

Washington County Museum

Oral History Interview with Angnes Hendren

At Washington County Museum Library

November 20, 2011

Informant: Agnes Hendren

Interviewer: Beth Dehn

Transcriber: Lauren Scher

A= Angnes

B= Beth

B= Okay, this is Beth Dehn at the Washington County Museum, on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, interviewing Agnes Hender, is it Henderson?

A= Hendren.

B= Okay, so can you say your name for us, so we get it correct?

A= Say it again?

B= Can you say your name?

A= Agnes Hendren (spells out name)

B= Okay, and where were you born?

A= Sioux City, Iowa.

B= And what year was that?

A= Nineteen fifteen.

B= Nineteen fifteen. How did your family make a living in Sioux City?

A= Pardon me?

B= How did your family make a living in Sioux City?

A= Oh, well my mother and dad broke up when I was two years old, and so I stayed with my grandmother and my uncle, most of my early life. And he worked on a railroad, my uncle did. And the other uncle was a fireman, in Sioux City. That's it. My dad, I didn't see much of my dad.

B= Okay. So when did you first come to Oregon? I guess that's the interesting question.

A= You'll have to figure that one out, I was, I got married in thirty-five and about two years after that we had some friends, a man and his wife that knew about Oregon, and they told my husband at that time and I about what Oregon was, the streets were paved with gold but they weren't. And so we decided we'd come out here. So we were living on WPA back then and there, and he was just young, he was about twenty, twenty-one years old and too young to live (inaudible) and so we thought maybe we'd come out here, and so we had another young couple that wanted to come with us, so we bought an old Ford, a two-seater one, and started out in a truck, in an old car like that and come out here. And stayed awhile and couldn't stay and so we all went back again, and come back again and stayed awhile and couldn't make it and went back home and stayed and come back one more time and stayed. Three times we come out.

B= And then you finally stayed.

A= Finally, my husband at that time got a job in St. Vincent Hospital over there, it was St. Vincent, what is that one over there on 23<sup>rd</sup> street?

Voice= That was St. Vincents. It was.

A= Yes . He got a in job there and so we just parked our bodies and stayed. (laughs)

B= So what was your experience, you said you rode the rails during the depression?

A= Yeah. Well we, a couple nights, we took our money and we got out here in our old Ford, and we got as far as Redding, California and the car broke down and so we sold what we could of the car, the four of us did, and we jumped a freight train and took it on into Portland. And with what money we had we rented an apartment down on, where the old, big old post office is, the big post office, and rented an apartment and we stayed there for awhile and tried, both my husband and this other lady's husband tried, they got a job and we didn't. And so we saved our money, broke out, then we road, started hitchhiking back to Portland. And we got into Hood River, where there's a bridge that goes, I think it's Hood River, the railroad does, we were hitchhiking and we were having not too good of luck, it was going like that (motions to the right) and the train slowed down and so we got on the freight. That's how I started riding the freights.

B= So, can you describe your first experience on the freight? Like what, how did that feel and what was your experience doing that?

A= Well so many things happened. One, I will say, when I did ride the freights, it was out on the road like that, all the men, family men, were almost all out there. Never once, I got worried about being hurt. And I was a good looking girl at that time and so, but they were real nice to us. And I remember I got a toothache, it was real bad, and I couldn't, I didn't have anything, all the fellas in there knew I had a toothache and they gave me some in my hand. They gave me about seventeen aspirins to put on it. Well this girl rode quite awhile and didn't know much but other than covering up and so I stay warm and my toothache went away. So I got out to Beaverton and then they pulled it out and then we went back home and stayed a month or two and decided we'd come out a try it again. He got a job by some people out in Beaverton, my husband at that time. So he hitched, he rode a freight out there and I got another lady and rode out in the car with her. We stayed in Beaverton and worked on a farm for awhile and don't seem to go any place so we left there and hitchhiked. That time we hitchhiked home, we didn't ride the freights, we hitchhiked most of the time. Went home again and stayed awhile; then we wanted to try it again, so we tried it one more time. This time, he got out here and he got a job at the hospital, then got a job at the railroad. And then I came out, but going back and forth, I rode the freights and hitchhiked.

B= Were many people, were many women riding the freights at that time?

