Warm Valley Historical Project
Interview with Lillian Hereford (d.o.b. September 14, 1924)[1]
Interviewed by Sharon Kahin
February 4, 1991

SK: Ok, Let me just label this. This is a conversation with Lilian Hereford, February 4, 1991 for the Warm Valley Historical Project. Ok, now we can—Now, you said that you started off at the government school or—

LH: Yes, I was probably about-in the fourth grade when I started.

SK: Fourth grade. So how old were you then?

LH: Oh boy! Probably about eight years old. See I lived part of the time with my grandmother. Every other year, I went to Montana to live.

SK: Oh!

LH: And I had the whooping cough so bad one year, I remember, I almost died. And I remember having to fall across the tongue of a wagon to catch my breath.

SK: Uh!

LH: So she took me to Montana with her that first year and I stayed with her until I vLas nine years old and every other year I attended school here and was at this—

SK: Gravy High?

LH: Gravy High [laughter]. I was going to tell you how it got it's name, yeah.

SK: Yeah.

LH: Well it was—It wasn't like it is now. They go to a different instructor. But in those days, one teacher taught you all the writing, reading and arithmetic, you know, you didn't have, you didn't change classes to go to another classroom as you do now.

SK: Oh, I see.

LH: Now the kids have computers—Of course, we didn't. That was unthought of in those days, you know, and well, you had English, you had spelling and you had all that—and it was in the same room and that's about it—

SK: Boys and girls together?

LH: Boys and girls together, uh-huh, yeah.

SK: Now, when you went, Lilian, was it still a boarding school?

LH: No, it was, it was—Oh boy, I can't remember when it was changed into a school, but I—I don't—they used to call it a day school—

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: —Then, you know, but I can't remember—I'd say it was probably about three or four years after I went to school or before I had gone to school that they closed it—

SK: So you—

LH: For a while, it had been a day school—or a district—but I don't know when the district took over or who took over the school. But that was after all the children had gone who had been in the day school. I guess, form the way it sounds, it was pretty bad.

SK: As a day—as a boarding school?

LH: Yeah.

SK: What were some of the things you hears about it as a boarding school?

LH: Well, some of the things that I heard was that the—One thing that comes out every now and again is that the instructors were told not to let the kids talk Indian on the—, you know, on the school grounds, in class or anywhere at school.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: And probably about the only place that you could talk Indian would be at home or in the, you know—I don't know, it sounded pretty horrible. And then the—well, some of the other things that, you know, there was just a lot of beatings and they had this military-type marching and things. Marching to lunch, marching to—any where that they went, you know. I remember people in wagons taking kids down—down to school and driving back home again and they had these big old army wagons, you know, that the government had given them, I guess, and horse teams—teams of horses and they'd take the kids down there and there were a lot of run always and, I guess, it was awful—it must have been terrible for the kids that couldn't speak English.

SK: I think it must have been very hard—

LH: Yeah—and I noticed that a lot of the older people didn't speak that good, you know, well, people that was a little bit older than I was—Now there's kids, I think, from age, now, what is kindergarten, I don't think was—they didn't have

kindergarten then, but the—I imagine they started them in the first grade, you know, and—I don't know, just what they did teach, I think it was mostly—housework, you know, keeping house and a few arts and crafts, you know, and—But I don't know—And for boys, I think it was mostly farm work, you know, and—But now—Listen here, my Dad worked down there for a while and we had—we lived in a great big brick—it wasn't made out of the ordinary bricks, but it was—rocks, that had been put together—you know, put together with cement or maybe it was adobe—kind of adobe. Uh—the mud, you know—

SK: Yeah, I heard that they had kind of a factory or maybe a plant there to make those.

LH: Ok, I think now, maybe those were some of the things that the boys learned to do and really—I don't think that there was that much homework. You didn't have homework. That was unheard of.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: And I know when I went to school there, we had—I always will remember this—it went along with math, you know, and maybe in their own way—I remember the teacher's name was Mrs. Overholdt and she was an elderly lady. She was an old maid, you know, but she was really a sweet person. She was probably one of the best teachers that I ever had.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: Well, I was lucky, you know, I spoke English. I spoke the language of the Crows, that the Crow Indians—'Course I was raised there, but then I had to come back here and I had to speak English. My Dad taught us English and Indian both—I never spoke Indian—Shoshone, but I could understand every bit of it, so it, even then, even when we went to school, was small as we were, I noticed that there's still warning the kids that they should try to speak English and not Indian. They didn't beat them or anything then, like that, but they did—

SK: Yeah, but that was after the change over?

