

Interview with Jack and Ruth Davies
Tape #1071
May 6, 1986

This is Fred Stones on May 6, 1986. I'm at the home of Jack and Ruth Davies at 600 East Dounce here in Lafayette. This is for a continuing series of historical narratives that the library of Lafayette is putting together so that they can have the type of experiences that people had, on file, over the years that makes up part of our heritage and part of the historical background of Lafayette.

Jack, how long have you lived here in Lafayette? Sixty years. Sixty years. Where were you born? Sheldon, England. Sheldon, England and do you remember what ship you came over on? USS Avalock. And you came with your mother and father? Yes. How many brothers and sisters came with you? I had one brother and one sister. Did you come right straight to Lafayette? No. Where did you settle first? Iowa. In Iowa. How long were you there? We were in Iowa from 1911 until 1926. And then in 1926 you came to Lafayette? Yeah.

Okay Ruth, where were you born? In Colfax, Iowa. Colfax, Iowa, and when were you born? Do you mind telling me that? November 20, 1900. Okay. When did you come to Lafayette? In 1910, when the strike was on. Okay. I'll tell you, now there's a little story to that too. Well let me get this other in first, then we'll get back to that. Okay.

How did you meet? By friends. Harders. Harders was our neighbors, mother's neighbor and I got acquainted with his sister-in-law at that time. She was a friend of theirs, so I got acquainted with him that way. Now this is funny, he was working for Charlie Scholes and I come into the store, mother sent me to the store to get something and he was helping in the bakery. He was standing there looking at me and Charlie Scholes said "Well, what are you doing?" I'm looking at that lady out there in front, she's the nicest lady in this town and Charlie looked at him and looked at me ----. So one day when I went into the store, Charlie said to me, "you know Ruth, that guy says that you're the nicest lady in this town." Good I says, I'm glad of that, if I'm the nicest lady in town. Okay that's how you met, now when were you married? November 3, 1932. Okay, how many children did you have? We didn't have any. You didn't have any children. Okay. I had one son from my first husband. You were married before you married Jack in otherwords? Oh yes, I'd been married twice before I married Jack. Okay.

Now tell me this story. There was a story you were going to tell me and I asked you to wait just a second. Oh I don't know. My mind is ----. What were we talking about when ----? I forget so quick. It's not even funny now I'm telling you. What was I going to tell him?

Well let's move on, maybe it will come back to us. Who was your mother and father? (Ruth) Granville and Mary Channel. Mother's name was Mary Elrich and dad was just Granville Channel. Okay, and how many brothers and sisters did you have? There was nine children altogether and mother raised nine of us and her last baby that she had was - he died when he was six weeks old. That was during that strike. That's what I was going to tell you about. Okay. Alright. We was living down here below Barrowman's place and mother told my sisters, they was dropping scabs off down there at Irwinton and that was just a short distance from where we lived, and mother was afraid that one of us kids might get shot that there might be a shootout down there and she got pretty worried. She told my older sister, will you girls go up to Lafayette and see if you can find a house. We found a house over here where Tafoya lives over here and that was out first house that we lived in Lafayette and then the second house was down there where -- on the corner down

here and a --- mother was really afraid that one of us kids would get killed. As it was, a bullet came through the house. They had a shootout down there at Hake's place, you know, the scabs and the union guys. The union guys was in Hake's barn and they were well protected because they had wood in front of them and the scabs was shooting from up above in the tipple and they shot it out down there but that bullet came through the house, course our house then was just a tent house and the bullet went straight through and hit the stove and the bullet went in mom's bedroom. Mother said, "I'm glad nobody was sitting in here, they might have got shot". So then you moved? No, we still lived there but mother was kind of scared. She made us kids all go down the --- we had an outside cellar, she had a bed down there and everything for us kids ---- she says "I want you kids down in the cellar". When the militia came, well they would go right past our house, where they would go up to the Simpson Mine and Mitchell Mine. They'd bring their coal from up there down to the side track down here at the Simpson Mine. Us kids was raised right here on Baseline Road. Now let me ask you, you mentioned the town of Irvington, they dropped them off at Irvington. It was just a little dropoff place. All it was was just a little shelter and they called it Irvington. Well on up above, now Bill McDaniels he knows more about this than I do, and there was a , years ago on the old main down there, there used to be a little depot and they called it Irvington and that was down there on the old main. Bill McDaniels was telling me all about this. There was a little place down here below Barrowmans to the south of Barrowmans and he says "No, Irvington was up west more toward the Rankin Mine and I remember seeing a bunch of ties, you know, that was built up along side the railroad and that's what that was. It was just a little place or shelter and they called that Irvington. They also named the other one Irvington too, the other one down below where they dropped the scabs off. This is the first time that I have ever heard of Irvington, see. So I'm happy to have this on here.

