

Interview with Alton and Mary Tirey
Interviewed by Rosalyn McCain

This is Rosalyn McCain, and I am talking with Alton and Mary Tirey in their home near Gardner.

AT: Well, Mr. Tom Sharp came here from Missouri in the early part of the 1870's. He was a livestock man, and he particularly liked horses. He set up this ranch South of Malachite on the Pass Creek Road where it crossed the Huerfano River. In that day and time the range was more or less an open range.

RM: When did that change? When did the land start getting broken up and being fenced?

AT: The farmlands comprised of river bottom land & meadows, had been fenced since people began to settle here. But the outside pasture land, the dry land where the pastures are and the mountain pastures, most of that land wasn't fenced until the 1920's and 1930's. That was when they really started to fence. A lot of the area right in through here, that was open pasture land.

RM: And 90 anybody could pasture there.

AT: Oh, yes. Of course, there weren't too many who had large herds of livestock.

RM: Was it mostly cattle and sheep?

AT: There were cattle and sheep but the cattlemen were in the majority.

RM: They didn't get along too well, did they?

AT: The sheep men didn't just go out and turn their flocks loose on the open range where the cattle were. I don't really think there was any real fueding between the cattlemen and sheepmen. It they did, I never heard anything about it. You see, I used to run sheep, and we never had any problem. I used to run sheep and cattle together.

Mr. Sharp, when he came hare, ran a lot of horses and cattle, on what we call the Moscal prairie which is in the mountains ten miles west of here. That was all open range that wasn't fenced then. Of 'course, it is all fenced now. He and his

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family hadn't been here but a couple or three years when he sent word back to my grandparents, my mother's family, the John A.J. Wilsons, that here is a good dry climate which would help Wilson's asthma. He wanted to get the climate, a drier climate. So they started for Colorado, and naturally, knowing Tom Sharp, they just came right here. They settled the next ranch up the river from the Sharp place. I don't know what the dates were, but I would make a rough guess that it was about 1874 to 1876 when they began ranching. My mother's three brothers and sister came with the family and all of the brothers livestock men, having two beg herds of cattle. My mother, Ida E. Tirey, was born on this Wilson Ranch home in 1879 so she is over 100 years old.

RM: Had the brothers homesteaded some of the land that they got or did they buy?

AT: I imagine that they bought. I don't know. They may have homesteaded. Maybe they had some timber claims. One or two of them might have done that. But I think they bought the land.

RM: Had they been farmers in Missouri?

AT: Yes, my granddad was a farmer there. My dad, Bruce Tirey, came here in 1902 or 1903 from Texas. His half-sister, Julia Smith lived at Malachite. Bruce came to Colorado on account of his sister. Her husband came here in about 1890. His name was Robert L. Smith, (Bob Smith), and why they came to Colorado, I just don't know. There were four or five brothers. Most all of them settled in La Veta country. Bob Smith came over on the Huerfano. And later became manager and worked for a fellow by the name of Sefton and in the early days had the land that the Dietz' later owned and lived on. It is the Gus White place now where all those tine buildings and improvements that J.B. Overfelt built in the latter 30' s and early 40' s while he owned this property. I think the Sharps were always more or less independent. They just ranched.

RM: Did they have cattle and horses?

AT: Yes. Bill Sharp, who was the son of old man Tom Sharp, who settled and lived

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in the flat-roofed house which is 1/4 mile west of Pass Creek road and then his son, Bill Sharp, lived in the house on the Pass Creek Road. In the early days, it was a stage coach stopping place and where the Union Army gathered. A man by the name of Captain Deus really owned the place. Here stamp mills, and big flour mills, that were run by water power and a water wheel were built by the Deuses. These mills were near the river bottom where a ditch comes from the Huerfano River.

RM: I have heard that called the Mill Ditch

AT: Yes, the Mill Ditch. They would put water in this ditch. They would bring some from the river, but some or it came from seepage. They made troughs and drops from these troughs that went onto the water wheels, and these water wheels would turn the stamp mill. The stamp mill, I can't say that I really saw them. I saw them after they were torn up. The belt from the water wheel went to the huge Wheel on what they called the stamp mill, and it was fixed where when this wheel turned, it caused a big rod which had a large, not hammers, but large iron heavy pieces on the bottom, cylinders. They were about 8 inches in diameter and possible 18 inches to two feet in length. So it made it pretty heavy. This device would bring them up, and when they came up to a certain point, there was a break in this shaft, and it would turn loose, and they would drop down, and they hit on a heavy iron down below, and it just crushed the grain or corn or whatever. That was what they called the stamp mill. It kept stamping stuff. So they ground flour there They pulverized the flour.

