

CAL KRAHMER

September 5, 1996

Tape 1, Side 1

M.O'R.: This is Michael O'Rourke for the Washington County Historical Society beginning an interview today with Cal Krahmer. It's September 5th, 1996, and the interview is taking place in the Krahmer home in Cornelius - or the Krahmer farm, I should say.

You lived here all your life?

C.K.: Yes. The only time I haven't was the four years I was in the Navy.

M.O'R.: I wonder if you can tell me, first of all, just a little about your parents. What was your dad like?

C.K.: My dad was a general farmer and we had some cows. He was an only son, and my interpretation was that he didn't really want to be a farmer, he wanted to be a doctor. But being he was an only son, well, it was thought that he had to take over the farm to continue it in the family, and he was the third generation farmer on this farm. Of course, I was the fourth, and my sons are the fifth.

M.O'R.: So his father and his father's father also farmed it, then?

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: So it's been in the family since when?

C.K.: From the 1870's on.

M.O'R.: How did the family acquire the farm in the beginning?

C.K.: My great-grandfather came from Pennsylvania by railroad to San Francisco and then by ship to Portland. Then he brought his wife out, and two of his kids out of eight were born then already. He came directly to Portland and he was offered twenty acres in downtown - not quite downtown Portland, but where Montgomery Ward

or Bond Street is, he was offered twenty acres there. And then he turned it down and took this, which was then supposed to have been an 80-acre farm but it turned out to be more like 65. And he lived long enough to realize he could have been a millionaire but was never sorry. He said it wouldn't have been good for the kids.

M.O'R.: Yeah, I guess that property around the Montgomery Ward building would be valuable even then, at the end of your great-grandfather's life.

C.K.: Yes. My great-grandfather died in 1928.

M.O'R.: Now you said your father wanted to be a doctor? What led him to that desire, do you think?

C.K.: Well, the schools were a little bit short here, and so he went to Portland and stayed with his grandparents in Portland and went to Jefferson High School and graduated from there. And so he was very good in chemistry and some of those things, which kind of led him to really kind of go in that direction.

M.O'R.: But then he was the only one to take the farm over from his father?

C.K.: Well, there were two sisters. Of course it was a traditional German family that expected their sons to take it over.

M.O'R.: I'm wondering if you can think back to what some of your earliest memories are from childhood on the farm. Well, actually, first of all, tell me a little bit about your mother as well.

C.K.: My mother is a Gerskey and they lived on a farm like a few hundred yards down the road. It was a place that they had bought, in I don't know what year it was, but I do know that my grandmother lived in that same house, and that was where my grandfather courted her. Then my mother was also in that same house, and so the family's been connected with that place a little bit also.

M.O'R.: So your mother came from a farming family, too?

C.K.: Yes, it was a farming family, too. Now that place has sold and several owners owned it, and then the school beside the church out here is part of that place also.

M.O'R.: Was that just down the road here?

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: I drove a little too far this morning, so I saw the school down there.

C.K.: The Lutheran school was part of the Gerskey place.

M.O'R.: Now maybe you can tell me about some of your earliest memories from childhood on the farm here.

C.K.: Well, it was a general farm, as I said before. It was 80 acres, and they sold milk and eggs and some hogs for money, and the rest, everything else that was grown, was used to support the cows and the chickens and the hogs.

M.O'R.: And what sorts of things did you do on the farm as a kid?

C.K.: Well, we as kids were expected to work, and we started working at an early age. I started driving horses when I was eight years old. I've got two brothers that were very close to my same age that were a year or two younger, and they picked strawberries. Strawberries were around here by then already and it was quite a crop, and all the kids in the county really participated in the strawberry harvest. So my brothers ended up getting to go strawberry picking, and I had to stay home and drive the horses. I can remember that quite well.

But the golf course, Forest Hills Golf Course, was out here by then, and as we got a little bit older, well, we became caddies down at the golf course, and my dad made sure that every Thursday afternoon that us kids got to go down there and caddie because we

could make two dollars in an afternoon, and he thought that was real worthwhile.

M.O'R.: Then this was you and Gary and ...

C.K.: And my brother Robert.

M.O'R.: And you say you were all three fairly close in age? You're the eldest, right? And was Robert next?

C.K.: Robert was next, and Gary was the younger brother. Then I do have I sister that's ten years younger than I am.

M.O'R.: And what's her name again? I think I asked this.

