

LLOYD BARON

TAPE 1, Side 1

July 16, 1996

M.O'R.: This is Michael O'Rourke for the Washington County Historical Society, today interviewing Lloyd Baron in his home in Hillsboro, and the date today is the 16th of July, 1996.

I thought first of all I'd just start off and ask you just a little bit about your background. Now, where were you born?

L.B.: Well, I was born at Marysville, Washington, north of Seattle, but then when I was four we moved to Winlock, Washington, and when I was 11 we moved to Newberg, Oregon, and I've been in this area ever since.

M.O'R.: And what did your father do?

L.B.: He was a farmer over at Newberg.

M.O'R.: Was he a farmer up in Marysville as well?

L.B.: No, no, he worked in logging in a sawmill up there. Couldn't afford any of the farmland up in that country.

M.O'R.: But he wanted to get into farming, was that part of why you moved to Oregon?

L.B.: Well, actually he came down here because his dad was here, and he was an only child, and his dad was getting in his older years, and so he felt he needed to get down closer where he could take care him. So he bought the adjoining farm over at Newberg, and that's where I grew up actually, because I was 11 when I came there, and I was there until I went to college. And of course I never went back to the farm after I got out of college.

M.O'R.: But your dad had some farming in his background then?

L.B.: Oh yes, he grew up as a farmer...

M.O'R.: I see.

L.B.: ... and his dad was a farmer, and so he knew how to do it.

M.O'R.: And what was his name?

L.B.: Dad's name was Fremont Roy Baron.

M.O'R.: And what about your mother? What was her name, and what sort of person was she?

L.B.: Well, her maiden name was Ethel May Howell, and she used to get a lot of teasing about that, Ethel May Howell, and her folks came from Michigan and met my father, and they were married in Missouri. And then they went to Alberta, Canada from there, and then down into Marysville, Washington where my brother and I were both born. And then we come down to Winlock where my younger brother was born, and finally then we come down here to Oregon. Been here ever since 1927.

M.O'R.: So you have two brothers?

L.B.: Two brothers and one sister.

M.O'R.: The farm was in Newberg. What was it like growing up on the farm?

L.B.: A lot of work. My dad believed in having a lot of different crops, so if one failed, he still had some income, so we had chickens and dairy cows and hogs and - didn't have any sheep. And then we had fruit crops: cherries, pears, apples, prunes and berries. We had blackcaps, strawberries, and then he threw in some gooseberries and rhubarb besides, so -. And we had grain. Well, we grew most of the grain for the cattle and chickens, and that way he had most of his own feed. But it was a lot of work.

M.O'R.: About how big a place was it?

L.B.: Well, it was only 54 acres, and it run about 1500 laying hens, and then each spring they would grow out one or two bunches of fryers and sell locally around Newberg, and so he had it figured out so there was always something for him and the kids to do. So we grew up knowing how to work.

M.O'R.: Yep. What were your chores typically on the farm?

L.B.: Well, I'd get up in the morning, and I'd go to the chickenhouse and work out there an hour before breakfast, and then of course during the school year I'd just barely get done in time to get to school.

And then in the evening, why, it would depend on the time of year, but usually there was chores enough to do feeding the hogs and the chickens and cleaning out the chickenhouse. We tried to clean out a section about every week, so that there was always one needed cleaning.

And then of course, during the crop part of the year, why, we had crops to help put in and harvest and all that, so there was quite a variety of jobs.

M.O'R.: You'd be home summertimes, I guess, when there probably was lot of work to do on the crops.

L.B.: Oh yeah. Yeah, we'd even go out and we'd find - if it was hot like it has been the last two or three days, why, we would find something to do in the breezeway and the barn, maybe repair harness or something in the hot part of the day, and then we'd go out and shock hay by moonlight because it was cooler.

M.O'R.: And what was the school like?

L.B.: Well, in grammar school, I attended the Springbrook school, just a two-room school, four grades in each class - or each

room, and there were six in my class. And then of course in high school, why - I don't know what we started out as freshman class, but we graduated '77 as seniors in 1933, and we just had our 63rd reunion yesterday over at Newberg. So we've been - we keep in touch with those that are around here. Of course, like all families, they've scattered.

M.O'R.: So you were just at the reunion yesterday?

L.B.: Yeah. There's still a few of them live right around here, but most of them have scattered all the way from Anchorage, Alaska to back East in New Jersey and around different places, but they'll usually write a letter if they don't come.

M.O'R.: What was school like for you? Was it an enjoyable experience?

L.B.: Oh, it was one of those things you had to do. No, I didn't really care for school too much in grade school and high school, and I just went because it was the kind of the thing to do and didn't really try to make anything special out of it.

