

This is Beth Smith I'm here to interview Wilmoth Everett. She has lots of things to tell us about farming and ranching in Chaffee County.

BETH SMITH: how are you today Wilmoth?

WILMOTH EVERETT: Well, I'm just fine, thank you.

BETH SMITH: You have an unusual first name. Wilmoth. Tell me, how did you get that name?

WILMOTH EVERETT: Well, my mother had a sister who didn't have any children and her husband was a school teacher. And when she found out my mother was pregnant she said, if I was a girl, would she name me Wilmoth, because that was the name of her husband's favorite pupil. And so my mother did.

BETH SMITH: Very good. Where were they teaching?

WILMOTH EVERETT: Excuse me?

BS: Where were they teaching?

WE: I think in Oklahoma.

BS: Uh huh. Alright. When did you come to the Arkansas Valley, here?

WE: in 1930. September, 1930. And I went to school for a little while after I got here and then I met my husband in 1932 and we got married in December of that year.

BS: Mm huh. And that was George.

WE: That was George E. Everett, yes.

BS: Uh huh.

WE: And we moved out,... well he was a rancher. In fact his family had been ranchers for about three or four generations.

BS: In this valley?

WE: In this valley, yes.

BS: All over in this area where we are now, close to 160?

WE: Yes. Yes. Well, most of their land was over on the other side, which is what we call Sand Park, over there which is on 291, highway 291. Most of the land was over there first. And from there on North of town, where they run their cattle and everything.

BS: And you and George moved out here. what were you doing? Were you raising cattle? Or....

WE: Oh yes, we always had cattle and raised hay of course. And to begin with we were in business with my husbands' father. He had lots of land up North of town on the Ute trail area and up in that area. And that's where they run 'em in the summer time and then bring 'em down here in the winter to feed. And then in 1959, I think it was, why my father-in-law decided he was ready to retire and, and we bought him out and formed with our two sons, Glenn and Terry, we formed the Everett Land and Cattle Company.

BS: Now what was the grandpa's name?

WE: George, My father-in-law was George G. Everett

BS: Alright. And you married George E. Everett.

WE: George E. Everett. Uh huh.

BS: Ok, I'll keep 'em straight here. So now you have the Everett Land and Cattle Company.

WE: That's what we had. Yeah. And we moved up, the ranch where I live now, we moved here in 1945. And after we incorporated why then we included this ranch in all of it then, so. Had cattle always, of course.

BS: That was the main purpose. did you raise crops of any kind?

WE: Just alfalfa for hay. Right, that's all we, we ever raised. Used to be that this area, they raised lots of grain. People raised lots of oats. And well, there were more farms around then there are now. A whole lot more. Then they, most of them raised grain. And my father-in-law would buy the, after they thrashed the oats, he'd buy the straw stacks and along with other kind of feed he would feed that to his cows too, so. But, we never did raise any grain, we always just raised hay.

BS: Mmm hum. And during the summer then, your cows were up in the Ute Tail area?

WE: Yes. That's where they were in the summer. And we had, they have homesteads up there. Course at one time, around Whitehorn, you know was a mining town, with 2000 people there. And then the town of Minola was supposed to have had quite a few people too. And when my husband and I were married, and for several years afterwards, of course the town of Whitehorn was gone by then. But at one time it had 2000 people and when we were married there were still some cabins there and the boardwalk, which was very interesting, I thought. And then as the homesteaders up there kinda starved out, during the depression, why my father-in-law, who was George G. Everett was pretty far sighted. And he bought up these homesteads which was a good thing because the Taylor

Act came in and we, which the Forest took over, and unless you had your own private land you could not run on the Forest. You had to have land also, and then get a permit to run on the Forest.

BS: But you had land.

WE: Oh yes, we had enough land, to do it. So, that was a good thing

BS: Yeah. You know what cattle prices were way back then?