RM: So everyone would bring their grains to the mill to have done?

AT: They had one here. They also had one in Gardner. Mary's folk's had charge of the one there in Gardner, didn't they, Mary?

MT: I think they did from what I know.

AT: So people around here in that day and time had to make their own provisions for food and whatever.

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RM: So did people grow a lot more variety of crops than they seem to grow now?

AT: No, the principal crops has always been hay for livestock and various grains, beans and potatoes and garden stuff. The garden stuff was not grown in large quantities. Practically every family grew enough for themselves, and they couldn't take it out of here, like into Walsenburg. It would take a whole day to go from here with a team and a wagon. Now, potatoes and beans were a different thing. Potatoes was something that would keep. There were a lot of potato farmers in the mountains, and some down in here. But back in the mountain there was lots of potatoes. Not too many years back, that was in the 1920s, up on the Divide between here and Westcliffe, they grew potatoes over there by the ton, truck loads. They did that for possibly ten years.

RM: What was the reason that they stopped growing potatoes?

AT: These were dry land potatoes, and we don't have as much moisture now as we used to. I've always had a feeling, and I think I have heard the Agriculture Officer make the statement that they got some kind of parasite in that area that were so small they would get underneath the leaves of the potato vines, and they would sap all the moisture, all of the juice out of the vines, and they just got to where they couldn't raise them. They never did spray or treat the seed and plants to control the parasite. It just got to the point that they couldn't raise a profitable crop. They could raise them, but they couldn't produce enough to make it worthwhile. Then we hit the Depression in the 30's. A lot of things happened to cause a lot of people to leave. They just don't raise potatoes like they used to. Now we could raise potatoes, and we still can if you take care of them properly and one thing and another. As a rule your vines will grow up two or three feet tall, and your potatoes under the ground will just be little nubs with runners and none of them very good sized. But up on the Divide, those dry land potatoes, grew up just like the San Luis Valley, only they were dry land potatoes, and they were

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much better. They would keep better and they were better tasting. They raised tons of them.

RM: So some people made their living off of their potatoes.

AT: Off their dry land potatoes, and they grew grains up there too. They would grow potatoes one year and grain the next two years.

RM: What kind of grains did people mostly grow?

AT: Barley and oats were the principal crops. What wheat they grew in here was for chicken feed, and maybe a certain kind of wheat for milling. But they didn't try to raise enough wheat to try and sell it. Potatoes they did, but not wheat. They never did try to raise enough barley or oats .in here to haul away and sell. They market this bay and grain and everything through livestock. That has always been the history of this valley. Livestock. We don't have as many livestock here now like we used to years ago. You should have seen it several years ago, big bands of sheep, which we don't have now. At one time just in this valley from Badito up there were 15,000 to 20,000 head of breeding ewes. Now I'm taking in Turkey Creek. The Dietz boys, they run over 1,000 head of cattle. I don't think they even knew themselves just how many they had. Besides the Dietz' there were the Meyers'. Now I am talking about some of the larger operations. There were the Wilsons and the Sharps. There were quite a few really. Then there were smaller operations. The Spanish people used to raise quite a few cattle and sheep, not big herds, but quite a few.

RM: Did they raise them mostly for subsistence or did they have enough to sell?

AT: Yes, they would sell a few, but not large herds. There was a man here. Named J.D. Montez who was a major landowner on the Upper Huerfano. He was a politician and a County Commissioner. He raised a lot of cattle and a lot of sheep, and he did sell some of both. He hired a lot of people to work for him. Some of them he paid with livestock. In the early days it was quite a bit different from now. People worked hard, and they didn't play a whole lot, but when they did,

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they played hard, too. Horse races, community doings, there was a lot of that, dances. There was a dance here nearly every Saturday night somewhere, wasn't there Mary? The Spanish people and gringos, (that's the white people), they didn't get along very well at the dances. The nationalites and the whiskey just didn't work out quite well.