LH: Uh-huh—and a lot of the girls my age spoke very, you know, broken—And I think, well, until this day, until they pass on or something, they spoke that same way. See, they had never to, well, there was no—there was Lander High School—I went to Lander—

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: After I got out of grade school, but a lot of them did not go—now, this elder—I didn't know very much about this one here. Now, was there anything else that you—?

SK: Yeah. I've got lots of questions for you [laughter]

LH: OK.

SK: I was wondering, this teacher that you spoke so highly of, had she been there when it was a boarding school?

LH: Uh—I think she had just gotten her—she must have been very young when she came—

SK: So she had been there when it was more strict?

LH: Yes, uh-huh, yeah.

SK: Uh—

LH: Over—Helen Overholdt was her name.

SK: Uh—Ok—I'm just trying to get the dates straight. So when were you born, Lilian? What year were you born?

LH: Oh, I was born in 1924 and I'll be 67 years old this September the 14th.

SK: Ok, so you went there and you were about—?

LH: I'd say I was about, probably, nine, because—oh—because when I was telling you that I had that whooping cough, I was very sickly after that—at that time they didn't have the medicines and the medical science that they have now and there really wasn't anything in the way of cough medicines or—I remember castor oil and all that, but—you know [laughs]. So my grand mother used to give me skunk oil. It was rendered and they said, a lot of people, that I had what they called consumption.

SK: Tuberculosis? You had TB?

LH: Tuberculosis, yeah. Well, I had. I still have a spot on my lungs, you know. I'm always careful. I'm raising two of my grand kids and I always think, you know, there's the possibility that if I get my system, my resistance weakened then it just might—'cause there is that weak spot on my lungs. But I didn't go to school 'till I was nine.

SK: Ok. I see, because you were sick.

LH: Because my mother—my grandmother tutored me. By the time I went to school I probably, I was probably—the year she died—I can't really remember if I was in the third or the fourth grade, but I started from there. But I knew everything and, you know, I suppose I was just the right age for a certain grade, you know?

SK: Yeah.

LH: So I remember jumping two grades.

SK: Probably you got better tutoring at home than you would have at school?

LH: I think I did. Because I knew nursery rhymes. I knew the verses in the Bible, you know, that she taught me. She used to read me the Bible, you know. She wasn't like—She didn't just stay home, in fact she cooked—up in the west—Was it the west entrance—of Yellowstone.

SK: Oh.

LH: She cooked in dude ranches. Were really, I remember making little gingerbread boys and she's make me, what do you call, fry bread and she'd roll the [rubbing hands together] and she call it snake bread and she'd put little seeds for eyes and I'd eat snakes, you know [laughs] it was real—Yeah.

SK: So she tutored you then—Was she Crow?

LH: She was Shoshone, sorry, she was Mary Washakie. She was one of the Washakies.

SK: Oh—OK.

LH: So we are descendants of the old chief.

SK: Yeah?

LH: And she was—I used to notice that her hair was brown and her eyes were light brown and, now this is a story that I heard about Chief Washakie, that he was a—that he was part Norwegian.

SK: Really?

LH: Yeah. He had, all the pictures I've seen of him, they are semi-colored, you know, but you noticed that he had light eyes and stories that I hear, you know, my mom and my grandmother and the other relatives way that he—and this old saying that blood is thicker than water, you know, is the white blood coming out in him—he liked people in general, not just, you know, Indians or his tribal members, but he liked to see the white people go, who were migrating then, and he would go to—take them to a certain point, he and his warriors, and then they would come back, because he had the Arapaho, the enemy, you know, all over and the Cheyenne and the Siouxs and—I guess he wasn't perfect, but he was a very humane person—

SK: Yeah?

LH: With a heart and I'm always—I've always—In fact, he and my English teacher—In Lander—have always been my inspiration to better myself, you know, but I just, I've missed the goal so far. I decided to get married after World War II and I raised a family. But I think I really done—I'm not rich and I'm not well educated, but I enjoy—and whey we learned down there, I think, was really good. I started to tell you—my mind kind of wanders, you know.

