

HERB LAFKEY

TAPE 1, Side 1

August 31, 1996

M.O'R.: This is Michael O'Rourke for the Washington County Historical Society beginning an interview today with Herb Lafkey, and today's interview is taking place at his home in Rockaway.

Let me just first of all ask you where you were born?

H.L.: Okay. I was born 1919 in Corvallis, Oregon. So I've been a native Oregonian all that time.

M.O'R.: All your life?

H.L.: Right.

M.O'R.: And what were your parents' names?

H.L.: My father's name was Mark Lafkey, and my mother was Manette Lafkey.

M.O'R.: And what was her maiden name?

H.L.: Her maiden name was Manette Hansen. And we - I was born in Corvallis. We lived in Corvallis for about a year and then moved to a farm near Junction City and were there about six years, and then we moved to Cornelius.

M.O'R.: Is that what your father did, then, for a living: he was a farmer?

H.L.: Yes. Yeah. And then in later years, along with the farming he raised Dutch Iris bulbs and was able to make a living at that. In fact, he got a patent for one variety of the Dutch Iris.

M.O'R.: Oh, really?

H.L.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: Now, your mother's name, could you spell her first name for us?

H.L.: Her first name is Manette, M-a-n-e-t-t-e.

M.O'R.: Okay.

H.L.: It's never - we never heard of another woman with that name. I don't know how they came by it, but it was pretty distinctive on her part.

M.O'R.: And she was a housewife and helped out on the farm?

H.L.: Yes. Yeah, they both - both my parents graduated from Oregon State. It was Oregon Agricultural College back in those days. My dad graduated in 1912, and my mother in 1916. So for those days it's rather unusual to have parents who graduated from college.

M.O'R.: Yes, that's right. That is unusual. Did they meet there?

H.L.: Yes. They met in Corvallis.

M.O'R.: At school?

H.L.: I think so, yeah. Well, maybe not, either, because I think my dad was out of school when she was in school, so it was probably through friends that were in school and out that - is how they met.

M.O'R.: Now, you said you lived in Corvallis for a year or two after you were born and then moved to Junction City, was it?

H.L.: Right.

M.O'R.: And they were also farming there?

H.L.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And then I guess a few years after that you moved up to Tualatin; is that - was that the next move?

H.L.: The next move was to Cornelius for a year, and then to Tualatin.

M.O'R.: Okay.

H.L.: Yeah, we moved to Tualatin in February of 1928.

M.O'R.: And in Cornelius your father was also farming?

H.L.: No, he worked for a feed store in Forest Grove.

M.O'R.: Okay. So he temporarily quit farming, then?

H.L.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: And then in Tualatin he bought another farm?

H.L.: Yes. He bought a 60-acre farm in Tualatin.

M.O'R.: And whereabouts was that farm located?

H.L.: It was located south of Tualatin, near in intersection of Boones Ferry Road and Avery Street.

M.O'R.: Okay. And let's see - by '28, then, you were nine years old?

H.L.: Right.

M.O'R.: So do you - well, you probably have some memories, I guess, earlier, from the earlier places you lived; is that right?

H.L.: A little bit, yeah. We were talking about the Tualatin River, and when we lived in Cornelius, I remember there were a couple of resorts on Gales Creek, which is a tributary of the Tualatin River.

M.O'R.: Right.

H.L.: One was called Bomb Grove, and one was called Rippling Waters, I think it is. I don't think either resort is running now, but the places are still there.

Of course, the way they farm now, they use a lot of water, and I don't think the stream flow is as much now as it used to be, to accommodate the swimming pools and things like that.

M.O'R.: But these resorts had swimming places?

H.L.: Oh, yeah.

M.O'R.: And did you go to them, then, as a kid?

H.L.: We went a time or two, yeah. I was pretty small, but I remember going there.

M.O'R.: And you swam there?

H.L.: Tried to.

M.O'R.: And was there any other interaction with the river while you lived up there around Cornelius?

H.L.: No, not in Cornelius. No.

M.O'R.: But then your farm down in Tualatin, was it on the river?

H.L.: No. No, it was not. It was about a mile from the river.

But I remember not too long after we moved to Tualatin going down to the river. They had a place where you could swim. They had a sort of a floating raft with pools, with places to wade or swim in. And they had diving boards for people to dive in the river.

M.O'R.: At what place on the Tualatin was this?

H.L.: It's located where the City Park is now in Tualatin.

M.O'R.: And it was just sort of a public place?

H.L.: Yes.

M.O'R.: So it wasn't run for profit?

H.L.: Right. It was open to everyone.

M.O'R.: I guess there were places not too far away, Roamer's Rest and Avalon, et cetera - that would have been, what, a little upriver, I guess, from you?