Now lets start with you on your job at Charlie Scholes. How long did you work for Charlie? Not very, very long. Just a couple of months is all. What did you have to do there? Bake bread. That's when he had the bakery in the back end. Okay, how did you bake the bread? He had a large oven and we baked it in that large oven and we made straight dough, no sponge. We come to work, I think it was 6 O'clock in the morning, me and Fred the guy I worked with. He'd cut his thumb with a rye knife. He was cutting like this and he cut it. They didn't have nobody so I-- they told me to come up and help, that's how I happened to get up there. This was a full bakery in otherwords, did you make other than bread? Oh yeah. Pies and cakes. You baked a whole line of bakery goods in otherwords? Yeah, yeah. Okay. (Ruth) It was good too. Oh I know it was good because I've eaten some of it. Where did you work after that Jack? After that, I went on the section after that. Okay. I worked on the section, like I say we came here in February and I went on the section in May, the same year. Who was you working for on the section? George Harder. George Harder? That's Harry's uncle. What railroad was that? Burlington. The Burlington. How long did you work there? Oh, lets see, close to two years. Then I quit and went on the bridge gang. I thought that would be a better life than tamin' ties, which it turned out to be better. I'm sure it did. Where did you build the bridges? First we went from here to, well the twin bridges in Denver, just outside the roundhouse there on 23rd street, that was my first job. Then when we finished that we went up to Guernsey, Wyoming and we built a 100 foot electric turntable. We had to take the old one out and build forms and run the concrete and put in the electric turntable up there. Then we came down out of there on Thanksgiving Day. We had Thanksgiving dinner on the run, and we started eating in Brush, I don't know where we quit eating but we started eating in Brush. Then we went to McCook, Nebraska and the Republican River sometime or another before-hand had went, in stead of making the bend, why it went straight through and washed

