

Interview with Earl and Verda Morton

Tape #1073

June 24, 1986

This is Fred Stones and I am at the home of Earl and Verda Morton at 303 W. Chester on June 24, 1986. This is one of the tapes in the continuing series of the historical background of Lafayette, Colorado. Verda and Earl, we appreciate your letting us come up and talk to you. We want you to know that we hope that this will be an experience for you as same as it will be for us and these tapes will be kept in the library on a permanent record and nobody will be able to loan them out, they're not for loan but they do make transcriptions of them and those will be made available to people that are researching the history of Lafayette. So Earl if you don't mind, we'll start with you.

Earl, where were you born? I was born in Louisville and moved to Lafayette when I was a tiny baby. Okay. When were you born? July 6, 1914. Where were you born, Verda? I was born in Lafayette out by Kelly Schofield's. North of town here? North of town. I was born on October 3, 1914. Okay, now who was your mother and father, Verda? My mother was Anna Kneebone Lewis and my father was John B. Lewis. Okay, so your maiden name was Lewis then? Lewis. Okay, and Earl your mother and father were---? Mr. and Mrs. Tom Morton. Mother's name was Ivan, which was often taken for a man's name. Where were they born? Mother was born in Oklahoma and my father was born in Marshal, Colorado. Okay. How many brothers and sisters did you have? I had one brother and two sisters. Do they still live in Lafayette? They're all living but the brother lives in Washington and the older sister lives in Arvada and the other one lives in Lafayette. And how about your family, Verda? I have two brothers and that's the extent of it. Are they living here in town? My brother Jack lives in town and my brother George lives in Glenwood Springs. Are you older than Jack? No, I'm younger. You're younger. Jack told me a story about when he was born, about Dr. Porter coming out in the horse and buggy when you lived out on Arapahoe on the crossroad there. When Dr. Porter came out in the horse and buggy, he had two six shooters on. They wore two six shooters out there. Have you heard anything about that story? Now, I haven't heard that story. Well that's what he told me and he flipped the six shooters on the table and then went ahead and delivered Jack. This was evidently during one of the problem times that they had. (Earl) Probably during the strike. One of the strikes. (Verda) Well he was born in 1910. Yeah, well that was during the 1910 strike then, and Dr. Porter went out there with his horse and buggy and he had a six shooter on each hip. That sounds reasonable. Knowing Dr. Porter, that sounds reasonable, doesn't it? How many children did you have? Two. Are they still alive? Yeah, they're both alive and Phyllis Whitley lives here in town and Verda Martha McCorkle lives in Aurora. How many grandchildren do you have? We have three. Well that gives us a little background on your family. We like to have that, you know, get that in here so that someday maybe a hundred years from now somebody's looking up the Mortons and they can find out about it.

Let's go back, you were both here in the early days of Lafayette. Tell me a little bit about what Lafayette was like back in the '20s when you were growing up? Well when I was growing up, Dad worked in the coal mines most of the time and we traded at Lee Baker's store most of the time and every time we had a payday and he went down and paid the grocer we got a small sack of licorice. Tar babies they were called. That was a big treat for us.

What did you do for entertainment when you was kids? (Verda) Well I can't remember to much of what we did. We had our own games, our own friends. We played hide and seek and kick the can and things like that. We had to make up our own entertainment. Okay. Did the churches have any kind of entertainment for kids in those days? Yes, they had parties for all the kids. (Earl) Verda taught Sunday School for several years up at the Methodist Church. At the Methodist Church? That was the old Methodist Church? That was the old Methodist Church. That burned? Yes, that burned. Do you remember when that church burned? (Verda) No, I really don't. I remember helping build the new one. I helped them build the new one but I -- and I was up there the night it burned, I was on the fire department but I can't place a date when it burned. (Verda) I can't remember either. I know my dad worked on it.

