

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

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McGonegal, Avesta Vahldick

October 22, 1985

Interviewed by unidentified interviewer

UI: This is October 22, 1985 and we're going to do an oral history tape with Mrs. Avesta McGonegal whose parents were settlers in this area and we are in the History Room of Canon City Library. Let's check it. Ok, we're ready to go. What is your full name, Avesta? Go ahead.

AM: Maiden name was Vahldick.

UI: You were married before you married McGonegal. His name was-

AM: Seeley.

UI: And that's the one that we're going to write your children down as. What are the names of the following members of your family? Your husband's name

AM: Melvin Frank Seeley.

UI: And you know where he was born?

AM: He was born in Kimbell, CO.

UI: And the date of his birth?

AM: October 1, 1907.

UI: Your mother's name?

AM: Lottie Avesta.

UI: Ok, Lottie Avesta, yeah.

AM: Maiden name was Laws, LAWS.

UI: Needs to be a couple, little bit more, I think, to record. Now, your children's names, let's see, I guess that's, no, this apparently is where you're supposed to pick up your families' names, their children's names because that's your father down here, so, were there other children in the family? Did you have siblings?

AM: I have one sibling, yeah. Frieda.

UI: Her name is Vahldick, then. Oh, here it asks brothers and sisters, so maybe that was supposed to pick up your children's names after all. Your father's name-

AM: George Charles Vahldick. Born Hillside, Custer County, CO.

UI: In Custer County. The date-

AM: June 29, 1873.

UI: OK, do you remember your grandmother's name? Your mother's mother, I guess.

AM: My mother? My grandmother?

UI: Yeah, your grandmother.

AM: My grandmother was Les Diane Anderson Laws.

UI: And your grandfather's name?

AM: John Matthew Laws. He went by the name of Joe.

UI: And were they born in this area?

AM: No, they were born, my grandmother was born in Iowa. I think my grandfather was born in Indiana.

UI: Were your parents natives of this area?

AM: My father was. He was born in Custer County and not too long after the colony came to the Wet Mountain Valley.

UI: Yeah, we have Hillside, yeah, 1873. Did the family's birthplace have any direct effect on your life?

AM: Oh, I suppose that any birthplace has an effect on any children's lives. My mother's grandfather's family, my mother's father's family were, came over into the Virginia colony and we were subjected to quite a lot of the kind of things that the Southern people did and my father's parents had come from Germany, and naturally, he had a lot of background from the old country and so, I suppose that we got a smattering of both. I know, during World War I, in 1914, we had the Ku Klux Klan around, my dad had taught a little bit of German. His stepmother who had come into the family and he was quite young, probably 8 or 10 years old, had been from England and from Wales, and she talked nothing but English. So, he knew more English than some of the older children in the family did. But, he said, we wouldn't talk any more German because the Ku Klux Klan was painting crosses on German peoples' lawns around Rocky Ford. That's where we were living at that time and we just didn't think we'd like to have our barn burned.

UI: Then you feel there was quite a bit of feeling against the German people by people who, well, considered themselves more American or more English?

AM: I think it was, anybody that had a German sounding name, when we lived in Rocky Ford, and there were a lot of Russian families there, sometimes these people who were so terribly against Germany couldn't tell the Russian names from the German names. Sometimes, the Russian people, at that time, of course, Russia wasn't involved in the war and they got looked down on just like the German people did. It was noticeable in school; it was noticeable everywhere.

UI: Do you know if there was any particular discrimination against the German people in the Wet Mountain Valley, since that was a place that at least part of it had been settled by German colony?

AM: I don't think so. I never heard of it. I had relatives up there, cousins that we visited back and forth with. I don't remember hearing them say anything about it because most of those people up there were either German or their families were involved in German things. I don't know how much World War I affected those people up there. Couldn't travel very much at that time, so you didn't do much going back and forth. Transportation was about as difficult then as it got to be in World War II.

UI: Ok, you've been, though you were born not too far away, about when did you come to Fremont County then?

AM: Fremont County. About the time I was four, which was in 1908 and we came down, I think about the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, we came, Dad moved us down in, with a team of horses and wagons. He had been a freighter up in Westcliffe and he still had his freight wagon and I remember them loading all our things in the freight wagon, and I guess he had more than one trip. My uncle Will, who lived in Westcliffe, was his brother and he helped him move and my mother drove a horse named Rob, the grey horse and a buggy and we came down. I remember we stopped and picnicked at the Basin and I thought that was great because I knew my dad had always stopped there when he'd been freighting and we ate our picnic lunch and then we got back in our buggy, came on down. My grandmother and aunt were living out on Four Mile and we were moving into the same house that they had been living in. Then they were moving into town. I had been there before, so I kind of felt at home. I remember Mother and my aunt repapered the whole house. It was a big house. It had eight rooms in it and they repapered the whole house and I remember getting into all kinds of trouble because I wanted to help them paper and so finally, they gave me some scraps of paper and we used flour paste in those days they made themselves. They let me paste little dabs of paper on where they hadn't gotten yet. Once I got busy and pasted where they had gotten and I was in trouble with my mother. We lived there then eight years. My sister was born there.

UI: Do you know if that house is still standing at all?

AM: Sure, yes, it's standing. It's been moved. It's up by the railroad tracks, the Denver Rio Grande railroad track on McKenzie, I guess that's McKenzie Avenue anymore. It sat down on the river and it got awfully close to the water line after we left it and it was moved not too many years after we moved to Rocky Ford, maybe as much as four. It's still there. Looks pretty much like it always did.

UI: So, that white house by the railroad track, across from what's a gravel pit now in 1985?

AM: Yeah.

UI: I know there's a white house that sits there by the railroad track.

AM: Well, they haven't changed it very much. They turned it around. My dad had built on a porch on the back and now that porch is in the front, which faces the east. When he built it on, I guess it faced the east but they changed it quite a bit. But it's the same old house.

UI: Have you lived in other homes in this area besides where you're staying now or with the one out on Four Mile?

AM: Well, not really. Oh, yes, well, my grandmother and aunt took care of my uncle's places for him and so, and he was a farmer, and when he would rent a place to farm, why, if it had a house on it, he'd move them into it. That way, they had cheap rent and he had his place looked after. I lived out on Fay once upon a time and that house has been remodeled and the top part has been taken off and made into a one room house, or a one floor house now. Then, we lived in the stone house that's part of the red museum now and that was a fun house.

UI: You mean the red house, the one that Anson Rudd built?

AM: Yes. It was a fun house because there was a long porch on the back and the house was kind of on a hill and there was a downstairs. There wasn't a basement but, and the front, it didn't show, but in the back, it went back into the hill and people lived in it. We could go out on this porch and watch the D&RG trains go up and down and that time, they used to carry an extra car on the back that was an observation car. It was open in the plop and you just sat in seats and people rode that through the Royal Gorge. I think it was off the Salida and the ladies, way back when people still used handkerchiefs and the ladies would wave their white handkerchiefs at us, and of course, we were delighted to wave back. There'd be two or three of those go through and so in the afternoons in the summertime if we happened to be there, we had a lot of fun. I had a couple of cousins that visited a lot and we played together a lot and the four of us would really enjoy ourselves out on that porch.

