

Interview with Lorena Williams Edwards

Conducted by Dean Bones at the home of Lorena's son north of Sandlake
May 3, 2004

Lorena: It's me...

Voice: Uh, huh (yes)...

Lorena: And I appreciate her...

Voices: But, honey, he wants to talk to you about... history...
... sounds like history, and when you grew up and things...

Lorena: Well, I didn't grow up in Sandlake...

Voice: Well, yeah, but I mean when...

Lorena: I was in my early twenties when I moved here...

Voice: But do you remember stories that Dick used to tell you...

Dean: *Oooh, we're not gonna' do that! Okay, so... and the other thing is... is it's gonna' be hard to not say much...*

Voices: We'll go outside...

Dean: *Oh, you can listen...*

Voices: I'll leave you alone! (laughing)

Dean: *Oh, I'm sorry... okay... and what...*

Voices: No, you do what you do, and...

Dean: *What I'm gonna'... we're actually recording that, too... but... what... what I'm gonna' do... it's okay... what I'm gonna' try to do is to talk little and to get her to just tell stories, because I find that what I say is in there so much... so... okay!*

So, I just wanna' say... I wanna' say so we can hear this on the mic, that is Dean Bones, and I'm interviewing Lorena Edwards, and today is May the 3rd, 2004. Okay... so what do you know of the history of your family before they even came to this area?

Lorena: Well, my father was born in Australia... er, in a... not in Australia... in uh... oh, darn... Wales.

Dean: *Oooh....*

Lorena: And he got into trouble in Wales, and was... so and so... they lived next door to a lord and his things... and... some things would come over into their property, and so he put out some snares, and got transported to Australia for it! And so they was there for a while... I don't know how come his wife went to Australia... he married here in Australia... she was born in London, of Welsh and Irish...

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but she was... he married her in Australia... then they came to California for just a very little while then came up to Tillamook...

Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: Came here about the time of the Civil War, I guess it was... they were here pret' near as long as you could... back as you could be and not be Indian... they were almost all Indians that were here when they came, and my grandmother brought up and played with the Indian children... and...

Dean: *So where did they live when they came to Tillamook?*

Lorena: Down at the mouth of the Wilson River on the north side.

Dean: *Oooh...*

Lorena: The Davidson place... I think they still call it the Davidson place...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: Then she married a Williams and moved up the river a ways, on what they call Sollie Smith Road now, and that was where I was born... I lived a lot of the time when I was young... folks had a place in Nehalem... we lived there for a few years, but not long. Mostly we lived different places along the Wilson River...

Dean: *So, your mother's name was...*

Lorena: Claudia Edgar.

Dean: *That was her maiden name... was Edgar...*

Lorena: Yes... yes... and she had an identical twin sister, and she married Charles Adkinson... Claudia and Maudie... they called 'em Claud and Maud (chuckling)...

Dean: *And your dad's name was...*

Lorena: Jack Williams.

Dean: *Okay... and the Davidson, then was your mother's parents... no...*

Lorena: My dad's mother...

Dean: *Dad's mother...*

Lorena: ... was a Davidson...

Dean: *Okay...*

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Lorena: Her father was the first doctor in Tillamook.

Dean: *And what was his name again?*

Lorena: Gideon Davidson.

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: But he didn't live awfully long after they moved here... they lived out in the valley for a little while, then they came over to Tillamook and... she had asthma awfully bad... they moved around trying to get someplace where she didn't have asthma, and they moved to Tillamook and he died... so when he died, then they stayed...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: It wasn't easy trying to raise... finish raising the kids on her own, but they...

Dean: *So you mentioned about the Indians... are there any other stories you remember about your grandparents... any of them?*

Lorena: Right off hand I can't think... but they used to talk a lot about 'em...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: And he was a doctor in a time when there weren't there weren't very many doctors in this part of the world...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: I remember an old lady telling about how thrilled they were when my dad moved to Tillamook... 'cause they'd never been a doctor here, and how thrilled they were when they found out that there was a doctor... and I heard 'em tell about when somebody sent for him and he had to cross a river in a canoe, and he left the canoe and went to take care of his patient... he came back and somebody had taken the canoe... so he took off his clothes and his medicine... deal and carried them on top of his head... and waded chest deep in the cold water to get across the river to get home...

Dean: *That's a wonderful story...*

Lorena: I guess, from what I've heard, he must have been a wonderful man... everybody spoke so very well of him...

Dean: *Any other stories you might remember about him?*

Lorena: Not right now...

Dean: *Okay. What are the names of your sisters and brothers, and do you have interesting information about them as you grew up?*

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Lorena: Well, I was the first...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: Then there was Tommy, and he had bad heart trouble, and he only lived to be four and he died of a heart attack... then there's Orin, and he lived to be an old man... and Boyd and Floyd and Bill and Jack, then my sister Jenna, and Dave and Ray and Ben. Pretty good sized family.