H.L.: Yes. Right.

M.O'R.: But they had diving boards and docks and places you could swim right there at the City Park?

H.L.: Yeah. And a few boats. I remember canoes and a boat or two. Not very many boats, like they have now, but a few. Of course, they didn't have motors like they do now. If you went out in a boat, you had to provide your own locomotion with the oars to get from one place to another.

M.O'R.: Right. And there was, I believe, real high water on the Tualatin right - just a few years, maybe, after your parents arrived in Tualatin?

H.L.: Yeah, there was a high water in 1933, and then there was another one in the winter of '36-37, and then there was another one in the winter of '56-57 - correction, I think it was '55-56.

At the time of the '55-56, I was married, and we lived in a house and the water got up pretty close. It got up just about to the floor level. We had moved out, but - and there was no damage or anything. Not like there was this last February when it got so bad.

M.O'R.: Right. When a lot of people were flooded out.

H.L.: Oh, yeah.

M.O'R.: I imagine you have some friends who probably were flooded out, eh?

H.L.: Yeah. Yeah, I should say. Yeah, that's -.

Talking about the river, in Tualatin there was - we had a butcher by the name of Walt Hochshurst, and he had a butcher shop, and he did some butchering on the banks of the river, which of course wouldn't be allowed now, but this was about 70 years ago, and it was located about - oh, about a hundred yards upstream from where the present bridge that carries Boones Ferry Road across the Tualatin River is. And in the summertime it was usually good fishing below there. Every time he slaughtered, why, everything went into the river, and it attracted the fish, so the fishing was pretty good then.

M.O'R.: Now, this was a butcher shop he ran, you say?

H.L.: Well, he had a butcher shop, and he did his butchering at a little building he had on the bank of the river.

M.O'R.: On the bank of the river. So what kind of - blood and discarded parts of the ...

H.L.: Yeah, everything he couldn't sell just went into the river, which was legal. Nowadays it would be frowned on, but he could do it then.

And I remember, too, near that place, between upstream from the bridge and up about 50 yards, there was - the river was fairly shallow, and I think years ago before they had the bridge they forded the river there because you could see where - on the banks, each bank of the river, you could see where they had sort of cut out a path or way to get down to the river and cross it when the river was low, like late summer. Probably a team of horses and a wagon and so forth could cross the river ...

M.O'R.: - at that point, huh?

H.L.: Yeah, where it was shallow. I doubt - it's probably unlikely that you could find that now, but as a kid I can remember seeing that area.

M.O'R.: And so you used to fish as a kid?

H.L.: Yeah, we did a lot of fishing then. You could catch trout and bass, and I remember croppies. That was pretty much the extent of it, but it always seemed like you could catch a lot of them. We'd go down on the dock where they had the place for swimming; you could fish there, or fish off the bank different places. Usually good places to fish were at the mouth of creeks; where a creek would come into the river, that would be a good spot to fish. More likely to have trout there.

M.O'R.: More activity right around there?

H.L.: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

M.O'R.: And the trout would be at the mouths of streams because - why? Because they would sometimes go up these streams?

H.L.: That's right. A lot of times they would go up a stream to spawn. And they probably still do on some streams. Most of the creeks, of course, have been sort of - oh, put out of commission with all the building and established homes and everything. They're are still creeks, but I don't think there's any fish in them. There's a certain amount of pollution that kills them, and they're probably not there now.

M.O'R.: Right. I think that's true. So on the farm in Cornelius, did you say how large it was?

H.L.: Well, in Cornelius we didn't live ...

M.O'R.: I mean, not at Cornelius. At Tualatin?

H.L.: It was a 60-acre farm.

M.O'R.: What did your father do there first, or what kind of crops did you raise there first?

H.L.: He raised grain, usually wheat. And in those days he had a team of horses to provide the power. He didn't have a tractor, so we had a barn that accommodated the horses and had another barn to take care of a cow that we had and a pig. And of course the cow provided the milk we needed, and we usually had a pig that would - we'd feed it table scraps and maybe buy some feed, but by and large you had enough feed on the farm to keep a pig alive and keep that going. We also had chickens for eggs, and you usually provide enough food yourself to keep the chickens going.

We had an orchard of - oh, apples and pears, and a few peaches and cherries, fruit like that. And that kept the animals going. So in those days, back in the 30's, you were pretty well self-sufficient. And to keep the cows going and the horses, he would raise hay, usually oats and vetch, and then the other crops would be wheat, as I said, or sometimes oats. But wheat seemed to be the main one.