UI: Do you remember any other house that they may have lived in that was interesting?

AM: They lived in one up in Garden Park. It was across from where the schoolhouse was and still is. Of course, it's not in use anymore. But that was kind of a fun place too because-

UI: That, by any chance, the one that was moved to Buckskin Joe's that the Sages had lived in at one time? I think that's written up in May Campbell's from Trappers to Tourists.

AM: I know that the Sages owned that place and I expect they built that house.

UI: It's not too far from the Garden Park Cemetery, is it?

AM: No, it isn't and yes, it's one that was moved down. I think we always liked to look over there in Buckskin Joe's Street and think about that house. You see it in pictures a lot of times. It was a pretty good house for a rural area like that.

UI: It was two story?

AM: Yes.

UI: I think I've read in her book which house it is, up at Buckskin Joe's, not the Saddle Shop, but something else. Do you remember stores where your family shopped in Canon City?

AM: Well, we shopped at right at Morgan's and I thought it was a grocery store. I know they bought groceries there but I was looking in the old book the other day that said that it was actually a meat market. But I know they sold groceries. My mother used to take me in there. She knew all these people because she'd lived around Canon quite a long time. People knew her and saw this butcher. I don't know what his name was, would give me a wiener and I didn't really like wieners, but I was not going to let him know I didn't like them, so I always took them and you'd have to take a bite of them because he was looking at you and as soon as I would get outside, I'd get my mother to put it someplace and I could take it home. I don't think I ate it. I don't know what happened to it but he always gave me one, every time I went in that store. Sometimes, I almost wished I didn't go in. One time, I'd fallen down and broke my nose and it was all skinned up and he teased me about it and he said, well, your nose looks almost like my wieners. I just hated that. That was bad.

UI: Were there other stories that you remember that were, it was all on Main St.?

AM: All on Main St. We always got our shoes at Gally's because mother wanted us to have good feet when we grew up, and I've been real thankful lots of times. I guess the shoes cost more because my father thought we could have lived with a little bit cheaper shoe. My mother always got them there. Even after we moved away from Canon, she'd plan to buy shoes for us when she'd bring us back up. Ott's candy store was my very most favorite place because they had the best butterscotch candy, hard candy, in little round circles, and I just loved them. Mother'd always let me have a few of those. So, that was always my favorite place and those were real treats. We didn't get them very often.

UI: Ott's was in business a lot of years, wasn't it?

AM: I remember Ott's way up until the '50s. Might have been, I don't know but I know they were still in business when we used to come up to visit the Seeleys when they lived here. That was after I had a couple of my children. Then we, well, Bryan Collins was real important to me because I ran around with Gertrude Fry and we'd go down to the store and he'd let us have his old pattern books so that we could cut out paper dolls. We had gorgeous paper doll books and we had so many things to choose from that we would be able to find a doll that we liked real well and then hunt dresses that would fit in the direction that that doll faced. And then, we had big books, these other big books that we'd slip our dolls into and we played paper dolls practically all the time we played. At that time, my grandmother and aunt were living down on River St. in the Rudd House and they lived up on Harrison so it was a case of getting together. We went to Washington school which was about halfway between and so-

UI: Would you stop just a minute and tell us where Washington school was?

AM: Washington school was on Macon Ave. It's where the courthouse is now.

UI: The old Washington schools.

AM: Washington school. Oh yes, this was way back in 1913, 14, along back in there, so it was, that building wasn't torn out till they built the courthouse. So well, one evening, we'd go up to her house and the next evening, we'd go down to my house and we played paper dolls practically all the time. It was a

great life for kids.

UI: Do you remember any special things about school that you would like to relate?

AM: Well, it's a Four Mile school. It was out in the country. Our house was between the two railroad tracks and my, it was the Santa Fe track on the south and the D&RG on the north and I had to cross the D&RG tracks to get to school. The school sat back on a ditch, a big arroyo type of ditch and you had to cross, you had to go out on the highway and then go back or you went up a back road.

UI: Did you ever hear that called, pardon me, did you ever hear that called Mud Gulch?

AM: No, I don't know anything about what it was named. It's still around. It's still there.

UI: Well, we had an oral tape and they talked about that arroyo out there and called it Mud Gulch.

AM: Could be.

UI: I wondered if that was the same one.

AM: It probably is. Irrigation water came down it. I know that and so it was turned out of some ditch someplace down into that and you had a head gate up of the D&RG where the D&RG track covered this, went across this little back road. So, I didn't start school until I was 6 and a half, 7 and a half, and mother taught me. Mother was a teacher. She taught me at home that first year. Then, I went to Four Mile and I spent a few months in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade and then they put me in the second grade and I finished 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and Margery Kirkdan was my teacher and the Kirkdans lived here in Canon. They were in the fruit business, wholesale business, and they've been around a long time. She was a, she rode horseback out to school and she always rode with a skirt that divided. When she'd get to school, she'd button the skirt all up and make a full skirt out of it. When she rode the horse, she divided it, so she had a divided skirt, and I just thought that was pretty fascinating. Then, the next year I had Elizabeth Keyes for a teacher. Then, I came into stay with my grandmother and aunt and went to Jefferson school. I had Mrs. Underwood and I noticed that she was teaching later at the Washington school in some old material I was looking at lately. Then, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I went to Washington school and I had Miss Sherman for a teacher. Then, in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I had Mr. Logan and I had some other teachers too. He was principal and he also taught some subjects. Then, in the middle of the year-

UI: Is that Mr. Logan that comes to the History Room sometimes? He was a teacher.

AM: I don't know. I have no idea. His name is in one of these books. Then, we moved to Rocky Ford.

UI: You mentioned that your mother had lived around Canon for some time and that she was a teacher and that she taught you at home. Did she teach in this area at all?

AM: Well, she taught up in the Westcliffe area. That's where she met my dad and she boarded with my dad's family and then she got in Westcliffe. That was the last year she taught before she was married, and then she had taught at Brush Creek and Texas Creek and Marigold, which was up-

UI: Every once in a while, we hear about Marigold but we never can find it. Do you know anything about

Marigold?

AM: Oh, it was on the old road that, what'd they call that road that goes up to Cripple Creek?

UI: Well, it was a toll road at that time I would imagine.

AM: It was a toll road. She just taught there one year.

UI: She lives at the toll station? That was-

AM: I guess she must have.

UI: The Canterbury's had the toll station.

AM: No, she didn't live with the Canterbury's. She lived with somebody that went around prospecting. He and his wife were gone a good part of the time prospecting. I don't remember their name. I'm sure I heard of it.

UI: We call it the Shop Road now.

AM: Shop Road, yes.

UI: Let's see. The other places were probably in Custer County and Texas Creek you said.

AM: Yes.

UI: And Marigold.

AM: And Brush Creek and-

UI: Where was Brush Creek?

