

This is Fred Stones on June 17, 1986. I'm at the home of Bert Pierson at 300 E. Geneseo. I'm talking to him in the continuing program of the historical things of Lafayette that he remembers over the years. Bert we appreciate you letting us come down here and talk to you. The library is putting together a whole series of these and we wanted your recollections on this. First, let me ask you, when were you born? I was born October 26, 1894. Where were you born? I was born on the western slope over at Delta, Colorado. My father homesteaded over there. How long did you live over there? Till 1908. When did you come to Lafayette? In 1908. When were you married? 1919. Who did you marry? I married Eliza Brown. Was she from Lafayette? Oh yes, her family had been here for years. Was she born in Lafayette? Yes she was. When was she born? Do you remember her birthdate? No, I don't remember her birthdate. She was three years younger than I was. So she was born approximately 1899, something like that? She is now deceased? Yes. How long has she been gone? Three years. How many children did you have? Six. Can you remember their names offhand? Oh yes. There was Lois, she was our first one. Delbert was number two, Elaine was three, Jean was four, Dean was five or Glenn come in there. I missed Glenn, he was after Delbert. Okay, so you had six children. Are any of them still living here in Lafayette? Jean is living here and Dean is living here. Okay. So you have people here of your family to ---? Oh yes.

When you came of Lafayette in 1908, what did the town look like? Oh there was dirt roads and everything. It wasn't like it is now. We had one marshal that took care of everything. We done things the cheaper way. It wasn't like it is now. We didn't have too much entertainment. We had a show over here. We had a school. Went to school up here on Baseline. It burned down. Did you go to that school? Yeah. How long did you go to that school? Two years. Then we went to Boulder and I spent the rest of my schooling over in Boulder. So you graduated from school in Boulder? Yeah. Do you remember any of the kids that were in the school class with you up here? Up here? Oh there was Dick Thomas, Bea Thomas, I tell you I'm no good on names. Well that's alright. Lester Lavelly, he went to school up here the same time I did. Okay. Do you remember any of the teachers up here? Names I can't remember. Names are no good. I just don't remember. Okay, that's alright. I had some good teachers, no fooling. And this was in the old, old grade school. The old square gradeschool that ---? The one that burned down, yeah.

Okay, were you married here in Lafayette? Yes we were. Who married you? No, no we weren't married in Lafayette, we were married in Golden. You were married in Golden then? Yeah, I was married in Golden. Okay. Where did you live when you were first married? I lived in ----, well where's the April Fool Mine? The April Fool Mine I have never heard of. Well it's on the way to Nederland to the right. Is it a coal mine or a ---? No a quartz mine. Oh, a quartz mine. And you lived up there, up in the mountains. Yeah, that's where I was living when I was inducted into the service. When you were inducted into the service in which war? First World War. In the first World War. How long did you serve in the First World War? Two years. Okay. Did you go overseas? Yes, I was overseas. What were some of the battles you fought? Our company, they lost all of their men down here at ---- oh where we turn down here, we got the flu and we lost about two thirds of our company and we went over as a replacement and we were shuffled around but I never did see any active service. But you was in France? Oh yes, all over France. Okay, alright. This was before you were married? No, it was after I was married, I was married before I left. Okay. When you came back from France where did you live then? We come back from France, that's what I was trying to tell you, I went down here to the boarding house and got a room down

there. Okay. Then the next couple of days I come down with the mumps and I went and told the lady, "I got the mumps, I got no place to go, I don't know what you're going to do with me but I gotta do something". She said, "My God boy I don't know what to do with you". She said, "I'll tell you what though, if you'll go and stay in your room and not mingle with the rest of the borders and keep your mouth shut, why you can stay there till you get over them". So that's what I did. Was that the boarding house that's clear down, that's now the church, the great big two story boarding house down there? It was just a block down from the Senior Center there. There was a boarding house in there. Oh, okay. And the jail was right over in there. The jail was where? Over here by the city hall? No, no. The jail was down there by, it was right down on the alley, right there on the same street that the Senior Center is on. So it wasn't anywhere close to the city hall then? The jail? No.

Who was the marshal at that time? Now who was before Bill Sherrat? It was whoever was on before Bill Sherrat. Okay.