And then I helped my dad three years after I got out of high school, and finally I decided that I wasn't really getting ahead any. I wasn't any further along three years after I got out of school than I was when I got out, so I told him, well, I was going to go to Oregon State College if they'd let me in. I barely made it, had the requirements to get in, and so I - didn't have any money, so I had to work down there, too, but I made it all clear through without having to stop and work like some of them did. And I think by that time I'd begin to see a purpose in schooling, so it was a little easier to study.

M.O'R.: And it was animal husbandry?

L.B.: Yes, that's what I took up, but I've never worked in it since I graduated.

M.O'R.: So you must have had in mind a farming career then?

L.B.: Well, I really did. Well, matter of fact, I signed up, pre-registered in forestry; I had always thought I'd like forestry. But I got down there freshman week, and I found out that there'd only been one graduate in the last three years that had gotten a job. And I thought, "Hey, those odds aren't very good, and so I'd better try something else." And I looked into the grads out of the college of agriculture, and they almost all got jobs of one kind or another. And so I thought, "Well, I know a little bit more about that anyway, so I think I'll go into that."

And I guess the reason I rebelled about going into horticulture, which is what I've done all my life or all my working life, was because we had to pick fruit and hoe strawberries and all that when I was a kid, and I thought I didn't want anymore of that, so I'd take up livestock, something to do with that. But the way it worked out, why, I did - I was the livestock agent here for the first two or three years I was here, but then they decided I was more useful in the horticulture end of it, and so they hired another livestock agent and assigned me all the horticulture - or well, not all of it because Palmer Torvin had the berries, but the tree fruits and nuts and nursery stock and that type of thing I worked with.

So now, if you ask people, they would probably say I was a horticulturist when really I've never had a course in college in horticulture.

M.O'R.: You had a lot of experience though.

L.B.: Yeah, quite a little experience.

M.O'R.: Well, I'm wondering when you were, just taking it back a little to the earlier days before you did go to college, did you have much free time, and if so, what kind of things did you do to amuse yourself on the farm?

L.B.: Well, there really wasn't a whole lot of free time. My dad always said, "If you want to do something, well, we've got a lot of work to do," and ...

M.O'R.: So he kept you pretty busy.

L.B.: And even sports in high school, he always said, "If it's exercise you need, why, hurry home; I've got a lot of it here." So I never went out for any of the sports either, which I'd like to have done, but it wasn't in the cards.

So there wasn't a lot of things. Oh, we'd go to a picnic or something like that occasionally, but as far as free time, there just wasn't much of it.

M.O'R.: Was your dad fairly strict, then, about making sure you worked hard and all the rest of it?

L.B.: Well, he tried to make sure we were busy, yeah.

M.O'R.: I'm just wondering if you had much interaction with the river at that point in your life.

L.B.: No, not the - well, yeah, we used to, like on a Saturday evening, why, we would go up to Roamer's Rest which was on the Tualatin River.

M.O'R.: Right.

L.B.: They had sunken tanks in the river there, and we would go swimming there. But that's the only contact I had with the Tualatin River back in the - well, that would have been in the late

20's and early 30's, and it was kind of a murky-looking stream at that time.

M.O'R.: Yeah? But you didn't mind swimming in it?

L.B.: Oh no, a kid don't know any better anyway, you know, so if it was wet, why, we got in it.

But we either went there or the Yamhill, the mouth of the Yamhill down below Dundee. The Willamette, there was one or two places where you could swim in it, but it wasn't all that safe, and you'd hear of people drowning in that every - pretty near every year. So we opted to go to either the Tualatin or the Yamhill - had better swimming holes, we thought, for kids.

M.O'R.: Now, Roamer's was actually run as sort of a park or picnic place for people, right?

L.B.: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: Did they charge admission then to swim there or how did that work?

L.B.: You know, I don't remember, but if it was, it wasn't very much or we would never have had it.

M.O'R.: I guess there were three places right there at the River?

L.B.: Yeah, Avalon and Roamer's Rest and - well, that's the only two I can recall right now.

M.O'R.: Well, there was another place, I think, for a while anyway, called Louie's on one of the - it was a farm there where they ...

L.B.: Oh, oh.

M.O'R.: It was right at the same place, I think, right where the highway crossed the river.

L.B.: Yeah. Yeah. I think you're right, but I, we never went to that one, so I don't know anything about it.

M.O'R.: You mostly went to Roamer's?

L.B.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: But Avalon sometimes, as well?

L.B.: We went down there and looked it over, but we liked the Roamer's Rest the best, so whenever we would go, we'd go there.

