

Interview with Ruth Redberg Crockett

Conducted by Dean Bones in Forest Grove Where Ruth Was Living at the Time
Transcribed on July 3, 2002

RC: (stating her name) Ruth Crockett

DB: *Ok, that's great. Ok, first, Ruth, I know that you were a teacher, but first we're just going to deal about when you went to school...*

RC: Ok..

DB: *And the name of the grade school you attended was....*

RC: Oretown.

DB: *Oretown. And did you go all eight years, then?*

RC: And it was a one teacher thing when I was there. And before my sister Liza graduated, they had two teachers... Dix... Dix...

DB: *Kenneth, was that his name?*

RC: No... uh, Dix... I... I don't remember.... they were related to Vogels that lived down there, and, uh... Bauers that lived at Neskowin that... now, he... he's related there.

DB: *I just visited Gerald a week ago.*

RC: Ya... ya...

DB: *And then which of the three schools did you attend? Because there was a really old Oretown school, and then there was a second one, and then there was a third one up on the hill.*

RC: The third one up on the hill was where I... and it was built in 1914, and that's where my brother first started to school.

DB: *Ok. Good... gee, I'm glad you know that date.*

RC: Ya.

DB: *Uh... ok, the building that you went to... what was it like? Uh, as you walked in, was it just one room, or were there cloak rooms, or...*

RC: Well... let's see if I can remember.... we walked up the steps, and there was a covered area so we could jump rope when it was raining...

DB: *Oooh... on the porch, or so...*

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RC: Ya... and then just inside, here was a sink... the water was there... but no... no... don't drink out of it... just water running... and then this was a big room across here with a big old pot bellied stove that had a thing around it and a wood shed there... there's a wood barrel...

DB: *Was the stove in the middle of the room?*

RC: No, it was off in one corner.

DB: *And were there windows...*

RC: All along this side and this side.

DB: *Ok. You had running water?*

RC: Ya... had running water.

DB: *You're one of the few schools that did at that time, I think.*

RC: (laughing)

DB: *What about, uh, bathrooms... were they still outhouses?*

RC: Oooh, ya, they were outhouses. Uh, huh. (yes)

DB: *Ok. Was there a stage or anything for programs?*

RC: No, we went down to Grange Hall for all that.

DB: *Hmm... so you did have programs.*

RC: Uh, huh.. yes.

DB: *Like, for Christmas?*

RC: Yes... ya...

DB: *Any other reason you'd have a program?*

RC: Hmm... I don't remember all that.

DB: *What kind of things would you do for your programs?*

RC: I don't remember all of that, either.

DB: *And was there a bell on the school?*

RC: Yes... uh, huh.

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DB: *Where's that bell?*

RC: I have no idea, because when the school was done away with, Uncle Earl bought the property... it could have gone back to dad, but he didn't want it, and so then he turned the building into a... a ... two apartments... so I don't know what happened to it. But Eula Pearn might be able to tell you... oh, she's not Pearn... Galloway, now.

DB: *Ok.. 'cause that's kind of a passion I have, is trying to locate those bells... I know now... I know where three of them are, so...*

RC: The bell that was on this old Pacific City School... the people that bought that was gonna' keep that and put it on top of the house...

DB: *Wallace is their name.*

RC: I don't know their names.

DB: *I'll check with them.*

RC: But they... they kept it for a long time.

DB: *So your dad owned the land where that school was built?*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)

DB: *Did he donate the land, then, or sell it to them, or....*

RC: Well... there's supposed to be... like most.. when it's not used, it goes back. But he... but it was... the kids had made it so there was a high bank here on his property, and so it wouldn't have been any good, his cows would have broke their neck trying to get down in there, so Uncle Earl bought it, and turned it in... because by that time they had built another piece on it so it was a two room school.

DB: *So, kids... between Oretown and Neskowin, where was the break off point for kids going to Neskowin or Oretown?*

RC: Do you know where the old Scherzinger farm was?

DB: *Ya...*

RC: All right... that was Clo... that was, uh... Oretown...

DB: *Ok... Scherzingers went to Oretown...*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)

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DB: *But everything south went to Neskowin.*

RC: Uh, huh (yes). Now, at first, the... I gave the museum a lot of school information, because when... Grandpa and dad and ... and he had the book for years and years and years... and it went in there... and south of the Little Nestucca River was all District 6 for years.

DB: Oh...

RC: *Uh, huh (yes)*

DB: The book of the school... the school record book, you mean?

RC: Yes.