AM: Brush Creek was in Custer County. It was down towards Hillside from Westcliffe. Greenleaf. She taught at Greenleaf. There's a Greenleaf school, an old school, in Westcliffe. She taught in Westcliffe.

UI: Now what kind of jobs have you held?

AM: Well, teaching in Junkins Park in Custer County in 1924. I'd been in college. The banks in 1923 and '24 were not in very good shape. We had a kind of a recession and the bank went broke, or closed anyway. Nobody got any money out of it much and so there wasn't money for me to go on to school. I had a scholarship but it didn't pay board and room and I'd worked for my board and I just reached the point where I just wasn't able to make it. So, mother sold some chickens and got me home and I went down for the Otero County courthouse at La Junta and took, in those days, you could take an examination and teach, and they were just limited to 2=3 years. Then, you either had to take another examination or hope that you'd gone to college and gotten enough education that you'd have a teaching certificate. So, I took the examinations and they offered me Silver Park and Junkins Park and I didn't know anything about either one of them. But I found out that some people from Kilbower, up in the Junkins Park area was

raising lettuce. They'd just gone up there to raise lettuce and I thought, well, that sounded like a pretty good place because there'd be people from Kilbo there and so I took the Junkins Park job. Paid \$5 more a month, too, and they let you do your own jazzdring and that gave you another \$5, and I was making \$80. So, that sounded like a pretty good thing to me. It was pretty good because I was able to save enough money to go back to college for a quarter of the next winter.

UI: This was a summer school partly?

AM: Yes, six-month summer school. And these were what most of the ones in Custer County were that were in the mountains because there's no way of kids getting to school.

UI: Do you think then your mother taught mostly summer schools or were those winter schools up there at that time?

AM: Well, I don't know. Texas Creek was a winter school I know. I think Brush Creek was. It was up there towards Hillside and you could get in and out. But Marigold was a winter school because you got snowed in but other than that, they may have been summer schools, because that's-

UI: There were lots of summer schools still in the 20s.

AM: When I got there you see, 20 some years later. Well, anyway, I taught three summers up at Junkins Park and I taught one year down at the Adobe closer to Westcliffe. Finally, I got my education finished up and got two-year life certificate which I thought was pretty good. It wasn't as good as it sounded. We had to have more education, more education, more education in order to teach. Finally, in 1936, I got my full Bachelor of Arts degree from Gunnison Western State College. I taught until 1943 and then, well, I stopped and had a couple of my children but I taught quite a bit during the time they were small too. Then, I went to the Welfare office and did Welfare work, went in in September of '41. The war came just after I got there and I stayed in the welfare office until, welfare work, until 1955 but meantime, I'd gone to Denver University and taken social work in the field of child welfare and I was a child welfare worker in Otero County.

UI: Well, you said kids were your hobby so I can understand now.

AM: Well, then I went back to teaching and taught until I retired. Then, I came up here to Canon City to live and worked in the library.

UI: This library?

AM: Canon City Public Library, yes.

UI: This library. I think I missed one thing back here. We talked about your mother was a teacher and housewife. Your father raised food, what, he was a rancher. You'd say he was a rancher?

AM: He was a cattle rancher in Westcliffe and he had been, his father was a cattle rancher ahead of him. Then, when he came to Canon, he had about 20 acres and land, most of it in fruit. That was what he did here.



UI: You did mention somewhere back there that he had brought you down on a freight wagon. Can you tell us anything about, I assume this was before they were married or something of that kind?

AM: Well, he had guests that he freighted. I don't think he did much freighting. His brother got married about two years, he and his brother Will worked together on the freight business, and his brother got married two or three years before he did and I think they probably folded the freight business up when my uncle Will got married because they had to be away from home too much. They both ranched. They ranched on ranches that were next door to each other and they could go from one man's field to the other man's field down in the corner of the place that was farthest away from the houses and they were actually cornered and then my dad farmed that place until I was four and that was about, well, I was born there so it must have been about four years that he lived there. Then, when we came to Canon City, he raised fruit and oh, he worked for the ditch company sometimes, and worked for the city whenever they'd have the fair, used to have a fair. He used to always run the water wagon and spray the streets, Main St. and out spray around the racetrack and things like that.

UI: Where was the racetrack at that time?

AM: Well, the racetrack is not there anymore. In fact, I guess it's covered with houses-

UI: South of town.

AM: It was north of town.

UI: Oh, it was north of town.

AM: Way out there, was just about out to that Orchard Park area. I think it was kind of a sluey sort of a place. I think it's probably about where that big, that mobile home court is out there towards the Hubbacks.

UI: We have so many of them.

AM: Well, anyway, I think when I drive out there-

UI: Yeah, I think I read somewhere that it was on north 9<sup>th</sup>, Hardy manor, which of course is Canon now.

AM: It's covered with houses and things now. I couldn't just locate it. When we lived on Fay, my grandmother and I used to walk back there, to it, and I suppose we probably, but she was quite a walker and she always took me along. It could have been maybe as much as a half a mile northwest of where we lived on Fay Ave. which was just off of 8<sup>th</sup> St., between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

UI: Back to the freight wagon-

AM: When we moved to Rocky Ford, he farmed.

UI: Oh yeah.

AM: He had 160 acres.

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UI: If they freighted and you mentioned something about the Basin which I understand is up on the Oak Creek Grade Road, I have seen it marked, what were they freighting? I know that they say that the Canon Hotel, and it was moved down brick by brick was moved down by freight wagons down Copper Gulch Road, was that the kind of thing they did?

AM: My dad and my uncle and I don't know how many other freighters moved that because when we'd go on the street, my dad would tell me that that building he helped move and they marked the bricks so they put it back together just the way it was when it was up there and I guess some of the finishing inside, some of the lumber from the inside was even used. However, I'm sure they used some other lumber too. They freighted mostly down Oak Creek.

UI: Well, then, where did they go?

AM: They came from the Westlife area, the Silver Cliff area I should say because Westlife didn't exist really until the railroad went in and that was about 1900 and so Silver Cliff was the main city up there. They came from there and they hauled potatoes because dad talked about peddling them in Rockvale and Chandler and Coal Creek and Williamsburg and at that time, the Wolf Creek Line apparently wasn't in existence cause he never talked about it.

UI: Wolf Park.

AM: Wolf Park. Anyway, he even as a kid before they really freighted and that's how they got into it in the first place, their father would send them down to peddle potatoes and my uncle didn't like to peddle very well, so he was 13 months older, he would drive a team. My dad would get out and go from house to house and peddle the potatoes. Then my uncle would help get them out of the wagon and take them into the house and the people just bought those just by the pounds, I mean, you took half a sack or a fourth of a sack or a whole sack and the miners' wives looked forward to them coming with these potatoes. Then, they hauled hay down when they got to be real freighters, lots of hay down and that was, they brought a lot of it to farms because they used to deal with Hadley Mercantile and some of the other places. But they also brought potatoes and then they took back supplies, coal and whatever somebody wanted that lived up there. They hauled a lot of coal and they would get it. They would sell their potatoes and hay and then they'd load up coal at the mines and take them back.