M.O'R.: I've heard stories that in order to kind of keep the algae growth down there at that location at Roamer's and Avalon that they would sometimes drag burlap bags full of copper sulfate through the water?

L.B.: Yeah, that was done, yeah. Of course, being kids, we didn't know what they were doing and it didn't bother us any.

M.O'R.: Did you boat at all out of there, or was it mostly swimming?

L.B.: What?

M.O'R.: Did you go boating or any -?

L.B.: Oh no.

M.O'R.: I understand there were some rowboats or something that one of the proprietors there ...

L.B.: Well, there were, but we didn't have one, the family didn't have one, and none of our friends had one. But you could see boats there once in a while. But there wasn't near the boating done in those days that there is now.

M.O'R.: What about the other swimming hole at the mouth of the Yamhill? Was that also developed a little bit like Roamer's?

L.B.: Well, there was one place that was, and there was another place that you just - no, just river bank was all.

M.O'R.: Just off the bank.

L.B.: Yeah. A place called Crawford's. That was right at the mouth, and real low water in the summer. We could wade across. I was short, always was, and I could wade across just right up to my chin, in the very deepest spot, and that was only two or three steps and then you were up on the shallower soil.

Then back at the place where they had a tank in the river, and they had a little cart that they rode down a track, and it threw you in the river. What in the world? - I can't think of what they called that one. But that was definitely a pay place; down at Crawford's wasn't. They just - you went down through a guy's wheat and Canadian thistles, and you finally got down there.

M.O'R.: Well, let's bring you back to your college years then. So you were at OSU, you majored in animal husbandry, and how did you like the college experience? Was that any different for you than school?

L.B.: Well, I liked that pretty well, yeah. The only trouble there was that I was making my own way, and so most of the free time I had, I had to spend working to make enough money to buy my books and pay my tuition. But it was a good experience.

M.O'R.: What kind of jobs did you do?

L.B.: Well, I started working in Memorial Union Building waxing floors and that kind of stuff, and I kept working up till I got to ...

[interruption]

L.B.: Then I worked up to where I had room furnished in the basement of the Memorial Union Building, and I'd get up at five o'clock and let in about 15 kids and assign them to clean the

various rooms and stuff, and I just had to make sure they^{all} got cleaned and the rooms got set up for meetings for that day and all that kind of stuff.

And then on Saturday nights, why, we had dances in all the buildings, and I had to arrange for the hat check girls and the doormen and all that. One night I had 81 kids hired, had dances going in the men's gym, the women's gym, the Memorial Union and a fraternity house downtown. And, boy, that was a real mess.

And then of course all day Sunday it took us to clean up and get ready for school again on Monday. But you could make - for those days, you could make pretty good money.

When I was working on the NYA work, just pushing a broom and stuff, waxing floors which we - whenever we needed to do like the main concourse, we'd take all night to do it when the thing was closed, and get four or five kids and work all night. And that was only about 15 cents an hour, and then when I got so that I was in charge of all the work, why, then that was up to 50 cents an hour, and I could put in - I could do the work myself or I could hire somebody else to do it. It was just a matter of how much time did I want to put in, or could put in. So it was - you could almost make whatever income you wanted to make at 50 cents an hour, which I guess would be below the minimum wage today.

M.O'R.: Yeah, well, I mean, now, if you translate it into 1996 dollars.

L.B.: Well, maybe not.

[interruption]

M.O'R.: Well, it sounds like life was a little different back then.

L.B.: Yeah, it was. It was, yeah. But you know, I guess we didn't know we were abused or anything, and so we never felt underprivileged or anything else. We just felt that's the way it was.

M.O'R.: Yeah, it was just where the world was at, I guess.

L.B.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: Not as developed to as busy as it is today.

L.B.: Yeah, right.

M.O'R.: Did you have much of a social life in college?

L.B.: Not too much, no. No. That's the thing I missed more than anything was the social life. At least I guess I did. But no, there wasn't too much of that.

M.O'R.: I have a note here that you mentioned that you came back to work - was it here in the valley - as the livestock agent?

L.B.: Well, when I first came on the job here, that was my major assignment was livestock. I had the tree fruits and nuts to do also, but kind of a secondary thing. And then as we started getting some programs going, they could see that there was a lot more to do in that field, and so they changed the livestock assignment around and split up the horticulture. And so - and then I didn't have any livestock; never did since that time.

M.O'R.: I had a note here that said that you, your first job was as a high school teacher; is that right?

L.B.: Yeah, in Gresham.

M.O'R.: That was before you worked as a livestock agent out here in the valley?