C.K.: Judy Borden, and they live out at Kansas City.

M.O'R.: Not in the Oregon region.

C.K.: Yes. At Kansas City, Oregon.

M.O'R.: Oh. Kansas City, Oregon. Okay.

C.K.: Up towards near Banks.

M.O'R.: Oh. Okay. So she's still actually quite close to home, then .

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And what kind of things did you used to do when you did have a little spare time as a kid? What sorts of things did you enjoy doing?

C.K.: Well, in the summertime we did some swimming and fishing. Of course in the wintertime hunting was one of the things we did. And my dad did not start us out very early with a gun, but about the time we were fifteen, we were handling guns and doing hunting and stuff like that. It was strictly bird hunting, pheasants and geese. We did not hunt deer. As long as I was a kid, I never saw a deer on the place. Occasionally now we see a deer, but in those days, as far as wildlife was concerned, it was pretty limited to pheasants and ducks.

M.O'R.: That's interesting. I would expect that you might see more wildlife back then. Was it because the farming activity



out here was so developed at that time, do you think? Or would the deer know to stay away because they might get shot on some farmer's land or something?

C.K.: I have thought about that question, and I don't have any real good answers. I do know that even in the 1800's, there wasn't a lot of big game around. And we know that when Lewis and Clark came west, they had a problem finding enough big game to feed their group in this area.

M.O'R.: Really?

C.K.: It was mostly fish that lived on.

M.O'R.: And when you say in this area, you mean specifically here in the Cornelius area, or just ...

C.K.: Northwest Oregon.

M.O'R.: Just northwest Oregon.

C.K.: I also believe just from what the reading I've been able to do, that the Indian population - there was a big Indian population - and it's probably because of their pressure there wasn't too much game that they had to eat and they lived strictly off the land.

M.O'R.: Right. So they were taking a lot of it, perhaps.

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And of course, down in the valleys, I imagine, the game population was less and the people population was more.

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Do you have any firsthand experience with the Indians in your family, as far as you know? I mean, with either your grandfather or your great-grandfather?

C.K.: No. We do know that there was a couple of Indian wars after my great-grandparents came here, but they were not asked to participate. And of course my grandfather knew about the Indians and how they got wiped out by white man's disease.

And when they built the flax plant at Cornelius, they put those deep trenches in - some of them were twelve feet deep - to run their stream pipes through the different buildings, from the different buildings. And he would go down there and watch the excavation. Of course, this was in the early part of World War II, and so the regulations weren't very strict, either, but they went through several Indian graves in building that flax plant at that time. And of course at that location was the Indian encampment here near Cornelius, and the stories that he give to me was that they did get scarlet fever real bad in the wintertime, and they jumped in the river to cool themselves off, and they either drowned or that killed them, one or the other.

M.O'R.: When you say they came across several graves, did they find artifacts in the graves?

C.K.: Yes. Yes. There was artifacts in the graves. I don't think my grandfather got any of them. I've never seen any of the artifacts.

M.O'R.: I was going to ask you if there was any still in the family, but ...

C.K.: No.

M.O'R.: Now, let's see. You said you drove horses from the time you were eight. What does that consist of, exactly?

C.K.: Well, we had three horses on the farm and I drove the cultivating horse, or a single horse. It was my job to do the cultivating for the field corn and also to drive the horse for putting hay in the hay mound. We had a fork that we stuck into the load, and then the horse was hooked to a cable and pulled the hay up into the haymound and it was tripped and it was stored that way. It was all stored loose. And so those were my first jobs with the horse.

Before that, before we were eight, we usually started about the age of six, we had to carry water to the field hands when we were threshing, especially to those that were pitching the shocks, the bundles, onto the wagon. And of course we always went barefooted in the summertime, and if you've ever tried to walk through a stubble-field barefooted, you know that quite quickly you find out where the bow-wheel for the grain-binder runs, because it knocks the stubble down and that's where you walk.

M.O'R.: Yeah, I imagine the bottom of your feet get pretty tough pretty quick, too.

C.K.: Yes, they did. And because the golf course was out here, and the influences of the golfers, the road out here has been paved and was blocked off as long as I can remember. So I never had too much trouble with the rocks on my feet, but I sure stubbed my toe several times on that blacktop.

M.O'R.: You mentioned that you did a lot of swimming and fishing. Was that on the Tualatin here, right on the farm? Can you remember much about what the river was like in those days?