A= (Shakes head no) The only one I met up was a couple that started out with me. She and him were a young couple like us and they went out; they never went back again. I never saw them after. Their name was Horne, their last name. And they'd never come back but we did. But, well, I had, my mom and dad had broke up and it was kind of tough there, so, just wanted to get back, You know, we didn't want to live in WPA. (inaudible) That was hard. We decided to come back and I went back home to my grandmother, that's where I stayed most of the time. Oh we had a lot of incidents on the trains. I got on a load of lumber with this, well this couple we were going with. At the time, boxcars were a lot different than they are now, cause they used to have doors you can get up and down (motions with hand) and this load of lumber and we had to get off. So she and I, and our husbands got off and I was down below her and she was ahead of me and I was helping her and she kicked me off. I fell down, alongside the tracks, and I saw this wheel go by, real close. And then that was kind of scary. Oh, I remember going through hobo camps, I kept, as a girl, I had my hair done up, and we stayed away from the men but we found out where the hobos would have, if you had something you'd put the food there and you didn't take it. My husband at that time wanted, he could find it better than I could. We had left, we'd go back and add to it. We got, a long time ago, used to keep the boxcars warm, uh cool, and they had, what's called refrigerator cars. Big boxcars, one end was all where they'd put ice. And this time we'd jumped on and some of the railroad men were not kindly if they caught you on a boat. They'd kicked you off. So we got in there and another young fellow got in with us and luckily the break man went to shut the lid down and he took a look and there we was. And we got kicked out of there. It was nice and warm, cause there wasn't any ice at the

time, it was nice and warm. And then the boys stopped over at the bakery, of bakery or someplace and usually they gave you some rolls or something to eat. But everybody was nice. I think the nicest thing that ever happened to me, these times are all mixed up because I can't put them separately. But this one time we was in there, in a boxcar with this old gentleman, like a grandpa, and when you're out there, you didn't water very often, anyhow, and he said "I want to leave you well" and I said, well he was so nice cause he told us where to go. And he said "I'll be back." And he was, he brought back, I don't know if you remember a little lard that was used, he'd come back with that and a piece of old P&G soap. Boy did it ever feel good to wash, that little old bucket of water. That was the nicest thing I ever had happen. And he brought that back to us.

B= What were the hobo camps like? I mean, were you by hobo camps?

A= Yeah they just sat around and they had little campfires and they were eating and going after coffee. But we just walked through; we didn't stop and didn't say nothing and kept to ourselves. But nobody mistreated or pulled any planks or anything so. The other couple never did come back, Ed and I did this the last two times by ourselves. Oh what else, I rode on top of a box car; that scared the wits out of us. The breakman, we couldn't get in the box car and was on top of the box car. And the boxcar, the breakman at that time came up there and sat with us. We rode through a tunnel, I said "Oh my gosh what do I do?" He said "nothing just lay down." I laid down like that (bends forward) and went through the tunnel. I looked to get knocked off but didn't. He was real nice. That was kind of scary. But I only did that once. Then one time we got on, the breakman got upset with us, and there was some other people but he kicked, really threw us off. Red was in Cheyenne, Wyoming, guy he's called Red, the breakman. They got something called dumb luck, (murmurs to herself) anyhow he caught us on there and he kicked us off, we had to get off. "Get off there". So, anyhow, my husband at that time showed me, it was a same way you roll, fold up and roll. I said "Oh goody there's some water out there, we'll be alright". It was water, sure, but it was alkali water. We didn't have no water to drink there so, but that's the way it was.

B= So, how did you get food then? Just depending on the...?

A= I just, we kept catching another ride. One time, this one time, was when I was, well anyhow, we got into some town. Where we'd got, told the breakman, the breakman told us to get off. We was out where it was dark. Gosh, it was dark out there. And this other couple, other that was with us, we were laying down there and you could hear the coyotes a howling. Gosh, I never felt so far away from home in my life. And down the road was a house where the railroad men would go in and wash up and keep warm in there. And where you could buy a ticket. So Ed decided he'd find out when the next freight was coming to cause it was cold. And he went down and asked them. And then then the breakman grabbed a hold and took him beat him up. I went down there. I said, I told him, "that's my husband, don't do that." And he said "well he got no business down here." I said "yeah", he wanted to beat him up. He ended up with (slightly inaudible) a big, on his rear. Got his foot mark on his rear. And we got chased out of that. And that was up in northern California.

