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ANDREW D. CROFUT: DIAMOND VALLEY DUST

Interviewee: Andrew D. Crofut

Interviewed: 1969

Published: 1970

Interviewer: Mary Ellen Glass

UNOHP Catalog #036

Description

Andrew D. Crofut is a Nevadan in the true sense. What does this mean? Crofut was born in 1889 and grew up on a ranch in Diamond Valley at the juncture of Eureka and Elko counties. The ranch provides the focus for a major portion of this memoir. The daily activities encompassed all possible endeavors in a struggle to maintain the ranch and a growing family. The ranch, established by Isaac F. Crofut, with Andrew "Dan" Dibble carrying on after the former's death, supported cattle and horse raising operations, along with an adjunct hay business.

As he grew to manhood, Andrew Crofut and his parents realized the values of education, and all struggled to school the children of the family. Andrew Crofut went to school first in Diamond Valley and then in the town of Elko. He attended the University of Nevada, winning a scholarship the first year. Financial problems intruded, but he continued his education through correspondence, finally becoming a teacher, first in Diamond Valley and then in some of Nevada's small communities: Delaplain, Contact, Preston, and Carson City.

Mr. Crofut later turned to a new career in retailing in Carson City, Fallon, and Reno. He worked first for Safeway Stores and then for many years in the shipping department of the Reno Montgomery Ward store. He retired from Montgomery Ward in 1958. Crofut and his family built and repaired homes as an avocation, and took a number of trips.

Crofut told of his life and career in expansive detail. His chronicle is useful for historians of education, agriculture and business. In addition, a novelist interested in authentic western settings will find a wealth of descriptive material in Mr. Crofut's recounting of events in Diamond Valley.

**ANDREW D. CROFUT:
DIAMOND VALLEY DUST**

An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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<http://www.unr.edu/oralhistory>

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Printed in the United States of America

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The Ruby Mountains loomed up. They were still covered with snow at that time of the year. And as they drew closer and closer, why, they were glad to come to a place which looked like it was a place of civilization.

Reaching Ruby Valley, they herded the stock for the summer in Secret Canyon, or Secret Pass, where the grass, as my stepfather always told us, was belly high to a horse. In those times, there was no stock to eat the grass down, like there has been in recent years.

That fall, Andrew C. Dibble hired out to drive beef cattle from there on down to Pioche and Eureka, while Ike Crofut hired out to Pete Lovell as a telegraph line maintenance man operating between Ruby Valley and in the vicinity of Austin, Nevada, on the Overland telegraph line. Andrew Dibble continued with his work for several years. We'll hear about him a little later in the story.

Isaac Crofut's life as maintenance man from Ruby Valley to Austin led him by Diamond Station which was on the west side of the Diamond Range in central Nevada, which was the Old Overland Route of the Pony Express and also, the Overland Stages before that day. That gives you a little brief history of my father's and stepfather's background.

Now, on my maternal side of the family, I'll give you a brief outline also. It was probably about the year of 1864 that one Phillip Clark and his young friend, Joe Studer by name, left Iowa City for a trip to California to investigate the gold fields of that notable state. They rode on horseback, each riding a horse and had one pack animal which they led. This animal carried their bed and food supplies on the trip west. Now one of the stops they made was at Diamond Station on the west side of the Diamond Range. And they liked the place and laid over for a few days to rest their animals and then went on to California. But

they didn't make a fortune in California as they had hoped. And on their way back, they also stopped at Diamond Station for a day or two. Then they proceeded on to their home in Iowa City.

About ten years later, or about 1874, this same Phillip Clark married a widow by the name of Christine Dix who had three daughters by her former husband, George Dix, who died in the Civil War and was buried in the national cemetery at Chattanooga, Tennessee. He was my maternal grandfather. The daughters' names were Louise, Emma, and Lila Dix. The young companion on the trip to California was Joe Studer, as I mentioned. He later married Louise Dix, the oldest of the daughters. And the young couple fitted out a team and wagon and headed west overland.

Joe Studer hadn't forgotten Diamond Station, and he thought he would take his young bride there and make their home for a while, at least. So after perhaps close to a month of hard going over rough roads and during the summer heat and dust, they climbed the east side of the Diamond Range and dropped down into Diamond Valley, at Diamond Station.

Diamond Station had big springs; there were three large springs. The water ran out from the springs and down over the land which made meadowland down below. It was quite a captivating place, after having traveled across the desert lands for such a distance. : never knew for sure whether they rented the place, leased it, or whether they bought the place, but I doubt very much that they bought it because they weren't financially able to buy it. Anyway, they made it their home for several years.

In the year of 1877, along in the spring, Louise Dix Studer wrote home the news that a happy event was about to transpire along

time. So he met and married Lila Celia Dix in the year 1878, he the operator and Lila Celia Dix the one who had come to visit her sister at the time that the happy event was to transpire. To them were born George in 1879, Minnie in 1881, and Ollie in 1888.

Isaac F. Crofut, in his trips along the line as maintenance man, usually stopped for the night at Diamond Station. And there he met Emma Elizabeth Dix, the second of the sisters in age. They were married in 1879. And to them were born Fred in 1882, Grace in 1885, Andrew (myself) in 1889, and Ferris, Jr. in 1890.

About that time a new telegraph line had been built along the present SP railway line, and there was no longer a need for the old line running across the central part of Nevada. So the line was discontinued and torn down. But the Cox family continued to live at the old Overland telegraph station.

During the interim, two rooms had been added to the original stone building that was used for the station, the telegraph station. One of the rooms was on the west, and the other on the north. These were quite substantial rooms and well built, warm in the winter and cool in the summer. They were used by the family principally for living rooms. The one on the west was used as a kitchen, and the one on the north was used as a living room. It had a quite a spacious fireplace and was very comfortable.

Anyway, Mr. Cox (of course, my uncle) fenced some more land, and they owned a few cattle and a few horses from which they eked out an existence or living for a few years until George became old enough to take over.

Ike Crofut and his bride settled on forty acres of land at Mud Springs which was three miles south of Diamond Station. They built a log cabin there, very crude in construction. They had earth floors, an old wood cook stove, and they got their water from a spring

which was there. Mud Springs was a "dinner station," a noon stop midway between the night stations of Box Springs and Diamond City. Mother used to serve hot lunches to the teamsters.

Now I'm going to let my brother tell of a little incident that occurred at that time [reading note by Ferris Crofut]:

Here at Mud Springs was the favorite watering place for a lot of the half-wild cattle that the ranchers had at that time. Mother had to dip a pail into the clean, clear water where it bubbled up and to get the water for the household use.