WE: Well, I remember one year, I don't know except that one time, course this was during the depression, when my husband and I were married, even. And my father-in-law sold cows to, to the government. The government was helping out and he sold them for \$10.00 a head. And I think they took them someplace, and dug a big trench and shot 'em and buried 'em because there wasn't any market for them.

BS: Ah. The depression.

WE: Yes. The depression. It wasn't good.

BS: It caught up with everybody.

WE: Yes, it did. Everybody suffered.

BS: But eventually you worked out of that depression.

WE: Oh yes, we worked out of it. And and we never went hungry during the depression. Especially living on a ranch, you always had something to eat. And, and of course, my boys were born before we moved up on this place. My three boys came along. That's why we raised boys I guess, to help with the farm work, the ranch work.

BS: Good thought. Good thought. Where were you living before you moved out here?

WE: Well, down on the river. Right down here, on the, still on his father's property. He had a little house there on, right by the bridge. Three rooms and a path was where we lived. No electricity, no running water, you know. We didn't have electricity until the REA came in. And course that was a boon to all the rural people.

BS: About when was that?

WE: I was trying to think, when I was thinking of this, it must have been about '42 or '43 when we finally got electricity. And that changed our lives a whole lot, for the better.

BS: I'm sure.

WE: I thought about around here at that time, before that, there were several dairies and

you know, 25 or 30 cows to have to milk twice a day by hand was quite a job.

BS: Quite a job, yes.

WE: But they managed to do it. And we had a friend when, about the time we were married, that worked for a dairy-man. And his wages were \$1.00 a day and, plus his board and room. But, so times have changed quite a bit in the last 70 years.

BS: Haven't they though.

WE: Yeah. You know, when we were ranching then too, we, we used horses. They didn't have any tractors or any machinery or anything to work with. Even after we moved up here it was two or three years before we got a tractor. My husband plowed with the team, with the horses. We fed 'em hay in the winter, with the horses. Like everybody else did too.

BS: And, when did you move to this house?

WE: In 1945.

BS: '45.

WE: Uh huh. And I often say, they had a cow camp up the Ute Trail area. And we'd go up there a stay quite often. Usually rode our horses up there. But once in awhile we'd drive, sometimes we'd drive the car. But, I think now, we'd ride up and ride back. Well, it's been a good many years. We didn't have horse trailers or pick-ups or anything like that. Now, my boys, load the horses up in the trailer and take them up and ride and then bring them back in the trailer. They don't ride back and forth like we used to.

BS: Times have changed.

WE: Times have changed. Yes.

BS: How big is your ranch here?

WE: Well, it was 240 acres. Yeah. I no longer own this ranch. It's been sold, and I no longer own it. But, none of the family does anymore. But I have a lifetime deal where I can stay here as long as I want to.

BS: I see. Well that's great.

WE: Yeah. I'm glad it worked out very well. Yeah. Cause I really love this place. Right. So. So, as they say, times have changed.

BS: Oh yes, uh huh.

WE: They didn't used to have the big trucks that they haul cattle in now. You know they used to have to drive them everywhere. They used to drive them down to the stock yard, which is now the sale barn, it was the stock yards.

BS: A little bit East of Salida.

WE: Uh huh, East of Salida. And, put them on a train and ship 'em to Denver. People from the Western Slope would bring theirs over. Gunnison, and places like that. They brought them on the narrow gauge and then they had to change to the broad gauge here in Salida. And of course they had to stop and unload the cattle and feed and water them. They had to do that every so often anyway. So the stockyards is in business for a long time.

BS: A busy place. And then you took the cattle to Denver?

WE: Uh mmm. People from the West slope quite often took 'em to Kansas City, but I, we always shipped to Denver. And eventually they got the big semi trucks and we would haul 'em to Denver then and sell them up there. Till we got the sale barn going down here and then we, it was much handier to sell 'em down here. Right. Ranching is a wonderful life, as far as I'm concerned. A very wonderful place to raise children. But, it is becoming a lost way of life, anymore. Very hard to make a living on a ranch, anymore. It certainly is.