Dean: *How many was that?*

Lorena: Ten.

Dean: *Ten. What are your earliest memories of living in Tillamook county? Or, actually, in south Tillamook county... what are some of your earliest memories?*

Lorena: Well, my earliest memories... I lived on what they call Sollie Smith Road... up a little... north and east of Tillamook...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: And I was brought up there... then we moved to Nehalem for a few years then back to Sollie Smith Road again... and I think I was twenty-two when we moved to Sandlake... my mother's twin sister married an Atkinson in Sandlake... she was a school teacher... she taught school down here and married here... so that's how come we moved to Sandlake... 'cause of mother's twin sister... they were identical twins, and even after they were old, a lot of people couldn't tell 'em apart...

Dean: *Right...*

Lorena: They were small, dark women... I got my mother's complexion, but I don't look like my mother... I actually look more like my father...

Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: But I have her complexion... and she had very fair skin, but tanned...

Dean: *So when you moved here, where was the... did they have a farm?*

Lorena: Yes, there was one... they had rented a farm down just this side of Tierra Del Mar and back off the road...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: And I don't know who's there now...

Dean: *Like the Beltz farm, or...*

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Lorena: Well, it's this side of the Beltz farm...

Dean: *Oh, okay...*

Lorena: ... and it was back off the... well, part of the Beltz farm was in front of where we lived...

Dean: *So the school that your aunt taught in was not... was it further down than where the last school was? Further south, or do you...*

Lorena: There was another school before that where she taught...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: ... and I thought... I think... I believe that she taught in the one that they've got there now...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: Or one that was there... or about there...

Dean: *When I read your husband's interview, he mentioned that he thought there used to be a school going east by where the Green farm used to be... do you remember anything about that?*

Lorena: It was gone long before my time.

Dean: *Aaah...*

Lorena: I know there was a school there at one time...

Dean: *So, when you grew up... if you would talk about your life... what it was like... maybe, let's talk about chores... if you could tell about some of the chores you used to have to do...*

Lorena: Mostly takin' care of kids...

Dean: *Aaaah...*

Lorena: I was the oldest of a big family, and I dearly loved taking care of kids, luckily! (chuckling) And... my mother raised ten and I was the oldest, and I spent... until I was married I spent most of my time taking care of kids and doing housework... I couldn't get out and get a job 'cause mom needed me too bad at home... with that many kids and she had arthritis...

Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: So she had it pretty tough... then dad had a stroke when he was, I think, 38, and so after that things were really bad... he was on crutches for several years and then never able to really work after that... had a small insurance and that's what we had to get by on... if some of the kids hadn't worked and helped out part of the time, we couldn't have made it... you know, ten kids is a lot of kids!

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Dean: *Yeah... so tell what it was like at home... what was the family life like?*

Lorena: Well, I absolutely worshipped my mother...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: And dad, sometimes, was inconsiderate... he was a good man... honest to a fault... and a good worker... he was a good man... but it was actually our mother that held us together... 'cause I think that we all just absolutely worshipped our mother... and she was an identical twin...

Dean: *So what was it like at home, like in the evenings after school, or during the daytime... what was the normal day like?*

Lorena: Work! (chuckling)

Dean: *What kind of work?*

Lorena: Takin' care kids and housework and things...

Dean: *Yeah...*

Lorena: ...washing and scrubbing... it's a lot of work taking care of that many kids...

Dean: *Did your family have any, like, family time in the evenings, where they were all together doing anything?*

Lorena: I don't know of any particular time... we had... we spent a lot of time together, but oftentimes we weren't all together... sometimes we were with mom, sometimes we were with dad, sometimes we were with each other... we were a pretty close family...

Dean: *Hmm.... what about any games you played as a child? Do you recall some of those games?*

Lorena: Not particularly... we just played... I don't remember what particularly... what we played... and I think I was seven when I started to school... and it was pertnear three miles to school, and in the morning, a lot of times, we rode on a factory wagon...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: And we... and a big share of the time... 'less we caught a ride, we'd have to walk home... in the wintertime that was pretty miserable... and I used to get sore throats and earaches and pleurisy and out of school a lot... and when you were out of school, then you had to catch up... I managed to keep up... I managed to get through all my grades all right, but it wasn't easy, I was out of school so much.

Dean: *What schools did you attend?*

Lorena: Well, we went to... what they call Maple Leaf...

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Dean: *Yeah...*

Lorena: ... just north of Tillamook... went there for seven years... then I was at Nehalem in grade school for one year... then I went a little while to high school, then had a breakdown and they had to take me out of school... I tried it twice, and both times I broke... too much work at home and then school, and I wasn't very strong... just couldn't make it...

