

Interviewer: It is the afternoon of August 16th, 2004. This is the Kathy Berg from the Salida Regional Library. I am in Delta, Colorado at 1749 Hillcrest interviewing Helen Campbell Drake and Norman Campbell. We've been here before. We've had an interview, so we know a little bit about the Campbells, but we just want to know more and more during their childhood, the different things that went on in and around Salida and on their own farm, ranch. Did you call it a farm or a ranch?

Helen: We called it a ranch... but it was really a farm.

Interviewer: That cleared everything up. Thank you.

[00:01:00]

Helen: Because my dad only had 30 head of cattle and the rest is all farming.

Interviewer: Did you distinguish it in any way? The Hutchinsons had a ranch and you had a farm/ranch, probably?

Helen: We just always called it a ranch.

Interviewer: Maybe it was the out west part of it.

Helen: Probably.

Norman: According to Colorado A&M when I was studying agriculture there, a ranch had to do with the ratio of cattle units to the acreage, and we didn't have enough acreage to qualify as a ranch.

Interviewer: There's a difference in the size.

Norman: I've forgotten what the figure is. Four or five cows per acre was a ranch, but one cow per acre was a ranch, too. If you could have 30 or 40 cows per acre, then it was a farm.

[00:02:00]

Helen: Don't you think it was called a ranch because, going back to the Blanchards, didn't the Blanchards have more cattle? And wasn't it that time my dad took over the farm it was truly a ranch, but then it had dwindled down to about 500 acres.

Norman: 320.

Helen: We had acres later then, didn't we?

Norman: Yeah. Dad bought the farm just west of ours, which added another 160 acres.

Helen: At one time in the past it was truly a ranch. We just always called it the ranch.

Norman: [00:03:00] On the southeast corner there's a cemetery, the Blanchard Cemetery it was called, and most of the bodies were eventually dug up and reburied in the Poncha Springs Cemetery because of seepage. After they started irrigating those hills, it seeped in and the caskets were getting all soaked. When we lived there there were still several tombstones over there.

Helen: It was great fun to take our little cousins down there, and Norman and my other brother, David, would be up on the hillside with sheets on and we would take our little cousins down to this cemetery and there would come these flying ghosts. It scared the dickens out of our cousins.

Interviewer: I bet. Just sitting here I'm getting a little scared. You had pranks in those days, too, huh?

Helen: [00:04:00] Yes we did. Close to the cemetery, my dad had a place that he would flood with water, and then in the wintertime we ice skated. It was close to the cemetery. We knew there wasn't any danger of ghosts coming but our little cousins didn't know that.

Interviewer: Are you still friends with your little cousins today?

Helen: Oh yes.

Interviewer: Some of the things that went on at the ranch/farm we had talked a little bit beforehand I'd like to hear more about and I'm sure everyone else would, like the soap-making and the sheep-shearing and the wheat. Do you want to just, either one of you, or both of you...

Helen: I think all the farm wives made their own soap to use for washing their clothes, and that was a big project every year. My mother had a big kettle that she would use to make the soap in, and it would be made outdoors, and my dad had a stand that she would put this on. She would save the fat and then ... What else did she use? The lye.

[00:05:00]

Norman: From slaughtered cows, she always kept the lard from that, the fat, and she kept the fat left over from the cooking. All this was put in there with some water and lye and boiled for a half a day or longer.

Helen: Then it would bubble.

Norman: It finally gets real thick and syrupy, a real thick syrup, then we'd dip it out and put it in, mom used cake pans, and we'd set those over in the old bunk house and let it dry out for two or three months. Then that's what she used to wash her clothes with. She'd bring a number of cakes she'd need and cut them into slivers, put them in a kettle and put the water in there and melt it down and just pour some of that in with each load of clothing.

[00:06:00]

Helen: All the wives did that, or at least our aunts did. It was real common. The soap had to be made outdoors over an open fire.

Interviewer: They did this once a year?

Helen: Usually. She usually made enough to last a year. I remember helping cut up the little square cuts and then making the slivers so you can boil it so it'd be nice and soft to put in your washing machine.

Interviewer: Washing machine?

Helen: Mm-hmm (affirmative). We used the soap in the washing machine. We didn't have electricity until I was in the 5th grade, 6th grade.

Norman: I was a junior in high school. '43 or '44.

Helen: '43 I was 10, '44 I was 11.

Norman: Before that, dad had fixed up a washing machine for mom. It'd sit out  
[00:07:00] under the pinon trees. They put a small gasoline engine on it which ran ... Two wash machines would run. We had pulleys and belts. Mom washed with that system for four or five years until they finally got a new washing machine she could use in the house. That was also a gas hog. She had a metal hose that she'd have to kick out the back door so you wouldn't get the house filled with fumes.

Helen: Mom was lucky, she felt, to have dad. He used ingenuity to power some of her things, such as a washing machine, and she always felt as though she was lucky.

Norman: Because otherwise they'd be using an old washboard.

Interviewer: Look at us today.

Norman: That's what grandma did and some of our aunts and uncles did.