L.B.: Yes. That was my first job out of college. There wasn't any farm jobs or extension jobs, and there was two or three openings in ag teaching, so I thought, "Well, a job's a job," and

so I took that one - at the magnanimous sum of \$100 a month for a teacher. I was the third highest paid in the school. The coach and the principal were higher paid and that was all.

M.O'R.: And why did you leave that job?

L.B.: Well, I didn't really like working with youth that well. I thought I liked to work with adults more than with the kids. So after three years a job in the extension opened up in Grants Pass, and I went down there. And I was there three years. Then I came back to Newberg as manager of a farm co-op for 10 years, and then I came over here and been here ever since.

M.O'R.: And what does an extension agent do exactly?

L.B.: Oh boy, you name it and they do it.

M.O'R.: Okay.

L.B.: Actually, the college has three branches. It has a residential instruction, which is a classroom teaching and kids going to college and all that. Then they have a research branch, and then they have the extension branch. And we're supposed - the extension is out in the counties. There's a staff of them in every county in the state. And we're supposed to keep an ear to the ground of the ground and find problems that the farmers have and feed them into the research division, and they do some research and find out some answers, and then they give those answers back to us, and we go out and teach the farm people what to do about the problems they had.

And then of course, along with that, why - oh, you have these little meetings to bring in the newest findings, and you have field days to show them what others are doing, and you write newsletters to keep them posted on new developments. And oh, there's just -

well, you kind of make your own job, but you make it so big that you can't keep up to it, too, if you aren't careful.

M.O'R.: And so that's what you did down in Grants Pass?

L.B.: Yeah, I did that for three years, and then of course, the family, my family and my wife's family was all up this way, and well, we got an opportunity to come up here, so we did.

M.O'R.: Actually, I meant to ask you, too - I think we're probably slightly ahead at this point in the story, but I'm just wondering how your family did during the Depression. I know that the agricultural business was hit in a somewhat different way than the urban areas - it maybe hit sooner than the urban areas; I'm not sure.

L.B.: Well, I suppose - of course, in the Depression I was younger, and my dad would probably tell a different story than I would. But I do know that we never went hungry. We had plenty to eat. It was just a matter that we didn't have very much money to spend.

But you see, if we got very hungry, we could always go out and kill a chicken or butcher a hog or something, and so we never did have to go short of food. Now, it may have been a little on the plain side at times, like we probably didn't buy a lot of oranges and prepared foods. We did it all from scratch, but at the same time it was good healthy food and we had all of it we needed. So from that standpoint, we didn't know the Depression here. But from a standpoint of having a lot of money to spend, I know we didn't have.

And I suppose we did more bartering than we did selling, maybe trade stuff. Well, I know we'd take like eggs and butter and all

that kind of stuff down to the store and get credit, and then could buy the staples that we needed, and so we didn't have to change hands with a lot of money.

But we came through the Depression in pretty good shape.

M.O'R.: And then another thing I was going to ask you about was how you happened to meet your wife.

L.B.: Well, she wouldn't want me to tell you. Four of us kids were batching, and I was working at the MU Building on a Saturday night; I had a crew of kids there. And she had gone with this friend of mine to a dance over at Albany. And when they come back, why, he wanted to stop at the house to get something, I don't remember just what. And there was a whole carload of kids out there, and they come in the house, and he got whatever it was. And I had just got home from the MU Building, and I was eating the last of something that we had for dinner that night. I was hungry, and it was during the sophomore Whiskerino, and I had whiskers all over.

And so when he went out the door, why, I told him, I says, "Well, if you don't ..." - I don't remember how I said it, but something about "If you aren't going to kiss that girl goodnight, why, send her in, and I'll do it for you."

Well, they went out and was gone and in about five minutes, well, here they come back again, and she says, "I come in to get that kiss." Face as red as a beet, you know, but I'd dared her to do it. So she did, and that was the start of it.

M.O'R.: So you looked her up after that?

L.B.: Yeah. Some people meet in funny ways.

M.O'R.: Yeah, that's right. So she was a student, too, at the college?

L.B.: Well, she was still a senior in high school over in Philometh.

M.O'R.: Oh, okay.

L.B.: But it's lasted 55 years so far.

M.O'R.: Well, you can't say too much bad about the foundation, then?

L.B.: No, guess not. I guess not.

M.O'R.: And her family was from the Philometh area then?

L.B.: Yes. They were all in some phase of logging, saw-milling and that type of stuff. They worked out in the wood area, and some of them worked in the mill, some of them hauled logs, some of them drove cat in the woods, and this type of work was what they - all of her family did.

M.O'R.: And did you get along well with her family then?

L.B.: Oh yeah. Yeah, never any problem.

