack: Yes, yeah, probably.

What kind of work did you look for?

Jack: Ranch work.

So you would help at other ranches in the area.

Jack: Yeah, oh yeah. We used to up to the park and hay. I went up there from the first year when I was thirteen.

Wow, who did you work for?

Jack: Artie Sandman, first year. I worked for pretty near everybody in the park since that, but he was the first.

Do you remember what he paid you?

Jack: I got the same as the rest of them, whatever that was. I think it was \$2 a day and your board I believe. So that was pretty good.

Tell me what the place was like to stay at thirteen! I think that would be kind of scary. Was it?

Jack: Where I worked?

Yeah.

Jack: Oh no.

To be thirteen. Did you know everybody?

Jack: No, but I got acquainted with them.

And were you the youngest or...

Jack: Probably.

Okay. What did you do day to day?

Jack: Anything that was to do with the haying. My brothers- - first year I worked there, my - - just my brother older than I we had some colts to break before we started haying that they used in haying. We worked there a couple of weeks, maybe a month before haying started getting these horses ready. And he was just two years older than I am. Well, pretty near three and that's the way...

Tell me about mealtime.

Jack: They fed good! South Parkers fed the best of any place I ever worked.

Huh! Why is that?

Jack: I don't know, it's just the (inaudible) they all did. They fed the best of any place and it don't make any difference whether they was hiring five men or twenty. Now Portis used to have about twenty men working.

Portis?

Jack: Portis. Eli Portis. That's the first ranch going towards Fairplay out of Jefferson to your right there. Now he owned that and then the place below the road there. Now I worked for them, but I worked at the lower place, which his brother-in-law was the boss down there. Portis's brother-in-law.

What was his name?

Jack: Henry Stull.

Henry Stull?

Jack: Yup.

Okay.

Jack: And he was just - - he treated me just like he would his own kid. I thought the world of him! Of course he's dead, him and his wife both. She cooked then and haying, of course, she had help 'cause they was about - - I said twenty men, now there's more - - hell, there's that many at each ranch. I suppose it's close to twenty men at each ranch.

Now that seems common, that the wives kind of headed up the meal. Was that true of all the ranches?

Jack: Yeah, oh yeah, yes.

So when you were growing up, did you have to help do that? Was that part of the deal for you?

Mildred: Well, no we just had our own family, we never had no hires.

Okay, no hired help. I just wondered what the girls thought of that.

Jack: Well, that's the way we existed.

Tell me what it looked like then. People tell me that it looks a lot different now.

Jack: Oh I does, particularly you go in the park, all them big ranches. I just - - it breaks my heart every time I drive through there and them old ranches is felled down and one owner has any, you know. And they were all nice people, just like the just like the Buyers, you know. They had a big ranch, Mickey's dad, Bill Buyers - big ranch at Fairplay.

When did things start to change?

Jack: I saw the big change probably in the '30s.

Why was that?

Jack: They started foreclosing these big ranches and the small ones. They couldn't make a living on them, things got so - - so (inaudible) of sheep and the wind ?valve? in the - -about half of the plains. Yeah, '34 was the worst. We had about five years of that in succession from that drought. Eli Portis, he lost his whole land and his brother was one that held on, but he worked it different.

How much did the Depression come into play?

Jack: Oh, it was the (inaudible) for practically all of it. Is that what you mean?

Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, it was the Depression.

So the combination – there was a drought and the Depression kind of hit at the same time?

Jack: Right, right. You could buy a dead calf for ten dollars then, all through the Depression. This wasn't just an overnight thing.

What had they been selling for before that?

Jack: Oh, around \$40.

Wow. That would be huge.

Jack: So you see about a 80% decline. And the cattle wasn't worth anything. They couldn't sell their hay, then the drought hit and they didn't raise any. Bill - - Mickey Buyer ought to be a good one to tell you about that. Now Buyer's has held on. They didn't lose their place.

But a lot of people you knew left?

Jack: Oh yes!

Can you think of names, like who you remember having done well and then leaving?

Jack: Oh, my God yes, I could name...the Cases in the park up there and the - - that big ranch that's down there – they lost it. The bank got it and somebody leased it. Wahl's finally bought that place in the Depression.

Oh, okay.

Jack: They had backing somewhere that ...

Is that when a lot of people bought up these places?

Jack: Yeah.

Did other people, outsiders and buy them?

Jack: There's (inaudible) and some banks it's a - - well, they took so damn much they was going broke, too! The loan company. They couldn't even get their interest, see. But there was a few held on and Buyer's is one ranch that held on and they're about the only one, the only big one I can think of.

How did your family handle it at the time? How were things here?

Jack: Oh, terrible. You can't believe.

What about food?

Jack: Oh, we always had food, yeah.

You had enough to eat.

Jack: Yeah.

Where did you get clothing?

Jack: Well, we managed that pretty well; we probably managed that better than most people, you know, we did.

Why was that?

Jack: Well, as us boys was old enough we went as I say, we all worked (inaudible).

I heard people talk about shoes – like having a hard time getting shoes and sugar, gas; was that all available to you?

Jack: Yeah, now this sugar deal, that was during World War I.

Oh, that's right, okay. That's right after that.

Mildred: World War II, typically was ration on shoes and...

Jack: Over here? Oh, I wasn't here so I don't know.

Okay, that's what I'm thinking of.

Jack: Oh, that was rationed, yeah. Sugar was rationed because they used sugar in explosives.

Mildred: Gas and...

Jack: Gasoline and yeah, a lot of thing was rationed during World War I and of course it was worse – bad – I suppose is worse than World War II.

What else happened during the Depression? I mean, if all these people are going out, it might have been hard for kids to even get work. Was there enough work for people?

Jack: It was, oh it was. Well, I guess I bragged a little, but us boys were always given something to do. If there was anything to do we'd get a job. And we always had a fairly good job.

It sounds like maybe you were willing to do any job.

Jack: Well, that's probably that's how it was, I guess that's right, but we always could get a job and we always - - big husky guys and we could work and we you know, was old.

So your folks were mostly running the farm - - the ranch here?

Jack: Yeah, they always stayed here. My dad worked out some but not much.

And what about your mom?

Jack: She always was a housewife and that's all she ever did.

So all through your teens were you working here in the park?

