An Interview with
VERA HAMMOND FLINSPACH

An Oral History conducted and edited by
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Lincoln County Town History Project
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PREFACE

The Lincoln County Town History Project (LCTHP) engages in interviewing people who can provide firsthand descriptions of the individuals, events and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interview are not history. However, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiography as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the LCTHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the LCTHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts, and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often largely

unreadable and therefore a waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the LCTHP will, in preparing a text:

a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often sprinkled;

b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;

c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context;

d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered but have been added to render the text intelligible; and

e. make every effort to correctly spell the names of all individuals and places, recognizing that an occasional word may be misspelled because no authoritative source on its correct spelling was found.

INTRODUCTION

Historians generally consider the year 1890 as the close of the American frontier. By then, most of the western United States had been settled, ranches and farms developed, communities established, and roads and railroads constructed. The mining boomtowns, based on the lure of overnight riches from newly developed lodes, and the settlement of most of the suitable farmland, were but a memory.

Although Nevada was granted statehood in 1864, examination of any map of the state from the late 1800s shows that most of it south of the 38th parallel remained largely unsettled, even unmapped. In 1890 most of southern Nevada - including Lincoln County - remained very much a frontier, and it continued to be so for at least another 20 years.

Even in the 1990s, the frontier can still be found in Lincoln County in the attitudes, values, lifestyles, and memories of area residents. The frontier-like character of the area is also visible in the relatively undisturbed quality of the natural environment, much of it essentially untouched by humans.

A survey of written sources on Lincoln County's history reveals variability from town to town: A fair amount of literature, for instance, can be found covering Pioche from its first newspaper, beginning in the fall of 1870, to the present. Newspapers from Delamar are available from 1892 to 1906 and Caliente from 1904 to 1968. In contrast, Panaca and Alamo never had newspapers of record. Throughout their histories, all Lincoln County communities received only spotty coverage in the newspapers of other communities. Most of the history of

Lincoln County after 1920 is stored in the memories of individuals who are still living.

Aware of Lincoln County's close ties to our nation's frontier past and the scarcity of written sources on local history (especially after 1920), the Lincoln County Commissioners initiated the Lincoln County Town History Project (LCTHP). The LCTHP is an effort to systematically collect and preserve the history of Lincoln County, Nevada. The centerpiece of the LCTHP is a set of interviews conducted with individuals who had knowledge of local history. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and then edited lightly to preserve the language and speech patterns of those interviewed. All oral history interviews have been printed on acid-free paper and bound and archived in Lincoln County libraries, Special Collections in the James R. Dickinson Library at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, and at other archival sites located throughout Nevada.

The interviews vary in length and detail, but together they form a never-before-available composite of each community's life and development. The collection of interviews for each community can be compared to a bouquet: Each flower in the bouquet is unique--some are large, others are small--yet each adds to the total image. In sum, the interviews provide a view of community and county history that reveals the flow of life and events for a part of Nevada that has heretofore been largely neglected by historians.

Collection of the oral histories has been accompanied by the assembling of a set of photographs depicting each community's history. These pictures have been obtained from participants in the oral history

interviews and other present and past Lincoln County residents. Complete sets of the photographs have been archived along with the oral histories. The oral interviews and written sources served as the basis for histories of the major communities in Lincoln County. These histories have also been archived.

The LCTHP is one component of the Lincoln County program to determine the socioeconomic impact of a federal proposal to build a high-level nuclear waste repository in southern Nye County, Nevada. The repository, which would be inside Yucca Mountain, would be the nation's first, and possibly only, permanent disposal site for high-level radioactive waste. The Lincoln County Board of County Commissioners initiated the LCTHP in 1990 in order to collect information on the origin, history, traditions and quality of life of Lincoln County communities that may be impacted by the repository. If the repository is constructed, it will remain a source of interest for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years to come, and future generations will likely want to know more about the people who once resided in the area. In the event that government policy changes and a high-level nuclear waste repository is not constructed in Nevada, material compiled by the LCTHP will remain for the use and enjoyment of all.

--RDM

This is Robert McCracken talking to Vera Flinspach at her home in Eagle Valley, Nevada, January 19, 1991. Ronda Hammond Hornbeck is present.

CHAPTER ONE

RM: Vera, could you tell me your name as it reads on your birth certificate?

VF: Vera Luetta Hammond.

RM: And when and where were you born?

VF: Right here in Eagle Valley, January 10, 1901.

RM: What was your father's name, Vera?

VF: Henry Wilson Hammond.

RM: Do you know when and where he was born?

VF: St. George, Utah.

RM: Do you know his birth date?

VF: It's October 17, 1874.

RM: What was your mother's full maiden name?

VF: Alice Eliza Heaps.

RM: Where was she born?

VF: In Panaca, Nevada.

RM: Now what was her birthdate?

VF: That was September 22, 1877.

RM: Vera, what was your father's occupation?

VF: He was a rancher. He also learned how to cure the hide of a cow, then cut it into strings and braid them into rope and make quirts and whips. He sold some of these. This was all done by hand, and I often held a light so he could see, as most braiding was done in the evenings.

RM: Where was his ranch located?

VF: Right here in Eagle Valley.

RM: Was he one of the first ranchers to settle here?

VF: No, his father was.

RM: Ronda Hornbeck is showing us a picture of your parents.

VF: Yes, that's my father and my mother. They were married in 1900.

RM: Where were they married?

VF: In Panaca.

RM: How many brothers and sisters did you have, Vera?

VF: I have 2 sisters and one brother - Ada Hammond and Robert Hammond and Sarah Hammond. I was the oldest.

Ronda Hornbeck: [Here are the children's] birthdates.

RM: OK, let's give those: Vera was the oldest and then Ada was the second oldest and she was born June 30, 1902. Robert was born January 14, 1905, and Sarah was born September 23, 1907.

VF: Ada's gone. She had cancer and she's gone. Bob lives in Pioche and Sarah's up at Carson [City, Nevada].

RM: Did both of your parents live a long time?

VF: No. Mother died when she was about 46 years old.

RM: What did she die of?

VF: She had a tumor - a 5-pound tumor.

RM: Is that right?

VF: They took it out and she got along fine. They sent us word she could come home in just a few days. Then all at once we got word for Dad to come, that they didn't expect her to live overnight. He got there just in time. I asked him when he came home, "Did she know you when you came in?"

And he said, "Yes, I think she did. She looked up at me and smiled,

but she didn't speak." And from then on she was gone. July 25, 1923, was when she passed away.

RM: When did your father pass away? Did he live to be an old man?

VF: Yes, he was in his 80s - 85. I cooked a birthday dinner for him here in 1959. He asked me to call his sister who lived up here and my aunt from Pioche and a friend from Rose Valley, a Lytle woman. He asked me to have those 3 people because they were the oldest. He wanted them here for dinner. While we were eating dinner he said, "Well, there's one of us that won't be here for the next birthday." And he was the one that was gone. I think he had a feeling that he wouldn't be here.

RM: Vera, did your family come into Eagle Valley as a part of the southern mission of the LDS church? What brought them into the valley?

VF: Brigham Young was over in the community at St. George and he had been around this country exploring. When he got home [to Salt Lake], he told them that a group should be sent out here to colonize this country. I think they had already started the mining over in Pioche. But my grandfather came here with John Lytle and [some others].

RM: OK, you're showing me a picture of a sign which reads "Eagle Valley Fort. In the spring of 1865 Brigham Young called the following families to settle this valley: Meltar Hatch, President; John E. Hammond, Presiding Elder; Frederick Hamblin, Francis Hamblin, Joseph Hatfield, Taylor Crosby, James A. Little, W. M. Lytle, John Lytle and Henry Chamberlin. They built a fort near here. Lived in it for 3 years for protection from the Indians. They cleared the land, made irrigation ditches and built their first homes." Where is that sign?

VF: Right down here where you make the turn to come this way. The road forks and goes the other way and it's right on the turn.

RM: Were they a part of the United Order or anything like that when they started this [community]?

VF: I don't know for sure.

RM: So they built that fort and then they started building their homes here?