[00:08:00]

Helen: I believe we already talked about how self-reliant we were on the farm. During the war time we only had to buy sugar, baking powder, and salt, soda crackers, because we grew everything else. We had the orchards, we had the farm, we had the beef, the pork. We had cream. Had the milk. Had everything. We didn't have to rely on anyone. It was a lot of work.

Interviewer: It's hard to imagine. You spent all day just surviving.

Norman: One of our nieces who was remarking to Helen the other day ... She said,

"I'm disappointed in grandma because she didn't really work on the ranch. She just stayed in the house." She has no idea. We're going to have to sit down with her sometime and just go through the whole things that our mom had to do on that farm. She worked harder than dad in some respect.

[00:09:00]

Helen: She wasn't out riding the horses as much and she wasn't out sorting the cattle, but she was doing other very important things.

Norman: The jobs were broken up; the wife has certain things that were her realm and the husband had his realm. Our niece couldn't understand the difference for some reason.

Interviewer: It occurs to me that that's probably where that saying came from: a woman's work is never done. From the time she gets up in the morning, she makes breakfast and then cleans the dishes and probably has to start thinking about lunch, or one of the extra things like making soap or something that needs to be done before the weather changes.

Norman: Planting the garden, weeding the garden, picking the raspberries, picking the strawberries. She hardly ever had time to sit down...

Interviewer: Did she read a book?

Norman: Still, she did crocheting and knitting and things like that.

Helen: She usually found time in the afternoon for at least an hour to read. She liked to read.

[00:10:00]

Interviewer: Now, didn't you help out as you got older?

Helen: Oh yeah. We all helped out. We all had our chores to do. We all...

Norman: We raised potatoes and we had to weed those, and it seemed like those rows were at least a mile long. You had to start over and do the next one.

Helen: Mom had the orchards and my dad would help irrigate. There was apples, and then the canning of apples, picking of apples, making cider. Then dad would haul all these apples into a cellar that we had and we'd haul all the vegetables, carrots and potatoes, the turnips or whatever we had, into the cellar and then we'd use them all winter. Then come next spring we had to carry most of them out and carry to the pigs because it was left over.

[00:11:00]

Norman: You always had a lot of cabbage. In the gardens you'd had four or five rows of cabbage. You made that into sauerkraut. We had about a 30 or 40 gallon barrel, keg, in which you put this sauerkraut in and pounded it down and salted it and whatever else you had to do. We also made vinegar. We had

about a 20 gallon wooden keg. They'd put cider into it and then mom would add mother into the cider, and the mother is what changes cider into vinegar.

Interviewer: Is that the starter?

Norman: Yeah, a starter. They called it mother because it reproduces.

Helen: Mom not only canned vegetables and fruits, but she also canned meat. I  
[00:12:00] could remember the venison that she would can, the beef she had, the pork she would can. Because we didn't have refrigeration, and so she canned them. They were good...

Norman: In the summertime we had an icebox, and every Saturday when we did our grocery shopping, on the way home we'd have to stop at the ice house and get a block of ice and we'd put it in this icebox and that would last until the next Saturday. Keep milk and cream and butter and stuff like that fresh.

Interviewer: What about drying meat? Was that done...

Helen: We didn't dry meat.

Interviewer: You didn't?

Helen: I don't remember...

Norman: Some people did, I guess, but we didn't.

Helen: We didn't dry fruit, either. I think now I know a reason why. Years ago I  
[00:13:00] bought some dried fruit at the grocery store and I had my mother, I said, "Try some of this dried fruit." She said, "I don't want to eat that." She said growing up she ate so much dried fruit she hated it. Evidently, when she was a child, her family must have dried a lot of fruit.

Norman: Because they had the farm on Adobe Park and they too had a large orchard. I'll bet you grandma dried it and...

Helen: My mom did not like the dried fruit that you buy in the grocery store, and that's why we never had it. Because she didn't like it.

Interviewer: What about the sheep-shearing?

Norman: We'd come around once a year in the spring and setup ... There'd be four or five shearers and they'd have all their own equipment with their gas motors and so forth and they would shear the sheep out in a shed dad fixed up. After it was finished, we had to tie up each...

Helen: A big bag. They would throw the fleeces into the bag...

[00:14:00]

Norman: We'd tie up each fleece, and then you'd have to throw it in this big bag. Then somebody had to get in there and stomp it down.

Helen: That was fun because we'd jump off the roof of the shed into this big bag. It was greasy, and I know there were sheep ticks, but we didn't care. It was fun to do.

Norman: Except out brother David didn't like it. He didn't like sheep to this day because of that, but it was something to do. I couldn't say I really liked it.

Interviewer: Probably not too many people have done that, so it's a unique experience.

Helen: My dad always said it was the sheep that helped him financially. It was the sheep more than any other part of the farm.

Norman: Because you have more than one crop there with cattle and pigs. You just have the little pigs in there. Dad has to sell those sheep. You can sell the lambs, but you also have the wool to sell. At that time, wool was subsidized by the federal government, so that helped.