RM: But there usually was a dance one place or another moat weekends?

AT: The Spanish people had their dances, and we had ours. We had dances here at Redwing at least once a month or oftener. We had them in Gardner every two weeks. Then up on Bradford, that's between here and Westcliffe. There were two Bradfords in that area. They called one South Bradford and the other North Bradford. Of course, where the school house in over on Turkey Creek, I think that building has been torn down, just this side of Tony Pando's. That's where Jum Wilburn used to live. They used to have dances there in the school house. The Spanish people had dances over there, too. Dances were also held at the fair grounds. That's where the Community Building is now. We had a Community Hall, just as large as the one that is there now. It got burned down. It wasn't quite as good a building as the one we have now, but it was a big building. They would dance and rodeo out there and race. For about five years in succession, there was somebody killed every fair time or Gallo Day. That's why I say people worked hard, and they played hard.

RM: How often did they have horse races, and where did they have them?

AT: We had one good horse race a year, sometimes twice a year on the Fourth of July and at Gallo time which was the 25th and 26th of July which was the Spanish day, or the Mexican day, then as a rule in September they had a fair. So you might say it was three times. The big races were usually the Fourth of July or at fair time. Not really big races. We always used to laugh. If you had an old plow horse and another plow horse that could run about the same speed, then we had a race to see which one would run faster or slower. Well, most of them

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ran slower.

MT: They weren't thoroughbreds.

AT: Well, we had some thoroughbreds, but they weren't properly trained. I have often thought about it. I used to ride a lot, but sometimes one would run off, and I would think this horse can really fly. But it seems like you'd get on a race track, and it wouldn't seem like it could run fast enough, but we had a lot of fun really.

RM: Was there much entertainment or getting together in the wintertime?

AT: Oh, yeah.

RM: Mostly dances?

AT: Dances, card parties, ice cream socials and box suppers.

MT: Then there were school programs.

AT: There were a lot of different things. The church did sponsor things like the box suppers and things of that nature. Then we'd have the church and school programs. We'd have Sunday School for the kids, and they would put on a Christmas, Easter and May Day programs. Mrs. Johnny (Lida) Meyer sponsored the May Day on the First of May. See, the school system in the days when we were growing up was altogether different from the school system now. Each area had their own school district. Our school house is on the Pass Creek road, 3/4 mile north of the Huerfano River and was called the Malachite School District 20.

RM: So the kids would almost always walk to school? They were all within walking distance?

AT: You bet. When I went to school over there I knew a Mexican boy that walked five miles rain, shine or snow, it was someplace for him to go, I guess. But that kid came, and he walked, well maybe it wasn't five miles, but it was on the North side of Poison Canyon. He walked day in and day out, sometimes his feet would be almost sticking out of his shoes, but he was rugged. The Choin boys, Fred and

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Chuck and brothers and sisters lived way up on what we called The Divide, and they were real poor people. They lived on potatoes and whatever they could raise. Those kids, didn't they walk from clear up there to down in Gardner, Mary?

MT: NO, when they lived three or four miles from Gardner they walked to the Gardner School.

AT: My first school was across the Huerfano River in an adobe building which is on the South side of the Huerfano River. You go on South about three or four hundred yards, and there is an old apple orchard of four or five trees, and that was where the school house was. I started school in 1912 and during the Christmas Holidays. The school was moved to this new rock building school which is located about 3/4 mile from Malachite and named Malachite School District no.20. We walked all the time. One of my mother's brothers used to come once in a while with a big horse for me especially when it was cold, he would come and pick me up and carry me home on the horse.

RM: I heard somebody say that the building on the other side of the river was once a church also. Is that true?

AT: They had church in this rock building the Baptists organized and had a church there. That was after the schools were consolidated. They may have had some church get-togethers over in the other school buildings, but I doubt it.

RM: They may have been talking about this stone school, and I misunderstood.

AT: What I was going to tell you, each community had their own school district and had their own school. In the majority of the schools, one teacher took care of all eight grades, first grade through the eighth, and there were between 40 and 50 students. It would vary. At one time there might have been 60. When I was in school, some of the upper classmen were 15 or 16 years old. They were men really, and they were in school maybe four or five months out of the year, and the rest of the time they were either helping with the fall crops or spring planting. Really, they didn't get a whole lot of schooling except from November until March.