VF: Yes. My grandparents lived down in that area when they first moved here. First they had the fort over on this side, and then when they divided for the land they moved into this area. And they lived down in that area down there.

RM: About how far down would that be?

VF: Just down the street - where Uncle John Hammond's place is.

RM: Where was the old fort located?

VF: Over on the west side.

RM: Do you remember your father ever telling stories about what it was like when he grew up here?

VF: He told me about how they used to separate and hide from the Indians because they were afraid. The Indians had this territory - they were settled here - and when the white people moved in then they decided that it was time for them to move out, but one group of them stayed.

RM: Were they Paiute Indians?

VF: Yes. They stayed here and as time went on the younger generation went to school with us. Ronda, your grandmother had one of the girls stay up there with her.

RH: Yes. I can't remember what her name was. That would be Ziny Hammond.

RM: Why don't we get your name on the tape?

RH: I'm Ronda Hornbeck, Harold and Shannon Hammond's daughter.

RM: How are they related to Vera?

RH: Joseph Hammond and her father, Henry Hammond, were brothers.

RM: Thank you. Vera, did they have a school here for your father and so on?

VF: Yes, they had a little log schoolhouse that they went to school in. As time went on that was destroyed and they built this building out here. I went to school in this one out here.

RM: Is that school still operating?

VF: No. They all go to Pioche now.

RM: What kinds of activities did your father engage in as he was growing up? What kinds of crops did they raise and so on?

VF: Well, they raised mostly hay, I think, on account of their cattle. But we always had our own gardens and orchards. They hauled their materials to Pioche from the gardens and from the orchards.

RM: So they sold their produce in Pioche?

VF: Yes. But when our flour and sugar and things like that were brought in they were shipped into Modena on the train and then the people from here took their horse and wagon, went to Modena, and loaded it in and brought it home. Generally one wagon and team went and brought the supplies back for everybody.

RM: And this was when your father was growing up?

VF: Yes.

RM: Why didn't they go to Panaca?

VF: Panaca was a bigger town than most areas here, but they just seemed to go to Pioche because Pioche was a mining town and they had more money coming in over there. That was their best place for selling because people in Panaca raised their own, and people in Pioche didn't.

RM: Your father built the house that you're living in now?

VF: Yes. The other one burned down.

RM: Oh, I see - your grandfather built a house where your house is now?

VF: Yes, then my father built this one.

RM: When did it burn down?

RH: In 1939.

VF: One morning when the wind was blowing very hard out of the north and he went down to the corral to milk, all at once he heard someone calling. He set his bucket down and raised up to find out who was calling, and it was his wife here at the house. (He was married for the second time.) She was calling, "Fire!" He grabbed his milk bucket and ran to the house and the whole roof of the house was on fire. It burned down before they could get any help to take care of it.

RM: OK, you're showing me a picture of the house that burned down in 1939.

VF: That's the house that burned.

RM: Was it built in the 1880s?

VF: I don't have any idea.

RM: It would have been built before 1900, wouldn't it?

VF: It would have to have been. They lived in the little log house for a long time before they built this one.

RM: Where was the log house?

VF: It was down in the lower end of town here. I can't remember just the spot.

RH: I don't know either Vera.

RM: Did Eagle Valley have a store back around the turn of the century?

VF: Down at the bottom of the street on the right-hand side as you come

up across from Ronda's place. The same house is standing now but they had a little room built on the back and they had dry goods and butter and milk and sometimes eggs if she could get hold of them. The room that she had her supplies in wasn't any bigger than this.

RH: Was that just across from Paul and Myrtle Bliss's place?

VF: Betty Francis's place.

RH: Oh, it's where Betty Francis's place is just now?

VF: Yes.

RM: Would that store have been built before 1900?

VF: Well, it could have been; I wouldn't say for sure. But I can remember, as a little girl, going down there. My dad would get me a nickel or a penny and I could go down there and buy me a stick of candy or a chew of gum or some little thing like that.

RM: Did your mother grow up in Panaca?

VF: Yes.

RM: How did your mother and father meet?

VF: They were working in Delamar - the mine over there was running. Dad was hauling supplies from here to Delamar, and she was working in Delamar. (That's how they got acquainted.) Then they kind of closed the place down and she went home. My grandmother here had poor health and needed help, and my mother volunteered to come up and help her. And Grandmother said, "I don't ask for volunteers. I pay for what I get." So she came up here and worked with my grandmother for . . . I couldn't tell you just how long. Anyhow, that's where their romance started. They married and then they moved out here and we lived in a little 3-room house across the way here. We had the 3 rooms and there were 6 people - my brothers and sisters, my mother and dad - in that little 3-room house.

But it was nice. We were taught to respect one another and we just got along fine.

RM: Did your dad own that house or did he build it?

VF: He owned it - he bought it from his uncle. You've heard him talk about Uncle Ike Mathis. He moved to Lund, Nevada.

RH: Yes.

VF: He bought it from him.

RM: And meanwhile his folks continued to live where you are now?

VF: Yes. I practically lived here with my grandparents because she always needed help. I was the oldest so I got the job.

RM: What are the things that you helped her with?

VF: Washing dishes, making bread. There was a fellow by the name of Nelson who ran a bakery in St. George, and he was up here. Grandmother served dinner for them and he asked who made the bread. She told him and he said, "Well, I'd like to take her back to work in my bakery down there."

She said, "No way. I need her."

RM: So you were good at making bread?

VF: I still make my own bread.

RM: Did they do a lot of canning in those days?

VF: Always. As soon as the fruit was big enough we took care of it.

RM: What are some of the things that you canned?

VF: Apples and pears, peaches, plums . . . we used to dry a lot of it. Grandfather had a big barn down here which burned down. It had a big metal roof on it and they'd spread a sheet up on that metal roof. Then my sister Ada and I and Ronda's oldest aunt and another one from up here used to be put up on the shed. Those pieces of fruit were cut in half

and the cores taken out, and we had to line them up in rows like this all the way across. We had to get up there and line that fruit up in the sun to dry.

RM: And did you put the cut side up or what?

VF: It was standing like this.

RM: Oh, it was standing on end.

VF: And this side here faced the sun, so when the sun came up in the morning it shone on the cut side.

RM: How long did it take it to dry?

VF: Generally a couple of days, if no rain or snow happened. Sometimes it was along toward fall pretty late when we would be drying.

RM: What happened if it rained?

VF: If it got wet it [would go] sour.

RM: So if you thought it was going to rain you'd have to bring it in?

VF: Yes.

RM: What did you do about fruit flies?

VF: We generally put a screen over the top to keep the flies from getting on it.

RM: I see. And what did you do with it after it was dried?

VF: We just put it in a sack and hung it up in a dry place so no moisture could get to it.

RM: Did you have a cellar that you kept things in?

VF: Yes. It's still standing out there. The one we had over there has been abolished. When Samuel moved in they tore it down and built the bigger house that stands there now. That covered the territory where our cellar and our house was.

RM: How many acres did your grandfather have?

VF: That I can't answer. We had the meadow down south and then we had this area over here on the other side of the creek, and then this section in here.

RH: The lower acreage is probably around 80 acres, and across here is maybe 14 acres, and then whatever acreage involves this around here.

RM: So approximately 100 acres?

RH: Somewhere around in there.

RM: And you say they grew mainly alfalfa. Did they grow alfalfa or natural grass?

VF: Natural grass. They still do, don't they? Over here they have some alfalfa, but the meadow's always been grass.

RM: And they would get one cutting a year, wouldn't they?

VF: Yes.

RM: Did you feed the hay to your own stock or did you sell it?

VF: We fed this to our own stock. We seldom had enough to sell until after we bought it in the Spring Valley. Then they used to haul it to Pioche.

RM: What kind of stock did you keep?

VF: Herefords.

RM: So you sold beef cattle. Did you have any dairy cattle?

VF: Just one milk cow. Each family had their own cow.

RM: And then did you keep chickens?

VF: We always had our own eggs - chickens. And we always kept a pig.

RM: Did you smoke meat?

VF: No, they salted it.

RM: Did you keep rabbits or ducks or anything like that?

VF: After I moved over there . . . we didn't have any rabbits, but we

had ducks and chickens.

