

Margaret Gibson  
 Interviewed March 16, 1984 by Teri Deane  
 Transcribed by Teri Deane

Tape #1053 side A.

Ok. Why don't we start with where you were born?

In Lafayette. 212 E. Cannon.

212 E. Cannon. Ah. . .

We still own the home.

Oh, you do.

My sister and I.

Your family moved there.

Yes. In fact, I think all three of us were born there.

How many brothers and sisters?

One brother and one sister. My brother is deceased. My sister lives at 841 Bluebird Lane. Have a son that lives here in Lafayette and a daughter in Louisville.

What are their names?

Ah, Sandy Simpson and Richard Gibson. Sandy has a son and Rick has a son.

Oh, two grandchildren.

Two grandchildren, uh huh. My father was the second boy born in Lafayette.

Do you remember his birthday?

January 27. . .it was 1890.

He was born. . .do you know where he was born in Lafayette? What house?

I really don't know. The old place was on Cleveland Street. On the corner, it was. . .let's see the 300 block. But I don't know if he was born there or not.

Bill Moon was your uncle.

My uncle, um hum.

Now, he owned the butcher shop next door?

Actually, it was my grandfather's. And my father worked there too for some time. They had a slaughter house down on the creek, Coal Creek. Used to go by horse and wagon back and forth. When I was very small I went along a few times, took my lunch along. I vaguely remember it.

Do you know what years the butcher shop was open? What year they started it?

No, I don't. I sure don't.

Did they employ a lot of people? Was it a large concern or was it mainly family?

No, I've seen pictures of it and it seems like they had one or two employees.

Do you know where they got their meat from? Was it local people, farmers?

I imagine it was the farmers.

Where did the Moons come from when they came to Lafayette? Who first came here? I'm a little unclear about that. Was it your grandfather?

I can't help you too much. I think they come from ((Alamore?????)) Not sure too much on that. They had a boarding house and I can remember of the . . . oh about. . . it seemed like oh three of the fellas I can remember were Greeks and I can also remember a man working on his citizenship papers. And I remember memorizing along with them going through it.

They were miners that stayed at the boarding house?

Yes.

How many people? Do you remember how many people they boarded?

Well, there couldn't have been so awfully many because there was about three or four bedrooms upstairs. I can remember two in particular and then another one. He's deceased now. And a big dining room table and how she cooked for them.

This is your grandmother?

Grandmother Moon, uh huh.

Do you know at all how much they charged the boarders?

No. I know a lot of times they didn't have money, the people who would come and they'd give her jewelry or something for it. Usually, it wasn't any good, it was of no value at all.

Must have been a lot of interesting characters that went in and out.

Uh huh.

Was that down here on the corner?

Where the Burgers live ((not sure of spelling))

They owned the one there. Did they own the one next door?

No. That was the Bradley's. And the ones I remember best next door was Mrs. Parks. And she also had boarders. And there were several Greek men that I remember. My mother's folks, they did that too. That was the Snow family.

Oh, really. I was going to ask you.

My grandfather was a miner. She was from a large family. She was from a family of nine children.

Do you know her parent's names? Their full names?

It was her stepfather. It was William Snow.

Do you know when he came here? Any idea what time. . . ?

Well, they came here when my mother was two years old. I think they came from Canada.

Oh, from Canada.

She was born in Canada.

What was your mother's birthday?

Mother's birthday was. . .April the 20th, 1902.

So they came here in 1904 then.

Did they ever tell any stories about how they came? Hear anything passed down about it?

Well, yes, but I can't. . .I know she had a brother they always joked about that he was born in a barn. That was out here in Colorado. He's still living. He's in his eighties.

What's his name?

Robert Sneden. He in California. Let's see there's only. . .of the large family my uncle Bob in California, and then I had an Aunt in Boulder. And that's all that's left.

What's your aunt's name, in Boulder?

Ah, Annie Grace ((Girden?????))

Ah. . .I have a question. . .Yea, how did your parents meet?

I think that they met when Dad was in the butcher shop.