How long did you live in the boarding house then? Oh, I was there just a couple of weeks. Just a couple of weeks until you could find a place to live. Where was your first house here in town? Our first house was down here on, it was down there by the laundry. Over on Oak Street? It wasn't on Oak Street, it was down this way behind----I know their faces but I can't recall their names. But anyhow we lived there, that's where our first child was born. Okay. Was your children all born at home? Yeah. They wasn't born in the hospital? No. Who was the Doctors that attended your wife? Dr. Porter. He was a mine doctor? Yeah. Okay.

When you come back from the service, where did you work? When I come back from the service there was no work. Okay. Where I had been working, that folded up. I went to the Simpson Mine and asked for a job. They said they didn't have anything right now but come back in a day or two. I went back in a day or two and he said "No, nobody died yet"! I said, "Is it that bad"? He said, "Yes, it's that bad". He said, "We just don't have anything". I hunted and I hunted and I looked everywhere and I finally got a job out here on a farm with Gil Herring. I worked for him for a couple of years. Then I worked on the railroad, paddy on the railroad. When they put that line in for the Columbine Mine, I put my bid in for a job over there and I got it. I stayed with the Columbine until it closed. How many years were you at the Columbine? From the time it started until it closed. It started in the '20s and closed in the '50s. So you was there over 30 years? Yeah. What did you do over there when you first started at the mine? When I first started I dropped cars on top. Tell me what that involved? The railroad pushed the cars up there and you dropped them in one at a time under the shoot and loaded it and dropped it on down and put another one under. These were railroad cars? Yes, these were railroad cars. They pushed the emptys up above the tipple? Yeah. Then you would drop them down --- Yeah --- under the tipple -- that's right --- they'd fill them with coal and then you'd put them down there where the train could pick them up and haul them off. That's right. How long did you do that? Well, they told me when I got the job, they said "Oh for two or three weeks". Well I was there for three years before I got a job down below. Okay. But I finally got a job down below. I loaded coal by hand. With a scoop shovel? Yeah.

Okay. Tell me about your experiences loading coal down there. They pulled the coal with mules. They pulled the emptys in and the coal out with mules. Everything was done with the mules. Was you in there by yourself? No, I always had a partner. There was two of you that had a room, either a room or entrys. You drive a pair of entrys in and when you get in as far as you want to go, they make rooms off of that. Do you remember who your first partner was? No, I don't remember. He didn't stay with me very long. Jim Wilson was my partner for years and years and years. Is that Laura Starkey's father? Yes. Okay. Alright. You worked together for a long time then? Yes. Okay.

Now when you first started down in the mine there, did the company do the cutting and the drilling and this kind of stuff to shoot the coal or did you have to do that yourself? The company done that when I first went to work. Okay. As your coal was shot down, you went in and cleaned it up and laid your track and got ready for the next day. Okay.

When you first went to work now in the morning, how did you find, what was it like when you went in the mines? When you went in your room to start your work? How did you find the physical conditions in that room? Well, everything was supposed to be ---. The brattices was all put up and your air was circulating and everything was prepared for your work. Okay. And they had shot the coal so you ---. Yeah, the coal was shot down and the smoke was blowed out and you just went in there an shoveled it up. Okay. Now what did they use brattice for? For air. They catch the air where it come in and when it come back through. In otherwords they put up a wall like ---. Just like a river, they just ----. And they directed it by putting up this brattice to direct the air where they wanted it to go. That's right. What is brattice? Well it's a, what do they call that, well it's what gunny sacks is made of. Alright, gunny sack. It ain't called gunny sacks but then that's what they're made out of. But that's what they deliver the air with. Yeah, okay. And then you would shovel this coal all up. How many cars a day would you load? Oh, that would depend on your place. If you have too big a place and you couldn't get the cars, you didn't clean out for the next day, you wouldn't have nothing.

How high was the coal? Oh, it was different heights. Anywhere from 10 feet to about 3 feet. That's where you were working. Okay. Now when you got to the -- did you take out the whole 10 feet? No. Where they had the 10 foot coal they took out about 8 feet. And left the two foot for a roof there for seal. Okay. Now on this 3 foot coal, how did you work that? Well you had to crossbar that on up and take care of it. You had to take care of -----.
Would your cars go under a 3 foot roof? Yeah. They had cars that went under there. Okay. I didn't work in that kind of coal very much. They was there to work under. It just depended on your vein coal. That in the Simpson and Columbine was irregular. Did you have to do much timbering? Oh yes. We had to do quite a bit. Did you have to do your own timbering? Oh yes. But the company furnished the stuff and brought it down to you to do? Oh yes. They delivered the stuff right to the place.