Dean: *Do you have... do you remember any stories of going to school... any teachers or anything that happened during your school days at...*

Lorena: Let's see... I'm trying to think of my first teacher's name... she lived not very far from the school... oh, I can't think of her name... then we had an older woman teacher... then a man teacher... his name was Pinkstaff... and I didn't like him... at all! I guess he was a good enough teacher, but I just didn't like him...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: I loved my women teachers... maybe that was the difference...

Dean: *Did you travel many places very far away from home, ever?*

Lorena: Well, my dad's older brother got tuberculosis and moved to California, and dad moved into the place and he took it... and we went down... but dad was lucky, he got over it quick... he didn't have to stay down there very long... his brother... much of his lungs were destroyed... he'd come up for a little while in the summertime, but then if it clouded up and got damp, he'd have to go back... he couldn't live here any more... and you know, that man lived to be... into his nineties... and he was homesick... he never got over being homesick and after all those years... it was pitiful...

Dean: *Hmmm.... so you traveled to California, then?*

Lorena: Yeah, we lived down there for about a year.

Dean: *How did you get back and forth? How did you travel?*

Lorena: Well, we went down to San Francisco... from Portland to San Francisco on a boat...

Dean: *Ooooooh...*

Lorena: And then we... on a train on down, and then we came back all the way on the train.

Dean: *Hmm.....*

Lorena: I didn't... and I wasn't a good traveler (chuckling)... I threw... I think I threw up all the way down and back (laughing)...

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Dean: *Are there neighbors that you remember as you grew up? That you remember anything about?*

Lorena: Trying to think... we always had neighbors...

Dean: *What about as you moved into the Sandlake area... were there neighbors that you can recall then?*

Lorena: Well, my mother's twin sister lived here... she married Atkinson... one of the Atkinsons... that's why we moved down here... rented a place down... just this side of Tierra Del Mar and back off the road... I loved it there... mom and I wanted to buy the place, but dad & my oldest brother got the notion of moving to Eugene... so we moved to Eugene, kicking and screaming (laughing)... mom and I, neither one, wanted to go to Eugene... we got down there... my mom went down, and she came back and she told me, "You're not going to like it down there,"... her mother lived on South Prairie, just this side of Tillamook... and I never liked it out there... flat country... and I never liked it there... and she said it's just about like South Prairie... said you're not going to like it... well, I didn't like it, and dad... well, I made up my mind when we moved down I wasn't going to like it... (chuckling)...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: Well, I hadn't made up my mind at all... mom said she knew I wasn't going to like it... anyway... then Dave, my husband, moved and he came down to see me and I was gladder to see him than I expected to be, so I came back and married him... he was quite a lot older than me, and he was a good man... and he was awfully good to the kids...

Dean: *So when you moved back here and you got married, did you live here, somewhere on this property, then?*

Lorena: No, not on this property.

Dean: *Where did you live?*

Lorena: Let me see... you know where the Allen place is? West of Sandlake...

Other voice: *On Galloway/Derrick Road...*

Lorena: Yeah...

Dean: *On Galloway/Derrick Road...*

Lorena: Yeah... we lived back a road that way and back up towards where the Derricks lived, only we lived below the hill...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: ... lived on the flat land, and they were up on the hill... and ??? bought part of the place kinda' between us and Derricks... but, I liked it there very much...

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Dean: *How long did you live there?*

Lorena: I don't remember... several years... out... down... over the creek down south...

Dean: *(something happened to the recording device... he says to others:) That's okay... and she's back on...*

Lorena: I looked down on the Scout Road... we'd watch... the Scouts used to get out at the Allen place and walk in... and we used to watch the Scouts go in and out and shut the gates after they got through... seemed like they never shut the gate and we had stock and Fellas had stock and we didn't like the stock mixed up (chuckling)...

Dean: *So was... was there much sand between you and the Scout Camp at that point, or was it actually grass... or...*

Lorena: Well, that big sand hill was between us and the Scout Camp...

Dean: *So the kids walked over the sand to get to the Scout Camp...*

Lorena: Yes, but we didn't go over there... well, lot of times... had a wagon and team and Dick and another guy used to haul stuff to the Scout Camp, cross the sand dune, cross to the beach and up the beach... and in the early time there was quick sand, and you had to go around the point...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: Then it got a little drier, and Dick used to have me come along... and we'd walk... me in front of one of the horses, and him in front of the other... to be sure that they wouldn't get bogged down... and the first trip across to get the... so we had the tractor follow... it was quite a thing, hauling to the Scout Camp... and there was another fellow had... the main one that hauled... and my husband hauled part of the time...

Dean: *What did you haul?*

Lorena: Whatever they needed up there... groceries, different things they needed up there... their clothes, their dummies, and... we used to have to haul that up there... and a lot of time I'd go, and then I had a cousin that sometimes went with us to help him load and unload... he had a back problem, and sometimes he wasn't able to do the loading and unloading, but he was better at driving the mules than I was...