RM: What did you do when people got sick? Was there a doctor in the community?

VF: The doctor from Pioche came out here. My dad made many trips to Pioche a-horseback. He'd get a carriage and a horse and bring the doctor back out. One time when he went in my grandmother was very sick, and he went in in a storm. And it was raining - oh, it was raining when he left! And when he came back he couldn't get across the creek down here where you came in. (I guess you came down that road.)

RM: I came around.

VF: Anyhow, he crossed that one down there going in, and when he came back the water was running right up to the top and he couldn't get over, so he came up through the fields here. And there was one stringer from the bridge that was left right here by the haystack. He unsaddled his horse, put his saddle up against the tree and got a-straddle of that stringer that was across the creek and came over on his hands and knees and brought the medicine back to his mother.

RM: Is that right? Wow. If somebody broke a bone or something did they take them in to Pioche?

VF: Yes. Dr. Camel took care of everything.

RM: Tell me what kind of school you had and what it was like going to school here?

VF: Well, we had from the first to the eighth grade and we had all grades in one room. It was nice. All the children learned to respect one another and we enjoyed it. In later years they built one up this canyon here up toward the east. (You can't see it from here because of these buildings.) It was up the foot of this hill over here. And I went

to school part of one year there but the rest of the time . . . I was out of school by then.

RM: How many children were in the first school you went to?

VF: I can name them, but . . .

RH: [Someone] said there were about 22 [students] but that for 2 years they came back and made this a high school, too. Do you remember that part of it?

VF: Yes.

RM: Why don't you name some of the children you went to school with?

VF: When I first went to school there was Irvin Hammond and Roy Lytle and Arthur Drake, Nita Riding, Sarah Hollinger and myself and Marie Donahue. That was our first year of school.

RM: When you were in the first grade?

VF: Yes.

RM: And those were all of the children in the school?

VF: Yes, when I first started. But before I quit we had about 15 - myself and Sarah Ross, and Ada and Fannie and Orpha.

RH: (Ada was her sister, and Fannie Lytle and Orpha Hammond.)

VF: And Lizzie Hammond, Betty Hammond and Mabel Hammond, and then there was Samuel.

RH: (Samuel A. Hollinger.)

VF: Sarah Hollinger and Fannie Lytle and Ada and I were the oldest. Then Orpha and Bob Hammond and the 2 Samuels - Samuel A. and Samuel J. Hollinger, and then Aurelius Riding and then Kermit Hollinger and Joe Hollinger and Sarah and Betty and Myrtle Donahue.

RM: What was your first teacher's name?

VF: Jane Heaps.

RM: And where was she from?

VF: Panaca.

RM: Was she a young woman or an older woman?

VF: A young woman.

RM: Your teachers were usually younger women, weren't they?

VF: Most of them were.

RM: Do you remember where she lived?

VF: She lived with us most of the time.

RM: Could you tell us a little bit about some of the subjects that you studied?

VF: Reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling. [chuckles]

RM: Did you use the McGuffy Reader?

VF: We had Heath Readers. They were a gray-backed book about [an inch] thick. They had the nicest stories in them. [chuckles] I had some of those old books, but when the house burned I lost them all. They were hunting history for my party the other night, but I couldn't tell them a lot of stuff because I'd lost the materials in that fire. Ronda asked about some pictures and I said, "Well, no baby pictures because they went in the fire."

RM: Oh, that's too bad. Did the school use to put on programs for the community or anything like that?

VF: Oh yes. At Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter time we always had a program.

RM: What kind of a Christmas program did you put on?

VF: They always put up a Christmas tree and had Santa Claus. And then the school children all had a part in a program, either singing or reciting. But it all had to be done from memory and there were no books or papers.

RM: Is that right? Was the program held in the school?

VF: Yes - in the evening.

RM: And what kind of Thanksgiving program did you put on?

VF: Well, we always had a thank-you program, mostly. You know, we were taught to give thanks. So that was what our program mostly resulted in, a program of thanks.

RM: And what did your Easter program consist of?

VF: The birth of Christ and the death of Christ.

RM: I see. Did you have things like Easter egg hunts in those days?

VF: Very seldom. We always had an Easter picnic but we never had an egg hunt because eggs were valuable. We had to sell them to get our money. They don't do it that way nowadays.

RM: Did you have dances or anything like that in the community?

VF: Yes. They don't do it now though. [chuckles] We used to always dance in this hall over here - they finally put in a hardwood floor. The first one got washed out by the flood so they put a new one in, and it's been ruined by floods. If you'd look in there now you couldn't see what it was [like before].

RM: Was the hall a community center or a church, or what?

VF: Everything was [for the] community. I told Ronda's dad the other day it's too bad they don't get busy and fix it up. And he said, "Well, it'd cost too much money to raise it and put a foundation under it and then put a new floor in." The rest of the building is good if it was cleaned out.

RH: Didn't your father used to take his old phonograph over there for the dances?

VF: Yes, he'd pack it. He bought it from her dad's uncle, Joe Blair. He bought it from him cause Joe was going away, and we had it there at

the home. How we did play that thing from morning till night! [laughs]

RM: Did it play the old cylinder records?

VF: No, it was a plate. He'd bring it over and put it on the stage over there and then he'd go home and we just had it to ourselves. And we had quite a lot of dance music. [We spent] many a good evening over there. Now they go to Pioche for everything. [chuckles]

RM: When you were a kid growing up, about how many people were living in the community here?

VF: Let's see. There was Uncle John and Mr. Hollinger and Bob Francis and Grandpa Lytle, and Dwyers, and Donahues, Ed Lytle, Joe Hollinger, and your granddad (that was Charlie Lytle over there).

RH: Wasn't Maggie Warren living there at the time?

VF: Maggie Warren lived over in her dad's home. That was in the first years - the older people who had their homes here.

RM: So there were about 10 families living here at that time?

VF: Yes.

RM: How did they earn a living in those days (that is, before World War I)?

VF: Just about the way they're doing now - farming - cattle-raising, principally. Most of them go to Pioche for work now, and in those days they didn't. It was too far to go with a horse and wagon.

RM: Do you recall how World War I might have affected the community?

VF: It didn't seem to affect us too much here. We continued with our life the same as we had done before. My husband was drafted from Utah just over the line here - in Modena. He was drafted just before we were married. And then Roy Lytle, who lived up here, was drafted. I can't recall any others directly out of town here.

RM: How did you get information from outside? What newspapers did you read?

VF: We had the Mill Carrier from Pioche. We had a post office up here. (Well, the first post office was right over here in the next house.) The mail was brought in with horse and wagon until they got the little Fords running, and then they brought it in by Ford.

RM: Did it come in from Pioche?

VF: Yes. The main office was at Pioche.

RM: How often did it come in? It didn't come in every day, did it?

VF: Well, to start with, no. But later it got to coming in every day. It still comes every day (they bring it by car). There is no post office - only mail boxes.

RM: What was your husband's name?

VF: William Conrad Flinspach.

RM: Is that a German name?

VF: Yes.

RM: Where did his family come from?

VF: Germany.

RM: Were they LDS?

VF: No, Grandpa was Lutheran and Grandma was Catholic to start with. Two of her sisters came to the States and they wrote back and told what a wonderful place this country was. So she (my mother-in-law) and her sister Mary decided that they wanted to come over. She said, "I got everything ready and Mamma helped us." And she told what a big trunk - well, she still had it - Mike Flinspach still has it at the ranch. They put everything inside of that big trunk - it's a great big thing like that [4 feet long]. And she said, "Mamma wouldn't let us leave until we

had a blessing by the priest." She said, "He came down and he'd give us a few lines and then he'd charge so much for how much he'd said. By the time he was through we didn't have any money to come to the States on."

RM: They were broke? [laughs]

VF: She said, "We had to stay home for 2 more years before we could get our money to come out." So she came to the States and they stayed back in Pennsylvania for a while. Then she moved out to Denver, Colorado. And she met him up there and they were married in Denver.

RM: Now this is your husband's family?