C.K.: The irrigation demands, which would be around the 1940 era, the irrigation demands weren't too great at that time. The irrigation dams came more around 1948 or '50. And so we had flows in the river all summer long, but they were not great flows. My grandfather at one time mentioned the fact that there was pretty good flow in the Tualatin River until the Tillamook Burn. And when the Tillamook Burn came, the summer flows diminished considerably.

M.O'R.: And that was because the watershed was gone up there in the mountains?

C.K.: I'm only going to mention it to you as a fact, not as to why, because it's all speculation on why. We know the Tillamook Burn has grown back, and the natural hydrology of the river, I'm not sure has changed that much. But it's real hard to determine

because of the input of the Hagg Lake and those things would be hard to tell.

M.O'R.: There's so many other things that took place also.

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: But there was enough water in the river, anyway, so you could swim and fish?

C.K.: Oh, yes. And we never worried about giardia. There was no beaver nor nutria or anything like that in the river at that time. They had not come back. And so the river was reasonably clean as far as those kinds diseases are concerned. But we know that all changed in the '50s and '60s. And of course, undoubtedly in your history you've got where the State forced the cities to form a large sewer district to eliminate the outfall of those sewer plants in the river.

I remember real well how those outfalls were working, and they weren't working very well, and the river was quite polluted in the early '60s. In fact, it was so polluted that those people on the river that were raising vegetables for processing, there was some real concern about whether they could use that water for irrigating and then send their crops into the processing plant. There was some disease in those vegetables, and it look kind of a slimelike, and if those got onto the processing rolls, their crops would have been cancelled out and they wouldn't have got anything, and they wouldn't have taken them.

M.O'R.: So I imagine at that point the farmers began to get a little concerned about the quality of the water.

C.K.: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They definitely were concerned then.

M.O'R.: Did you use the water for irrigation on this place as well?

C.K.: I developed the irrigation system, and that was in 1957 that I did on this place.

M.O'R.: So prior to that it was dryland farming?

C.K.: This six acres down here below was on an early water right, and it was called sub-irrigation, and there's a concrete dam right below my house here across this bottom, and it was drained there also. But there was a way to block that tie-line and then a way to pump in the upper end of this. And we could maintain the water at about a six-inch depth below the top of the surface. Worked great because we never had a weed problem with that kind of irrigation. But we did do that prior to 1957. In fact, that was started back in the '20s.

M.O'R.: But that was just six acres of the farm?

C.K.: Well, that was my six acres, but then there was another 50 acres that was with the other place. Basically it was developed for raising onions. Onions have always been a very lucrative crop. Not every year, but most of the time. So they developed this bottom to grow onions and irrigation was pretty essential.

M.O'R.: Well, before we move on from your childhood days, let me just ask you a little bit about your school experience. Where did you start school?

C.K.: I started at Blooming in a one-room schoolhouse and went there to fifth grade. And at the fifth grade, the district was unified with the Cornelius District. This area has been in the Hillsboro High District, though, since the '20s or earlier, I don't know when it was. But we were in the Blooming Grade School District, then it was unified with the Cornelius District along with Fernhill and some of the others, and then we rode the school bus to Cornelius and went to school there until I went to high school.

M.O'R.: And what was school like for you during your grade school period? Did you like going to school?

C.K.: Yes. I mean, it was assumed you went to school and you went to learn, and I didn't know any different. In the one-room school, we had six or eight kids in it, and of course, two of them were my brothers, so you know. And two or three others were my cousins. So you know, it was kind of a very close-knit organization. Usually it was a new teacher every year, and she usually lived in Hillsboro and rode the bus out here to Blooming to the school. And of course there was the church school was beside it, looked just like it. There was two schoolhouses sitting there, and the church school usually had about 30 people in it, quite a bit more than the grade school.

M.O'R.: But you were all in different grades, though, obviously.

C.K.: Yes. And of course, even when we went to Cornelius school, there was two grades in one room. Oh, Cornelius give us a little broader view, but you know, we learned to play marbles there, so.

M.O'R.: What were your favorites subjects in school, or did you have any?

C.K.: Well, the science courses, the physics courses, were always my favorite subjects. I understood them the best, much better than English literature and those things. Though I always read a lot.

M.O'R.: Actually, I didn't ask you at the start of this, it might be good to get this on the record, when were you born?

C.K.: May 15th, 1931.

M.O'R.: Okay.