Dean: *(to others present) Did she tell that story you wanted? What was the...*

Other voice: When she lived in the cabin... I believe that was up there at Derricks and it was on the crick... (Lorena chuckles)... she used to tell me about the...

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Lorena: It wasn't up on Derricks... it was on his folks' place... and they'd built a milk house... on logs across the creek, and we lived in that for a little while... when we was first married, that's where we moved...

Dean: *On the folks' place down here...*

Lorena: Yeah...

Dean: *At Sandlake, you mean?*

Lorena: Yeah... it was over...

Dean: *What was it like living in the cabin?*

Lorena: Well, it was tight! (laughing)... wasn't room to put the cat! It had a double bed and a stove and it had a table under the window that we could let down... but it had a cupboard in it... just room to get in and out and that was about all! I think we had two chairs... dining room chairs... one behind the table and the other one... and that... it was kinda' tight fit in there, but... it was built on logs across the creek... then we had to... it went down and a board across where I'd go down to dip up water, for our water above the cabin... and then the slop and stuff went out the window in the creek below the house...

Dean: *So when you lived there, what did your husband do? What was his job?*

Lorena: Different things... logging, haul for the Scouts, and...

Dean: *Right...*

Lorena: ... whatever he could find... during the Depression, and work was hard to get... but he usually had something... he was a worker... he'd cut light poles and fence posts... and fence posts were pretty hard, 'cause he was a small man... he was only an inch taller than me, and thin... and he wasn't a very strong man... cuttin' fence posts was really too hard for him, but we had to eat...

Dean: *And your role... what did you do for your role?*

Lorena: Housework, and gardening and canned and raised kids... and I used to... maybe all the time I'd some of the neighbor kids I was taking care of... I didn't usually get paid for it... but once in a while I did, some of 'em... but mostly I just... somebody'd have kids that needed care, and they'd be sick or something, I'd inherit the kids...

Dean: *Who were those kids? Can you tell us some of the names?*

Lorena: Right off hand I can't think...

Dean: *That's fine...*

Lorena: There were several different families that I used to take care of the kids off and on...

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Dean: *What about holidays, celebrations... as you grew up, and then as you moved to Sandlake... what did you do for the holidays?*

Lorena: Well, we usually celebrated Christmas... and usually did something on the Fourth of July, but sometimes Thanksgiving... mostly we didn't celebrate holidays much...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: We just...

Dean: *Did family get together at all at those times?*

Lorena: Well, sometimes quite a bunch of different families got together... and sometimes we got together with some of dad's folks, and sometimes it was mother's folks...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: And... my mother had a bigger family than dad had... that used to be a lot of fun... and we specially enjoyed when her twin sister and her family were there... my mother had an identical twin... a lot of people never could tell 'em apart... and... you know, they never looked alike to me until after mom died I'd catch myself telling Aunt Maud things you'd never tell Aunt Maud...

Dean: *(laughing)...*

Lorena: Mom, you could tell her anything you didn't want told, and nobody ever found out about it, and Aunt Maud couldn't keep things to herself... (laughing)...

Dean: *(laughing)...* *What community gatherings do you remember in this Sandlake area and where... where would you meet if you had any community gatherings?*

Lorena: Well, sometimes... some things we had at the school house, and some things we met at the grange hall...

Dean: *Okay... now, this school house was where?*

Lorena: Well, you know where the Galloway Road turns off?

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: It was across the road from that.

Dean: *Okay... and I know where the grange is...*

Lorena: And then they had a... put in a little store across from the school house... put in a little store there...

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Dean: *What are some reasons that the community might have gathered?*

Lorena: Oh, I don't remember... different things...

Dean: *And, Lorena, what...*

Lorena: They usually had a gathering somewhere in the neighborhood of Christmas...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: And sometimes two or three other times a year... during the year... doing different things...

Dean: *Do you remember anything about the cemetery that's here at Sandlake?*

Lorena: Well, they'd stopped using it long before I moved to Sandlake.

Dean: *Oh, really...*

Lorena: Uh, huh (yes)... and I wished I'd written it down... Dick's uncle... one time... told me every... who all was buried there... it was a few old people, and mostly children...

Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: ... and there weren't but a few people buried up there, and I don't think the graves, or many of 'em, are marked at all... Dick's grandfather, they put a... there's a rock there and... but it's sandstone... Dick's father chiseled his name and the dates on it, and I think that kinda' went off after a while... I don't know if anyone can find the graves up there anymore... the one behind they had a fence behind it...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: But that was almost all gone before I come to the lake... they hadn't buried anybody up there for quite a few years before I came to the lake...

Dean: *So you said that Dick's grandfather was buried there... did his grandfather live in this area, also?*

Lorena: Just a little below the cemetery...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: Yeah... he... on the east side of the road... he lived there...

Dean: *What can you tell us about his family... about your husband's family?*

Lorena: Well, they were mostly Welch and Irish... and I think one of his grandparents went to Australia and came to Tillamook from Australia... and the other came directly from the old country...