VF: My husband's family. And then they moved from Denver to Salt Lake, then from Salt Lake down to State Line, and from State Line down to Delamar. He ran a butcher shop everywhere he went, so they got along pretty well. Then he decided when he was working in State Line that he wanted a home over in that area.

RM: In Modena?

VF: Yes. So we have a ranch just 5 miles above Modena in the canyon there, and that's where they grew up.

RM: When was your husband born? Was he about the same age as you?

VF: No, he was about 12 years older than I am.

RM: So he would have been born in about 1889 or something.

VF: I think it was '89.

RM: Did your husband's father continue to run a butcher shop in Modena, or did he go into ranching then?

VF: He went into ranching.

RM: But they were not Mormons?

VF: None of them.

RM: How did you meet your husband, Vera?

VF: Well, he needed work and we needed help on the farms in Spring Valley putting up hay in the summertime. So they hired him to come and help put up the hay in the summertime.

RM: And he was born in 1889?

VF: February 17, 1889.

RH: And they were married on December 31, 1929 and he passed away on February 9, 1966.

RM: Your husband was close to 40 when he got married, wasn't he?

VF: Yes.

RM: And you met him because he was working for your family?

VF: Yes, that was when I first met him. And then they started mixing their cattle with the ranchers over here. He'd bring his cattle over and put them with these and take them west in the spring and bring them back home in the wintertime and feed them.

RM: Where was he selling his cattle? Did they go to Pioche too?

VF: No, they shipped from Modena. Generally a buyer from California would come in and buy the cattle, then they'd take them to Modena and put them on the train. In later years they stopped that, and we'd bring our cattle in and separate what we wanted to sell and mix them with the herd. They'd put them in the cars at Modena and ship them into California. He used to ship with the cattle to see that they were fed and watered right. He used to go every fall.

RM: Where did you live when you first got married?

VF: Over in Modena with his folks. His oldest brother died a year or so after my mother did and the mother was alone on the ranch when he passed away. Bill was riding out west here and they called for him to come home. So Ronda's grandfather went and got Bill from over on Dry Lake and

brought him here and Dad took him from here over to Modena. When Dad got ready to go he said, "Vera, you'd better go too. That lady needs help." So I packed my little suitcase and went.

Then his sister was teaching school in Panaca and she had to go back to work and she said, "There's nobody here with Mom. Will you stay?" So I stayed - and I stayed and I stayed. [chuckles]

RM: How long did you stay?

VF: Oh glory! I was there . . .

RH: About 40 years.

RM: Is that right?

VF: Yes, 40 years, I'm sure. I stayed up on the ranch in the canyon there for 40 years. Then after my father died he gave me this home - well, the one that burned down. Bill said, "Well, when we get rid of the cows then we'll go to Eagle Valley." So that's what we did.

RM: And when did you move back here then?

VF: In 1963.

RH: Yes, Bill died in '66 and you guys had lived here for about 3 years.

VF: He passed away in 1966, so he didn't live here long. He was wounded when he was in the service. He was shot through the chest - it broke the covering around his heart. They took the bullet out from under his arm. It's up there.

RM: That's the bullet there?

VF: That's the bullet that they took out from under his arm.

RM: Goodness. And that was in World War I?

VF: Yes.

RM: How many children did you have, Vera?

VF: Not any. Everybody's children are my children.

RM: Let's back up and talk a little bit about how you lived when you were growing up here. There was no electric power, was there?

VF: Oh, no.

RM: What did you do for lights?

VF: We used coal oil lamps and candles.

RM: Did you make your own candles?

VF: No, they bought them.

RM: When did electric lights come into the valley here?

VF: Do you remember? I wasn't here.

RH: I know there were electric lights long before I was born. I was born in 1951 and I know that we didn't get TV here until I was about 7 years old, but there was electricity here.

RM: So TV came in in the late '50s. Where did it come in from?

RH: They put a station right up here on the top of the hill. I would assume it probably came from Las Vegas.

RM: Do you get your stations from Las Vegas?

RH: Yes.

RM: When they brought power in, where did it come from?

VF: It came from Vegas; I think it still does.

RM: Is it Boulder Dam power?

VF: Yes.

RM: Did people have light plants here when you were growing up - little generators?

VF: There was nothing like that.

RM: What did you do for refrigeration?

VF: The creek down here used to freeze over solid, about that thick [more than a foot]. They used to go out with ice saws and saw it off in

blocks and bring it home and store it in a ice house. The ice house was an underground cellar; they'd fill it up with chips and sawdust - just cover the ice with chips and sawdust. If you'd leave it in there with the door shut you'd have ice all summer.

RM: Would an ice house be as big as this room, or bigger?

VF: It was about like this room. We'd fill it to the top and then cover it with sawdust. The tighter they could get it in, and the tighter they could cover it, the longer it would keep.

RM: This room is about 12-by-18, isn't it?

VF: It's 16-by-14. I measured it. Count the blocks.

RM: Did each family have an ice house, or was there a community ice house?

VF: No. We had one in Spring Valley up at the old ranch where Ronda's dad is now.

RH: Yes. He tells some stories about how they thought it was really neat when they could still have butter into late July and early August from those ice houses. Up in the Fogliani ranch, because there were so many springs up there, a lot of them would build their refrigerated houses over the springs and then they would built their cupboards and everything up a little bit higher, because those springs would provide the coolness so they could store their milk and things inside those without actually putting them on the water. The springs were very useful for that.

RM: So, instead of ice they used the springs?

RH: Yes. They'd use the ice to keep the meat and butter and things like that, but as they brought milk in fresh every day they'd keep it cooler - and they used it for breads.

RM: But the ice house was a separate building?

VF: The ice house was built under the ground.

RH: Yes. It was totally different - they had 2 different types of refrigeration.

VF: These people over here had one and the people at the bottom of the street had one, and then we had the one up here.

RM: Now what did you use the ice for, exactly? You wouldn't use it in the winter, would you?

VF: Oh no. You could go to the creek and get it then.

RM: So when the weather turned warmer, what are the things you would use the ice for?

VF: We stored our butter and eggs near the ice. If we were going to keep it a long time we could put it right down with the ice. But we made ice cream and we made cheese. We didn't make too much cheese ourselves, but those people who lived up there in Spring Valley used to make a lot of it - the Foglianis and the Francises.

RM: Now, let's say you wanted to keep something cool. Would you take it down to the ice house or would you bring some of the ice up to an icebox?

VF: Generally we brought it out because we didn't want to thaw what was in the house.

RM: OK, you didn't go in the ice house any more than you had to.

VF: No. The warmer the air got the less we had of the ice.

RM: Yeah. But it would last all summer. Isn't that amazing?

VF: Yes. We didn't put up any ice up at Spring Valley the last year or two, so we used to borrow ice from the people up above us - the Foglianis and Francises. They always had ice because they were so far out. They kept their food on it. They'd bring it in the house and store

it in a pan so that when it melted the pan caught the water. Everything that we set on the ice, kept.

RM: What was happening up at Spring Valley? Was there a community up there like there is here?

VF: There was at one time - several families lived up there. My grandmother was a midwife and did a lot of work for the families up there. They would call her when anyone was sick, or if there was a new baby to be born she was on call.

RH: In fact, they used midwives for most all of the children that were actually born around here. They didn't take them in to be born in hospitals; most everybody was born in their own homes here with the use of midwives.

RM: Vera, you were saying that at one time there was a community up in Spring Valley. What happened to it? Why did it fade away?

VF: Well, for one thing, it was too far for children to go to school. They had 2 different school buildings, didn't they?

RH: Yes.

VF: There was one up by the Fogliani place and then they had another one down here. But they had such a time getting their children back and forth to school that they moved away to get the children a better chance at school. And then most of the people that were there were older people and they passed away. And the younger generation didn't want it.

You were talking about the buildings a while ago. I still have the big old rock cellar where we used to store our milk and things; it's still standing out there. And I have one underground cellar where they used to keep the apples in storage for wintertime. I can remember when my grandfather would fill that cellar - well, the boys had to help him - clear around with apples. They had a space about so big square between that and the door so you could get in and out. And in the wintertime when it was cold they'd get a big pan like we used to wash dishes in and fill it with dirt under the bottom. Then he'd come in and get the coals out of the stove and fill that pan up and put it down in the cellar and leave it to keep the cellar warm. There was no danger of it catching fire cause it was just the coals and they were in that pan. But that's how we kept our fruit over the winter. We don't do it now.