DB: It's up there?

RC: Yes, yes... all of that's in there, and I gave it to him... and it... and it's where the teacher kept track of the kids and what grades they were in, and what...

DB: *I don't know if I've seen... I've... I'll have to check with that.*

RC: Yes... it's there. And in one place... I get such a charge out of it... it asks for teachers to report about the school... and one of those old schools that was down on the creek, where they didn't have outdoor toilets... one.... this book tells about all the arguments that the directors did about what they were gonna'... have any windows, and how many....

DB: *You mean it talks about the old school.*

RC: Yes. Everything. Everything was in that...

DB: *I've got to find that book.*

RC: That is... and so in the back of it, it asks the teacher... the teacher had to write out what needed to be done.... and how... and it says how's the ventilation... it says, fine... all the cracks in the doors! (laughing)

DB: *(also laughing) Ok, so then, going east, where was the dividing line between Meda and Oretown?*

RC: Well, Rays came to our school... uh... I don't know exactly... I don't know exactly.

DB: *That was the old highway, though, wasn't it, going by the Redberg farm...*

RC: Yes... ya... ya... yes... there was a gravel part and a dirt part. And when... you know, when the canneries over there... they brought the Chinese in by boat, and when they didn't need them any more, they had to walk back, and so they were walking up and (whispers) talk, talk, talk... and we would just sit and listen to see what they were saying, but they spoke Chinese all the time.

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DB: *You mean every day they would do that, or you mean just when they ran out of work...*

RC: At the end of the season...

DB: *They would make them walk.*

RC: Walk back to Portland.

DB: *That's terrible!*

RC: I know!

DB: *Actually, in your... in John Redberg's diary from 1909 or 1910, uh, it tells about that he and Grant Dawson and one other man hauled the Chinese out to Willamina with their wagons at one point.*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)... well, they did sometimes... but I can remember walking up to... 'cause it was so.... uh, huh (yes)

DB: *So... uh... I'm really curious about that, too... that... do you remember... I don't know how old you were at that point...but do you remember any prejudice toward the Chinese?*

RC: No... the only thing... dad had a little fish shack over there, and occasionally we would go over there, and so here was the big cannery, and dad's shack over here, and the owner... the big bosses lived over here, and the Chinese house was over here... and folks always told... you stay over here, because you don't know what the Chinese will do... so my brother, Ralph... you knew him... he went over there and he got his hair cut. (laughing) So.... they ... I... i... so they were all right, but... they were different, so you stay away from them.

DB: *Were there ever any women?*

RC: Uh, huh (no)..

DB: *Only men.*

RC: Only men.

DB: *Did any of them speak English?*

RC: Not that I know... 'cause I was too little... I wasn't even in school...

DB: *How could they... I wonder how they could have had them understand what to do?*

RC: I don't know.... I don't know, because, uh... well, someplace I have all that records that, uh... Painter was one of the bosses there, and... they lived up at Meda Loop, and uh... Lawrence Whiteman's dad was there... oh, it told about different ones that was... and I know they didn't understand Chinese, but they had a way of understanding....

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DB: *Wow.*

RC: But, after all, they were cleaning fish and doing all this kind of stuff, so you know... I mean...

DB: *Right. It would just be something they already knew, probably.*

RC: Probably, yes.

DB: *So how did kids get to school?*

RC: They walked.

DB: *Anybody ride horses or anything?*

RC: Well, I... yes... our Grange Hall was built and then they had a horse shed here because people drove horses to the meetings, and so like, Anna Christenson... she'd ride her horse up and put it in there in the winter... while she was in school.

DB: *So where did... where was her house?*

RC: Oh, uh... do you know where, uh... do you know where Scherzingers house is?

DB: *Uh, huh (yes)*

RC: All right. They were up on that hill, and

DB: *Oh, where Goody Harding lives?*

RC: Yes... yes.. they were there.

DB: *Oh.... really. Did anybody ever come in wagons or anything like that?*

RC: No... no.

DB: *And what time did school start every day.. do you remember?*

RC: Well, it seems to me it was like nine to four... something like that.

DB: *Ok... and..... a lot of this other people have kinda' told us about, so... do you ever remember any kids misbehaving in school when you went to school?*

RC: Well.... generally, it wasn't... I'll tell you one time (chuckling)... we had a teacher that came from... kids... I think we were eighth graders... and the teacher came from out here in the valley... and a couple of the boys caught a bunch of frogs and put in her desk... (laughing)... she opened up... they went out, hopping around everywhere... and they got in the vent, and she couldn't get it out... and I can remember, she used her belt! (laughing)

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DB: *On the kids?*

RC: Ya (laughing)

DB: *Did that ever... They didn't do that again, though, huh?*

RC: No.. well, my brother Ralph was always interested in doing stuff!