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Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: I think he came... I'm not sure... I think he went back and married his girl and brought her over....

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: But that was a long before my time... and used to, I'd ask dad questions, and oh, young folks nowadays don't care about those things was his usual answer, so I didn't get an awful lot from my dad... I don't know why he thought we'd ask about things if we didn't want to know, but...

Dean: *What were the important lessons that you learned from your dad?*

Lorena: Well, for one thing he was honest to a fault. He was upright... he leaned over backward, and I rather admired him...

Dean: *And what are the important lessons that you learned from your mother?*

Lorena: Pertnear ever'thing! (chuckling) My mother... I think she was totally wonderful... she was small... smaller than I am, and dark... and just a thoroughly good person...

Dean: *Is there anything else that you remember most about them that you'd share? Any stories about them, or anything?*

Lorena: Off hand I can't think... I'll think after awhile...

Dean: *That's fine...*

Lorena: 'Cause there were a lot of things... things were always happening... in a family of ten kids (laughing)... there's never a dull moment!

Dean: *So you've lived in South Tillamook County quite a long time...*

Lorena: No, not... well, I have lived here a long time...

Dean: *Yeah...*

Lorena: ... but I was born out what they call Sollie Smith Road... northeast of Tillamook... you know where the Wilson River Loop is... it's across the bridge there and just up the river from that was where dad's folks lived...

Dean: *Right...*

Lorena: And his grandfa... well, his mother's father was down towards the mouth of the river... his dad's father was up from where we lived... but they lived there on the Wilson River for... since around

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the time of the Civil War... and pertnear... been there pertnear long as you can be and not be Indian... I got my complexion from my mother... my dad's family... his father's family were inclined to be redheaded...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: His mother had... they all had dark and gray eyes... my mother's family had variety... some blondes and some dark...

Dean: *So can you tell me when you moved from the place on Derrick Road to your land over here?*

Lorena: See... we moved to... on the Trask River... the north side of the Trask River... just a little below the Cheese Factory for a while... we was there for two or three years before we moved from Sandlake from there...

Dean: *Oh...*

Lorena: *And... I didn't like it there very well, but... where your folks move, you gotta' go...*

Dean: But when you married Ulysses, and you lived on Derrick Road, when did you finally end up over here in your house?

Lorena: Oh, it was quite a little while after we lived over there... we sold out over there, and had another place that... the guy said he'd come over the next week and make out the papers... so we sold the place where we were living... he hasn't got here yet! (chuckling)... so there we were stuck... the place was sold and there we... and we didn't get the place that we bargained for...

Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: ... so then we bought a patch of ground down at the other end of the street away... from Dick's sister... had an old house there, and we lived in there until we got the place here... and it wasn't a very happy place, and we didn't like it there, but it was right across from the Cheese Factory, and... no privacy ever! I don't think you could say a word on our side of the road but what they could hear it at the Cheese Factory plainer than what we could hear it on our side!

Dean: *Hah!*

Lorena: (laughing)... I hated it there. And we moved up here, in the house down below and I like it here very much.

Dean: *So what has been good about living in this area for you? What are some of the good things?*

Lorena: Kinda' back woods...

Dean: *Hmm....*

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Lorena: The people here are most such nice people, and I just seem like I just kinda' fit in... I'm happy... I like it here...

Dean: *You've seen a lot of people come and go, though, probably, haven't you?*

Lorena: Oh, yes... they come and they go, but there's a few of 'em that have been here all the time.

Dean: *Who's that? Who... what families have been here quite a long time?*

Lorena: Well, there's some of the Atkinsons still here, I think...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: ... and then the Derricks are still here... 'course we didn't live near the Derricks for a long time, then we moved over at the foot of the hill just below Derricks, so the Derricks were close neighbors, and most of 'em I liked really well... especially the old lady... I really loved Ole...

Dean: *Ole? Was that...*

Lorena: Now, wait a minute... Ole was Davis... see, what was Mrs. Derrick's name... I don't remember now...

Dean: *What's been difficult about living in the area? Can you think of anything that's been really difficult for you?*

Lorena: Well, one thing is, it was a long ways when you wanted to buy anything...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: Used to have to go clear to Tillamook for anything, and that was a little bit inconvenient, and then... then school was... they used... had the grade school in Sandlake, then they had to go to Cloverdale to high school, and I didn't like that so well... oh, there was several things... there's for and things against pertnear anywhere you live, I guess...

Dean: *How did you travel from here to Tillamook in the early days?*

Lorena: Well, we always... from the time I lived here, we had a car of some sort...

Dean: *Oh...*

Lorena: Part of the time it was an old truck, but we almost always had wheels of some sort... but we didn't used to go very often... sometimes there were months at a time we never went...

Dean: *Any idea how long it took you to travel to Tillamook from here?*

Lorena: No, I don't... I don't have an awful good sense of time, anyway... but... but the horses... it took quite a little while...