They had a dog named Bob, which was mostly English bulldog. He also went along to the spring as a rule with my mother.

One day, as Mother was returning to the cabin from the spring, she heard a noise behind her. And turning around, she saw a wild cow bearing down upon her. She was so frightened she couldn't move. She stood stark still. When the cow got to within about ten feet, old Bob took over. He jumped up and grabbed the cow by the nose and held on until Mother got safely in the house.

But for Bob, this story might never have been told.

As I said, the house, or cabin, had a dirt floor. Mother used to keep the floor sprinkled to keep it damp so that it wouldn't be dusty. She perhaps had a throw rug or two, but I'm not sure about that. She also sprinkled the floor with sand occasionally to keep the dust down.

The cabin was not very substantial; it was laid right on the ground with nothing

under it. However, within a few years it was moved away, because about the year 1881, my folks bought a place at Box Springs, which was seven miles north of Diamond Station. They bought the place from Nels Ouderkirke who had owned it for a number of years and operated it as a station and also raised a few cattle and horses. And my folks bought the station, the ranch, and the stock, complete.

It consisted of three log rooms, quite well built of logs which were hewn and well fitted. Ouderkirke had built a large living room just to the north, which connected to the log house. This was about fourteen or sixteen by eighteen feet. It was made like a stockade. It had been homesteaded land and consisted of about a hundred acres of meadow and pastureland. There was also a spring just below the house. At this place, we children were all born—Fred in 1882, Grace in '85, I in '89, and Ferris in '90.

The house consisted of dirt roof, chinked sides; and then the sides, after being chinked, were daubed with mud to keep the cold out. The fireplace—there was a large fireplace in the living room that had been built on. That was added about 1879. There was also a cellar dug on the east side of the kitchen which was separate from the house and about eight or ten feet distant. It was simply a hole in the ground about twelve by twelve feet and about five feet deep and logs laid around on the outside to a height of about two and a half feet, and then a dirt roof put on that, similar to the dirt roof that was put on the house. The roof on the house was built by—heavy timbers were laid across the log part or stockade. On top of that were laid cottonwood poles quite close together, and on top of that was laid cedar bark, which would not decay or rot. Under the cedar bark, I forgot to mention, was burlap. They put burlap bags to keep any dirt from sifting through the house.

There was an old stairway, direct stairway, going down into the cellar, that was just a sort of dirt ramp, or sloping entrance to the cellar, which sloped from the cellar door to the central part of the cellar. And my mother, in going up and down, or anyone else who wanted to go up and down, had to run down, it was so steep. And in coming back up, they had to go to the other—far east side of the cellar and take a run. I always wondered how Mother could carry that pan of milk up that runway. There were no steps.

In the cellar, there was a potato bin which was on the north side of the excavation, and then there was a large table in there, and there was shelving, and a rack for the pans of milk, and other racks for other commodities that we wanted to keep down there. It was fairly warm, but it could freeze in the wintertime. And in the summertime, it was not as cool as they would have liked it to be. In later years, my Father Dibble and Fred put a shade over the top of it to keep the heat of summer out.

The dirt on the roofs built up and built up. Each fall we had to, of course, haul more dirt to put on there because it would wash off during the summer and winter and spring and fall storms that came on, until in some places, the dirt would get a foot or a foot and a half deep.

My father was able to take care of the ranch, but he had ideas of improving it. And it was almost too much work, because we did have a lot of teamsters there all the time, coming and going. And taking care of the teams and one thing and another took a great deal of his time.

So in the fall of 1887, he wrote to Andrew C. Dibble, who was then in Butte, Montana. And I want to give you a little summary of what Andrew C. Dibble had done during the interim of time when we left him in Ruby Valley.

make up a thick, gooey mess that really tasted pretty good.

And there was Indian tea that we used to gather. And we did drink Indian tea occasionally. Indian tea is a small bush which grows all through Nevada as far as I know, in different places. It has jointed stems and is of a light green color. There's some of it right out here around Lakeside Drive. At the lookout station, there's Indian tea bushes below the station, at the lookout, and up above the lookout also.

Allcock's Porous Plasters were used extensively in those times. Allcock's Porous Plasters were about eight inches or nine inches long and about five inches wide. They were perforated with small holes. The porous plaster itself was very similar to adhesive plaster that we have today, only, of course, they were made in these large pads. They were used principally for lame back. I remember very well, Father Dibble, seemed like he had to wear one of those Allcock's Porous Plasters on his back a great deal of the time. He couldn't have had anything very seriously wrong with him because he lived to an age of ninety-one. And he was really a vigorous man, too.

I remember very well asking Mother about what were the holes for in the Allcock's Porous Plasters. And she said, well, she guessed they were to let the pain and the ache out. So we assumed that was the reason why they were porous.

We always had an Ayers Almanac. Ayers Almanac was a little yellow pamphlet that was put out by the Ayers Medicine Company. And it had weather forecasts, and it also told of the moon's phases and also the times the sun rose and set. And it was our clock, you might say. My Father Dibble always set the clock by Ayers Almanac. He would note the sunset and would watch Roberts Creek Peak, and when the sun went off Roberts Creek Peak, well, that

would be the time the sun would set. And he would set the clock accordingly.

And there was a Firemen's Fund calendar which we always had in the house. He always got that from the express office in Eureka. Mr. Whitmore, I. C. C. Whitmore, was the agent up there, and he was the agent for Firemen's Fund also. And that's where my father used to get the calendars.

Father Dibble always said that he was a blue-bellied Yankee. We children, of course, were quite curious about why he was called a blue-bellied Yankee, and we wondered why this appellation should be given to the Yankees. I don't think we ever found out definitely, although we did try to make it our business to find out.

As I have told you before, our place was the Box Springs ranch, and the name Box Springs came from the fact that the original owners, perhaps before Nels Ouderkirke, had put a box, a wooden box, in the spring which was perhaps three hundred feet below the house, to the west of the house. That's where the water bubbled and gurgled up out. It was a cold spring, and lovely water. The box was put in there, no doubt, to keep the horses and other animals from trampling in the spring and filling it up. A great many springs were filled up that way, by animals coming to water and getting so close and gradually trampling the soil and sod into the spring itself and cutting off the flow of water. But it flowed out a nice little stream of water, a little sand in the bottom. The sand would rotate to the top and back down as the water came, bubbled out of the spring. Water ran on down then, below, for quite a distance. But when Father came, he and my stepfather got a slip, which was a scraper, with a team of horses, and scraped out a section of the water away below the spring and piled it up across the low place and made a dam. And that way, why, it served as

a sort of a pond to hold the water back. They also made a gate to put in the dam itself, so they could open it up and let the water down, down below to irrigate the garden which we had down in the field below that.

