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THELMA DAVIS Tape #1035

11/9/77 Interviewer: Effie Amicarella

I am taking the place of my late husband, Horace E. Davis, who started this paper on the Davis Family and wasn't able to finish it because he passed away December 15, 1976. L. M. Davis and family came to Lafayette from Denver, Colorado where they had lived since 1922, coming from Harrisburg, Missouri where Mr. Davis was engaged in the grocery business for 28 years, including living in Columbia, Missouri for 10 years where he owned and operated a wholesale grocery business; and educated his three children, Horace E., Claude W. and Bertha Lee. Mr. Davis came here for his health. When his asthma worsened in Denver, he moved to Lafayette and bought the Davis Grocery Store from Jake E. Cleary. His son, Horace, came here from Sturgeon, Missouri with his wife, Thelma, and son, George, six months old. He was cashier of the Citizens Bank of Sturgeon, Missouri. He joined his father and from there, they opened nine grocery stores, including Louisville, Erie, Brighton, Frederick, Niwot, Mead, and three in Lafayette. L.M. and Horace operated three stores for 17 years. Finally, Mr. Davis again became ill with asthma and retired and moved back to Denver and they sold all the stores.

Horace, again, was engaged in the banking business, becoming the State Bank Examiner of Colorado for 16 years before retiring.

Horace's son, George, was connected with the Davis Grocery Store as a delivery boy and he attended the Lafayette schools and graduated from high school in 1948. Then he graduated from the University of Colorado in 1953. He also served 18 months in the Air Force. After graduation, he worked at Midland Federal Savings and Loan Company for three years. He then joined the Mountain Bell Telephone Company in advertising and is still with them after 20 years.

L.M. and Horace employed many local people to work in their stores. Elmo Lewis was a native of Lafayette and worked for most of their stores, finally becoming manager of the Louisville store.

I remember distinctly them promoting sales in their grocery stores: bread for 5¢ a loaf, hamburger for 10¢ a pound and beefsteak, 15¢ a pound.

The older people remember their children hurrying after school to the DAVIS Store with a few pennies for candy. A glass case with a variety of penny candy was to be had, located at the front of the store.

At one time, the DAVIS Store in Lafayette employed 14 employees, including two meat cutters, two delivery boys, an employer who was Merrill Brown who operated a big truck that was sent to Denver each day to bring groceries to the different stores.

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I remember the miners were all working when we came here. I clearly remember the Columbine Mine. And when payday came, they would come to our store with their checks to be cashed, as there was no bank in Lafayette at the time. And they'd buy a supply of groceries for the two weeks. Even in those days, it was a common thing for a family to spend \$80. to \$100. every payday. I remember one family would buy 10 to 20 loaves of bread at one time.

Besides grocery business, they decided to buy old run-down houses and remodel, make modern, paint, put in sidewalks. At that time, in the 1930s, Lafayette's residential section was pretty well run down. I remember they bought paint by the barrel to paint houses. They sold the houses to people who really needed a place to live.

Mr. Davis, retired in Denver, passed away in 1962.

Thank you, Thelma.