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I suppose that was one of the reasons that they were men before they got out of the eighth grade, and some of them really didn't care anyhow. There were some, their names were Schmidt and these four brothers walked from the Schmidt place up on Pass Creek every day which was a long four miles.

RM: Was that pst Zeke's place?

AT: John Rodriquez? You go by his place, and then you finally drop over into Pass Creek proper, and go up the hill where there are some old tumble down shacks, it would be the second time you drop down into Pass Creek. There are on the right hand side of the road, some old houses, that was the original Schmidt place, and that is where these brothers walked from. In the-early day when I first started school, I guess they didn't have a school at Redwing. Then later on they had a school at Redwing, Chama, Sharpsdale and all around, but for some reason a lot of those Redwing people came to the Malachite School. About midway to Gardner from the Malachite School were some people named Inman that had three boys and a girl and when they first came here and settled, they started coming to this Malachite School. They didn't come here a full term, and then they switched to Gardner where they remained for their elementary schooling. It was after the Inman's graduated that they started the Rahn District in the 1920's. It was too great a distance from either Gardner or Malachite Schools so they started a district of their own. There were a lot of Spanish people that lived on the lower Pass Creek area as well as on the Huerfano.

MT: Now those Inman boys, when they come to school in Gardner, they rode horseback.

AT: A lot of the kids did ride horses. I never did take a horse because I could walk to school a lot easier than I could take a horse. Sometimes somebody would come along with a horse and give me a ride. One thing that is kind of interesting is when people said, "Well, how did one teacher take care of 50 or 60 kids? All eight grades. There was no problem about it because sometimes the upper classmen would

help teach the lower classmen. When we got to the 3rd or 4th grade, and got to where we could read a little bit and were interested in what was going on, we always thought, "Gee, I wish I was John. He is three or four years older than I am. . .Is he ever smart!" You know, you would try to copy after someone. I would be in the third grade, and he would be up in the sixth grade. I was a~ much interested in his grade as I was my own. So by the time I got to the 6th grade, I had it learned, some ways at least. The reason for that was that the teacher called each grade up to the front, and they had a long bench, called the recitation seat or bench. They sat down there on that bench, and the teacher called on those kids. They would read or spell or do arithmetic. It was all oral, and you year after year listening to these recitations and the repetition of these classes was an advanced learning of schooling. The teacher didn't necessarily want you to listen, but they didn't always insist that you be studying. They couldn't keep you from listening. So, as I say by the time I was in the middle grade, I didn't know all of it, but I knew most of it. I don't think that kids today have that advantage. They have to dig it out when they get to it. And don't have the advantage of advance training. So I think that was quite an advantage. When I got into high school, it was quite a bit different.

RM: Did you go in to Walsenburg to high school?

AT: Yes, and I stayed in Walsenburg. I might come home on weekends. When I started my freshman year in high school in the old armory building in Walsenburg the school during the Christmas holidays was moved to a new high school building. This experience or beginning my elementary and high school days in old buildings and at the first Christmas holidays was moved into new school buildings is something that doesn't happen

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to too many persons, I feel.

MT: His mother stayed in Walsenburg with him for a time.

AT: She stayed there two years. And of course, I worked. My "second year I had a job both before and after school. But Walsenburg was a larger town than it is now because it was surrounded by the coal mines, and coal camps. A lot of those coal mines had at least 200 or 300 miners. That is 200 or 300 families, and a lot of them had large families, seven or eight children. They had their own schools, and then these children went on to high school in Walsenburg. The Walsenburg High School was pretty fair sized, but you know the Freshman year, they'd always have 150, but by the time you got up to the Senior year, graduation time, it would drop down to about 15 or 20. A lot of them would drop out. The Freshman year and Sophomore year they would have 150. I expect there are about as many going to high school right now. But in that time the schools were divided. They had the Catholic schools as well as the public schools. I suppose there were as many at the Catholic schools as there were at the Protestant schools or public schools, A lot of the miners were Catholics.

RM: Do you remember the time of the Coal Field War, the Ludlow Massacre and all of that? Was there much influence up here?