SK: That's fine [laughter].

LH: But, anyway, we had this good citizen's cash store and it was within the school, you know, and we would save up our pennies and, I think, candy,,we had penny candy and I think you got five for a penny and sold barrettes and we took turns being—keeping the store.

SK: That was a good idea—So you learned that?

LH: Yes, uh-huh—And it helps, you know, as you go on, you know, you do take a little bit of that and selling and keeping track of your records on what you put out for materials and what you take in—it really helped. And also, you know, you're, well, we worked in the kitchen—a lot of us learned to make bread—

SK: So you were still working in the kitchen and things like that [end of sentence too faint].

LH: It's just like somebody just left the school and then we got to go to school there. But yet the boys were teaching, they ; were being taught to raise gardens. They were being taught ` to milk cows and to feed and water—take care of the—they had a school herd, you know, they had their own beef. they butchered and a lot of them learned how to cut meat and—

SK: So they were still doing that when you went there even though it was no longer a boarding school?

LH: Yeah. It wasn't a boarding school, but it was just—well, I guess it wasn't—up until lately—Well, you know the difference now.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: It's run by the district and funded by the district. But all the vegetables and things like beef, chickens, they had pork and, you know, it was—it took care of all the students and then at Christmas they had these great big oldfashioned buses, they used to go out to each home and they'd! pick up the families and bring them to the schools and they'd have these great big pageants. They'd have these nativity school programs and once we had this pageant—this Sacaweja pageant, and I'm telling you that I just really enjoyed that.

SK: Was that at Christmas or was that at a different time?

LH: No, that was a d fferent time. Yeah. Christmas you get, oh golly, you know, it was kind of hard times then. I remember, I remember my Dad working for a dollar a day down there, you know, and when we were kids we used to have us an army wagon. He'd take us to the hot springs and it was a treat to go to Wood's store. You remember, their names, but it was Wood's store and it was right where Hine's Service Station is.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: Right at that corner and that was a treat. And at Christmas, you know, we weren't able—there were nine of us in the family, nine kids. I remember we used to, the older ones, we'd save our candy for the little ones. We'd get an orange and an apple and maybe three or four walnuts, you know, and maybe six pieces of candy and that was out Christmas present, you know.

SK: It was during the Depression?

LH: It was, uh-huh, yeah. I remember the little ones, I have one little brother that's passed on that's—I practically raised him and, you know, what you learned about planting gardens, you took home, but I've never been able to find any one to plant or to plough the ground here and I've been here six years and no one has equipment, so I thought, well, you know—And each year I'm getting older and I don't move around too fast. I sit around too much and do this. But I do—it supplements our income and that's—

SK: The garden?

LH: Yes.

SK: So, when you were at school, that was the boy's job to work in the garden and that kind of thing?

LH: Well, any one could work in the gardens, but the milking and taking care of the stock—Ah, they had some beautiful horses—great big farm, you know, they had farm machinery and my Dad worked as a farmer down there and, let me see, then he had these boys that stayed over the weekend and I take it that that place hadn't been completely shut down and that another outfit had taken over. Well, they had taken over, but it was probably one of the unused places and he used to teach classes on poultry and, you know, farm animals. How to take care of them, what to do, you know, what diseases they could get and all that. And he was paid a dollar a day.

SK: And his students, were they regular students at the school?

LH: They were, they went to school there.

SK: And they just came in on weekends to spend—

LH: Oh, I think what they did was they kind of took care of—they kind of were guards that, you know—kind of watched over the school at night. 'Cause there weren't any quarters for, oh, there were but they were in the process of tearing that down.

SK: The dormitory then?

LH: Yes, uh-huh.

SK: So were these kids, were these kids—did they stay there all week and weekend too?

LH: Yeah, they stayed there, some people left them—Never -bothered about going down to see them. Mostly orphans, you know, that had to stay there all the time. The whole—during the whole school year, you know.

SK: Well, that's interesting. So, that part was still a bit of a boarding school?

LH: Yeah—And uh—and then it just grad—very gradually, you know, it kind of—just left different things out like keeping the kids there longer and then let them go home and finally, there was no one there and the farm, they did away with the farm.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: Uh—and I think they—the tribes probably reclaimed the land and I see that it's all leased out now, because different people have their cows in there now. And they put up the hay and everything now.