B= So was this like in 1935? This was after 35?

A= Well, you figure it out. Yeah it had to be. I was, we were married in 35.

B= Ok.

A= And it was about 37 or something like that. But every two years we finally ended up out here. I don't know if I'd want to do it again or not. (laughs) There weren't any women, though very seldom, just that one couple we'd run in with, that started out with us. It was like, depression at that time. There just wasn't work and (inaudible)...of relief. You didn't like it.

B= Can you describe a little bit more about the depression or how people were surviving?

A= Yeah everybody that was out there, guys were homeless, were out looking for work for their families and they were, they didn't have any money either. And nobody bounced us for any money but they would, most of the time they'd hit the bakeries in the town, that were open, and they was always nice to giving you old bread and stuff and they were good about sharing with you, they'd leave some around, I couldn't tell the spots but Ed knew, there's a letter or something that they'd tell you, that's a good place to go. And he was, he'd learned that, I didn't. But we'd had it pretty good, oh as far as hungry once in awhile.

B= Did you dress in women's clothing or did you wear kind of more...?

A= I had, well we, we took our clothes each time, we sent our clothes ahead, folks would pick them up, back home. But I wore pants like we do know except I had a pair, I don't know if you remember, they was white with a band around the tummy. The girls would wear them and the boys would wear them. They, I had a pair of those, they were pretty neat. But just plain clothes, you didn't change very often. And you didn't wash, when that time comes, that little bucket of water felt so good, when that guy brought it over. We stayed out, slept underneath the stars. I had, Wyoming, had the darndest time, we slept under a big sign that was kind of there. Man, that wind blew all night long. I don't think it ever stopped blowing cold. But we had carried our blankets with us and stuff. Most of our stuff was carried in a little sack.

B= What else did you have with you?

A= What else did I?

B= What else did you have, what possessions did you have with you?

A= Just a little bag with, well like your underwear and women's stuff. Just what we had to have. Then we'd, wherever we got then we usually collected a few things. So long ago.

B= So when did you finally stay in Oregon? That was?

A= Let's see. You figured out two years, '35, '37, '39? Probably around '40 or like that.

B= And what did you do when you permanently stayed?

A= Well we got an apartment down by the old post office. At that time Ed got a job at the hospital and then from there he went and worked at the railroad. And we just started out from there, he worked, we worked for different people. Then we stayed out there. The folks didn't have much money. My mom once in awhile would send a dollar or two in the mail and the general delivery you know. I remember one time she said "I send you a dollar". At that time a dollar was good. The letter comes and there was no dollar in it. We ... (inaudible) She must have forgot. That's about it. Yes.

B= Was it easier to find work in Oregon then in Iowa?

A= Yeah, he well, he, we were looking at any kind of work. But he found work in the hospital. The hospital there. He worked in the maintenance man, furnaces and stuff like that. He worked at that. And, uh, that's before, women didn't work to much at that time, you'd stay home. But I got hijacked I guess into working at the hospital because everybody got the flu, and I didn't get the flu so I had to go. They'd come over to the apartment and got me, sayin "We're gonna put you to work". Then, eventually Ed found a job at the railroad. He worked for the Union Pacific, down there on Front Street. Then we'd... Then I'd...he went to war and then come home. Things weren't so good so we broke up. Eventually I married the man I went on the boats with. Eddy went back home to his folks. So many things, I forget a lot of them. But uh...

B= When did you move to Washington County?

A= Pardon me?

B= When did you move to Washington County?

A= This Washington?

B= Yeah, this county.

A= I just, we just stayed out there.

B= Springville.

A= Pardon me?

B= Springville.

3<sup>rd</sup> Voice= When did you move up to Springville? Where you at now.

A= Oh out there? We've been out there 50. How old is.. ? Fifty? Been out there over fifty years forward now. **Whitey**, that's my husband, at that time. He's a tugboat man.

B= Ok. Do you have stories about the tugboats?

A= That's a different story.

B= (laughs) Do you want to tell that story?

