

ALFRED L. OWENS
JULY 24, 1979

You want me to start now? I was born in 1893 in month of November.

Frances: You don't know the day.

Alfred: Ya I don't know the day, but I know the month of November 20th, 1893.

Frances: And where were you born Mr. Owens?

Alfred: In Franklin Washington

Frances: In Franklin Washington?

Alfred: Un huh, right about 40 miles from Seattle,

Frances: And how.' long did you live there?

Alfred: Oh I lived, we lived in Franklin until I was about 8 years old, and then we came to Bevera Missouri thats where my sister was born, and then from their we came to Iowa, Youngstorm Iowa. And from Youngstorm Iowa, we came to Wyoming. And from Wyoming we fame to Colorado

Frances: Have you lived here ever since?

Alfred: Un huh and uh we lived and moved to Pictou first.

Frances: What year was that?

Alfred: That was in, I think about 1902. And then we moved to Pictori and lived up here in Walsen Camp. And after we moved from Walsen camp, we went to Rugby, and thats where I grew up. And then in 1913 I started working in the mines.

Frances: How old were you?

Alfred: I was 16 years old.

Frances: What were the mines like in those days?

Alfred: The mines was much different; than they are now. Practically all hand work, men had to dig Coal with a pick and shovel and load it. They didn't have machines in the Mines

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then.

Frances: What did you get paid in those days?

Alfred: Well when I first started in the mine I got \$1.10 trapping the door, and then from that I went to driving a Mule, I got \$2.95 and 'worked 10 hours a day.

Frances: Thats a long day.

Alfred: Uh huh, and then after that I went to loading Coal.

Frances: Tom Bodycomb, can you remember that.

Alfred: I've heard of the Bodycomb's yes, he was the boss driver up there and in fact when I would go to work I wanted to load coal, and he'd always offer somebody to make me drive a Mule. I was also working with a man named Lukenbough, I think Sam Taylor married his daughter. I can remember those things back but its pretty hard to remember all things.

Frances: Yes it is, you have to stop and think about it don't you?

Alfred: Uh huh, and then in 1913 I think that was the year The United States went to War the 1st World War or wasn't it.

Frances: Uh Huh, Were you in the war Mr. Owens?

Alfred: No. I went to the army but I never did go to war.

Frances: Where were you at?

Alfred: Well they sent me to camp Huntstone and the Armistice was signed in November, I didn't get to go, but I was in the army at that time.

Frances: And Camp Huntstone was in what State?

Alfred: In Kansas.

Frances: What did you do after you were in the Service?

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Alfred: I came back here, the mines to work, the bot-
tom dropped out and there was no work around here, and I went
to Des Moines, Iowa and started working for Chicago Great West-
ern. Stayed there till the mines started up, and I came back
to Walsenburg. ,

Frances: When were you married Mr. Owens?

Alfred: I was married in lets see, I didn't come back to
Walsenburg, I went to Rouse and went to work there, in the mines
my mother lived in Rouse at the time, my step-father got kil-
led in Rouse, so I worked in the mines for awhile.

Frances: You probably worked in all the mines didn't you?
Did you work in the Big Four?

Alfred: No, I never did work in Big Four, but I worked
in the Walsen, and the Robinson and then I worked in Rouse, and
then I went to Raton, New Mexico and I worked down there in the
Mines, I worked in Gardner, I worked 15 miles from Raton, I
was Kind of a runabout, but most of my time I put in Walsen-
burg.

Frances: Theres really been a big change in the mines since
then?

Alfred: Oh! Yes.

Frances: Did you work in any of the modern mines

Alfred: Well Yes in Utah, I worked in Calmers Utah, I ran
a machine there, cutting coal and was shooting it down and put-
ting it in conveyors. The conveyors would take it out, that's
the first mine that I worked in when they had conveyors. Since
I came back, I worked out here in Ravenwood, Morning Glory.
When I worked in Ravenwood, Thompson had that mine out there.

Frances: What year was that?

Alfred: It was in 1953.

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Frances: What were you making then? And what kind of wages were you making when you quit?

Alfred: We were making pretty good money then, you know in fact, when the 2nd World War was, I was making around, close to \$16,000 a year. That was good money in those days, but the government was taking part of that, a big part of that. Then after the War was over I worked there til I got hurt in the mine and stayed off about a year. I went back in the mine, and I worked until I was cleaning out from the machines, I was what you called a Mucker, and when Bill Crump got killed out there. He was the machine loader, I had taken over and worked with him, and I was also working with Ralph Roybal, until I finished out there and I haven't worked in the mines since.