And then he also had - he planted a small filbert orchard, and he was pretty good at raising gardens. In fact, his gardens were usually good-sized to where we had a little roadside stand, and when we had things that were plentiful, why, we'd sell them, or put a sign down there and people would come and buy them. You didn't make a lot of money, but you were able to sell the excess that you didn't need.

M.O'R.: So it sounds like, especially during the summertime, you pretty much had all you needed to survive there on the farm?



H.L.: That's right. Yeah. And of course for the wintertime, my mother would do a lot of canning. As I say, we had the orchards, fruit orchards, and some berries, so that she did a lot of canning.

M.O'R.: And canned vegetables, too?

H.L.: Yeah. Beans and peas.

M.O'R.: And would you be able to put up - or preserve meat at all or did you just pretty much -?

H.L.: Did some, but not extensively. Usually with a pig, you butchered a pig, and that provided you quite a bit of pork, and then as soon as that was gone, why, they'd get another one and raise it and butcher it. So for the most part you had a pig there at all times.

M.O'R.: And a constant supply of fresh meat?

H.L.: Tried to, anyway.

M.O'R.: Well, it sounds like a nice life.

H.L.: Yeah, it is. I don't think there's very many people that do that now. I'm sure there are some, but not to the extent that they used to. But we were - we and the neighbors, everybody else that we knew around there pretty much did the same thing. People were farmers, had farms and raised animals, chickens, pigs, had horses and cows.

M.O'R.: Now, apart from the produce that you sold at the roadside stand, were any of these crops for sale that your father raised?

H.L.: Well, he would sell the wheat that he would raise, and they usually would come by - the early years, they'd come by with a threshing machine. He - first he would use what they call a

binder to go through and cut the wheat and put it into bundles, and then they would come by - they'd bring a threshing machine by, and then usually you'd have neighbors come and help, and they'd put these bundles of wheat through the threshing machine and get the grain, and then he would sell the grain.

M.O'R.: And where would he sell the grain?

H.L.: I'm not sure. I don't know where it went but ...

M.O'R.: It generated some income, though?

H.L.: Yeah. Some local source would take it.

M.O'R.: And was that pretty much your father's living, then?

H.L.: Pretty much. Then in the late 30's, he got interested in raising Dutch Iris bulbs commercially, and he did pretty well there. He sold some of the flowers, but mainly it was the bulbs that he raised and sold.

M.O'R.: And sold the bulbs to nurseries or something?

H.L.: Well, there was a company - I can't recall the name of it, but they were dealing in Dutch Iris bulbs, and that was his outlet.

M.O'R.: I see. So he'd sell his crop to them?

H.L.: Yeah. And one year he had a variety called a Wedgewood, which was a blue flower, kind of a light blue, that bloomed early. It was probably the earliest blooming Dutch Iris. There were other varieties, but they would bloom later: yellow ones and white ones. And one year he discovered one of these Wedgewood iris threw off a white bloom instead of the blue, and he realized it was what they called a "sport." It was a sort of a mutation; rather than the blue flower, it was a white one. So he kept that and cultivated it, and as he planted it, there would be little bulb-

ettes that he would keep, and pretty soon he enlarged the supply of the white iris, and he was able to get a patent on it. It was a - in other words, it developed into the earliest blooming white iris. There were other white irises, but they bloomed, oh, maybe two, three, four weeks later than this variety.

M.O'R.: So he actually patented an iris variety.

H.L.: Yeah. So that was rather unique.

M.O'R.: Yeah. I imagine he could get a good price for a unique strain, too?

H.L.: Yeah. Of course, he sold them years ago, but he got a pretty good price for them because nobody else had them that color that bloomed that early.

M.O'R.: Now, in your father's farming activities, did he irrigate at all?

H.L.: No. No, we didn't have irrigation. And he was able to raise crops without having the irrigation. They irrigate a lot now, and of course they have more - the crops now are much more - much larger than what we had then. But no, he didn't irrigate.

M.O'R.: Not even your vegetable garden or ...

H.L.: Very little, no.

M.O'R.: What was your water source on the farm?

H.L.: It was a well, a dug well. It was - as I recall, it was about 40 feet deep, and we had a pump on it. And that was our water source.

M.O'R.: Did you ever have any trouble with that?

H.L.: Not too much. I remember one time he had to go down into the well to do something, and he had a long wooden ladder that he lowered into the well and climbed down in there and fixed

whatever it was that needed to be fixed. But he was pretty much self-sufficient, and he could do it himself. Didn't have to hire much help to keep the farm going.

M.O'R.: Well, that's good. I'm wondering if you could tell me a little bit about - I mean, you already mentioned, of course, the fishing, but what were your own activities during those days, both in terms of things you'd do for fun, but also the work you had to do on the farm?