Tell me, how did you timber a place? Well you start in - it just depends on how bad it is. If it wasn't too bad you just strengthened the props in there and if it was bad why you had to put crossbars in and take care of them, put them up wherever it was bad, you know. Okay. And you had to lay your own track? Yes.

How wide is the mine track, approximately? Two feet, two and a half feet, or what? About two and a half feet. I've got a bar down there that I -----.
Okay - that I always used to gauge. And you just lay that rail so that they can bring the cars in so that you could load them up and then when you cleaned it out you'd extend that on as you went? That's right. Okay.

How long did you load coal by hand? Oh, it must have been about 10 or 15 years. I don't remember just how long. Okay.

When did they bring the coal mining machines in? Oh, it was in the early 40's when they brought those coal mining machines in. Did you ever work on one of the coal mining machines? Yes. Which make did you work on? Which make of a machine? Oh I didn't work on a machine. I timbered for 'em. Oh, okay. But you was in the crew that run the machine? Yeah. Okay.

How many men worked at the Columbine? Have you any idea? There was at one time 300 men that worked there. Well when I was in charge of the union we had 300 men. When did you get the union in the Columbine? Well that's another question that dates don't stick with me but it was after Mrs. Roach took over. After the Wobbly strike.

Was you there when they had all the problems with the machine guns and the soldiers? I wasn't over there. That was the Wobblys and they went over there and a ----. But you was working there at the time? No. You wasn't working at the Columbine? I was working at the Columbine but there wasn't any of us working ----. Yeah, but what I mean was that you were still employed there? Yeah. But you was on strike. Tell me about that strike. Well it was bad. But they went over there in the morning, but they got shot and they stopped them at the gate and told them they couldn't come in but they came in anyway and they had a guy up in the tipple with a machine gun and he mowed them down real quick. How many of them were killed over there that day? My neighbor right up here, I can't think of his name, he was killed. Were you doing picket duty over there when this happened? Yeah, I suppose I was. Did they have the whole camp fenced off? Yes, oh yes. The whole camp was fenced off, and the strikers were inside the fence - the strikebreakers I mean? They had them inside the fence? Yes, oh yes. Okay. On your picket lines, you had to stay outside the fence? Well that's what I say, no they hadn't been. They'd been coming right on in and this time they told them they couldn't do it. Oh, I see. But they did it anyway, so they paid the price. And this man was up in the tipple with a machine gun? Yeah. You don't know who he was? Was he one of the soldiers? The way I got it, no. I couldn't say for sure, but it was the blacksmith that works there, they claim that's who was up there but you don't know, you can't say for sure anything. Yeah, okay. How long did that strike last? Well after the Wobblys done the shootin', that's when Miss Roach took over. Okay.

What happened to the people that were in the houses there at the Columbine while all this was going on? They moved them out. Oh, they moved them out? During the strike, the people that were on strike they moved them right out? Did they put the strikebreakers in the houses then? I don't know what they done with that, anyhow they moved them out.

They had a boarding house over there, didn't they, at the Columbine? Oh, sure. Okay. And a store. There was a schoolhouse there, too, wasn't there? There was a store but I don't know about the schoolhouse but I do know that they, when I first went over there they told me that I had to stay at the boarding house and trade at the store. Then they told me when I didn't do that, they told me I had to trade at the store but I didn't do that either. So that's when they kind of broke away from that. They could control you there. They could give you so much work and you had to spend that to live there and you couldn't get ahead enough to get away. That's the way these coal companys done, years ago. That's right. They dictated to you where you could live and where you had to buy your ---. That was one, wasn't that one of the things that you were striking against? Well naturally but then they'd been doing that for years, you know. Back in 1910, when they was down here you know, doing the same thing. You know, you probably remember when they had that all fenced in. No, I didn't come until 1933. I was up in the mines up in Utah then.

How many soldiers did they have over there at that time? I don't know. They had several.