UI: You know what mines or do you remember-

AM: I remember the Chandler mine coal the best because it was the hardest. But they got quite a bit at Rockvale and some at Coal Creek and Williamsburg. Those two places were close together.

UI: Was the Williamsburg called the Ocean Wave at that time?

AM: I don't know. Dad always called it Coal Creek, and my other uncle married a Copperthwaite who lived in Coal Creek and they were miners and it go so my dad and uncle Will would go down there sometimes and stay all night with them. Mrs. Copperthwaite, she had quite a family of children but she always seemed to have room for a couple more young fellows. So, once in a while, they'd stay there with them and he was a miner in, they were from Wales.

UI: What do you remember about the Depression? Apparently, you were back up teaching in this area by that time?

AM: No, I was married. I had two children. We were living, well, we had been up raising potatoes out south part of the valley. Focus was the name of the town. It isn't there anymore and my husband's people had owned land out in there and we farmed with them a couple years. It wasn't a very good business because potatoes weren't worth much of anything and finally, we moved back down to Rocky Ford and he just worked down there for the sugar beet company.

UI: Did you know people on relief or the WPA or the triple C camps in this area?

AM: Well, yes. Finally, his dad, Frank Seeley, well, he used to put on, they hired one man for every 10 that was on WPA and he was quite a fine carpenter and they hired him as one man. That was up in this area, Custer County, and then Maynard, he went up to Gunnison County and did the same kind of thing. My husband worked in the timber and that was also, one man was hired and 10 WPA workers worked under them so he had, they called them supervisors and they got, I think, a nickel more an hour than the WPA workers got and it was paid from a different fund. So, we had a taste of WPA times and we also had quite a taste of not having much of anything. If my dad hadn't been a farmer, I expect we'd have got mighty hungry but we managed to salvage enough beans and tomatoes and things like that off the farm. My grownup kids don't like beans and tomatoes very much to this day. They say they ate enough of them during the Depression to last them the rest of their lives and I expect that's true.

UI: Do you remember anything about labor strikes?

AM: Well, I remember the one in 1914, whatever that mining strike was. We were living out on Fay Ave. It was before '14, guess it was maybe '12 or '13. We were living out on Fay, I was living with my aunt and grandmother out on Fay Ave. and they brought in the militia and parked them out in the fairgrounds. I was scared to death. They had great big guns. They pulled them with mules and they would, they had tents set up out there and my uncle was running the store over at the Wolf Park, where Prospect Heights is now, that mercantile store at Prospect Heights was the one he was running. It was a grocery. It was run under the hospices of the mining company. It was one of those mining stores that you remember about. Everybody remembers hearing about. Tennessee Ernie Ford, I guess, had a good song he sang about that-

UI: I owe my soul to the company store.

AM: Yes, that's the one.

UI: That was the one.

AM: It was the truth too. 16 tons and what do you get? Another year older and deeper in debt.

AM: Yeah, I remember that one-a little bit money so they wouldn't be quite so deep in debt. Well, what they really wanted was to be working the year round instead of a few months. But that was pretty bad and I know my parents were down on Four Mile at that time and so I'd be in town most of the time and then I'd go out there. I know, my uncle came down and told my parents to be real careful cause there was getting to be a lot of shooting between the coal camps and Wolf Creek, Wolf Park was involved in. Of course, he was involved in it too. I remember how scared I was. I don't know how they settled it. I just

remember that finally we didn't, the militia moved away and things settled down. But I was too young to remember.

UI: Well, it would make an impression on a kid that age.

AM: Sure.

UI: Any kid that age. What community groups or paternal organizations or churches did you and your parents attend? I remember

AM: Well, we attended the Methodist church. My dad had been raised a Lutheran and after we came down to Canon City, he felt like we all should go to the same church and Mother had always been Methodist, in fact, there was Methodist ministers involved in her family. So, we went to the Methodist church and I grew up doing the things that all kids do that go to Sunday School and church.

UI: Did he belong to the lodges or anything of that kind?

AM: He was a woodman of the world and Odd Fellow. When they built the original Odd Fellow home, Odd Fellow's Home out here on 15<sup>th</sup> St., he was a pretty active member in the lodge and I know he went out there and there were business meetings about it and he went to them. Then, it wasn't finished yet when he took us out there to see it. He said, I remember him saying to me, now if anything would happen to me and there wouldn't be anybody to take care of you, they'll take care of you out here. At that time, they had children and I was scared to death. I thought, oh dear, I don't think this is a place I ever, ever want to see ever again. But fortunately, I didn't ever have to go there.

UI: [unintelligible] one of our fine nursing homes that's connected with the Odd Fellows. It wasn't too bad a place to be maybe.

AM: It wasn't too bad a place I'm sure for older people, because they either had to go to the County Farm or they had to find someplace like that, and they were better off there than they were at the Count Farm, I assume, since people said they were.

UI: Did you ever, there were other families, you said, your cousins were on the back porch of the, south porch of the Rudd house. Did your families, did they get together very often, and if they did, what kind of things did you do and so forth?

AM: Well, there were three, four families, really five families, my aunt and grandma and my grandfather had died when I was very, very small and there were three Laws families that lived around, and of course, our family. My mother was a Laws.

UI: Now did they, pardon me, did they have, were they people from around here who also had families in the area?

AM: Oh yes.

UI: Who were they?

AM: Jim Laws, James Laws was married to Laura Louwther, I believe was the way they spelled it.

UI: Oh, Louwther cemetery, stones up in the cemetery in the old Greenwood cemetery the other day.

AM: I know we're related. They had two children, two sons and Raymond, the older one, and I were pretty close. We were a couple years apart in age. Then there was John Laws and he married Addie Drysden. They had three girls.

UI: You know the Drydens were connected.

AM: Grandpa Dryden's was a very fine carpenter and did really nice cabinet work in his houses.

UI: He did build houses?

AM: He built on his own. He hired help and took contracts. Then, for a while, when I was pretty small, Uncle Andrew's family, they were Laws too, had come from Missouri and their children were older. He was the oldest child in the family and their children were older, and they moved away and went to New Mexico when I was about eight. Before that, they had six children and we'd all get together for all the holidays at my grandmother's and aunt's house. We had family dinners and we kids, of course, looked forward to when we'd get a chance to play together because transportation wasn't the same then as it was now.

UI: Interruption here. Did you say there was one other Laws that was living?

AM: Yes, Sam was married to Nellie Burrage.

UI: We have a Burrage building somewhere in town?

AM: Yes, yes, that was her father's building. Actually, Nellie was an adopted child. They had one son by the name of Will and he was quite a bit older than she was when they adopted this little girl. Now, I don't know anything about the background for that or anything. They left when I was reasonably small, probably 2-3 years old. But they had two children. One of them was named Burrage for a first name and then the next one down was William and he and I were about the same age. Then, they had three, four more children after they went out to Portland Oregon. I think they went to Seattle first and then moved down to Portland but they really raised their family in Portland Oregon. Will Burrage had gone out there ahead of them. I think they were all involved in geology and mining and that kind of thing. I'm sure there's a lot of records around Canon City that tell lots more than I could possibly tell.