H.L.: Yeah. I remember doing quite a bit of work on the farm. Whenever we would harvest the hay, it meant you would go out with a mower, cut the hay, and then we had a rake, a hay rake. After the hay was cut and dried, after a few days of sunny weather, you'd come through with a rake and put the hay into windrows. And then he would come through afterwards and put the hay that was in windrows into shocks, hay shocks.

Then to gather the hay, we had a hay rack, a wagon, with the sides - with the ends so they would hold the hay, and the team of horses would pull the wagon or the hay rack around, and he would pitch the hay up onto the wagon, and I'd be up on the wagon and distribute the hay around levelly on the wagon.

And as soon as we got the wagon full of hay, as much as you could put on there, then the horses would pull the wagon to the barn. And at the barn they had what they call a hay fork, which was suspended from the top of the barn off the end of the barn. And it was a fork, it was about - probably about three feet long, two points, or whatever you call it, about three feet long. And you would put that into the hay, and you could pull levers up at

the top which would cause the sort of fingers to come sideways at the bottom and hold the hay.

Then we had a rope that extended up off to the side, and we'd take one of the horses and hitch it to the rope and pull the hay up to the rack that was at the top of the barn and into where the barn hayloft was, and then he could trip - when he wanted the hay to be dropped, he could trip it with another rope that he had.

So it was a kind of an involved procedure, but that's - in those days, that's what they did.

M.O'R.: Well, I guess farmers, in addition to being horticulturalists and weathermen and maybe a few other skills thrown in there as well, they had to also be mechanics?

H.L.: That's right. Yeah. In case anything broke, why, you had to know how to fix it or had to know where to go to have it fixed.

M.O'R.: And what sort of - you mentioned fishing. What other kinds of things did you enjoy doing as a kid?

H.L.: Well, I had a bicycle, and it was - the bike that I had in those days, in the 30's, sort of resembles the mountain bikes they have now. They were balloon tires, and that was one of the things that I enjoyed doing, was taking the bike and going somewhere, maybe with a friend, or maybe going fishing on the bike. I couldn't drive and didn't have anyone to take me, so bike riding was quite an occupation.

M.O'R.: Did you have friends your own age, then, from nearby?

H.L.: Oh, yeah. There were a lot of friends.

M.O'R.: From other farms nearby, mostly?

H.L.: Mm-hmm. Some from the farms, and some who lived in town who didn't live on farms. There weren't a lot, but there were quite a number. A few that are - I still correspond with or see once in a while. At our age, they're starting to leave, though.

M.O'R.: And you went to school in Tualatin, then, I assume?

H.L.: Yes. Yeah. We had a high school in those days, and it was - one building had the grade school plus the high school. And all in all there were probably - probably wasn't over 150 kids in both the grade and the high school, if that many. It may not have been that many.

In 1936, they discontinued the high school because the attendance just dropped down so low. So they discontinued the high school, but they built a school in Sherwood. So I finished my high school education in Sherwood, the last year. I graduated in 1937.

M.O'R.: What subjects appealed to you in school?

H.L.: Oh, I wasn't all that great a student, but I liked geography and history. And we had an English class where we did some debating, and that was sort of interesting, especially the last year. Earlier than that, they didn't have very many subjects in the smaller Tualatin high school.

M.O'R.: Now, when you moved to Tualatin with your family, it would have been just three or four years, I guess, before the official beginning of the Depression, but of course the Depression actually began, I think, in some farming communities even earlier than in the cities. And so I'm just wondering how that affected your family?

H.L.: Well, it affected us. Of course, you didn't seem to mind too much because everyone else was just about in the same

boat. And as I mentioned before, we were pretty much self-sufficient. If you could afford to live on the farm, if you could keep the farm ...

M.O'R.: Make your payments or whatever.

H.L.: Yeah. And raise these things, the vegetables and the fruit and the animals, the pigs, the chickens and cows, you were pretty - you pretty much were self-sufficient about the only thing you ever had to buy was maybe coffee. As far as sugar was concerned, I remember my dad had a hive of bees that you could use for honey to take the place of sugar if you wanted. So by and large, you really didn't have to go out to buy things to eat like you do now. You had it there. Especially in the summertime, there was a lot - plenty to eat.

M.O'R.: You had mentioned to me on the phone that you used to go up to - despite the fact that you had your own swimming hole there at City Park, you used to go to Roamer's on weekends occasionally?

H.L.: Mm-hmm. Yeah. They had a nice park. They of course charged to get in. I don't remember what they charged, but it wasn't very much. But they had a nice swimming facility there, rafts - or docks, I guess they called them. And they had more boats, it seemed to me, than some of the other places did. But it was a very popular place in the summer, especially on the weekends, Saturday and Sunday.