A= I don't know if you want to listen. I don't know if the marine people in the room would appreciate my talk. I did sleep in **Bonneville** Dam. We, well let's, Ed was still alive at that time. We were hiking home. We got, we was coming home, cause it broke again and we got into **Troutdale**. That's before it became a big place like that. And we were picked up on the highway there. Well first of all we stopped....and Troutdale was cold, and we were standing inside, the wind, the doorway was cold, a man, he come by and asks us what we were doing there and we said well it was cold. And he said "Ok,"so, he says go with me so he took us down to the Bonneville Dam and that's where it's got police cars and cops around there. He went in there and left us. He said lay still and be quiet. He went in there and then pretty soon he come out and got us. He took us into the **Two** room. Great big **two** room. Nobody was in there, nobody saw us. His name was Ralph Johns and down there...was things on the floor and he put heaters all around it. And when I woke up the next morning and it felt like a furnace. And he waited and he said "you stay here." So he went and made everybody out of the way so I could go to the bathroom and then he put us in the car and drove us out, there's a town there. He gave us a dollar a piece. He gave us a dollar. Boy that was like a million bucks. So we could go home, back to Iowa, so. They wanted me to tell them about, back when there was a big deal at the Bonneville Dam, but I thought, I don't know whether that man had a family left. He'd get in trouble if they knew it. But Ralph Johns, I never forgot that name. But I thought that was quite an experience. And then, Ed, my husband got tugboats and I started working on the tugboats with him.

B= What type of work did you do on the tugboats?

A= He was buying, he started out when he was thirteen years old and a gentleman took him on as underhand. He started buying his own tugboats and he was skipper. And then I had, that I was, I had a little boy, before Ed and I broke up, but anyhow, we had a little boy and he, he adopted him and he helped his dad build a tugboat company up. He was, his dad was a skipper and he is a skipper himself now, one of the real good ones on the river. He runs the barges that take up the fireworks, you know that? You see one

of them? Our boat is hooked up to one of them. He shows up every year. And we had a lot of fun. I stayed, I think I kept my husband's feet warm. We had decks like this (hits counter and due to noise words are not understandable) a bunk under there, and I'd set him there and I could go any place, he'd be there. When I had the other two kids I had to quit because they wouldn't stay put (laughs). Little Lee would stay put. He learned to run the boats. The other two kids didn't like them. A younger boy he didn't. Oh, I helped steer the boat when he had to go down and fix the engine and stuff. I know that one night, he was going out there, I was told what red and green lights were and to watch out for them. But anyhow, he said "stay in the middle of the river there." He said, "just watch where you're going. Pick a target. Aim for it". So I did. All of a sudden everything got real black. It was the evening, nighttime. Real black and I thought, "something's wrong". And he was down fixing the engine. We had an old Fairbanks in there, if you know what that is and he had to check it all the time. And he was down there working on it, and I looked and looked. Pretty soon I saw a red light, and I knew something was wrong. I yelled, "Floyd, come up here quick." He didn't. Boy, the third time I called him he got up there in nothing flat. He dropped the break on the, whatever it was he had to drop. He stopped the boat and the waves went by from that ship (makes swishing sound). Went over the top of the house and took the...what do you call it? The deck plate, took it off (makes sound again). We lost that and one of the anchors went off. Outside of being scared to death we did alright. (laughs) So, I never seen the guy get up there so fast in his life.

B= So were you travelling between Portland and..?

A= Portland and down in Astoria. Years ago, we had to have grandfather's rights in order to run a boat from Portland up to the Dalles or something, you had to have grandfather rights. So you were kind of restricted a lot of times. And I remember another time he was having me run the boat and it was daylight. He came upstairs and said "what are you looking for?" and I said "that church steeple down there." "What church steeple?" and I said "that one down there." "That's no church steeple! That's a battleship!" (laughs) Course, he was far enough away he couldn't hurt. And see I don't, I never fell in so it's alright. I remember using, I better not say that. The bathroom priveleges were not the kind you talk about. I went out lots of times on the boats with him and stayed out. But when he let me run the boats I always got into a lot of problems. I took out a old fishnet one night with him. He said, "where you going?" "Where you told me to go!" "Oh my God", we took out a fishnet. I don't know whatever happened, we got rid of it. Lot of nice guys out on the rivers. There just about, the old timers are just about gone. Floyd was ninety? Ninety-four? How old was he? When he passed away. So he started out when he was thirteen and we started our youngest boy out when he was thirteen so they were working all their lives. I can't think of anything else.