RM: Yes, it wouldn't freeze. Did he do that every night?

VF: Yes, in the wintertime when it was cold like we had the last couple of weeks.

RM: Vera, do you think it was colder in days gone by than it is now?

VF: Oh my, yes. We had more snow than we've had the last few years. I can remember when my dad used to take his saddle horse and either get a bale of hay or a big log from the wood pile, tie his rope onto that and drag it around to make trails so we could get around.

RM: Isn't that something?

VF: That was easier than shoveling.

RM: Where did you get your firewood?

VF: From around the mountains here. Sometimes it'd take them all day to go out and get a load of wood, but they always brought in about a cord or a little more on the wagon. [One time] my uncle went out alone up through here, and about 3:00 in the afternoon I saw him coming. I ran to the door and said, "Mamma, Uncle Milt's coming home. What's the matter?"

She said, "I don't know. Something's wrong."

We went out - and we used to have wires instead of a gate - and we crawled through to meet him when he came down. His ax had slipped and cut his foot down here. He didn't have anything to take care of it, so he tore his shirt off and wound it around as much as he could and got on one of the horses and rode it home.

RH: Tell him how cold it was when you used to take your trips to Modena and to St. George by wagon.

VF: It was when my grandmother was sick. I had been with her all summer here and when fall came her daughter in Salt Lake said, "I'll take Mother home with me for the winter." My father had been up and visited with

her and his sister from up here had been up, so along in March Uncle Joe said, "Well, it's my turn now."

Dad came home and he said to me, "Grandma wants you to come up and stay with her."

And I said, "I can't do it."

He said, "Yes you can. You did it here, you can do it up there." He said, "Joe's going up in a day or 2 and you can go up with Joe." We left here about 4:00 in the morning and the snow was . . . more than we have now (I can't remember just what the temperature was). They hitched the team onto the wagon and we went from here to Modena in that wagon. And the icicles hung under those horses [a foot] long. And around the mouth where they breathe it was all frozen like that. My mother wrapped a big long scarf around my head and around my shoulders and where I breathed through that, it was frozen. We had rocks and lanterns at our feet to keep our feet warm and then we had some kind of warmer in the seat between us to get the heat. When we got to Modena it was coming daylight. I said, "Where are we going to wait till the train comes in?"

He said, "Well, we go up to Mr. Bond's and put our horses in up there. He'll take care of them till we come back."

So that's what we did. And when we went into Mrs. Bond's house, she opened the door and saw me on that walk and she says, "Are you froze?" [chuckles]

"No, I'm not froze. I'm warm."

So she took me in and took all the covers and clothing off and got me up to the stove to get warm. Then she fixed us a big hot breakfast. And then at 10:00 we got on the train and went on to Salt Lake. I'll tell you, that was one cold night.

RM: It must have been below zero, wasn't it?

VF: It had to be, because it was really cold. When you see a horse sweat and the water run down and freeze, that's [going] from heat to cold.

RM: That's amazing. Speaking of cold, what did you use for bedding and how did you keep warm at night?

VF: Well, we used to make what we called a hay tick. We'd take a piece of cloth and make it the size of the bed and then we'd take it down to the haystack and fill it full of hay and then fasten it shut so the hay couldn't get out. Then we'd take it home and make our bed in it. You'd be surprised how warm you can be in that.

RM: Is that right? Was it comfortable?

VF: You bet.

RM: The hay didn't stick through and scratch you, or anything?

VF: No. They put enough cover over the hay so it didn't come through. It was really a good bed.

RM: How often did you have to change the hay?

VF: We could go 2 or 3 weeks on a bale of hay.

RM: And then you'd have to change the hay, huh?

VF: With this grass hay, you can just shake it around a little bit and it makes a nest. [chuckles] You can't do it to the alfalfa, but you can with grass.

RM: What did you use for sheets?

VF: We had what they called "factory." It was just a great big long sheet of cotton material, and you cut it out for whatever you wanted to make out of it. We used to buy it from St. George. They a had a cotton mill down at St. George. And my grandfather and grandmother lived in St.

George for a while. Whenever they'd go down they'd bring a big bolt of that material back with them. And if she went to Salt Lake she'd bring colored material back to make clothes for us.

RM: How wide was the factory sheet?

VF: Oh, it was wide as a bed. It was wide material.

RM: And as long as you wanted to cut it?

VF: I don't know how many yards there were in it, but it came in a bolt. It was wound round and round.

RM: Was it like sheet material is now?

VF: It was similar to what we get now. There is no false [man-made] material in it like we get now. [chuckles]

RM: Did you use flannel sheets at all?

VF: Sometimes, if we could get hold of flannel. Being out here, a lot of times we couldn't get it.

RM: I see. And tell me about what kind of blankets you used.

VF: The flannel blankets.

RM: Did women make quilts?

VF: You bet we did. [chuckles] We made lots of quilts. My mother's sister's home burned down in Panaca, and my mother made her a flannel quilt like we were using on our beds (because it was colder here than it was down there). She took it down to her sister, and she was so happy to get it because she had a big family and they were just living in a little adobe house that my great-grandmother lived in. When she took it in, one of the boys looked at it - Earl (I don't know whether you remember him or not, Ronda). Earl said, "Huh, that don't amount to anything. See the one Aunt Sue bought?" She had one made out of fancy material.

But Mamma said, "Well, I didn't make mine to look at. I made mine to

sleep in." [laughter]

RM: Basically you never threw cloth away, did you?

VF: Oh no.

RM: You cut it up and made quilts out of it, didn't you?

VF: And rag carpets.

RM: How did you make those?

VF: There was a lady down here in Rose Valley who had a loom. We'd tear up our clothing that was not wearable anymore and sew [the strips] together till they could make a ball like that and take them down to her and she'd run them through the loom and make a carpet for us.

RM: She would use it to weave? How wide were your strips?

VF: About an inch.

RM: I'll be darned. That's amazing. So is that what you used for carpets on your floors? You didn't use wool carpets or anything like that?

VF: Oh no. Everybody had rag carpets.

RM: Did you have rag carpets all through the house, or what rooms would you have them in?

VF: Not in the kitchen. We had a wooden floor in the kitchen. And it was a job to keep that clean. If you're frying or spill anything on it, you've got a spot and it's awfully hard to get it out of that wood.

RM: Yes. They didn't have waxes and everything then, did they?

VF: No.

RM: Did you put anything like linseed oil on your floors?

VF: No, just the raw wood. We had carpets in the front room and the bedroom.

RM: Were they what you'd call throw rugs, or were they kind of wall-to-

wall?

VF: Well, some of them had throw rugs, and some had wall-to-wall. It was a lot better than walking on wood. Sometimes that wood gets slivery on the feet.

RM: Did you ever use feather quilts?

VF: No. We had feather pillows, but we never . . .

RM: Did you make your own pillows?

VF: Yes. We kept our chicken feathers. I have feather [pillows] on my bed now that I made from ducks.

RM: Is that right?

VF: I made them off of the ranch over there. Wild ducks come in in the spring and in the fall, and Grandpa always shot ducks for dinner. So I saved the feathers - just the downy feathers - and made my pillows out of them. And I saved enough to make Mike Flinspach a pair when he was married, but it was mostly down, and he didn't like the down. He says if it had feathers in it he'd like it, but he didn't like the down. [chuckles] But they've still got them.

RM: What did they line their quilts with that they made?

VF: Cotton.

RM: They never used wool?

VF: No, we didn't have any sheep.

RM: And you couldn't afford to buy it?

VF: Right.

RH: The water situation around here was interesting, too. Aunt Vera, tell him what the water situation was around here before you guys had the wells, and about who had the first wells in the valley.

VF: Oh, that was something else. [chuckles] In the summertime our

water came down right above these houses up here, right in the back yard.

RM: Just to the east of you.