UI: I remember seeing Will Burrage's name. He was a surveyor or something of that kind.

AM: He was a geologist but he may have been a surveyor too.

UI: And then I remember the mining and picturesque canyon, which is a little book that we found when we opened the room, there was a Burrage house listed and said that Mr. Burrage was one of the outstanding citizens of a building on Main St.

AM: Yes, he had a building, there's still names on the buildings downtown there yet. He built that

building. He was a leading citizen. I didn't know them very well.

UI: Do you remember the first telephone.

AM: Oh, I remember the first telephone I remember, let's put it that way. It hung on the wall and you had to crank it up to get Central and I remember it was white, and I've been trying to think what the rest of the number was. Seemed like it was 234, but I could be wrong about that.

UI: Now, was this here in Canon?

AM: Out at Four Mile. Not very many people had telephones. They were kind of new and expensive, I guess they were expensive. I suppose they were expensive, what you had to use for money in those days.

UI: Did you say white, or how were these color coded?

AM: Yes, you call, you rang up Central and she said, number please, and you wanted somebody, you could either call the blue line or the red line or the white line. Then you gave her the three figures after that and then she rung it up and there were all, lots of people on the lines, and you had an awful time getting hold, well, to get two lines that were not busy at the same time was really interesting. My father used to get pretty unhappy. He'd try to call somebody in town about fruit that he'd raised or something, and couldn't get the lines. He'd be pretty unhappy. Used to say sometimes, I could go to town and see them in the time it takes to get this telephone to work. My mother would say, well, now, now, after all, you're fortunate to have a telephone. Sometimes, he kind of stalked out of the house. But there were about 60 or 20 people on a line and the telephone poles out where we lived were just little short things and the line was kind of nailed along on them and the people that used it had to keep them up. If they fell down, why, you didn't have any service and you had to go out and fix it. That was the way it worked.

UI: In other words, they didn't have a telephone company that came out and repaired.

AM: They had a place in town on Main St. that was upstairs in a red building and I guess it must have been down in there across now where they, well the tore it out lately, where there used to be a mortuary. Then the senior citizens took it over. I think it was in that block about middle of the block and they, Mother always went upstairs to pay the bill.

UI: Where maybe Gobbins are or somewhere along there?

AM: No, it was farther up town. It was, I don't know what's there now. I've looked at all of that block and tried to figure out just where it was. The whole building apparently was torn out. It was a red brick building.

UI: 600 block rather than the 700 probably.

AM: Probably yeah.

UI: The church was on 8<sup>th</sup>, that's where it was, about the middle of the block.

AM: I suppose the whole building I'm sure was the telephone building. They kept their equipment and

things but we paid our bill upstairs cause I would go up with Mother.

UI: We're talking about family gatherings, I sort of went by the question of what kind of, when you had these family gatherings, as I know that you did, were these usually holidays and what kind of food did you have?

AM: Oh, they were always holidays. Nobody had time to go and plan on a day of doing nothing, except on holidays. I suppose we probably saw each other on Sundays but not big family deals. They were always holidays. Well, we always had turkey on Thanksgiving and my grandmother still had all the dishes that she brought from Missouri with her and she kept them up in the top of the cupboard. So, one of the big deals for me was to help grandma get the dishes down. They always had to be washed and dried, all of them, every one of them whether we used them or not, and then she'd stack them on a table. We'd do this two or three days before the big deal. My aunt had an old steamer that she set on top of the stove. Of course, these were coal stoves, you know, and it, oh, I suppose the thing was 3' high maybe. I don't know. Seemed like it was awfully high. Anyway, she'd make plum puddings and those always got made a day or two ahead and I thought that was great. I didn't really care much for them because they had soot in them and always stuck to the top of my mouth. It wasn't hot enough, but it was fun to watch my aunt do them. That was a tradition. My daughter still makes that plum pudding every year for Christmas, same recipe, and she gets the same ingredients, and they taste the same.

UI: Still stuck to the top of your mouth?

AM: They get them hot and put hot, Mother and my aunt used to make a hard sauce out of butter and sugar, granulated sugar and put on them, and if they weren't good and hot, of course, that didn't melt. Nowadays, we use a softer sauce then you'd get by with it.

UI: I'm going to have to stop for a minute and we'll be. Ok, we have a pause there but we were talking about holidays and how they were celebrated and family affairs. Do you have anything you'd like to add to that?

AM: When the families would get together, it was a big day for us youngsters because that was about the only time that we all played, all of the cousins played together, and we used to play ball out in the, where the high school is now, was an alfalfa field and in the fall and winter, when we could play baseball out there, and so we made our own games and that was one of the things that we enjoyed the most cause we had room enough and we didn't have any problems with banging a ball in the street or anything. But our good times together always meant a lot to all of us cousins and I guess that way, we were not bothering the adults and they enjoyed visiting and getting the meal together and of course, there were always lot of dishes to wash and we children never had to help with that. So, holidays were one of our most interesting family times and actually, most of our good times for all of us were based around the church and the family gatherings.

UI: That was the Methodist church or were there other churches involved?

AM: Well, we went to the Methodist church and Uncle Jim and Aunt Laura and their boys went to the Presbyterian Church and Uncle Andrew and his family went to the Christian church. So, we didn't all go to the same church but we all took part in the activities in our own individual churches. Really, there was no problem about it. Sometimes I would go to Sunday School with the cousins who were older that would

take me to the Christian church. I'd go to Sunday School and church there. Sometimes, they would take me to the Methodist church and I stayed there but we did have good times in the church groups and our parents did too.

UI: In the line of playing things, what toys, do you remember whether they had toys or you had toys that you especially liked. You mentioned paper dolls with a friend. Were there other things that you were especially fond of?

AM: Well, I kind of liked the outdoor toys more than I did indoor toys. However, in the wintertime, I guess we played indoors. But our summer fun always seemed like it was the most fun and since I played more with boy cousins than I did with girl cousins, we dug a lot in the dirt and made tunnels and so forth. I don't remember, I don't think we had any little cards or anything like that. I don't remember what we did. I made lots of mud pies. There was an irrigation ditch close to the house and mother used to let me take little pans and things that she didn't use anymore and I would play in the mud all afternoon long and had a good time doing that. We also could use the alfalfa field to fly kites in the spring and my cousins were pretty good kite builders. I think their dad and mother probably helped them and so, we would all get our kites together, and then they used to make box kites but my kites were always just three-cornered kites, sometimes made with little sticks and newspapers. I know my mother helped me make them and my dad was always real interested in them too. So, we had a kite flying episode and I remember towards the end of the time that we lived in up here, which was 1916, my cousin Raymond Laws said that Marconi had figured a way of talking and we could hear him on the air. That sounded pretty ridiculous to me. We were out flying kites and he said, I wonder if they use kites to get the messages up into the air. We really didn't know much about it. Later on, he built a crystal set and we were able to hear, with headphones, Kansas City which really thrilled us. I guess that must have been the closest station at that time. That, he was quite mechanically minded and that took up quite a bit of our time. In wintertime especially, we'd go and he'd work on things and I guess the rest of us kind of looked on, but it was fun. So, those were most of the games and things that we did.