the railroad track out and Highway 34. So they put in a great big culvert there and we worked on that and I was there when my, I was still there when my sister died of spinal meningitis and I came home for the funeral and I couldn't get in so I had to stay at Frank Rich's house. Well anyway when we went back we got through that job, so they started cementing in between the tracks of the roundhouse. There was nothing but dirt in there and made it a lot cleaner and easier to get around with wheels and we finished that and then we came down to Box Elder Creek between Kingsburg and Hudson and we had to raise it about a foot and a half, that bridge there. We got that just about done and we were ready to go to Omaha to build a subway and my dad and Mr. Harder came out and asked me if I'd come back to work for him, so I worked for him until '31, then I went to the Columbine. Okay, and this all happened before you were married now? Yeah, oh yeah. And you went to work at the Columbine Mine? Yes. How long did you work at the Columbine? Thirteen years. Tell me about what you were doing at the Columbine. When you first started at the Columbine, what were you doing? Well the first job they gave me, why I was to dig a ditch for the water to run away from the electric shop. Okay, this was up on top? Well when I got that finished why I done general work up on top, you know. Digging rock and timber and what all. Now did you work that whole 13 years on top? No, no. I only stayed up there about four years and then I went down below. Alright, now tell me what your general duties were or what you had to do upon top of the ground at the mine. Well most generally it was pick and rock on shakers. Okay. That was most generally. That was what we were put up there to do. Describe how that was done. The coal would dump out of the hopper and would come down the shakers and of course they were moving back and forth and then as the small stuff all disappeared then you had to pick the rock out of the big stuff before it got to the cars. Okay. You would just bend over and pick out your rock and you had a little shoot on top of you, right there by you and you'd put it in and it went outside and down into a car, little car, and then when there was no coal coming why you'd go down there and empty that bin out to the dump and bring it back then and when they started hoisting coal why you'd quit and go back up. Now describe how you got this car out on the dump, describe getting the car out to the dump. We had to press rails over the regular railroad, you know the Burlington, the cars coming down to the tipple, there was four lines see then the one made five lines. We had five sets of rails to lay and then push it out there by hand and upset it and bring it back in again. When you got through why if there was a, -if the engine wasn't bringing coal cars in why you could leave that one open but the others you had to open them too in order to let the cars get out when they got full. Okay. So you was constantly, if you wasn't pickin' rock you was layin' rails and pickin' them up or layin' them down till you got your bin empty and then you'd start over again. When you went down in the mine, what were you doing? Loadin' coal with my dad. Were you loading it by hand? Yeah. Okay. By hand. Describe how they -- a regular day in the mine, what would happen? A regular day in the mine. Why you would go in, you'd walk in, they'd assign you a place and you'd walk in and if you dared buried your tools someplace, if you wasn't there before, why you'd have to pick up your tools on the way in and carry them in and the first thing you'd do was check it out for timber to see if there was any timber to be set first and if you had any coal to load why you went ahead and loaded coal when they brought your car and when you cleaned up why then the machine would come and cut and after they got through cutting why then you'd drill your holes, maybe you had them in before, and then you'd shoot and load the bottoms out, then you would drill the tops then shoot that at noon and then you'd start loading again. Okay. That's all, then you'd gob your rock if they didn't want to pay you, if there wasn't that much to haul out why they'd just pay you to gob it. Now what do you mean by gobbing it? Just throwin' it to one side on the dirt side, see, cause this side over here was pillars, you had to bring it back see, you go up in there

300 feet and you left a 4 foot barrier all the way up for protection, see, and then you bring that four feet back cause after you broke through the 300 feet why then you bring that back and the machine didn't cut that you had to pick coal that. That was pick coal. You made more money that way. Okay. Did you load coal by hand all the time you were down in the mine? No, No, when they built the incline, the vein, why there was very little hand loading done then, very little, they were slowing down all the time and everybody was going on machines. In crews, it would take about 10 men to a crew and some crews would have 4 men on and that was called a panline and other crews would have 6 or 7 or maybe 8 men to a crew and that would be on the joy loader and that always made plenty of noise all the time. That's when I got leary of working in the mine because you couldn't hear Mother Nature working and then I went and worked in company work. Well let me stop you here right now. You said you couldn't hear Mother Nature working. Describe that to me. Well by describing that means that the roof was working, you know up above you. And it was noisy and what? Why couldn't you hear or what was going on that you was concerned about? Well you had machines running all the time. If the cutting machine wasn't running the joy loader was see, all the time. Then you had drillers in there, you had shot firers, you had buggy men in there, you had the loader head man in there and you had the operator and a helper and sometimes the timbermen too if it was getting pretty risky, you know. What was you listening for? For earth movement. You could hear that down there then? You could hear it, yeah, you could hear it. And what would that tell you then? That would tell you that you'd better hurry and get out. Okay. Now by this earth movement, what actually could you hear? Well you could hear the coal dribbling, see if you had, say that much top coal and all the rest was rock, well this here would start crackin' in between your timber and if you had a crossbar here and you had a crossbar up here, say an 8 feet span, why she would start dribbling in between these two crossbars and start coming down see, your adual weight pushed it down on you see and that's where she would generally cave would be in between your timbers and that would tell you that she's about ready to come on in. Okay. We had another way of telling. When the mice started movin'. Okay. Because no matter where you were at, you had mice. When they started movin', well it was time for you to move too. (Ruth) Well you know I heard dad talk one time about rats. When the rats start to , when they start gettin' out of the workin' place it's time to move because if you don't why you're going to get covered up. In other words they just had a sense about them that something was going to happen. That's right. I never seen no rats in the Columbine they was all mice. (Ruth) There must have been some over at the State Mine when dad worked at the State Mine because he was workin' at the State Mine when he said about the rats runnin'. It's strange how they sense this, isn't it? Yeah. (Ruth) The coal mine got my dad. In a cave in. Was he killed in the mine? (Ruth) Oh yes. He was killed in the State Mine over there. What happened there? Well, there was a cave in. He told my brother, my brother was working with him, and my dad said "Buster you get out in the holliage, get away from here, it's going to come. I guess he just tapped it and boy it come. It didn't come the way he wanted, it came from the back instead of the -- it scalped him and killed him. He had been in the coal mine - that's all he knew - he had been in the coal mine from the time he was nine years old until he was killed. He was 60 years old when he was killed. My mother couldn't get over it.