What are the names of your brothers and sisters? Dorothy Barker and my brother's name was Albert LeRoy Moon.

Where is your husband from? Well, originally from Arkansas but he left there and he'd been in Arizona for a long time. Then he went into the Service. I met him during war time. Did you meet him in Lafayette? No, in Denver. He was stationed at Camp Carson in Colorado Springs.

What do you remember about Lafayette when you were a little girl? Oh, I can remember my mother sending me to the bank when the bank was down here on the corner. I remember all the grocery stores, especially a child like me to go to Joe Roberts to buy candy - penny candy. They were located up on the highway, I can remember that. I remember my mother belonging to a quilting club and women coming to the house and quilting. Were the streets paved? Oh, no, my husband was on the City Council when they paved the streets. I can remember when everyone was putting in bathrooms in their homes and had an outside privy. Did they tell everybody they had to put in a bathroom? Yes.

When the streets were mud, were the sidewalks like they are now or were they the boardwalk kind of sidewalk? Did that change with the paving? Yes, the sidewalks were mud too, but they weren't boardwalks. But I can remember Bermont's store down here, we had wood. I can remember going to Bermonts and buying candy. And I can also remember the Rocky Mountain Store.

What other stores do you remember? Well, I can remember ice cream parlors down here, a clothing store, the Library used to be down there in the hall, the Odd Fellows Hall, down below - very small. Where was the ice cream store? Well, there was even an ice cream parlor in this block here, down on the end, where the Senior Center is. And years ago there used to be a drug store down on the corner; I worked there for a little bit, when Mr. Kemp owned that drug store on the highway. Do you know the name? Well, Mr. Dow used to have it. This was probably what year? Well, I didn't work for Mr. Dow; that dates back before, probably the early '30s. I've worked in the drug store here in Lafayette since 1939. I started working for Mr. Kemp; he bought out Mr. Dow. Then he had one there and he had one on the highway; not at the same time. Yes. Oh, at the same time; he had two at once? Yes. Then later he sold the one down here. I've worked in the drug store since 1939 - for Mr. Kemp, then for Mr. Swinnes, then for Mr. Sullivan. I can also remember Mrs. Blankenship used to have a drive-in on the highway - catty-cornered from the drug store and that was about the beginning of drive-ins in this area. We used to wear little starched uniforms with the aprons.

When the streets were mud, were there a lot of automobiles? Quite a few, yeah. Wasn't it hard with rocks and - -? No, not really. I can't remember them being real rutted and real bad. Of course, it was dusty. Of course the alleys would get bad.

Do you remember the movie theater across the street? Uh-huh, I used to go on Sundays to the matinee, for about a nickel. What kind of movies did they have? Oh, Laurel and Hardy and all sorts of kinds - we really looked forward to the Sunday Matinees. Did they have the serials? Or was that before your time? I don't remember, but I remember all kinds of different movies that we really looked forward to.

Cleveland Street was our big place - in the wintertime, we would sleigh ride - we would put our sleighs on Cleveland Street and in the summertime, we roller-skated on that street. We had a good time. Why Cleveland? Because of the hill.

What else did people do for entertainment? We used to go out to the lakes and ice skate in the winter time and build us fires - bon fires. In the summer time, we went out to the lakes and had weiner fries and walked around. What lakes did you go to? The Van Lake and the Prince Lake. The Prince is the one out here at the Junction. That's what we called it then; I don't know what they call it now. And the Van Lake was out where Joe Distel lives - (1½ miles north of Baseline on 119th).

When the streets were paved is that when they put up the names of the streets? They were already up. Do you know how some of the names came? Who decided what to name them? Do you know anything about that? Not really. A lot of them are named after people. I've often wondered why there was none named after my family because they were among the first families.

We always looked forward on Friday nights to the school dances - we usually had a dance at the school.

What grade school did you go to? Lafayette Elementary. Was that the building that burned? Yes. What high school did you go to? The one still standing. (now Angevine Middle School). And that's where you had the dances? uh-huh. What year did you graduate? 1939. Do you remember how many people were in your class? I think there were about 31.