[00:15:00]

Interviewer: What is the wheat experience about?

Helen: Dad and two other men, Carl Anderson and Ed Eggleston, wasn't it?

Interviewer: Bert Eggleston.

Helen: Bought a threshing machine and they would go around and they'd thresh the wheat or oats or whatever it is at my dad's place, and then they'd go to Bert's, and then they'd go to Carl Anderson's.

Interviewer: Did they go other places, Norman?

Norman: Yeah, the did. A couple years, went around to other people who didn't have their own threshing machine and threshed for them. You had to thresh oats and wheat and barely, and you could also thresh peas. They had raised some peas, but not a lot. Basically oats and wheat and barley that they threshed. In late August, early September, we had a McCormick binder that we used three horses to pull and you would cut the grain, whatever it was, wheat, barley, and it would tie the wheat into sheaves, bundles, and then it'd kick them out the back. Then we had to go along beyond that and make shocks of the grain, put eight or 10 of these sheaves together in a shock. You probably seen pictures of them. When they would finish your field it'd be covered with hundreds of these shocks.

[00:16:00]

Interviewer: The circles, is that what you're talking about?

Helen: They look like a tepee, all the ... You probably seen them around Halloween time. Those are the shocks.

Norman:  
[00:17:00] Then when we got ready to thresh you had at least two wagons and at least two people in the field, and the people in the field would pitch the grain onto the wagon, the shocks, and then whoever is on the wagon had to arrange them so they wouldn't slip off. Then they'd drive that into the threshing machine and you'd pitch it off into the threshing machine. Only the big men got to do that because it was dangerous. You were standing there beside this elevator thing that ran into the threshing machine as the sheaves when into the threshing machine. You had these knives that were doing this, they were cutting up ... Several people had been killed who fell into the ... Not necessarily in Salida, but Kansas and other places where they used a lot of them. We had to have people you could trust to do that job.

Interviewer: Was it an entire family activity?

Helen: Mainly the men.

Interviewer: The women made food ...

[00:18:00]  
Norman: A threshing team would be 10 or 15 men, and the women, like in mom's case, my mother would get together with Mable Anderson, who was one of our neighbors, and Grandma Blanchard would always come out. I don't know Mrs. Eggleston ever came over or not. They would get together and cook the meal and serve it as lunchtime to the threshers. Then when the threshing machine went up to the Andersons, mom would go up there, they would prepare a meal from up there.

Interviewer: It was a community effort, really.

Helen: It really was.

Norman: Yeah.

Interviewer: Sounds interesting. There are a couple of other things that I wanted to ask you about. One was about the circus coming to town. Obviously it would've been a big deal because not much was going on and here comes the circus.

[00:19:00]  
Norman: The circus, they traveled on the trains. They would come to either Pueblo or Grand Junction depending on which way they were going. The shortest way from Pueblo to Grand Junction was the D & RG Railroad through Salida and they needed someplace halfway between Grand Junction and Pueblo to unload their animals because the law required that they do that. Salida was the ideal place because they could set up a tent and put on a show and

earn a little bit of money. We got to see some of the better, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circuses that way.

[00:20:00] Mom tells a tale back when she was growing up, the agent for the circus came around and he had these big posters he wanted to put up. He asked our grandfather put one up on the side of his barn, because they were huge posters. He said, "Sure, I guess." The guy said, "I'll give you enough tickets for each of your family," and grandpa said, "Okay." They put it up and the guy said, "Now, how many kids?" There were 11 kids and grandma and grandpa, so he needed 13 tickets. I was a little taken aback by that.

Helen: I can remember my dad saying that so many of them ... I suppose he and his friends would go down when the train came in to unload the animals. They would go down and watch the watering and the feeding of the animals. It was so interesting and something that they didn't see very often; the elephants and the tigers and all. They would go down and watch them feed them, train them, and exercise them. That was an added bonus. We saw a lot of three ring circuses. I still remember going to circuses with you and David and Sally.

Interviewer: For free. It was always for free?

Norman: [00:21:00] No. It was free this one time. Our mom used to tell us about it. It wasn't too expensive. A quarter or \$.50. Something like that.

Interviewer: Now there's quite a controversy about circuses and the way they treat their animals, and it sounds like, when you went to see them, that they were treated well. They made sure of that.

Helen: I think they were.

Interviewer: Times were different. Now there was something interesting that we were discussing about Laura Evans and being kids and getting near Riverside Park which, of course, is down by the river, which is also by Sackett Street, which used to be the street for the ladies of the evening. If you could continue that story I'd appreciate it.

Helen: We were never allowed to walk down to the Riverside Park because that was too close to the ladies of the night district. It was quite forbidden.

[00:22:00]

Norman: If we were going to the depot, and we had to do that quite a bit. You always drove the car down to the depot so you didn't get out between 1st Street and the River. We were not allowed. It wasn't any specific rule, it was just the comments dad and mom and our friends made which let you know you weren't supposed to go there, so we didn't.