Frances: What was it like during the strike Mr. Owens? Do you remember the strike?

Alfred: The 1913 strike, I was in Rouse at the time, I didn't know too much about the strike, the mines were working, pretty good, during that time. We never had no trouble in Rouse but up here they had trouble.

Frances: Just certain places were worse than others?

Alfred: Uh huh, In Hastings Nebraska, in Hastings Colorado they had an awful time down there, I can remember I was working in the mines when they had that Melita, killed all them people.

Frances: Down at Ludlow?

Alfred: Uh huh, I was working then.

Frances: You didn't see anything that went on or you were not involved in anything.

Alfred: No, I wasn't involved in it, I didn't see any of it at all.

Frances: Do you think that it helped any? Then having

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the big strike and everything? Do you think it helped the Miners in any way?

Alfred: It helped them an awful lot. There hasn't been a big strike like that since in Colorado, and you know they have a memorial day, every year down there. To bring the attention to the people what happened in the mines. The miners what they are getting they deserve it.

Frances: Earned it, Right?

Alfred: Yes, the mines was very dangerous when you go in there, you don't know whether you're coming out or not.

Frances: Well like you say they haven't had a big strike like that since. It must have been tremendous.

Alfred: Yes, it helped an awful lot.

Frances: The conditions improved a lot in the mines after that didn't they?

Alfred: Oh! yes.

Frances: From the pay and everything else?

Alfred: The pay and everything else helped. After they put the machinery in the mines to cut coal and things like that, it made a difference. The men didn't have to work as hard.

Frances: I've heard some of them say that they treated the animals better than they did the men. In some of the mines before they had the union & everything.

Alfred: Well I don't know too much about that, but the thing of it is, when you worked in them days in the mines, if you laid off a certain amount of time, there were a lot of men, and they could get miners anywhere. If you laid off you just lost your job. When they sent you to a place to

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work and if you didn't work there, there was someone else to take your place.

Frances: You didn't attend the schools here?

Alfred: I went to school in Primrose.

Frances: To what grade?

Alfred: I went to school in Rouse, and in Primrose and went to school in Pictou, I was a little bitty fellow. I think Pictou school was the first school I went to, and after we moved to Walsen camp, up here I went to the school. There wasn't no Y.P.W.W. you know the Y.M.C.A. there was nothing like that then. The houses up there was 2 stories. They had apartments, upstairs, and downstairs, and 2 families in every house then.

Frances: How many was in your family Mr. Owens?

Alfred: Well I come out of a big family theres 5 boy and 4 girls. Me my father and Harry were the only ones that worked in the mines. My father was a musician and he served in the army, He was in 9th Calvery, my father married my mother when he was in the army.

Frances: Could that have been the Civil War?

Alfred: No, it was the Spanish American War.

Frances: Do you remember them telling you anything about the olden days, your grandparents? Did you know your grandparents?

Alfred: I knew my grandparents on my mothers side, but my fathers side I didn't know them.

Frances:: Where did they come from?

Alfred; My mother was born in Bevera, Missouri, and my grandfather was born in Seattle, they were miners. My grandfather was a miner. I have some folks in Seattle yet, and

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there was one of my uncles, I never did see him, but he was the youngest. My mothers mother was a full blooded Indian.

Frances: What kind?

Alfred: I don't know what kind of Indian it was, my mother was half Indian, So I got a little Indian blood in me

Frances: Do you remember anything about any of the outlaws in the old days?

Alfred: No, I don't know much about the outlaws, we heard of them Jesse James, and all of that bunch, but was never around them.

Frances: What was Pictou school like when you went there?

Alfred: I notice children in school in them days learned a lot more than they do now days. Because I never went to but the 5th grade in school, because I had to go to work, and help raise the family. But I do know this I only went to the 5th grade and theres a lot of the children that graduated here in High school, I helped them. We had short division, long division, and things like that when I went to school. We learned our times tables, learned how to add and subtract, and spelling classes. Children were more apt to learn than they are today.

Frances: It was more a luxury to have an education in those days, Now then it's different

Alfred: Yes It's different altogether.

Frances: But like you say; You only went to the 5th grade because you had to work, and children of taday has got it easy.

Alfred: Thats for sure. Theres a different type of child today, than when I came up, you didn't see children fighting, and drinking and drunk and things like that. Smoking cigarets you didn't see that. You could see children playing together, and didn't see fighting all the time.