DB: *Well... that sounds good.. that's a good story. If you can think of any others at any point, I'd love for you to share them. Because we don't... we want.... we don't want to lose the old stories; that's important... not just the facts, but the stories, so.... Um.... do you ever remember any student getting hurt at school very badly? I'm curious... what they would have done because of no phone.*

RC: No.... not really... I don't remember... no.

DB: *Was the community involved in the school at all?*

RC: Ummm.. ya, I would say they were... more so than they are now... they knew... of course, the teacher... everything the teacher said was ok... you know, I mean... it wasn't like nowadays, and so... if you got in trouble at school, you got in trouble at home...

DB: *Right.*

RC: ... without question.

DB: *Now what did I just think of I was going to ask you? Ummm... I forgot it. Was the school used for any community functions at all?*

RC: Not really... used the Grange Hall, because it was a bigger opening place for it.

DB: *And you didn't have a gym, did you?*

RC: No... no... no... that's why the porch worked for jumping rope.

DB: *So for playing games, there was jumping rope... what else... what other games...*

RC: Not really... on rainy days, really nothing.

DB: *Any Annie... Auntie Annie Over or anything like that?*

RC: Oh, well, ya... we played... ya, there's Auntie Over, and Last Couple Out... going around the school house, you know, and Fox and Geese, but a lot of the times we played ball... boys and girls.

DB: *Uh, huh (yes). I.... I used to think that it was Annie Over...*

RC: It could be...

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DB: ... but it's... but... then a lot of people have said Auntie Over, and some people have spelled it Ante, and some spell it Auntie, and now I'm really confused.

RC: I don't know... I don't know... all I know... we called it Auntie Over... that's all I know... I don't know about the spelling... (laughing)... probably there was any spelling... as they was people...

DB: Right. I'm going to find out. What are the teacher's names that you remember that you had in grade school?

RC: Well, the first I was... Miss Graves, and they lived...

DB: Oh! Minnie?

RC: Oh, I don't remember her first name. I got a pict....

DB: Was her name Minnie Butts Graves?

RC: She wasn't married... she was a single woman...

DB: Oh.

RC: She had relatives lived... I have a picture of it someplace around... I can find it for you... she was a teacher.... where is it? Well... go ahead...

DB: We can look later...

RC: Later... ya... but her sister was a teacher, too, and she lived in Woods, but I don't remember her name.

DB: Ok, what was another teacher?

RC: Well, uh, Wayne Franklin's wife was teaching, and...

DB: Do you remember her name?

RC: Well....

DB: Mrs. Franklin.

RC: Ya... they moved to Canada, because Wayne got in some kind of trouble and they went up there, but some of the kids were back around... and he was also Deputy Sheriff... uh, Deputy... uh, later on, one of 'em was uh...

DB: Oooh... Deputy Sheriff...

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RC: Ya... well... not Deputy.. it was for the fish stuff... um... Averill Weed was our eighth grade teacher that came in and finished the year when.... and uh... I don't remember the rest of 'em.

DB: *Ok... that's fine... ok, so we got that... any other stories that you can think of about anything happening at school or concerning school?*

RC: No... you know, we had to take eighth grade tests... state tests... you told... you've been told that...

DB: *And they weren't easy, were they?*

RC: And the teacher could not give 'em... somebody in the community, because the teacher might help us... so somebody in the community came in and supervised it...

DB: *Hmm...*

RC: And you had to take it in every subject... and when I graduated from eighth grade, if you didn't pass every one of 'em, you didn't get your diploma.

DB: *So, could you go to high school, then, without your diploma?*

RC: Well... but they could study a little bit and take another test a little bit later...

DB: *Uh, huh (yes)*

RC: And there was one boy that went up to get his diploma, and he didn't get to go across... they hadn't notified him that he hadn't passed one... something or other...

DB: *That would be terrible.*

RC: Yes. But he studied a little bit more and took another test and he was graduated.

DB: *Hmm... ok... so where were you born?*

RC: At Oretown.

DB: *In your home... in your parent's home?*

RC: In my parent's home.

DB: *And when was that, again?*

RC: April 7, 1912.

DB: *Ok.*

RC: Ya... I'm a whole ninety years old! (laughing)

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DB: *And what's your ancestry....*

RC: Well...