Helen: One reason we went to the depot a lot because they would take cans of

cream and milk down to the depot. Had those huge cans and they would...

Norman: Every farmer kept five, or six, or a half-a-dozen cows that we'd milk every morning and evening and then separate out the cream. Some of them mom would use to make butter with, but it was more than what she needed for making butter, so we had five and 10 gallon milk cans that we'd put the cream in. Part of the time we took it down to the depot, unloaded it there, and it was picked up and taken to Denver where it was used by some creamery there, and they would send back the empty can to be refilled. On the other occasions, we had a creamery in Salida and we'd take it there sometimes. Took it to the railroad sometime and to the creamery other times we did.

[00:23:00]

Helen: Probably wherever they got the most money. Maybe that had something to do with it.

Interviewer: There were dairies here in Salida, like Starbucks?

Norman: No, Starbucks was a dairy. Every farmer had several milk cows, three, four or five, half-a-dozen, and every farmer milked and sold their milk to the creamery or send it to Denver. In addition, there was Starbucks and one right next to them that ran Jersey cows.

[00:24:00]

Interviewer: What about the Valley View Dairy?

Helen: That's the one I was talking about.

Norman: I never heard it called that, but if you want to call it that, you can. Roy Sneddon and his brother owned it, and they became angry with each other for some reason. Because Roy was a drunkard. Alcoholic. After they separated, it wasn't long after that until Roy's house burned down. Then about four or five years later his barn burned down. About this time, his brother decided he had had it with that area so he bought this farm over on Sand Park and moved his dairy over there. Since Roy didn't have much of a house to live in, his wife moved down into his brother's house, which was just a quarter of a mile east of there.

[00:25:00] After we left Salida, they had two houses down there, both of those burned down. In every case, for the insurance. Now, why the insurance company kept re-insuring him, he had to have money ... One of my cousins, Evan, he was an assistant superintendent at Denver for about 25 years, he and this girl, Eleanor Matthews, had to sneak out for dates because her grandmother didn't want her to have anything to do with the Sneddon because the only Sneddon that Eleanor's grandmother knew was Roy Sneddon and his family. Buddy, that was our cousin Evan, and Eleanor would sneak out to go to dances and so all sorts of things, and eventually they got married. Eleanor said her grandmother never forgave her for marrying Sneddon.

Helen: Just because the one uncle was an alcoholic. The others were fine men.

[00:26:00]  
Interviewer: That's a good story. Now, pardon my ignorance, but what is the difference between a creamery and a dairy? A creamery is where they sell it?

Norman: A dairy, they have the cows and they milk the cows, and then they the facility there to separate the milk and the cream and bottle it and sell it. In the case of a creamery, they depended upon farmers to bring it...

Interviewer: To them.

Norman: To them. Some farmers would bring in whole milk, but most of us just took in the cream.

Helen: Some dairies also took their cream to the creameries, too.

Norman: I don't know about that.

Helen: I was thinking about Irvin. He had more of a dairy, but he took his cream and his milk down to a creamery.

Norman: That's right, he did.

Helen: We had one farmer, he's related to us in a way, Bert Eggleston who talked slow. He took his cream into the creamery and the next week they just refused to pay him for it. Because why? They pulled up a dead cat and Bert said, "I'd been wondering what happened to that cat."  
[00:27:00]

Interviewer: What a story. I'll check my milk carton next time. That brings up another thought, another question of mine. Was there a creamery where they made ice cream? In those days did you get ice cream cones? It's a hot August day today, makes me think about that.

Norman: Yeah, the creamery where we took our cream in Salida. It was there at the corner of...

Helen: Coming down from Poncha Boulevard.

Norman: Where the new Presbyterian Church is, you go down that hill.

Interviewer: That curve?

Norman: Yeah.

Interviewer: 3rd Street?

Norman: It was at the corner of 3rd.

[00:28:00]  
Interviewer: Poncha turns into 3rd.

Norman: This creamery was the corner of 3rd and H.

Interviewer: It was right there. It's a storage place right now for the Hyltons.

Norman: They processed the cream that people took in. They made butter and they made ice cream, because we'd often stop there on a Saturday because mom always went shopping on Saturday, and on the way home we'd stop at the creamery and she'd buy ice cream cones for each of us. She'd buy an extra one, we'd take it out and we'd try to race back to the ranch, it was five miles from the house, so we'd have one for dad. You could bulk ice cream there also.

Interviewer: Could you keep it in your icebox? Would it stay in there?

Norman: For a while, but usually you bought bulk ice cream on the days you were having a family picnic.

[00:29:00]  
Interviewer: That, or we made it.

Norman: In the wintertime we made our own ice cream, but in the summertime you'd have to buy it.

Interviewer: The name Salida, there's a lot of different thoughts and a little controversy over the pronunciation. I know you wanted to talk about that.

Helen: Norman has a story about that he...

Norman: S-A-L-I-D-A is the Spanish word, Salida, for exit. When the railroad first went through there, they weren't too concerned with Spanish names, so they gave the sighting there the name Salida. Supposedly it was for the name for the daughters of the president of the railroad system. One was Sally and the other was Ida, so it became Salida.