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Frances: They got along better?

Alfred: Yes

Frances: What about the people, The people got along better too didn't they?

Alfred: Everbody in the camps got along real well, No you didn't see fighting and people killing one another, In fact killing when I come up I didn't see much of it. But now days somebody's getting killed right around us.

Frances: What sort of law was there in those days?

Alfred: The law was good, you didn't see so many laws. At the camp they didn't have any, they had what you called night watchmen's. They didn't have to much law.

Frances: Now weren't those Marshals, werent they more or less to protect the mine property?

Alfred: Night watchmens, Yes, thats what they did.

Frances: They really didn't bother the people that much?

Alfred: No, they didn't bother the people at all. We didn't have no trouble in the camps.

Frances: Kind of a neat way to grow up Wasn't it?

Alfred: Yes it was real nice, in fact you didn't see much trouble.

Frances: What kind of games did they have, and thing they played in the camps.

Alfred: They had baseball, and they there used to be a Mexican game they called shinney, and its something like golf, it had like a golf stick. In fact we used to go up in the woods and get wood & bend it, you see it had a bend and you had to a ball and you couldn't pick it up with your hands, You just hit it with the shinny and you'd go from goal to goal. Then we used to play Rugby football.

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Rugby football was played with an oblong ball, made like a football, but you couldn't pick it up with your hands, you kicked it.

Frances: I'll bet that got pretty rough?

Alfred: Yes, it was rough, You couldn't pick it up with your hands, and you had goals to go to.

Frances: Sounded like fun.

Alfred: Uh huh, Alot of bruises to.

Frances: Were there any special holidays that you celebrated in those days or was it just like it is now?

Alfred: There was the 4th of July, and the same holidays.

Frances: Did they get teogether more and have big picnics, and family get together.

Alfred: Yes, out here there used to be a Grove, big trees, they used to have barbeques out there and there were alot of trees.

Frances: Do you remember when they built the Pavillion, wasn't there a swimming pool there too? In back of your house over here?

Alfred: There was a swimming pool ritht back here but the Pavillion it was done in later years. Way back then they did not have no pavillion and when Rouse shut down they moved some of the things up here that they had in Rouse, they used to have a good time, you dinn't have to come to town to have a good time. In the camps they had dances & football games and tournaments and things like that in the camps. You could have more good times in the camps than you could coming to town. You didn't have to go for, and the baseball games, we used to travel from place to place, each camp, the C.F.G.I. Ballplayers, they got good jobs, they'd send off and get them

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good ball players and they'd give them good jobs.

Frances: Just like they do now? They help them out in their jobs or whatever if they play good ball?

Alfred: um hum.

Frances: How about your church Mr. Owens? What church do you belong to?

Alfred: The Church of God in Christ.

Frances: Has it been here a long time?

Alfred: Its been here, It started up in Camp, Walsen Camp.

Frances: In those days?

Alfred: Yea, started out in Walsen Camp and they moved one of the houses down here and put it on 3rd St. and its been going ever since.

Frances: And that was since when?

Alfred: I don't know when the Walsen shut down in fact, when the Walsen shut down I can't remember the year. They moved people to Cameron and some went to Big Four. I wasn't working around here then, and I can't remember.

Frances: Do you remember when they had the big Flu epidemic?

Alfred: Lets see when they had the flu epidemic, I was in Ravenwood, working there and let's see, Wait a minute let me see them, when that Flu was wasn't it in, right after World War I in 1918.

Frances: Did many people die?

Alfred: In 1918 I think I was just getting out of the Army.' They mustered me out of the Army. in 1919, thats when I got out, then I came home. Well I can remember now', when that Flu emipemic, I was in Camp Loues Camp in Kansas. because a lot of the soldiers died there. Let's see, I was in the Army at that time,

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that was the beginning of 1917 and 1918. Thats when the Flu epidemic was. I was in the Army then.

Frances: Do you remember your Grandmother, Did she have any remedies, that she used to give you for, well whatever you had?

Alfred: Well I don't know about my grandmother but my mother used to make different, she used to get different herbs out from the hills and make teas, and things like that. and I know my mother used to get some kind of stuff and make soap out of it, I can remember that. I don't know what it is, what it was. She used to get weeds and things and make some kind of medicine tea, tea like and she'd give it to us.

Frances: And it worked?

Alfred: Uh huh.

Frances: Was the soap made out of Soap weed?

Alfred: I don't remember.

Frances: You didn't help do it?