DB: *... like on your mom's side, and then on your dad's side?*

RC: I don't... on my... on my dad's side... my grandma was Swedish... came from Sweden, and my grandpa came from Norway... Bergen. Grandma Porter's side... I don't know... they were... they were Germans and Scotch-Irish and about everything... all mixed up... they were Americans.

DB: *And, the first that came to Oretown, was that Ole? No... John... no...*

RC: No, no, no... well, his name was William Ole...

DB: *Which Redberg was it then, that came first?*

RC: William Ole... my grandparent.

DB: *And why did he come to the area?*

RC: Ok... he had trouble with his own family, and in Norway they taught them three... he would... three different kinds of things that they could do for life, and he was a tailor and a butcher, and I don't know what the other was... but he came at 19, on a ship, around the Horn, landed in Hawaii, and he came back to San Francisco, and that's where he met my ... my grandma. And then they moved up here... out here... to what they called a little old place called, uh... Bertha... and their friends were out here... and then grandpa and my uncle Johnny got on a boat, went down to Astoria, walked clear down... across the mountain and down into Oretown and... and got this farm.

DB: *That's a great story.*

RC: Ya.... ya...

DB: *Did he ever contact his family back in Norway at all?*

RC: Oh... a little bit, but he was very unhappy, because, uh... his one brother was an alcoholic, and he spent all the money and everything trying to help him... even sent him into Germany for stuff... and I don't know what all happened... I was too young, I didn't question it, and... but, uh... he... when they died, he didn't get anything excepting a letter with black around it saying that they had died.

DB: *Has any of the family ever been back to Norway to see where they came from?*

RC: Uh, huh... no, no...

DB: *Ok... and then did your family always live in one place in Oretown?*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)... dad and mother was always on the same farm.

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DB: *And is that the farm that's on Redberg Road?*

RC: Ya...

DB: *Is that where you lived?*

RC: Ya... ya...

DB: *The one that was the Upton place?*

RC: Uh, huh... right.

DB: *Ok... oooh...*

RC: That was... the... Upton had homesteaded it, and then he wanted to get rid of it, so his attorney out here took charge, and so there's another name in between, but that fella' didn't do anything about it.... it was really... it was just Upton.

DB: *And then, from the Redberg family, who did you sell it to? Who did...*

RC: Well, it went to my brother Roy, and then it went to Harold, and then the cows got a lot of sickness and stuff and died, died, died until he just couldn't make it and lost the farm.

DB: *Now did he... is he the one that sold it to Seymour?*

RC: Uh, huh, uh, huh (yes, yes)... no, they took it over, because he'd lost it.

DB: *Oh, I see, I see.*

RC: No... they even came in from Corvallis... from the school out there... and tried to find out what was wrong. And the vets didn't know what was wrong, but it happened to be they were lacking zinc, I think, or something...

DB: *Hmm..*

RC: But... the calves... maybe they... maybe their calves would be born dead, and maybe they'd live for a while and die...

DB: *Wow.*

RC: Mineral deficiency.

DB: *Any significant events that occurred during your childhood... not necessarily with school, but with anything else.... anything in the world, or anything at home that you can think of?*

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RC: The things that I remember of childhood is where my grandparent... Porter had that great big kitchen... dining room, and we always went over there for all holidays, birthdays and celebrations and everything.

DB: *Is that still the house that's there?*

RC: No, no, no... it burned...

DB: *Oooh....*

RC: ... it's an old, old one. I don't know... I have a picture of it someplace here...

DB: *Is that where one of the other houses is now?*

RC: No... it's more where, uh... well, it's right across the hall... road where Bill and Eula lives, and back... and back away there... it was a big... big place... but, uh... and then... we had... they put hay out here, and the men would target shoot and they'd let we kids occasionally target shoot. (laughing)

DB: *What... What jobs did you have as a kid, or what responsibilities did you have?*

RC: At the what?

DB: *Chores, or... at home...*

RC: Oooh... well, I was in the milking business all the time... we just went out and milked.... and when dad bought from Uncle Johnny, and he didn't have any milking machine up there, so my older brother and I went up there and milked, and I milked ten cows by hand, and he milked ten cows, but he did all the feeding.... and then, afterwards, dad got a machine in there... but I milked cows from the time I was...

DB: *So, morning and night?*

RC: Yes... ya...

DB: *And go to school?*

RC: Yes... ya...

DB: *You didn't have much time for anything else, did you?*

RC: No, we didn't... no, we didn't have time to get into mischief.