When Mrs. Roach took over, wasn't her name Josephine Roach, I said Mrs. Roach, I don't think she was married, was she? No, she never was. Miss Roach. How did things change at the Columbine? Oh they changed tramatically. Everything was kind of half way reasonable. Okay. She was sure a nice person to deal with. Do you know how she got involved with the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company? Well her father was a big shot. Oh, okay. Yeah, her father was the one. It makes me think when I first went to work at the Columbine there was an old guy there with a ragged pair of overalls on sitting there on a powder keg and I was dropping cars and there was one of the rails that was kind of soaked down and I went and got some stuff over where they ----- was puttin' on the rails, brought it over, put it in there and started to raise that up. He said, "Hey Jack, by God that don't need raising". I said, "Ah hell it don't"! Boy, he come down off that hill and he said, "No by God it don't and I want it left just like it is".. I said, "Yes Sir". After he left I said to the weigh master up above, "Who was that guy anyhow"? He said, "It doesn't make any difference who he is, you better dance to his music if you want to hang around here". Was it Mr. Roach? It was the old man Roach. Why didn't he want the rails raised up? He thought he was paying you to do something that the railroad should do, huh? Well I don't know what he thought I was doing but I know that cars would come in there and slow down, you'd have to get a pinch bar and coax them on and then you'd have to hurry to get them blocked and stop it. I thought I was doing something for my own good. But anyhow, I'll never forget that.

During the strike, when the strike was on, what did you do to keep going, to keep your----? It didn't last that long. About how long did it last? About a month. Oh, just about a month. Okay. Where were you living at that time? I was living down here on Foote Avenue, right across from Joe Brown. Okay. How did you get back and forth from here to the Columbine? I had a car. You had a car. What kind of a car did you first buy? A Ford. A Ford? Was it a Model T or a Model A? Model T. Okay. Who rode with you? I couldn't tell you. Let's see there was Beranek down here. There was four of them that rode with me but I can't remember who they were. Did Mr. Wilson ride with you? I don't think so. No I don't remember who they were but anyhow I know the Beraneks, there was Joe Beranek and his son Carl, they rode with me. How far is it from

here to the Columbine? How far? Oh, it's about three miles. About three miles. When I first started working over there, I used to walk over there all the time. Is that right? And then you'd walk home at night? Yeah.

What condition was the business in the City of Lafayette at that time? Could you get anything you needed in town? Oh sure. Oh sure. Old Julius Magesky used to have a store right there and Baker he had one up there on Baseline. The man that lived across the street had a clothing store down here. Was that before Alderson's? Yeah. Names just don't stick, I don't know why. Well it's hard for all of us to remember names. Did you belong to any of the lodges here in town? No, I didn't. You never joined any of the lodges? Well I belonged to the American Legion while it lasted here in Lafayette. It didn't last too long. Then I went from there to Louisville. Do you still belong to the American Legion over in Louisville? Yes I do. That's all the lodges I belonged to. I'm not a lodge guy.

What did you do for entertainment here in Lafayette? You made your own. The only entertainment we had was the show over here that I knew anything about. At school they didn't have anything. The kids just got together and played a little baseball, played marbles but you made your own entertainment you didn't spend any money for entertainment in those days. In otherwords, everything in town they had their own entertainment right here. They made their entertainment right here in town. Was there any dances? Oh yes, there was a dance hall here. I never danced, I never went. Where did they dance? They had a hall somewhere, I don't remember just where. Did they dance in the Union Hall? Yes, they did dance in there. Do you remember when they built the Union Hall? I should but I don't. Now you mentioned that you were one of the officers of the Union. What did you do in the Union? Well anyhow I was the big shot or whatever you call it. Was you the president? Yeah. Okay. How long were you the president of the Union? I was president of the Union for several years and I was president of the Union when they closed the Columbine down. I went to a mine down here, a deep mine over by Denver. Would that be the Lyden? I went to the Lyden Mine and I was president over there until they closed up. How many members did you have in your UMW of A? Were you just president of the Union from the one mine? Did they have just the one Union for each mine or did they have a Union for the whole-----? Some of them had two or three mines but ours was just for the Columbine. Okay. And the others was for the Lyden. So you were in a different Local when you went to the Lyden than you were for the Columbine? Oh yeah. And then did you take over one of the offices at the Union there? At the Lyden? Yeah. Okay. How long did you work at the Lyden? Well not too long, it was about gone through. The three of us used to work down there. We worked there a couple of years, I think, before they closed down. Now you worked at the Lyden for about two years and when you left there, then what did you do? Went to the Lincoln. To the Lincoln. Tell me what was the difference in the mining, you say that the Lyden was a deep mine, how deep was it? I couldn't tell you. It was deeper though than the Columbine? Oh yes. The Columbine was about 300 feet but this mine was, I just don't remember how deep it was. Was there any difference in the way they mined coal there than they did at the Columbine? Not a whole lot, no. It was the old style of mining at the Lyden. They never got any of that new stuff. They didn't get any new loaders or anything like that? You just went back to loading