B= Do you have stories about living in Springville?

A= Up in Springville? Not much up there except we...the guy that lived in our place was killed up there, we bought his place after he died. But no.

B= Did you farm when you moved there?

A= We had a farm. We got forty acres and we bought Christmas trees. We got Christmas trees now. We had Christmas trees. Now we have trees for lumber and stuff like that. And we planted pumpkins up there and now we got a couple of goats and one donkey. A couple of horses up there. And we all, all my family lives up there. Everyone has a spot. And uh, I just forget the stuff. (to third person in room) Do you think of anything you want me to say?

Third Person= Well you could talk about when you first moved up there and little Floyd took off.

A= What?

TP= When Floyd took off and you were looking for him?

A= Little Floyd?

TP= Yeah.

A= When I first moved up there, Floyd was just a little guy and I lost him. I started to get ready to call the neighbors. Well I thought, "I know I can't find the poor little guy". And a little bit later he comes walking up the hill. Big handful of flowers. What are they? Little? Anyhow, a whole bouquet of flowers for mommy. I didn't know whether to whip him or love him. (laughs).

TP= And then you were telling me about Whiskey Gulch and how they were supposed to be...

A= What hon?

TP= Whiskey Gulch was up there somewhere?

A= I can't hear you.

TP= Whiskey Gulch? Whiskey Gulch? You said was up there.

A= Whiskey Gulch? Oh that's over where Whiskey Gulch right now is called..it used to be called...right down there. Below us, a creek runs down there. There used to be..They had whiskey you could go down there and dig out. I guess they did even a few years after we moved out there. And they called it Whiskey Gulch.

B= So they were making whiskey down there?

A= There was whiskey down there. They'd hide it down there.

B= So who was doing that? Just local guys?

A= Some bad guys! (laughs). I don't know who they were but we knew about that. Well we didn't have any at our place. There was supposed to be money hidden out there and in our place. But we never found it.

B= What is the story? There's a story that there's money there?

A= What's that?

TP= Tell them the story about the money. You said the guy that got killed had money hidden up there? How did that story go?

A= You aren't talking loud enough.

TP= How did that story go? Where the was money hidden on the property?

A= Oh yeah. There was supposed to be money up there. We looked for it and didn't find it. But some of his folks, the old guy that killed in there, they took his mattresses and took them over. That's where the money was. In fruit jars. And they'd cleaned it out and he'd hid the money in fruit jars. Of course, when they'd (inaudible) they'd broke up the fruit jars and all you could find was little pieces of money out there. But we haven't found any since. (laughs). Not any of my own even. And, it's been a nice place to live.

B= What changes have you seen in that area?

A= What hon?

B= How has that area changed over time?

A= Oh a lot of houses being built down there now. Lots of them. Well, to me, it hasn't changed a lot. But quite a few, well some of the people are still there, but uh, oh I've been up through there fifty years. So, but, some of the neighbors have moved. I haven't found anything up there else. We used, one time I saw a bear up there and that was a long time ago. There was still bears up there. And there's coyotes up there now. And there's racoons. Outside of all the dogs they got. Oh there's a lot of houses moved up, well they got two big water tanks down there, if that means anything. On Springville road. Big water tanks up there. That's out there. And that's all. I think I run out of information.

TP= Well you could tell her about some of the families out there. Like Melanovsky's. You remember the Melanovsky's?

A= She was the one who was crippled so bad. Wasn't she? Well anyhow, about nine months ago, one of the guys that live below us. They have a bunch of Shetland ponies and my daughter's got two nice mares. Beautiful big horses. And one of those ponies got loose with a mare, a stud. I said "Judy, you better do something!" Oh no, she too little/big. (motions size difference between mare and pony). Sure enough here, about three or four months ago, they come home and here was a little baby. Her partner there, she says "what'll I do? What'll I do?" She says, "get me a towel" And all I got was a little, bitty towel and a little tiny rag to wipe the colt out cause he fall right in the mud. God it was wet. He got so excited. She said, "I don't know who to rub, him or the dog." It was the horse. That was real cute. It's going pretty good now. And I got a donkey out there. I've had several donkeys out there. And last Mother's day, about three or four months, they said "hey mom, what'd you like for birthday?" I'd like another donkey. I had three of them. My God, the girls hunted around and they found one. This little girl was five years old and her mom was going buy her a pony. So she sold us the little donkey. It's a good friend. You go out in the yard and it'll follow you all over. But our place, we first started out with cattle, then went into the tree farm, then went into the pumpkin farm. Now we're into tree farming again. Just now Christmas trees, just plain trees. That's all.