SK: And that was your Dad's job, was to teach these boys, these older boys?

LH: Yeah. He had one teacher, an ag teacher. I guess he was an ag teacher, Uh—He, you know, I even remember his name. His name comes back to me now. His name, Mr. England was his name and—my Dad was kind of a helper to him and my feeling's that he did a lot of interpreting because some of the kids—

SK: Still couldn't speak English?

LH: —didn't quite. AH—I think he'd kind of tell them if they didn't quite get all what was being told to them, well. I imagine that it was really—I felt, well, you know, it's odd that they don't, well—how come we speak English and they don't, you know, and he says well, if you had been down there, if you were there age and you had been spanked and you would have learned to speak English. See, see, he had been beaten up. I guess it was kind of rough in those days, the dorms were—now they always had—Now, you're always going to have half-breeds. I never knew

what class I was. No one ever called me an old half breed or—and they used to have gang fights. Even when it turned into a day school. There was always all these full-blooded girls on one side and these, you know—the half Indians and, my, they'd have some horratius fights, you know, hair pulling, slugging and, it took a lot of teachers to break them up. So that, there was a lot of prejudice, I thought.

SK: Against half half-breeds?

LH: Half-breeds, yes. And it's—it goes on every now and then. I remember when I first learned how to bead and, well, my work wasn't really that good. It wasn't neat and I didn't know my colors or anything. Really, it was just something to bring in some money, you know? Ok, I'd take mine up. they had a buying day where you could buy moccasins or all Indian crafts—

SK: Where was that?

LH: Well, it's—it's so changed now. There used to be a filling station right where—just about where the post office is now. And that old highway ran—just about—behind the clinic and down over the hill—and—I took mine up there and I said—I wished I never knew—I understood how to talk [Shoshone?] because when I went in there, why these old ladies says—Uh, my old aunt—we just buried her last week, she's part German—

SK: What was her name?

LH: Madaline Day, used to be, yeah—and she had just started. So, I came in—She walked in and I came walking in behind her and this one lady said, an Indian, says "Why don't these half-breeds go somewhere else and sell their funny looking bead work?" You know? And Oh! That hurt so bad. So I told another lady, "Will you tell that lady that one of these days I am going to be the best, just because she said that?" And you know, I guess that—I usually take an insult and make a challenge out of it and I said, "Alright, I'm going to be the best." and I'm almost the best [laughs].

SK: Good for you!

LH: Yeah, and I do make a lot—I recently made a coat for—he makes fur coats and leather goods and things from Houston, Texas.

SK: Huh!

LH: And I made a coat. It had a great big eagle on the back. It's some sort of a—I really don't know who would wear it, but it's a man's jacket. It looks like a dinner jacket, because it comes down and it has a lapel and it has oak leaves. I did the oak leaves in these shiny beads and this great big black eagle on the back. He had two oak leaves facing down and two down at the bottom facing up and two on the

lapel on each side.

SK: Sounds pretty impressive.

LH: Oh—I thought it turned [out] beautiful and, you know, I usually worry about what I'm doing and uh—yeah—

SK: Well, what sort of things—

LH: Oh, can I tell you another thing?

SK: Yeah.

LH: That the little lady that—Her Daddy, Gwenny Roberts, was a teacher down here—Now my youngest son—was from here now, God, what grade was he in—Well, anyway, he was probably about in the third grade. Second or third grade. But she was getting really—to the point where she would just fall asleep.

SK: Gwen Roberts?

LH: Uh-huh. Poor little thing. She was—she taught and she had the most beautiful skin, she didn't have any wrinkles and I thought—Oh, she's found the fountain of youth, you know. Oh—and she was—well, I was looking for—they started having parent-teacher conferences, so I was looking for her room and one of the other teachers came up and I said "Where's Miss Roberts's room?" "Well, you see right where all that noise is coming from?" She had fallen asleep and here was all these kids, standing on the desks, chasing each other—you know—Just raising Cain in there. And so I walked up to her and I said "Where's Miss Roberts?" And they pointed at her and they laughed. So I walked up to her and I said "Miss Roberts, Miss Roberts?" and kind of, you know—And she said "Oh, excuse me. I am so tired." And we had to tell her who we were. But she used to know us, you know, and after so many years she begun—her memory begun to go, you know.