by hand over there then? Okay. You and Bob Johnson and who? That's the guy I can't think of. He's an old timer around here but I just can't think of his name. Did you ride together to the Lyden? The three of you rode together? Yeah. We used to put our chains in the car and drive to Broomfield and get out and put our chains on and go from there. Okay. Did you go over onto the Rocky Flats road and down? Is that the way you went down? There wasn't a Rocky Flats road then. Oh! How did you get over to the Lyden? Wadsworth? And then went West to the Lyden? Yes sir, that's right. Was there any reason why you couldn't ride the streetcar from Wadsworth to the Lyden? Didn't it run during the time that you could have gone? No. You couldn't make connections in otherwords? No, you couldn't. Okay. Who owned the Lyden Mine? I don't know. Where did they sell the coal? It went to Denver. But the coal all went to Denver? Okay.

Over at the Lincoln Mine, now this wasn't a shaft mine was it? No. It was an incline. Approximately how steep was the incline? Would it be about a 30% incline? I forget, I used to know how steep in was. Okay, and they brought the coal out on a belt? Yes. Okay. Down at the bottom where you was working now, how did you get the coal from where you was working over to that belt that brought it up to the top? Well they had trucks but they didn't call them trucks they ----. Did they call them buggies? Yeah, buggies. Buggies, okay. They used them. In otherwords, you loaded the coal into the buggies and the buggies hauled it over to the belt, the belt brought it up to the tipple where it was loaded and ----? Was the coal deep enough to accomodate these buggies without taking any of the top or bottom out of it? Yep. So it was pretty deep coal over there then? Well they kept their buggies in that kind of a place, you know. I see. How did they load the buggies? They didn't load those by hand? No, they didn't load those by hand but how they got from the cars to the buggies I forgot how they done that. Okay. We loaded the cars by hand. Oh, you loaded the cars and then took the cars over and dumped them into the buggies and then the buggies took them onto the belt? Is that the way it worked? No, now you're getting ahead of your time. When they put the belts in, they had these machines that you just go up and get some face and cut it down. There wasn't no hand loading to it. It was loaded in buggies. In otherwords, there wasn't any cars then? No. Oh, okay. That was modernized. Yeah. In otherwords, they just had these loading coal mining machines and loaded it right into the buggies and then took the buggies over and dumped it onto the belt? Yes.

Have you any idea how many ton of coal they produced a day over there? No, that part of it I don't know. How many groups of miners were down there? How many buggies did they have? How many people were working on these? I think they only had the one machine. Just the one machine? Who owned that mine, do you remember? Rocky Mountain Fuel Co. Oh, did the Rocky Mountain own that mine? Yes. And that was still under the United Mine Workers? Oh yeah. Okay. In otherwords, the United Mine Workers took over most of the union activities here in the country, did they not? Whatever union activities there was, you know there was years, in 1910 when they had that strike they never did call them back again. Lots of 'em stayed out for years and years. A lot of 'em never went back but it was never called off and that was sure a bad deal. Now that was before you started working in the mine, though? The 1910 strike? Oh yeah. When I went to work they didn't have a union. They didn't have a union until Miss Roach brought it in. You know they had this fenced off down here in 1910 and they really had it but they

never did call that strike off. It was never officially settled then?
No. I see. Okay.

You never worked at the Simpson Mine? No. Okay. Were the Columbine and the Lyden and the Lincoln the only three that you worked in? No, I worked over here at that mine west of Louisville. The Crown? The Crown. Now that wasn't a Rocky Mountain Fuel Co. mine was it? No. Okay. Was that the new Crown that you worked in? Right there close to Superior? Yes. That's where my neighbor got killed. Spensieri. Oh, Spensieri was killed at the Crown Mine? Yeah. Was you ever injured in the mine? Oh yeah. I got run over with a car and it didn't do me much good either but I never did go to the doctor. Was it empty at the time? Yeah. But you was never crushed or a rock fall on you or anything like that? No. My big toe, I mashed it. That wasn't rock that was a chunk of coal that hit me on the toe. That was before we got the hard toed shoes. Yeah.

