

Oral Histories

Number: OH 27

Date: 8/1/90

Condition:

Good

Holdings:

WP Library

Initials: DP

Interviewee: Brown, Joseph

Interviewer: Davine Pera

Abstract: Side A

00-86 Bibliography information of family. Tells of first trip to Telluride when he was 6 months old. Brother, who was 15, drove the car with mother and children. Grandfather was here in 1872-1875 as a scout with the Hayden Survey. Grandfather patented claim in Ophir in 1876, later settled in San Miguel. He had the first dairy and post office in San Miguel. He laid out town and sold lots for \$15 each. He filed on the water rights at Mill Creek and later sold some of the water rights to the town, reserving his own for the dairy. He started the Boomerang Mine. Grandfather settled the old Brown Homestead at San Miguel. He went broke mining in 70's so started the dairy in '78 or '79.

86-161 He speaks of different years he attended school here. Talks about grandfather filing claim on the water at Mill Creek to have for irrigation of the valley. They took milk cows to Norwood for winter months. He put up hay and sold it to the miners to feed their horses they used in the mines for \$50 a ton. Describes the milk house at San Miguel and the process his grandmother used to make butter, which she sold in town. Speaks of Bob Alexander working for his grandfather.

161-213 His wife's great grandmother Elliott was married at his grandmother's home in San Miguel. She ran hotel and rooming house at Old Town at Placerville. Describes the quilt made for Chester A. Arthur's inauguration in 1881, by ladies in Ouray that was given to grandmother. Describes location of rooming house at Leopard Creek.

213-270 His grandfather milked 70 to 80 cows. Describes how they separated the cream from the milk to sell cream in town. Father drove the milk route to Telluride and Pandora. They carried it in 5 and 10-gallon cans on the wagon, and dipped it out at each house. Mentions other tools that were used in the dairy business. His mother and father left the dairy ranch in 1942.

270-327 father moved to Telluride at age of few months and lived here until he left for college. He was on the college football team in 1898. His parents were married at Bridal Veil Falls in 1903. They rode train out to Denver for their honeymoon. His mother was a Daniels and the family came here on the train in 1890. Mother's uncles all had dairies on Turkey Creek. Speaks of all the dairy farms on the mesas.

327-374 Describes grandfather clearing willow and raising hay on the valley floor and how they mowed it. Names different families that lived at San Miguel. The first school in the valley was at San Miguel. Talks about all the bars in Telluride at that time.

374-544 His mother was 10 when they came to the valley. She grew up here, attended school here. After graduating from college, she taught school in lower end of county, on Hastings and Specie mesas. He speaks of his brothers and sisters. Sister Lois married a Dunham who were big cattle family owners in the Norwood area. Tells story of reason parents left the area in the 40's.

544-603 Talks about placer mining he and father did on river by the city dump. Describes the equipment used and how it worked.

Side B

00-83 He finishes describing placer mining methods and equipment. Al Backman worked for his dad on project as a young man. Speaks of large placer operation on river at San Miguel.

83-108 He and his father went into the timber business on Boomerang for lumber for the mines. Describes the process used in timbering. Mentions that Navajo Indians burned off the area in 1877.

108-178 Recites story his grandmother told him about travelling from St. Louis to Los Angeles by horse and wagon. Made three trips across the country with her grandfather who was a minister, before she was married. She hated Indians, because of bad experiences. His grandparents were married in 1876. Memories of grandmother. Buffalo Bill was a great friend of his grandfather.

178-341 Tells several stories about the Breckenridge brothers. They were great hunters and Walter furnished meat for people of Telluride. He describes the skidding process they used in timbering. Reece Breckenridge was in Klondike in 1890's. Breckenridge boy's father came into the area with Freemont. Recites story of how the town of Breckenridge was named. Joe Oberto owned most of the valley at one time.

341-364 His grandfather and Homer Hasting came in and settled the valley. The Tolls owned half of claim with his grandfather in Ophir. The claim was dated in 1878.

364-394 History of wife, Elsie Ross. She was born in Redvale. They were married in Gunnison. Names their children. Joe attended 1st grade in Telluride, left and returned to attend the last 3 years of High School, graduating here

394-531 Speaks of all the weddings at Bridal Veil Falls in the early days. Speaks of the Brown's relationships to C.D. Waggoner. Recaps his life history. Speaks of great grandfathers diaries and all the history contained in them.

531-600 Recalls his life history. Speaks of great grandfather's diaries and all the history contained in them.

Description: sound cassette (90 minutes)

Subjects: Side A

Early history

Dairy at San Miguel

Grandmother's history

Dairy

Folk's history

San Miguel

Placer mining

Side B

Placer mining

Timbering

Grandmother

Breckenridge Boys

Personal history

C.D. Waggoner