Now let me ask you, were you living in Lafayette and driving to the Columbine? Yeah. While you were working there? Yeah. Will you describe the Columbine Camp to me. Columbine Camp? It was a pretty nice camp, it was pretty good as far as coal mining camps go, you know. Everybody knew everybody. You had Mexicans on the west side of the tracks and you had all the rest on the east side. (Ruth) All the white people. (Jack) It was a pretty nice camp. Describe the normal house over

there. Normal house would be about four rooms some of them five, plain frame. How many houses were there there at the time? Approximately. (Ruth) I think there was quite a few. I don't know how many. Was there 25, was there 50, or --? Oh I'd say 50 to 60, Fred. Yeah. Did they have a store there? Had a store and a casino, a boarding house, that's about it. Did they have a school? (Ruth) No, they had to go to Erie School. They had to go to Erie? They bused them from the Columbine over to Erie? Yeah. Okay. Now you say they had a casino. Could anyone use the casino? They used it for meeting places and dances and private parties. What was the casino? Was that just another hall or what ---? Just a hall off the store, yeah. Okay. It wasn't a place, like they call now. in Las Vegas, a gambling casino? No, no. It was just a name for a hall, a recreation hall? Yes, that's right. Did the railroad come up to the Columbine Mine? Yeah, right up to it. Was there any truck traffic at the Columbine Mine? Eventually they did put in custom shoots. They had very good truck trade out there, very good. I remember two trucks that come in from Nebraska that would bring in corn and then take back coal. Why would they bring corn? To the elevators here in ---. Oh to the elevators, not to the mine? No, no. They'd come to the elevators in Denver then come on out and pick up coal and then go back. They had two trucks and they were so big that they couldn't get underneath, you know, the shoots so they all had to have lump coal. They didn't want no small stuff, they wanted the big stuff. So they were too long to get in here underneath the shoot so they had to go in endways and get in as far as they could and then take, oh four or five, tophands and as they put that coal in, maybe they'd come and it would be empty. Well they'd have to hoist coal in order to get 'em loaded. Well that would let the other crew to take care of the railroad cars so that means we've got four or five hours at time and a half but as I was saying, these trucks, one truck would take 19 ton and the other one would take 21 ton. Well we would have to carry it back and start stacking it, just like you would timber, you know, until we'd get up to the top of the bed and then work our way back that way. In otherwords, you was glad to see them come in there because you got the extra work? Yeah, well they were at that time, Fred they were selling it, after delivery, \$20 a ton. Now what they bought it for I never did know. You mean the trucks were selling it at \$20 a ton? Yeah, yeah. What was the normal price of coal around the area here? \$2.50 for a ton of coal and \$1.00 for delivery. (Ruth) Well if you was working at the coal mine, you got it cheaper. (Jack) Yeah, that's what I say. (Ruth) I don't know how much it was Jack. Well it was about \$2.50 a ton and a \$1.00 for delivery. Who delivered it for you? They generally had one company truck. Oh, they had their own truck that would deliver? They had one truck and if he was busy why they'd a ---- Joe Mathias and Frank Yakish and a -- they would haul coal. Old man Reed used to haul coal. Okay. Now when you worked over at the mine, who was the superintendent over there? The superintendent when I first went down was Henry Thomas. Do you remember any of the other men that were working over there? Yes, I can remember alot of men working over there. Can you name some of them for me? Well my first top boss was Johnny Page. My second top boss was George Schrockman. I worked with Boots Noble, Tommy Davis, Louie Brugger, Jack Long. Engineers was Bill Stevens, Joe Cundall, and Jack Long. Blacksmiths was Joe Faulkner and Pete Schwab. Electricians was Kahn, Harry Coen and Forrest Yunkman. The rest of the crews was Mexicans on clean-up crews and all that. That's great to get these names because you know alot of them are gone. Oh yeah. So it's great to get these names down where people can remember those times. (Ruth) I'll bet some of the old coal miners would sure remember it. Yes, sure, you bet.