BS: I expect that's right.

WE: And especially around here with the developments and so forth, that are going in, subdivisions and that sort of thing.

BS: People eat steaks still.

WE: I know. But, you know you wonder how long it's going to keep on. my husband was on the Southeastern Water Conservancy District, which is located in Pueblo. And when he first got on there, he came home and he said, eventually there won't be any ranching here, or there won't be any lawns or anything because the municipalities have the people, they have the power and the money and they're gona' take the water. And I said, then what are people going to eat. Well, he said, they'll figure out something. Which I guess they will eventually, but it's a very sad thing, I think. And you can see it here. You know there has one big ranch in Nathrop, they sold the water off of the ranch. And, I can't blame the people for doing that, when you can't make a living on the ranch, and you can get a million dollars or so, for your water, which is more valuable than land anymore. You can hardly blame them for doing it, and yet, I hate to see it done, because eventually this will all go back to sagebrush.

BS: YeI'm afraid they're right.

WE: Yeah. So. But it won't be in my lifetime, I don't think. Thank goodness.

BS: Well, George was very active in the community.

WE: Yes, he was. He was at that Conservancy District. And, they, they brought, got that Arkansas, or the Frying Pan, Arkansas problem, you know, solved. That brought water over from the Western Slope, which gave more water here. Which also gave more water to Pueblo and Colorado Springs.

BS: And the one up at Twin Lakes.

WE: Yes. Yes. And he worked real hard on that, along with a lot of other people to get that going.  
And then he served on several different boards and things too. So he was active. Passed it on to his son Glenn, who's still active.

BS: Still active. Well that's very well.

WE: Still active. Yes.

BS: It's nice to have some ranchers on these boards in the county. They have a different point of view.

WE: Well that's right, that's right. Much different point of view. And, especially the newer young people that are moving in here. Now they have an altogether different view than we do. So we need to try to keep this place, this valley, like it is, or as much as possible. So, it's a beautiful place to live, I think.

BS: I can see the mountains out your window here.

WE: Oh, oh yes, all the way around. I have a view all the way around. In fact, we had a friend that was also on that Conservancy Board with George, and we'd gone to one of their meetings or conventions one time and he said, "I'll bet you're anxious to get home and wash dishes." Well, not really. He said, "if I had the view out your windows, I'd wash dishes all the time." Course I said, "well, I don't have to wash dishes to look out the window." But it is beautiful, all the way around. I think our mountains are really wonderful, so.

BS: Can you think of any major event in the valley, or in Salida, that affected you on the ranch. Or you enjoyed watching, maybe something different.

WE: Well, yeI...course they've had the rodeos around, which we've always, always enjoyed ranch...rodeo. And my husband rodeod some before we were, and a little bit after we were married. And we always, in fact his father had a rodeo up at that, a place up Ute Trail that they called the mid-summer roundup, they called it, which is where they'd do a pretty big rodeo. And they also used to have them in town for a few years, and then they quit that. So, those are things we always enjoyed. And I enjoy going to

Fib-Ark, and watching the parade, taking that in. In fact, the very first Fib-Ark race that they had, we followed the I don't know what kinda...

BS: Kayaks

WE: They weren't kayaks were they, the first ones. There weren't very many in it, I know. There were a couple of Swift men that won the race. And it went clear to Canon City at that time, the first one did.

BS: About when was that?

WE: Oh my, I can't remember. It's always in the paper, how old the Fib-Ark is, and now I can't remember when it was. It was way back, early 50's, I would think it would be, wouldn't it? Something like that. The early 50's.

BS: Yes that's what I was going to say, around the 50's.

