

*West Custer County Library District Local History Collection*  
*Oral History Collection*

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LP2009.013.015-16

Berry, Hattie

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Teaching Brush Creek [thumping noise throughout]

00:00 1927 started teaching in District 8, 16 kids walked 5 miles to school, thawed frozen feet, cleaning

3:45 moved schoolhouse to higher ground; 5-foot snows common

4:15 Conradt (coon-rodt) Koch donated the land. Jim Berry

6:00 Koch family names

8:30 1910, 8 families, Civil War Vets got 340-acre homesteads

9:30 Irwin's, Kaufmanns, Fellows (Koch descendants)

12:15 a document with Benjamin Harris's signature from Civil War

13:00 Wellstead Homestead Act

14:30 poor sound

15:45 Colorado Teacher College; from Idaho Springs to Salida, heard about the teaching job at Brush Creek

17:00 Ray Adams on school board. Teacher couldn't be married or pregnant, no retirement

18:30 1941 PERA

19:30 \$75 month

20:15 The Depression, \$3 month, they could have steak once a month

21:45 people all their lives never traveled as far as Pueblo

22:45 rural life during the depression, didn't use banks, lived off the land

23:45 George Beardsley said if he lost his bank, he could go to a friend who had gold in his corn crib

25:45 Taught with no pay at Willows School, Superintendent Lucy Beeman, Francis and Georgeanne Kettle, Ruth Lange

30:00 County chairman Junior Canda

34:00 School consolidation, Jim drove and Hattie rode the bus

37:00 Few students went past 8th grade, 1 out of 10 went further, Hattie thinks some aren't college material

38:00 Passing college entrance exams

40:30 Kids today wouldn't know a verb coming down the street

42:15 College class size from 50-225

44:00 What girls wore then and now from 2 dresses to a full wardrobe

46:45 Kept Brush Creek School open for 1 year after the consolidation

48:15 Lessons were 10-20 minutes long, used older kids to help younger ones

51:00 Kids were adults after 8th grade

54:15 1927, Everyone was related

55:30 An Indian came to her mother's (Knudson-German Colony) and wanted eggs by pointing and grunting

57:15 Koch's trip from Chicago and the sway of the wagon

58:15 Some boys set a dog on fire

59:45 Taught at Brush Creek, Willows, Colfax, Knuth, Wetmore 1937-1941

1:02:30 Christmas box, take and share, 1929: school provided canned soup and crackers. Teacher training in Kersey the Russians had borscht.

1:07:00 End