

Person Interviewed: Roy Hofer

Interviewed by: Winn Herrschaft and Juliane Schudek

Other people present: Elmer Grossen

Location of Interview: 9553 NW Helvetia Road Hillsboro, OR 97124

Date: 3/1/2011

Special Conditions:

General Description:

Tape No. 1 of 1

:29 – 3:25 Roy gives general background, biographical information, name, birthdate, etc. Born in Helvetia and lived there most of his life. Born on a farm. Had 2 brothers. Father died at age 7 and mother raised 3 boys. Talks about going to mechanic school learning how to work on diesel engines. Got a job as a mechanic working for car dealers before getting a job with John Deere where he worked for 50 years. Roy also worked on the railroad. Bought land in Helvetia. Since retiring spends time on his land. Has forest land, clear land, and 12 acres of Filbert nuts. Took Filberts out this year due to disease and replanted new Filbert trees. He is turning over the Filbert trees to his nephew because Roy is getting too old to manage it himself.

3:30 – 5:15 Roy talks about how his family came to the U.S. His mother came from Switzerland around 1890 and married Roy's father, another Swiss immigrant who lived in Helvetia, OR. Talks about living at home on the farm with his mother after his brothers were grown and left. One brother died at age 40 from cerebral hemorrhage, another died in a logging accident when machinery fell on him.

5:25 – 7:00 Roy talks about his mother working the farm as a single woman, chickens and selling eggs, raising some crops on their 20 acres to sell to neighbors, later had 5 cows and made cream to sell to the creamery. Mother's name was Emma. Brother's names were Frank (oldest) and Wilber (youngest).

7:25 – 8:00 Talks about his brother Frank and his role in Bird's Eye vegetable production (peas, asparagus, etc) Frank was in charge of the companies farming operation.

8:05 – 11:45 talks more about trade school in 1932 to become a mechanic. School was in Portland and Roy lived in Portland with his uncle while he went to school. Drove a Model-T ford. Catching gophers and moles and collecting the bounty from the county in order to earn gas money. Gophers and moles do a lot of damage to farm land. Gas was delivered from Beaverton at a cost of 6 cents. Talks about working on tractors at John Deere dealer in Hillsboro. Started working for them 1938, bought shares in company in 1948. Retired at age 70.

11:53 – 13:08 Talks about working a 20 acre farm and being a mechanic at the same time. Says 20 acres is not that big.

13:10 – 15:25 Briefly talks about wife and her working for Iron Frank's for 52 years. Took the bus to Portland everyday for work. Then goes back to talking about his work. Talks about importance of grain and dairy farming in the county's history.

15:30 – 20:30 Talks about horses being replaced with tractors in the 1930s. Some people were hard to convince to use tractors. From 1940s on horses were mostly replaced by tractors. Then talks about what happened in early days of tractors when tractors broke down. Talked about difficulty getting parts and tractors during World War II. Continues talking about grain farming and the introduction of grass seed and grass seed farming.

Stopped at 21:17

Finished in database tape log

### Tags

World War II, John Deere, Tractors, Agriculture, Agriculture—History, Mechanic, Hillsboro—Oregon, Beaverton—Oregon, Portland—Oregon, Helvetia—Oregon, Tillamook—Oregon, Farming, Grain farming, Dairy, Railroad, Switzerland, Filbert nuts, Walnuts, Automobiles, Automobile—History, Model-T Ford, Livestock,