SK: Which school was she teaching at at that time?

LH: She was in the day school.

SK: In the day school?

LH: I think after the county had taken over.

SK: I see.

LH: It was a pretty rank school.

SK: What was the name of it? Fort Washakie Day School?

LH: Just Fort Washakie Day School.

SK: And where was it located?

LH: Right at the same place.

SK: Same place?

LH: Right where it's at now.

SK: Oh—oh, oh, oh.

LH: Yeah, uh-huh and she taught my brother and my brother's in his early—I think in his fifties now. But she taught him when he was a kid—that was in that little one room school with all the grades in there. The grades all sat in little groups.

SK: Oh, and where was that then?

LH: Now, that was right up there in the Fort—and they just recently—It used—there was a white building, the school itself was turned into a Head Start when the Head Start came into the—and Ok, the remanents of the building they moved away to build a new Head Start, so it sits up on the Sundance grounds now, and I see where they were putting it up for bids, some one to buy the—

END SIDE ONE
BEGINNING SIDE TWO

SK: —but you said that there was a buying day for bead work—can you tell me a bit more about that?

LH: Yes, well, they had this—it was run by this lady from Browning, Montana.

SK: Mrs. Schultz?

LH: Mrs. Schultz, she started that.

SK: Ok.

LH: Oh, by the way, she was married to my favorite author, too.

SK: Who was that?

LH: Willard Schultz. He's the author of The White Buffalo Are Leaving [Living?]. Gee, I don't know how many more of those—but, anyway, she started that and she kind of developed it into a—where they had this—they bought this, Mrs. Claremont had this store and, gee, it was just a few feet from the highway, so the put up this arts and crafts building where they sold the beadwork. You took your

beadwork up there and you sold it and if you needed groceries, they had the groceries there and you bought groceries.

SK: What was the name of the store, excuse me?

LH: Uh—wait a minute, I can't think—well, I can't remember.

SK: It was right here at the Fort?

LH: Yeah, it was right here at the fort there, uh—

SK: And that was once a week? Was buying day—?

LH: Well, I think it was once a—No, I don't think there was any set—it might have been twice a month that they sold—Because you can't make it in one day, one piece or one article.

SK: No, I didn't think so—

LH: Probably about every two weeks was their buying day, because you had time to make a pair of moccasins or a purse or something like that, yeah.

SK: Was this during the Depression or when was this? '40s, '50s?

LH: Probably—about—Let's see. Probably about in the '50s.

SK: '50s.

LH: Uh-huh, yeah. I think it's been there about twenty years, I think, twenty or thirty years. I remember it being there during World War II.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: Yeah. Because I was [garbled] still working. Ah—Let's see—

SK: Did a lot of women like you do that? Did it really help make ends meet?

LH: Oh yeah. I was just looking for some—Oh there weren't—the jobs were so far and so few, you know, you just couldn't find a job, you know, a job took skills then too, you know. And—more so—it keeps going into—so that you have to have a high school even to wash dishes, you know, high school education. Now it's getting into the degrees, you know, you have to have a degree for—I know, I did a lot of work for the tribe, but mine was—all of mine was in the health care and I worked in a hospital to start with. I worked as an aide and then worked for the—My daughter works for the CHR program, and I worked in the training school with the retarded people up here in Lander and I loved that—My health just didn't last, you know, I had to—In fact, I had to resign. I had thought that I'd

retire from there, you know, and it probably would have been about '70—I wasn't about to retire, but I had an operation and that ended everything—it just didn't end right.

SK: Well, the whooping cough, now, you don't see that very much any more, but was it—were there a lot of people who had it when you were growing up?

LH: Oh yes, especially—well kids, it's a kids disease, you know. And, I don't know, I know I've had it and I've watched kids here, you know, you've got to do something—you've got to jar yourself [slap] to get your breath back. Because you're—and then my grandmother made an eagle feather—she bought an eagle feather and I don't know what she—she used to have it soaking in water and then when I used to start coughing, you know, and gasping for breath, she'd take that eagle feather—and it had something on the end of it—and she'd take it down and she'd go—

SK: In your throat?