Now, you went to school in the old square schoolhouse up here, the old schoolhouse? (Earl) That's right I started, actually I went to a, the first year I started out in a little country school near Niwot and then I went for two and a half until the middle of third grade I went to a little country school at Hillroads. Now where's Hillroads? Out near Brush. Oh, okay. Then I moved to Lafayette and went to the rest of my school at Lafayette, starting in the old building and graduated in the new building. Okay. Let's start out, what grades were you in when you started here in Lafayette? Third grade. Third grade. Do you remember who your teacher was? I sure do. It was Miss Ingersole. How many kids went on through the whole system, have you any idea? We graduated 28. And they were just about all in the same classes as you went through? Yeah, we went through practically the same thing all the way from the third grade. Okay. Now name some of those kids for me. Well lets see, there was Frank Mastriano, Hayden Davies, Bennie Parks, Florence (now Williams), Verda Morton, Bud Mosler, Pauline Wilson, Fred Beranek, Floyd Lowe, Miss Clemens. Do you remember any of your other teachers in the other grades? Either one of you? One of our sponsors in high school was Williams, then there was Mr. Haviland, Mary Cavner, Miss Harmon, of course we all had Miss Harmon. She taught forever, didn't she? We started in with McCready as the Superintendent and we ended up with Angevine. Okay. Did you play on any of the sports teams? I played football. Being one of the smallest in my class, I got to play in very few league games. What other sports did they have in school? We had softball, especially among the classes. I played in all of those.

Can you describe the school building to me? The old school was just a square school with a two stories and the gym was all up above. It was kind of tin on the outside with a frame building. Were you in school when that building was condemned and you had to go to some of the other buildings around town for classes? No, we had already graduated then. You had already graduated when that happened. Okay. How many did you say were in your graduating class? Twenty eight. How many of those are still here in Lafayette? Do you have any idea? (Verda) I don't know exactly but at a class reunion two years ago, they had an awful lot that had come to the reunion. When are they going to have another reunion? Well I don't know. We went to a 50 years reception Sunday and most all of us that set at one table were classmates. They were talking then that we couldn't wait another 50 years, we had to have one in a couple of years, they thought, if somebody would just get together and have it. Get it started, okay.

Tell me a little bit now about how the town was then. What did the town look like? Simpson Street was the main part of town and of course we had no beer joints below the highway and so any of the taverns were on the West side of the highway but all our businesses were down town. The drug store was on the corner, post office was next to it, the clothing store, meat markets, Ham's Groceries - actually it was Davis first and then finally Ham took over the grocery department but the businesses were all down in the 300 and 400 block of Simpson and Joe Roderik ran one of the grocery stores. There was Charley Scholes, he had a grocery store. Do you remember the bank being in operation? Yes, the bank was in operation on the corner. It would be 400, I guess, East Simpson and it went broke in 1932, wasn't it? Yes. The class of '33 had money in the bank and they lost most of that but they paid a few dividends and a few years later we got what we could of the class together and went on a theatre party with our dividends from the bank. Okay. That was the first time I went with Verda. Oh, okay. That was the beginning of the romance then? (Verda) We went to school from the third grade through high school. Well that's great.

Do you remember when the bank was robbed? I don't remember that. I think it was before 1932. Yeah, it was before 1932. Dad farmed for almost four years out by Brush and I think I was out there at that time.

Now when you got out of high school, what did you do? Well I worked at the Lafayette Leader all through high school and continued to stay with them for awhile until, they were a union paper and they didn't specify wages until you got to be so good and when I got that good they had to fire me because they couldn't me the wages. Now who was the editor then? E. G. Sands was the editor. A lot of it was hand set and they had two presses. Then I went to the forest service for a year and then I moved to Sterling and worked for five years at the Sterling Farm Journal. Okay. When were you and Verda married? We were married on June 26, 1937. Were you in Sterling? Was that after ----? I was living at Sterling and Verda was here and I came back from Sterling, we got married and moved back to Sterling. Okay, so your first married life was in Sterling? That's right. Now when did you come back to Lafayette? Right after VJ Day. Okay. I mean right after the war struck, the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Right at the beginning of the war. Beginning of the war, the little newspapers, I worked for a pretty good newspaper, they lost all their national advertising and so forth and the boss couldn't afford to pay all of us but he didn't want to cut wages so he said he was going to lay us off a week. It sounded like a cut to me so I quit.

What did you do during the war years? I started out with George Lewis at the old dairy and worked for him for a year and then I went to the industrial mines and worked a year and then I went to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and worked under the government for 15 years. You was out at the Arsenal for 15 years? When the Arsenal closed out, we bought the A & W Drive-In and ran that for 15 years.