[00:30:00]  
Interviewer: That's a true story, right?

Norman: That's supposed to be a true story.

Interviewer: That's a new one. It's as good as any other one, I think. Or maybe better. Now we can feel okay about pronouncing it Salida and not Salida.

Norman: It's interesting that we pronounced Salida. There's a Salida, Utah and it's pronounced Salida, and there's one in California and it's also pronounced

Salida. You'd think in one state or the other it'd be Salida, but it's not.

Interviewer: That's interesting. I didn't know they were in three states. Now, there were some interesting stories about the Posts, a family that lived near you.

Norman: From Missouri Park. That area is called in the Valley View School west is Missouri Park because originally it was settled by mostly farmers from Missouri. Back in the early part of the 20th century, Italian immigrants came in and bought some of those French farms, and one of them was, I think it's Fred Post or John Post. Fred, I think. He was from northern Italy. He was a red-headed Italian, which is rather unusual, but he was. He married and he had a bunch of sons and daughters, and eventually he bought farms for each of his sons. For his daughters, he would pick out a potential son-in-law and say, "I'll give you this farm if you will marry such and such a daughter." He even did that with our dad. He asked him if he'd marry one of his daughters and dad said no.

[00:32:00]

Eventually she became Mrs. O'Hara. Ted O'Hara's brother. Ted O'Hara's father was Irish, and so Ted was half-Irish and half-Italian. Until I was in college, I thought the name O'Hara was Italian because we referred to them, dad did, as "those Italians" because Mr. O'Hara had married this Italian woman which Mr. Post wanted dad to marry. It gets complicated.

Interviewer: That made him Italian because he married his daughter. There were a lot of other immigrants, there were a lot of other people from other countries that settled and...

[00:33:00]

Norman: It was mostly Italians on Missouri Park. Naccaratos, the Alloy's, Elsie Alloy's father came over from Sicily and they bought the farm right across the road from where ours was.

Norman: Predovich?

Norman: The Alloys, when they left Italy they had two daughters and a son, and the second son was born crossing the Atlantic. They left Italy with three kids and arrived in New York with four. Then Elsie was born in Salida. They brought the grandmother. She and Elsie's mother never learned to speak English in all the years that they were there. Her father Sam did, but mother and grandmother didn't.

Norman: They were good people, but Predovich?

Norman: That's Austrian.

Interviewer: There was a contingent of Austrians that lived here, too?

[00:34:00]

Norman: In Missouri Park there was only one. There was a lot of Austrians in Smelter Town. They worked in the smelter there, a lot of them. We looked down our noses at Austrians. We claimed they lived in a classless society, but it's really not. The Austrians were down at the bottom even below the Mexicans because they lived in Smelter Town, because they had worked in the smelter.

Helen: Our mother taught school before she married and one of the schools in which she taught was at a smelter. I can remember telling the story how ... I don't know how many children she had, but it was a two-room schoolhouse.

Norman: They had two teachers. One teacher had the 1st through the 4th grade and mom had the 5th through the 8th grade, and there were about 40 kids in each classroom if I remember.

Helen: [00:35:00] The kids would go home at noon to each lunch, and so one day the boys particularly decided it was too nice to go back to school in the afternoon, so at noon they ate a lot of garlic knowing that when they came back to school Ms. Sage could not stand the garlic and so she would dismiss school. They came back reeking of garlic, mom closed all the windows and the door in her room and made them sit there all afternoon in this hot room smelling of garlic. They never tried anything on Ms. Sage again.

Interviewer: Was she there also in the room or did she leave?

Helen: She could leave.

Norman: She stuck it out. The other teacher wasn't a very good disciplinarian. She had the lower grades. Mom was frequently had to go over and discipline the kids in the lower grades because that teacher couldn't.

Helen: Mom had enough brothers that she knew how to handle the boys.

[00:36:00]

Interviewer: That was a very clever way to end that. I heard that Gypsies used to frequent Salida and it sounds like it might be very interesting. Can you tell me what you remember about that?

Helen: I can remember the Gypsies' wagons being parked below Valley View School going towards town over on the right side. When we would go to church or go to town, I remember seeing the wagons. They would have horses there. It seems to me as though the women had long skirts, but whether that really happened, I don't know about the dresses. We were always informed that we shouldn't be friendly with them because they snatch children and that kind of stuff.

Interviewer: A lot of old wives tales.

[00:37:00]

Norman: They're business quote unquote was basically horse trading. They always have a lot of horses with them. One reason they stayed there where they did was because there was enough water see that there was a lot of grass either side of the road along in there and they'd pasture their horses there for a week or two.

Helen: It's always exciting when the Gypsies were there to go down the road, go to town, because we would get to see the Gypsies in all their...

Interviewer: Finery?

Helen: Finery, yes.

Norman: I never remember seeing one.

Helen: I remember seeing them a lot.

Interviewer: Did you hear the music? Were you allowed to stop and ... No?