M.O'R.: Did you marry - how soon after that, after meeting her?

L.B.: Oh, we went together for about three years, I guess.

M.O'R.: And where did you get married then?

L.B.: Well, I had actually taken the job at Gresham and had gone up there - I'd been up there about a month, and she says, "I'm not going to stay down here in Philometh."

So I says, "Well, there's one answer to that. We can get married, and you can come up here." So we did, on a weekend. So then, the kids at the school heard about it, and so the whole god-darned high school band come over one night and shivareed us. Oh

boy, they had the awfulest noise going you ever heard out there in the street.

M.O'R.: And did your parents know about the wedding?

L.B.: Oh yeah, they attended, yeah.

M.O'R.: And you had their blessing then?

L.B.: Oh yeah, yeah.

[end of side one]

LLOYD BARON

TAPE 1, Side 2

July 16, 1996

M.O'R.: Okay. So you taught at Gresham for a while. Then you went down - you were the extension agent in Grants Pass?

L.B.: Yes, uh-huh. I also did horticulture inspections for the State Department of Agriculture. See, they try and keep track of plant materials coming in and going out of an area, so that they don't bring in new diseases that we don't already have. And so if the Post Office got anything that was plant material, they had to hold it till I came over and checked it out before they could release it to the people it was assigned to.

And I know one time that some Louie's bulbs come in there, and they didn't let me know, and the first thing I knew, some people come in and asked me what they was going to do about those diseased tubers that they got, and I says, well, how'd you get them? Well, they got them through the Post Office. And I says, "Well, you know, they weren't supposed to release those to you."

"Well," he says, "we talked them into it, and now we've got them."

And I said, "Well, you really deserve to have a problem then, don't you?"

"Well, I suppose we do, but we'd sure like to get out it."

And so some of them had been hauled down to Crescent City, California, and we spent a couple of days rounding those all up and got them shipped back to Florida where they come from. And stuff

like that, you know, going on all the time. So there's things to do.

And then any of our growers, if they were legitimate growers, would apply to the State Department for inspection, and then they'd have their - the products that they wanted to ship out inspected, and then I would issue a shipping permit for them to ship stuff out, that it was clean and had been inspected and was free from whatever it was that could be a problem.

M.O'R.: And the problem here is mostly contagious diseases?

L.B.: Well, that's the thing they're guarding against, yeah. Yeah. Or insects.

M.O'R.: Insects, right. Something that could spread and infest a crop or something?

L.B.: Yeah, there was quite a gladiola industry down there at the time I was there, and we had about 10 sizable commercial growers, and all of their bulbs had to be fumigated before they could ship them out, before we could issue them a certificate. And most of them was just afraid to death of that fumigant. So I told them, "Well, you get the house sealed up, with tape all around the windows and the doors and everything, and I'll come in and set the fumigant in and lock the door, and then I'll tell you when you can go back in and air it out."

And so I did all the fumigating there the last year or so I was down there. It's not that big a job. It's just a matter of you need to be careful and do it according to the rules. It isn't one of these things that if a little is good, a lot is better.

M.O'R.: Right. So you'd fumigate in a building where the bulbs are stored?

L.B.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: Like a barn or something like that?

L.B.: Well, most of them had a bulb house because they needed some drying in order for the bulbs to keep. They weren't quite dry enough as they come out of the field, and so they had them in screen-bottom trays in racks, and so we'd fumigate them while they were in that.

M.O'R.: So when you worked in Grants Pass, was that when you fumigated, or was that when you did the fumigating?

L.B.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: Oh, it was. Okay. Any other interesting problems come up down there when you were working as an extension agent?

L.B.: Oh, probably, but I don't remember what they were right now. It was mainly just day-to-day activities, keeping in touch with the farm people and helping them with their problems.

M.O'R.: And then you came back up here and went to work as the manager of the farmers' co-op?

L.B.: Yes, over in Newberg. It was a nut processing plant and filberts and walnuts, and we handled growers' supplies and so in the fall and winter, why, we'd get the crop in, dry it and process it and ship it out, and then in the spring and summer, why, I'd make contacts with growers and sell them grower supplies and things of that kind. It was a cooperative, so we would try and sign up new members for the co-op.

M.O'R.: And can you tell me how a cooperative like that one works? Everybody just brings in their crop and then you market it as a co-op?

L.B.: Well, yeah. They sign up to deliver their crop to you, and then you get the crops all together. We process each one separate, and then like - we have standards of quality and size, and we grade them into these different grades, and the grower gets credit for so many pounds or tons going into these grades.