For water for the teamsters, we had a well in the corral with about two and a half or three feet of water in it. And we had a big post set in the ground just south of the well, with an arm extending over the wheel with a rope around it, and buckets to pull the water up out of the well, and a trough right there to the north where the water could be dumped from the buckets right into the trough for use by the teamsters or anyone else who wanted to water their horses there. There was a plug in the north end of the trough, and Father had left a little slit in the side of the plug so that water would drip out gradually for chickens. We had a little cast iron trough under the big trough where the chickens always went for water. The well caved in gradually until it became perfectly rounded and perhaps ten feet in diameter. Father Dibble decided it was dangerous. He decided to dig a new well.

So he and Fred set to work to dig a new well just about eight or ten feet farther east of the old well. And as he dug the new well, why, he dumped the dirt and rocks into the old well. He set up a windlass to haul up the rocks and dirt. After we had the well down deep enough, we went down and contacted John Lani, who was living in Four Mile Canyon [at] that time. He was an Italian and he knew something about rock work. He was willing to come and wall the place up for us above the water level so that it wouldn't cave in. And from there on up, we cribbed it up with juniper posts, so that we did have a good well. The water in that well was about four feet deep. Later years, we put up a windmill, and we never could pump it dry.

There was also a well near the kitchen door which supplied the house for water. And this well was dug, as my mother said, at the time that I was a little baby. So it was just as old as I was. It was about twelve feet deep. The water in it was perhaps two or two and a half feet deep. There was no rock work in the well, or curbing. But we did have a well curb above which was simply made of boards and sat on cross timbers of cedar and other planking to cover the ground just around there.

It was not bug-tight, so occasionally we noticed that the water didn't taste just right when stink bugs got into the well. These bugs—I don't know. I've never seen one here in Reno, but they're a rather offensive bug. They're a black bug about three quarters of an inch long and round in shape. And if you disturb them out of the ground, they always elevate their posterior parts in the air and emit a perfume which isn't a perfume. Anyway, when they fall in the well, why, the water starts to taste just like the bugs smell. So we would have to bail out all the water—that is, pull it out and pour it on the ground until we had all the water bailed out. And then one of us would go down the well—usually Fred would do that—and bail it out and scrape the bottom so that it was all clean and pure again.

From this well, we carried water to the house and put it on the table in the kitchen. And there in the kitchen was a dipper for all, hung above the water bucket. Everybody used the same dipper, of course; there was no thought of catching any communicable disease from drinking out of the same dipper that they do nowadays.

Along the west wall we had a bench, which was a homemade bench out of hewn logs, with legs in holes that were bored in the bench. And on this bench we had a water bucket also, with two tin basins [which] were used in washing, where the men as well as we

then hung in the smokehouse to dry. We also used Ella's house as a smokehouse, and he smoked them with cottonwood and other wood on a smoldering fire built under the hams and bacon. So much for the pigs.

I have said that below the spring was where we had the garden. And the water was dammed up by a dam which had been put across below the spring to provide water for irrigating the garden and also for allowing it to run below for stock in the field. The garden was perhaps two hundred yards from the house, and perhaps a hundred yards below the spring, and off to the northwest. Every year, in the spring, the garden was plowed; Father used to get in there and plow it. First, Fred and he would haul a load of manure and spread over the top of the garden spot, and then it would be plowed with a two-horse walking plow. And it would be harrowed by a team also. And to do this, he had to take down the fence at each end of the garden and then put it up after the work was done in the fall, when we turned cattle and stock in there.

Father Dibble would spend quite a lot of time, then, raking the garden and smoothing it off by hand. And every spring, along about April, he would spend a big part of the month down there, getting it ready and planting the seeds and putting up the markers. Early before that, usually in March, he would set out cabbage in flats, and they would mature later in the season, that is, get large enough so that they could transplant them to the garden. He didn't put them in the garden too early, because it was cold at that time, early in the year. And along about May, he would transplant the cabbage plants to the garden also. He always kept a few plants over, because they were troubled with cutworms. He would go down the night before; the cabbage plants would look so nice and healthy. In the morning, they'd just be lying flat on the

ground. So he would always replace some of those, and when he would replace one of the plants, he'd always dig down and usually could find the old cutworm that had done the damage. And he always dispatched the cutworm forthwith.

On the north side of the garden were gooseberry bushes and also what we always called "pie plant," which was rhubarb. We had a patch of horseradish along the trail, about halfway between the garden and the house.

Among the garden vegetables that we grew at that time, besides the cabbage, were beets and carrots, turnips, parsnips, onions, rutabagas, lettuce, peas, and, of course, the potato patch. We had two different places where we raised potatoes. We'd alternate the potato patch from one place to the other. There was one patch just above the spring, another one just to the north of the spring. The soil was quite moist and kept moist throughout the year so that it never needed irrigation.

In the valley, the climate was too cold—that is, the seasons were too short—to raise corn or tomatoes. So we didn't try to raise those. We just raised the more staple vegetables. We could usually depend on a frost in May, and up until perhaps the first week of June. We always aimed to plant our potatoes on about the twentieth of May, so that they wouldn't be up until about the first week of June. And thus, we avoided practically all the frost that came. All these vegetables and potatoes were dug in the fall.

We put as many potatoes in the bin in the cellar as the bin would hold, and then we always scooped out a pit (Father and Fred would scoop out a pit) about two and a half feet deep and about five or six, seven, sometimes eight feet long. The extra potatoes, then, were put in the pit. They were rounded up; they could be above the surface of the soil,

the cattle for the different ranches throughout that whole neighborhood. They would range down even as far as Mound Valley, and sometimes farther east and west of us into the other valleys, so that everybody had to join in on the rodeos and gather up the cattle to be put in the fields, then, during the wintertime. Along in October and November, they were gathered into the fields where the green grass had not been touched or eaten off during the summer. And, of course, then, it was good feed for them until snow covered it up in the winter.

Our big corral between our stable and house had a shed along the east side, the full length of the corral. However, there were no other sheds for protection of the cattle during the wintertime. The stronger cattle were kept right out in the field, as did all the other ranchers in the vicinity. But the weaker cattle, ones with cows and calves, or some of the older ones, were kept in the big corral and fed extra amount[s] of hay. Cattle have a tendency, if one is weak or has a hard time getting up in the springtime, why, other cattle will hook her down, and they don't seem to have any mercy or sympathy; they'll pick on one that's down.