M.O'R.: And this is Roamer's Rest, now?

H.L.: Yes.

M.O'R.: I guess there were two other places at the same ...

H.L.: Yeah. Right near that place there was Avalon Park, which was across the river. And I think there was one or two others. Very popular ...

M.O'R.: A place called Louie's, I think, also.

H.L.: Right. Louie's. That's right.

[end of side one]



HERB LAFKEY

TAPE 1, Side 2

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M.O'R.: But you used to go primarily to Roamer's then, or -?

H.L.: Yeah, usually to Roamer's. That was - seemed like the resort in Tualatin wasn't quite big enough, wasn't as large, didn't accommodate as many people as Roamer's did, and you liked to go where there were more people. And so I had the bicycle then, and I'd take the bicycle over to Roamer's.

M.O'R.: About how often did you swim at Roamer's?

H.L.: Oh, probably - oh, half a dozen times a year, I guess. Or maybe just sometimes go over there not necessarily to swim, just to visit.

M.O'R.: Just to talk to people and roam around, eh?

H.L.: Sure. Right. Meet friends.

M.O'R.: And I guess there were a couple big water slides, too, at Roamer's?

H.L.: Yes. Yeah, there were. I didn't go on them. The big boys went on those things.

M.O'R.: You weren't quite ready for that?

H.L.: Yeah. I wasn't big enough and didn't quite have the nerve. Yeah, they were really something. They had an apparatus where they built runways into the water, and they had a kind of a sled or something where you sat on it, and this carried you down the slide into the river. It was pretty exciting.

M.O'R.: You mentioned the dumping of the refuse from the butcher shop into the Tualatin, and of course back in those days there were so many fewer people living on the river ...

H.L.: Right.

M.O'R.: ... that a certain amount of that probably didn't have the impact that it would have today if everybody that lived on the river dropped their garbage in it?

H.L.: Right.

M.O'R.: But I'm just wondering what you remember about the water quality in the river at that time. Did it seem to you to be a clean stream, or was it always a little on the muddy side, or how would you describe it?

H.L.: Well, it was never crystal clear, but I remember that it was clearer then than it is now. It seems like now it never really gets cleared up. I remember, you know, it was clear enough so you could swim in it and it didn't have the feeling that it might have any contamination. Plus it seemed like there were more fish then, especially trout. Trout are pretty susceptible to polluted water. We would catch trout quite often, and I just remember the river being clearer than it is now, but not crystal clear like some streams are.

M.O'R.: Did you continue to fish the Tualatin over the years, then, and did you actually notice the fish decline?

H.L.: Well, yeah. I think probably the last time I fished was probably around 1950, maybe 1960. That was pretty much the end of it. My folks sold their farm and moved to a house on the banks of the Tualatin, and my dad had a boat. And sometimes we'd go in the boat and row up or down the river and try to fish, and we

rarely caught any fish. Once in a while we would, but it was more just being on the water than it was fishing. So it was a decline, all right.

M.O'R.: Now, you mentioned also that you used to fish at the place where Fanno Creek enters the Tualatin?

H.L.: Yes. That comes in on the north side of the river from the city of Tualatin, and I was fishing there one time - I don't recall when; it was probably in the late 40's, maybe 50's, and I think I was - I may have been wading in the river near the bank. The river was probably not more than a foot deep right there.

But I noticed a rock, and there weren't any other rocks around there. And it was kind of a round rock, and I picked it up and turned it over, and it was a bowl, an Indian bowl, apparently. It was located at a place that they probably had a camp at one time, and maybe when the water was higher, somebody moved the bowl, and it rolled down the bank and into the river, and the water was too deep to retrieve it then, and they never thought to come back and get it when the water was lower. And I was able to find it.

M.O'R.: So you still have the bowl?

H.L.: Yes. Well, my family still has it.

M.O'R.: And did you ever verify its Indian ...

H.L.: I've showed to people who are pretty familiar with Indian artifacts, and they confirmed that it's a bowl.

M.O'R.: Of those origins, eh?

H.L.: Yeah. And when we lived on the farm, my dad would find arrowheads once in a while, especially when he was working with his Dutch Iris; he'd be working pretty close to the ground, he'd be weeding the iris or maybe rooting out the diseased ones, so he'd be

quite close to the ground, and once in a while he'd find an arrowhead. And he probably found, oh, pretty close to a hundred, I guess, and most in pretty good condition.