And then as they're sold, why, then we can figure, well, what has it cost per pound to do this for them, and then we take that much off of whatever we sold them for, and then they get the balance. And it's supposed to - it doesn't always, but it's supposed to figure out a little bit better for them money-wise than where you just sell it to an independent - and of course, he's got to make a profit if he stays in business, and so theoretically he doesn't pay as much back to the grower.

But sometimes co-ops don't pay that well, either. They make some bad judgments or sell before they should or something, and so they don't make as good a return as the growers would like, either. But overall, why, they generally will come out a little better. But then, they do own the plant, which - on a private enterprise they wouldn't.

M.O'R.: Right. And so if someone withdraws from the co-op, then do they get a cash settlement for what their share of it is, or how does that work?

L.B.: Well, theoretically they're supposed to, but most co-ops don't. [laughs]

M.O'R.: Okay.

L.B.: Actually, what we did, we would take the new retains from the growers this year and pay off the old ones back - and it had about a 10-year lag in the payoff. And so if they were now out

of the business, well, they would, when their turn come, they'd get paid off.

M.O'R.: I see.

L.B.: So it did work that way, and actually they got interest on their certificates during the time they were holding them, and that was the only co-op I knew of that did pay interest on them.

M.O'R.: And about how many growers were involved in it?

L.B.: Oh, we had about 300, I think. It wasn't a big co-op, but there weren't near as many growers at that time as there was in later years.

M.O'R.: So these were mostly nut orchards then, or all nuts?

L.B.: They were all - yeah, all nut growers, filberts and walnuts. Of course, there used to be an awful lot of walnuts, which there aren't as much any more. They froze in '55, and they've never recovered.

M.O'R.: Well, my aunt used to have a little place out here in Aloha, she had a filbert orchard as part of it. I can remember going there once or twice at least, cutting back the - I guess it was the new shoots out of the base of the filbert trees or something like that. I forget what we did for her. So I know there's a lot of filberts growing out here in this country.

L.B.: Well, they grow up suckers around the tree and ...

M.O'R.: That's what it was.

L.B.: And you used to have to grub those off, but now they've got sprays that they take them off with.

M.O'R.: Oh yeah? Well, in the 10 years that you managed the

co-op, did you initiate any new policies or changes in the way the co-op ran its business?

L.B.: Well, about the only thing that we did that was different, we put in a cleaner so that the grower - on filberts, not on walnuts - could just rake the stuff up, leaves and everything, and bring it down there, and we could clean it out. Before that, they had to get down on their prayer bones and pick them up.

And of course there was a lot of fiddling around with trying to develop harvesters. They made a little progress, but they never really had a good one yet at that time. And of course now they have progressed to the point where there's some pretty good harvesting equipment. Of course, at that time, you worked your disk and everything in the orchard, and you had that just pulverized like sand on the beach, and so if you didn't get good weather and get that firmed down, you couldn't harvest it with a mechanical harvester very well.

Now they never till the orchards anymore; they just run what they call a flail and just beat off the weed growth and whatever else might be there. So they have a good solid surface to harvest on, and they can use - well, they sweep them together in a wind row, and then they come along with a pickup and pick them up, and so they never even touch them, and like two people, one sweeping and one with a harvester, can probably pick up 10 ton in a day, where one person - if you got 300 pounds in the old days, you were doing pretty good.

M.O'R.: Well, that must have been a bit of a leap forward then?

L.B.: Oh well, it was, yeah. Yeah, it was.

M.O'R.: What kind of problems did nut growers face in those days?

L.B.: Well, of course, they've always faced cheap imports. You see, Turkey is the world's largest hazelnut/filbert grower, and they'll produce like 300,000 ton in a year, and have gone pretty near double that - and where Oregon - well, the best they've ever done is 40,000 ton, so you see we're down quite a bit. And generally we do, oh, maybe closer to 25 to 30 thousand ton. And Italy comes in with about two and a half to three times what we produce here. So when you get on a world market, why, they have so many of them, they pretty well dictate the price, and with lower standards of living and all in the those countries, they sell them a lot cheaper than we do. So it's - and they don't have the grade standards that we have to meet. See, we have some USDA, U.S. Department of Agriculture standards, and the imports don't have to pay any attention to those.

One year we got the - from our Congressman to put some standards in, but they finally had to sneak them in the back door, and they only lasted one year, and they found some excuse to get them out. The State Department and the government doesn't want any restrictions on Turkish filberts, for the reason that that's probably their major export, and our government wants to keep them happy so that we can maintain the military base in Turkey. And if we made them unhappy by beating them down on their livelihood, you might say, why then, they would probably cut us out of a military base. And you got so many things it doesn't seem like it should make a bit of difference, but it is all important when you get right down to it.