LH: In my throat. And there'd be a great gob of that stringy phlegm would come up and I would vomit and finally, I would feel better and also so weak that I couldn't get up. She'd pick me up and take me in the house. But she—she used to doctor me with cod liver oil and skunk oil—

SK: Now, skunk oil—I've never heard of—How did she make that?

LH: Now, well—there's this kid—well, he's not a kid any more, works for the [Showalt?] Lodge—It's a—the rehab center down here at Ethete, Tom Wissah—His dad, I don't know, it was one of the old tribal—one of the old Indian remedies, I guess, for tuberculosis. (~I% rendered the skunk-' and you know, it made the most beautiful white oil and he'd—he gave me—he game my grandmother two of these—ah, well, they're straight up and down jars, odd looking] jars. I don't know what came in them—Well, anyway, he took two of these and he filled them full of skunk oil and he told her to give me a tea spoon three times a day. So she did that and, you know, I began to get my appetite back and I loved to eat and I began to get around. I got stronger and, you know, really, I think that that pulled me through.

SK: Well, with the TB—that was specifically for the TB?

LH: Yes, uh-huh. And I don't. I never really, well, you know, you don't really ask "Well, what else does it do?" at the time.

SK: Yeah.

LH: But I really think that it helped me.

SK: What did it taste like?

LH: Well, it tastes like—Did you ever burn your heating oil in your stove, you know, and it starts to scorching? Well, that smell. Ok, that's just about the way it tasted. You know, and it's really not that bad—

SK: It's not?

LH: It didn't taste the way a skunk smells. And I ate the carcass. I didn't know what it was, you know, and he was making some of that one time and he asked me—see I said "Oh, what is that, a ground hog?" See, we eat the ground hogs and—I can't eat them any more and people were warned not to eat those or the prairie dog—

SK: Why was that?

LH: Because being rodents, they had that plague, you know. Down around Casper and it's just awfully close—

SK: Oh, the bubonic plague?

LH: Yeah, bubonic plague. There were several cases—several animals that they'd tested that had that—

SK: That was recently?

LH: Oh, yeah—last year and it's just—

SK: Oh, gosh—

LH: But it's—Well, if you take fat and crisp it up almost to the point of burning, well, that's just the way the skunk oil tasted and everybody said "Ooh—you ate that?" and I said "Yeah, I did." and, you know, kids are awfully finicky about things like that, but I wasn't. In fact, I really liked the taste of it.

SK: And it helped you.

LH: It helped me—I really think it did, uh-huh.

SK: Now, the eagle feather—was it dipped in something or was it just something—

LH: Well, she used to have it in a jar and it had something on the end of it. I don't know, I thought it was a piece of cotton—I think it was strands—it looked like strands of buckskin or something and they were all tied and knotted together—but it was so small that you didn't feel it—well, I don't know, I was kind of out of it anyway, I guess. And it was like she was stirring real fast, you know. And then, she jerked it out and then she'd wipe it with a rag and then she'd do the same thing and then, finally, when I got all that phlegm out, that was just what she called it—I don't know what she called it—the head, ok, she got the plug, ok,

well plug—It was kind of like a plug, this stuff so filled your throat that you couldn't breath and it probably went down into your breathing parts, you know, and she would take that out and when you began to vomit, you know, with something down your throat, you're bound to vomit, you're kind of retching—and, anyway, it would bring up that vomit and it was, I don't know—[like a?] piece of cake, you know, it wasn't sticky to where it would stick to your throat, you know, it just came right out—it was slime, you know—

SK: So, she stuck it fairly well back then?

LH: Oh she did, she went clear—way down and she'd bring it up.

SK: Well, that's fascinating. Were there other things like that, you know, that you remember being given as a child that were Indian things?

LH: Yeah, well, one thing that some people still do and it's—Well, you had to look for certain people to—they call it "poking your throat." Now when you had this where your tonsils are swollen and your throat feels like it's closing, you know, when you look at little kids and it looks like they're kind of swollen—you can see the swelling on the outside, ok, they do something. I think what they do is make a finger out of buckskin for this one—You had to find a person with long fingers, very carefully, you had to hold the kid's mouth open, very carefully, they would work their way, I think with grease of some kind and they swabbed the throat and they kind of pushed the sided of each, you know [tonsils?]. But there's a special way, but they'd say that this person would cut their fingernails clear down, in order not to, not to scratch 'cause they say if you scratch, you'd be worse off. Probably infection is what they're talking about, yeah, and then—

SK: What would they swab it with?