DB: *Did you help in the house, also?*

RC: Oh, yes... oh, yes... we always ate after we got through with the chores, so... and so it was... mother was always in the barn, too.

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DB: *So, when you look back on that, do you resent that at all?*

RC: No, no! I'm glad... I'm glad I learned how to work, and I glad... that it was hard to make it, and easy to spend.

DB: *Hmm... ya...*

RC: If I hadn't learned that, I wouldn't be able to live here.

DB: *Right. That's true.*

RC: But one... one.... Thanksgiving, I think it was, my brothers trapped down on the slough for muskrat and mink, and that was their spending money.... (laughing) they caught a skunk... (laughing)... so they tried to clean up before they came over to eat, but they didn't get in the house... they served 'em outdoors! (laughing)

DB: *That'd be terrible. (chuckling) Did you.... Did you want to be a teacher when you were a child, or what do you....*

RC: I don't know... when I was a senior in high school, one of the teachers in the grade school was ill for quite a while, and the principal sent me down to do the... help. So I taught until the first and second grade teacher could come in and finish the day. I don't know... I don't know what I did... I was just a senior in high school.

DB: *But it must have made an impression on you.... you must have liked it, I guess...*

RC: Ya... ya... yes... but I didn't start.... I didn't start in September to school, I started in January to go to Monmouth.

DB: *Ok...*

RC: (chuckling)... I found... I don't know why... but I had it in the... in the, uh... safety deposit over... my first certificate from it, and it says "Normal School", and I said, "Lois, look!" I says, "What in the world did I put that in..." and she looked at it and laughed, and she handed it to Janette, and Janette sat there... normal school.... and I said, "Well, we were normal!" (laughing)

DB: *That's a funny name, too.*

RC: But it had a name before, you know, it was a Christian school first.

DB: *Ooh... I didn't know that.*

RC: And that was when they taught teachers how to teach... two years.

DB: *So you went two years.*

RC: Uh, huh (yes).

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DB: *Ok, I'm gonna' leave that for a little bit. What, uh... so your favorite games or sports or books or hobbies... what was your favorite thing to do as a kid for, uh... like a recreation or something?*

RC: You mean school kids?

DB: *Well, for you. What did you like to do?*

RC: Oh... well, it was always with family... whatever family did... it would... we didn't go off someplace and do a lot of stuff otherwise.

DB: *Did your family do storytelling or skits or reading or...*

RC: No, but there was always books given at Christmas time, and we sat around the wood stove and took turns reading that book.

DB: *Oooh... that's great.*

RC: Ya... ya... yes...

DB: *The whole family.*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)...

DB: *What do you remember most about your mother?*

RC: Well.... well, she was a hard worker, she never complained, she was easy to get along with, and... she just... just was a good mother.

DB: *And her first name was what?*

RC: Elna.... E, L, N, A.

DB: *Ok. What do you remember most about your father?*

RC: Well, he was a real hard worker, and... but when we kids were in school, if there were any school functions, they were there. And when we were in high school, you had... they had to take us everywhere we were going, and they were always there. It was a family always.

DB: *Very supportive.*

RC: Yes.

DB: *And then, what do you think was the best advice that your mother or father ever gave you, or what were some good lessons that you learned from them?*

RC: (chuckling)... Oh... I hadn't thought about that.

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DB: *And it may not be something they told you, but just something they modeled, maybe, for you...*

RC: Well... I don't know... I don't really know how to answer that.

DB: *That's ok... if it comes to you later... and as far as... I'm going to leave your occupations until later, too... tell us about your own family... the family you had.*

RC: Oh... well, I have two kids.... and they're eight years apart... my son was in the Navy, now he's living in San Diego... he has, uh... he had six of his own, and he married a woman who had two, so he has six kids... and I have eight great-grandkids... and Lois lives out here... she was a teacher for thirty years, and her husband is... well, they both... they met at Linfield, and then... she... he had a year yet of school, but they were married at Christmas time, and so he lived here and drove back and forth... so, now he's graduated, he went to work for Blue Cross/Blue Shield... when they put in computers, he went on Saturdays to find out what in the heck they were doing, and every chance he did... he did extra work, and now he's one of the big shots in the regency... he's traveling... traveling all the time.

DB: *Wow.*

RC: And she... she's just doing all kinds...