Of course, when you plow and disk and work the ground, chances are you'll break an arrowhead, especially if they're any size. And there was one time when I was working on the farm, I was plowing. I had a team of horses, and I had a single plow, and I was walking behind the plow in the furrow, and we were plowing along, and I felt the plow hit something, bounce on something. So I stopped the team and went back, and I found a long, slender rock that turned out to be what they call an [atlatl]. It's an Indian device for throwing a spear, and this was used back before they had the bow and arrow.

So I'm told that the thing is probably 2500 years old because that was about the time the bow and arrow came into existence with the Indians. The rock - I don't have it here, but my family has it. It was about six inches long, generally in the shape of a cigar except it was flat on the bottom and perfectly round on top - that is, just symmetrically round, and near the end - each end there was a little notch. Each end, about a quarter of an inch from the end, was this notch, just - it was almost like it was machine made. It was just perfectly symmetrical.

And it's a wonder the plow didn't break it when it bounced off of it, but it was intact, and so we -. And then I've showed that to other experts who are familiar with Indian artifacts, and they confirmed that it's an [atlatl].

M.O'R.: And do you know how it works?

H.L.: Yeah. When the Indians would throw a spear, they used a stick about so long as an extension of their arm to throw the stick - to throw the spear, I should say. And this [atlatl] was somehow tied to the stick as either a balancing mechanism or something, but that's how they used it.

M.O'R.: Just as a footnote here to our conversation about Roamer's, roughly what time would this have been that you were swimming at Roamer's with some frequency?

H.L.: In the 1930's.

M.O'R.: In the 30's. Okay.

H.L.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: You also mentioned, I guess, that your dad used to supply crawfish for the crawfish festival?

H.L.: Yeah. When he lived - in later years when he had the home on the river ...

M.O'R.: Yeah. When did he move to - when did your family move to the ...

H.L.: About 1963.

M.O'R.: Were you still living with the family, then?

H.L.: No, I was married and had my own. But he - yeah, he lived on the river, and the river has a lot of crawfish, and he had traps. And in the early days of the crawfish festival in Tualatin they needed crawfish, so he trapped and supplied some for them. Of course, now they need a lot more, and they go to commercial sources now to get their crawfish.

M.O'R.: But he was a source?

H.L.: Yeah, in the early days he was a source.

M.O'R.: Right. Do you know roughly how many he would trap for them?

H.L.: Oh, I don't know. I suppose probably 40, 50 dozen.

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah?

H.L.: Yeah. Nowadays that wouldn't go very far, but in those days it worked out. And the crawfish in the Tualatin are pretty good sized. They get pretty good-sized, about as big as I've seen anywhere, anyhow. I used to get some, but just for my own use.

M.O'R.: I guess it's famous for its crawfish.

H.L.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: Let's see; I have here as a note, also, that you went into the service in World War II, then; is that right?

H.L.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Where did you do your military service?

H.L.: I was - I joined the Army in early 1941, in January of '41. This was about a year before the war started. I could type. I learned - I took typing in high school - and they needed people in the recruiting office in Portland because they were processing draftees at that time, people who were being drafted were being processed through the recruiting office at that time.

So I joined, and I immediately went to the officer in Portland. I was still single. I lived at home with my parents. Took the bus just like I was - just like a job. Took the bus to work and home at night, and I wore a uniform. And sometimes if we weren't processing the draftees, as they called them, they'd give us an arm band, U.S. Army Recruiting Service, and we'd - usually two of us would walk in the streets, and we'd see some likely-

looking young fellow, we'd talk to him about joining the Army. So that was that.

And then of course about a year later the war came on, and so I was transferred from the recruiting office to another agency or another department of the Army at Fort Douglas, Utah. And through all those years, I never went overseas. I was stateside all the time. I spent most of my time either in Utah or California - Southern California for a while, and then toward the - in later years, I think just before the war ended, I went to Officer Candidate School in New Orleans in the Transportation Department and got my commission there, but by that time the war was over in Europe, and in a couple months the war was over in Japan, so I didn't hold a commission very long, and I was separated from the service.

M.O'R.: So you decided not to stay on?

H.L.: No, I just didn't quite have the military feeling, I guess. I enlisted for three years and was in five, so I figured that was enough.

M.O'R.: Fort Douglas, I think, actually was a transfer point for shuttling nuclear material from the Hanford Reservation to Los Alamos during World War II. Were you aware of any ...

H.L.: No, I wasn't aware of that.

M.O'R.: So then when you got out of the service did you come back to the farm in Tualatin?

H.L.: No, I was married during the service.

M.O'R.: So you met your first wife during that period?

H.L.: Yeah. We were married in 1942, and then we came back to Tualatin, and we ...

M.O'R.: Where was she from?