LH: Just the finger and with that—buckskin cover over their finger. Uh-huh—yeah—Now, they have a blade of grass that they used to use, and, you know, Indians were bad, they had—They used to have trachoma and when this school started, we used to be all lined up in a row and it was on the—they would turn up their eyelids over and ooh—on some of them were just—you could see the pus in them and all—

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: It wasn't on the eyeballs, it was on the lids of your eyes, the inside. So they would turn it over a swab and they'd take this, I don't know if it was silver nitrate or some sort of a medication and they would rub it until it was just raw—they made it bleed anyway.

SK: It sounds very painful.

LH: Yeah—ah—I wasn't that bad, you know, to where they really had to rub—but

some of them—there's a lady down here that went blind—but she went to both Roberts' mission and to the school down here.

SK: Who was that?

LH: She's Mrs. Brown. Uh—There's a house right beyond this first trailer, if you can go—you go north—just about, probably from about—about from this house to here—you can go straight, but her husband—she's related to me too, but—Her name is Nanny Brown. But her husband is very protective and he won't—He'll say "Well, I don't like anybody bothering her."

SK: Nanny

LH: Nanny Brown, Uh-huh. And she's really adjusted. Of course, she had to, I guess. She's probably a little older than me—she might be seventy now.

SK: She went totally blind from trachoma?

LH: She went totally blind from trachoma—a lot of them have. I remember a lot of them taking that. Of course, a lot of them are gone too, you know. She is one that—I think she went blind probably about thirty years ago, something like that—

SK: What other health problems do you remember back then?

LH: Well, I remember the measles—Oh goodness, teeth rotting early and Public Health, well, it wasn't Public Health, it was the Indian Health, I think that was from the BIA, but we had these doctors and we had that hospital here and they used to say that there was so much of that decay in people's teeth, because they were lacking some sort of a mineral [that] makes strong teeth—and I thought—I always thought to this day that it was fluoride, it's in the water—so that was real bad—People had real bad teeth and I notice the little ones—I don't know, the bab—A lot of the kids have their teeth turn black, you know. And yet they brush and everything, you know. And I don't—There's no dentist that's ever given me a clear answer and I ask "What causes this to darken like that?" "Well—It's probably that they haven't brushed or they haven't flossed and—" And I still don't know, and I always ask. But anyway—Let's see—Oh, there was kind of a scarlatina. I see there's this old guy, an old man, he used to walk around—His skin, he had patches of pink and he was very dark. Patches of pink, great big blotches, you know, and he had them on his hands and someone told me that he had scarlet fever. I imagine there was just no way of treating that either.

SK: And what about TB, was there a lot of that when you were growing up still?

LH: Oh, you bet there was, yeah. And it scares me. They say that TB is coming back. This is, well, I thought "Golly because if you have a weak place in your lung, why TB would just—" I don't know, I depend on vitamins a lot, you know, and I still

have my faith in cod liver oil. And my little boy, my grandson, has asthma and I give him the cod liver oil. I get it down at Smith's in Riverton. He seems to have shaken it. See we lived in—someone was supposed to cut this pollen, these—we get a different kind of a weed added to—you know, and some of it has that pollen that he can't tolerate, you know, so, that seems to keep that down. And it keeps down the colds. He's only had one cold this winter and one ear infection. Now, ear infection is another. They say that Indians are prone to it because their ears won't drain. It all backs up in the middle ear. It's because the structure of the ear is different from the non-Indian—

SK: Huh!

LH: —and that was real interesting, yeah. So there's a lot of ear aches and tooth aches and—

SK: Oh dear!

LH: —I—I don't know if any one's, now, that's tubercular though. But that's—its just in the health report that you get that they can see—I see a case every now and then, so, I don't know.

SK: Huh!

LH: But they got that pretty well under control. What I like to see them do is to teach preventative medicine, you know, do something before it happens. If you—if you prepare the body to resist it, you know, foods that have something there to resist different viruses, for instance, you know, the colds. they're really not that miserable, but I think they are miserable enough, but you know, I think that's—

SK: Well, what I was wondering about, you know, diet and preventative medicine, when you went to the school, were you eating differently than at home with your grandmother and your parents?