Jack: Oh yeah. Like I said, I worked my first year out there when I was thirteen and then from time to time after. As long as them ranches lived, us - -any one of us boys could go back to any of them ranches and get a job. It wasn't paying anything but...

But you always got your room and board too, right?

Jack: Oh yeah and as I say again, they always managed to feed their help good. I mean good!

Did you ever go to town during those years?

Jack: Oh yeah.

What towns would you typically go to?

Jack: Colorado Springs, it was later when the vehicles come in and stuff like that. That was always our town.

What was your fist vehicle – do you remember?

Jack: My first vehicle was an old Essex. It was pretty damn (inaudible)

Essex?

Jack: Essex. Es-s-e-x. It was made by the Hudson Motor Company.

Okay. And how did you do that. Did you earn the money to buy it?

Jack: Yeah.

Do you remember what you paid?

Jack: No, not exactly. It was a pretty good little car. I say I bought it; my dad and I bought it together and by that time, my older brothers were you know, they had commitments of their own.

And when would that have been?

Jack: In the 30's, early part of the 30's, even maybe in the late 20's.

When you went t o town, what did you do?

Jack: Bought what we needed, what we had they money to buy and come home.

Did you ever go to movies?

Jack: Myself, I don't remember what the other boys or kids done. I probably saw three movies before I went to the Army. I never liked movies still.

Really!

Jack: That's the way, I mean, when I was in the service you know, they'd have movies. Well, I never went to them.

So what does a teenager do for fun in the 30's then?

Jack: Well, they had a lot of dances.

That you can tell me.

Jack: Okay, they had a lot of dances.

Where did you go dancing?

Jack: Everywhere around here. They'd have a dance at maybe Tarryall or Lake George and the old dance halls from the boom days was still there in both places in Lake Gorge and Tarryall.

I didn't realize that Tarryall had one.

Jack: Oh yeah, a big dance hall there. A good one. They had as good a floor as ever was. It was just an old pole building but it was a big - - you know, a good big dance hall and it had - - I've always said that was as good a floor as I've ever danced on. It was pitch. It was made out of this pitch dye pine and they got it sawed it and finished that. Beautiful dance floor.

Do you remember who did that? Is that a local family?

Jack: That built it?

Mm-hmm.

Jack: No, that was some you know, these boom towns brought in some money when they was hunting gold here. Of course, that's what started this kind of thing and then it was just left there and they got to move out when there was no gold

and left all them buildings and that dance hall was among them. It and the saloon. Saloon was right across the street just a (inaudible) and somebody made a barn out of the saloon later, but the old dance hall, they stood there until it was about to fall down.

Tape 1
Side B

Will you tell me some of them?

Jack: Well, I'll tell you all of them! Well, one band got together then, they was the first one I probably remember was Paul Terhune. He played – well, he played the guitar or trumpet slide trombone and fellow by the name of Parker, he played the fiddle and his brother played the piano. That was the three on them and then there was - - who else was I thinking of?

Mildred: Harold Williams.

Jack: Oh, Harold Williams; he was one of the old-timers. I went to school with him. He would have played anything that come along. He mostly played the - - what did he play? He (inaudible) when he was a kid but he later got to play in something else. I can't remember.

Is this something - - did everybody get all dressed up for these?

Jack: I'd say they cleaned up. You never saw anybody that was disrespectful. They was always clean and maybe come in overalls like I got on, just like they wear now, so...

Would you go to a dance alone or would you always have a date?

Jack: No, dates, no. That wasn't there.

So everybody would just know there was a dance coming up and you would all come.

Jack: Dance and everybody'd go.

Okay.

Jack: But every once and awhile, somebody got married you know, they'd meet somebody.

Yeah? You talked about being in the service. When did that happen?

Jack: That was World War II of course.

Okay, so when did you - - how did you find out you were going?

Jack: Well ...

Were you a "handcuff volunteer" or were you a ...?

Jack: No, I was drafted, I got the notice. By that time you see, things was getting fairly modern and I'll back up here one thing. Now there was a - - the Forest Service had a telephone line through here part ay but it was the old system, I forget what they called it. It was a two-wire phone line. Then they

changed it to (inaudible) and put in the one wire; it was a pretty good system and we lived - - it's about close to five miles where going up the 77 so when dad got - - that's about the first him and his two oldest brothers done, they put in a telephone here – for themselves.

And that's the phone right there? (gesturing)

Jack: Well, it was just like that, yes.

Do you remember who the operator was? I'm told there was a lady who would answer.

Jack: Oh, yeah we'd call all out neighbors up here for Lake George. They had a certain ring. I mean, somebody had two, three, or five...

So it had a different sound you'd know if it was for you? I mean by how many rings?

Jack: Right! Ours was one ring, I remember and so they put in a telephone. That was the first year I think we was here.

Wow. So they probably were pretty progressive then.

Jack: Well, they were. My folks were, if I do say so. They put in the telephone and they had to buy the wire and the insulators and all, you know up to code. What it was a code then, so it wouldn't ground out and we had some trouble with it, but then they put - - it worked fine for years and they did put the telephone in and we was the only ones away from the road for years that had a telephone. Still is. Some of them other places up there still don't have a phone like the Gibson place and the Pearl place. We's the only ones that put in - - see, that's maybe four miles to the road down, went right straight down to that and that was fine. It was Forest Service phone. Then they turned it over if you got (inaudible) out of it, the Forest did.

Why would that have been a Forest Service phone?

Jack: Fire.

Oh! Okay.

Jack: And they saw one right after the Forest was come into existence they saw that that was a must you know, to get news around. If you saw a fire, you reported it.

Were you running cattle on Forest Service land?

Jack: Yeah, always have.

How did that work?

Jack: Well, it used to work fine.

How's it working now?

Jack: Not so good.

What's the difference?

Jack: They got too much - - the environmentalists are controlling the Forest Service now. Now do you see what I mean?

Okay, well, tell me what you mean.

Jack: They dictate to the Forest Service. The environmentalists dictate to the Forest Service. Somehow or another they got a hold of this - -what they call - - used to call Public Land on the Forest Service land.

How does that change what you can do?

Jack: Well, it changes everything! I mean, if you're up on your - - monitoring news and stuff you know that the environmentalists have stopped all oil drilling on public lands; they stopped the timber work and they're controlling the water... so that's all there is!

So what can't you do now that you used to do here?