Helen: I don't remember the music at all. Did you have Gypsies over in the valley?

[00:38:00]

Keith: Oh yes, there were gypsies. The women were always dressed with the long flashy-looking skirts and flashy-looking blouses and their hair was always long and ... They were interesting to see.

Interviewer: Maybe she's not making it up. That's great.

Helen: I thought maybe it was from a movie that I had seen that...

Keith: They were over in the San Luis Valley, though.

Norman: Probably the same ones.

Keith: I'm sure they were.

Norman: They migrated from one part of the state to another.

Interviewer: This is Keith Drake, Helen's husband, who's sitting in with us. Now you'll need to sign the paper, but we'll do that later.

Keith: You can just erase the tape.

Interviewer: That's pretty exiting. Because you do have a vision of Gypsies that I've seen in movies and so on, and I know they still exist in Hungary and Romania.

[00:39:00] Just interesting that they were here and they're probably here still but they

don't...

Keith: They don't play the part.

Interviewer: They probably don't go around horse trading anymore.

Helen: I think people watched their horses pretty carefully when they were around because the horse trading was kind of done at night without your knowing about it.

Interviewer: I thought that you meant that they actually were in the business of it.

Helen: That too, but they also took a few.

Interviewer: There was probably some of that too with all the outlaws and all those exciting personalities.

Helen: As you're thinking back, was there anything else that comes to mind that...

Norman: This was on the last tape, but it wasn't in the first one, about our fishing trips in the summertime. Is that in?

Helen: Oh yes, and that Indian mountain and...

Helen: I gave you a picture.

Interviewer: Yes, let us know about that.

[00:40:00]

Norman: Our neighbors, the Andersons, the same Andersons that we threshed with and so forth, we would go with them. Carl had a son, Melvin, so Carl, his son Melvin, and dad and my brother and I, maybe once or twice in the summer we'd ride our horses up the North Fork Valley and go fishing. Stay a week and set up a tent. It's a lot of fun. In the Depression, when we were too young to go, dad would go up there with hired men in the summertime because '32, '33', '34 we had a drought and nothing grew, so he and hired men would go up north and catch 100-200 fish which they would bring, we'd salt it down and have part of our winter food.

[00:41:00]

We also went to Clear Creek Reservoir by ... Where in the world is that? With the Andersons. A couple of summers mom and Mable Anderson went with us. We went up North Fork and we spent a week up there fishing and fooling around. Helen had to go stay with grandma that week.

Helen: I was too little to get to go.

Norman: Once when I went up there, all the men went fishing and mom and Mable decided to stay in the tent, but they planned this. They gone out while we

were gone and picked about a gallon of wild raspberries and they then made shortcake with bread, so we had raspberry shortcake one evening out there in the mountains.

[00:42:00]

Helen: I bet it tasted good. You think what a lovely little spot that was, and now the dam's up there and the loveliness is gone.

Norman: Dad also went hunting with the Andersons and he and Carl and another farmer that lived near us, Hemmel Bloomquist, the three of them would go hunting together and get venison and that some sort of thing. Hemmel came to the United States from Sweden just prior to World War I. Sweden was starting to draft their young men into their army. Bloomquist, we called him, Bloom, didn't want to get drafted into the Swedish Army, so he got on his skis and he skied out of Sweden, across Norway, and got on board a ship to come to the United States. He got to the United States and he said the first thing that happened to him, "I got drafted into the Army." He was drafted into the American Army, and when he came back he sailed back to Sweden for his girlfriend she came over and they lived on this little farm up in the foothills.

[00:43:00]

Helen: What was her name? I was trying to...

Norman: Anna.

Interviewer: Somehow people had some pretty wild creativity in there.

Norman: Speaking of creativity, dad had an old automobile. Before that we'd taken old cars and he'd turn the rear end over and make buck rakes out of them because that way he could drive them backwards to pick up the hay in the fields and bring them into the stack to the stack or in the stack room. He decided to take this automobile and another old car and put two transmissions in it. As a result, when you had one transmission low you could put the other one in low. When you were in low, you just barely moved along. You could go places where you couldn't go with an ordinary car.

[00:44:00]

One of the first trips he took with that thing was up North Fork with Hemmel Bloomquist and they took this puddle jumper, as we called it, and drove all the way up from Maysville all the way up to the lower lakes up North Fork. There was an old wagon road there that had gone up to the mines that were up North Fork, and so it wasn't even a problem that way.

Interviewer: How long did it take them?

Norman: I have no idea?

Keith: The first Jeep.

Helen: [00:45:00] It was the first motorized vehicle ever in the area. Also, close to Shavano. There was an old cabin, little house up there, too. Was that where...

Norman: I think there was the town of Shavano.

Helen: The town of Shavano, but there was one cabin that was in fairly good shape and Bloomquist and my dad thought it was theirs in a way. They had utensils to cook with, they put the utensils in a gunny sack and then bury them so that the next summer when they came up they knew where they were and they would clean out the cabin. They would stay there quite a bit. Did you stay in that cabin, Norm?