Did you notice a lot of change in Lafayette when you were growing up? Oh, yes. How did it change? Actually, I think there's been more of a change in the last 10 years. But, of course, paving the streets and the type of government. The change in the businesses. And the move away from the main part of the city to the outlying. I miss that small community feeling. Having lived here all my life and working in the drug store, I used to know almost everybody that would come in. And I could chat and have a little conversation. Now I have people say to me, "Well, what's new today?" And I really don't know anything new because most everyone I've seen today was a stranger to me and I had no conversations. I miss that. It's grown so much. I don't believe I've ever seen you or know you.

What community activities did you have that we don't have today? Well, of course, we had a lot of lodges, we had the Odd Fellows and Rebeccas and of course, Eastern Star still meets here. And we were always having social functions and everyone turned out for them. Did you have parades? Well, not any more than we have right now. What happened to the lodges? I guess the older people just passed on and the younger people just didn't seem interested in that sort of functions. Lajuan told me she thought you were president of VFW Auxiliary. I'm a past president, yes. What year? I think it was in '54. '54 and '55. Was that presidency for one year? One year, uh-huh. And my husband was commander too. He was commander before I was president, just a year or so before. I've seen that organization come a long ways. Yeah, just by growth? Oh, yes, we didn't have all that many members. I think the year that I was in, I suggested that we have Christmas dinner and a Christmas party for the children. And then from then on, it has grown until you wouldn't believe how large. Do you still go? I go occasionally. I'm not too active now.

What do you remember about the mines and the strike? Well, I can't remember what strike it was, but I can remember the militia being in town and I can remember them being on top of the houses over here. I was quite young. It was real scary. I don't remember too much about it, but it was ugly, ugly. My dad, he did work in the butcher shop but then later he went to work in the mines. He didn't work down in the mines, he was a top man; he worked on the top. And I had the experience of going down in the mines a number of times. And that was quite an experience. Did the strike - how did it affect your father? Do you remember anything about that? No, I can't remember any bad affects in our home from it. I know there was violence and people were killed. I was just a little bit too young, I guess, to really know much about it.

What was the depression like for Lafayette? Bad. Mother worked on the cooking and the sewing through the depression, you know when they canned stuff. Dad, he'd go out and work on the farms for practically nothing a day - I think it was \$3.00; it was practically nothing. But he had to have something. When the employment was so bad, did a lot of people leave Lafayette - what kind of opportunities were here? There wasn't too much other than to work on the WPA. So did people leave town; did the population shrink, do you think? It didn't seem like it did that much, no. Of course, Dad, in the summertime, almost every summer, he worked on the farms because mining - there just wasn't any in the summertime. Did a lot of miners go out to the farms and just be hands, like help with the harvest? I don't know about a lot of them, but some of them did. Dad stacked hay and irrigated. Of course, he liked it; he really liked the farm. He loved horses and he did like the farm. It wasn't really bad; I mean he wasn't doing something he really hated. It wasn't the best for money, though.

How about Lafayette and Louisville, I've heard a lot about a sort of -- uh - Friction? Yeah, that and competition. Well, in the schools and that, but I think parents are what created a lot of problems. In sports, I mean. Do you remember any incidents along those lines? Not bad ones, no - they were just always out to beat each other. Not much different from today. No.

What do you remember about the churches around? I remember the Christian Science and the Baptist and the Methodist and Catholic - I mean, that was really the churches in those days. Do you remember when any of them were built? Do you remember anything being built? No. Of course, the Methodist Church was where Mr. Sleppy lives now on the corner, on Geneseo and Gough. Which corner? On the north corner. I think something happened to the building and then they built the new church over on Baseline.