All stock were fed in the wintertime from stacks. It wasn't baled; it was just put in stacks, the hay, and fed from wagons or sleds. If there was plenty of snow on the ground, they used sleds. One would drive the wagon up to the stack and load the hay onto the wagon and take it out and spread it around for the cattle.

As I mentioned previously, the ranchers began to fence some more ground immediately after the hard winter of '89 and '90. And for this purpose, of course, barbed wire was used. Barbed wire was quite expensive, too, because it was just coming in, and there was all different types of barbed wire with different

kinds of barbs, spaced differently, and some of them had four prongs, some of them two prongs. There was one type of barbed wire that was used on the Diamond Springs ranch which I have never seen anyplace else. At intervals of about eight inches was a little block of redwood about three-eighths inches thick and grooved around the edges so that the wire would hold it in place. It had a barb, one barb, in between each one of these blocks of wood, a four-pointed barb. I never saw it on spools, but wire of that type would take up a lot of room on spools. That's the only place I ever saw that type of wire. I've seen wire at some of these bottle shows around Reno, but I've never seen any of that particular type. And I wonder if it's there today. I rather imagine that some enterprising person has bargained for it and taken it away.

In our-valley, we usually cut only two crops of alfalfa. As I said, after we had fenced a part of the new meadowland, we put some of the upper land, which was gravelly and had good drainage, into alfalfa. And that yielded two crops. Usually, one crop was cut right after the Fourth of July, and the other one in late September or early October. To tell when alfalfa was ripe and ready to cut, Father usually decided it was ready when it first came into bloom. We always figured about one ton of hay to the animal to feed them and tide them over during the wintertime.

Beside the natural wild grass that we had at home and the alfalfa that would be put in, there was also a patch of rye grass at Davis, which was about three miles farther north from our place. This was not fenced. And it was down near the flat and was watered by water that came out of Davis Canyon, and spread out naturally over that low place there before it finally flowed over onto the flat. As a usual thing, cattle would gather there and eat the young grass when it was quite young, and

also trample it into the mud. And if it were left to its own devices, why, there wouldn't be very much in the way of hay. So Father Dibble decided that we ought to have that hay, and for that purpose, why, he decided it ought to be herded during the spring. So I was detailed as a herdsman to keep the cattle off from this patch of rye grass. Every spring in June, why, that was my job, to herd the cattle away, keep them off from that particular spot. I would go there every day.

I had the same old horse, Prince, that I used when I was carrying mail—at about the same time, in fact. I was only about ten years old. And Prince was a big horse, and I was only a little guy. Usually, when I'd bring the cattle up towards our place, driving them away from the rye grass, Prince would have an idea that he wanted to come home. He'd decided that he'd gone far enough. And one time in particular, he really had decided that he wanted to come home, and he did come home. I couldn't hold him; I couldn't keep him from coming. And Father Dibble saw us coming, and he was wondering why I was leaving the cattle there. Now, when I came up to the corral, he saw me—I was crying; I couldn't control old Prince.

He says, "I'll fix him!" So he went in the old granary and got out his four-horse whip, which was a hickory handle of about six or seven feet with a lash on it about fifteen or sixteen feet long, a braided buckskin lash, which teamsters with four horses always used to touch up their leaders. [When] Father Dibble went out and lashed old Prince around the legs two or three times with that whip, why, Prince took off. And I was able to get him back down to the herd again. Prince learned his lesson; he didn't try after that to come home because he was pretty sure of what would be waiting for him there. He was a smart horse.

No sheep in those days. Not even tramp bands? Well, no, not when we were really small. After we were about ten years old, sheep started to come in, just a very few—never bothered at all at that time. So the feed was really good on the outside. But I'll come to the sheep when the time comes, when they did start to bother.

I was telling George Cox about what a hard time I had to control Prince sometimes. And he says, "Well," he says, "I have a bit here that'll stop him." And he brought out a ring bit. So I bargained with George for the ring bit and put that on. It's the ring instead of a latch. It went right around the lower jaw of the horse. And it didn't take very much of a pull by the rider to really bring the horse up standing. And old Prince had a lot of respect for that ring bit.

Also, when I was about the age of ten, I started doing all the raking there at home. And after I'd finished at home, why, I thought I should go out and rake for some of the neighbors, but Father Dibble said I was too young to do that. So I had to be satisfied with raking the hay at home. To do that, I used old Torn, the faithful old white or gray horse that we had. He was not so young at that time, either, but he was a good old horse. I raked all the hay into windrows. Then Father Dibble and Fred took the pitchfork and piled the windrows into what we called cocks, piled them in by hand so that they would be easy to pitch onto the wagon. That was a considerable amount of work, but it made a nice job. Then when the hay was thoroughly cured after a few days, it settled in the cocks and was easy to load onto the wagon.

When Ferris and I were really small, we, of course, couldn't drive the team. Father Dibble would have the lines down on his side and drive the team, usually between two windrows with Fred on one side and he on the other, and

wagon. So this was the way that the hay was unloaded.

They usually ran it up to a height of about twenty-five feet, or sometimes thirty feet, before they finally topped it out. The stack was perpendicular up and down to a height of about twenty-five feet, and then it gradually rounded off on the sides. But the ends were kept perpendicular. So this would continue on. The mowers would be mowing on some new patch, and the rakers would be following the following day when the hay was just dry enough to rake,.. so it would be picked up without dropping it, and not too green. If it was too green, it might mold or spoil before it was cured. Then, of course, there was the raker who would go around after the wagon men had passed over and pick up any scraps of hay that were left on the field.

Then they'd go from field to field, and usually a haying period was perhaps a month or so, depending on the amount of hay that had to be put up. It usually started right after the Fourth of July, ended up perhaps in August sometime. Nowadays, of course, it's all mechanized, and no more horses are used in haying time. That eliminates keeping a bunch of horses over.

Then at about eleven thirty, the boss would signal the various hay hands that it was time to quit. They would start for the barn, or stable—barnyard. As a usual thing, if it wasn't too far, the ones who had the mower and the rake would drive on up to the barnyard. But the ones that had the wagons would unhitch their teams and all the men would go to the barn with the one single wagon, leading their horses behind. At the stable, of course, they would unharness their horses because they always had fresh horses for the afternoon. No one ever worked a team more than half a day. And if they were good horse hands, they always washed off the shoulders of their

horses when they'd take the collars off and unharness them; that was especially true for horses that were just being broken in to the work from the previous year because they were soft. And if their shoulders got sore or their neck got sore, why, they wouldn't be much good for work any more until the sore was healed.

And at night, of course, the foreman or boss would signal time to quit. They usually quit at about six o'clock. They had one hour for noon, so it didn't really give them too much time for rest, because by the time they got to the stable and unharnessed their horses and went to eat and then got back to the corral and caught their fresh team and harnessed them, there wasn't really very much time for a rest.