You lived in Lafayette during the war years then? Right. Okay. Tell me a little bit about the city during the war years, what was going on here in Lafayette? Well most of Lafayette was traveling back and forth to war industries in Denver, different ones in Denver. Do you remember any of the actual things that people did in Lafayette in regards to the war effort?

Not in particular. Was you in on any of the civil defense? I was a member of the fire department most of the time during the war. I was there when we fought our first good fire. Okay, which automatically made you a part of the civil defense, right? That's right. Were either of you involved in the air raid warden deals or the blood drives? I was involved in all the blood drives and I lacked once of getting one donation of getting my gallon card. Okay. (Verda) And I gave blood all the time, every time. Did you go with the first group that went to Denver on the school bus? Do you remember that? (Verda) No I just went, they had it in the high school and I went. Okay. Eventually they did come up and they got it right here at the high school?

Tell me about rationing. We were rationed on a lot of things, especially tires, sugar and gasoline. We pooled our gasoline and so forth so we could get back and forth to work. Everybody I know of was pooling to get to work. Tires were hard to get. I finally got them to okay two tires for my car or else I wouldn't have been able to get to work. It was a hassle getting anything. Who was on the ration board? Do you remember? I don't remember now.

What did you do down at the Arsenal down there? At the Arsenal, I worked in the gas plants for several years and then I took over the incendiary plant and made incendiary bombs and also hand grenades, white phosphorus hand grenades. Now where was the Arsenal? The Arsenal was at Commerce City, just northeast of Denver. That's the section now just north of Stapleton Field, in otherwords? That's right. Okay.

Were you involved in the nerve gas bombs that they destroyed here a few years ago? I did not work in the nerve gas. I worked in mustard gas, lewisite and tear gas. I didn't get into the nerve gas. Okay.

Verda, what were you doing during the war? Well right out of high school, I went to work at J. Nobles. It was a confectionary and restaurant and I worked there, I guess, until we got married. Where was this? This was down on main street. In the 400 block on main street. And Jenny Noble and this was a confectionary? Confectionary, had sandwiches and soft drinks. How long did you work there then? I think I worked there around about five years. Okay. Were you involved in any of the arms plants or anything like that? No, I never got involved.

After the war and after you finished up with the Arsenal down there, you took over the A & W. Was the A & W already there? It was already built. We bought it from Frank and Dorothy Arbuthnot. Alright. Do you remember anything about the ground there that was already there and what was on that ground before the A & W was there? There had been a car repair there but it was pretty low and it had been filled in about five foot deep when they built the A & W. The old railroad track went through there. The town finally gave us our share of the railroad track if we would pay the street assessment to it. At that time, Scarpella and I divided the land so we could get off of the bias and put the lines straight so that our lots would pan out. Okay. Do you remember Mr. Reed owning that ground and having cabins there for the teachers to live in? I remember when Mr. Reed owned the ground but he had a repair place there and that's the only thing I can remember, I can't remember the cabins. Yeah.

He used to have some little cabins on that ground that the school teachers, I kind of think that they moved them up, you remember that Davis had right down here back of the Highway Food Store, I think they were moved up there but I wouldn't say for sure but they were about that same size and the school teachers lived in them. (Verda) Well the A & W had only been built a year and a half when we bought it.

Was the elevator still there when you took over? The elevator was still there. I was on the fire department when the elevator burned down. Tell me about that fire. It was quite a fire. We hooked up the pumper to it and it sucked the water all out of the pipes to where nobody could get any water and there was no chance of putting it out. It was really going. Do you know what started that fire? I don't know what started it. How long did it burn? I don't remember. Who owned the elevator at that time? I don't even remember who owned it. It was Charlie Keller that owned it. (Verda) That's what I was thinking. I thought it was Charlie.

Let's leave that now and go to some of this that you've got out here to talk about. You've got a picture here of the sixth grade to start with. You named off a lot of these kids here. This man at the back here was the teacher? Yes, his name was Morrison, he was our teacher. Most of these kids stayed together and went on through and graduated together? Nearly all of the ones that graduated are in that picture. Okay.