What doctors do you remember? Well, Dr. Porter and Dr. Braden are the farthest back that I can remember. And Dr. Braden delivered my brother and I. Of course, in those days, they had midwives too. The lady that was the midwife that took care of my mother was from Erie. She took care of a lot of people. Do you remember her name? Uh-huh, Julia Gorton. Our family always doctored with Dr. Braden. Dr. Porter was a very good doctor too. How about dentists? Dr. Hurt; that's as far back as I can remember dentists. Where was his office? He was upstairs in these apartments down here - well, no, first, he was over here in the Oddfellows Hall and then later he moved across the street - we used to call the Norm Apartments, I don't know what they call them now. Yes, they remodeled them across the street; they had offices in them. (400 Block of Simpson, north side)

When you went shopping when you were a girl, you and your friends, where was the place to shop in Lafayette? Or did people go to Denver or Boulder? Oh, no, not in those days. We shopped pretty much at home - down at Alderson's. And then there was another store here - a men's shop - Sam Luckock's. Men bought a lot of clothes there - just a little - in this block down here, in the next block. On the same side of the street? Uh-huh. So you had pretty much everything? We did. We got our shoes there and most everything we needed. Of course, we did shop some out of town. It was usually a treat on Friday to go to Longmont, especially after payday. We'd go to the bakery shop

and maybe buy a few things. Of course, there used to be no shortage of grocery stores here in Lafayette. My folks always traded mostly with Lee Baker - you know up where Alan Young has his auto parts - he had a little grocery store in there and that's where we did most of our grocery store trading. There was Tom Johns, that was up there where Denise's is - he had a little grocery store in there and then there was one down on the highway and Clemens had one and Bermonts. Now we don't seem to have any.

How about World War II - do you remember anything during that time - do you remember how it affected the town - what comes to your mind? The boys that went to Service, my brother included. It wasn't a good time.

Did you notice a change in Lafayette or maybe in the world as a whole after World War II? Well, the young people, they had to start from the bottom. No one had too much. They were looking for jobs. And automobiles - of course, automobiles were something that were just hard to come by. If you had any money, you could hardly buy one. It was just kind of a hard time. The boys finding jobs and they didn't pay too much. It was really kind of rough. There was probably a real lull in the growth.

Well, we had all these things - clothing stores, grocery stores - what happened - do you know when they left - why they left? Well, I think because of the outlying areas, all the shopping centers and building up, attracting people. I don't know why the town ever let it happen. There's just as good a class of people here and well, that has nothing really to do with it but I mean, with the population - I don't know why it happened. Louisville - there they sit with a nice Safeway store and shops - paint shops and different things. And restaurants. I don't know where we failed. Something has happened.

When was your husband on the Council - that's when they paved the street - do you know what year? I can't remember what year. He served a couple of terms on the Council. And so did my brother-in-law. My brother was on when they paved the streets, also. Harry Barber. What other changes did they implicate, do you remember? That seems to be the main - the big thing. I know he was in business and some people, they really, they got prejudiced and upset about things - they were so opposed about the paving that they ceased to trade with him. But now, they're glad they've got them. This was your brother-in-law? My husband. What business did he have? Service station. Well, he first started out in a garage and later - Phillips 66 - then he got a Conoco station and this last one was Texaco. He retired about four years ago. And people quit trading with him? Well, a few of them, these radicals, who get upset over nothing, really.

You worked for the drug stores in Lafayette and before that you worked for the drive-in? That was in high school. Was the drive-in like they've always pictured it in the 1950s - you know, the kids went there to hang out and stuff was there that kind of a thing? You probably didn't have cars? Yeah, they had cars. That was the days of the root beer, you know. You could get root beer and hamburgers with the good sweet relish. Like I say, that was really about the beginning of drive-ins around Lafayette. When was the Sonic put in? Oh, that hasn't been in too long. This lady I worked for, Mrs. Blankenship and her daughter, Virginia - she made the best homemade pies; it was quite the place for people to go. So they owned it; it was not a chain. No, no -

it was private. And they had booths inside where you could sit and a counter too. It was real clean. She was a super business woman. When did that drive-in close? Well, there were several other people who had it after that but it hasn't been as a drive-in for many years now.

How about home rule, were the people basically for that or was there opposition there because of the change? Well, it was pro and con. What do you remember about it?, basically? Well, just there was a lot of -- some wanted it and some didn't. There was a lot of controversy over it.