There usually was a bunkhouse for the men, but in many instances, the men didn't prefer to sleep in the bunkhouse. They would all bring their own bedrolls, and as a usual thing they would roll them down outside someplace around the hay corral, which was all right, too, in the summertime, because a lot of people like to sleep under the stars anyway.

They cut just one crop up there. Of course, that was nearly all wild hay. The Sadler place, in particular, they had two crops of alfalfa; they did have one field of alfalfa, and they had two crops in that. But it was about half foxtail; this alfalfa, foxtail had crept in. Foxtail, of course, is a noxious weed. And if any horses or stock ate that, it would get in their mouth, you know, and—something like the cheat grass that they have today, only worse, and make their mouths sore. And, of course, the stock couldn't keep in shape on that. Even the pitchers there at the Sadler place and the wagon men had to tie their overalls down around their feet to keep the foxtail out of their underwear. And also, it was almost necessary to wear some coarse shirt of some type so that the foxtail wouldn't work through.

It was a miserable situation to have to work in the foxtail. I don't know whether it's still there or not. We had a little foxtail on our place there at Box Springs, and Father used to have us go down every spring as soon as the foxtail appeared, as soon [as] we were positive it was foxtail, and pull it out. But it seemed to come back every year. But after a period of years, it disappeared of its own free will. It disappeared, as the wild hays and grasses do; they change from time to time. One year, there'll be a lot of one type of grass, wild grass, and that'll gradually die out and other grass will take its place.

Did we call this grass by any particular name, or just wild grass? It was wild redtop. Of course, there's timothy. We had timothy in our fields. Father always, whenever he sowed anything, he'd sow a mixture of timothy and redtop, which made a wonderful all-around hay for all kinds of stock.

Fred and Ferris and I, of course, helped with the haying at home. Fred went out to work when he was about eighteen years old, after he'd finished with the work at home, putting up the hay. We didn't have a great deal; it didn't take us very long to do it. So usually by the first of August or before, he was ready to go out and help with the haying, sometimes by the middle of July. When he was about eighteen, and then when I was about eighteen and Ferris was about sixteen, we went out to work also. Ferris, at sixteen, got a dollar and a half a day, and we got two dollars a day, with board and room. We worked ten hours a day in the hay fields. Fred worked as a stacker; he got two and a half a day.

One place that we went to work, the first one, in fact, that Ferris and I worked at, they worked ten hours a day. They were up before daybreak and called us, and we went to the house after we caught our horses and got ready. It was still dark. [We] went to the house

and practically always for breakfast we had hotcakes with brown sugar and some kind of—perhaps bacon, but very seldom very much else. There was no meat, fresh meat, of any kind. The grandfather lived there also. He'd bring out a hot lunch for us at noontime. Then along about after sunset, the foreman—or he was the owner, in fact—he'd say, "Well, it's time to quit," and we thought so, too. It was always dark before we got home and had our supper.

Hay hands as a usual thing didn't work on Sunday. They took Sunday off and would take their baths and wash their clothing. There at the Sadler place, there was a big hot springs only about a mile and a half from the house. And people would come from long distances around to bathe and swim in that hot spring. It was a wonderful place, even in wintertime. I have taken a bath there—in fact, that's where I used to take my baths most of the time when I was going to school there at the Romano place and living at Sadler".

The brush and willows surrounding the spring might be covered with frost, but it was always warm down in the sheltered part, down around the spring itself, because it was down in a lower place and ran off into a big spring. It was deep there; the water was real deep out away from the surface, the shore. There were two Eureka boys went down there to swim when we were about in our teens. One of them drowned, and the other boy, attempting to get him out, drowned also. But that was quite a catastrophe.

Well, I was just going to tell about the Sunday meal. We had our breakfast just a little bit later than usual. Then we had dinner about one o'clock. The wife cooked up a good dinner; we had something really quite nice, a little something extra for Sunday. Then we didn't have anything else for the rest of the day. That was the way the setup was.

But we noticed that the rest of the family always had something to eat in the evening. So we worked out a little scheme. We decided that Ferris should go to the house and ask for a candle or something of that type; I think it was a candle he was to ask for. He knocked at the door and caught them all in there eating, and we weren't having anything to eat. So when they saw that we knew what they were doing, then they called us and said that we could come and have a little something to eat, too. And we were willing to eat because it's a long time from about two o'clock until the next morning, especially for young people.

Well, this one year, the first year Ferris and I were out, after we had finished haying at this one place—I didn't mention the name—we went to Edgar Sadler's. Edgar had some hay that he wanted to have baled; he had a stack of hay that he wanted baled. We could haul it to Eureka to have it there for their use in the wintertime.

Well, Fred and Ferris and I took the contract to bale the stack of hay. The baler that they used in those days wasn't the type like they have today, which bales the hay right in the field, takes it off from the windrow and bales it. It was a cumbersome arrangement. It was a heavy baler, was set on runners that weigh about five hundred pounds, I imagine. It was set on runners (it was sort of a box affair) with a lift that slid up and down on the inside of this box affair this heavy boxed affair with a big wheel on one side with a cable on it that operated this compressor in the baler itself. When the lift part was down, they had to thread through the baling wire or baling rope which was to be used to hold the bale. That was threaded through a place that was arranged for it. And the hay was pitched into the baler from the stack. One man would trample it down while the other would pitch it in. When we got it full, as much as would

go in so that the lid would clamp down, the lid was then locked. Then the man that was driving the team would start the team up that would pull this big wheel around and around, and lift the compressor up to a certain height. And then we would fasten the wires or baling rope on one side. Then the team would back up and the bale was let out through the side, opened up one of the sides and the bale was dropped out. The hay bales in those days were very much heavier and bigger. The bales usually averaged at least two hundred and fifty pounds apiece. So they weren't very easily handled. We didn't have to pile them; we just rolled them away and someone else did the piling after we left.

After we'd finished baling the hay (I've forgotten now where Fred and Ferris did go), I went over to Nels Toft's and did some baling over there, or helped with the baling. After we'd baled up a stack of hay, we hauled it to Eureka. Jorgen Jacobsen, my brother-in-law, and I did the hauling, as well as most of the baling. Pete [Gaetane] helped. Jorgen helped with two or three trips, and then I took the team myself and drive several trips myself alone, using eight or ten horses. don't pretend to be a teamster, but I herded them along and managed to get the hay to town all right, excepting the last trip. The hay, the baled hay, one of the baling binder ropes got loose. The hay was loaded on the wagon about four tiers high with two hundred and fifty-pound bales, about four tiers high and two tiers wide. Then the top tier, which would be the fifth tier, was piled through the middle, then a stake driven down through the middle of the hay, and a rope coming up from each corner of the rack was placed around this stake that was driven, and another bar was put into the end of this stake and turned around and around and around to tighten. The ropes were tightened on the stake itself by its turning around.