What led you then to leave the Columbine Mine? Shortage of work. When the railroads transferred from coal to diesel, Columbine practically shut down. In other-

words when they were burning straight coal on the McCook division, we were working five and six days a week and summertime we'd work three and four. Now other mines would be shut down and we'd still be working. It was a good place to work because it would ride you through the summer, then when they started hiring for winter why you was already there, you didn't have to get rehired again. How many men normally worked at the Columbine? I'd say, when we were going full blast, I'd say 300. So it was one of the larger mines around the country? After the Simpson shut down, yeah. Approximately how much coal could they put out in a day? Do you remember? No I don't Fred. I really couldn't say because not being on that end -- Louie Brugger could tell you or Tommy Davis could have told you but I couldn't. When you left the Columbine, did you work in any of the other mines around? No, that's the only mine I ever worked, Fred. Okay. Where did you go to work when you left the Columbine? I went to work McMurtry Manufacturing Company Paint and Varnish. Down in Denver? Yes. And you was down there for how many years? 29. 29 years. I know that's where you retired from. Yeah.

Okay. Now let's go back a little bit farther now again and either one of you now, tell me what the town was like. The town itself, the business part. What was the physical part of the town like when you first came here. You go ahead now, you tell him what you thought about the town when you come up here. (Ruth) Well we thought it was pretty nice. There was a clothing store, course at that time it was a man's store, Jake Alderson run it and after he married Afelda, why then he put ladies clothes in but before it was all men's clothing. It was a man's store. There was the company store, they had clothing and we had two drug stores at that time, in town. We had two mortuaries, Howe had both of them, if I'm not mistaken. The company store, it was quite spiffy but alot of the union people didn't want to go there because they called it the scab store. You know that word scab sure follows a person through their life. It was really a nice little town and there was something doin' all the time. What was doing? Well, they'd have dances and finally at the last why they'd never have a dance, it just seemed like the town after that 1910 strike, it seemed like everybody closed up and nothin'. Here lately, here the last few years, more things than one is goin' on. Now before the 1910 strike --? It was a nice little town. Alright, and you could get most anything you needed? Yes we could. Okay. Well during the depression, that knocked the heck out of everything too. People broke, the stores went broke and this and that and so on. It just ruined the stores. What stores went broke during the depression? What stores closed up? We had what they called a union store and that closed up before the depression. Who ran that? Old man Green, Jack Green, they called that the union store, the union people did. Where was that? Right down there on main street, that a Nazarene, just across the street from that. We had two banks at one time and then some guy embezzled, they blasted the bank and robbed the bank. I don't know if they ever caught them, whoever it was, they blamed it onto the banker cause he left town after that. That was one of old lady Miller's sons. What the heck was his name? I can't think of it now. Did you ever know of Mrs. Miller? I'll tell you we was poor and our folks they --- she had some old stuff she wanted to give away and mother, she sent us kids down to get it. Well she was real snotty with us, so we went back home and told mother what she said. She was a big member of the Congregational Church and we called that the scab church because the scabs all went to that church, boy if they went to any other church they got the heck beat out of them. If they went to the Methodist Church, they got beat up, if they went to the Baptist Church, they got beat up. The scabs had no place in the churches here in town. People were sure against the scabs. You know when I look back on this, it's kind of funny. If a scab walked up the street, he'd sure get knocked upside down.