Alfred: No, I didn't help do it No. I never was in fact, the girls done the work around the house and then the boys done the work outside.

Frances: They made the Money?

Alfred: Yes.

Frances: That's a pretty good fair exchange.

Alfred: Yes, now theres 3 of us boys went to work and help-ed raise the family. The other children got to go to school.

Frances: Thats kinda the way it was in those days wasn't it?

Alfred: Yea, we had to go to work early.

Frances: You learned the hard way maybe thats how come you know as much as you know because you learned it the hard way.

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Alfred: Yea, We had to learn. From the school of hard knocks, like my mother says.

Frances: Did you have any chores that you did around the house, or did you just do the work.

Alfred: In fact the girls done the work inside and the boys done the work outside. We you know hve to get in Coal and wood & things like that, In fact we know what we had to do and we done that. Our folks didn't have to tell us what to do. I know of the 1st 3 boys the oldest first 3 boys when we would help one another outside, and our work wasn't hard.

Frances: It a far cry from what the kids do these days isn't it?

Alfred: Yea, alot different from the child of today. We would help one another and I know in the house the girls would help one another my mother would get up and fix breakfast and things like that the girls would clean up the house and wash the dishes and things like that. They in fact taken care of the inside, (and helped with the little children too.)Yes thats right (I think thats why people could have larger families because the older ones would help with the little ones, and it wasn't quite so hard.

Frances: Do you remember what it was like during the depression Mr. Owens?

Alfred: During the depression, I was in Ravenwood at the time of the depression and they was given commodaties out, I used to bring. I had what you call Erskin car, and I used to bring people from Ravenwood over here to get commodities and, one day I asked her, Mrs Summers she was the one giving out the commodities, I asked her for some commodities and she

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said Alfred, I can't give um to you and I asked her why, she said I can't eat that automobile, she said but you can run it.

Frances: And what were they just staples? What kind of things did they give?

Alfred: Well I don't know the commodities they'd give them different dried stuff, you know it was all in a pack and they used to take it.

Frances: Like dried milk, eggs?

Alfred: Eggs, and things like that and I was bringing them over here and taken them back. In fact when I leved in Ravenwood during the depression, we had a garden and we raised alot of things and I was working aroung about 4 or 5 days a month. for the government. I never did get on the W.P.A.

Frances: Just made it by whatever you could find?

Alfred: Well You know I don't know I always been able to take care of myself always. I don't know how it came about but I've never have the depression, didn't bother me much we planted gardens and then I worked 4 or 5 days a month and what I made we put it to use.

Frances: Well things were very cheap then too weren't they?

Alfred: Yes. awful cheap.

Frances: If you just had the few pennies it took to buy them, you were lucky.

Alfred: Yea, you know the money then we had and they were awfully good to me out there in Ravenwood in fact, I didn't pay house rent. Well I'm trying to think Tommy Thompson. I believe was running that mine at that time Durring the depression, and they were awful good to me too. In fact he was good

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to everybody, Tommy Thompson was a good man. And the little bit of work he helped me out quit a bit too.

Frances: It kinda works both ways, doesn't it?

Alfred: Uh huh, yep.

Frances: What kind of vegetables did you grow?

Alfred: Everything, well we grow cabbage, lettuce, different things, beets, and cucumbers and things like that and we had an Indian man he was a bachelor out there and he would help me in the garden and when the cabbage would grow up, we would dig a ditch and put the head down and cover it up. When the snow would fall you talk about something good. When you'd take the cabbage up you'd only take 1 at a time, you know but after the frost fell on them they were really good.

Frances: And this man was an Indian?

Alfred: Uh huh he was an Indian neame Henry Clay in fact, he died in my house.

Frances: He was one of your friends?

Alfred: Yes, Well you see, he was a full blooded Indian and he knew my folks when they were in Arkansas, and he knew all of us, see in fact, when my father, I had a brother born in Gardner, New Mexico, I don't know, In them days people did not stay long in one place. I can remember we lived in Wyoming, Arkansas and Colorado. I can remember that.

Frances: How did you travel in those days, did you have a car?

Alfred: No, there was no cars, Trains.

Frances: You went on train?

Alfred: Yea, in fact you didn't see no automobiles when I was coming up. The first automobile I living in Primrose I was going to school and I think it

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was a Studebaker and us kids followed that thing all over camp. Yes it was a Studebaker thats the first car I ever seen.

Frances: Did it go very fast?

Alfred: Well it don't look like it went very fast to me, in fact we would run behind it. Well he got a kick out of us the first automobile we ever seen and he didn't run it too fast.