DB: *She enjoy being retired?*

RC: Yes. Yes.. well, she did... she volunteered at the hospital for a while, and then they put her on the, uh... board to pick out scholarships... she's still doing that. And then she'd go to help some of the teachers... we need extra help... so she'd go and do some of that for a while... and she played pianos all the time... she just keeps busy.

DB: *Tell us about your husband.*

RC: Well.... he never finished high school... but he was... that was California stuff... they lived Oregon, California and back and forth... and, now this is what we did as a family... our family.... he played the violin, I played the piano, and so that's the kind of music we had, because we lived where there was no electricity for a long time, and... the kids, both, were very musical into all this kind of stuff... and he, uh...

DB: *Hmm... where'd you meet him?*

RC: Uh... a hop yard. (chuckling)

DB: *Where was that?*

RC: Oh, out here at Independence. You know... lots of people from over the coast went to the hop yard... make a little extra money. My family... my parents did that, because cows were always dried up for a while, and so some of them always went out there, and they picked hops...

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DB: Hmm...

RC: It made... they had to have extra cash, because there wasn't enough money on the farms to do that and to pay for things... but, uh... then it... let's see... we, uh... we farmed... he worked for my dad for almost a year, and he worked for three or four other people, and we were in Nehalem for three months, and then he... we rented the farm where, uh... Thelma Otzen lives... and did that for three years... then we left, and we lived up there... well, you know where Jim Trent's farm is... the farm just above it was called the Hat... the old Hatfield place... now it's a part of their place...

DB: *Hmmm...*

RC: ...and there was, uh... the place was all run down, because it had been rented for years and years, and so we rented that, and by the time we left the Otzen place, we had a few head of cows and some horses and a few things, so then we could get a... a ... a loan from the government to buy some more stuff that we needed, and we were there for three years, and then we bought our farm over there where, uh... John Hurliman is now.

DB: *I didn't know that.*

RC: Ya..

DB: *How long did you live there?*

RC: Oh, five, six years and then he got the job, he was running the... being the manager of the feed store... and he worked there for fifteen years... but then he got hurt and his health got so bad that that's when he started the... uh... the rock shop and the lumber shop... where he made clocks and tables and stuff... out of myrtle wood...

DB: *Down by the firehall?*

RC: Yes... uh, huh... well, uh... he owned one of those buildings down there, and, and then he put in a... a dryer thing... let's see, it's in this book... show it... and it was supposed to be... oh, you go and do it... but people ... oh, well, you do it, and so he got to doing it... then finally, they wanted more, so then, uh... he put it in presses, and he got Shorty... uh... Brassfield, because he'd done that kind of work previously, and so he did the pressing for him in there.

DB: *Hmmm... I forgot about that, too.*

RC: Well... when the... when the people who worked on the base, you know... the Air Force base... they'd always bring their laundry down and they'd send it out and come back there, and then if they had other things, they'd bring it down and have him clean and press it.

DB: *How long did he do that?*

RC: Oh... I don't know.... couple years or so... and then he got so he wasn't able to do a lot, but he... it gave him something to do... uh, to think about instead of just sitting at home.

Interview with Ruth Redberg Crockett

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Transcribed on July 3, 2002

DB: *Uh, huh (yes)*

RC: No... he's been gone for twenty-nine years.

DB: *That's quite a while.*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)

DB: *Uh... what special skills or interests do you have... I know you worked in your yard and did lots of flower...*

RC: Oh.... I liked that outdoor work. Ya... I've been a outdoor gir.... woman (chuckling)... ya...

DB: *Ya.... And, community or religious activities that you'd like to tell us about?*

RC: Well, when the Oretown Sunday School... my grandparents helped get that going... and, it was just one room, so Grandma Porter taught our group over here... the adults were up here... and my Grandpa Redberg... (chuckling)... I can remember.... "Buh, buh, buh, buh, buh... that is not right!" (laughing) I can remem....

DB: *(laughing)... How'd that go over?*

RC: But Grandpa Porter was very... and they talked a lot and they got along fine... but, uh... well, and the first song that my Grandma actually learned to play was "What A Friend We Have In Jesus", and I was... I did the... on the old pump organ... and then there wasn't any Sunday School, and then there was... back and forth... and, then when we were, uh... at various places places... I filled in for Eleanor Johnson sometimes up there at the Presbyterian Church... before it got so big, and then I.... a bunch... (sigh)... somebody... the minister in the church they had at the Presbyterian Church in Cloverdale wrote the big staff out in Portland, and a lot of 'em were kicked out, so they went down to Oretown and had... it was worse... uh... tunes... and another family... and then Oral and Jesse Ray started, and we had a big... and I was pianist there for years.