B= What is your most exciting memory from your life? Was it riding the rails? Or working on the tugboat? Is there something that stands out?

A= Tugboats scared the wits out of me, a few times you get pretty close. Kind of caught me off guard. On the railroads, it scared me, the time I got kicked off accidentally and I thought the time I laid back and watched it roll. They put us in jail in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Yeah it was Cheyenne. Our car broke down. It was cold. We went up to the depot. We were setting up there in the depot all day cause it was cold and we didn't have any money. And I had an electric iron that I had, believe it or not, I put it in my stuff cause that was a treasure. I never had many until I got married. And so, I was careful of that. And so we finally ended up pawning that iron. I got a dollar, a couple of dollars out of that. We took down and went down to the telegram. We telegraphed home we needed help in Cheyenne. We didn't have any money to help us. So that's where went our dollar. So we sat in the railroad there. Pretty soon, a couple of well-dressed customers there and "what do you want?" I said, "well it's cold outside." "You know, you can't stay in here". And I says, "Well couldn't we, just a little while?" Course, old me, I had to start bawling. "What's she crying about?" And Ed said, "Well you'd cry too if you was hungry and have been for a couple of days and you were cold." "WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO!" And they took us into the restaurant. I never saw such big hamburgers in all my life. And the guy said, "Eat what you want. It won't cost you anything. They're going to pay for this." And they gave me a big piece. So help me God I couldn't eat that hamburger. But then they took us down and put us in jail and we spent the night down there. And there was two or three women in there. They had been out at a party with their husbands. Their husbands were drunk. They was in there with me. I had more fun than a barrel of monkeys. We'd say, we need to take a bath in there. You should have seen the bathtub. It was dirty! I said, "This bathtubs dirtier then I am." I stayed there, and then the next morning. They checked the telegraph and there was no answer. You had to answer by general. Police guy comes in and says "we haven't heard any answer."

And the judge up there, he says "I can't fine you for anything." But he said "we'll take you to the edge of town" and he said "you keep going. Don't come back." So they drove us out to the edge of town. And I think just about the time they must have got us out to the edge of town, the folks got the, sent the money and I didn't get it. So the money went right back home. That was... (laughs). When those officers walked up at ya, that scared me. That's the time it did scare me. And what did they do. But the jail was more fun than anything.

B= What did you talk about with the women in jail?

A= A lot of girls were just talking about their husbands. They had gotten drunk so all of them were just having a good time. And they got a little loudy and they were just picked up and put in there. They were short one bad so we had to kind of take turns on it. The girls were nice. They were just women that got drunk with their husbands. And Ed says out there, where he was at, they were throwing up all over the place. The trunk tank, ugh, that was a mess. (laughs). They took us out at the end of the road. And then we got out, we was out on the road and stopped at a farmhouse. We was thirsty. Water was the hardest thing to get on the trail. The water. If you got it, you hung onto it. I remember one time, I got a little bucket, a little pan of water thrown out. And the freight went by, and we had to catch the freight. God, and my bucket was like full of lead. I couldn't get up there, and Ed had to push me up. And anyhow, I had this water and he said, "Hang on to the water". I threw the bucket and all the water inside. So we didn't have any water. That, but we did have, water was hard to come by.

B= Did people give you water? Or you had to find the water?