VF: We had an irrigation ditch that came through, and the water was divided between each family to water their garden with. But when winter came it was all shut out of that ditch and it would come down this big creek down here. Then in the wintertime it'd freeze over, and it was awfully hard to get water out. So Dad and Grandfather used to take the horse and wagon and go up this canyon here (that's where our flood comes from now). There's a spring up in there - Foman Spring - and they used to go up in there and take every tub and boiler, anything they could get, and haul water back to use. Then when the ice went off so we could get water [at the creek], we had to go down there with our buckets and pack it home. [chuckles]

RM: Oh boy. That was work.

VF: We'd pack from across the street, clear down to the creek down here - 2 buckets. The littlest one had the smaller buckets and as we grew up we got bigger buckets. Mother always carried 2 big buckets about that big around at the top and about that deep, one in each hand.

RM: Five-gallon buckets?

VF: Yes.

RM: Those things are heavy. Where did you keep the water in the house?

VF: We had a big barrel outside the house and we'd put the water in there. But we kept what we needed to drink in buckets in the house. Whenever we needed extra water we'd go to the barrel and get it. Wash day was the worst. [chuckles]

RM: That was really hard work when you had to carry all that water, wasn't it?

VF: We used to pack our water up one day and then wash the next because it was too hard to pack it all and then wash. We washed on the board; there were no washing machines.

RM: Did you make your own soap?

VF: Yes. I was thinking about that the other day when they were killing a beef out here. We used to take that fat and put it in with a can of lye and the lye would eat the fat up, then we'd make our soap.

RM: Was it good soap?

VF: You bet. My grandmother Heaps always washed her hair with that soap. If she couldn't get that she'd get the ooze root off the mountain.

RM: Is that a plant?

VF: It's a plant that grows up . . .

RM: How did she prepare that root?

VF: I don't know. If I could have been with her a little more I'd have learned more about it.

RM: What does that plant look like?

VF: You've seen these plants on the mountain that have a long spear for a leaf?

RH: Oh, is that the yucca, Vera?

VF: Yes.

RM: I've heard of the Indians using it for shampoo.

VF: They used to call it ooze root but now they've got a bigger name for it.

RM: Yes. And of course everybody had outhouses, didn't they?

VF: Oh yes. I've still got one out here but it isn't usable now.

RM: When did people get indoor plumbing here?

VF: I don't know.

RH: I don't know either. Again, it was before 1950, because my mother still tells of the time when she moved out to the valley here when she married my father. They had outdoor plumbing then; they didn't have any indoor. But when they were digging some of the old holes out here, didn't they find a complete rifle?

VF: Oh yes. I remember when that was. You see, I lived here with my grandmother a lot. And some of the boys would bring their guns in and store them here in the house. Then they got outmoded and got better guns on the market and she got tired of handling them. So she took them down and put them in the outhouse - dropped them right down through the seat. [chuckles] And when they were hunting old bottles and things, that's one of the places they'd go to find old bottles. They didn't want to throw a bottle away that some kid might get hold of so they'd put them down those holes.

RM: Is that right?

VF: That's right. They dug up a lot of them down in here.

RM: Isn't that interesting.

VF: It's strange how they used to do things [when you] think about it now.

RH: What about the first well here in the valley? Didn't Roy Lytle get the first well here?

VF: I can't remember - I wasn't here when they dug it. I remember when they dug this one, because Dave Mathews from Panaca came up. He had a horse drill and they put the auger down and then had a horse hooked to it that turned it around. They dug this one that way, but I can't remember

the others.

RH: Orpha was telling me about when Roy Lytle got his first well and they would carry water from Grandpa Hammond's place - or down to that place - and they'd go get buckets from Roy's well because they had one of the first wells here in the valley.

RM: How deep is the water here?

VF: Well, in some places it's 200 feet - this well up here is.

RM: Oh, [they are deep] so that's why they didn't dig wells and they relied on the ditches.

VF: Yes.

RM: All these fields are irrigated fields, aren't they?

VF: Yes. They're all irrigated from this creek down here.

RM: What do they call that creek?

VF: Eagle Valley Creek.

RM: Does it run year-round?

VF: Oh yes.

RM: You must have had some bad floods that came through here, didn't you? Could you talk about some of them that you remember?

VF: I remember being called home twice when that little room we have downstairs was full of water. It came out of this canyon up here and our gardens and everything were destroyed. And since I've been here there have been 3 big ones that I can remember. The first one I remember before I left here came down through this canyon and the whole town was covered.

RM: Wow.

VF: And the old hall that's standing here now was picked up and set down right here in front of the house by the water. They had an awful time

moving it back. But when they did they figured they had it anchored so it wouldn't go again - and it hasn't, so far. It stayed there, but it's been full of water several times. But the first one that I remember, as I said, covered the town. And my grandmother sent my sister (Ronda's oldest aunt) and my cousin from up here back of Terry Olsen's place. She said, "You get up there and the water won't wash you away." And Sarah Ross up here asked her why she didn't go. She said, "Cause I can't go cause of Ann." That was her sister, my grandmother's sister. She was deaf, dumb and blind and she couldn't go on her own. Grandma said, "I can't leave her here alone. I'll stay with her." So they sent all the younger kids up on the mountain and the older ones stayed here and fought to save their homes.

RM: When would that have been, Vera?

VF: I can't remember - we were just girls.

RH: Tell him about some of your snowstorms like the storm of '49.

VF: Well, it just snowed. [chuckles]

RM: How deep was it?

VF: From 1-1/2 to 2 feet in places. We were snowed in over there at the ranch [outside Modena], in '49 was it?

RH: Somewhere around in there.

RM: Thirty-seven, I think, was a bad winter.

VF: It could have been '49. We were snowed in and we couldn't get out. Our cattle were all dying. Our cattle were dying right there in the feed yard but we couldn't get . . . the snow was too deep. The boys tried to walk and make trails to the cattle where they were scattered out in the field. But the cows couldn't get through the snow. We lost most of our cattle that winter. Finally they brought a Caterpiller with a big "V" on

the front of it. They broke the trail up so we could have hay brought in from the desert to feed. Some of them had it brought in with airplanes and dropped - they called it the hay lift.

RM: I remember one hay lift in '49?

VF: It was a bad time, I'll tell you.

RH: Didn't you dig caves to get out of your house?

RM: You had to dig a tunnel to get out of your house?

VF: No, just a trail. We had a regular shovel that you shovel dirt with - not a snow shovel - and we'd take that in the house at night and then in the morning they'd get up and throw the snow out with that shovel.

RM: Woo!

VF: You couldn't move it with a broom because it was too deep. Thank goodness we don't have that kind anymore. [chuckles]

RM: Is it dryer, Vera?

VF: It's been dryer this last 2 or 3 years than I ever remembered. We had more snow this winter than we've had for a long time.

RM: Is that right? It's a little better now than it has been?

VF: You bet. I was glad it changed.

RM: Do you remember stories from your father and your grandfather, talking about how the weather used to be here?

VF: No, we just grew up with it. It was here when we came and it's changed in the last few years. We don't get the storms, so we don't have as much water any more.

RM: The creek is not as full?

VF: No. I've seen that creek down here . . .

[Vera Flinspach shows a photo showing how full the creek used to be.]

RM: Oh, my lord. [looking at a photograph]

Bambi McCracken: Look at that. That's the house?

VF: That's getting into the potato cellar to get potatoes.

CHAPTER FOUR

RM: Vera, tell us about how you and your husband dated - how did people date in those days?

VF: I don't know as it was any different than anybody else.

RM: What did you do on a date?

VF: Well, we were on the ranch and there was no place to go. Sometimes we'd walk to the top of the mountain, sometimes we walk up the road or down the road; there's no place to go when you're on the ranch. [chuckles]

RH: Didn't he used to take you to the top of the mountain and roll the rocks down?

VF: We were right at the foot of the mountain and a canyon came down, and there's a break in the mountain - the top part comes straight down like this. We used to go up on top and he'd push those big rocks - oh, I don't know how he got them loose. He'd give them a push and I was always scared to death that he'd lose his footing and go with that rock. But he was lucky enough that he didn't. [chuckles] I don't know how in the world he could ever move those rocks; they were big ones. [They were] like this big mountain up here.