AT: Not up here, but down in the mines. There was the Unionization, of the miners. The union people in that day and time were just fighting for their rights. When I say fighting for it, I mean they had to get out and fight and it was pretty bad. I happened to work for a company that sold general merchandise, food, and so forth. They had stores in these various mines, not all of the mines. but they had stores in 9 or 10 mines here. The mine owners, took advantage of the miners, and that was very plain to see. Going out there to work and carrying

the payrolls, even a dumb kid like me could see that. If the miner wanted to live there and keep his family and everything, the first thing was that he had to rent a company house. If he was going to keep his job, it was pretty well understood that he was going to trade at the company store and have the company doctor to take care of his family. In other words, the company practically owned him, to tell you the truth about it. The company store was the out fit that I was working for. The group of people that owned this mercantile, Huerfano Trading Company, were stockholders, and these same people owned shares in the coal mines. They didn't own all coal mines for the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company of Pueblo and the Wasach Coal Company or the state of Utah owned the majority of the mines and stores. When you'd take the payroll out to these coal miners, the rent bill, and the doctor's fee were taken out. By the time you got it all taken out, they didn't have much left, so they did have a hard row to hoe, but they had a good life at that. They worked hard but like in Gardner, they played hard. They had a good time. They had a good ball team. They had dances, parties on the weekends, and man, they had a big time. They didn't have a lot of money, but I guess they didn't need a lot of money, really. Walsenburg, when the weekend came along, was a boom town. Not that a lot of money exchanged hands because there wasn't a lot of money, but they had a lot of fun.

RM: What were the medical facilities here? Were there doctors here?

AT: They had a good doctor here in Gardner. Wasn't there a doctor here all the time, Mary?

MT: As long as I can remember.

AT: We didn't have one recently until Evans came. The doctor that found out that Mary had diabetes. He was the last medical doctor and surgeon. He was an elderly man who had retired from practicing medicine

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and surgery in Denver Hospitals. His name was Dr. Freeland. Then Dr. Knight, came along. He was an osteopath.

MT: The doctor I remember them talking about more than any was Dr. Clay.

AT: He was a fair doctor. Then in Walsenburg they had a Dr. Chapman. He was a CF&I company, doctor, but he would go all through the county. When he first started out, he had a team and a buggy. He would drive all the way out to the upper Huerfano Valley regardless of the weather, at night or anytime that you would call. Then later on he got a Franklin automobile. That was quite an automobile in its day, and he would make trips in this car, and he made house calls all over the county. I don't know that he ever operated unless it was an extreme emergency and he also extracted later. He generally sent patients down to St. Mary Corwin because he was associated with the CF&I mine, and Corwin was and still is their major hospital.

RM: How about trading? I know your (Mary's) parents had a store. Did most of the people do most of their trading there or did they go into Walsenburg.

MT: They didn't do much in Walsenburg and it took a day to go in. Then they would stay overnight, take a day to trade and wouldn't get home for two or three days. The majority of the people in the community-y came into the stores of their area. The Gardner store had the greatest variety and supplies.

RM: How did this store originate and who owned it?

MT: I heard my dad J. B. Hudson (Josh Hudson) talk about when he was seven and eight years old he was helping his father at the store.

RM: So his parents had it before him?

MT: Yes, and they also had the flour mill.

AT: In the 1870's her granddad came here, he started the store business

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and trade business. He finally got disgusted and left. He said, "This Valley is too crowded for me."

MT: He felt there were too many people.

AT: His pioneer spirit took him further east to Salt Lake City, but he came back though. Too many people. He turned his business over to his son.

RM: What was the name of it in those days?

MT: It was called the Hudson-Ingraham Mercantile Company.

RM: What was your grandfather's name?

MT: Joshua, my daddy was named after him.

AT: We have a 1913 calendar we just happened to keep.

MT: They had calendars much earlier than that, which I would much rather have had. The picture of Mount Blanca with the ruins of the Goose Lake in the foreground was taken after the damn broke in October 1910 or 1911. When the damn broke, it practically ruined this upper Huerfano Valley from Sharpsdale to the lake and damn, leaving large boulders and rocks when the top soil was mashed away.

RM: That was a damn that broke.