C.K.: And I did go to one year of college at Oregon State, but my father never thought that college was really important to

everybody. He didn't think Gary and I needed college, so neither one of us guys got very much college. I got one year. My other brother, of course, he went to six years of college and ended up being a professor at Oregon State. My sister never went to college.

M.O'R.: Before college you went to Hillsboro High, is that right?

C.K.: Yes, I graduated from Hillsboro High in 1949.

M.O'R.: That must have been a bigger place, compared to the schools you were used to.

C.K.: Yeah. I don't know the exact number of kids that graduated that year. But, you know, I was in the era of the Adruchmans and some of those at Hillsboro High School. I know Abel Brandein and the head of the state police, and he lived out here. So we had some people that went quite far in this world. Norm Getsey was a very good friend of mine, and he worked with Mr. Borlog for quite a few years in developing the short wheat and doing some of those things.

M.O'R.: Actually, I was also going to ask you, back in the period of your childhood, do you remember much about social interaction between the various farming families that lived out here in this region? What did people do to get together and have a good time back in those days?

C.K.: Well, you've got to remember that I grew up in the war years, World War II years, and that really limited the travel; we were rationed with gasoline; we were encouraged not to use a lot of lights. And so it really limited the recreation, social kinds of activities also. Church was one of them, those social activities, weddings and funerals, and it never went much beyond that. My dad and mother went to dances, but after us kids left home pretty much - you know.

My wife and I, we've been square dancing since 1962, so you know, we've got a few more social things that we've done because we could get around.

M.O'R.: But in the war years, mobility was a problem.

C.K.: The biggest thing then was to try to find that keg of beer. Then the shivarees and those kinds of things were the social things.

M.O'R.: So those things did happen.

C.K.: Oh, yes. And my great-grandfather made a lot of wine, and he did sell it. And my grandfather would make wine, but not a lot, and my dad made some wines. And of course, that is one of my hobbies, and I make a couple hundred gallon a year, so you know, I can create quite a party if I wanted. But my father and grandfather never made enough wine to, you know, to be able to do that.

M.O'R.: Can you tell me, do you remember going to any of these shivarees?

C.K.: Oh yes. I've got sick on home brew.

M.O'R.: Can you describe what a typical one was like?

C.K.: Well, the typical one was after newlyweds got home off of their honeymoon, and two to three weeks after they did, well, the community would go over and make a lot of noise and blow shotguns and try to get their attention at their house and tell them the community had come over to shivaree. And usually the group lined up a keg of beer and some goodies, and the newlyweds were expected to pay for it. And when all agreements were, then they'd roll out the keg and tap it and they would have a party.

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]



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Tape 1, Side 2

M.O'R.: So these parties would go on for a while.

C.K.: Yes. Usually the weddings didn't have that kind of a party. Now, in the last years, well, the wedding has had that kind of a big blow-out and party at it, rather than a shivaree.

M.O'R.: But the shivaree would happen after the wedding, sometime after.

C.K.: Yes. Of course, at funerals, well, they always had a lot to eat, and sometimes there was a keg of beer, and sometimes there wasn't. It would depend

M.O'R.: And all of these events would take place at peoples' homes?

C.K.: Yes. They were always at peoples' homes. The churches at that time usually didn't have a social hall and a place for that in those years, that I can remember much of. And of course, it was not appropriate to have alcohol at a church in those years.

M.O'R.: Now you mentioned your growing up years were during the war years, and of course just before that was the Depression. I realize you were pretty young during that period, but I'm just wondering if you have any sense of how the Depression affected farmers out here.

C.K.: No, I can't remember much of that. The German community was pretty frugal to begin with. About the only thing I remember about it is some statements that my grandfather made, and of course one of them I remember real well was that as long as there was dairy cows, you never felt the Depression hardly, and he really believed that. I know that him and my dad both, people owed them money because they had a little bit, and they shared it, and

so they ended up with people owing them money. And even sometimes they didn't always get paid for their milk when they delivered it, and it was delivered it every day - or every other day. And sometimes the dairy couldn't pay them for it until some time later. They were smart enough not to cut the hand off that was feeding them.

M.O'R.: Was your dad's primary source of income from this farm then the dairy operation?

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And the crops that he raised were mostly for the cows?

C.K.: Yes. It was mostly oats. Usually only less than five acres of wheat, and of course hay in the pasture. The hay was primarily alfalfa and clover both.

M.O'R.: And where did your dad sell his milk?