RH: Tell him about your trips.

VF: I've taken more trips since my husband died. I've been with the senior citizens and we've had some wonderful trips.

RM: Where are some of the places you've gone?

VF: I went to Catalina Island and I've been to Hawaii and I've been to Victoria, Vancouver, and back to New York - Niagara Falls. And I've been to the prison where Joseph Smith was murdered.

RM: Where was that?

VF: In Navoo. And I've been in Chesapeake [Bay, Maryland]. One big thrill we had . . . my brother-in-law had a niece who lived back there and he wanted to go to visit her. So his daughter came from San Bernardino and picked me up and we went to Idaho and got him, and then we went across the northern states to New York, and then down to Chesapeake. And on our way out of Chesapeake she said, "I don't know for sure whether I know the way or not, but we'll try it." And do you know, we drove right down into a big tunnel that went 16 miles under the ocean and came up on an island out there. What a thrill when you got on top and found out where you'd been! [laughs] I just wondered how in the world they could stay under that water like that.

RM: Isn't that amazing . . .

VF: But it's built tight enough that it held the water out. That was really something.

RM: Did you have a church here in the valley, or did you hold services . . . ?

VF: We had our Sunday school every Sunday in the old schoolhouse building. And then once a month the elders from Panaca would come up and hold church. My mother was the president of the Sunday school here for several years. Her [Ronda's] grandmother was one of our counselors. Roy Lytle's mother was another counselor, and Mrs. Warren, who lived over here, was our organist. We always enjoyed our little Sunday school.

RM: Did you have church services for the adults every Sunday, or just for the kids?

VF: Mostly for the children.

RM: What role did the church play in your daily lives? How did it

affect the way you lived your life here and so on?

VF: Well, I think we were taught to respect our redeemer. And from there on we had our little prayers at home and we always got together once or twice a week for what they called Relief Society. They still have it in Pioche - we don't have anything here anymore.

RM: What did you do at Relief Society?

VF: We made quilts and [shared] some recipes for cooking and different things used in the home. Like somebody would bring in a recipe for making bread, then everybody else would compare that with what they made and then, if it was better, they'd change their system.

RM: There was a lot of sharing, wasn't there?

VF: Yes, there was. If we ran out of a loaf of bread we could call our neighbor and ask for a loaf of bread. And if we didn't have the start to start our yeast with, someone of our neighbors had a start, so we could get it from them.

I'll tell you little experience I had this morning. I bought 2 loaves of bread because I had company the other day and I didn't have enough to go around, so I bought 2 loaves. I took 2 slices out this morning and put them in the little roaster oven in there and in 2 minutes I turned around and the whole room was full of smoke. [chuckles] That bread, when I put it in, was [an inch] thick. And in a few minutes it was just shrunk down to like that. There was no volume to it at all - it was just gone. Now that's boughten bread. I can put mine in the oven and it won't do that. [chuckles] I've still got a slice of bread when it's toasted.

RM: That's right. The bread now is air, isn't it? [chuckles]

VF: It is. I was reading on one of the cartons this morning what they

use to make bread with now. It was sure far from what we used.

RM: What is your basic recipe for bread?

VF: Just a tablespoon of yeast, and the flour, salt, sugar. You put that in some water or some milk and let it ferment. It'll foam up and run over the side of your pan if you don't watch it. And then I just put the flour - not quite a quart of flour - in the pan and then I put the yeast in and a little sugar, a little salt, and I whip that up till it's . . . Now, a lot of people make it right into a loaf, but I don't. I do the other system. I can set that in a warm place and it'll raise up like that. When it's raised then I can turn around and add more flour to it and knead it so I can roll it out into a loaf. But it's got to raise at lease twice.

RM: How about some stories about roundups, Vera?

VF: Everybody in town had a cow or more and they used to run their cattle out in the far open countries where they could get food. And they'd go out and round all those cattle up in one big herd and bring them in. I remember one time they brought them in from Spring Valley, down this canyon. We lived right over there in that old house, and my uncle who lived up here was coming in the lead. He came down the street hollering for everybody to shut their lights out, because the cattle were coming toward the light. And they stampeded right out here on the corner. It was between this house here and that one over there. They stampeded - some came this way and some went up the canyon that way. They had cattle everywhere.

RM: But they were running to the light?

VF: They were running to the light coming down this street here, but when they got there they found an opening so they just ran away from it.

They worked half of the night getting those cattle back. They got them in the corral here and then they opened the gate and let part of them go into the next lot over there. The next day they got up and separated the cattle for each man who had cattle in the herd. They'd separate theirs and take them one way and the others would go the other. Then they'd get a wagon of wood and make a fire, and get a big pile of coals. Then they'd lay the irons in those coals and get them hot. Then each man who had his cattle in there would rope his own calves and bring them in, tie them down and brand them. I hated to see that. [chuckles] I felt so sorry for those little calves being burned like that.

RH: Did they drive them to the railroad from here?

VF: Yes, to Modena.

RH: Which direction would they go?

VF: Over the hill. They'd go right down the side of the fields here and then up through the mountains there.

RM: Does that route have a name?

VF: Just the Modena Road.

RM: It's the old road to Modena?

VF: Yes.

RM: Is it still used, Vera?

VF: Some of it. They opened it up last year, I think.

RH: They just started grading it, but the road's always been there. It's just drive at your own risk.

RM: Did all of the men in the valley drive their cows at the same time?

VF: Yes. They'd hire a car on the railroad and fill that car with cattle. It took so many to load the car. If you didn't have enough then your neighbor could put his in so they had a car full. Then they left.

RH: Did they have a cow buyer come over here and look at the cattle?

VF: They always separated them so the cow man knew whose cattle and what brand [belonged to what man].

RM: How far is it to Modena?

VF: Thirty-two miles over this way. Of course, nowadays we go round the other way.

RM: You go over to Panaca and that way?

VF: Yes.

RM: When did they pave the road to Pioche?

VF: I don't know. I was gone when it was paved.

RM: Was it paved when you were a kid, Ronda?

RH: Yes. It's been paved for a long time. Not necessarily good, but it's been paved.

RM: And there are a couple of state parks here, aren't there? How have they affected what's happened to the valley?

RH: Well, there are different feelings on that.

RM: Well, that's all right. Why don't you name them?

RH: The one above the Eagle Valley going north is called the Spring Valley State Park - that's about 3 miles up. And just about 5 miles down below the valley is Echo Dam. When it started, my father owned the property up where the Spring Valley State Park is. The county came in and approached him to sell the property to them so they could build a dam and at that time it was strictly for irrigation. And then, as they started planting fish in there, it was hard for the county to keep up the reservoir and the expenses and everything, so the state parks [department] came in and offered, ever so nicely, to take it over.

RM: Was this in recent years?

RH: No. I was about 10 at the time, so it could have been around 1960 or '61.

RM: And that's when the state took it over?

RH: That's when it was actually built and dedicated. And I'm not sure - I wasn't here when Echo was actually put in down there. But those are the 2 state parks that are in the area.

RM: Has it made a difference with tourists and so on coming through?

RH: Oh yes. There really wasn't anything for the people to come up through and look at. They could come in and fish on the streams. Most everybody probably left here and went over into Utah - Panguich's Lake or Navajo or something - and go fishing. But it has helped tourism. They come up where they've got the campgrounds at both areas, and the campgrounds are kept very nice. They can come up and go fishing and biking and things like that, so it's been good for tourism.

RM: Has it been good for the valley?

RH: Well, there are a lot of people coming through. It makes a difference because you can put stop signs up or 15 mile-an-hour signs, but you've got a lot of kids in the valley now and, because this isn't a policed area every day, they don't heed [the traffic signs]. So there's a lot of bad to go along with the good. The people are coming to see [the parks] and they don't care about the valley and they don't realize how many kids are here. As I say, there's good and bad in both ways.

RM: Vera, were there fish in the creek when you were a kid? Was it good fishing?

VF: Yes. A lot of people wouldn't eat them - they called them suckers.

RM: Oh, they weren't trout?