Interview with Lorena Williams Edwards

Conducted by Dean Bones at the home of Lorena's son north of Sandlake
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Dean: *So, you've mentioned Derricks and Atkinsons, can you tell about some of the people who lived in the area who were important to you and your family, and any stories you might remember about them?*

Lorena: Well, there were Davises.... and especially Mrs. Davis was a very close friend... some of the rest of the family I wasn't quite so keen on, but I loved her terrifically... she was an awfully good woman...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: And there was one of the sons we particularly liked... then there was... let's see... I'm trying to think who else lived around there... I don't know... there were quite a few people around... some of them lived there for years, and some of them lived for a little while... I don't know why... I think of them... and look at their faces, remember where they lived, but I can't think of their names. You ever have that problem?

Dean: *Lots! Are there any others that... okay, so... if you think of some you can just mention them as we're talking.*

Lorena: Well, I'll wait 'til after you're gone, then I can think of a lot!

Dean: *Well, all right! Well, write 'em down, or something. So you've mentioned some of the jobs that Ulysses had... hauling into the Scout Camp, etc., what about when you moved here onto this property, where you live now?*

Lorena: Well, he didn't work on the place much. I did the big share of the clearing and things...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: Oh, you ought to see how well I can chop down trees! I was good at clearing land...

Dean: *Really...*

Lorena: I think better than I was at keeping house... I was better at taking care of kids than I was at keeping house... I was a pretty good cook, but I wasn't that good a housekeeper... there were other things, seemed like, was more important that had to be done...

Dean: *Um, hum... (yes)...*

Lorena: And the kids were far more important than house or any other work that I had to do... and that was all right, 'cause my husband felt the same way about it...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: ... that the kids came first...

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Dean: *So, when you cleared the trees, were they big trees, and how did you clear them?*

Lorena: Well, I'd chop 'em down with an ax and chop or saw 'em up... in the woods... pile the brush to burn... I wasn't exactly a lady... I did all kinds of things...

Dean: *While you were doing that, where was your husband?*

Lorena: Working.

Dean: *Doing...*

Lorena: Whatever job he had.

Dean: *Do you remember some of those other jobs?*

Lorena: Oh, he hauled for the Scouts and he worked for different ones of the neighbors, and he logged, and cut fence posts... that was hard work, for he was a small man... he was a hard worker, and a awfully good man... and terrifically good to the kids...

Dean: *Okay, you've mentioned the kids a number of times... can you tell us who your kids are, and tell us something about them?*

Lorena: Well, we started out, we had a daughter first, and she lived to be almost eleven... and had out tonsils out and hemorrhaged...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: Then we had the two boys... I still have the two boys... but it was awfully hard losing the girl.

Dean: *And what was her name?*

Lorena: Leah.

Dean: *Hmm...*

Lorena: And she was... she was an awfully good little girl.

Dean: *Doesn't get any easier, does it?*

Lorena: That kind of thing never gets easier.

Dean: *Yeah... and your sons' names?*

Lorena: Tom and Wesley.

Dean: *Okay. What lessons do you hope that your children and your grandchildren have learned from you?*

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Lorena: I don't know! (laughing)... Try to be good, the main thing...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: One can't always be good, but you can always try.

Dean: *Are there any experiences that you've had in local clubs or local organizations or local churches or anything like that that you'd want to share?*

Lorena: Well, I used to go to... they used to have Sunday School down at the school house, we used to go down there to Sunday School, and part of the time they had... part of the time they preaching, but big share of the time was just Sunday School...

Dean: *Do you remember any of the teachers there, or who lead the Sunday School at all?*

Lorena: Well, one was Mrs. Mike Galloway was the teachers that I thought the most of, and there was Mrs. Ward... Mrs. Carl Ward... she was somewhat older than me... in fact, she had kids around my age... and there was several of the older people, and some of the younger ones that I was really fond of... my mother's twin sister lived close there, and her daughter and I were quite close... she was quite a little younger than me, but that never seemed to make any difference... she was nearer my sister's age, but she was closer to me...

Dean: *What was her name?*

Lorena: Let's see... Stella...

Dean: *And her last name, when she got married was...*

Lorena: Let's see... Morgan...

Dean: *Okay... many times families have stories that are told and retold at family gatherings... what are some stories that you remember being told, or that maybe your kids tell about growing up?*

Lorena: Well, I've heard 'em tell about dad's grandfather... time that... there was somebody needed him... he was doctor... somebody needed him, and he had to cross a river in a boat, and he crossed the river in the boat and went and took care of whoever it was and when he went back, the boat was gone! So he took off his clothes and carried them and his medicine bag on top of his head and waded chest deep in the water crossin' the river in the wintertime...

Dean: *Any other stories that you...*

Lorena: I don't remember... there's a lot of 'em...