A NEW LIFE IN DIAMOND VALLEY AS A RANCHER AND TEACHER

My financial resources were depleted. There was no work to be had in Reno because Reno was virtually a dead town. If someone were really acquainted, perhaps, around town, he could have gotten a job, but there were no student loans or assistances of any kind. It all depended on the student himself or his parents to finance his way through school. I went to work on a ranch there in Diamond Valley, the Nels Toft ranch, which was the old Diamond Station on the old Overland road. Nels Toft had bought the place a number of years before and built it up and operated it himself. But as I said, his nephew, J. P. Jacobsen, had come about 1903 to help him with the place. And he had married my sister Grace, as I also mentioned. They had two children at this time, Katrina and Lloyd. They were quite young. Lloyd was only a year old and Katrina was several years older. She was about three, I think it was.

I made brief mention of the Johnson family in Eureka who were friends of Nels Toft, both being Danish people; they both came from Denmark, Mr. Jorgen C. Johnson

and Mr. Toft. There was also another man in Eureka, Pete Hjul, who was a Dane and quite prominent. He had a store there in Eureka, and also ran the mortuary, funeral parlor. Mr. Johnson came to Eureka in 1875, and Mrs. Elizabeth Agnes Geraty Johnson in 1877. I think I sketched briefly their coming to Eureka. Their oldest boy was Martin Johnson, who was born in '85. Then there was Chris Johnson, who was a year and a half younger; then George Johnson, a year and a half younger than he; then Eugene Johnson, who was about that much younger than George (I was just between George and Eugene). Then there was Will Johnson, who was about two years younger than Gene. Then Mary Johnson, and Virginia Nevada Johnson. The two girls didn't come until the last. So there were seven in the family, five boys and two girls.

Each one of the boys had in turn come out to the Nels Toft place during the summer to work during the haying time and sometimes longer. Martin Johnson had also stayed there one year during the winter months and had

attended school at the little schoolhouse down halfway between our place and Cox place. He used to ride a buckskin horse to school each day. And he got a lot of fun out of having fun with us boys; he was older than we were, but he was a decided blond, like the Danes were at that time. But he was the only one of the Johnsons that stayed to go to school. I think he was down there for about two years. And Chris was down for one or two years during the summertime to help in haying time. They usually ran the hay rake or did other light work like that in helping out during the haying period. So when it came to 1912—'11 and '12—Will Johnson had been coming down there to help. I worked there also during 1910 and '11 at Nels Toff's. Will Johnson being there, we got to be very, very friendly. Every night after we came from the hay fields, we would make a beeline for the old pond. It was quite a good pond for swimming, off north of the house. And that was more interesting to us than supper was. We always had to have our swim before we came to supper. Sister Grace was quite provoked sometimes because sometimes, the meal was—of course, they didn't hold the meal waiting for us; they went—eating anyway—and sometimes there wasn't very much left, but we got a bigger kick out of the swim than we did out of something to eat. We learned to swim, too, just by ourselves. We got so that we were fairly good swimmers.

In 1912, the oldest Johnson girl, who was Mary Elizabeth, came out to help my sister and take her turn being on the ranch. She went to help my sister with the cooking and taking care of the children and things of that type. Her name was Mary Elizabeth; everybody always called her "Mamie;" she was always known by Mamie. If you asked for "Mary Elizabeth" in Eureka, no one would know who she was. We, of course, got

acquainted, and she was quite shy. I had been to the house at Johnson's at previous times, but never really got acquainted with her because she was always shy, as was her sister. And when any boys came around, why, they would always make themselves scarce.

But I had my .22 rifle with me, so I used to go out and shoot some jackrabbits in the evening. One evening I persuaded her to go along with me to shoot jackrabbits. We got a nice young jackrabbit and brought him home and sister Grace said, "Well, if you'll clean him, we'll have him for supper tomorrow night." So, of course, I knew how to clean jackrabbits but I knew that if I cleaned the jackrabbit, why, Mamie would go off someplace else, and I wouldn't get to talk to her. So I told her that as long as I shot the jackrabbit, she'd have to clean it. She didn't like the job very well, but she consented to clean the jackrabbit, and I stayed there and talked to her while she was doing the job. She's brought that up to me a good many times since.

In the meantime, my brother Fred had gone to Stillwater, down near Fallon, and bought a hundred and sixty-acre farm down there, hoping to improve the situation. He thought the ranch wasn't big enough, and Father Dibble didn't offer him any incentive to stay, either, and become a partner because the ranch was not large enough to maintain two. So he went down there and bought this hundred and sixty-acre ranch, or farm, down there at the Stillwater section. Then he sent for Father and Mother Dibble. They moved down in June of that year, 1912, taking the old spring wagon, and Father Dibble made a cover to go over the top, with bows, to keep the sun off the seat. And they took their things that they had to take in the spring wagon. Old Prince was one of the horses they drove, the same Old Prince. Later, Fred came up and got one or two of the other horses.

moved in there were new people. A great many of them had only a few dollars when they came in, and it took a few thousand dollars to tide over for a year or two until the crops were ready for harvesting.

Ira Kent was the big merchant in Fallon at the time who tided over most of the farmers from one year to the next. Of course, then, when their crops were ready, he would take their crops, and he acted almost like a banker in that way, advancing them what they needed in order to run from one year to the next. Some of them prospered and were able to run on their own a little later on, where others never did pull out of debt. It happened that when my father sold out at Diamond Valley, he had enough money to pay—he could finance the necessary expenses down there and didn't have to go in debt to Ira Kent or anyone else. But it was a hard proposition; they worked long hours, even at night, irrigating. Father Dibble worked full time, too.

Mother, of course, took care of the house and did the cooking and things of that type, raised a few chickens and turkeys. It was warmer there than it was in Diamond Valley so that she could raise turkeys. They also had quite a nice garden, all kinds of vegetables, and also Hearts of Gold cantaloupes and even watermelons. Some of the best watermelons we ever ate were raised right there. The day that we reached Fallon, they brought out a great big rattlesnake watermelon. It must have weighed twenty pounds, or perhaps twenty-five pounds, and they cut off huge slices and expected us to eat those huge slices. But we couldn't eat watermelon like they could because they were used to it, and we weren't. But they were lovely watermelons.