AT: There was a big heavy rain or cloudburst and two damns broke. Goose Lake was the upper one, and when it went out, there was another smaller one down below, which was demolished by this one rush of water. So there were these two fairly good sized bodies of water, one on top of the other. By the time it had gotten this far down, the water had kind of broke up and spread, but further up, it was just one big wall of water in 1910 or 1911.

RM: What all did they carry at the store? Could people get pretty much or everything that they needed?

MT: Everything. We had food, clothing, tools and machinery.

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AT: When the Model T Ford came in, you could go down there and buy repairs on a Model T Ford. They had hay mowing machines also.

RM: Did they have building materials, too?

AT: Oh sure. All this stuff was brought in by freight wagons most every day except in the winter for there were a number of freighters. They had a railroad spur that came out as far as Tioga Mine, which is the furthest west coal mine in Huerfano County twelve miles west of Walsenburg. A siding was on this railroad where railroad freight cars were parked for unloading and loading and also at this siding livestock was loaded out of the stockyards. The store bought their flour in carload lots and mixed carload of sugar, coffee, can goods & other staple goods in the fall of the year. For winters were so severe that the freighters as well as the ranchers had difficulty getting to the store. A number of the ranchers laid in their needed supplies only once or twice a year. My uncle Bob Smith had a fairly good sized store, in Malachite and he had an old Mexican fellow named Joe Sandoval, who was on the road most all the time freighting. It was like Mary said, a day going, a day loading and so forth, and a day to come back from Walsenburg, he could only make two trips a week. Now her folks, I think they had two or three or four freighters. They would have somebody coming and going from there all the time. Aside from main store buildings they had storehouse to the east of the store along the river bank. They had two or three storehouse that fell off the banks in floods, where they stored their flour and sugar. They would bring a carload home because when winter hit, they had to have it, sugar, flour, coffee.

RM: You mentioned something earlier about the Depression. What was the effect of the Depression in this area? Did it force a lot of people

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to leave? was it just hard times?

AT: It W33 just hard times. A lot of people tried to maintain their livestock & ranching operations. Of course, if they had to pay their taxes, store bills, and living expenses. If they had a cow or a sheep that they ordinarily would figure they could get \$60 for the cow and \$12 for the sheep, but during the Depression they dropped down to where they was getting a third or a fourth. The margin of profit was pretty slim anyhow, and it worked kind of a hardship when they got around to paying their bills and their taxes and so forth.

RM: Did anybody lose their land that way?

AT: I don't think anybody lost their land, but many had to take out government land loans and PCA (Production Credit Association) livestock loans. I imagine the storekeepers suffered as much as anyone. They didn't work on a cash basis at the stores as they do today they would carry them. They would make arrangements for 30 days or more for bills to be paid. In a lot of cases, the livestock men, it was twice a year.

RM: I imagine you had a lot of accounts like that at the store, didn't you?

MT: All of them had credit in those days for there was very little cash.

AT: When the Depression hit, her dad he due to being a good businessman, his credit losses were not too heavy.

RM: Were there other smaller stores in Gardner at that time then?

MT: Yes, there was Clem Brown's store. I recall we closed on Sundays, and he always kep his open, and in that day and time the stores were open until 9:00 or 10:00 o'clock at night.

AT: As time went on, her dad and his brother, sold the Hudson Ingraham store to Mr. Redmon, and a few years later Bill Agnes bought the store. Then her dad became associated with Gus Meyer, in a store building.

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Lucille Waggoner's daddy had built a store and operated. Later that building was owned by the Gardner Co-op who operated it for a few years until the building burned down.

RM: What other local businesses were ther? Were there local blacksmiths and carpenters?

AT: Yes, there was a blacksmith shop at Gardner, Redwing and at Malachite. You had to have a blacksmith. Gardner and Malachite had good garages, and there were also filling or gasoline stations, and Gardner even had a barber shop. They had two good stores in Redwing, a good store up there.

RM: Who ran the stores?

AT: The addington brothers who later sold to Homer Benson.

MT: It was the same building where the buildings are now.