Now I want to talk to you a little bit about this picture here. Was that taken when you were over at the Industrial Plant? Yes, that was taken when I worked the year in the industrial mine driving buggy. What year was that, Earl? That was 1942 and from when I left the mine I went right to the Arsenal. Okay. Tell me, driving a buggy, tell me what this involved driving a buggy in the mine. A buggy was an open end car that held about five ton of coal. You drove up and the joy loader loaded the buggy through to it and you moved it with a conveyor back as they loaded it. When you got through you drove it out to the car and unloaded it into a ramp that loaded the cars. Okay. How many of these buggies was in the mine? There was two on our run. On your run. How many ton of coal a day could you handle with those things? If you had the coal available, you could come out with five ton every 20 or 30 minutes. Was the joy loader an automatic miner? Yeah, it was all put on by joy loaders. Okay. And this joy loader would bring the coal back and put it into this buggy and you would take it out and put it in the cars and the cars would then hoist it up out of the mine. Is that the way it was? The joy loader had big arms on it that went into the coal and drug it up onto a conveyor and the conveyor took it back and dumped it into the buggy and we brought it out to the cars and they took it out of the mine. What kind of power did these buggies have? They were electric. You hooked the nips onto the line, they were electric power. Okay, how fast did they go? Approximately five miles an hour if you hurried. They would go that fast? How deep was the coal over there? Most of it was between five and six feet where we used the mechanical loaders. Okay. When we worked one year before that, loading with my dad when some of the coal was between four and five feet. That was hand loading then? Hand loading with my dad. How long did your dad work in the mines? Dad worked in the mine until about 1947. When did he start? Dad worked in the old Fox Mine at Marshal when he was just a kid. So he worked in the mine a lot of years?

All his life except for the five years he took out farming. Okay. Did he ever have any problem with black lung? Not that we know of. Okay.

Have you got any recollection or any experiences that you had when you was running the A & W down here that you'd like to share with us? Interesting experiences, things that happened to you down there? Well when we ran the A & W, we hired the girls, most of the girls were at school and they were a wonderful bunch of girls. We still keep in touch with a lot of them and we think the world of them, almost like they were our daughters. Now they've grown up and have kids of their own and you can't hardly believe that it's been that long. (Verda) They still come and see us. There's some of them that just come at Christmas time and other times and they just come and throw their arms around us just as if they belong to us and we think they do. We had a lot of fun with the girls. That's right. (Verda) Then you have some that aren't so good. Oh, well sure, that always happens. But that was more of a family affair down there anyway. It was, our two daughters started with us when we first started out. They knew more about the business than we did and they started with us for several years until they got jobs of their own. How long did you run that? Fifteen years.

Okay. After you sold the A & W then what did you do? I retired. Good. Alright. What have you been doing since you retired? (Verda) Well we've been taking a lot of trips. We've been to Florida several times and Arizona and we've gone with the Senior Citizens a lot on their trips which we really enjoy and every winter from the first of January to the first of April we go to Texas.

Were you ever involved in the city government or the school district or anything like that? No I wasn't except being in the fire department.

Now we've pretty well covered your life up until now. You've got some books there that, how did you come by these books? These are Simpson Mine time books for January and April from a Mr. Allen, Robert Allen, and my father-in-law John Lewis bought the old mine office when the Simpson Mine closed down and moved it up and attached it onto his house to make his house bigger and these books were in the office at that time. Were there any other things besides these books? I never seen anything else. (Verda) I didn't see anything else. Now my father kept them for years until he passed away and then we found these books and I'm the one that acquired them. Will you read the names that are in these two books? Just the list of names. Just a few of the ones that are familiar are S. L. Abernathy, Dave Williams, Fred Gardner, John McDonald, John Kelly, Tom Abernathy, Ed Scholes, William Abernathy, John Robinson, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Conway, Sam Luccock, Frank Rid, Charles Hanes, John Lewis, John Abernathy, W. D. Wilson, Anthony Zarvick, Jack Reese, Ed Walkenberg, J. E. Hendricks, A. Pasquale, Frank Zwiger, Tom Zillis, Frank Bolick, Jr., James Irwin, James McKewn, Charles Rotolla, William Young, Tom Jones, John Allen, William Zwiger, William Reese, John Shelly to name just a few of them. William Lewis, I'm sure you recognize some of these names from the old ---. Yes, I recognize them now. I would like to have you go through that book and as you come to some of the names that you remember, tell me a little bit about them. The men that you remember. The Abernathys lived down