Jack: Well, we used to could run our cattle and stuff like you know, like a white man should do. Now they don't want no cattle on the Forest and they're fighting the Forest and I think it will come where they'll win 'cause it's too much money behind the environmentalists. It's the rich that's controlling that. They want it for a playground.

Do you still have cattle on Forest land that you use?

Jack: Yeah.

And is it that - - does it changes when you can run them or what places?

Jack: Yeah, absolutely. When I can run them out and turn them out and how long I can run them – absolutely it's changed that. But still, the public comes out here and tears up the ground I - - you run in the Forest! You know, I mean - destroy!

Tell me what they're doing.

Jack: Tearing up the roads and they got all these 4-wheelers out here and they come out here by the hundreds – by the hundreds!

Mildred: On ATVs, that's the...

That's causing you problems?

Jack: Well yes, it would cause anybody problems! Would you like to have one of them on your property?

Mildred: Oh, they'll come right through your property and then come out.

Jack: Well, they go anywhere! They own - - we gots as much right as you got and I pay for my Forest permit ; I keep it up; all the water, fences, and pay taxes on it. But you didn't know that. Course, 'cause I just (inaudible).

What else has changed to ranch now compared to ranching then?

Jack: That's the big thing. That's the big thing. Well of course, Denver taking all the water now.

Can you tell me when that started?

Jack: Well, it's been in progress ever since I can remember, but they just keep a squeezing and squeezing. Denver buys a little more ground and buy a ranch and they give a little more water then build another dam on that ranch. Puts it out of existence.

Mildred: A lot of the ranchers sold their water rights.

Jack: And a lot of the ranchers did sell their water rights.

When was that?

Jack: It's been going on since the Depression.

So when you talked about all those people having a hard time, was that kind of when you saw it starting in the 30's?

Jack: That's when - - yes. I think that a lot of people who just couldn't make it, they sold them.

Do you remember any personally? When it first started selling?

Jack: Not what year? No, I - - the miles? I says ...

I just wondered what did locals think when you first heard of the guy that sold his water. Do you remember?

Jack: Well, somebody like myself they'd cuss the guy who sold his water rights. We kind of saw what was going to happen, but he got the money and he left.

Do you remember when it started impacting your ranch?

Jack: It immediately did.

Immediately.

Jack: Immediately, sure it did.

What changed? Is it the stream right here or ...

Jack: Well, not here they didn't bother us. We never had enough water; they've never bothered us here, but whether the economy (inaudible) you know 'cause they get - - part-time you get some tax out of Denver, but no (inaudible) anything. In those days, all your cattle, horses - and everything, what took you into consideration on your taxes. It's just been the last five years that they don't tax your livestock.

Has that helped?

Jack: Oh yes it helps; you're damn right it helped.

How many acres is this place?

Jack: This place is 320.

Did you work other places as well? I mean, as part of the ranch would you lease another ranch?

Jack: I leased other ground; I do right now, I still do.

When were you in the service?

Jack: Well, I went in in '40, or 41? 41 I think.

How long were you...

Jack: Just before the war broke out. I was in about three months when the war broke - - when the Japs hit Pearl Harbor.

Do you remember when you were leaving, what your thoughts were?

Jack: I didn't 'have any thoughts! I knew what was going to happen; I knew we's going to get in the war.

Had you ever been far away before?

Jack: Well, not too far, I don't know how to answer I guess.

I'm just wondering if you were scared or if you were excited or just..

Jack: Well, not either one. I mean, it was just another day's work. I mean, I knew what they expected of a soldier; what he could run into or could not.

Had you had brothers in previously?

Jack: No, I didn't. I had a lot of good friends that was in World War I (One) but, no and I was the only one of my time that went in.

Where were you stationed?

Mildred: Jack: I was stationed all over the world.

Well, when you first went in.

Jack: Oh, Ft. Hood, Texas I think was my first stop.

Then where?

Jack: Well, San Diego, California. And from there it was in Nevada... and from there, back to 'Frisco and from there to the Aleutian Islands; spent two years there.

What was your work? What kind of things...

Jack: What a soldier does.

Infantry or ...

Jack: Yeah, I was in the Infantry all the way. Yup.

When did you get back?

Jack: Well, we come back to the Aleutian Islands just short of two years, ten days. You couldn't keep a soldier over - - that was the regulations over two years so it was just ten days short of two years... and docked at Seattle.

Did you come back here, or did you go elsewhere to start out. What did you do when you got back?

Jack: Well, I was here for - -

Mildred: He went to Europe after...

Jack: I took a leave, they give us furlough. I think I had fifteen days and I hadn't had a furlough in two years and then we left from there for while we were going back we reported back to Mississippi, not Jackson but Biloxi I believe. Went to Biloxi, Mississippi; we was there awhile and then we went to Ft. Benning, Georgia and was there just a short time. We was in Instructed Offices School there at Ft. Benning. That's where the Infantry Offices School is. So we was there – we's instructed there instructed then the Infantry (inaudible) for ...we had a good deal there! We didn't have to do much. We was there probably a month, maybe two months; I don't remember. Maybe three. Then all at once, they broke our outfit up and I went to Europe; well, I was one of them that went to Europe. They all left for Europe but none of us together, just to different outfits. We went to ?L'Haure? France is where we debarked and we ?spent? all over Europe. We went into Belgium and Germany.

Jack: Anything you'd tell a kid about that now?

Jack: Not much. There's not much to tell 'cause things happened different. I watch these wars going on now, it's different than the war we was fighting. It's all... oh, this is mechanically stuff. They don't - - there's no end (inaudible). Nto even one where they have - -where they run into incidences where they have hand-to-hadn fight and I'm sure they do, but ...

How were things different when you got back? I would think you would have changed a lot.

Jack: I suppose I changed more than the people who was home, yeah, I do.

Do you remember coming home what you first started doing?

Jack: Yeah, I helped my dad put in and finish up his hay! The next day.

Came right back.

Jack: Yup, yeah, oh yeah.

And have you ranched here ever since?

Jack: Oh yeah.

How did you two get together? Were around before he left for the war or did you meet afterwards?

Mildred: Afterwards.

Alright – tell me the story.

Jack: Okay, I come home and again, these community dances were going on and it was people from Colorado Springs and everywhere by this time and a lot of soldiers being let out and then I met her at a dance down there in Lake George. They had a good dance hall there and found out who she was; I didn't know who she was. She didn't know who I was.