The peaches, too, were simply delicious. I don't think I ever ate a peach with such delicious flavor as some that they grew down there in the Stillwater-Fallon area.

While we were there, they harvested a third crop of alfalfa. Always up in Diamond Valley, we were lucky to get two good crops of alfalfa and then let the third crop grow for feed for milk cows, as pasturage.

They irrigated there differently from anything that we had ever seen before. In Diamond, we always irrigated by the trench method, whereas here, they irrigated in check system, flooding of the ground. The ground was so compact and the soil was so fine that it couldn't be irrigated very well otherwise. They had to make here what they called "checks." They would level the land off so it was practically level; the given area, a few acres, was practically level so that there was very little slope from one side to the other. Then they would run up little embankments, perhaps six or eight inches high, through this so that the whole thing was in checks, and they would turn the water in from one check to the other. It would fill up each one of these checks to a depth of a few inches and gradually seep down to irrigate the crops. The boys had to be out and take care of the water when it was allotted to them. Some, of course, was at night. Sometimes they would be given the water for night use and sometimes the daytime. The water master tried to arrange it so that they would have it one time in the daytime and the next time at night, so that it would be fair to all people concerned.

It was an all-night process to go out and irrigate that way. Sometimes, the boys would lie down on the ditch bank or sit down on the ditch bank and wait for it to fill up. And loftiness they would go to sleep. And, of course, if they went to sleep and slept for too long a period, it would overflow and wash out their checks. So they used to put their hands usually where they knew the water was coming. When the water came to their hand, then, it would wake them up.

out while I chopped the posts. We hobbled the roan horse out during the day and kept him nearby at night and fed him some of the hay.

We hadn't much more than arrived there when it started to rain, the first moisture we'd had for some time. Started to rain, and rained, and rained every day—not only a little bit, but it rained hard. We didn't have a real tent; we had a wagon canvas which we stretched over a rope between two trees. And for a stove, we rigged up an old galvanized tub. I cut a hole, an opening, in the front and had a stovepipe running out through the top to let the smoke out. It rained and rained, in fact, rained us out. So we decided we'd better be getting home because we didn't know—with so much rain, why, the water would probably be coming down. We could use it for irrigating the land there at home. We went home in a mud puddle or a water puddle all the way home. The road was filled with water, and the old roan splashed through the water all the way home. But he certainly was glad to get back. He didn't relish being hobbled down there in the canyon alone very well.

When we got home, why, the water was starting to run out of the canyon already. We turned it on the fields, and while it was almost too late to really make very much of a crop of hay, it did make good pasture and was a lifesaver, almost. The heavy storm we had was almost a lifesaver for crops that we had coming on.

So after that, after the rain stopped and the water, we got that under control, we didn't go down to camp any more, but I would go down [on] horseback and chop posts down that way, down there, and let them season during the summer. And we could use them, then, the next year for building and for fences and corrals and things that we were building. We built a new alfalfa field, cleared off the land above the old road and put in several

acres of new alfalfa. And it came out and was doing fine; it was rich sagebrush soil. In fact, it was some of the soil where big brush that I mentioned north of the house used to stand. Wherever there's a big sagebrush, why, we know that's always fertile soil. Well, this big brush patch that I mentioned was part of the alfalfa field that we put into alfalfa. It did to our place so it would have fall all the way and still not be too steep so it wouldn't wash and fill up.

After he had surveyed it, Jorgen came down (he had a big plow with four horses) and plowed out the ditch along the route that Surveyor Nickerson had mapped out for us. Then we put Pete to work shoveling out the ditch. [We] did scrape out some of it with a scraper, slip scraper, and two horses, but it had to be finished by hand and a shovel. And Pete did a lot of that; I also helped him, of course, in shoveling the ditch out. And Pete said that the water was running uphill; he didn't think the water'd ever run down there. He didn't think that was—he says, "Me see long time." He says, "Water no run very good uphill." But he worked at cleaning it out. And when he turned the water in, it did run uphill; at least it came through the ranch all right.

But the ditch always, every year, accumulated a lot of wash and sediment. It had to be cleaned by hand every year. That was quite a job every spring before the water came down, to [go] over there and shovel that ditch out. I usually worked for a month or so at nothing else excepting cleaning that ditch. But it came on down all right, brought the water, as we had expected it would. We made a crossing at the road where it crossed the road to the field below.

And we cleared off twelve acres of land (it was wonderful soil), large sagebrush, below the road. In order to clear the land, we used a rail, from the E and P tracks, a heavy rail.

Of course, it wasn't too heavy a rail, either, a narrow-gauge rail, a full-length rail. We hooked two horses onto each end, used four horses to drag the rail around. We went one way on it, and then would go back the other way. And that way, it tore out practically all the brush; there were a few little brush that remained. We went around and pulled up the stumps, or grubbed them out, and planted it to wheat, first, the first year.

Oh, it came up beautiful! It was a beautiful stand of wheat, irrigated from the water from Davis Canyon. It was up to a height of about six or eight inches, maybe a foot high when late spring came, and also the rabbits. Well, the rabbits came in there by droves. It didn't take them very long to really spoil the whole crop of twelve acres of wheat that was growing. In fact, toward the last, when we'd go over there in the evenings, the rabbits would start to run off there; they'd kick up a dust, there were so many of them on the field.

We didn't grow any more wheat or grain there. After that, we just tried to let it grow into wild grass. We sowed Johnson grass; we heard that Johnson grass was such a wonderful grass; it would take over, provide forage and feed. But it proved that Johnson grass didn't grow in that climate. It was too cold. Johnson grass apparently thrived in a warmer climate. We wanted pastureland, but it eventually built up with native grasses and provided hay.

I was telling about the fencing that we had done and the crops that we had put in, alfalfa and so forth, and how the rabbits had multiplied to such an extent that they were a regular pest. Well, they used to come in to the spring there at our place to drink. A jackrabbit is kind of a peculiar animal. They can live for long periods of time quite a distance from water. But when they can get water, they'll come practically every evening to drink. I've

seen jackrabbits living in places which was, oh, seven or eight miles from water. I don't know for sure how they manage to exist, unless they absorb moisture down holes that they frequent at nighttime. But when they can get water, they will come in to drink. So they used to come there at our spring and drink. I rigged up a blind near the spring where they would come in, and with my .22 I used to lay in wait there in the blind. I'd shoot them by the dozens in the evening, go down after supper and wait for the jackrabbits to come in to take their drink. Used to shoot them by the dozens.