on Geneseo Street in the -- years ago when I was just a kid, my dad bought furniture from them. There were several Abernathys there, were they all brothers? Yeah, they were all related. And of course Ed Scholes run the grocery store on Simpson Street for years. Sam Luccok ran a clothing store in Lafayette for years. (Verda) It was down on Simpson Street. This was after they had evidently closed the Simpson Mine that these people went in business down there. There were several of the Zwigers around here that was gone later on, of course this was, people in this book are 1902 which was just a little bit before my time. This John Lewis that's in here. There were two John Lewis's in town at that time. One was the father of John Lewis, Jr., known as "Greeky" and then my father-in-law. I'm not sure just which one this is. Now does that book give the time that they worked? The hours that they worked or what? Yes, it gives the hours that they worked but there is no pay. Most of them are marked at \$3.10, I assume that was a day's work, I'm not sure. There is \$3.10 that is mentioned in a lot of them and that may have been a day's work, I don't know. It don't have the total amount of money that they drew. Jack Reese lived on Simpson Street. He was a cager in the mine in 1902. Now what does a cager do? He puts the cars on the cage to be raised to the surface. James Irwin was quite a man around town. He lived to quite an old age and was about a 60 year member of the Odd Fellows. He was a very wonderful person. He still has a daughter in town, her name is Jessie James. Charles Rotolla established a ranch out on South Boulder Road and lived out there for years. That's about where the crossroad is there now of Centaur, where the light is? Right there close to a, well just above where Sax is now. William Reese, oh I told you about him, didn't I? (Verda) No, that's a different one. Which one of those did they call Buck Reese? Was that a --? I think that was William, wasn't it? I don't know. (Verda) I believe but the other Reese lived up there where Jessie James bought their house. Now this is in 1902, this book? That's right. January, 1902. Of the Simpson Mine? Alright, now you said, it mentions in there that they were making, there was a thing there was \$3.10 an hour. They have a lot of from bottom to top, they have \$3.10 which looks like that is the wage at that time. Okay. What, do you remember, now this was before you were born of course, do you remember you father talking about what precipitated the strikes in this area? I don't know what all precipitated but it was over just about the time I was born, I know my dad went through all the strikes. He had worked at the old Fox Mine about the time the strike started. I know my grandfather was held down in the ditch at Hecla Heights, when they turned the water on him he had to lay in that water all night to keep from getting shot. Okay. Now where is Hecla Heights? Hecla Heights is just this side of Louisville. What was he doing down in that ditch to start with? Well they were all trying to get the strike over and do a little walking around with signs and so forth, then the militia started firing or the mine workers started firing on them. Okay. He was on the outside of the fence then? The other people on the inside started firing at these people on the outside? That's the way I get it. Alright. Where did the water come in? Well it dropped down in an irrigation ditch above the mine and there was no water in it when they dropped down but before the night was over, somebody turned the water in the ditch so they laid in the water the rest of the night. Oh, okay. They didn't dare leave then? No, they didn't dare leave. Now that was a Rocky Mountain Fuel Company mine up there? I believe it was. Yeah. Do you remember any of the stories about the Columbine Mine? What happened over at the Columbine? I don't remember the Gig Strike but I remember the IWW Strike later on when they marched to the Columbine Mine and they opened up and I think there was about five men killed. They were just actually walking up in peace, they had the militia around then and they were here in town. They practiced

firing at these dumps and so forth. Let see, the IWW Strike was in what year? Do you remember? I don't remember exactly. I was in school and I don't think it was ever settled. Sometime during the middle '20s if I remember right. I can't remember the exact dates. What were the IWW's as compared to the or as opposed to the United Mine Workers? Well they were not members of the United Mine Workers. Dad was always a member of the United Mine Workers, course I joined them when I was in the coal mine but the IWW was International Workers of the World. Now where their headquarters or who the boss was, I don't know. What were they trying to do? Just trying to better the conditions and raise the wages. In otherwords, they were trying to get their union recognized? They were trying to get it recognized, I think they wanted to be over the top of the regular union. Over the top of the United Mine Workers, in otherwords? To replace the United Mine Workers. I think that's what they were trying to do mostly. Course I was just a kid at the time and I didn't get too much into it. Were you living in town when this happened? Yes. Was there any problems in the city here? Not here in the city that I run into. Okay. Do you remember them talking about the problems at the Simpson Mine? This was before, you were too young to remember this, but do you remember your dad talking about this? I know the Simpson Mine put up a huge fence all the way around the camp and they had approximately 30 houses in the camp for the people that worked there so that they didn't have to go out of the area because it was too dangerous to go out of the area if they were going to work there then. Why was it too dangerous? Well the miners and the scabs were fighting and they'd just soon kill each other as not. That's where the danger came in?

