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Oral History Collection

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Cozad, Josephine

No date

Interviewed by unidentified interviewer

UI: We're at the home of Mrs. Josephine Cozad and she's going to reminisce and go back into history and tell us something about her family and history in early days in Greenwood, Hardscrabble. Mrs. Cozad, will you tell us when you was born?

CZ: I was born in Rockvale, Colorado on January 4, 1895.

UI: Parents' name?

CZ: Joe Calmett and Maude Jones Calmett.

UI: Would you spell that last name?

CZ: Calmett.

UI: You had brothers and sisters?

CZ: I had one brother, Joe, Jr. and one sister, Janna Cathy.

UI: And you were born in Rockvale?

CZ: I was born in Rockvale.

UI: And you moved to Hardscrabble, Greenwood?

CZ: Yes, up from the Cattle Ranch in about 1911 or 12. I don't just remember exactly.

UI: Tell us about your life there on the ranch.

CZ: Well, it was really, what my dad got it for, was for a summer place for us. However, we spent some little time in the winter, too, up there, but it was really a summer place. But it was a nice ranch, beautiful place. It was joining the old Blake, Tony Blake, place at that time. And now, it's the Billington Ranch.

UI: What did your father do?

CZ: My father was a miner.

UI: He was a coal miner.?

CZ: Yes, but he just had a place for-

UI: Summer.

CZ: For farming, yeah.

UI: Ok, and, go ahead, tell us about your life there on the, in the early days.

CZ: Well, the first thing I guess was that I was a very young girl, but always wanted, always kept my nursing in my mind always. I nursed the Clarkson's that had the Forestdale Resort, up there, when I was just a very young girl. I nursed them two months one winter when they both had pneumonia at that time. Then, soon as I left there, Mr. R. Edmundson of the Hill Ranch came. He was not at the Hill ranch then. They were on the Cress place, but running cattle, down there on Red Creek, and then, later, we moved down. I went to stay and work for the Edmundson's and we moved down to the Hill ranch, what was known as the Hill ranch. Then, from there, I, after having a very nice time with all the young folks- That used to be fine old country, they were a wonderful lot of people there then, you know, lots of farmers. Then, I went to work for sort of a companion to Miss Bartlett and she owned and bought the old Mont Evans place up there at Greenwood. I stayed and worked for her until 1914 when I was married.

UI: Well, now, she later married

CZ: She later married Floyd Edwards.

UI: And she had some children.

CZ: Three, three children.

UI: Well, now, when you and Ed were married, then what, where did you go?

CZ: Went down to Red Creek. Ed and his dad had a bunch of cattle together. So, we stayed at Dad and Mother Cozad's down on Red Creek, and Silom country. Then, that winter, and we bought our place up in the hole, up in, on the Red Creek springs, in the Red Creek springs country, what people call it, the hole. But that isn't really, but Babcock's Hole over there, but it's what people, you know, think of it as.

UI: They refer to it as the Hole.

CZ: Yes, yes, and we ran cattle and farmed. Then, we later went to work for Mr. M. Nair, wanted us to come over to the old company ranch, the Gamorra ranch.

UI: Gamorra ranch.

CZ: Gamorra ranch, and he come and asked us if we wouldn't come work there on the ranch, which we did, and then Mrs. Crouch at Greenwood. She had the little store and sort of little eating place at Greenwood, and we bought that, in the early part of 1919.

UI: Now, this Greenwood Hotel, you had accommodations for people that were stopped on the, that was a state stop too, wasn't it?

CZ: Everybody stopped there, and we fed great, great crowds of people there. We don't have an awful big place, but we served an awful lot of people and took care, and Pueblo Chamber of Commerce used to entertain their guests at our place there at Greenwood, and the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce, when they entertained Alonzo Stagg, the great football coach, I guess he was, was their guest in Pueblo, they entertained him out at our place, at Greenwood.

UI: And now, you remember the old halfway house at the top of Jackson Hill, can you recall some of the stories that was told about that?

CZ: Not, not too much. They were beginning to not keep people so much after a while. They did, people from Westcliffe up in the valley, used to stop there, as they were going with their hay and grain and potatoes, to Pueblo, and later, why, they weren't stopping so much, and they stopped with us, up in Greenwood.

UI: Greenwood. The people changed their habits

CZ: That's right.

UI: And they stopped at Greenwood instead of the old

CZ: That's right. It seemed like whoever was, I don't remember the name of the people that was running the halfway house then, but anyhow, they didn't feel equal to taking care of the people anymore, so.

UI: They did have accommodations for overnight guests, and

CZ: Fed the people, yes.

UI: Coming from Pueblo, the old stagecoach, they stopped there, and changed horses and

CZ: That's right.

UI: Now, how about the cattle drives. At that time, the road didn't go through Wetmore, did it, that is, the main road.