WE: And we followed it, all of them down to the Canon City. There weren't very many in it that, that year, I know. But then they shortened it after that, to just go to Cotopaxi. So, ah...that was an interesting thing. Well, they used to have the rodeo in Buena Vista, which they called Head Lettuce Days. And that was always in September, over the, I think, Labor Day Weekend. And my husband had, his father had horses which he would furnish for the rodeo. Bucking horses. And I know, I think it was... one year after we were married, ah... I was supposed to ride in the parade. But my husband and his two brothers took the horses up for the rodeo, and of course you did not haul 'em up then, you drove 'em. So they got there a little bit late, too late for me to get a horse to ride in the parade, so I missed it. But, they got 'em there for the rodeo. And then one, then he furnished horses for a rodeo out in Fairplay one time too, and my husband and his brother Dan took the horses again. It took them two days that time to drive 'em out there. They stopped at some ranch and spent the night, and went on out to Fairplay. So that was the way they used to move things around.

BS: It took a little time.

WE: Took a little more time.

BS: Bet it was more fun.

WE: It was more fun, I think, yes. I really think so. I always enjoyed a rodeo like that, more than I do these professional ones, really. You usually knew who was riding and, you know, rooted for them. I don't know, there's one sort of funny thing you might want to listen to. As I said, we had no electricity, and we didn't have a radio. They had to, of course, have batteries for the radios, in those days. But we wanted a radio, real bad. So it was in Buena Vista at the rodeo, my husband had a pretty fast little mare, and he said "if I can win the stake race, we'll have enough money to buy a radio". So, he did, he won the stake race. And I was sittin' on the fence and he just come runnin' over, "now we can buy

a radio,” he said. And everybody around, of course, just laughed. And then he won something else, and everybody around said, “now you can buy a battery for it”. So that’s what we did. We enjoyed the radio, only at night, because you didn’t want to run the batteries down, you know, so. So, those are kinda funny things that happened. Right. So. But, I was always very glad that my, we, our three boys all went to college. But, they all came back here, and the two older ones, at least, they wanted to be ranchers, and that’s what they are. And their two boys, the same way now, so. We gave them an opportunity to do other things if they wanted to. This is the life they like, so.

BS: Very good.

WE: But, I, we were very happy that they did. They don’t make a whole lot of money ranching, but it’s a good way of living, I think. A good way of life.

BS: Yes it is. And what did you do, in town, during all those years. Were you in organizations, or what?

WE: Oh, well, they, we formed the Chaffee County Cowbells, which was of course, the ladies part of the Cattlemen. And so I was active in that for as long as it existed.

BS: About when was that?

WE: Oh... I’m terrible at keeping dates and remembering dates, but it would have to have been in the, well we moved here in ’45, it would have to have been in the early 50’s, at least, or before. And it was a very active organization at one time. In fact, we had, with the Cattlemen, we had the State Convention here in Salida one time. The Cattlemen and Cowbells. So that was a pretty big deal. I think it lasted three days, or something like that.

BS: About how many people came?

WE: Oh, there were several hundred, I think.

BS: Fine.

WE: Um huh. And they all, of course the Cattlemen had their meetings, and we entertained the Cowbells, our organization, our part of it did. Well, Margaret McMurry, Frank, Frank McMurry’s mother it would have been, and I were sort of chairmen in getting this organized. So we planned a trip to St. Elmo for the ones that wanted to go. Well we got up the morning, that morning and it was snowing up at St. Elmo. Well, it wasn’t very nice down here. So we hemmed and hawed; she had contacted the Buena Vista school to get a bus, a school bus to take us up there. And we didn’t think they would go. She called the man that was going to drive, and at first he said “well, no, he didn’t think we’d go”. And then talked about it off and on and said, well why don’t we do it. So we did, we loaded ‘em up and took ‘em up there and by the time we got there the sun was shining and it was fine.

BS: So often in the mountains.

WE: That's the way it happens. See this is in June. The month of June is when they have their convention. And we had a luncheon for them, at one, at that time they had the motel over at Poncha that burned down. What did they call that, it was a big motel and they served meals there. We had our Cowbell luncheon there. Then, the last night why then they had a, a banquet for all of them and then they had a dance afterwards. Entertained them royally, we think.