UI: Did you or your cousins have pets that were of any special interest?

AM: Well, they had a horse named Old Chubb and we rode him sometimes. I just wasn't much of a horseback rider at that time and so, pets never appealed to me. I wasn't a pet fan. I had a dog but I never cared a lot about him. I guess mother probably fed him and I did have a cat once that I liked pretty much. Seemed like every time I had a pet that I really got kind of attached to, poor thing always died or got killed. I think it turned me off pets for the rest of my life.

UI: Every area has had, I think, some kind of disasters and I think the Canon area had for the most part of our history has not related except the penitentiary things that were real disasters. Do you remember of any particular disaster or thing that happened or affected you or your family?

AM: Well, we lived on the river and right close to the bridge that goes across the river on McKenzie Ave. We lived on the north side of the river and at the time that we moved there, the river current was on the opposite side of the bank, which was the south side. There were lots and lots and lots of little trees on our side, more or less an island, and the orchard had been built down there. Four Mile came in to the river up above us and it carried quite a lot of water, especially in the flood times. In fact, it was one of our big flood problems, so we would get, summertime, we would get water up into this kind of a sandbar area and we would be afraid to go down towards the river and then, finally, the current changed and washed all of



that away and our orchard was right on the banks of the river, and every year, we'd lose a tree or two, would cut down under them and go into the river and my dad built what you call fills that were made out of evergreen trees and rocks and all winter, he'd build these fills to keep the water from washing the crops away, the orchard, and then, once in a while, we'd get a big flood down the river from up Salida way and one down Four Mile. They'd come together and then the water'd get clear up in the corrals and around our house. I was just terribly afraid of floods because you never knew, they always seemed to come at night. The water got real high one time and it backed up several different things flooded. The big arroyo along the side of the house flooded too, backed water up on the other side of the railroad track and you couldn't get out and my uncle forded the water and came in and tried to get my dad to take us and go up on the railroad track at least, along there. But, he didn't and we stayed there all night and the water got up, the house was built kind of high, about four feet or five feet off the ground, got up to the porch and we would never have been able to have gotten out except waded, and us kids had been carried I suppose, but it receded and so, we didn't ever get water in the house. But later, they moved that house out and I think we talked about that once before. The floods were bad then. Of course, that's one of the reasons that the dams have been put into the Arkansas River has been to cut the floods down, especially one up at Twin Lakes. That was one of the first ones I think that they did, too, for irrigation purposes but it also was a flood control. We weren't here in 1922 when they had the bad floods but I'm that Canon. I know that south Canon got a lot of water around the houses and some of them I think washed away. But it was bad, all around the river and we were really at the time. Water got miles away from the river banks.

UI: We haven't mentioned any of the surrounding, close surrounding country, the coal camps we mentioned because of your father hauling coal down or back from them. Do you remember anything at all about the Penrose area or the Florence and Cripple Creek railroad, any of that area out to the northeast?

AM: Well, Florence and Cripple Creek railroad, I think they discontinued about the time we left Canon City. I don't exactly remember. I remember we went up one time on an excursion, up to Cripple Creek. I had another aunt and uncle who lived up there. They were Al and Minnie Gongway. He was a miner in Cripple Creek and she did dressmaking at that time. Later on, she took some training and became a practical nurse. The time that I was speaking about, going up on the train on an excursion, so beautiful up through there, I was seven and I remember how beautiful it was. My uncle got interested in the Penrose country. It was just beginning to develop at that time. I suppose I must have, that must have been about 1912 or '13 probably and he, I don't know how they got the land out there. I know it was a development of some kind and he bought land. He bought land. He didn't homestead it or anything. I was real interested in the fruit orchards that they were going to put in and they had just figured out some way of getting water for that area out there. I know my dad was kind of, wasn't too sure about their water system. He wasn't too sure they were going to have good luck getting enough water to raise orchards. However, he never developed his. He finally sold it. But we went out there one time and it was pretty much sagebrush and open country at that time. It was pretty sandy and I know my aunt didn't think much of eating a lunch out on the ground in that sandy, dry land. But that was the only time I was out there during that period of settlement. However, in later years, they did have lots of orchards out there and I guess they still have, at least they advertise apples and so forth and we go out there and buy. Then I understand they've put in cherry orchards now but, at that time, they were mostly apples and cherries. When I was first married, we used to go out in the summertime and pick cherries and they would let us, say you picked two gallons, we gave them one gallon and we took one gallon. So, we would pick about 100 pounds of cherries for ourselves and an equal amount for the people that owned the orchards. They had a hard time back then getting things picked just like they have now. So, they were always glad to have anybody that would help, and I'd had some experience in apple orchards and so forth, and cherries and so

on when I was a kid. So, they kind of liked us to pick them because we picked them nice and clean and that's important if you're, some people just pick a few off of a tree and go to another tree and so forth and pick the easy ones. But we were willing to clean the trees. That was about 1926-7-28, so they still had a lot of orchards out in there. I don't know. Water's always been a problem. I can't tell you how they solved it but they do have water enough to get, keep the orchards going at least.

UI: Yes, they do have a new water system out there that seems to currently be very successful, I am being told.

AM: we're always hoping. I know my dad said, it has to be pretty good soil. The time that we were out there, my uncle had just gotten this land cause you never find sagebrush growing where the land isn't good. So, I think that they did have good land to start with. Just water was their problem.

UI: Do you remember any particular stories about the Royal Gorge or anything of that area, any of the floods that took out Grape Creek. That was really before your time.

AM: That was before my time. By the time that I remember what happened, they had that dam someplace up Four Mile. It was the one that was always threatening to break and really flood us out. So, any of those others were prior to my memory at least.

UI: We mentioned the Shelf Road back when you were talking about your mother having taught up in that general area. The Shelf Road, of course, that was called Oil Creek originally and a lot of the old timers, I'm finding, still call that Oil Creek rather than Four Mile. The tunnels that were draining the mines at Cripple Creek are drained into Four Mile Creek or Oil Creek. Do you remember of hearing anything about those in connection with the Cripple Creek mining things?

AM: Well, I guess that part of the problems that developed when the mines begin to close down involved the water that got into them. So, they really couldn't mine efficiently. I keep hearing that there's still gold in those hills and I expect that that's true. That area up there, my understanding from listening to my relatives and all, the gold up there is in veins which makes you know in a volcanic period that simply came up in a vein situation and then of course, the veins have gotten broken and so they're scattered. I imagine there's gold up there. It may be too expensive to get it out but I think, as I remember them talking about it, my uncle used to say that those mines were going to be closed because of the water. There were no way of draining the water out when they got pretty deep. That's really all I know about it.