M.O'R.: All these interconnections ...

M.O'R.: So that was a problem?

L.B.: That was the major one.

M.O'R.: Did any of these growers have orchards on the Tualatin, and they did rely at all on the Tualatin for irrigation in those days?

L.B.: Orchards in general have not been irrigated.

M.O'R.: Okay, so they're just ...

L.B.: So they didn't. There are a few that do, and some - well, it depends on the soil. Some soils it would pay, and the others it wouldn't. Usually, on the soils it would pay on, they haven't any access to water. The ones that are down where they could get the water, we haven't made it a paying - been able to determine if it's a paying proposition, and so as a result, why, there's not much of it done.

M.O'R.: Well then, after you worked for the co-op, then you went on to become Washington County extension agent?

L.B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And then you worked, is that when you began to work with Palmer Torvin?

L.B.: Yeah. He was the chairman agent here when I came. And one of the first jobs that we did - of course, you do more than just horticulture. For example, you have to do - I suppose you call it housekeeping jobs and all that. But in '57, why, all the water rights were reviewed, and we found that we had water rights for three times the amount of water that we actually had water available for in the valley. That was from all sources, creeks, wells, ponds, rivers, whatever. And so that was probably one of

the major reasons why they decided they were going to have to do something about Scoggins Lake up here, or Henry Hagg Lake.

And we also registered all the wells in the county. If a well was used to water - I think it was more than five head of livestock, or to irrigate over half an acre of ground, it had to be registered with the State. And so we spent a lot of time registering wells, and that then give us a pretty good story on just really how many there were and what uses were being made of them, which we didn't know before. Well, you know, you can kind of guess, but sometimes your guesses are pretty poor.

So about that time, then, they started getting - trying to get organized to do something about irrigation. Prior to that time, the farmers had complained about they needed to do something about water even back as far back as '40 or '41. But at that time, they were thinking mainly of getting rid of water in the winter time - see, there was a lot of flood plain - I think there's something like 12,000 acres that's flooded every winter - and they were trying to get rid of that.

And the Army [Corps of] Engineers come in and made study, and they says, "Yeah, we can get rid of that. We'll just put a ditch from Gaston right down along the base of the hills over there and just run it right on straight through into the river over at Oswego.

And the farmers didn't want that. That wasn't what they had in mind because, see, the river goes like this, and there's a lot of waterfront along there, and they could just drop their hose over in there and irrigate then in the summer when they wanted to, and

if you put all that water in a ditch over here, there wouldn't be very many that had waterfront property anymore.

M.O'R.: This was the plan, I believe, that they were going to line the river with riprap its entire length, too?

L.B.: That's right. Yeah, that's right. But that was back in the early '40s. So then there wasn't anything done for quite a while.

And then in the late '50s, why, they got to thinking - by that time, you know, wheat and oats and those things did not bring in enough income to keep a farm or a farm family going, and so you needed to do something to enhance the income on a property, and the only way, or one of the ways they felt they could do it would be to raise irrigated crops. There was more demand then for things like green beans and sweet corn, and of course the dairies, we had a quite a good-sized dairy industry and even pastures, irrigated pastures took quite a lot more water than grain or anything like that.

And so then the move was - well, through a lot of meetings and stuff that Palmer Torvin held and all, why, people were beginning to feel that that was the answer, to be able to store water someplace so that they would have it available in the short season. See, there's over a million acre-feet of water runs out of this valley every year, but it mostly runs out between November and April when we don't need it for irrigation. And then the three or four dry months, why - when we need it for irrigated crops, why, there's only about something like five percent of the water - of the year's supply that is generated and comes down through.

And we have a picture of one of the farmers down here standing astraddle the Tualatin River in - I think it was about August, and actually, when the farmers up here would get to irrigating pretty heavy, instead of the water running toward Lake Oswego, it run this way because ...

M.O'R.: They were pulling so much water out of the river?

L.B.: They were pulling so much, it was more than was coming down out of the mountains. And there is a reef in the river down close to Wanker's Corner, and so it creates quite a little lake through the Tualatin area, and we were getting that water back up here to irrigated with, and there's only about a foot fall in about 20 miles of the river.

M.O'R.: So you pull a foot of water out of the river and then it starts to flow the other way.

L.B.: That's right.

M.O'R.: Now, it sounds like, even though there were three times as many water rights on the river as there was water available, that really it hadn't been a problem with supply there until later. Is that -?

L.B.: Well, not too much. However, they had put a Water Master - the State did have a Water Master stationed here in this county, and he did the regulating. But of course he didn't have a good basis for it until after everything was registered in '57, and then of course he knew more about where the water was and all and what the flows were. And so then they started regulating pretty close, and he would have to cut people off every year. So they had to learn that their water right wasn't as good as the neighbors maybe, and they'd have grow crops accordingly.