Frances: But when you traveled it was mostly by train?

Alfred: Train, mostly by train, there wasn't no buses or things like that when I was little.

Frances: What was the Country like? It isn't like it is now right? Even the Country was different?

Alfred: Oh Yes." You know you didn't have no paved streets and things like that, just natural roads. You didn't have no paved streets & things like you have now Oil roads and things like that. I can remember the streets here there wasn't no pave ment on it at all. and I can remember in Walsen Camp you didn't have no oiled roads & things like that and you know I'll tell you an old person around here I can remember them. We lived right close to them up in Walsen Camp. Youricks, George Your- ick. We lived right across from them, up in Walsen camp, they were raised up there, In fact I think he had some brothers and sisters that was born here.

Frances: Now these Indians you talked about were there alot of Indians around at the time you were growing up, these people that were friends of yours?

Alfred: In Catalpa New Mexico, Yes there were alot of them, In fact the had an Indian Camp right out in Catalpa. In fact I went to school with them. I was a little bitty fellow

Frances: Did they have Special Indian schools or was it

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just a regular school?

Alfred: We all went to the same school.

Frances: Not like it is now, everybody did the same thing in those days?

Alfred: Yea we went to the same school but the Indians they had a place out to themselves. They didn't live in the Camp, and they used to go around the houses and beg and things like that.

Frances: Did they work in the mines too down there?

Alfred: I never seen one in the mines I don't think they worked in the mines. No, I know they didn't. When I was little. But we went to school together, that was when we first lets see were we first came from Missouri, we came to Catalpa, New Mexico

Frances: And you said your grandmother was an Indian:

Alfred: Uh huh, But she was an Indian from up in Seattle. That tribe up there. I don't know what tribe they were I really don't. Theres alot of towns up there named after Indians. uh huh theres quite a bunch of Indians up there. My grandfather married an Indian. She was a full blooded Indian and My mother was half blooded Indian.

Frances: Can you remember anything about anything else you would like to tell me Mr. Owens?

Alfred: Well Jeff Farr, you know he had a deputy named Shor-ty Martinez, and he was a big tall fella, I can remember them well and then but I want to talk about Furphys.

Frances: Oh thats fine.

Alfred: Herb had some brothers and one of them was a butc-her and he and they were mean people. They Irish mens, and I can remember Herb used to drink alot oh yes, he was a real Irish man. In that respect, and we would go hunting Harding Long, and

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Bob Turner we all used to go down hunting. That was when I was working in Turner in Ravenwood, no in Morning Glory. And we used to go hunting and take him he'd go out. He would go hunting first and when all the rest of us left he'd come back to the car and sneak all the liquor. He was a corker. Yes he was that, but he was a good person. Yes sir I loved that man. He helped alot of people. In fact he helped other people more than than he helped himself. and I can remember when he stopped drinking.

Frances: After a good many years?

Alfred: Yes thats been a long time back. Yea I know the Furphys, one of his sons married a girl here I think her parents are here in town yet. SHepic girl

Frances: Shepic

Alfred: Uh huh.

Frances: He was married to my mother for about 15 years. when he died he was married to my mother.

Alfred: Herb?

Frances: uh huh,

Alfred: So Herb was your step dad.

Frances: uh huh, Herb was my step dad

Alfred: Well where do you live now?

Frances: I live down on Kansas down by the hospital way down, a block over from the hospital.

Alfred: And what is your name?

Frances: Daher, you probably knew the Daher's too, didn't you.

Alfred: You are a Daher

Frances: I was married to Moses son, Danny.

Alfred: Danny, they used to un the the store over there on

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4th street. And I can remember Della.

Frances: Uh huh, thats my husbands first cousin.
Did you know the Campbells?

Alfred: Campbell, What was his first name?

Frances: M.C. Campbell.

Alfred: Mrs. Campbell What was her first name? Oh! she
died here in town, yea and her husband and she had 2 children.

Frances: A boy and a girl.

Alfred: And the boy got killed down here in Texas, and
Elsie shes in California.

Frances: Isn't she a nurse now?

Alfred: You know Elsie was kinda off.

Frances: You know I grew up with those kids, I remember
when Jeff shot his fingers off with some blasting caps he found.
He blew all his fingers off.

Alfred: I remember that, So you was raised with them?

Frances: Uh huh, we grew up together and the Journeys.

Alfred: The Journeys I know them well.

Frances: What about them? You weren't related to them?