Mildred: Yes I did.

Jack: Oh!

See, now I'm going to have to have each one of you tell the story. What did you know about him?

Jack: She didn't know anything about me! I had been gone all this time.

Mildred: (Laughter) Well, I knew him - - somehow or other I knew him. I mean, I knew about him of course, but I knew ...

Jack: Oh, everybody knew about me but.

Mildred: I knew when I saw him I knew who he was.

Jack: But anyway, during this time, before I got out, she had gotten married.

Oh, okay.

Jack: And she kids when I met her. Well, her husband, he decided to (inaudible) list and of course, that didn't work; two kids and ?I?. Well, I guess, anyway, they - - I kept seeing her and they parted and we got married a year, I guess.

What year?

Mildred: 1951.

The ladies always know.

Jack: Oh yeah.

Where were you married?

Jack: Canon City.

Yeah? And was it in a particular faith?

Jack: No, we were married by a minister, but no faith.

And did you have a honeymoon?

Jack: No, I come back and went to haying!

Mildred: We come back and ...

Jack: No, I come back to the (inaudible)

Jack: Well first, my first job, was sawing wood.

See, he got her on the wood, right off.

Mildred: We had one of them buck saws and I helped hold up the logs to saw them.

Jack: If was a buzz saw if I remember.

Mildred: Buzz saw, not a buck saw, buzz saw.

And had you been raised on a ranch? Were you familiar with the work?

Well, I was familiar with the work, yes, because we were raised on... Oh, I guess...

Jack: Just like all the hillbillies.

Mildred: Yeah, really, so... so we've been married for fifty-two years now.

Congratulations!

Jack: Thank you.

Where did you live?

Jack: We lived here. My mother was still alive when we was married, but I owned other little ranch over here where our son lives.

And he still lives there, your son?

Jack: Yeah, he does.

And what's his name?

Jack: Webb.

Mildred: That's our only child.

Together. So you had two and then you had Webb together.

Jack: That's right. A boy and a girl. She had a boy and a girl. Then we was married about six years and she decided she wanted another "me."

I can see I'm going to have to come back and her side! She's making faces.

Jack: Well, that's true!

When was Webb born?

Mildred: March 13.

Okay, just coming right up.

Jack: Yup.

March 13, and what year was he born?

Mildred: '57.

Okay. I was listening so I was writing this down. You were married on what date?

August 20th.

Jack: '51.

August 20, 1951.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Mildred: And I was born on March the 18th, 1927... at Tarryall.

Right in Tarryall?

Mildred: Yes.

Jack: Yeah, there was kind of a little town, there was a Post Office there then.

Tell me what else was in Tarryall. What was it like as a town?

Jack: Well, the Post Office was the main thing and a couple of old - - I guess that's right. A couple of old ?Bass's? is all that lived there. All I know is Margaret and Ed lived there before he died. Yeah, it was all older ?Bass's.?

Well, and the dance hall and the saloon, were they all part of that during that time?

Jack: Oh no, this is what they call the boom days, the gold boom.

Okay.

Jack: This was the boom was in here in about - -way back at the turn of the century, a hundred years ago I mean. You know, something like that.

So those buildings were left and then they kind of...

Jack: Yes, yes ma'am, that's the way it was.

Okay. So when you were growing up, it was pretty tiny, in Tarryall?

Jack: Well, no there was quite a few people there then.

I mean, was there a grocery store or anything?

Jack: Yeah, there's the old guy that run some kind of a store there and he had the Post Office. Well, her grandmother had the Post office for a long time.

What was Grandma's name?

Jack: Patton.

Jack: Patton.

May Patton.

May Patton?

Jack: Mm-hmm.

She ran the Post Office?

Jack: Yeah, for a long time, but he - - this old guy was always Post master.

What was his name?

Jack: Derby?

Jack: Yes, he was an old -timer now, he was an old-timer.

I missed him, didn't I?

Jack: Well, not much to tell about him. I should go back though, and give you some history on him. He come here from Canada, he was a Canadian, but he come here in the very early - - he come here in the boom, somewhere in the early century, you know.

Was he looking for gold? Was that why he came?

Jack: No, I don't think that brought him in. I think he did what he come to do. He was a merchant evidently. I don't remember - - I knew him. Oh God, I remember his (inaudible). And he had the town site. He established the town site of Tarryall, this Derby.

Huh. Was Derby his last name?

Jack: Yes ma'am.

Sid Derby.

Sidney Derby.

Mildred: Yeah, that was Puma City.

Jack: Yeah, that was Puma City is what it was established first.

When you were growing up, was it Tarryall or Puma City?

Jack: Yeah, they changed it when they put the Post Office there, but it was really Puma City.

So he established it but then your grandmother worked there?

Jack: Well, she run the Post office is all, yeah...for him. Now is there anything I missed? Oh, I know a lot of the things.

Jack: You're going to think of all kinds of things I bet after I go.

Jack: Oh yeah, you know it will come to you, but now there'll be things if this was put out like in a book, like this other party I was telling you about – somebody'd read that and dispute it, see. And I'm not telling you anything that I don't know or I know is the truth. If you ask me something that I don't know all about it, I'll tell you.

Mm-hmm. And part of our deal on this tape is that if someone wants to use it, they have to come back to you and check with you.

Jack: Absolutely, absolutely.

So we'll have it on tape to verify that.

Mildred: I was just going to say that there's not very many people to dispute him!

Jack: No, just like (inaudible). Somebody told her different, see. She was just come in here, she didn't know anything the country but she married an old-timer but then he moved away as he grew up somewhere else, so he wasn't here like then.

I think even if we're all at the same thing we might have a different story we tell about it.

Jack: Well, there'd be other stories that I'd miss, sure. They'll come to me later, but like in here, you're like (inaudible) visited with you as we go along and telling you this stuff. I'm glad you're interested in it.

What am I not thinking of asking you about that might surprise me about growing up here, living here?

Mildred: Tell her about the cranberry episode.

Cranberries?