Was there quite a few scabs in the town? Oh down at the Simpson Mine, there was all kinds of them down there. I don't know how many houses they had for them. They had a big bull pen, a big fence around there and I don't know how high the fence was but it was pretty high and they had a guard standing at the gate all the time and an old man by the name of Sherrat, he was the night watchman there, and he had a beard and the union kids they'd go by there and they'd say "Bad Charlie, Bad Charlie". That poor old guy sure took a ribbing, because he was guarding the scabs see and the union kids all called him a "Bad Charlie".
Was this during the 1910 strike? Yes. How long did that last? I don't know. I'm telling you, it lasted a long time. It started in 1910 and I think it went until 1913 or 1914, something like that. It was the longest strike because the militia came in and then the militia left and they sent the regulars in, the regular army and it lasted a long time. Everybody was glad when it was over with.
How did you people live? Well they gave us rations. From the union? Yeah, the union gave us rations. I remember one time that my dad had a little bit of a job with one of the farmers out here and somebody went and squealed and said that Channel was working and so they cut us right off of the welfare and mother said, "Now what will we do?" Dad says, "Well we'll live." I guess somebody was jealous because dad had got a few days work. Mom had a big family, she had nine kids. To this day I hate a union, I despise a union. Down there at McMurtrys I had to join a union but that was against my grain. I hated it. I can't see what the heck a union does for a person. You might get a little bit more in wages but boy it sure knocks the heck out of things. I sure hate a union.

After you were married, you were married in 1932 did you say? That was right in the middle of the depression, what did the depression do to the town? (Ruth) Well I really don't know. (Jack) Well I think, Fred, that it started separating the town. (Ruth) That strike was what separated the town. Anybody that was a scab a union person wouldn't have anything to do with them. They were still ostracized nobody had anything to do with them because that word "scab" with union people --.
Now this was clear up into the 1930's and there were still people around that was called the "scabs" then? Oh yes. But during the depression, how did you people get by? (Jack) Well I worked all during the depression. I worked at the Columbine all during the depression. So it didn't actually affect you like it did alot of people? No, it didn't. I didn't make an awful lot of money but it kept enough on the ---. You know we'd go in the whole in the summer and then get out in the winter and then just fall back again the following year and do the same thing over again. How long did the depression last around this country? (Ruth) I don't know. (Jack) Well a'---. How long were times hard? (Jack) I'd say times were hard right up until around '40 or '41, when the war broke out. Till the war broke out? During the depression were there alot of people that were having problems in the town? (Ruth) I really don't know. (Jack) I don't think there was too many, Fred. I really don't. That's when people started getting out and working. They found out there was soemthing they could besides coal mining. Okay. That's what I mean about separation, you know. It used to be everybody here worked in the mines and then it got so that there was very few. Everybody was going out as a tile layer, carpenter, electrician, and brick layer and all that jazz you know. They all found out that they could something besides coal mining and away they went.

Did you ever have any problem with Black Lung? No. Never, did. In otherwords, you hadn't worked long enough over there to actually get it? I was asked by one of the people that go out and ask you if you have Black Lung and I told them I would like to know whether I did have Black Lung or not and she says, Okay. So she wrote down my service records and that's the last I heard of it. Well then one day I got

a letter from Washington, D.C. to go to Avery in Boulder and get examined. So I went over there and Avery was in California but his nurse done the examination. They give me my breather test and that's all. Well in the meantime, he had called up from California and said, "I'm on my way home. It won't be long and I'll be in the office." So she told me, so I thought well I don't want to wait around an hour or an hour and a half so I just walked downtown. I'd never seen the mall, so I just, you know, it was something that I had never seen before and I walked around long enough till I thought it was time and I came back to the office and I was in there about 15 minutes and he called up and says, "I'm in Stapleton Airport. I'm goin' to go home and get me a cup of coffee and a sandwich and I'll be right down". Well he did, he came right down and he took a blood gas test, he run a needle right up in here and that's all he done. Then I waited, oh maybe three weeks, then I get an answer back from Washington saying they had to turn me down because I had 97½% natural breathing and you'd have to be down below 85. Well that was good news then. Yes, that's what I wanted to hear then. That's right.