DB: *Hmm... and you're very involved in the Grange...*

RC: Yes... yes... yes... yes... and Pamona Grange, too... I was secretary off and on back for the... but I was Master for our Grange for... I think it was twenty years... and I was also the secretary for the Pamona Grange for quite a while.

DB: *So, if you were telling somebody what the value of the Grange is... what the importance was, or, uh.. what was good about belonging, what would you say?*

RC: Well.... when they organized, that was the community gathering place.... community things happened there... all the programs, all the entertainment and everything was there... they used to have some dances there, and all this... basket socials... all... that was the center..

DB: *Huh, huh (yes)...*

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RC: ...but they also were... and you know, that the Grange is the ones that had the... rural free delivery... they are the ones that pushed that through...

DB: Oooh.. for mail, you mean...

RC: Yes...

DB: Ooooh...

RC: ... and that's... that's the big thing, but then for our local Grange and everything, they were... always... uh, had a road committee.. they'd go to commissioners and talk and tell 'em do this and this and this and stuff, and it was for community service and community work.

DB: Ok...

RC: And also some for state...

DB: *Sounds wonderful...*

RC: Uh, huh (yes)

DB: *All right...*

RC: Quentin Borba can tell you a lot about that.

DB: *Ya... I'll bet he can. Ok, now... you, the teacher... your first teaching job... was that Boulder Creek?*

RC: Uh, huh... uh, huh (yes, yes)... and it was during the Depression.. so when they consolidated and went down to Beaver...

DB: *Oh, they didn't go to Brown...*

RC: No, no... Brown was... Brown was not there the year that I taught up there... Brown was already down to Beaver... so was Wolf...

DB: *Now, Dorothea said that when she.. when Boulder Creek closed that she walked across the bridge and went to Brown School... with the Schoppert boy... huh... well...*

RC: I don't know... I don't know... I don't....

DB: *But that was your first school...*

RC: Ya...

DB: *What do you remember about Boulder Creek?*

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RC: Oh, well, it was a pleasant... pleasant thing... I lived, uh... down... I don't know who lives there now... but it was the old, old Jensen homestead... and

DB: *Right... Reuben and Naomi Schrock...*

RC: Ya... and I walked out... and I can remember it snowed so deep, and I had hip boots... knee boots and I got wet through there, it was so thick.

DB: *Dorothea was telling me that she, as a little girl, she went every day, and that she was the only student there when she was young... at some... because, uh... nobody would go in the snow... none of the other kids would go, so...*

RC: Well, and we had...

DB: *But, you were there... or somebody was there... I don't know...*

RC: Ya.. ya... ya... well... but... and then, uh... Marion Schoppert had a little chipmunk.. and he'd carry it in his pocket for a while.. and he'd come out... (chuckling)

DB: *During school... he'd...*

RC: During school... it didn't make any difference... but we had outdoor toilets... they had a play shed, but with so few kids we never used it, and.. we... it was just a one.... one....

DB: *Why did they keep the school going even though there were... few kids....*

RC: I don't know... I don't know...

DB: *I thought they had to have six kids or so...*

RC: No... I don't know why.. they just... I guess just hoped that there would be more kids to go to school...

DB: *And you got your regular pay, though, didn't you?*

RC: Yes... well, the pay was not a check that you could go and cash and have full value, 'cause there wasn't the money... so you could go to the bank and they would discount it and give you some money... and when the money came into the district, then they got the full amount.

DB: *And that was called a warrant?*

RC: Uh, huh... uh, huh... (yes, yes) That's what I got the whole time. And I got seventy dollars a month, and supposed to do all the.... all of the janitor work and everything... but there was a wooden stove there, and Nicholaus' lived up on the hill, and they delivered wood, so... a lot of people were splittin' wood, so I didn't have to do that. (laughing)

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DB: *Good. So that walk must have been.... a mile and a half?*

RC: Yes... well, I cut across the pasture, I didn't go around the road...

DB: *How'd you cross the creek?*

RC: Well.... I don't remember, but I did.

DB: *Hmm... ok, so you were at Boulder Creek one year, you said?*

RC: Ya...

DB: *And then where'd you go?*

RC: Well, I didn't teach for years... not until after the kids...

DB: *Ooooh....*

RC: ... until I went down to Neskowin when... when they needed... I didn't even apply... they just came and asked me if I'd do it until she was able to...