Alfred: No, I was no relation, the Journey girls are in
Denver now, and 1 them lives just about Elsie she lives
about a block from my daughter.

Frances: Oh: my goodness do you see them?

Alfred: I see them once in a while, I think the rest of
them are dead. Elsie and them, I think he went to California
he died in California.

Frances: What about the Barnes's Do you remember the Barns?

Alfred: Lets see I'm trying to think there was Robert and
Bob Barnes. Both of them are dead.

Frances: One of his wives is here shes a mescan, shes living

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here, and I think Bob, he married that girl Rachel Pino, and I think she's around here in town somewhere.

Frances: Were there any prejudice against Negroes in those days Mr. Owens?

Alfred: No, I can't remember, You know I was raised up around white people and I can't remember no prejudice

Frances: Everybody got along well didn't they?

Alfred: I, In fact we played ball together, we went together and I can't remember no prejudice. I never had no problems and then when we, my father taken sick in Arkansas that was lets see the year of 40 it was 42 or 43 my father died in Fort Smith Arkansas. I went down there to see him and the boy was in the army you know they after you get below, I don't remember the place in Kansas. They Jim Crow'd you and one of the boys was in the Army and he was sitting in the Jim Crow car with me, talking to one another and so the conductor told him to go in the other car, and he wouldn't he said I paid my fair and I'll sit where I want. He was a white boy, and we sat there untill we got into Arkansas. Arkansas was Jim Crow, and I know that but I wasn't raise up in Arkansas, and I don't know nothing about it.

Frances: But they didn't have those kinds of laws around here did they?

Alfred: No never, I have never seen a place that I couldn't go in.

Frances: The only place I remember is at the movie. they used to have, You'll excuse me if I say this, they used to call it nigger heaven. The colored people used to have to sit way up in the back. Do you remember that?

Alfred: Listen, I want to tell you this I know when Chillens

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was Jim Crowed, but I never was Jim Crowed myself. I went and set where I wanted to

Frances: And nobody ever said anything to you?

Alfred: No, well thats as it should be. Theres never anybody said anything and I think they brought it on themselves. I really do because they never said nothing to me. and I sat where I wanted. I really think they brought it on themselves. They Jim Crowed themselves.

Frances: How that Mr. Owens?

Alfred: They taken these you know where they had these, where the Negroes was to sit. They went there. They went there they Jim Crowed themselves.

Frances: If they'd have said I'm not going to sit there it would have been different.

Alfred: Thats right if they'd have went anywhere else I don't think they would have done anything about it. But you know cause theres some good people in every Nationality and theres some bad in every Nationality. I think theres some good in everybody, but everybody looks at the bad side and ignores the good side. Well if you'll notice your step-father, Herb, Will get back to him. My mother used to wash clothes for him, his brother, he was a butcher, and he sat in the house and drank beer, and thing like that, and I never heard him say a nigger at all. and then my father used to go together at all times down there in Primrose. My mothers done his washing. He was a butcher, and Herb, one time I was living out there in Ravenwood. He was drinking and it was snow on the ground, and he had drove off on the side and he was stoping cars to get him out. So I happened up at the time when they were trying to get him out. And somebody else wanted

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to get in the car with him to drive him. He wouldn't let no body get in that car but me. I told him I didn't want to get in the car because I had my best clothes on, and he grabbed me and cursed me too and put me in the car and say, and you gonna take me home, and I took him home. Herb was a nice person. Yea in fact he was better I noticed when he was under taken there. Theres alot of people that miners that died here and them women never did pay him.

Frances: Well and a lot of things if it was, you know a question of was it an accident or yes he helped them out in that way.

Alfred: Yea, theres alot of people that should be grateful to alot of what he did for them, cause he helped them get there benefits. Herb was a wonderful person, and his sister is she dead?

Frances: No she's in a nursing home in Trinidad.

Alfred: Oh! in Trinidad, She's living yet?

Frances; Oh Yea shes still alive

Alfred: She was a wonderful person.

Frances: yes she was a good person, In fact I visited her Just a couple weeks ago, we went to Trinidad and I visited with her, her eyesight is very bad.

Alfred: Ask he if she remembers me?

Frances: I will, next time I see her I'll ask her about you Mr. Owens. There's getting to be very few of you people around thats why we want to record what you have to say, because there's getting to be just too few.

Alfred: Well I want to tell you this I don't think I'll leave Walsenburg until I get so I can't take care of myself. I love the people in Walsenburg. You see the plaque they gave

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me.