VF: They weren't trout, no. But we used to eat them. They tasted just

as good to me as the others do. Instead of having a mouth that opened this way, they had a round mouth like this.

RM: Were they like carp?

RH: Kind of.

RM: Then trout weren't native to the stream?

RH: There were some trout in it, but there were a lot of garbage fish, too.

RM: How about hunting? When you were young, was hunting important for venison and so on?

VF: Yes, and they never had to pay for it either. They could go out and kill a deer any time.

RM: Did people do that a lot?

VF: Not too much, but once in a while they'd go out and get a deer. Now the deer come in and eat right out of your dooryard. You'll notice when you go out that they've eaten off this tree right here at the corner that high. They've done it for 3 years now.

RM: How about other animals like grouse and sage hen and so on?

VF: Well, there used to be a lot of them, but they're scarce now - even those little quail. There used to be a lot of quail. They'd come right into the yard here and eat, but they're gone. We had bunch of some kind of game bird. They brought them in one year and turned them loose at our haystack at the ranch, and I don't know how many there were, but there were an awful bunch. We had them there, we fed them, and they wanted us to keep them in that area. Then along toward fall the game warden came in and asked how they were doing. Bill went out and showed him around and showed him where the birds were, and I'll be darned if they didn't start them down the road. One took the lead and the whole flock followed

them. They left there and they've never been back. We've tried several times to get them back again. They're a very popular bird to eat in the fall.

RH: Tell him about when you got your first car.

VF: We used Bill's father's Model-T Ford when we were first married cause the old man wouldn't ever drive one. He said he didn't understand that modern stuff. So the boys took turns driving it. If Charlie wanted it, he drove it. If Henry wanted it, he drove it. And Bill used to bring it when he'd come over here. After that was about worn out we bought a Buick. Then Charlie bought an Oldsmobile, and we thought we were really something because we had a bigger car.

RM: Yes, Buicks were something.

VF: They're still a good car. They're very popular on television right now.

RM: In the evenings, when you were growing up, how did people spend their time?

VF: Sometimes we played cards.

RM: What games did you play?

VF: High 5. I don't think I can remember how it was done anymore, but that was our main game. Then a few years later 500 came in and we played that for a while. There are 3 of us here that have been having card games once a week, but this last month or two we kind of failed [chuckles]; we haven't been able to get together. We were supposed to play yesterday but one of the ladies went somewhere else and broke up our [group].

RM: What other games did you play as a child?

VF: A lot of times we played house. We'd take our toys and go in the

kitchen under the table - that was our house, under the table. We had our dolls for our children.

RM: What kinds of toys did you have?

VF: Well, we had little play dishes. They were really pretty. And then we had doll clothes so we could dress our dolls.

RM: Did you have wagons and things like that?

VF: We had a little wagon. We had to haul wood in that. Our wood pile was a little distance from the house so we'd go load that wagon up with wood and haul it to the house.

RM: Did you have sleds in the winter?

VF: Well, it was not very good sledding - the wagon would work easier than the sled did. But we had a little sled. It was about that long - one person [would fit] on it. Sometimes we'd try putting two on, but that was too much to pull. We had to pull it by hand.

RM: How did the adults spend their evenings back then with just a coal oil lamp and so on?

VF: Reading or playing cards; mostly reading.

RM: What did people read in those days?

VF: Just books, like we do now, only we had to buy them instead of going to the library.

RM: Would they read novels?

VF: Sometimes, and sometimes it was history books. A lot of times it was just the Salt Lake Tribune, if we could get it.

RM: I see. It didn't come in regularly?

VF: No, our mail didn't run too regular and so whenever they'd get the [mail] through then we got a paper.

RM: Did they read magazines?

VF: A few. Not too many.

RM: What were some of the magazines they might have read?

VF: The Saturday Evening Post was one. I don't know if they still publish that or not.

RM: They do, but it's not the same.

VF: It was considered one of the best of the time. And there was Collier's.

RH: Didn't you read Sears and Roebuck a lot, too?

VF: [laughs] Did we! We lived with that.

RM: Tell me about the catalogs. What part did they play in your life?

VF: We had Montgomery Ward and Sears and Roebuck most of the time. That's where we got most of our clothing, bedding, and things like that. What we couldn't get here, we'd send to the catalog.

RM: It was kind of your wish factory, wasn't it?

VF: Yes. The lady who used to live over here, Mrs. Warren, had one of the first Sears and Roebuck catalogs that was ever put out. I don't know who got it when she passed away, but it was still there.

RM: Yeah, that would be worth something, wouldn't it?

VF: Yes. And [it showed] how different it was then, than now. [chuckles] I looked in it the other day and thought maybe I'd send a Christmas package from there, which I do most every year, but when I looked at it this year, you've got to do it by telephone. I've got a telephone but I didn't know how to dial for the store. Every branch of their store sends out a different catalog. (I call them flyers, because they're about that thick.) Some of them aren't that much. But they do send out one bigger catalog that has the machinery and things for outside.

RM: Vera, you wanted to tell us some more about the flood?

VF: The last one was about 6 years ago, and it came right down through here. Nobody else got much of it, but I sure got it. But Ronda's dad had been to town and when they came back, the water was just coming in up there. He took his car home and then he came back down and brought his shovel, and that was about 9:00 in the evening. He stayed right here till midnight. He and his son-in-law Tim Olsen came down here and they both worked till midnight trying to keep the water from coming into the house and into my well, because the well's right out here. When he got through he looked at me and said, "Well, I'm going home and go to bed. We kept it from going in the well anyhow." But I'll tell you, it's scary when you see that water coming like that.

RM: Yes, I've seen those floods in Nevada. I know how they can be.

RH: It gets quite fierce coming down out of the canyon there, and Vera's is one of the worst because as it comes down it takes out the fence and it'll start through her garden here, and when it's finished there isn't a lawn out front. She digs out every time there's a flood. It just covers everything. There used to be a big ditch coming down alongside of her house, and it has totally filled that ditch to where they'll bring in the Cats and just dredge dirt and try to bank everything up. It'll go clear down through the corrals down here and cover up gates. It just knocks everything; it ripped out fences just going down.

RM: They need a check dam up there, don't they?

RH: It would be nice.

VF: I've got a picture that was taken the next day after that flood. It

showed the big rocks and the big trees and how it flattened the garden. The garden was just getting so we could use it, and the next morning it was just level. Nothing was left. As soon as it dried out a bit Alyson Hammond came out from town, got the rototiller and started making rows up and down through the garden to get the water back in there again. It's awful to see that coming through. You don't know what it's going to do to you. The one before the last one brought in big trees and big rocks and left them down here in the corral. Her dad helped to move them out. Some of them we didn't get out, they just let them be burned.

RH: Just to get on record, because she doesn't brag a lot on what she does, she's 90 years young and this "mere child" does a tremendous amount of crocheting and tatting and she has some beautiful, beautiful works. She maintains her own flower garden. They raise a huge garden out here and her brother comes out to help her a lot, but she's out there every day picking weeds.

RM: Is that right? That's wonderful.

RH: She'll get out during the winter and if either my dad or mom or someone isn't down here digging snow, she's got her snow shovel out there.

RM: She's out shoveling snow?

RH: She's out shoveling snow.

RM: Boy, you're amazing, Vera.

RH: She maintains her own household and does her own cooking. She has family here every Sunday and she does all the cooking. She does all her own cooking - always makes her own bread and cakes and things like that. And she's always willing to lend a hand. The kids might as well be her grandchildren - they're everybody else's grandchildren. Everybody

rallies down here and the kids'll come down and make snowmen out front for her.

RM: That's great.

RH: She's quite a popular lady.

RM: Yes, I can see you love her.

RH: For her 90th birthday she had over 200 people in at her party. She's just very well-liked.

RM: Did you make the doily on the table?

VF: No, a friend back in New York did. I've never seen the woman, but a friend of mine from Modena went to see her folks back there and she took back a headpiece that I made; it was a cap that fit over your head and the shawl attached and you wrapped it around your neck. She took it back and gave it to her sister-in-law back there, and the next Christmas I got that doily.

RM: Isn't that sweet?

VF: There's a lot of work on that.

RH: She makes things like that.