How many mines was there right here in the Lafayette area? Well I can remember the two down close to the dump, the Capital and the Standard and the Centennial, the Vulcan, Hiway Mine, Black Diamond, Simpson and then there was several of the dumps that the mine had quit before I was here. One of them was out by Chuck Wanekas, there was a couple of them down just south of Emma St. a ways. We used to walk out in the fields of those big dumps and lay on them when we were kids.

Verda, we haven't had much from you on this. Tell me a little bit about your family. It's an old family that's been here for years and tell me about something of your family. Well I don't know, they've always lived here. My dad has always, he started in the mines at 12 when he was in Pennsylvania and Ohio. He just never stopped, he still worked in the mines. Who are some of the people that you are related to? Well my mother was a Kneebone and we were related to the Kneebones and Mrs. Wagner was a sister of my mothers and then her one brother in Oregon raised fruit on a fruit farm and he lived until he was over 90. I think he was 91 when he died. My brother Jack used to work in the old dairy and he worked with Rubel, his name was Roy Rubel and he worked in there before they had a dairy of their own. Was that the old creamery up here? The old creamery. I called it the dairy but it was the old creamery where they made cheese and then George and Jack, George had the dairy up on Oak Street where all my family lives and then Jack worked for him for many, many years. When did they start that dairy up there? Well I don't know, I was pretty young, I remember. They had it here and Roy Rubel had two, one here and one in Fort Collins and one in Brighton. I used to run around with that girl and we were just small kids. Do you remember the laundry up there on Oak Street? Yes. That was just at the end of the block and that was Crawfords, Roy Crawford.

It was a laundry and then that's where Nip and Jack had the dairy. Okay. In that building? Yes. I didn't know it was the same building. Well that was the house and then on the side of the building. How long did they run that laundry? I don't know, it was for years and years. All the time us kids was growing up. Did you ever work in that laundry? I never worked in the laundry. (Earl) The old dairy was started in the laundry building after the laundry quit and then Nip built the cinder block building next to it and moved the dairy over there. It was a home dairy. Home dairy, that's right.

(Not audible) ----- (Verda)---her up here as a baby. She was just a baby and we came up for a vacation and she cried and cried and cried and oh we all walked the floor, my dad and my mother and I and we just couldn't imagine what was wrong with her. We took her down to Dr. Porter and he says "She needs some Pet Milk". It was 10 o'clock at night and he got Joe Roderick out of bed and told him to open up that store and get some Pet Milk and from then on we didn't have anymore trouble with her.

Tell me a little bit about Dr. Porter. (Verda) Well he was a mine doctor and you paid very little, \$2.50 or something like that out of a month's paycheck and the whole family could doctor there and he was there for years and years and everybody thought he was a grouchy old man but underneath he was one of the best there was. Now for this \$2.50 you say, the whole family could be doctored not just the man? No, that was the family. Would you go to his office? Yes. Or would he come to the house? Either one. We went to the office the night that a ---. That was just for miners that he did that. For these miners, did that include if you needed an operation or if you needed hospitalization or if you had a baby or something, did that include that? I don't know about the hospital. Most of the time when they had a baby, in those days, they had them at home. Yeah, but did they have a doctor there? Yes, they'd have a doctor there but he made house calls. But would that include, what I'm trying to get at, would that include this \$2.50 they paid, would that include the birth of the baby? Now I don't know about that. I think it did. So for \$2.50 they got all their medical treatment? Did that include medicines too? I don't know. (Earl) They give most of our medicine. So that was a pretty good bargain then? (Verda) That was a good bargain.