Was you every around a mine fire? I was running a machine in the mine and I told the fireboss that I could smell smoke. He said, "No, I don't think you can". I said, "Well I can and I don't like it". But he went on for, I guess two weeks, finally there was a fire broke out right by the shaft. Is that right? Now was that at the Columbine? That was at the Columbine and they caught it in time and it didn't do any harm. How did they put it out? I don't remember. But you could smell it two weeks before it broke out? Yeah. Was you ever on a mine rescue team? Nope.

Let me ask you now, can you think of anything, I'm going to turn this off now for a minute. Tell me about how you did get hurt. Well you know we used to ride the belt out -- at the Lincoln? -- at the Lincoln. We'd get on the belt and ride it out and of course where they had their air regulations, every so often you'd go through one that hung down low and you'd duck your head down and go on through. Well we was kidding around and I raised up just when I should have been going down and that caught me and threw me over backwards over on the rollers on the belt and broke my jaw and knocked me out. You couldn't stop it you know and when it got to where it stopped to let them off, somebody said, "Hell, he's dead". I said, "No I ain't dead". You heard them say that? That was the first thing I heard. Well I'll be darned. They was going to send for the stretcher but I said, "No, I don't need a stretcher". I got off and walked off with the rest of them but I was a mess. How many men worked over there? How many? In the crew where you was working. Well there was two or three different crews worked there. There wasn't too many. 12 or 14 of us. Can you describe how this belt worked? What do you mean how did it work? It was just an endless belt. Alright, but what did it run on? Electricity. It run on rollers. So it was low in the center and up on each side? Yeah. And it was just an endless belt? How long was the belt? Do you have any idea? 300,400 or 500 feet long? Well they kept extending out in the mine but the one that goes to the bottom, you know, one belt would dump onto the other. Yeah. That's your main belt, it was about -- I don't remember. But it came from the bottom of the mine clear up to the top of the tippel, in otherwords? Yeah, that it did. From the bottom to the top.

Now in that mine, you were paid by the hour or by the day, you couldn't have been paid by the ton? Oh yeah, we was paid by the ton. You was paid by the ton? How could you be paid by the ton? Oh no, that's right, when we got through, that's after they put that machine in, yeah. Then you was paid by the hour? They used to dump that coal on there when we loading coal. No they didn't, they didn't have any way of weighing it. No they never did. When they put the belt in, the tonnage business was out. So then they paid you so much an hour or so much a day or whatever. Yeah, that's right. Okay. Company work. When you were loading coal, how much were you making a ton? How much did they pay you? I don't remember. To load a ton of coal? Wasn't very much. Okay, but you had to work like the devil to load enough coal to make a living, didn't you? Oh, we done real well. Some of 'em and some of 'em couldn't make a living. Like after that Wobbly strike, I went over there and they wouldn't even let me go in and I said, "I've got tools in there, I need to go get them". No, you can't got get them and I was off quite awhile. Finally they sent word over and said we've got two men that can't make a living at this place and if you think you can do anything about it why we've got a job for you and if you can't, we don't have a job for you. I said, "Well I've never seen anything at the Columbine I couldn't make a living at". So that was Jim and I and we went over there and these guys, well they were miners, but they really had a mess there, it was terrible. They had a machine cut in there, a big one, so they said, "We'll give you pick coal first, if you clean this up and timber it"... Well that tickled us, cause there was quite abit of coal there so anyway we cleaned it up, cleaned the rock up, timbered the place up and started it off. He said, "Gonna take this machine out of here, it ain't workin' like it ought to, so we're goin' put it on pit coal. Well that was alright but we had a chunk of rock come out like that right where the squeeze come on, it was workin' on that rock and made it easy to pick out so I said to the foreman, "If you put a switch in here and put a double track in here, we can put our rock in between the tracks and timber it and save takin' all that rock out and makes it better for that and makes it better for us if you got more carts for coal". He said, "I don't know whether I can do that or not. I'll see about it". So the next day he come in and said that they were going to put the switch in. So they put the switch in and got to movin' and boy we was really making the money and thats when we'd worked there a couple of weeks. He come in and he said, "We ought to put another man in here, you guys are making too much money". Okay. We had to haul our own coal and take it out to the guy that picked up the coal so they got another man in there and there was three of us, Jim Wilson and an old timer down here and myself. Anyhow the three of us worked in there and we led the payroll. Was there more than just that one seam of rock in there? That's all there was. Coal down below and coal up above. You take that rock all off and shoot the coal down and shoot it up, you had all clean coal. Yeah, then all you had to do was load it. That's right. Who was the mine foreman there at that time, do you remember his name? Dave Lueras. Dave Lueras, okay. He was eventually killed over there at the mine, was he not? Young Dave. The old man wasn't, no. Yeah, young Dave wasn't he killed at the Columbine? The Columbine Mine. The last day that they quit. Well I'll be. I remember him being killed in the mine but I didn't know it was the last day. Well it wasn't the last day, they had to clean up. I worked the last day, pulled the machine out the last day that they worked.