Norman: You've got the utensils mixed up.

Helen: With what?

Norman: All the way up in North Fork we had this one place we always camp. They would bury the utensils near the foot of a tree and cover them up with pine needles and cone shells and that sort of thing. They'd stay there over winter and then the next summer when we went up we...

[00:46:00]  
Helen: I thought they had some at this old cabin, too.

Norman: They might have because one year dad decided to become a prospector ... He and Uncle Bubby and Otha went up there and stayed all winter and prospecting. Supposedly some of his tools are still up on the side of that cliff.

Helen: Is that right?

Interviewer: I'll have to go up and take a hike.

Norman: There was a lot of mining up there. There was a mill at one time up Shavano and our Uncle Boyd drove ore wagons out of North Fork Valley to take them to the smelter there by Salida. This would've been prior to World War I, about 1910, '12, '15.

Interviewer: Before your time.

Keith: Not much.

Interviewer: There was a lot of activity around here.

[00:47:00]  
Norman: There was because, after all, that smelter was pretty good size and there were enough mines in the area to keep it busy for a while.

Interviewer: It was a hub, it was...

Norman: Yeah. Salida was a hub, not only for mining, but for railroads because you had the railroad coming from around Alamosa and Monte Vista, it came over Poncha Pass and down. Or you could go up Poncha Pass and Marshall Pass and go to Gunnison and up to Crested Butte, at one time all the way to Montrose. Then you had the trains that went up to Buena Vista and all that. Gradually they pulled those out, on the first ones they pulled out was at Monte Vista.

Interviewer: There aren't many trains.

Norman: Mom went to school at Western State and she always rode what they called a  
[00:48:00] Galloping Goose. She'd get on the train at Salida and then come home Marshall Pass to Gunnison. Each summer she'd go that way. Then even rode the train from Gunnison to Almont and the train around to Crested Butte, but they'd get off at Almont because there was a pavilion there and every Saturday night they had a big dance. The girls from the college would ride the train up to Almont so they could kick up their heels.

Helen: When our mother was in college, the pavilion was at Almont, the Saturday night dances, and then we moved to Gunnison in 1952 those dances were still going on at Almont in the pavilion and we went to lots of them when we first moved to Gunnison in the '50s.

Norman: They had a lot of cars.

Helen: That was an open field pavilion and you'd just dance all night long. It was wonderful.

Interviewer: I don't think that kind of thing happens anywhere. People are probably  
[00:49:00] dancing all night long but not in an open pavilion.

Norman: Sometimes in the winter, we'd go all the way to Crested Butte, what had been the company store in Crested Butte ... When the mines at Crested Butte closed, I don't know who bought the company store, but they took all the stuff out of it and converted it to a big dance hall. We'd go up there on some Saturday nights to dance and on New Year's. Now I think that store is divided with a bunch of boutiques.

Helen: It is.

Interviewer: Things change. Speaking of that, are there any things that you can think of that strike you ... Because you have been back to Salida fairly often. You come back.

Helen: I haven't been there for a while. Since 2002, I guess.

Norman:  
[00:50:00] Changes like the Presbyterian Church we went to. Instead of being at the corner of 3rd and F is now up by the courthouse and the high school we went to is burned down and it's replaced. One interesting thing driving by the hospital, that's the same hospital that I was born in back in 1927. Many towns with their hospitals, when they build a new one ... Like here in Delta they're tearing down the old one and they just built a new one, and the same happened in Montrose and other places. In Salida they haven't torn down their hospital because it was well built. It's a nice brick building. It still looks as nice now as it did 100 years ago or whenever it was built.

Interviewer: It does look like nice now.

Helen: They've taken good care of it.

Interviewer: It's solid.

Norman:  
[00:51:00] The only thing I miss on the south side of it, there used to be a nursing home where the nurses stayed. It burned down a long time ago. On the corner, the north side was where they have the doctor's offices. It was a brick building there. I noticed it's been torn down.

Interviewer: There are a lot of doctor's offices all over town now.

Helen: I think three of the most important buildings to us are no longer there because the Presbyterian Church was torn down, new one built, the high school burned and new one built, and the house on the farm where we grew up also partially burned. Could never go back to your home, and a few years ago I did and I wish I had never gone back. Just never is as you remembered.

Interviewer: Because it truly has changed. Just in the 10 years I've been there, there have been a lot of changes. Not as large and drastic as you're talking about.

[00:52:00]  
Norman: We've been gone 50 years now. Used to be 50 years seemed like a long time ago. Now it doesn't.

Keith: The evolution of, I don't know if you'd call it Lookout Mountain...

Helen: The Salida Mountain?

Norman: Tenderfoot. It has evolved quite a bit.

Keith: What used to be there and what is there now.

Helen: You used to go up there when you were in high school?

Keith: Oh yeah. That was many years ago. They'd walk up the silly thing.

Interviewer: Walk straight up or you went with...

Keith: We were smart enough to walk around. That was a long time ago.