CZ: No, it went up on the hill from, oh, we could get over to Wetmore, there was a road over there, but that wasn't the main way of going from Pueblo and the stage, or the, yes, the stage, and the halfway house people that stopped with them, why, they went up the hill there by the old halfway house, and on that passed the Watson place and the old Steve ? ranch, and old man and old lady Duncan's place and Mr. Lively, Henry Lively, had a place over there, and then, later, Bondsman ? and built over there where, we all know it as Bond place, just off of the creek at Greenwood.

UI: Now, one time, I think about 1912, they had a water district out there and built a reservoir. Do you know where that reservoir was supposed to be located?

CZ: Well, I don't know just exactly. Some talk was they would put the reservoir, what most people wanted, was it be, over in Babcock's Hole, to run the water around the hill and put it over there, because it was a natural reservoir and all, and didn't need much of a dam built to store the water in there. And then another, that was a controversy, that they never got any place with. Then they wanted it out, kind of, down on what is, toward the Clyde Hanes place, down in there. But that was a big, big open space that they'd have to build a bigger earthen dam than they did over there. Then, that's, I don't know much more about it.

UI: Well, that was the early days, you went right along with the cattle drives, didn't you?

CZ: Oh, yes, I was always out there riding, and, when we moved the cattle from the lower country, Goss

and Edmundson, and the Hill branch out at the Goss and Edmundson. Mr. Will Goss and Art Edmundson had the Hill ranch leased, and they moved the cattle from down at the Red Top ranch and all down in, on the ranches down east of Pueblo, down there, and they brought them up, and all the cowboys came. All the [unintelligible] girls in the Silom country had a big dance when the boys came moving the cattle, and then they stayed, and kept them overnight, for a day or so, at the Hill ranch. And then they took them on up to Tommy Tompkins ranch, up on the mountain.

UI: You had your own horse and saddle and everything?

CZ: Everything, mm hmm.

UI: And how many children did you have?

CZ: I don't have any. We never had any children.

UI: Well, uh, in those days, when you first went out on the Greenwood, was, it was mostly horse and buggy, horses, there wasn't many automobiles.

CZ: Oh, yes. And then when we lived over on Red Creek, why, our mode of travel was horseback. We carried everything horseback, in and out.

UI: Living over on Red Creek, uh, they had some, what they call, Red Creek Springs.

CZ: Springs, yes.

UI: Will you describe those springs?

CZ: Well, they were mighty fine springs there, at one time, a great many springs, and very valuable waters. And they then, and there came a flash flood up in the canyon above them, and drained most of those. It washed quite an arroyo down through there and drained those springs, the original waters, yes. But, today, you can ride over that country and you can hear that course under there.

UI: In other words, it seemed to give a hollow sound.

CZ: Yes, it does, uh huh.

UI: Now, they had a hotel there, didn't they?

CZ: Yes, they had the Case Hotel. That was down towards the springs more, and then they had the Wagner, I think they called it, Hotel, up the canyon farther, right under Bear's Head.

UI: Bear's Head, describe that.

CZ: Well, Bear's Head, you could see it from Florence. As you start out, or you're coming from Canon City, you look out south in those mountains, and that kind of big rock looking up there is called old Bear's Head. That's Bear's Head rock.

UI: The people that fraternized this hotel were usually people that came there for their health, is that it?

CZ: Yes. They came there for those charging? Waters and for their health. A lot of them were tuberculars,

and they came there, and so, a good many died there, and they had their own little cemetery, which is still there. The cemetery's still there. Of course, the graves are trampled, broken up by the cattle running over them, but, and there's evidence, some, the last time I was over there, of where the old Case Hotel was, and a beautiful yellow rose garden, the most beautiful yellow roses. They looked different than most of our yellow roses are.

UI: Now this was on which, which ranch, this?

CZ: That was on what they called the Case place.

UI: Case place.

CZ: Uh, the Case place.

UI: Do you know who has it now?

CZ: Yes, you know

UI: You mean the, what's the name of that ranch that's west of Pueblo there?

CZ: Yes, uh, Don Kay Owns that now, and I think Don Kay owns our old ranch that we had in there too, in Red Creek.

UI: They don't, they haven't improved that ranch or anything?

CZ: Where we were.

UI: Yes.

CZ: No, no, I don't know the even any buildings are standing.

UI: Do you know whether there might be some old foundations there where the hotel was, or anything like that?

CZ: Well, there was, yes. There was.

UI: How do you get to it?

CZ: When you go up through Silom country and go up to Darlen Cave, he, I think now, they have a fair road that you can get in and out now there. When we traveled in and out in the wagon [sound drops out] We'd ride horseback, we had our cattle. We looked after our cattle and we had quite a few horses. Ed had quite, some real good horses, and we used to ride for our horses, broke our own horses, and old, old time.