AT: The other store was the Johnny O'Hagon store and he was s nephew of Bill Agnes. Later this store burned. You know the store which was near the Redwing school house later burned. Both were good stores, big stores in that day and time. The one that Benson had was a good store, and Homer (Benson) was a good merchant. His younger brother, Oren Benson (Shorty) and Bill Schmidt worked for him. I remember Josh Hudson telling me one time, that "Since the roads are being improved", the automobiles were being used more and more. Chain stores came into Walsenburg, like the Safeway, he said, "The store business in this area is on its way out". He saw that coming, and he was right. (Notes taken after the tape ran out:)

Costello Hotel served meals. Mrs. McCosh had a restaurant next to the Agnes store. She served Sunday dinner specials and people came from Denver, Pueblo, Walsenburg as well as people living in this area to eat there.

Mrs. Elmire served meals, family dinner style in Redwing at her home in the Gaitley's house where they live now. She was a nurse and midwife for everyone around here.

The WPA days were very bad for the Spanish families. People had no money here, so they took jobs working for the WPA building roads and buildings. They had to travel into Gardner, up Pass Creek or Mosca Pass, etc. So someone came in and sold a lot of people cars. They weren't very good cars and people bought them on credit. Then when they'd break down they'd sell them another one, and a lot of people mortgaged their land eventually lost desire to make a living on their land.

I used to hire Spanish shepherders. Then after World War II the old age pension came and paid as much as the shepherder made so it got very hard to hire shepherders. At one time I ran as many as 3,000 breeding ewes I usually hired men 50-60 years old, and then I couldn't find anyone to work for me anymore. Then I had to pasture the sheep on the home ranch so I had to cut the size of the herd and increase the cattle herd.

A lot of men left during World War II and never came back.

The ranchers couldn't get help and bought more machines. Then there were fewer jobs for young people, and more people left.

Crestone became Redwing when it became a Post Office because there was another Crestone in San Luis Valley. Crestone voting district had 400-500 registered voters each year. Before voters came into Gardner, most of the little schools had an election polling place but after consolidating the voting precincts into one precinct from Badito all the way back including all the Huerfano Drainage areas, the total Gardner voter registration is near 400. This county will have a hard time getting back to what it was for now a few big operations own

nearly all the land.

I had y ranches here which was a good working unit. As time went on, I just couldn't hire any help. Jerry Mills came along, I priced it to him-high-and he bought it. I used to put up 30-40,000 bales of hay every year. I used to run 200-300 cows, 100 sheep and horses. I figured I needed as much or more than three second feet of water to irrigate in an economical and time-saving way.

The old Tom Sharp place and the first ranch due south of us were sort of used as forts. They never really had trouble with the Indians though. My mom and grandmother always used to say they'd bake a lot of biscuits if there were Indians around. That was the main thing the Indians were interested in.

Prospectors mined ore. The MacMillan mine mined gold and some silver. It was a hard rock mine at the foot of Mt. Blanca. There were 2-3 boarding houses and many family residences. They were snowbound November through April or May. They had a six or eight horse team they used to freight ore out and bring supplies in. They were all white horses, and they were rigged up with sleigh bells all over them because they hauled that wagon in and out fast and wanted everyone on the road to get out of their way. Alton's mom remembers two or three saloons up there. They were still standing when I was a kid. The MacMillan Mine operated years, before I was born in 1906.

The Copper Bull Mine was up Pass Creek-due west of the Smith place on Grayback Mt...Alvie MacIntyre was the blacksmith, and general manager. He had a samll ranch on Pass Creek. He ran a furniture store in Walsenburg when be was older.

Hector Patterson built this house and the George Ingraham house and a lot of the other larger houses around. He was a wonderful Carpenter.

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Mr. Philpotts painted the house. He painted e wonderful mountain scene with a waterfall on the stage curtain at the Malachite school.

Two huge Negroes came out and made the cement bricks for this house with a big press and mold brick machine. They were set out all over the field to dry.

I used to hire 15 men during the haying season for \$1.50 a day. They worked from 7-6, that was the going wage. Kids now can't believe that for the minimum wage new is over \$3 an hour. They make that much. We worked hard, and we played hard.

Things have just changed. The world's changed. I imagine this whole valley used 100 gallons of gas a month. A few cars went to Walsenburg once a month. In the early days people had kerosene and gas lamps for there was no electricity in this area until the early 1940's. That was about it and most single families use that much or more in a month.