C.K.: He started out with Blair's Dairy in Forest Grove, and then Blair closed down and went out of business, so then he ended up selling to Geiten's Dairy. When I took over the farm, that is where I sold to start with was Geiten's Dairy.

M.O'R.: Now you took over the farm because you were the eldest son?

C.K.: Yes. I was expected to take it.

M.O'R.: And did that square pretty well with you? Is that something you wanted to do at that time? How did you feel about it?

C.K.: Yes. I wanted to be a farmer. I had all kinds of other opportunities.

M.O'R.: What were some of the other opportunities?

C.K.: When I went in the Navy, I went in by contract and that contract guaranteed me school, and I went into aviation electronics. This was in 1951. And when I got out in 1954, the electron-

ics industry was just really starting, and there was an opportunity at Silicon Valley near San Francisco to go into the electronics, to go there and get involved in electronics because I had the training and the schooling. And of course the other opportunity I had was to stay in the Navy. Those that stayed in the Navy got out when they were like 42 years old as Lieutenant Commanders, Retired.

M.O'R.: With their pensions.

C.K.: With their pensions and so forth. And here I was just really getting involved in farming, you know. But those were two of the biggest opportunities that I had and turned down because I knew I wanted to be a farmer, and I'm not sorry I came and farmed.

Then I guess the fact that the farm, I bought 80 acres ended up when I pretty well turned it over to the boys, there was over 400 acres to the farm, and it was a real crop farm. I changed with the times. And I've got three sons who are farmers, so, I don't know what that speaks for me, if they're stupid or I did a good job of convincing them that farming was a good life.

M.O'R.: Are they three each farming then a piece of your original farm?

C.K.: No. Two of my sons are farming this farm, and then I've got a third son that's down at Silverton. He told me last night that he's got a partner and they're farming a little over 200 acres, and then he also works for Iverson Farms, which is the one that owns the tulip flowerbeds down there at Woodburn.

M.O'R.: I've got a note here that in the Navy - did you actually see active duty in the Korean conflict?

C.K.: I was in school during the whole Korea part, and then I became a crewman on a P2V, and then I went to Japan. The only trouble is, at the Korean War they forgot to quit shooting, and so when I went to Japan, Russia and China were still shooting down airplanes, and they were U.S. Navy airplanes mainly. At the armis-

tice, which was in July, I believe, there was supposed to be a cease-fire, I went over in October and they cancelled that cease-fire order and said that if any enemy plane or unidentified plane or one that wouldn't identify himself got close enough for you to shoot him down, to shoot him down.

So we had a pretty peaceful time over there because they were not coming very close to us. Our job was electronic surveillance, shipping surveillance, any other kind of surveillance of the Japanese sea, all the way from Vladivostok a parallel in Korea. The crew I was in, I came back from Japan, went on leave, and I was married then to the wife already, and we came home and here was orders to go straight back to San Francisco.

So we drug our feet a little bit, but we did go back, and they transferred me to San Diego. The squadron that I was in three months later then went to Kodiak, Alaska, and was there three months. The crew I was in was shot down by the Russians on one of those little islands in the Bering Sea, and they bellyflopped the airplane on one of those islands, and most of the crew got burnt bad enough that they were discharged medically, but none of them were killed on that.

M.O'R.: That's fortunate.

C.K.: Well, yeah. I missed that flight and I missed another one that they found the airplane and the bodies six months later on Mt. Baker.

M.O'R.: So you had a couple of near misses, eh?

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: And your specific job in the service was operating electronic equipment?

C.K.: It was radio, radar, electronic countermeasures. I was the first cook, the bow gunner, and I was junior person in the crew, so I was almost everything.

M.O'R.: Whatever had to be done.

C.K.: I didn't fly the airplane, but there was many times I sat behind the pilots on the radar, and both of them were asleep and so was the engineer sitting between them.

M.O'R.: But you decided when your enlisted period came to an end that you had had enough of that, huh?

C.K.: Well, I was supposed to be a farmer.

M.O'R.: Let me back you up just a little bit here to ask you a little bit about the fact that you were going to take over the farm, did that cause either of your other brothers any consternation, do you think?

C.K.: It didn't Robert, because he wasn't expected to and he trained himself and got enough education that he was expected to find a job. Gary, when he got out of the service, did look at the occupation of farming. I'm not sure. He didn't farm, so we know he went a different direction. But I know he did look at it. And he was looking at a place just down the road here, a place for sale at that time, and it was a dairy farm also.