Frances: No what does it say

Alfred: Take it down. It says! Alfred Owens in appreciation for your dedication and support of the Walsenburg Athletic Program 1979.

Frances: Oh how nice. and who gave you that Mr. Owens?

Alfred: The High School

Frances: Well how nice, It's nice to be recognized for the good things that you do. So many times they see the bad things that we do but they don't recognize the good things, near often enough.

Alfred; Well you know in fact I go up there and help them out a lot. You know the children when they want to go to basketball games or away from home and things like that. I take them in the car. Joey Batuello over here is going to Notre Dame to school, and I'm gonna miss him because he done all my driving, when we'd go to football games and things like that, and cause they other children at the High School. I'll take them cause they call up and want to know, Mr. Owens Have you got a car load? Can I go with you?

Frances: Oh! thats nice, Now in later years were'nt you caretaker at the swimming pool for awhile?

Alfred: Yea. Well after I retired, my wife worked down there she was a janitor at the Catholic School for about 12 years. You know my daughter went to the Catholic school here she graduated from the grade school and then she went to the High School.

Frances: What was her name Mr. Owens?

Alfred: Vera Lee. Do yoy know her?

Frances: No. but I knew Alfred. Vera, was the class of 49

they had their reunion.

Alfred: Her and my niece, both was down here to it. My niece lives in Colorado Springs. The Bassets. Do you remember them? Well Lesslie and I married two sisters and so they were down Dorothy, and my wife, and my daughter was down here, and they just went home Yesterday, Sunday evening. They came down here to the reunion the class of 49.

Frances: And your wife had worked at St. Mary's

Alfred: She'd worked down there about 12 years and then I worked takeing care of the Swimming pool. I just took care of it when it was open, and the rest of the time I used to her down there.

Frances: I thought I had seen you because when my son was at St. Mary's I remembered you being the Janitor down there.

Alfred: I used to help her, She's the one that had the job I used to go help her. I was down there when Elder Monsignor Delaney. He was a nice person, In fact I used to go around with him quite a bit and when I went to the hospital up there in St. Mary's he came by to see me. He spent quite a bit of time with me. He was a nice person.

Frances: A very learned Man, Verry very Intelligent!

Alfred: Smart Yea.

Frances: Any body that can build an organ like he did that beautiful.

Alfred: You know I watched him build that. He was building it when my wife was working down there. He used to go in there and work on those things and I used to sit and watch him.

Frances: Fascinating, wasn't it?

Alfred: Yes, and George Ritz can you remember him?

Frances: Yes,

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Alfred: He used to go off and I used to take care of the place when he was gone. I done it quite a bit of work down there for him. George he loves his children; and he used to make things for them. George had been sick longer than anybody. He had something wrong with his head, and he used to go to the Doctor from there in Trinidad. He was working on him.

Frances: Your wife is no longer living?

Alfred: No she died in 64.

Frances: Oh! That long. So you've just been here by your self since then

Alfred: Yes. been by myself. My children wants me to come up there and sell this place, but I don't know, I have to live my life and I want them to live there life. I don't want them to have to take care of me, until its time. I don't want to be no burden to them.

Frances: You do all your own, you take care of yourself here?

Alfred: Uh huh

Frances: Do you do your own cooking?

Alfred: Yes. I do my own cooking.

Frances: Are you a good cook?

Alfred: No, You don't have to be a cook now, all you have to do is go to the stove and buy it already cooked.

Frances: Just put it in the oven and eat it huh?

Alfred: Thats all, and I take care of my lawn and this lawn, over here, cause these 2 houses belongs to me. I think the girl thats in there now she's the Ridges. You know they stayed there a long time until they died; Then another girl had it, and she to Denver, now this girl over here she's an O'Rourke.

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Frances: Is she just a young girl?

Alfred: Yes, She does some work down someplace, she isn't married.

Frances: Not Regina, Is it Regina?

Alfred: The ones not married, Thats her.

Frances: Does she work at Otero Savings?

Alfred: I don't know she works down there somewhere, She lives there now, she drives a little blue car.

Frances: Yea thats who it is.

Alfred: Her sisters the one who came up here and asked me. when the others mover if I would rent it to her, But I thought she was married, so come to find out she had no husband. I was over there cutting the lawn the other day and she came out there and wanted to help me. She cut it pretty good. Well when I went to Denver cause my grandson got shot up there, she had a push mower out. She was out here pushing it and George was telling me how she was doing it. So the other day L was out there cutting the lawn and she came out to help me. I showed her how you know she don't have to cut that lawn. I can do that you know & things like that. And another thing about it you don't have no hose to water because theres sprinklers, so its so much easier to take care of,

Frances: So you're still pretty active? You still do your own work.