Jack: Oh, one time my dad moved here and I told you he got - - you know, he bought this place and then he bought a bunch of cattle 'cause he didn't very know (inaudible) sold his cattle in awhile and he bought these doggies I was telling you about. It was seventy head of them I think it was. So they got these doggies branded and he's - - or here and he run them on winter and it was a hell of a winter. We had a winter for five months just like this has been. Couldn't get a bit to eat or nothing. So Ed Williams was on the creek over there and he didn't have any cattle; he was a bachelor and I've got the place leased now that he had and so somehow Ed wanted some cattle, so they got together and my dad sold him this whole bunch of cattle and as I say again and I can't emphasize that too much, the snow was nearly deep to a big horse and it stayed that way and colder than hell! So they moved them cattle on New Year's Day while all the people come here that was involved in the cattle; Ed and my dad and a brother-in-law of his that I told you about that lives over here in the sticks somewhere, my mother's sister, her husband was here and I don't know. Anyway, cranberries used to come in a box about yea - - did you ever see an orange crate?

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jack: Okay, just about the size of an orange crate – cranberries and a lot of that (inaudible). Well, her mother had a case of cranberries so my brother and I get - - older than me – he's pretty near three years older than me - - we got into some kind of an argument and so he took me down and he sat on me and took them cranberries and squeezed the juice in my eye!

Oh! Wow.

Jack: We was in the house, in the bunkhouse somewhere where nobody else knew what was going on, you see. So I remember that!

Did he get caught?

Jack: No! No, he didn't. No nobody knew for a day or tow I don't guess or after you know in the evening or something, I don't know.

I'm guessing that would hurt!

Jack: Yeah, very much.

Mildred: How about you cavorting around and supposed to do something – building, or something.

Jack: Oh, that was later, we was bigger then.

See, I knew you had stories.

Jack: It was just he and I left here at home and there went they went to town I guess, you know. He told me to do something we was supposed to do, you know, to help him and I run off - - we had an old house out here; they tore it down – before they built this. And I run out pas the window there and it's sort of a (inaudible) about that size – it hit me right there (gesturing to his head).

Oh! In the temple.

Jack: Of course he didn't - - he just about knocked me flat as a pancake. Of course, it scared him and we got along pretty good, but we had our rough times, you know.

Now I heard what he did to you – did you ever do anything to him?

Jack: Not much, he was always too big. He was bigger than me anyway and he was two years older or two and a half and he was always the boss.

Mildred: Probably you don't want to tell her about him shooting you in the hand probably.

He shot you in the hand?

Jack: Oh! Oh yeah, later.

Why was that?

Jack: Well, he was playing with the gun, a little old .32 they carry quite a slug you know. It was one of them with the two-inch barrel?

Oh my.

Jack: You know, the suicide gun and he traded for that gun and he was a playing with it and I was off - - we was off up here doing somewhere, four or five miles from here at another people's house. And he had this gun with him and he - - I think he had been helping him; he'd been helping this guy with some house and I went up there snooping around on horseback of course. He was playing with this damn gun, he pulled it off and I was sitting across from maybe like how you and I are here. And I hit me!

Oh!

Jack: I must have had my hand up like this or something (gesturing).

Mildred: You said you had it in your belt like that.

Jack: Yeah, maybe I had my belt you know, I sat that way. I was sitting right directly across.

You got a bullet right in your hand.

Jack: Yeah.

Where did you go to a doctor then in those days?

Jack: Springs, Springs.

You had to go all the way to the Springs.

Jack: Mm-hmm. The bullet didn't go through. See that (inaudible) was all cocked around there (inaudible) and that bullet lodged against the thumb bone and spread it out like that but it didn't tear it off. Heck, we was - - I think I was about thirteen or fourteen when he did that and of course he was sixteen or seventeen.

Do most kids have guns? Was it common for kids to have them?

Jack: He did! He did. He was always having a damn gun. I never did. I never cared for firearms.

I can see why!

Jack: Well, I just never did and I don't think before that, but I don't like them. I use them and I've got them - plenty you know - if I need them, but I don't like to play with guns. They're not a plaything.

How did things change for raising your kids here? How was that different than you were raised?

Jack: Well, altogether what hurts you is when the school - -I mean, we had busses, I drove a bus for thirteen years to haul my kids to school.

Where did they go to school?

Jack: Lake George. Then Woodland High School.

That would be a haul.

Jack: Well, I didn't take them clear to Woodland. We had a - - I met another bus there that the school had.

And then they would bus from Lake George to Woodland Park.

Jack: Right, clear to Woodland park and then Becky, even later - - that our grand-daughter, she went to Fairplay, rode a bus to Fairplay when they didn't take her.

Were the kids expected to do chores?

Jack: Not in the later years, no, no. What they did - -

Okay, your kids? Did you make your kids do chores around the ranch?

Jack: No, it would be so damn late when we got home that be dark you know, when I got home.

Jack: Because of the bus from school and ...

Jack: Well yeah, because this was my last run and I - - they'd stay with me the complete run 'cause they had to come in here.

Jack: Would you say you ranched any differently? Did the ranch itself change?

Jack: Well we probably built ---

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So we were saying you got home so late, that the kids couldn't really do it, but that ranching is a little different for you, too.

Jack: Yeah, a little different.

What is different?

Jack: The (inaudible) you know I leave so early in the morning and then I'd do the feed and try to do the best I could with the stuff during the day until I had to go pick up the kids. I'll tell you...

It would be along day.

Jack: You didn't do much less than in those days.

Were you raising any crops then? Did you have...

Jack: Oh yeah, I - - oh yeah.

What did you have?

Jack: We was still - - we never raised no potatoes after we was married but raised oat hay, planted a lot of those. They were coming up. Somehow I got the knack.

Do you raise any hay now?

Jack: No, we haven't raised any hay on this place for - - we pastured it all again.

Is that because of the work or the money or the water or...?

Jack: Well, the water is the main thing I supposed. No, haven't put up any hay on this place for several years.

Does anyone around here cash crop at all? Do people cash crop? Could you raise vegetables to sell - - I'm thinking it's warmer here.

Jack: Oh no, my dad used to raise a hell of a lot it, but you couldn't sell them in those days. You couldn't sell a vegetable.

Why not?

Jack: Because nobody'd buy them.

Was it because they raised them themselves?

Jack: Well, I think so, yeah. See you can't realize how this area - the whole state - is populated since that time. Look at Colorado Springs. I remember when Colorado Springs was 19,000.

Wow. What was it like?

Jack: Well, it was a nice little (inaudible) town. It was a friendly town. I mean, the people from out east, they come there; we come from a long ways and 19,000 - - yeah, when the census was took. I don't remember when, but it was way back.