Okay. Did you every have any experience with Dr. Braiden? (Verda) Yes, we went to Dr. Braiden all the time and he was just an old family doctor, same as Dr. Porter, and he had the miners go there too. (Earl) I'll tell you one on Doc Braiden. Lee Baker run a store up on the highway and some guy had a heart attack when he came around the corner and came on around and went right through the wall. Mother and Dad were both in the store when it hit and mother got all bruised up and dad broke his leg and they took everybody down to Doc Braiden at that time and the insurance company was out there while we were at Dr. Braiden's and signed up with Mr. Epler who was in the store and bruised up and they signed up to give him \$50 if he would release the company, then they turned to dad and I refused to sign it and eventually it paid for all his hospital and time off work. This was during the war of course and he was working at the Remington Plant. But Mr. Epler signed for \$50 and a -----? He signed for \$50 to release him. Now, the man had a heart attack as he was coming around the corner there and went right into the store? That's right, the car was still running and the tires was burning the floor and dad shut the motor off, shut the key off in the car. Was his leg broken? Yes.

He helped dig the milkman out from under a bunch of stuff on the opposite side of the counter that was about to fall against the counter and he was down underneath it so he didn't get hurt too bad. But dad helped get him out before he realized that his leg was broke. Was there anybody else in that store when this happened? Mr. Epler's dad and mother and Lee Baker was the only ones that I know. Lee wasn't hurt? No. Did that end the store then? No, they fixed it up and he run it after that.

We're just visiting now but during the mining days, when the mines were off in the summertime, what did the men do? Mostly very little. There wasn't anything to do. There was too many miners loose and no jobs around. They built up their debts until next winter when they could pay them off. (Verda) That's the way Charlie Scholes did that was down on main street. They'd all charge -- (Earl) Charge your groceries all summer and then pay for them during the winter. (Verda) And then sometimes he never did get paid for it. If it was a mild winter there wasn't enough work then to get them paid off, so it was one continual in debt and out of debt for the miners at that time? Did that apply to most of the miners? Everybody that I know of.

Was there many automobiles in the early days of Lafayette? (Verda) Not too many. (Earl) Let's see, we bought one when I started school in 1920 when dad got his first Model T. (Verda) I remember when my brother Jack was around high school age and we had a Model T. Okay. Now when he bought that Model T in 1920, what did it cost, do you remember? (Verda) I have no idea. Do you know what your dad paid for his? (Earl) No, but I remember it was one of those that you cranked it till it boiled and then give it a good twist and it'd go every time. Till who boiled, you or the car? The car. Oh, okay. It didn't have a starter on it? Oh no, you had to crank it. (Verda) Yeah they had to be cranked.

What else was there in town that you can remember that you'd like to tell us about? About the town? Well Faulkner ran a garage which he sold the old Whippet and the cars when he was up on the highway where the bank lot is now. Grief started there after he left. Then Grief moved up on the corner after he moved out of there. How long was Grief there? Gosh, I don't know. What kind of cars did he sell? Grief sold Chevrolets. That was all he sold, just the Chevrolet? (Verda) Then when he sold it out, he sold out to McMahan. McMahan then sold it to his son-in-law. Grief moved to Denver when he sold out.

Well, we appreciate your letting us come up and talk to you. I have an envelope of dad's when he worked for the Fox Mining Company in Marshal for the first half of April, 1909. He loaded 16 3/4 tons of coal for which he was paid \$10.45, he worked one half a day of regular work which he was paid \$1.50. He was charged 20¢ for blacksmith and a \$1.50 for union, so for half a month his take home pay was \$10.25. For a half of month?

(Verda) The one thing that I didn't say, I belonged to the Rebecca Lodge for 34 years. Is the Rebecca Lodge still active? It's still active. Where do they meet? They meet at the Masonic Lodge. Oh, okay. Do you belong to the Odd Fellows? No, I gave up the Odd Fellows after they quit here in town. (Verda) I also belonged to the Methodist Church for 31 years. Tell me about the lodges. Were the lodges an active part of the town? (Verda) They used to be when they met up at the Rocky Mountain Hall and then after the hall burned down and so forth they didn't have any place to meet. They didn't know

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what they was going to do because they couldn't meet in homes and so they did meet in the Masonic Hall up there and they still do. There used to be like 70 or 80 in the Rebecca Lodge and now they're down to about 14, I think. How many lodges were there in Lafayette? Do you remember? Well off hand, I'd say -----.