During the war, what did you do? During the war? I worked at McMurtys. You was right there during the whole time. In otherwords you didn't serve in any of the services? No, I quit McMurtys and went up to Hill Fields, Utah on the fire department for six months and then came back and went right back to McMurtys again. You was here in Lafayette most of the time during the war then? Yeah. What did the town do during the war? What were some the things that happened here in the town during the war? Well I was fire chief at the time and we had, naturally, civilian defense. It had to be organized through the city council, I'd say, the mayor, the police department and the fire department. You had to have your town divided up into four districts. Then you had to have your block wardens. That would be four and then they would have their men in their groups to do the patrolling whenever they had a blackout. We went to meetings, in case of bombings or anything like that, so that we knew what to expect and what to do and what not to do. Did you ever have any experience with the ration board? No, Fred I didn't. The rationing board, I done good on that as far as rationing is concerned because Dr. Hurt was on the board and if someone went to him and said I've got to have a ride to Denver, well he'd call me up and say, "Have you got a load"? I'd say, well maybe I could use one more. He'd say, "Okay, you see Jack Davies". We'll see that you get plenty of gas and tires or whatever accessories you need. Just let us know and you'll get them. So you could take people back and forth to Denver? Yeah, yeah that's right. I didn't have too many war workers, I just had one is all. (Ruth) That one girl that worked in that big building. (Jack) No, she wasn't in the war department. It was a pool deal that helped the transportation. Yeah, yeah it was a pool deal. (Ruth) Dr. Hurt used to tell everybody that needed a ride to go see Jack Davies. Do you know who was the head of the ration board here in Lafayette? (Ruth) Well Carrie Nelson, she was a big shot in it. Yeah she worked up there for a long time. Well I just know Carrie Nelson and Dr. Hurt. I think Lee Moore was on it but I'm not sure. I think that's about it. (Ruth) I know Carrie was the one that if you wanted sugar you had to see her. You see sugar was rationed and alot of other things was rationed too. Sometimes she'd break down and let a person have a little more. What the heck was that girl's name that rode with us and she was the lady that sold popcorn at the movie. What was her name? (Jack) Casegi. (Ruth) One time the girl said that they got their ration of sugar and somebody put salt in the sugar and they went to Carrie and told her that somebody put salt in the sugar and Carrie gave them an extra amount of sugar.

When did you join the fire department? '38. In 1938. Do you still belong to the fire department? As a retired fireman. Tell me about the fire department. How it was organized in 1938 and what kind of equipment did you have. In 1938, we had the old truck, the 1926, the one that they built in Lafayette. That's the only one we had at that time. And you carried all of your equipment on that truck? Everything on the old truck, that's all we had. Okay. You didn't still used the hose carts then? No, not unless we had to, you know. (Ruth) They never used that unless they went to a, what was that they had up in Longmont, those contests. (Jack) No, that's different. How many men were on the volunteer fire department? As an average. We were allowed 42. How many were actually active? Active, oh I would say about 15 or 20 out of the 42. You'd have a few that you took in and then that would be the last you would see of them. How were you notified when you had a fire or an emergency? At that time, we had the bell at first. They'd ring that whenever there was a fire and they rang it again to call people to the meetings, to our department meetings and then they installed the siren on top of the City Hall. The old one I believe is still sitting there. What were some of the places in town that burned, that you remember, that were spectacular fires? I'd say the picture show for one, the Methodist Church for two, the Elevator is three, Black Diamond Mine was four, Liley Mine was five, and the Gambles Store was a good one, it could have been worse you know. Then let's see, Mayhoffer Hotel, right there across from The Hub on the corner there. When you were firechief, how long were you firechief? One year. Were there any of these big fires happen at that time while you were firechief? I really can't remember Fred. I know that I think the one at the Elevator and the Methodist Church and I was working for "Ham" Roberts when the store burned down, I mean the picture show. I was working for "Ham" then. That was after you had retired down at McMurtrys? Yeah, yeah, that was after I retired.