You said there wasn't even a market for vegetables.

Jack: No, you never saw nothing like that even in the stores. I mean, maybe occasionally; potatoes was about the only vegetable- fresh vegetable in the store that I can remember.

That surprises me.

Jack: Oh no! I mean, all your stores here- even in the Springs and all - everybody raised – must have raised their garden stuff.

Did you go to any of the other towns? Would you go to Jefferson or Fairplay or...

Jack: Oh yeah, us boys always did when we worked up there, yeah. Most of the ranches I worked at was just a - - one was – well, on 77, it's at the first branch that you come to down there. Looks like it's deserted, there's been a new house there and that's all, about 2 miles out of Jefferson coming down 77. I think the old house is still the other way right there that Eli built; I think it's the same house that's still... and that's all you can see, just that old house. I don't know who lives there, don't know who owns it, or (inaudible)

Do the ranchers get together at all now?

Jack: I don't know - - well, the only thing they get together on is the Cattleman's Association. Web belongs to that and he goes; I don't .

Did you used to?

Jack: Yeah, I belonged to the Cattleman's Association one time. I got mad at them and told them to go to hell and quit!

Why were you mad?

Jack: Oh, the kind of people they had running it, that's why. They weren't cattle men; those guys that come in here out of maybe a store or a bank or something and hear them rattle off. Couldn't associate with that kind of people – and I won't. This is supposed to be - - you know, it was stand (inaudible). No, it seems altogether like (inaudible). t's not what it used to be.

Have there been any good changes, or are they negative changes?

Jack: Right now I can't think of one good change. No, not that helped the ranches. Do you know - -she lives in Fairplay, works for the Forest Service - - Sheila Lamb?

I don't know. Now is that Mark Lamb's wife?

Jack: Yes, Mark Lamb's wife.

Okay, I know Mark Lamb; I met him when I first moved here, I worked for the Forest Service for a couple of months.

Jack: Was there Maggie in the office there?

Mm-hmm (affirmative). She was so sweet.

Jack: She is.

I really, really liked her.

Jack: She used to teach school for us over there. I was on the Board; I was on the School Board up there fifteen years.

Really! Fairplay School Board?

Jack: Yup.

Was that when your kids were in school?

Jack: Part of the time – I guess most of the time. When they was in school most of the time, I was on the Board.

Mildred: Well, probably.

Jack: Probably; I'm not sure.

Tell me about the School Board.

Jack: Do you know Nancy Stinson?

I do.

Jack: Well, do you know what happened at the schools then if you know her!

Oh – I know her, but I guess I don't know about that.

Jack: She was down there every School Board meeting and going to ... (sigh) tell us how to run the school. This is the way they did it in California. Her brother was a school superintendent out there, so all the Board members got up one night and we put up with that and he said "God damn-it Nancy, we're not in California and your brother's not the superintendent!"

Oh, my goodness. When were you on the School Board- what years?

Jack: Oh, I guess the ...

Sixties?

Jack: Yeah, I was on there fifteen years.

Sounds like that's - - let's see – Webb was born in '57, so ...

Jack: Well, I was on the School Board when he started to school and before he was old enough to go to school, right?

Mildred: Yes, I ...

Jack: Yeah, I know I was. And I drove to Fairplay 'cause of meetings.

That was a long way.

Jack: Yes it was ...when you're working. Walt Coil was one of the School Board members when I was on there that's Mickey's brother-in-law.

Mm-hmm. Who else was on?

Jack: Oh, I cant' remember all - - they changed during the - -some guys don't not even (inaudible) They couldn't stand it. I was - - me and Bob ?Bankers? was the only ones that I know of come to think of ,that stayed that long, but see, Walt Coil; there was a fellow out south of town - -I was trying to think of his name the other day. He just come here, he was pretty good and I know you knew the fellow that run that store up there – he was on the School Board. I don't think he's up there anymore.

Mildred: Gene Howey – he's dead.

Jack: Gene Howey was...

Oh, I met them! I chatted with them last summer.

Jack: Well, Gene was on there quite awhile.

Mildred: I think he's passed away.

He did. He passed away.

Jack: He did? Gene died. Yeah, you told me Gene died.

Yeah, not too long after I spoke with him.

Jack: What's that fellow's name that runs the store up there, what's his - - you know him, Carl Duncan?

Mildred: Oh yeah.

Jack: Is that his name?

Mildred: Yes, that was Carl Duncan.

Carl Duncan, okay. I don't know him.

Jack: Well, he used to - - he was working the store up there right across the street from the old town council, you know, the Courthouse.

Okay, from the Courthouse – that store, mm-hmm.

Jack: Now they call it the "rock store." That's what I call it.

Mm-hmm.

Okay, I don't know whether he owned it or not. I think he did. And Carl was a very good Board member.

What kind of things were issues at that time?

Jack: Everything was an issue – everything! We wasn't paying enough; we was paying too much and everything was an issue. We had a battle there every meeting.

Was that school politics or was that like town politics?

Jack: It was mostly town politics. No, plentiful what you call political was ever a factor I don't think. It may have brewed from that but I don't ...

Can you tell me what Fairplay was like then? Has it changed much?

Jack: Well, I haven't been in Fairplay in so long I couldn't tell you.

Hmm! We'll have to get you to come up for lunch. I'll get Mick Buyer and some of those guys.

Jack: Get who?

Mick Buyer.

Jack: Oh yeah, I respect him.

Were there any other ranchers that stand out in your memory that you respected and learned from?

Jack: It was all ranchers but Gene Howey.

Okay, even on the Board... it was ranch families.

Jack: Yeah, I think so. They was all ranchers but Gene.

Who would you say are the most prominent ranchers in your mind as a far as well-respected?

Jack: Well, Bill Buyers would be another one, that's Mickey's dad and I respect Walt Coil to a degree in some ways. Nobody used to be with him but Walt and I, we ended up good friends and we both got off of the Board. Let's see- who else was on the Board? There was seven; we had a seven-man Board.

So hearing about your work, did you guys ever get away to have fun? What kind of social things did ranch families have?

Jack: There's not much socializing in ranching.

No?

Jack: No, there isn't, truthfully.

Did the dances continue or would you have people come?

Jack: No, them played out right after - - I suppose by the time we got married, didn't they?