UI: Is there anything else that you think of that would be of interest to historians or to people just listening to the tape that you remember of the Canon area? Skyline Drive has always been a landmark. Do you remember things about Skyline Drive or I think you mentioned that your grandmother lived somewhere up on Fay towards Skyline Drive. We talked about the fairgrounds. Is there anything back in there that you remember of?

AM: Well, we used to, one of our favorite things in the summertime and usually I went with some of my relatives, cause my dad and mother lived on a farm and they raised quite a few cattle and milk cows, and if you milk cows, you milk them twice a day. You milk them in the morning and you milk them in the evening. My dad had a kind of unwritten law that everybody got home by 4 o'clock so the chickens could be fed and the cows could be milked. So, when they would have wiener roasts and picnics up on Skyline Drive, they, I don't think we went up for the backside, as I remember. We went up on the front side

because this was horse and buggy days.

UI: The front side being Canon City side.

AM: We just turned around up there. But there were places up there where you could build a fire. I think with some rocks stuck together and made a circle where you could build a fire. I know, I used to go up with my Aunt Laura and Uncle Jim and their two boys and we would picnic and we'd have a fire and we'd sit by the fire. That was all the light we had unless it happened to be moonlight. We drove a horse and buggy and then we kids would roast marshmallows and play around and then we'd come down. We came down the same side we went up. Horses and buggies, you could always meet cause they didn't take a lot of room and you didn't have to have space for power and so forth. It was a pretty good grade up there. The horse had to really work to get up there. That was probably the most fun thing we did on the Skyline Drive. We didn't go to the Royal Gorge many times. That was a long ways with a horse and buggy. It was all uphill of course and it wasn't fancy like it is now with paved roads and so forth. We went up an entirely different canyon from where the highway goes. I remember two or three picnics we had up there, especially when we'd have some special company that came in for a visit. We'd go up, but I was never up there but two or three times in all the years till I was 12. So, but I know lots of people did go up there. It was fun to look down on the railroad track, and my little sister was about three or four I suppose, and we were someplace with our parents hanging on to us tight, looking down and a freight train came around one of the curves and she said, oh, look, somebody's pushing that train around that hill. Where does it go? Of course, we all got a big laugh out of that. But that's just how they looked down, just like our toy trains that we played with in our yards.

UI: So, you did have trains?

AM: Oh, yes, the trains ran up there. In fact, my very first trip going any place after I was born, my mother brought me down. I was about three months old and my mother brought me down from Westcliffe to Canon City to visit her parents and we came down through the Gorge and hanging bridges there. Of course, I don't remember that but I know it was there. That Gorge had a lot of memories for me because we travelled it from Westcliffe mostly, we'd come down on the train and that was an easier way for us to get down than to try to drive. My dad was always busy and lots of times, I don't think he, if we did come with him, we drove, but usually mother and I came down on the train, went back on the train. We had to change at Texas Creek on to the little train that ran to Westcliffe and just went up there and came back. Then, after I was grown, in fact, the first year I taught up in the Custer County, the train was still running and I would ride it to get down to Rocky Ford to my home. But they tore it out about that time. I guess that was about, might be around, prior to 1930.

UI: Well, that's very interesting. Did you remember ever your mother saying anything about having ridden the train back in the early 1900s when she went to up in that country?

AM: My mother was teaching up, in fact, they built the railroad when mother was teaching in Westcliffe. She taught the primary grades. There were two rooms in that little stone school. She had the first four grades and somebody else had the upper four grades and there was no high school. In fact, they built a high school when I was teaching up there, and that would have been about 1924 or 5, somewhere along in there. Up to that time, when the boys and girls got out of grade school, if parents could afford it and wanted to, they sent them either down to Canon City or some other place for high school. My cousin Fred Vahldick from Custer County was sent up to Ft. Collins and he went, I guess by that time they had two

years of high school in a little bit bigger building than the one mother taught in. I guess he went two years. Then, he went up there and went the rest of his high school and some college and the girls who were about his age, his sisters, one of them was a twin, came down to Mount St. Scholastica's and finished their high school down in Canon City. They built that high school I guess about 1925, 24 or 25. They put in the four years of high school about then. That's not accurate I don't think. But up to that time, getting an education was a real problem for people up in the Custer County area.

UI: You mentioned trains. We had been talking about toys and you said they were like our toy trains or something. So, you remember having toy trains.

AM: Yes, the boys had toy trains. I think mother thought they were not quite girl material. However, I certainly enjoyed a train more than I did the dolls I had. I wasn't really a doll lover. But I do love children now. It wasn't a case of I had to learn how to take care of babies by cuddling my dolls cause I didn't do much of that. But I did love the boys' trains and they were wind ups. We didn't have any electric trains. But we did have tracks and they were just very simple little things that were laid out on an oval, well, an oval or a circle and you wound them up and they went buzzing around and they were made of tin I'm sure and the engines weren't much better than the cars cause they were forever falling off the tracks. When you first wound them up, they ran real fast and fell off the tracks and then gradually got run down and they stayed on the tracks much better. But I did love to play with the trains and I guess I still like trains a lot.

UI: Let's see. I thought of something else I maybe should mention or should ask you about. Oh, we had this question about where you born in a hospital or out of the hospital. Now you were born in Custer County.

AM: We lived in a log house. It had, must have had four rooms in it and it was south, a mile west and three miles south of Westcliffe. The Dr. Bain was the doctor that delivered me and was out at the house. My grandmother had always done a lot of going in and taking care of women that were having babies, and taking care of babies. In fact, she had a lot of home remedies that she practiced and you have to remember that this was in the days when midwives and people like that were perfectly legitimate and she came up and was with my mother when I was born and took good care of me. I was kind of slow arriving in this world and I had had a lot of special care when I was little. My grandmother saw me through quite a few bad times. I had, after we moved to Canon City, I got a hold of some river water to drink and I got typhoid fever and just about died, and I guess if it hadn't been for my grandmother, probably would have. But she came to our house, stayed and took care of me.

UI: Did you have a doctor?

AM: Oh yes, Dr. Wilkinson. I see his name around in some of the books.

UI: Do you remember other doctors that lived down here?

AM: Dr. Brooks took care of my mother when my little sister was born and that was later than that, don't think Dr. Wilkinson was practicing then. We had Dr. Graves, liked Dr. Graves lots. He really had a good idea.

UI: He had a hospital at one time here.

AM: Yes, his offices were in the hospital and the hospital, well, it's still there. They're turning it into an apartment house or something. It was on Macon and 7<sup>th</sup>? Across from, they're just now changing it. It was pretty much like it was when we were living here.

UI: Was there more than one Dr. Graves, it seems to me.

AM: Well, later on, a son became a doctor, but at the time that I was a kid, Herman, his name was Herman C. was the doctor. He was really a wonderful person. He had a lot of feeling for people and I always liked to go to him because he was such a nice person. And then there was a Dr. I think, Dickson. I believe it was spelled DICKSON that was an osteopath that my mother used to go to and took me a few times. I had a bad fall off a wagon and she took me in and he kind of got me put together again. My back was kind of out of shape. I can't think of the dentist's name but there was a dentist here that we liked a lot too. Then, he was here for many years.