Do you have any stories now, we're getting close to the end of this, do you have any stories of the town or your experiences here in the town that you'd like to put on this tape? Well, all I could say is that it was a good town and it still is a good town as far as towns is concerned but I think there's too many strangers. You don't know anybody anymore. It makes it bad, and by all the building going to the south, is making it bad for senior citizens, transportation, shopping, doctors, which is quite a change. (Ruth) I'll say it is.

How many of the older friends, that you have, are still around? That you've known for a long, long time. Well, the guys I used to run around with, let's put it that way. You want to put it that way? That's fine. I have only about one left in Lafayette. Joe Bagdonas and my other buddy died, Albert James, I used to chase around with him. Angelo Fornish is gone, Ernie Dier is gone. Jim Lastoka, he lives in Louisville, we used to run around together and that's about all Fred. (Ruth) Well I still got one friend. Alright, who's that? Bill McDaniels. We grew up in this neighborhood and he comes up here, one of the neighbors down here couldn't figure why Bill McDaniels would come here and visit me when Jack wasn't home. How come he goes up there to visit her? Is he related to here or something? We're just very good friends. We've been friends all our lives. We were both kids raised together right next door to one another. We lived over on Baseline and they lived down a little bit farther on Baseline. We were all kids together.

How long did you work for "Ham" Roberts? Well, I retired in '69 from McMurtrys so I worked '70, '71 and '72. I worked for three different people. I worked for "Ham", Hale and McCrae in that same building. What did you do in there? Just general. Just general work, stocking and a ---? Yeah, stocking, unloading trucks, carryout, janitor, that's about it. Just everything that had to be done? Yeah.

We're getting close to the end of the name now and before this thing shuts off, I want to take this opportunity to thank you both for letting me come down here and talk to you and get some of these remembrances on this tape. I want you to know that the library appreciates it and that it will become a permanent addition to the library.

(Ruth) I've got your picture in this graduation class. What year was that? That was in Erie, early date. I don't know just what year that was, I'd have to look it up. Fern Woods is on that picture and one of the --- there was six graduates on that, but that was a graduation picture. Those are all precious to me. Oh, well they're precious to the whole community here. How long have you been keeping these? Oh, I started in when Pat went into the service. I started cutting clippings then. Do you remember the music teacher, Mrs. McCready? I got her picture in there, in one of those scrapbooks. Oh I've got Dr. Porter and Dr. Braiden. Oh, that's fantastic! I'm proud of all of them. Well of course! (Jack) You've been here quite awhile, haven't you Fred? Well I've been here since 1933, yeah.

(Ruth) I haven't been able to see very good. Since I've had these strokes I can't see too good and I'm anxious to get started back at these. How many of these books do you have? Oh I've got a slug of 'em. (Jack) You can't get 'em, you know you can't. There's no use you lookin'. Well just approximately how many do you have? 10, 12 or 20? (Jack) No, you don't have that many. (Ruth) I've got about six of them. (Jack) I'd say 6. Would you be willing to have the library copy those and bring them back to you? (Ruth) Just so I got them back. I don't want to lose them. I'll tell you what you do. I will talk to them, with your permission, I will talk to Blanche Moon, you know Blanche?-- (Ruth) Oh, yeah. I will talk to Blanche and then she can get in touch with you about these things and make arrangements to have them copied. This is a mine of information. (Jack) Now about obituaries see, she has an awful good collection of obituaries. Oh, that's great. (Ruth) I cut all the obituaries out and Wilford Dodds, one time he said " Aunt Ruth, do you know when my dad - something about his dad - and I said a---- (Jack) He didn't know when his dad died. (Ruth) He said, I'd like to know. So it was in one of my scrapbooks, when he died. So I cut it out of the paper and I kept it. So I handed him that little clipping and so one day when he came, I says "Willie, I don't know whether this will do you any good or not but -----."

NOTE: In this last paragraph, Jack, Ruth and Fred are talking about some scrapbooks that Ruth has kept that is full of newspaper clippings from the Lafayette News and the Boulder Camera for many, many years. They are full of history about the City of Lafayette and the people of Lafayette. The scrapbooks were brought to the library and Donna and Blanche xeroxed all the pages from the scrapbooks so that they could be compiled and placed with other information on the history of Lafayette.