BS: Yes, that's great.

WE: They all seemed to enjoy it very much, so. So that was one of the main things I was interested in, I guess. Course, I, my husband became a Mason and then I joined Eastern Star and was in that for awhile. He was very active in the Masons and Shriners and everything, so. Those were mainly the town activities we had, I guess. Though we had lots of good friends in town. And see, when my boys were in school, to start with, they went to Adobe Park, all the country schools were still going.

BS: Where did they go?

WE: They went to Adobe Park School. They tore the building down, down here. They went to that school. George, my husband George had gone there, and his father had gone there. And so they were going to Adobe Park School, and then about the time that Glenn would have been a Freshman, in High School, they consolidated then and all the kids went to town.

BS: To Salida High School.

WE: So Salida. All the schools in Salida. Yeah. That was quite a deal to get them consolidated, cause there were lots of people didn't want to do that, just like anything else. But, we got it done. Sometimes I look back and think maybe we shouldn't have. You lose control, you know, when you do things like that. But, it turned out ok, I think. Salida's always had good schools.

BS: And, you say you say you were born in LaJunta? And how old were you when you got up here?

WE: Yes. I was seventeen when I moved here.

BS: Oh, well you were out of school then.

WE: Oh yes. Uh huh. I, my mother and father, had they moved around quite a bit when I was small, to different places. But I spent most of my life in Colorado. And then, my mother and father separated. Well, we lived her one time when I was about seven years old and I went to school here for a little while, and then my parents, we moved to Golden

and they bought the picture show in Golden. We lived up there for awhile. Then, mother and father separated, so then it was just she and I that came back here. She liked Salida so well when we lived here that she wanted to come back. So....

BS: And did you work in town?

WE: Oh, I worked a little while at Woolworth's. It had just started, you know, and I worked there for a little while. That was the extent of it. Before that I think I worked at the greenhouse. The what was there names, right on the tip of my tongue. It was an older couple that owned it and I worked there for a little bit, a little while.

BS: Out there where DeNoyers is now?

WE: Mmm huh. I'm not sure whether it's there; doesn't seem to me like that's the place where it was. But, its out in that area someplace, and maybe that's where it was, I don't, it wasn't near as big at that time, as it is now. They also owned the flower store at that time.

BS: Downtown?

WE: Mmm huh, downtown. Uh huh. I did not do much work outside of the home. After I was married, why that was what I did was home work and take care of my children.

BS: Kept you busy.

WE: Kept my busy. Yes it did. So, the first few years, after we moved up here, course my boys were too small to do much. And you couldn't hire help. During the war you couldn't get any help. So, I know at least one summer, the neighbors over here, who were the Starbucks, Elvis and Nina Starbuck, we helped each other put up hay. And by that time we had tractors and stuff and but we were still stacking the hay loose. But we had what they called a buck rake on our tractor and they had a little old torn down, tripped down Ford or something that had a rake on it. And Eunice and I drove those while George and Elvis stacked the hay, cause the boys weren't old enough yet to be doing anything. So, that's the way people did in those days. And, we, we had fun doing it really, so.... Then they became more mechanized and now machinery that they use nowadays, course costs thousands and thousands of dollars. And seems to me like most of it is broke down most of the time. And I don't know that they get it put up any faster than we did when we used horses. But it was, it's easier, I mean they don't have to use so much handwork and stuff. It's more mechanical.

BS: Do you remember any flu epidemics or, or pneumonia that was, that swept through Chaffee County?

WE: Not since I've been here. Before of course. That was way before I ever came, cause that was the flu of 1918. And all I remember them telling about how many people

were sick. And I remember that Starbucks had a dairy over on Highway 50 and they, they lost three children in one week, I know. Twin babies, I think and another child, to the flu.

BS: Was that the Starbucks that used to live here?