Where did they send the machines when they took them out of the Columbine, do you remember? I don't know, I don't know what they done with them.

Have you ever been on the city council or anything like that here in Lafayette? No, never took part in any of the town dealings here. Just a nobody. Ha Ha, I wouldn't say you was a nobody. How many years were you and Eliza married? Sixty five. Sixty five years. That's great.

When did you move in this house here? Sometime in the '30s. I don't know if it was in the '30s or the '20s. We've been here, oh, 50 some years. It must have been in the '20s.

Well Bert, we appreciate your letting us talk to you. We appreciate the things that you've remembered and told us about this. But there were alot of things that I didn't remember. Well, course that's, -- there's things that you've told me that nobody else has told me see and this just goes to round out the whole story of the town, see.

Let me ask you one more question before we get through here. How did this doctor business work with the city or with the company? Dr. Porter was the company doctor, how did that work, how did you pay him? You paid him just the same as you pay any other doctor. You paid him for the trips that he made. They didn't take it out at the mine? If the mine paid for it, they took it out at the mine. You know, whenever there was an accident, they'd call him and he'd come over and if they put you in the hospital or anything, why the mine took care of that. But if one of your family was sick or anything like that ----- . In otherwords if any of your kids got sick or anything like that, the money that you paid at the mine didn't pay for the doctor for them? That's right. Oh, I was wrong there. I thought that that included ---. No, no. How many doctors were there in Lafayette? Well there wasn't very many. Dr. Porter, I think, was the only one here for a long time. Course Braiden and then there was another one but I can't remember his name. Well the two that I remember when I came here was Braiden and Porter and of course Dr. Hurt was the dentist when I came. Yeah, Doc Hurt was the dentist for years and years.

Well again, we thank you for letting us come and talk to you here. Okay.

Do you remember when Charlie Scholes built his store? No I don't.

Was there a blacksmith in town? If there was, I don't remember. I always had mine done at the mine. I think there was a blacksmith, why what's the matter with you, you ought to know. Oh hell, they lived there by Lavery, what the heck's his name. He had a blacksmith shop right there. Oh a Addie Nelson. Nelson. Course it was Addie and his brothers. Right across the street from where the store is now.

Did you lose any money when the bank went broke here in town? Well, I finally got it back. Oh, you got your money back, good. When they robbed the bank, did you know what was going on or did you know anything about it? Not until it was all over with, huh? Not till it was all over with and then it was second hand.

Now when the union come in, you didn't have to trade at the store no more. Was the company store down here? That was the Rocky Mountain store, wasn't it? This one here? The big store. Yeah. Didn't Fred Autrey run that for awhile? Yes he did. Okay. They had a company store at the Columbine Mine too. Can you describe that store? The company store. Well it was a store, the same as the rest of them. Did they handle almost everything that you needed? Yep. You could buy anything you wanted. Did they have just groceries? Yes, groceries. I think they had, I ain't sure but it seems like they handled mine tools. Anything that you wanted to buy that you could charge to the mine why they took care of you. Did they have clothes or anything like that? No. Had to go to Aldersons for that then? Aldersons or, what's this guys name? Luccock. Luccock. Sam Luccock. Yep. He lived in that big house right on the corner there, didn't he? Yes he did