Mildred: Yeah, I think so.

Jack: Just about. We never had no (inaudible) dances. I haven't heard of one in - -gosh, I don't know how long!

Mildred: We've never done much of anything actually.

Would people have parties? Would neighbors get together and have social time?

Jack: Not much, no, it's not much of a place for that, no. No, it's not but there's been so many new people move in, see. We're not the only that's been here very long. All of us come in you know, since World War II and then from that, five or six years here so...

We'll have to get some of you together. I know a few.

Jack: Gosh, I don't know who you know - I don't know who's left! You know, Buyers and Walt Coil and them guys, they weren't people I neighbored with; they were too far away. You know, we'd just meet them.

Who would spend time – it was more like the Tarryall to Lake George area that you would have known the ranchers?

Jack: Yeah, but there's none of them left – not one of them. Most of them sold out during the war. They were getting - - most of them were getting old and the kids didn't see taking to that, so that's what's happened.

I haven't met many people down this way. I think this is the farthest south I've probably been in the county.

Jack: And the old town of Guffey over there. You get into there, then telling me I haven't been there in years but that used to be a cow town. We used to go to dances over there.

Where were the dances in Guffey?

Jack: Somebody told me the old dance hall's still there. Now I don't know whether they knew what they was talking about or not. It was a hall.

Mildred: But it still is because the woman that does my hair says it's still there.

Jack: Oh yeah, you said that. And there's you know, there's a few people moved in there but I don't ever heard of any of them! Not a one. They used to have a good little store there and...

Now would go there for somewhere like there for groceries, or did you bring everything from the Springs?

Jack: Oh no, not Guffey. It wasn't that good a store. Us people here couldn't trade with these stores up here to amount to anything. The prices were too stiff.

So really for any of your basic needs you would go to the Springs?

Jack: Yeah right and if we run out of something and they had it yeah but other than that, we never traded with them. We might have been friends to them, just like this old Derby I was telling you about. We was good friends; I liked him and I went to school with his grandkids, you know, stuff like that. You couldn't trade with the old cuss.

(Laughter). Anything else you can think of we should add? I don't want to wear you out.

Jack: Well, you're not bothering me. We're alright. I can tell you a lot of things after you leave.

Yeah, that's how it - - I think it would be good if I could come back because that's what happens. It gets you thinking about some of the old times. What about the Tarryall School? I've heard that they're trying to fix it up and I know there's been a lot of efforts to save it. Have you been involved?

Jack: Yes, I was involved very much. We started the reunion club about what – twenty years ago?

Mildred: (Laughter) It will be forty.

Jack: Forty years? And one of the boys that went to school there, he was - - they moved years ago. I went to school with him, but he's...

Who's that?

Jack: Tom Brewer.

Okay.

Jack: They lived back up there in another place that you wouldn't know where I was talking about. And he wrote here - he wrote to me or called or something and he wanted a reunion 'cause he was getting to be probably a hundred old when he decided that. He lives in Missouri and they was scattered all over the globe. SO I called him or wrote to him or something and told him that would be fine, that I was - - he'd wrote to somebody and found out and I kind of looked after it. I was president of this club and still am. That's been - - what did you say? Forty years.

What did you call the club?

Jack: Well, it's a reunion kind of thing.

And when do you get together?

Jack: Once a year in July.

Who comes back?

Jack: Well, there's nobody anymore. They're all dead!

Mildred: It's dwindled.

Jack: I think there was about four or five of us maybe that went t school there. Then they went later years you know, Mildred's age or younger.

Mildred: Jack's the oldest. ?Craig Harbor? I guess is, but he did not go to school there when they...

Jack: No, he went to school in the old schoolhouse. He a hundred; he'll be a hundred in ...

Is he? Now, I'm told I should talk to him, too.

Jack: I don't know whether...

If he would be able to feel up to meeting with me or not.

Jack: Yeah, he would, if she's not there.

Mildred: That's Madge.

Jack: But don't start - - that's his wife who wrote this book.

Okay.

Jack: So you stay the hell away from her as far as you can!

(Laughter) I'd hate to make you mad!

Jack: So but Frank, if he told you something, he would remember before I was. He was there as a little kid, but they moved. They went out east to - - what was it that he raised? Well, the southern part of Colorado. I think down there pretty close to the Oklahoma line, but somewhere. Ah, he's a fine fellow. He's an ex-teacher, principal. He was principal at Woodland Park for years and Postmaster there. A nice fellow, but when you're a hundred, I don't think you're you know...

Mildred: He'll be a hundred in July.

Jack: Yeah, he'll be a hundred in July, but he is a nice fellow if you ever get a chance to ... and if you don't see him, you'll miss something because he's educated, he 's a smart person; he's a not only smart, he's intelligent. Anyway, the reunion started and they all died, so we don't have any body left! I think there's about four of them that went to school there. Just for a little while, some of them. I'm the only one of the whole bunch that's left that went to school there.

The whole time you mean?

Jack: Yeah. My sister and I, she's still alive – she lives in Grand Junction. She lost her husband here a short time ago and it's sad she's - - she's in a sad way.

What's your sister's name?

Jack: Everenni.

Huh – that's an interesting name and she lives in Grand Junction.

Jack: Yeah – now. They moved from California here just before he died. He died here; that's what he wanted, so... but he did and he left her in awful shape. Not financially – I don't mean that! He was wealthy. They're wealthy. But he left her in a position ...

All alone here?

Jack: Well, she can't take of that. She don't know anybody over there. She don't know a soul there, not a neighbor...

And you guys don't either, huh?

Jack: No, I don't because I get acquainted overnight but she tells me she's just about lost her eyesight and her mind is not too good – her memory. I mean, you talk about something and she yeah, she can carry on a conversation but she can't remember. I was over there - why, I guess it's been a month or two – this boy that was here today; he took me over, he's a good friend of mine. A damn good friend.

Have you hired many people? You mentioned he worked for you sometimes.

Jack: Oh yeah, he worked for me off and on, ever since they've been here again, eight, ten years; something like that.

Anything you want to add? You're quiet over there (speaking to Mildred).

Mildred: No.

Jack: You know, I didn't tell you much in person about my brothers or any of my family.

Is there anything you want to tell me about them?

Jack: Yeah, I'd like to mention my older brother.

Okay, tell me about him

Jack: He went to Arizona as I told you.