UI: Did you have a pretty good herd of cattle?

CZ: Yes, a fair size, mm hmm.

UI: About how many?

CZ: Well, I don't know. I think [tape stops and restarts, seems to be a short break in the flow of the

conversation] and turned the cattle out on the range.

UI: It was all open.

CZ: It was all open. We paid for our permits, for our cattle permit.

UI: To the Forest Service.

CZ: That's right, and Mr. Jim Roll was the forest ranger at the time.

UI: Can you name some of the old-time ranchers around there at that time? Now, did you go to school out there?

CZ: No, no I didn't. My brother did up to the Blake ranch, my brother did. But, we girls did not. Well, there's, to start with, up on top Hardscrabble, there was the old Barton place, Charlie Barton, and Mrs. Farrington, his sister, and Mr. Farrington. That was her husband and they had three children up there, and then there was the Chatham place, which my father and mother owned, and then, there was the Blake ranch, and Mr. Tony Blake and his mother and his wife, and their son Everett lived there. Then, there was old Slater? Place down adjoined them. Later, was the posting place, no, no, later was, no, I wish I could remember that.

UI: Well, maybe you can think about that after a while. You knew Louis Draper out there, I suppose.

CZ: Oh, yes, Louis and I were kids, you know, back in 1912 and 13, we were very much youngsters and we used to go to all the dances and all had a big time.

UI: He come out there when he was pretty young man.

CZ: Yes, yes.

UI: Course he has quite a spread now.

CZ: Yes.

UI: Can you remember some of the others around

CZ: Well, there was the Barker place. That's what I wanted to say a while ago. The Barker, Snyder place, and then there was old Albert Shaffer, and then the ranger station was down in the canyon there and Jim and Mrs. Lowell lived down in there, on the ranger station, and old John Clementosh, he was an old timer and he had a little old cabin over on the hillside over there, and he owned, also owned a ranch that Dad Cozad owned, which is later known as the Edwards ranch there. But old John Clementosh owned that and

UI: Now, this old hotel

CZ: And the Wrights, and the Wrights. Well, let's finish up the neighbors up there. Then there was the old Snagger place and the old Wright place, I mean to say Wright place, and then we later moved from there over the place at the bottom of the hill up on to the Albert Shaffer ranch. Then, from there on, up in the canyon was Olge? Molly and Ike Sanders.

UI: Molly and Ike Sanders.

CZ: Yes, old John Sanders' father and mother.

UI: Well, that Mrs. Schein here is a daughter or something

CZ: No, not of them, no. No, she was a Morgan.

UI: Oh, I see. Well, now, this old hotel, you say they had a stage from Greenwood to Florence.

CZ: Yes, yes. And Mr. old Ed Snyder, Mr. Snyder, ran the mail stage and of course, he took passengers back and forth and hauled little stuff that anyone had. He used to haul out quite a few things for us when we had the store.

UI: He'd come to Florence and stay overnight and collect?

CZ: No, he drove it in the day. He made it cause he had the mail, see?

UI: I see.

CZ: And he left early in the morning and then he got back in the evening.

UI: I see. Usually an all-day trip.

CZ: That's right.

UI: 12 or 14 miles.

CZ: That's right.

UI: What else can you tell us about? Later, you, this old hotel has burned down since then.

CZ: Yes, that's where Mr. Snyder ran the stage round, that later burned, in later years, uh huh.

UI: At that time, there was a saloon there, is that it?

CZ: Yes, when it burned, I think or about that time. I wasn't there. We didn't move there then.

UI: And your hotel at Greenwood was up the crick a little bit.

CZ: Yes, yes. And we had the cottages, and we built several more cottages, and we had the store and the hotel, and everything, had a great many people. We had an awful lot of people there from all over. In fact, we had people from all over the United States and two or three foreign countries as guests there.

UI: They'd come there and stay all summer, is that it?

CZ: Some of them stayed all summer. We had people that kept cottages from one season to another, once a year, so they could have it for the next year. From Oklahoma and different places, they came. Jacks, of the Jacks that used to be here

UI: Ed and Dell Jacks?

CZ: Some of them, they had a cottage with us for quite a while, different, well, they kept the cottage.

UI: Did anything out of the ordinary ever happen? You should, occasionally, with that number of people, there's something usually happened.

CZ: Well, nothing very exciting, I don't think. All things were really, whether Ed and I expected too much or always seen it that way, was the nice thing, the nicer times, the nicer things of people, and everything. But we met a lot of people that needed a lot of help, which we tried to give to them. People are always nice.

I think maybe the only thing was, and it wasn't too evident, but I always was trying to feed everybody. I was scared everybody was going to be hungry, especially boys. Boys was hungry and there was a boy came there one time and he didn't ask for any food or anything, but that boy was sick and I knew it. It was one of those, what was those boys' brother name, I had the name on my tongue just a few minutes ago, but anyhow, I, he was, he was dizzy, he was so hungry. He was on the run from the law then, but he never asked or he never tried to get any money or anything.