WE: Well Elvis, Elvis was one of them. Yeah. Yeah. And so that was pretty sad. And then there were, I'm sure a lot of other's too. That was a bad thing, like I say, but I was just very small at that time, but I'd heard them talk about it. But I can't think of any other bad disasters that they've had around here.

BS: What about during World War II, did you make any changes in your life because of the war?

WE: Well, we almost did. in '43 it was, my husband was working for the Soil Conservation Service and they transferred him up to Craig Colorado. And we were up there that summer, and then he got a notice he was being drafted. So we came back here to Salida, expecting him to have to go to service. Well, the draft board at that time, they said, well we need more farmers and ranchers right now than we do soldiers, said if you'll stay on the ranch, why then, you know, then they won't take you. So, that's how come really, that we came back here to the ranch. We were down on his Dad's ranch at the time and stayed there until '45. So that was the one big change, I guess, that would've been in our lives. And of course my husband's brother Dan was in the Air Force during the war. And, but other than that. And then, as I say, you couldn't hire any help or anything cause most of the boys were in the service, so you did it yourself. But that's all that I, that really affected us, I think. And now this war, my son, grandson Brady is in the Air Force Reserves, and I understand he's to go to Israel next week.

BS: Is that right?

WE: For, I hope, only three weeks, they said. He's to go over there and train some Israelites in something, I guess. He's an, he's an MP, which he'll train them in Military Police, I guess. I'm hoping that's all his is going to be. But you never know. So.....

BS: How about people in Chaffee County that, that you remember as being outstanding?

WE: Well, course Frank Kneely was a rancher up in Nathrop, and he was in the Colorado, the State, oh, he was a Representative, I think, in the, in the State for several years, so he was pretty well known. And then of course, his, he, he never had any children, but his Nephew Glenn McMurray then took over his ranches after he was gone. And then Frank McMurray is Glenn's son and now he's in politics. Commissioner, want'n to be a commissioner now.

BS: Might run in the family.

WE: It just runs in the family, I think. Uh huh. And well, I expect I knew some of them.

Course Wendell Hutchison and his family. Wendell's pretty well known and had done a lot for this area. I can't think of who all else is around here. The Burnetts over at Poncha, he was also a Representative in Colorado.

BS: What was his name?

WE: Burt Burnett. Did you know Emma Helene Smith?

BS: No.

WE: You didn't know her, well it was her father, she was a Burnett. And they were old-timers too. They came to this area about the time as the Hutchisons did, I guess, so they were pretty well known. And I can't think of, right off hand, any of the rest of them. Course there used to be more ranching than there is now, too. Lot more cattle; more ranchers were active then there are now. So it, it's just changed, very much. So...but it's still beautiful country.

BS: Right.

WE: My son Glenn for awhile, had a, up at that cow camp, he had a guest ranch, and brought people in, he'd had some from Australia. Had quite a group from France one time, and then of course, other parts of this country. And they all loved the area, every one that came. And, but I particularly, I went up and rode with them some, some of the time. And I remember one man especially, we were riding along and he looked up at the sky and he said "that is the bluest sky I've ever saw in my life, even when I have on dark glasses". And he was from Chicago, so I'm sure he didn't see much blue sky back there.

BS: Well he was right.

WE: He was right. Yes. It's the bluest sky you've ever seen. And they all thought it was wonderful, beautiful, country. And they loved to come. And his, the way he did it, they helped, they worked, as well as enjoyed it, you know. Course he furnished horses for them, and they, but they moved cattle and they fixed fences and they did regular ranch work and that was the way it was done. But, and there were those kind of people that wanted to do that, so, and they enjoyed it, so. Course they didn't have to do it all the time. So, that probably made a difference.

BS: For a week.

WE: For a week it was fun. Yes, but,... there were these French people, there was several couples of those, I forget just how many altogether. And they were all pretty well to do. They were business people mostly, in France. But, they enjoyed it very much. They all spoke English well enough that we could understand them anyway and they could understand us. So that was, but then he quite that business and his son now, Casey now has a hunting camp just in the Fall, up there where hunters come up. So they have fun too. But don't know anything else much.