He's the one that you had the funny stories about? Was he the one whipping the potato you? Or was that another brother?

Jack: No, that was another just older than me.

Okay, what was his name?

Jack: Bill.

Bill, okay. So and the oldest is Burt.

Jack: Yeah.

Burt, the one you want to talk about?

Jack: Yeah, he went to Arizona and he was a cowboy; that's all he ever done, that's all ever did do. And he went to work for this cattle company ranch, big outfit and he worked there - I don't know - probably five years maybe. So they finally decided - - it was like everything else, it was weighted down. So he went out there and he homesteaded about forty miles from where he worked, where their ranch was in the most God-forsaken country you ever saw.

What part of the state was he in? Was it way down south?

Jack: No, it was - - you know where Prescott is?

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jack: Did you ever hear of ...what the name of the (inaudible).

Mildred: El Chino?

Jack: No, El Chino - you've heard of Chino Valley.

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jack: So kind of in the mountains of Arizona. Wasn't it fairly (inaudible).

Yeah, it's past Flagstaff. You go to Flagstaff and then you I guess south it seems to me. We went out to...

Mildred: Bagdad?

Jack: Bagdad.

Bagdad, huh.

Jack: Did you ever hear of it?

Mm-hmm (negative).

Jack: Mining town.

Okay.

Jack: Copper mine - big one. Well, he homesteaded all seven, eight, ten miles from there and he didn't have much money when he went there and got married, believe it or not. Then you talk about place being out in the toolies! But he run that ranch then so I think he told me he was on that homestead forty years and then she finally beat on him 'til they sold it and then they went to Chino. Now, do you know where Chino's at?

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jack: Just out of Prescott.

I know where Prescott is.

Jack: Well, he moved to Chino, bought a house in there. I went out to see him once well, when she died; his wife died first and I went out and I was fixing to go again and I got a call from a friend of his that he'd died. So I went on out of course, anyway and ...

What was special about him? Why did you want to talk about him?

Jack: As far as I know, and they said there he was the only man that was ever put in the Cowboy Hall of Fame before he died.

Do you why? What made him stand out?

Jack: Yeah, he just had so many friends and he was so good; he was (inaudible) he was probably the one of the best cowboys known anyway, so they (inaudible).

You were saying that was Burt Smith?

Jack: That was Bert. He was born in 1900 in Colorado Springs.

And then there was Bill, so who was the other one?

Jack: Well, there's two more. There was ...

Bert, Bill...

Jack: In (inaudible) when they was born, there was Bert and then there was a sister and she lived in Michigan and then there was...

What was the sister's name in Michigan?

Jack: Ruth.

Ruth?

Jack: Mm-hmm.

And she was second.

Jack: Mm-hmm and then Charlie.

Charlie?

Jack: Then Jim and Bill and myself. There was seven of us.

Wait- Jim – is Jim before Bill?

Jack: Mm-hmm, they was old.

Then Bill.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Then you?

Jack: Yes.

What's your full name? I didn't ask you that.

Jack: Well, you don't need to know. Just Jack Smith.

That's all I get?

Jack: Yeah.

Okay.

Mildred: His brother Charlie was killed.

Jack: Yeah, he was killed in Arizona. That's the (inaudible). He went out there with my older brother.

Now how was he killed?

Jack: Well, we don't know I mean, really. He was killed - - he was going to town; that's when they both worked for the same cow outfit and Radial's was the headquarters in the summer, then they moved down to Chino in the winter with the cows. He was going to Flagstaff; he'd married some gal out there. He was taking her back, she was out at the ranch with him and you got no idea what roads are out there unless you've been there.

I have! You seen that sign, "It's a 150 miles to the next gas station".

Jack: Not only that...

And there's nothing.

Jack: There's a mile below you with (inaudible) in there. Well, he went off one of them (inaudible) but it didn't her. That was in 1925 when he was killed.

What did Jim do?

Jack: Well, a lot like me; he was with different outfits and then he - -during the War, he worked for the Forest Service for a long time. He was Assistant Ranger of this (inaudible) District before this district of its own – Lake George District. And I worked for the Forest Service.

You did?

Jack: Yes, I did.

I wouldn't have guessed that from the way you were talking about them.

Jack: Well, I'm not proud of it, but I did.

What did you do for them?

Jack: Everything. I was put on a crew somewhere.

So did Jim end up ranching or what did he do?

Jack: Well, he tried to ranch along with it and it didn't work.

What did Bill do?

Jack: Same thing.

Ranching?

Jack: A little, with his other work. He worked with the saw mill outfit a long time. Well, I guess that was that was ...

Mildred: He was a timberer.

Jack: He worked the timberland, yeah he did most of the time.

Anything you want to say about your folks, what kind of people they were?

Jack: The greatest.

Why do you say that?

Jack: Well, they were. They raised seven half-way respectable kids and provided for them, teaching them that there was a God and a hereafter and that kind of thing. I think they was great, too. You know, we wasn't heathens, we was exactly... I think Mother particularly - - well, my dad, too. That's the opinion I've got - that's why I answered.

Were there any other family around? Were there aunts or uncles or anything like that, or grandparents?

Jack: Not around here.

Grandparents, did you have any ties with?

Jack: No, actually no ties any of them on either side. Some of them called to see us but to me, they was just cousins or whatever it was and I think we all (inaudible) We didn't have much time.

So you lived so far apart that you didn't really interact?

Jack: Well yeah, a lot of my mother's folks, most of them ended up in California. I had one uncle that I respected a lot that lived in Wyoming.

What was your uncle's name?

Jack: Well, that's what I'm trying to think...Whitaker.

Whittaker?

Jack: Yeah, Polish.

Mildred: He lived in Casper?

Jack: No, no I don't know.

You'll think of it.

Jack: Oh yeah. Here's one thing (pointing to a picture). He seems like a pretty nice fellow. We see him once and awhile. He's my cousin.

The son?

Jack: Yes.

What was your uncle's first name?

Walt.

Walk Witraker?

Jack: Yes. You know they (inaudible) He had a big ranch up there.

Jack: Would he come visit or did you go up there?

Jack: Well, he'd here once and awhile. He come here after the war. He was a nice fellow; I liked him. And I was up there and saw my relations, or my aunt. I went up with this one, he lived in the Springs then, this boy of Walter's. Well, his name is Walt, too.

end of tape.