A= I had to find the water. Yeah. Once in a while, the breakees, once or twice we got to ride in with the breakees. They put us in that, right in the booth. That was nice and warm. They were real nice guys. And every time we went by a station they'd say "duck down". So we had to duck down so the railroad, nobody would see us. But they were nice guys, all of them were. I think they were all family men. And we weren't doing anything bad. Scared is one good word. Anyhows. See, I'd stayed in jail in Cheyenne, Wyoming and oh, am I supposed to say that? We went to jail in one other place. It wasn't jail. It was out, and the stand outside was cold and there was an automobile place, that sold automobiles and repaired. And this guy comes out and says "it's kind of cold out here." You know, I was cold. And he said "come on in." And they put us in the cars over there, so each one of us got in a car. And they gave us old blankets for the night. (to TP) Where JC Penny started? What town was that?

TP= I don't remember.

B= I don't know.

A= Did you figure out? That's the name of the town? JC Penny started. We didn't get no money or anything. But we kept warm and such. Oh my stepdad, when I was back

home, he bought me a leather jacket and that's what I had to wrap up in. The nights that we were cold, that one jacket went over Ed and I both. It was cold but that kept us warm. The leather jacket. And let's see.

B= Do you remember any other people that you met when you were travelling?

A= Not anybody on the road no. People we met just went on by. The guys that helped me with my toothache I didn't know. I didn't know I could take so many aspirins (laughs). I sure had a good nap though. But it does stop a toothache. Put it on top there and let it melt. I had about seventeen of them. That's why I passed out. I know I woke up, when I got up Ed had his jacket off and had it on me cause I was cold. He wasn't chilly. No, I didn't, just this one couple that went with us. That was the only couple, I'd found a women out there with us. The rest were all men. All were. But the boxcars are so much different now then they were then. You know, the doors would slide open. Now they don't have that hardly at all. I know one night we jumped in a boxcar. This couple was still with us. And coming home, and had lots of paper, this old boxcar. And we got, like I say, when I went to get in, Eddy had to push me. I couldn't get up in there. Anyhow, we got in there and there was this whole bunch of men in there. A whole bunch of guys. There wasn't two or three. A whole bunch. So one of them walked up to Ed and he said "you take your women and go in that corner over there and stay there. We'll not bother ya". So, I never thought about anybody bothering us. She was a pretty girl too you know. She was quite young. So what are we going to do? We had all that cardboard so we cuddled up in the cardboard. And in the morning we woke up and everybody was gone and we was still in there. So guys were family guys. That's what I always thought was so great. I remember that boxcar. That paper was nice and warm. But there was a lot of bullies out, guys that you had to keep out of the way of them. Guys, they were doing a job and we were just in the way but there was a lot of men out there, guys. (to TP) Can you think of anything I forgot?

TP= Well I think, local history? You told me about that house? Down the road from you that farmhouse? Where the people were so poor that they were ripping the boards to keep the fire warm?

A= I don't remember that now. Gosh.

TP= The farmhouse across from Melanovsky's farmhouse? That's down in the gully?

A= I don't remember that. I think a big heavy set woman lived there. I forgot about that.

TP= Most probably drive by it, it'll trigger her memory.

A= A lot of houses were built down there, in that part of town. The lower part of Springville. A lot of people down there now. There's three of us down there. Three families of us.

B= Do you have any stories about prohibition?

A= About what?

B= Prohibition?

A= Liquor and stuff like that?

B= Yeah.

A= I never saw any of that on that river. On the boat. Never, never. I went to, we'd walk to wear the hobos were. They were all sitting around there. You'd walk right through. They were eating or drinking lots of coffee. But you never threw the coffee grounds away. You just kept them there and they'd put them there. I don't know how many times they were boiled but the coffee went a long ways. And they'd always left some. If you had anything at all. The guys would leave something so you could find something to eat there. I thought that was kind of nice. There was several. I couldn't tell you what different camps they were in. But you didn't bother. You'd stay away from them. I never went to a door and asked for anything to eat. I didn't have nerve enough. But the folks didn't have any money either so they couldn't send any money to us. And of course Floyd, he started out in a shoe store and get this tugboat company going. He ended up with about 7 boats, barges so he done pretty good in his young life. Then I had, well we had two children. My boy, he adopted him, and he taught him all he knows on the river. He's a good skipper. One of the better skippers. Not because he's my son, but he really is. Nothing bad happened. Except dad would run off and leave me on the boat to run the boat while go and fix the engine. I was always getting in a bad spot. What I saw was never out there. Like the battleship up there. It was a beautiful thing up there. That steeple. It's a church. "it is not", "it is too, look at that. He said "wait a little bit, you'll know it's not a church." That was pretty psycho, coming down the river. But I always had to aim at something. That was something I aimed at. I can tell you the worst thing, as far as the river, is going into dams, when they lowered you down. I always got, that terrified me. All these walls here and all this water. That did scare me. Well I guess that's it kids. I don't know.