But they multiplied to such an extent that nature came in to relieve the situation with an epidemic of tularemia that went through the country and suddenly decimated the jackrabbit population. It acted rather odd, too. The rabbits acted rather odd when they were afflicted with this disease. It seemed that they would want to seek water. They would come in and take a drink of water from the spring. And then, I've seen them jump straight up in the air after they'd taken a drink of water and kick around and die. So, of course, they died from—without the water, also, out on the ranges. You'd find dead jackrabbits every place. Prior to that, people did consider jackrabbits as edible, and a lot of people did eat jackrabbits; we did, too, especially the young jacks that were nice and fat, the spring jacks that fattened up on the new grass. They were quite edible, especially if they were cooked up with onions or something to enhance the flavor.

Cottontail rabbits were never as plentiful as jackrabbits, but they always frequented the rocks or hillsides or places where they could hide out. Sometimes they were down around the ranches, too, if there were places where they could crawl in under and hide out. But cottontails were always considered very good eating.

After we were married and on the ranch, we always had some horses, or horses that we were breaking or in the process of taming. I remember one day (in fact, Handle reminded me of it the other day), one of the horses that we had taken from the ranges, I had him tied up in the stable while I went to a field to work—about two miles; we called it the “point field”—just south of our place. And she’d heard me say that any horse that was on his back, that would lie on his back very long, he would probably die. Well, she heard a kicking around and a great commotion out in the stable, so she went out there to see what was the matter. She found the horse in a manger on his back. So she felt that she’d have to get over to inform me about the condition of the horse. So she ran practically all the way over. By the time she got over there—two miles—she was about exhausted and out of breath, and came down to the field to tell me about it. I wasn’t excited at all because I thought—felt sure that he’d kick himself out of there before [laughing] I had a chance to ever get back. But she was so concerned about it that I guess I went home to see what the trouble was. Anyway, the horse was all right by the time I got back there. But she was certainly concerned about the plight of the horse in the manger.

Another time, I was harrowing down in the fields and one of the spring storms came up in April, sort of a spring blizzard. They last for only just a few minutes, and when they do come, they throw down the big snowflakes in great abundance for a short time, and the wind blows. Then they pass on over and the sun shines. On this occasion, I stopped the team and sat down alongside the shelter of the team until the storm passed. She looked down and she saw that the team was standing there and she couldn’t see me anyplace. So she didn’t know what had happened. So she ran

all the way down to the field to see what was the matter and found that [laughing] I was all okay. So she was relieved to know that I was okay, but quite provoked to think that [laughing] she had to run all the way down there [laughing].

King was certainly a good watchdog. I mentioned King before. We never had a dog before; he was the first one, and we have never had one since who was anything like King. We thought a lot of King. That was before Andrew was born and shortly after we were married. We made a lot of King and he thought a lot of us, also. On some occasions, I had to take King along with me to help with the cattle. But I tried to leave him at home as often as possible so that he’d be there with Mamie when she was home alone. On this one occasion, I had him over to the point field with me, and a tramp came along (we called them tramps those days, any itinerant fellow that wandered around on foot, trying to bum off the country; we called them tramps), and Mamie was in the kitchen doing something—cleaning shelves or something, and as she turned around, she looked out through the screen door. He was looking right straight through the screen door at her, and, of course, that gave her quite a fright, she being there alone. So she went over immediately and closed the door, and he came to the door and wanted to know if he couldn’t get a bucket of water or do something to help her in some way. She said no, she didn’t need any help; she had plenty of water. First, he wanted a drink of water and she told him, well, there’s plenty of water in the well, just pull the bucket up and help himself. But he apparently wasn’t satisfied with that. But when she closed the door, he couldn’t talk to her any more, and I guess he was a little undecided what to do, also. Anyway, it wasn’t very long after that that I came home. Of course, as soon as King saw the tramp, his hair bristled up and

around a thousand dollars for the lath and plaster job. I put in the concrete basement floor myself, put in the forms and had the concrete brought. I had a contract from the Hasco Company to furnish the furnace and water heater.

It was hard to get a furnace at that time because of the war that was going on. To get anything like a furnace was almost—you had to pull teeth to do it. Anyway, I knew that a number of furnaces had come in on orders that were probably given after I had given my order if they had taken a contract. “Oh, yes, another furnace was coming in. In a very short time, why, we’ll be able to get the furnace.” So anyway, I wrote back to the GE people at their headquarters in the East and told them the situation, that I knew that furnaces were being delivered in Reno, but that I wasn’t getting mine. It was in a very, very short time that the furnace was delivered. The GE people in the East wrote me a letter and told me that they would see that I got a furnace in a very short time. And it came in, and I got one of the furnaces that was in the next shipment.

I laid my own hardwood floors, and, of course, had someone come in to do the sanding. Then I built the stairway downstairs and built a stairway upstairs. Upstairs, we made two rooms and put in a floor up there and insulated the side walls and the ceiling, had a window in each end. And these two rooms were just as nice and comfortable as the ones downstairs, unless in the summertime, they may have been a little bit warmer, but not much, because they were so well insulated and of the cross ventilation between the two ends.

Well, Mamie did most of the painting, practically all of it, excepting some of the outside, and she even helped me with some of the outside painting. So it was a big painting job; we gave everything three coats of paint.

So it really looked quite nice. The doors and windows, some of them, did shrink a little bit that we got from Watkins Mill, but they weren’t really bad. We didn’t have any spray; it was all done by brush; we didn’t use a roller, either. Rollers were a thing to be; they hadn’t come in yet, at least we didn’t know about rollers.

After we finished inside, we hadn’t told our sister Grace or Jorgen anything about that we were building a house. At that time, they had sold their place in Diamond Valley and he had gone to work as a sheep inspector for the state, inspecting the health of the sheep. They lived most of the time in Elko. The two boys, Harold and Lloyd, had bought a ranch up north of Winnemucca, fifty miles north of Winnemucca. He had financed them with some of the money that he had realized from the sale of the ranch there in Diamond Valley. The sale of the ranch in Diamond Valley consisted of our place and the Cox place, as well as the old Diamond Springs ranch, which gave range right to quite a large area of country, all through the north end of Diamond Valley, and was quite a good piece of property. We never knew for sure just exactly the price that they got for the place, but it wasn’t anywhere near what it was worth in later times, because property was just on the rise at that time.

Anyway, they made trips to Reno occasionally, and went around to see what was being offered for sale here in the way of houses for sale. Happened to come by here on Nixon Avenue and saw us—saw me—working there; I was just working on the garage door. [Laughing] And they were surprised. Anyway, they came in and saw the house, and were surprised that we had built a house and in such a nice place, such a nice home.

Well, we were all ready to move in 1947. When Andrew was home, we had built a