DB: *So you only... you had one year teaching experience and then you quit for your kids, and then you... ok, that's fine...*

RC: And then... I didn't... they asked me back, and I said no, and I had surgery, and then the year that I really started teaching was when we were at Pacific City, and they came and... "We don't have anybody to teach.. will you teach for us?" And I said, ya... so then I just kept on... because my daughter was in school, I taught her for two years down there.

DB: *So how long did you teach at Pacific City?*

RC: Two years there.

DB: *And then where'd you go?*

RC: Right up to Cloverdale.

DB: *And then you were there from then on, right?*

RC: Uh, huh.. uh, huh (yes, yes)

DB: *How many years at Cloverdale?*

RC: Well, let's see... there was one, two, two, three, four... twenty-seven....

DB: *Oh, that's great.*

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RC: But, I never asked for a job. They would ask me, and then I just kept a'going... and when... when they got... were consolidated and having one room for each grade, they asked me, "What grade do you want to teach?" because they had to hire some other teachers...

DB: *What grade did you teach?*

RC: First... first for years and years... and then later on it was third grade.

DB: *Any stories that you want to share about being a teacher... anything you remember happening, or...*

RC: Well, I enjoyed every bit of it. And we did a lot of things that, uh.. for instance, my husband built a place... incubator... and we hatched eggs.. and when they... had the kids take turns to turn the eggs and to see this... was a little water in the bottom of it... we had frogs in jars that hatched out, and all this kinda' stuff...

DB: *It sounds fun...*

RC: And young Jim Owens went up on a hill and he found a cow's head and brought it down.. (chuckle)... and he was going to bring it to school.. and his mother says, " You can't take that... it's got maggots and everything on it... we gotta' clean it up!"... so he brought that skull... and then I had, uh... a vertebrae of a... of a... of a quail... that's what your vertebrae looks like, only it's smaller, you know... all that kind of stuff... that was fun...

DB: *Sounds to me like you like science...*

RC: Well, science for those kids...

DB: *Ya...*

RC: Ya... and, course we raised flowers for Mother's Day, and all that kinda' stuff...

DB: *Huh, huh (yes)...*

RC: When I was teaching the first grade, you know, they had a toilet back there... and so I said, "When you not in it, you shut it, but otherwise you leave it open"... so one day my husband talked to me a little bit... one little boy came... ya...ya...ya...ya... and he's just... I was already going! My husband was just having a fit, covered his face and had to get out of there... 'cause somebody opened the door and came in on me... (laughing)... so, he thought that was the funniest thing.

DB: *So, growing up in the area, was it good?*

RC: Ya...

DB: *And living over there you think it was a great...*

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RC: Yes, yes... I think it's a lot better than what most kids have nowadays.

DB: *What was good about it... about your childhood... growing up over there, and about raising kids over there?*

RC: Well, I think it was about family togetherness, and the community was a community... you knew everybody, and everything... and so.. there wasn't all this bitching and quarreling and fighting and everything going on that... there was things maybe you didn't like, but you didn't make a big issue out of it.

DB: *And a lot of your family was nearby, weren't they?*

RC: Yes, yes, yes, yes...

DB: *I'm sure that was good... it was many years before I realized that you had sisters that... and that Louiza was a sister of yours, and... and...*

RC: Ya.. well, I had... Uncle Johnny just lived up the road a little bit for... but his kids were all... uh, well, Marvin and Ervin... but the others were older, but, uh... I had aunts and uncles here, and aunts and unc... Porters, you see... Earl Porter... Eula's parents were close, and grandparents were close, and... and then, uh... Uncle Herbert finally moved up to Nehalem... they were all there.

DB: *Uh, huh (yes) You've done a wonderful job, too, with preserving history... I really appreciate you.*

RC: Well, I... as I say, that book that I... that stuff that I gave to the museum had... here was where they first started organizing and having this school, and all the discussion and all the arguments they had about everything (chuckling)...

DB: *I'm gonna' go look and see if I...*

RC: Yes.. it's...

DB: *I've seen so many things, now, that I may have seen and forgotten, but I don't really remember that for...*

RC: And then they had the long books where the teachers kept records...

DB: *Right...*

RC: ... and, here was some kid that was in the sixth grade, but they was doing fifth grade work...

DB: *Uh, huh (yes)*

RC: But, you see... he was put... he was in a.... he was in a school, so he wasn't retained....

DB: *That's great.*

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RC: But, I was... I was surprised at that.

DB: *Anything else that we should.... you could share before we shut this off....*

RC: No....

(End of tape)

Transcribed by
Darleen Cole