B= Well thank you very much. Did you have other questions?

A= Any questions at all, I'll answer them.

B= That's what we're curious.

A= You know, I take those magazines, oh good old days and stuff and in there's got people that have done things, that they said how nice all the people were out there. They were nice men, it was not only my opinion but it really was. We could have got, well I wasn't any beauty but I wasn't that bad off. But not once did they get smart or

anything. I don't know what would happen now if you'd go out there. I don't think you could ride the freights.

B= People do.

A= I don't see anybody out there much anymore.

B= Yup people do. But I don't think it's safe.

A= I guess its still going on. I better not tell it. Well it wasn't anything bad. When you went to the bathroom you'd have to find where to go. That was the bad thing. Well I'll tell it anyhow.

B= Yeah how?

A= Anyhow, we were riding freights and uh, Ed had to go to the bathroom. That's the first time he had to go. So I said, "well I'll go with you". We went out, up and over, climbed out and come down the side there. When the trains are hitched together. He stood up and went to the bathroom I had to hang on to him so he wouldn't fall off. And I said "honey, the highways over there". His hinder was up that way. "Well hell, they wouldn't know who I was anyway." (laughs). That's how you didn't get to go when you wanted to go. That was one time. It was funny. I don't suppose anybody knows what was happening. It was hard to go to the bathroom and finding a place to get a drink of water you got it. When I look back, I think of how in the world I did all that stuff. I don't know. I worked in a hospital in Sioux City, Iowa. And then I come out here and I got stuck in, when every body got sick I got brought in to help. Just a chambermaid. Not a..When I was growing up, women didn't work. And I don't know if you know that, that's why I didn't. I worked a little bit. Not a lot.

B= Well thank you very much.

A= I don't think it done much for you.

B= It does! It does!

A= If you have any questions I'll answer em and say whatever you want. Lot of things I forgot. I worked in Beaverton. At a farm out there for awhile too.

B= What farm was that?

A= Well, here was the airport (motions with hand) and you'd turn off the road. Oh a little airport. You went down there. It was a little farm. Murphy was their names.

B= Murphy. Okay.

A= And they just had, we got, we were lookin for work like they do now. They had these places, where this guy wants somebody for work. They had to take me. His wife wasn't happy, but we got along fine though. We went down there and worked with him. They raised turkey on a farm down there. It was nice. We stayed there and they had two kids who were a little bit jealous because we were getting, Eddie was getting paid for work. And they had a boy. And you know, kids all like to work, but they weren't doing much for their dad and so, they didn't get paid. We saw, Ed and I said we can't do this, the families going bad. So we just left our trunks and told them where to send it. We got a suitcase and went out and got back on the freight train and headed home. I felt, just, needed work away from people at that time. But she was real nice. She taught me a lot of things. We stayed there about a couple of months. She was a real nice lady. I would have liked to stay longer but there was just family problems and I didn't like that. Ed and I had enough problems getting going where we were going. Anyhow, almost all his family is gone.

TP= The hospital you worked at Agnes, was that Good Samaritan or St. Vincent?

A= St. Vincent. In Sioux City, Iowa and then I came out here and worked at St. Vincents. There's two. Yeah I worked in the kitchen. I helped, I had a nun that was head of the kitchen. She would, I worked with her. We had a great big stove, as long as this is (motions to a piece of furniture in the room) and we had to clean it up at night. When it'd cool off, we had to get up there with rags on our feet and clean off the top of the stove. That was in the hospital. Nothing got onto it but we had to clean it off. I remember those great big stoves. And we had, the nuns were awful nice, we worked with them. Then I had my (inaudible). Kind of disapoint you cause I can't remember anymore?

B= No that was a great amount actually. That's perfect.

A=Thank you.

B= Thank you very much. I know you're having lunch now. I'm going to stop.

**Keywords:**

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