Dean: *Okay... do you mind telling us when you were born?*

Lorena: 1910 in January.

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Dean: *Okay... (to others there)... are there any other stories...*

Lorena: Your lying about your age don't make you a day younger!

Dean: *... that you've heard her tell about that we should ask about?*

Other voice: Yes...

Dean: *Go ahead...*

Other voice: Why don't you tell 'em about your home here and how it was built...

Dean: *Oooh...*

Other voice: ... how it came to be?

Lorena: Well, we had the place and sold it, and there was another place that we figured we were... figured we were going to get and we didn't get it... so we bought a little house from Dick's sister... just a few acres down at the end of the straight-away... we were there for a while and then this place come on the market and we bought this...

Dean: *Did you build your house, then?*

Lorena: Yeah... well, the neighbors built it for us. My husband was a man that was always doing for people... anybody needed help, he'd leave his work and go and help them... and when a house burnt and we bought this place, and so they piled in, built the place, and I'd appreciate it more if they'd asked me what I wanted... 'bout how I wanted it... seemed like everything I wanted, they did it different! (laughing)...

Dean: *So.... you mean, there was no house here...*

Lorena: No...

Dean: *And then your neighbors and friends built the house for you.*

Lorena: Yes... yes... yes, and the neighbors built the house... well, I tell you, even that, I don't think they paid back what Dick had done for some of them... seemed like he was a great hand for... he'd leave his work, go and take care of the neighbors troubles...

Dean: *How long did it take to build your home?*

Lorena: I don't remember.

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

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Lorena: Wasn't very long... we lived in a little one room shack while they were building it, and that was pretty... pretty cramped for a family of four...

Dean: *Okay, Lorena, I'm gonna' turn this tape over and then I'm gonna' ask you something else here...*

(end of first side of tape)

Other voice: ... now wasn't he the first one in Tillamook... your relative...

Lorena: Yes.

Other voice: Okay...

Lorena: My great-grandfather... Gideon Davidson... was the first doctor that practiced medicine in Tillamook. And they were pretty thrilled when they found out when he moved here that he was a doctor.

Dean: *Now did he travel outside he Tillamook area much, or did... mostly in the city of Tillamook?*

Lorena: There wasn't a city of Tillamook.

Dean: *Okay! (laughing)...*

Lorena: No, he was down on the tide land on the north side of the Wilson River, and I guess he did... his practice was from home... and I've heard 'em tell about him... somebody sent for him, and there was supposed to be a boat for him to cross the river and the boat wasn't there... he took his clothes off and put them and his medicine bag on top of head and waded chest deep in the river... across the river... in the wintertime... it must have been cool... now how many doctors nowadays would do that?

Dean: *Hmmm.... not very many!*

Lorena: Lot of 'em won't go a block to somebody's house...

Dean: *Right...*

Lorena: You have to bring 'em to the hospital or the doctor's office... but he'd would wade in water to get to a patient...

Dean: *There's... I've heard a lot about you and your gardening and your flowers... can you tell us about raising flowers?*

Lorena: Well, I just plant stuff and it grows. I've guess I've got a green thumb... in fact, two of 'em.

Dean: *What are some of the flowers that you've enjoyed the most, or some of your plants?*

Lorena: All of 'em. (laughing) No, I just raise flowers.

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Dean: *Yeah...*

Lorena: There's some of 'em right there.

Dean: *Up here? From your place?*

Lorena: Yeah...

Dean: *Oh, good!*

Lorena: And that's some that I've raised.

Dean: *It's good that you've got 'em here.*

Lorena: I've raised lots of flowers, and you know, there's one good thing about raising lots of flowers... somebody... lot of times, if you own something, they're happy to get flowers... to get plants.

Dean: *Sure...*

Lorena: And I've shared plants with more people than you'd believe. That's one of the joys of raising flowers, is being able to share them, and I used to let the neighbor's kids pick flowers in my yard, and a lot of people couldn't believe that... well, I always had enough that I could spare 'em...

Dean: *Hmmm....*

Lorena: And I liked kids very much. I never had as many as I wanted... I thought I wanted at least six and I only had three... I lost one... lost my daughter... but I always thought I wanted at least six, and I wouldn't have minded having more than that... I think I would have liked to have had more, but you don't always get what you want in this life.

Dean: *Lorena, where is your daughter buried?*

Lorena: At the cemetery up east of Tillamook...

Dean: *The Sunset, or the IOOF Cemetery?*

Lorena: The one across from the...

Dean: *From the fairgrounds?*

Lorena: Uh, huh (yes)...

Dean: *Oh...*

Lorena: You know where the hill...

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Dean: *Yeah...*

Lorena: She's at the top of that hill, and back in a ways...

Dean: *Okay...*

Lorena: I got quite a few family buried in there...

Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: Yeah...

Dean: *Can you think of anything else you might want people to know about you or your family?*

Lorena: When do I want... I'll think of things after you're gone... I can't think right now...