Alfred: Yes, I still do my own work, my own cooking, and I do my own washing. I don't do my ironing, but I do my washing.

Frances: Things are pretty well?

Alfred: I don't ever do my ironing. Everything I have is wash & wear, You don't have to bother anymore. alot of things I have that you don't have to iron, I fold them up and put them in

the drawer.

Frances: That's right, that's all it takes. Well it seems like you've lived a good rich life Mr. Owens. Well a full life?

Alfred: Yes I think it is, I really do. I prepared for my wife, so that I thought there was an awful lot of difference in our ages and I thought that I prepared for her and she didn't live to reap the benefits of it. She had hardin of the Arteries, of, the blood, poor circulation of the blood, and she couldn't in fact theres nothing the Doctors could do about it.

Frances: How old was she Mr. Owens, when she died

Alfred: She was around 65.

Frances: And you just have the 2 children?

Alfred: Yes, Well I had 3 children, I got one girl that died. She's burried up there in the hospital. Up there in the cemetary. I had 2 girls & 1 boy.

Frances: Alfred was very Athletic wasn't he?

Alfred: Yes, he got a girl and a boy. and my daughter has 2 girls and 2 boys.

Frances: So that gives you What, 6 grandchildren?

Alfred: Six grandchildren.

Frances: Well that seems to be all the Questions Mr. Owens is there anything else that you'd like to talk about?

Alfred: Well, I don't know, If there's anything else. Did I tell you about the mines I worked in up here

Frances: Uh huh, You told me about the mines, So what do you do with your time now?

Alfred: Well I spend most of it home, and the rost of the time, and I go to church, and in the head Deacon up there in the church and I teach in fact I do more teaching than I do any thing else. We have service twice a week. And we have a

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Minister he comes down here from Pueblo and hes a very nice person/

Frances: What is his name?

Alfred: His name is Samson Calvin Samson, him and his wife and he has children too. Lot of times they, their son & his wife comes down here.

Frances: Do you have a very big Congregation?

Alfred: NO, not too many I think theres around about 12.

Frances: Small Congregation.

Alfred: Well But its nice YOU can teach, and be of service to other people. I think that's our main purpose in life is to see what we can do for other people. I think thats my reason the Lord keeps me here.

Frances: I think thats true.

Alfred: I do for others more than I do for myself.

Frances: Well and like you say I think thats your purpose in living is to help others?

Alfred: I think thats the reason I've lived so long. I've been good to people and in fact during the depresssion? I brought folks over here to get the commodoties and things like that and take them back home. They didn't have ways, no cars or nothing. I had what an Erskin, you know I bought it from Mike Reviglio. I bought it from him and Miss Summers, I tried to get commodities, and she wouldn't give me none

Frances: Just wasn't poor enough huh?

Alfred: She said well she had something to fall back on? I was driving that car, bringing those people over here, and it couldn't run with out gas in it, and I was driving it. She had a point.

Frances: Yea thats true and I'm sure if you were hurting

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that she would have seen that you got something to eat. I really believe it.

Alfred: Cause she like me, I know that and her husband too.

Frances: Now that was Ruth Summer?

Alfred: Uh huh He dropped dead out there at the mines. He was in with Thompson out there and he was an office clerk, and he was out shoveling snow and dropped dead. Had a heart attack. Well will all of this thing be on T.V?

Frances: No, now this is just our documenting it. There going to I think eventually there going to write a book and its gonna include all the people that we've interviewed in Huerfano County. What it was like in the old days, and how what the laws were like and just different phases of peoples lives and they want it documented in order to maybe some day put in a book;

Alfred: The story of Walsenburg. The past History

Frances: The past History of Walsenburg, yea and Of Huerfano County, Gardner, La Veta, and the outlaying districts. Also there suppose to talk to people. So maybe someday well have a book for you to read Mr. Owens.

Alfred: I hope so.

Frances: See your name will be in it. How about that.

Alfred: That will be alright.

Frances: You'd like that?

Alfred: Well one thing about it if I'm gonna, if the book comes out they won't forget me.

Frances: Thats right, you'll be down in the History of Huerfano County, and we need our old Pioneers the people that were here along time ago. We need to know about what they did/ It's really been nice talking to you Mr. Owens. I thank you very much.

Alfred: Well your welcome.