BS: Do you want to tell us how George died?

WE: Well, he was working with, for the Southeastern Water Conservancy Board. They had had their regular meeting in Pueblo on the Friday, no Thursday, they met on Thursday. And they had a meeting to go to over at ah...oh, not Durango, but the other one on over, the other town on the other side of Durango.

BS: Cortez?

WE: Cortez. So this friend of ours who was on the Board, Tom McCurry and his wife came up here, and spent the night, Thursday night, with us. And then when they were getting back, why we were going up in the hills and see the leaves. They spent Thursday night here, and they had hired a plane to take George and Tom and George's brother Dan at that time was the County, I forget what they call them now, they still have them, I just can't think of the name. Anyway, he worked for the County. And they had the two, two of the County Commissioners, had rented this plane, and they started over to Cortez. One reason they weren't driving was because Wolf Creek Pass was so torn up they didn't know if they'd get through there in time. And of course when they took off the wind... well, the night before I had never seen the wind blow like it did that night, or like it was blowing that morning. It was just terrible. But I know this pilot figured he could manage it. And they took off and they started up over the Little Cochetopa, which the pilot said, normally you go up over there and you get an updraft that lifts you up over the mountains. But instead why, it, they hit a downdraft and it pushed them down. Course the plane crashed and burned. Everyone was killed.

BS: Well that was a traumatic experience for the town.

WE: Oh, it was for everybody that lived all over, I guess. I, I couldn't believe how fast the word got around. Course Mrs. McCurry was staying here with me, I don't know if you want this all in there or not. She was staying with me and I had joined the Hospital Auxiliary, and I was going to help with the visual screening. And I was to go into town that morning, this was Friday morning, and sort of learn how, what we were supposed to do. So, Mrs., Thelma and I were just going to go around town, you know, shop and so forth. So we were sitting here waiting for it to be time to go. Well, before that, when we were washing dishes. my daughter-in-law Judy called and she said "well did Papa George take off?" And I said "yeoh yethey did". And she said "well that's all I wanted to know" and she hung up, and I didn't think anything about it, but she had heard about the plane crash and wondered if I had. I had turned the radio off, thank goodness. So, I never thought any more about it and we, Thelma and I were sitting here waiting and Glenn and Jeannie and Terry came running up the steps. And I thought, what's the matt... something's wrong. But, of course it never occurred to me. And of course, they come in and grabbed both of us and said there'd been a plane crash. And Judy had gone into town to gather up the little kids, all the grand kids from school, before they heard it there and brought them all home and everything, so.. That was, and then it seems to me like it wasn't any time at all before people started bringing food. You know I didn't see how

they'd even heard about it yet, but they had. So, It was quite, quite a thing. So, very bad at that time. But, I was always thankful thaft it was very close to home where they could get to them, and where they were all killed instantly, they didn't have to suffer or anything. And if it had to happen, that, that was a good way for it to be.

BS: Well, you've done a lot of talking for me this afternoon and painted a new picture about ranching in Chaffee County. Can you think of anything else you'd like to add?

WE: Well, just that I would hope that ranching could continue here in this county, cause it is a very wonderful way of life, I think. and the way to raise children.

BS: I hope so too.

WE: You maybe read my daughter-in-law's letter in the paper yesterday?

BS: No, I didn't.

WE: About Jerry Mallett. I, maybe I shouldn't bring that up because it's politics. But, it's mainly about the easements and things that they are talking about, and it would change things pretty drastically. And she said, the ranchers, the real ranchers, are hoping to keep it this way for their children and grandchildren, and so we would love to do it that way, keep it that way.

BS: If you like beef steaks.

WE: If you like beef steaks, you'd better do it, yes. That's right.

BS: Better keep it that way. Well, thank you Wilmoth, it's been nice talking with you.

WE: Well, you're very welcome. I hope people enjoy listening to it.