Interviewer: That is still there, but it is a little different.

Helen: Main Street in Salida seems very much the same.

Norman: The buildings are the same but they're...

Helen: A little different.

[00:53:00]  
Norman: They're shabbier. They need to do a restoration. Going down F street starting there where the Presbyterian Church was, you had the women's dress shop.

Helen: Crews Beggs.

Norman: Then right next to it there was a flower shop, Dorson's ran it for a while. Then there was a candy kitchen and Everybody's and then first bank. Then across the way you had Hayes Photo Studio. The grocery store, and then the next block you had a couple real nice jewelry stores. Big hardware studios.

Helen: Bakery.

Norman: With Walmart, those things all disappeared.

Interviewer: They have a way of doing that.

Helen: Main Street in Salida is still narrow.

Interviewer: It is.

Helen: When I had to renew my license one time over here in Delta I had to take a driving test, and the man who was giving me the test asked me where I learned to drive and I said Salida and he said, "If you learned to drive in Salida then you don't really have to take this test." Those streets are so narrow.

[00:54:00]

Interviewer: That's good to know that you have to be a good driver to drive in Salida. That's interesting.

Norman: The Elk's Club is still about the same.

Interviewer: The what?

Norman: The Elk's Club. That's where we had our junior/senior prom. Or dinner and prom. That's where we had ours, I didn't know where you had yours.

Helen: We had ours there, too.

Norman: Other school dances we'd have in the gymnasium and winter formal and...

Helen: Sadie Hawkins Dance.

Norman: That's the word I was trying to think of.

Interviewer: Are there any other memories that you'd like to share?

[00:55:00]  
Helen: Our ranch had lots of pinon trees on it and those pinon trees produced the largest pinon nuts you can imagine. I swear they were as big around as my finger, and they were wonderful. A lot of those trees had been cut down. The people who owned it now cut down some of them, but they were unusually large pinon nuts and really good. We used to pick them and send them to relatives.

Interviewer: Did you sell them around?

Helen: No, we didn't sell them. I was just trying to think of some other memories. There are lot of them that we'll remember later.

Interviewer: The minute we turn this off you'll remember them. You have certainly filled up this hour with a lot of memories, so I appreciate it. If you have some  
[00:56:00] final words that you want to impart, now's the time.

Helen: Salida, to me, was a very enjoyable place to grow up and I look back with pleasure when I think of Salida because I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the ranch, I enjoyed the schools, I enjoyed my friends. I have very pleasant memories of Salida.

Norman: You had a bunch of girl cousins all about the same age. There were five of you in Salida, I guess all about Helen's age. They just did things together and they are still doing things together. In the early '90s, Helen and a couple of the cousins decided to get together in Glenwood Springs for a week. Four of you, I guess.

Interviewer: Where do they live now?

Norman: One lives in Canon City, one down in Springerville, Arizona.

Helen: Wyoming.

[00:57:00]

Norman: Another one in Wyoming. They've been doing that now every other year since then and they keep getting more and more cousins. The last one, which was in Wyoming, you had...

Helen: About 18 or 20 of us. When you are one of 34 grandchildren, you are going to have lots of cousins. We'd get together every other year, but after the first one then the sisters wanted to go, and now the granddaughters want to go.

Keith: Don't forget Las Vegas.

Helen: We met in Las Vegas one year. Next year in 2005 we're going to meet in South Dakota because...

Norman: Deadwood City.

Helen: Rocket City.

Norman: Deadwood City.

Helen: Yeah, Deadwood.

Norman: Because we have a cousin that lives near there.

Helen: One time we met in San Diego.

[00:58:00]

Norman: You met in Denver and went out to a dinner theater. Had a host. He was introducing people, up here we had the Sage cousins. He said, "I don't know what's happening, but I guess it's important to them."

Interviewer: You had your Sage family reunion in Salida.

Helen: In 2002. Some are rattling the bushes, they want to have another one, but I don't know. It takes a lot of energy.

Interviewer: Did you put it all together?

Helen: Another cousin and I did.

Interviewer: Do it again.

Helen: We probably will.

Keith: I gave them a test. You ought to give her the copy of that test about Salida.

Interviewer: You gave them a test?

Keith: Yeah.

Norman: At the banquet we had.

Interviewer: Did anybody pass? Or did you fix it so nobody could pass?

Norman: I only missed one.

Keith: Norman got them all.

Norman: I missed one.

[00:59:00]

Helen: Who was president of the United States when Rebecca and Joseph were married in 1890? Who was that? We had questions like that.

Interviewer: Who was it?

Keith: Cleveland.

Norman: Cleveland.

Helen: No. Buchanan, wasn't it?

Keith: I forget.

Interviewer: I forget, too.

Helen: Hope that's off.

Interviewer: It's on.

Keith: ...test.

Helen: Turn it off.

Interviewer: I'm going to say thank you again.

Helen: Tell her not to write down the last part.

Interviewer: That was the good part. I just want to thank you a lot. You've both been just great, filling our archives with more information about when you were young and about Salida.