What do you remember about the police and fire departments, do you remember anything? Any interesting anecdotes about that? The fire department - when we were kids, we used to go to their meets, you know - in Loveland and different places - we always followed them around and watched the races; that was always a big thing. The police department has really come a long ways. In those days, they just had the main officer and maybe - well, usually, that was about it. They had just one officer, and that was about it. Do you remember the names? Well, I can remember one - Bill Gallagher. And I can remember Lenny Metz

How about the bank, do you remember when the bank was robbed? This one was robbed and the other bank was robbed too, I know. This one up there on the highway? I was in there one day; this has been just a few years ago and I didn't realize it - I was taking care of my check and I saw this fellow come in and go to the teller's and then leave - you know quite hurriedly. But I didn't know until after he was gone that anything had happened.

How about the current trend growth direction today - are you pleased with the way Lafayette is going? Oh, it had to happen, I'm sure. You know, having lived in a small town all your life, you hate to see it happen; you really do. You wonder where everyone's coming from. Do you think it's positive though? Basically you're happy with it? Other than that it's not a small community any more? Things have to grow and go along. I still like the neighborhood that I live in. Most of the people have been there and probably will be there until -. What changes would you like to see? Not any larger.. I can't think of anything.

Anything you remember that you'd like to mention? Oh, I can remember when the train used to come through here and I can remember as kids, we used to walk the railroad tracks to Louisville and occasionally go over there to a matinee to the show. We used to like to go over to the Labor Day celebration in Louisville.

Any stories you remember from your father about the old days? He was a happy person. He loved horses. He always had horses out here in the country. One time, I think he had as many as seven horses, because he liked horses. And he loved rabbits; he raised rabbits. I'd go out and take orders for the rabbits on Saturdays and I'd deliver them on a bicycle. I had a bag on my handlebars that I put the rabbits in. And then my mother - then he'd stretch the hides and every so often, she had a friend, Marietta Edison - and usually, that day, my brother would usually go with them - and they'd go Denver and take the hides and sell them and then they'd go out to the Province for lunch



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and then go to a movie. And that was always a big thing. But Dad did love rabbits. I remember, one time my brother, he was out cleaning rabbits and turned them loose and my dad really had some interesting litters after that. You delivered live rabbits? No, they were already dressed and everything, ready to eat. Dad would dress them. Then he'd take the hides and sell them. Then he'd stretch the hides and then ever so often they'd take them to Denver to sell the hides. Do you like rabbits; do you have any rabbits now? Yeah, we had a rabbit - it came in our yard - for several years now. And my husband said he'd hate for something to happen to that rabbit so he built a cage. But no, to eat rabbit, I don't think I could - I liked it when Dad raised them. Because I knew how they were taken care of and how they were fed. That makes a difference in the meat? Uh-huh, just like any other animal.

I can remember years ago the Morgans, I.W. Morgan, lived across the street from us. I used to love to sit on the porch with him. At one time, he was a United States Senator. He'd sit in his chair with his feet up on the porch rail and us kids had a porch swing and we'd just sit and swing and talk and visit with him. That was quite a treat. I've seen a lot of people come and go.

Our children both went to school here in Lafayette. They both graduated from Lafayette. They graduated when there was still a high school in Lafayette? Yes, in fact our son was in the last class to graduate there and he was in the first bunch of kids that went to the new elementary school - Rick was. Do you know what year he graduated? I think it was '72. Sandy and Wally moved to Louisville - it was growing at the time and they just liked the idea of the way things were going so they moved there; Rick, he stayed in Lafayette. I imagine he always will. With Mom and Dad. My sister moved; they wanted to get away, they were living in town and everyone was so close they wanted to get out so they moved out west of town. My brother, he lived in town for a while then he later moved out west of town. I have an uncle that lives here in Lafayette; he's 90 years old. What's his name? Damon Brown; he still lives in his home. There's women that stay there with him and take care of him. My aunt, his wife, died just about a year ago. And he's lived here all his life? Well, I think most of his life he has; I don't think he was born here.