M.O'R.: I have a note here, too, that you helped reallocate the water between farmers after you took a look at this water rights problem?

L.B.: Well, I didn't actually do much in the way of allocation. We did make quite a study and found out where all the water was available, from what sources, what percent of our water come from wells, what percent come from ponds, and what percent come from river flow and all that, and we made that available to, oh, people like the Bureau of Reclamation and all, and actually, the Water Master did most of the allocating of water because they had teeth in their program and we didn't.

M.O'R.: Did people try to cheat on this?

L.B.: There was some of that, yeah, and there'd be some that would - because they lived further up the creek than the guy that had the water right, why, they'd pull out water they could get until the Water Master starting walking up the creek to see where it was coming from - or where it was disappearing at, and then of course that had to stop.

M.O'R.: So that's how they would police it, then, he'd actually go out and do a physical inspection of the river and see what was going on?

L.B.: Oh yeah. Yeah, they did, they did quite a little of that.

M.O'R.: Now, you were involved in putting together the Hagg Lake proposal or -?

L.B.: Well, I did some of the legwork, and when they would need signups and stuff, why, I would help to accumulate those and organize them to see how much demand there might be in this area

and how much over here and that type of thing, and some of the preliminary stuff. But before they got into it too deep, why then, they had a Bureau person here that had more know-how on that, and actually, I guess they would be regarded a little bit in a little different light than just a lowly county agent was.

But whenever they needed a good leg person, why, I usually got in on some of that. And we would discuss the things, Palmer and I, and some of the farmers, and try and decide what the next move is going to be, you know.

It wasn't too long into the thing until we saw that the farmers, even though they're the ones that started - that initiated the move to get the water and made the contacts with the Bureau, we were not going to get enough farmer support to do it totally. We was going to have to go industry and Fish & Wildlife and a lot of other uses in order to justify the dam. And so that was worked on, and of course, the cities, two or three or four of them, did decide to buy into it, and actually are taking water from the dam.

And then of course, the Fish and Game people, the recreation and all those are getting use out of it. And actually only, I think, 17,000 acre feet is allocated to irrigation out of about - I think the dam holds about 50,000.

M.O'R.: So roughly a third of it.

L.B.: Yeah. Yeah, about a third, mm-hmm.

And then when it come to actually signing up the farmers for irrigation, why, I did quite a bit of that. And we would - then we would plot them out on, so many out in this area and so many there, and then you could determine the size of the pipes and all that had to be put in to supply them because the district has three deliv-

eries. One is just let it go down the river, and people that are adjacent to the river can draw it out. And the other delivery is in a pressurized pipe. And then there's a third one where they - actually, they run it into the diked area out at Lake [indiscernible], and see, they've got that onion bottom all diked, and they would run the water over the hill there into the Tualatin River and bring the river down and run it out around the dike area, so that then the onion growers and people in there could just put a pipe over the dike and irrigate their land. They'd have a supply there which they wouldn't have had if it hadn't have been for the dike.

So they did have about three delivery systems in the project. And of course, I guess it's the only one anywhere that the Bureau has dealt with where it wasn't a contiguous irrigated land. Ours is a checkerboard, irrigate this field and you don't irrigate that one, and like that, and most all Bureau projects, you irrigate the whole area. So that was a different approach than they had anywhere else.

And it got so that right at the last, we was having trouble getting - when we started to form the district, people - "Well, we don't want to be in the district." So we finally left them out. We've got islands out here within the district where there's an island that's not in it. And it's rather interesting, one of those guys called me not very long ago, and [said], "I happen to be in one of those islands and I'd like to get in because I want to sell my farm now, and irrigated land sells for a lot more money than dry land."

"Well," I says, "you know, you should have thought of that back in those days."

" Well, he says, "I didn't, and now I need to get in, and I thought maybe you could tell me how I could do it."

And I says, "I really don't know how you're going to do it. You'll have to, I guess, go to the district and make application to get in, and then how - whatever their rules are, you're going to have to abide by them because I have no idea whether you can make it or not."

Well, he thought maybe a good word from me would help, and I says, "No, I'm not going to do it because I don't have anything to do it with it anymore." We did the best we could at the time, and as far as I'm concerned, that's the way it's going to stay.

M.O'R.: So this was a recent query; then, from someone you're talking about?

L.B.: Yeah.

M.O'R.: So they wanted you to go talk to the folks over at Tualatin Water District?

L.B.: Yeah, help them get in the district.

[end of tape]