M.O'R.: But he decided not to get into it.

C.K.: I did have the house then.

M.O'R.: And were the three of you fairly close as brothers as you were growing up?

C.K.: Yes.

M.O'R.: I curious about how you met your wife?

C.K.: I met her in college. I went, like I say, one year. Like all of those things that came and went, and I guess there was a couple of key moments when it could have gone, been something a whole lot different situation, but I happened to arrive at the right time and the right place, and gosh, I don't know what else to say.

M.O'R.: Where was she from?

C.K.: She's from Astoria. Oh, okay, so you want a little history, huh?

M.O'R.: Sure, just a little background on her as well. I hope you don't feel too inhibited by the fact that she's listening in here.

C.K.: Oh, no. Well, you've got the Krahmer history basically here. But her family background is Huntingtons, and of course the Huntington family came to the United States in 1623, and Samuel Huntington, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, is one of her relatives. He was also the governor of Connecticut. And the part of the Huntington family that came by covered wagon, they went to Kelso, and they were the primary instrumental people in getting the State of Washington formed and into the United States. Kind of like what Joe Meek did with Oregon.

Of course, all of those Huntingtons, their surname has disappeared. Five generations of girls can't keep a family name going. I did know some of them, but they have died since then. But the Huntington name is all over the United States; probably the biggest group of them now is in Los Angeles. The railroad that my great-grandfather rode to California, one of those was C.B. Huntington, the vice-president of the railroad that went westward was built. So the Huntingtons had to come here first before the Krahmers could get here.

M.O'R.: So you met at Oregon State, was it, and then when did you get married?

C.K.: 1953. She's age 70, so that's right. I was in the Navy.

M.O'R.: You were in the Navy by that time.

C.K.: Yes. In the Navy, I went to San Diego for boot camp, went to Florida for aviation boot camp, went to Memphis, Tennessee for electronics, went to Woodby Island for advanced electronics,

went back to Alameda, California, for the squadron. When I was in the squadron at Alameda is when we got married before I went overseas to Japan.

And of course I went overseas to Japan, was stationed in Japan, when we flew all over the Pacific. I hit Midway and the Philippines and all those great places, and then when I got back from there, we came back to Alameda, I was transferred to San Diego, and that's where I did the rest of my hitch in the Navy was in San Diego, North Island.

M.O'R.: Actually, I don't think we've got your wife's name on the record then, too.

C.K.: Her name is Sally. Very well known in Washington County.

M.O'R.: Now, why is that?

C.K.: Well, she's been very active in the community, especially in the extension and church and of course square dancing and all those other things, and she's got pretty well known. Being here for 45 years almost now, well, she don't call Astoria home no more.

M.O'R.: What kind of things would the two of you do when you were courting at school? What sorts of activities or dates did you have?

C.K.: Oh, gosh. Oh, golly. I had a rule when I went to college, and the rule was that I dated a different girl every week. I had two dates a week. The different girl on the one date, and then on the other date I could date somebody that I had dated before.

M.O'R.: Make sure you cover a little bit of ground.

C.K.: Make sure you cover a little bit of ground. It'd give you a heck of reputation. And she was one of those that I dated more than once at college. I only went with her a few times when

I was in college, and then when I came back home from the Navy a few times. Well, and in the summer, the summer between getting out of college and I didn't go in the Navy till September, I'd stay - I worked around here on the farm while I dated her a couple times during the summer, all summer. Then when I came home on leave, I dated her a couple of times. Like I say, these were the opportunities. One of them, she was going steady with some other guy, you know. Then I wasn't supposed to be involved in that, but I don't know, something happened.

M.O'R.: Okay. Let's see, your dad, of course, was still here at the farm all during this period of time, and still operating essentially a dairy farm at that point?

C.K.: Yes. And oh, when we were kids in high school, he got ulcers and got sick, and so as we graduated from high school, we were expected to stay home one year and work on the farm and help him out. And of course, I was the first one and I did work the one summer and that winter. Then that next spring, I went to work and started working for Vince Dobben, and he's still a farmer around here. I worked for him then and then worked also for him the next summer also after that first year of college, and then I went in the Navy in September.

M.O'R.: Was his a dairy farm also?

C.K.: No, his was a general farm, grain and hay. That's where I learned to drive semi and all those great things. That second summer I drove the semi and hauled an awful lot of hay to Tillamook and Clatsop and Columbia Counties.