H.L.: She was from Utah. I met her when I was stationed there at Fort Douglas. And so we came back here and lived with my folks for a month or so until we could find a place to stay, and we got a place out at Vanport. This was back before the flood. So we were there from - in Vanport from early 1946 until sometime in '47. I think we were there about a year. Then we got an apartment in downtown Portland at the Stadium Court apartments, Southwest 19th and Burnside, or somewhere around there - near the stadium, anyway. And we were there till about 1950, and then we found a little place in Tualatin, a little house, and bought that and moved from Portland out to Tualatin.

M.O'R.: And what were you doing in these years?

H.L.: I was - after I was in the service, I went to work for the Veterans Administration and was with them from 1946 up until 1950, and then left there and got a job with a company called Chipman Chemical Company that were out on Northwest St. Helens Road, and I worked in an office there getting more into purchasing. And I left there in 1960 and went to work for a company called Lilly Miller company, and I was a purchasing agent with them from 1960 till 1982, when I retired.

M.O'R.: And this was also for - you mentioned they made pesticides - or no, herbicides?

H.L.: Yeah. Lilly Miller - in fact, and the Chipman Chemical Company, too, were both - they were into insecticides, fertilizers, weed killers and garden seeds.

M.O'R.: And you were always on the manufacturing end, the purchasing of raw materials or whatever for their operations?

H.L.: Right. Raw materials and containers.



M.O'R.: Now, you said you bought a place in Tualatin. But it - it was or it wasn't on the river?

H.L.: No. No, it was on Boones Ferry Road in Tualatin. Pretty close to the river, but probably two blocks away.

M.O'R.: And did you have acreage with that place?

H.L.: No. Just a little garden; that was about all.

M.O'R.: But you continued to use the Tualatin for outings and recreation even after that?

H.L.: Yeah. As I say, my folks built their house on the bank of the river, and my father had a boat, and so we'd visit them sometimes and use the boat.

M.O'R.: And I guess it was in the 50's, maybe your folks or yourself might have been involved in this, but there was a move by the Army Corps of Engineers to improve the river. It never actually came about, but they were going to straighten it in places, straighten it out, and they were going to line the banks with riprap, I guess, to prevent erosion and some other improvements. But I understand that the local people didn't think too much about some of these ideas. Do you remember anything about that?

H.L.: No, I didn't get into that. I don't remember that. Yeah, it would have been quite a project.

M.O'R.: But you mentioned to me that you used to fish up at Hagg Lake after it went in there?

H.L.: Yeah, we did a few times. Didn't catch very much, but we fished from the bank. I didn't have a boat, so we just fished from the bank. I don't remember catching anything up there.

M.O'R.: Were you aware at all of the plans to build the reservoir up there when they were taking form?

H.L.: Yeah, I recall when they did it, yes. It was designed as a flood control, but looks like what happened last February, it didn't do very good because the Tualatin sure flooded.

M.O'R.: Yeah. Well, what I was going to ask you was whether you'd noticed any difference in the river after the Hagg Lake reservoir went in?

H.L.: Not really. I don't know that there was any difference, to my knowledge.

M.O'R.: I guess most people say that it used to at least help the flow out a little bit in the summertime, that the river would get pretty dry during the hot weather.

M.O'R.: Yeah. Of course, I don't know how it is now, but there was a time when a lot of the farmers along the river would irrigate from the river, and of course that cuts the flow down. I don't know whether that's been changed or not, but I think that's had an effect on the river.

M.O'R.: I also have a note here that you used to fish up at the Cherry Grove area as well?

H.L.: Yeah. That was the headwaters of the Tualatin. That's above - well, Hagg Lake is on a tributary of the Tualatin River. It's on Skoggins Creek.

M.O'R.: Skoggins Creek, that's right.

H.L.: And next to that is the Tualatin River that goes through Gaston and Cherry Grove and up through there. Yeah, I used to fish there a lot, up until the - probably 1970's. The trout fishing was pretty good.

M.O'R.: I guess the river becomes a different river by the time you start climbing up a little bit?

H.L.: Yeah, it's more of a creek up there.

M.O'R.: Let's see, you lived in the Tualatin area until what time, then?

H.L.: Until about 1980. My first wife passed away in 1979, and I continued to live there until I met my second wife, and then we were married and we moved into her home in Sherwood. And I gave my Tualatin home to my son, and he and his family live there now.

M.O'R.: The other thing that I guess is somewhat of a historical development on the Tualatin during that later period, during the 70's, in fact, was that the state Department of Environmental Quality slapped a building moratorium on Washington County - I think it was in 1970, or perhaps it was '71 - and wouldn't lift it until all of the little sewer districts got their acts together, and what happened, of course, was that the USA, the Unified Sewerage Agency that built the big plant there at Durham and two or three other plants in Washington County was formed at that time. I'm just wondering if you remember any of that?