Dean: *Okay... I'm going to leave you a list of questions, and if you'd look through that sometime, and you'd think of anything you'd like to add, if maybe... I don't know if you have a tape recorder... just a tape or... or just to jot down some things... and my dad had a little tape recorder, and when stories would come to him, he would start talking, and he's done many tapes.*

Other voice: Yeah, I've been trying to do that with her...

Dean: *Wonderful.*

Other voice: ... trying to record some of the stories and stuff... video...

Dean: *Oooh...*

Other voice: ... and trying to get the pictures and everything in before we lose this part of the family history...

Other voice: You know, Dick used to sew...

Dean: *Can you tell us about your husband sewing?*

Lorena: Well, he used to do it, but I can't remember... he used to do all kinds of things...

Dean: *So he made quilts?*

Lorena: Yep... I didn't do much makin' quilts and that kind of thing, but I made a lot of clothes, and boy! I did a lot of patching and mending...

Dean: *Sounds like your husband had many talents.*

Lorena: He was. Very clever. He was a good cook, and he seemed like he could do pertnear anything he turned his hand to...

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Dean: *Hmm....*

Lorena: He was just a great guy. He wasn't rich and he wasn't good looking, but he was sure a good guy.

Dean: *Okay... let's...*

Lorena: And I never felt he was replaceable... when he died... he used to worry about my second husband, and nobody else ever looked good to me after him... nobody else ever come up to him...

Dean: *Lorena, if he was sitting here now, talking about you, what do you think he would say about you?*

Lorena: I hate to think!

Dean: *Oh, puleze!!*

Other voice: He'd what?

Lorena: I said, I'd hate to think!! (laughing)... what he'd be apt to say!

Others and Dean laughing...

Lorena: You never knew what he was going to say. You'd have loved him...

Dean: *He died quite a long time ago, didn't he?*

Lorena: Yes, quite a bit... I don't remember now how long ago it was... (to others...) do you... I don't remember...

Other voice: Um... '80 or '85... or something...

Dean: *Oh, that long ago... and is he also then buried in Tillamook...*

Lorena: Uh, huh (yes)...

Dean: *He is... okay...*

Other voice: Dick used to talk about holding the horses for the Indians when the Indians would get together and meet...

Dean: *So, can you remember some of the stories he used to tell, like when he did... hold horses for the natives... for the Indians and stuff?*

Lorena: Right off hand I can't remember... he told lots and lots and lots of stories, but right at the minute I can't think...

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Dean: *Okay... you're allowed...*

Lorena: And he's a pretty wonderful guy, and I think everybody loved him...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: And that's not common!

Dean: *Right... now that's a wonderful legacy.*

Lorena: If there was anybody that didn't like him, I never knew who it was...

Dean: *Hmmm...*

Lorena: 'Cause he was always doing things for people... he was just a thoroughly good person, and I appreciated him... that's something that don't always happen, either...

Dean: *Right...*

Lorena: I've known women married to the best men, and treated 'em like dirt...

Dean: *Uh, huh (yes)...*

Lorena: But, I really... he was really a good man, and I knew it... in fact, I usually thought he was too good for me...

Dean: *Oh, my...*

Lorena: I tried... but he... we lost our daughter... and still had the two boys... I always wanted six or more, but I only had the three... and...

Dean: *You've been wonderful to allow me to come and ask you these questions... I appreciate that...*

Lorena: I rather enjoyed it.

Dean: *Good. And also, I don't know if you have old photographs... but if you would allow, I would actually bring a scanner and copy some so that other people could see some of those... but that's up to you...*

Lorena: Up there in that box, I've got quite a few...

Dean: *Is that something I might come back sometime... I didn't bring any of the stuff with me...*

Other voice: Yeah...

Dean: *And then, uh...*

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Other voice: I've been trying to do that, too...

Dean: *And then have her identify them and that kind of thing?*

Lorena: You know, the trouble is, sometimes at the time I can't think, and then later maybe I'll remember...

Dean: *But maybe there are other people who could help also... but, if you wouldn't mind, I would come back sometime and maybe we could look at your photos.*

Lorena: Okay...

Dean: *Yay!!*

Lorena: Yes... I think it would be fun.

Other voices: Yeah...

Dean: *Yeah, I'd just hook the tape recorder right back up... Yay!!*

Other voice: Okay...

Dean: *Okay... I'm gonna' turn this off...*

Lorena: Oh, I forgot you had that on!

Dean: *You forgot to add what on?*

Lorena: I forgot you had it on.

Dean: *Oh, good... Yay! Woo Hoo!*

(end of tape)

Transcribed by Darleen Creecy Cole

Interview with Lorena Williams Edwards

Conducted by Dean Bones at the home of Lorena's son north of Sandlake
May 3, 2004

Transcribed by
Darleen Cole
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