M.O'R.: When you did go for that one year in college, did you have a major or a field that you'd picked out by that time?

C.K.: It was agriculture. And by the time I was through with the first term, I knew that I was not going to graduate from college. So the next two terms I took very technical courses.



Most of them were junior and senior courses, since I wanted to learn as much as I could before I left.

M.O'R.: And these are technical courses having to do with agriculture?

C.K.: Right. Right. And I'm glad I did it that way and not some other way. I got an awful lot out of those technical courses.

M.O'R.: You packed a lot into that year?

C.K.: Yes. Well, the first term, you know, when you start out like your advisor wants you to do with 15 hours, and then the next two terms I carried 22 each term. You have lots of homework, but that was fine.

M.O'R.: So then after you came back from the Navy, that was when you really started taking an active role on the farm here?

C.K.: I farmed one year as a partner with my dad, and after that year I told him if there wasn't room for both of us on the place, one of us had to lose. So I stayed on the farm, I bought the farm from him, and he moved to Cornelius and worked as a carpenter, plumber, electrician with another carpenter who was a professional carpenter, and he did that for the rest of his life.

M.O'R.: Was this a tough transition for him to make, do you think?

C.K.: No.

M.O'R.: He was ready to quit?

C.K.: Yes. And traditionally that's been in the family, that when the son is ready to take over, the other one gets out of the way, and I, you know, complained to my kids that they really didn't buy me out until last year when I was 64 years old. My dad retired when he was 51. And I've complained to my kids, "How come you haven't tried to buy me out till now?"

My kids, I took them in as partners in 1978. I formed a partnership and took two of my sons, the one at Silverton and the

one that's here, in as partners. And then of course, the one son married into the Dyke family and he wanted to farm with them, so he did and he got out of the partnership. My youngest son came into it then, he was old enough, and came into that.

But the two sons that are here on the place now really started farming under pretty much their own management in - let's see - eight, ten years ago now and I went to work for the Irrigation District as Manager at that time. And I've been away from the Irrigation District now I think five years, and I was manager three and a half, so it's been that long since I've been pretty much out of the active part of the farm. I've just kind of been - not the complainer there, the kibitzer, but the one that asks the hard questions.

M.O'R.: I see that this house we're sitting in isn't the original house.

C.K.: No. The original house on the farm does not exist. I burned it down years ago. And the house across the road is the second house on the place. It was built somewhere around 1895. I built this house 22 or 23 years ago, in '74. The original house sat clear down by the river and there's an old pear tree down there now that was one of the original trees that was planted there.

Of course the county road came across the river by Cornelius where that flax plant is that I was talking about and then followed the section line along this side of the river which was next to the river all the way up the hill. Well, in the wintertime the local community couldn't get to town because of the flooding. So somewhere around 1890 or somewhere in that area, the records would be in the county, they changed the road out here and they put the bridge where it is now and put the road then to the west coming out of Cornelius because they could get around the flood here in the plain that way.

Then they brought it out to here so because it didn't flood here either and they could get to town then in the wintertime. And so they moved the farmstead to where it is now across the road, and they built the barns there. They took the house and they put it onto skids and they towed it up there. I don't recall anybody ever living in the old original house, but it had been used as a grainery, and of course you carried everything by haversack into it and filled the bins and then you refilled the sacks to unload them. Of course when I got on the farm, I didn't have time for all that baloney, so I put a match under it when it was empty.

M.O'R.: And built an alternative grainery, or stored the grain yourself?

C.K.: No, I didn't. I hauled it all to town and the?  
A n I hauled it back as feed.

M.O'R.: To a place in town to store the grain?

C.K.: Well, by the time I had started to dairy, we were talking about more sophisticated kinds of feed and stuff for the dairy cows. My dad never went to very exotic minerals and additives to the grain mixtures for the dairy end of this, but I did and I raised the production considerably and got very technical with the dairy operation. And then, you know, when I would still be milking cows, but the prices got so low for milk in the early 60's and we were paying our bills but we couldn't have paid off any of the farm or anything like that. So I told my dad I was going to have to change, and he says, "I can see that too."

And so I went to work for the Farm Bureau insurance company in 1964, and worked for them one year. But I got a good idea of what was going on in the community and who was making money and who wasn't. And I'd look at their farm, and so that's when I just - I had three alternatives: either stay as a dairy, but I was going to

have to grow and get a lot bigger; I could go into the hog production.

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]