H.L.: Not too much. I remember when the Agency there at Durham was built, but I didn't follow too much why it had to be built or anything like that. But I recall when that happened.

M.O'R.: Did you notice as a resident at that time any difference in - well, what was your situation with regard to wastewater disposal? Did you have your own septic system, or were you on the sewer line?

H.L.: We had our own septic system, yes.

M.O'R.: And you didn't ever have to hook up to the sewer system ...

H.L.: No.

M.O'R.: ... or it was never available to you?

H.L.: No.

M.O'R.: Okay. Well, then, you wouldn't have been directly impacted by any of those changes, probably?

H.L.: Right.

M.O'R.: I was going to ask you also, back when we were talking about your childhood there on the farm, what some of the other families were around there that you - you know, that you interacted with? Just some of the names.

H.L.: Oh, there was a family that lived across from us, the Sunday family. They were Norwegian. They had four boys, and the father was a carpenter. And they had some land, but they were not into farming. But they were a little younger than I, but I interacted, as you say, some with them.

There was another family, the Harkness family, had two boys. One was a little bit older than me, and one a little younger, but we spent quite a bit of time together through the years.

And there was the Seranin family. Ted Seranin was a little bit older than I, and his brother Bob was a little younger. There was the Narburg family. They had a big family. There were three boys that were - two about my age and one younger. There was the Sagert family. Earl Sagert was about my age.

There was the Dickinson family that - I don't know if you ever heard of the Dickinson jams and jellies. They lived about a mile from us. Part of that same family were the Byrums. One of the grade schools there is called Edward Byrum, who was an early resident of Tualatin. And there was another family, Iback family, that

- most of them are gone now; I think there's one daughter. But there was two girls and a boy in that family that were around my age.

But in those days you knew just about everyone in the community. Tualatin, in those days the population was maybe 200 at the most, and you'd go down to a store or someplace, and you'd recognize almost anyone that was there. Nowadays if I go to Tualatin, with the population of over 16,000, I'm fortunate if I happen to run into somebody that I've seen before. It usually just doesn't happen.

M.O'R.: This would have been in later years, after you had your own place in Tualatin, but I wondered if you ever ran across Althea Pratt?

H.L.: I've met her, yes.

M.O'R.: She has that old, old house there right in the middle of - right in the Tualatin city center, almost.

H.L.: Yeah. That was what they called the Sweek house.

M.O'R.: That's right.

H.L.: When I was younger, they pronounced it "Swick." People call it "Sweek" now, but that was the way I remember hearing it. There was a Harding family, which I think was a descendent of the original Sweeks. And this was back in the 30's, they had a Chinese fellow who was - oh, was sort of the caretaker. He lived with them, anyway. And I don't know if you heard, but years and years ago they had Chinese people come in and they dug the canal that went from the Tualatin River into Lake Oswego. Did you ever hear of that?

H.L.: Yes, I've heard a little bit about that.

M.O'R.: Well, I think he was one of the descendants or one that was left of that Chinese group, way back when. And he was kind of a character. Anytime I remember seeing him, he almost always wore knee boots, winter and summer, whether it was raining or sunny or whatever, he wore knee boots.

And I recall there were Fourth of July's when they used to have the little firecrackers called ladyfingers. Did you ever see them? They're about, oh, maybe an inch long. And he had long fingernails, and he could hold these ladyfinger firecrackers with his fingernails and pop them without blowing his fingers off. And I'm sure he was well along in years, because when he walked around he was pretty stoop-shouldered. And they called him - I think they called him Li Hing. Seems like that's the name that I remember that he was called.

But he stayed with this Harding family in this Sweek house. And I don't know when he passed away, but it must have been in the late 30's sometime.

M.O'R.: Well, that's great to get a picture of some of the local people there.

Well, I'm starting to run out of questions here, and I'm just wondering if there's anything else you remember about those days or about the Tualatin that we haven't talked about so far?

H.L.: Well, you know, it's amazing to me to go there now and see how everything is built up. As a youngster, there were so many open areas, open fields, big - lots of trees, forests that you don't see now. You look on Bull Mountain, for example, and it's just a mass of houses. It didn't used to be that. You kind of

hate to see it come, but it's coming. That's what they call progress.

M.O'R.: That's right. Well, I'm just exactly at the end of a tape here, so maybe I'll just say thanks a lot of the interview. Thank you very much for sharing your memories of the Tualatin.

H.L.: Glad to do it.

[end of tape]