UI: You mentioned, and we had had a question that I think I partially ignored. Did your family have home recipes or cures that they used before going to a doctor. So that comes in here very appropriately now.

AM: My grandmother'd been going around doctoring people in Missouri before she came here and a little bit after she came out to Colorado. She didn't do as much of it. Why, she had her home cures and some of them were pretty awful. For instance, I had lots of colds and sore throats and she'd give me a teaspoon of sugar with one or two drops of turpentine on it or coal oil. Now, really, the coal oil was worse than the turpentine. But it did clear your throat out, I will say. It was not too bad cough medicine if you could stand the flavor. Then, onion poultices were one of her strongholds and I had croup. I had it when I was three months old and I had it forevermore after that. My grandmother would put horrible onion poultices on and the way she did it, she fried the onions just enough to get them so they're good and juicy. Then, she'd lay them on cloth and then she'd fasten another cloth over the top. Sometimes, she'd even take a needle and thread and stitch them up and she made them just the size to fit your chest. If your chest was little, it was little. When you got bigger, it was bigger. After my grandmother was gone, my mother kept it up. In fact, I've done it for my children. So, they are horrible things because they're gooky but they would certainly cure the colds. They had gotten some croup medicine when I was three months old from Dr. Bain up at Westlife and they kept that prescription for years and years and between the two things, we got along pretty good. Then, there were the mustard plasters. Now, they went on your back and when you go down into your lungs, why, they made these mustard plasters and you took a little bit of mustard and quite a little bit of flour and started out with water and made a paste. You put it on cloth and then you covered it with cloth. It was sticky enough you didn't have to sew it up. Well, you could cure a lot of different things. If you had a bad headache or something, you'd cure that with mustard plasters. In fact, when my youngest son was tiny, he got a real bad case of bronchitis and I put mustard plaster on him and by the time the doctor got there, why, you saved your baby's life because I got a hospital full of them and I've lost several. He said, that mustard plaster's the best thing you could have done. So, you see, they still are good even now.

UI: You think he was old fashioned too?

AM: Yes, he was. He was Italian. (pause) Arthritis and that was iodine and coal oil and my grandmother's mix that up and you'd rub that on your throat and neck and bandage it up. Now, I imagine doctors nowadays say that was a poor cure but it did the thing it was supposed to do in those days.

UI: Well, don't they put off something by the name of idex or something or didn't they used to for a while? I think I've used that on my kids when they had swollen glands and things of that kind. I know it's still on the market.

AM: I think it probably is, so I guess this was the forerunner. It's a mild thing compared to coal oil and iodine my grandmother stirred up. But anyway, we didn't go to the doctor too often cause grandma usually knew all the good remedies.

UI: Do you know what she did for bad cuts or burns or something of that kind?

AM: She put turpentine on.

UI: Turpentine?

AM: On cuts, and it did keep them from getting infected, and wrap them up. Of course, we didn't have Band-Aids or anything like that in those days. You just, she always kept clean, sterile sheets wrapped up in papers and she would never put them in anything but a brown paper bag or something like that, not newspapers cause they wouldn't be sterile.

UI: You'd have lead poisoning.

AM: Yes. And she'd cut out a piece and wrapped your finger up and tie it real tight with thread and she'd take it off and look at it and doctor it if it needed to be. She used iodine on those kind of places, but she thinned it down someway with something, so that it wasn't full strength. Usually, you got cured up.

UI: Did they use lard for some things. It seems to me that I've heard something about a lard remedy. Was that was they maybe-

AM: Well, they used to make, well, you see, we didn't have Vicks VapoRub or any of those kind of things at all in those days and they would mix lard and turpentine and put that on. That was before you got to the onion poultices.

UI: Easy remedy, huh?

AM: Yes, it wasn't too bad because the lard would stay warm on your body so it never got hard or anything. Yeah, it was a pretty good cure. Well, I was sick a lot and so my grandmother was always coming to my rescue and getting me healed up again.

UI: Well, we are getting towards the end of the tape and so I think we need to kind of wrap it up. There are several questions that we could cover. Do you remember of their being special gatherings for art or music or anything in the Canon area? Do you remember anything of that kind?

AM: Well, there used to be a Mr. Roberson. I think it was ROBERSON that brought slide shows of some kind around once in a while. I don't know if he came every year or how often but it was at night. My mother used to come in and stay with my grandmother and aunt and take me to see those. They were the most wonderful things. I remember the ones on the Panama Canal when they were starting to build it and to me, that was the most fascinating thing I'd ever seen and I could hardly wait for Mr. Roberson to

come around.

UI: Was this lecture at a church or auditorium?

AM: I think they had it at one of the churches. In fact, I think maybe they had it at the Methodist church. But it was for everybody. Then, the bell ringers used to come someplace and Mother'd always bring me in for that. That was another night thing and night things were a problem because we lived five miles out and had to drive a horse and buggy and our horse, she didn't like to go. Father didn't like her to go either in the dark, at night. So, she'd come in before it got dark and stay all night with my aunt and grandmother. Then, my aunt and she and I would go. After we had my little sister, my grandmother used to keep her because she wasn't big enough to enjoy them. So, those were the big moments of our lives. People didn't go to things in those days like they do now.

UI: You mentioned you came back, work in Canon City library. Was there anything of particular interest about that or what do you do when you're in Canon now? I know you travel a good deal.

AM: Always wanted to be a librarian. I wanted to be a librarian when I was in junior high, wanted to be a librarian when I was in high school and I worked in the library and I was in high school. I wanted to be a librarian. The two closest places you could get library study was either in Chicago or Los Angeles. No. 1, we couldn't afford it and no. 2, that was far away from home. My parents didn't approve of it and I think maybe I didn't either cause I think that sounded too far away to go. So, I didn't. They had six hours of library just for school, getting you ready to do school library, up in Greeley, and I took those courses. Then, I just went into teaching and never, oh, I always had a library and checked things out to kids and I quite a bit of library stuff of my own that I'd check out to children. Always was interested in what happened for children. I paid more attention to that than anything else. Then, when I came up here to Canon City back up here, why, I worked in the city library and the children's library there and did story hour. We got to the point where we had about 30 youngsters in our story hours.

UI: That's about what year?

AM: Early '70s.

UI: '72?

AM: It was in the early '70s.

UI: You have grandchildren?

AM: Oh, I have nine grandchildren. Then, I have 20 great grandchildren. So, I've become a very productive grandmother and I go around and visit them. You see, when you have that many great grandchildren, you can spend quite a bit of your time going around visiting.

UI: You can run your own library with them, can't you?

AM: I do. I found out that the best thing I do is, when I go, is to coach their educations. It seems as though children have gotten awfully careless with writing and putting numbers down and all that kind of thing and teachers sometimes, I don't think are as strict as I think they ought to be. So, sometimes, I work

on that kind of thing, always working with the youngsters in the family and making things for them and writing letters to them, just enjoying my children and grandchildren, great grandchildren immensely.

UI: We certainly do want to thank you and this of course will be-

Tape ends.