But outside of that, I don't believe there was anything too exciting. It was in later years. It was exciting that old Jim Sears, bless his old soul, he was a nice old timber hauler, and he had rooms, a little apartment or something down there in the old hotel, and he hauled timber. Then, he was a very fine fellow, had a fine sense of humor and everything, and then after old Jim died, the ladies aid gave him a wonderful funeral and everything, and then, they said he was Jesse James, and they took the body up that night after he was buried. Tom Easton was the mortician then and he told me hisself. That night, after dark they had taken the body up.

Mr. Sears. he was very, very fine old fellow. He was very charitable and he used to want to do things for people, especially children that didn't have much. He would say, now, I want to give you some money and leave some money here, and you give the children around here candy and things that children like. I said, I will, but Mr. Sears, I have to tell them that, because they would think it was us giving it to them, and I said, we can't do that and I wouldn't want it that way. But I would tell them that some kind person left the money for them to have this, and that's the way it was.

Then, one time, it came about Christmas time and Clay Tribbet, his wife was very delicate, and very frail, and she passed out. And she had a little saloon down there at the old hotel building, and they had a little girl, Ada. She used to follow Mr. Sears around and he thought so much of that little girl. So, he gave me some money to buy her a lovely doll for Christmas, not, she didn't know who it come from. I told her, some nice person left the money for her to have a doll. Then, the following summer or spring, why, her mother died. Clay's wife died.

UI: Well, this Mr. Sears, I've heard that rumor too, about Jesse James. They tell about some woman that appeared there, well dressed woman, seemed to have plenty of money, seemed to be with this Mr. Sears. Is that?

CZ: No, I don't know anything about that. Never heard about any woman. He was very woman-shy. But, he did, he had his little, George Fuller. They bought the building then later from some folks that had bought it. A few families had owned it before the Fullers and Mr. Sears had this little apartment there.

UI: Now, this was out at the old hotel?

CZ: Yes, and Mr. Fuller said one evening, why, he came in an awful hurry, and he said, take care of my team till I get back. There was a car drove up in [unintelligible] where the cars had these curtains on them, you know.

UI: Some of them.

CZ: Yes, and he said, take care of my team till I get back, and Bob, that was the dog, his old dog. And he said, you take care of them till I get back, and away he went. There was two men in the car and Mr. Fuller did not know who they were or anything. So, the next day, he came up to our place, up to the store, and he was telling us, and he said, you know, I'm kind of worried. He said, Jim left in such a hurry and seemed kind of bothered and he repeated about taking care of his team for him, and old Bob, the dog. So, then, he was gone several days, and when, he didn't know anything about him, but he kept on feeding, taking care of them, and one evening, why, here come this same looking car and Mr. Sears got out and that was that. Mr. Sears never told him where he'd been or anything about it. But he met, he said, later years, Mr. Fuller said, you know about that time, he said, there was a big holdup down in New Mexico, I think, was what he said that it was. He said, I don't know whether Jim was connected with that or not. But he said, anyhow, he left in a hurry and came back just as mysteriously as he left. So, that was it.

But he never did, and he come up to the store, why, and we had a dog, very friendly dog, and he liked everybody, but Mr. Sears, he didn't want Mr. Sears to come in, and especially, to get over too far in the store. I would scold the dog a little bit and he said, Mrs. Cozad, he said, don't do that. He said, dogs know men better than people. So, we never thought anything about that but Mr. Sears was a wonderful old fellow. He hauled timber and Mr. Guylor, and all those old timber haulers and old Cal Sweet? Occasionally would haul a little load, a shirttail load of timber, did many of them up there in the mountains. And the Bradshaws, and Corning used to live up there. Horning, Hornings is what I want to say, and Charles Bray.

UI: Well, when did your husband die?

CZ: In 59.

UI: 59. Were you living on the

CZ: No, no were, or I was living in Grand Junction. We later sold out, and we went over on the Western Slope. But Ed died in Pueblo in 59.

UI: How long did you live in Florence then?

CZ: Here now? I came back here in 57, 58.

UI: 1958.

CZ: Er, 68.

UI: Well, that's a pretty, you had a pretty exciting life out there.

CZ: Well, it was all very friendly country, that was then. We all had great times. Every Friday night, why,

we all got together and went to somebody's house, and had a party and danced. There would be just a little bitty room, but we all danced in there. There was one fellow that could play the violin. He could only play one thing. Nellie Gray. And we danced everything to old Nellie Gray, and we killed old Nellie Gray that winter. But everybody was so friendly and that was the way we got together and we [tape ends abruptly]

End of tape.