LH: No, I don't think so. Uh—you know, we had—you probably had some of your basics. I can't remember, well, oatmeal and, we used to call it mush you know, Cream of Wheat and, you know, and all of that. And then you had cracked corn and you had hominy—No, I'd say that you had just about the same. You had just about the same meals, only it;s the different cooks, you know, you get tired of your own cooking first and then your mom's cooking. But it was real good, but we didn't have that much, uh—oh, they always had cookies and deserts. That's something that I never eat is deserts. I eat a lot of fruit and stuff, but not at meal times.

SK: Uh—why was it called Gravy High?

LH: Gravy, beef and potatoes [laughs]. Yeah—and then everything was Government Issue and then they had pencils and then they marked your pencils "G.I." see.

SK: Government Issue?

LH: Uh-huh.

SK: Even when you were there still?

LH: Uh-huh, yeah. In fact whey we won this claim for the, you know the—

SK: The Tunnison money?

LH: When we got that Tunnison money [laughing]. I never saw so many things—I you bought a new bedroom set, your dressers all were marked G.I. The you had horses running around with your brand on them and G.I. on the bottom. I always thought that was funny, I said "Why do you need two brands?" And Dad said, "Well, that's so you won't take that horse and sell him," you know. And I guess it was just to keep people—I said they treated us like we were babies, you know, and we didn't know—I'd sit and think about things like that and I thought that was so unnecessary for people to treat you like you can't count money and you don't know how to spend money, which probably a lot of them don't, but I think that if you come from a poor family, a large family, you learn how to save and you learn to care about how your money is spent. And not everybody is that way, of course, there's people that drink, you know, and that can happen to anybody. It's not just to Indians alone, but still, they say "That old drunk, you know, he's drunk up all his money now he's bumming around." We hear that a lot. I said "Gee, if people ever learn to understand that that is an illness—" Alcoholism is an illness, now there is another. 'Course, now, in this day and age, it's drugs and alcohol and the little ones, they're learning pretty much—"Oh grandma, is that? Look at that poor guy—Is he drunk?" You know, and I don't like kids seeing stuff like that, but it—that's reality. If they see it and I like to know what they're thinking and I ask them "What do you think?" "That's terrible and he doesn't have a coat and it's cold and his face is dirty and his clothes are dirty—" and all that, you know. It's just not—maybe, 'cause I don't know, my little granddaughter, you know, she's a very thinking little girl, you know—she's—she—she's kind of had it rough, you know? It's—she realized that she has to do things, you know, she's got to. She minds grandmother and she says "Grandmother, we're learning to say 'no' to drugs and alcohol" and they do—

SK: Who?

LH: The police—Or maybe it's a juvenile officer. They always have someone from Lander come out—I think it's Sheriff Bear McKinney's program, you know, I think that's, I guess he is doing work with the kids in school, Ok, I think it's part of that D.A.R.E. program that they come out every so often and they have little pamphlets that the kids bring home, you know, and we talk about them. And then—the firemen are down there and, you know, they're just tickled to learn, you know, and they really believe what they hear.

SK: Well, that's really good that that's working

[tape off and on]

SK: Uh—I just wanted to—I've been writing little notes to myself as you've been talking, you said that there was a lot of runaways, you remember stories of a lot of runaways from the school.

LH: Well, that's probably on—I've heard things that the dorms were all—Well, you know that the dorms were segregated, there were girls dorms and there were boys dorms, but some of the girls were kind of weird and would take the little ones and abuse them, you know, they would abuse them. No, I don't remember if they were sexually abused or just mentally—by tying them to beds and, you know—and uh—pouring water in your shoes and stuff like that, and—and then they were very strict because they had a truant officer and they were forever chasing kids, you know. And if the—I think that the folks were in trouble with the law if they refused to send their kids back because of that—and they were really strict with their discipline. They were strictly disciplined and—In fact, they used to bear the kids, you know. But it was just the older kids, you know, causing these little ones to run away—and maybe because they know the place. They know exactly where to go and they know a relative's house, you know. But there were runaways.

SK: But you said that you remember seeing wagons that would bring the kids back?

LH: Yeah, uh-huh. Wagons or buggies. Some had buggies, the more—the richer, the more well-off people had a horse and buggy, yeah—

SK: Well, the people that were in charge of discipline, were they Indians or were they white? Because I keep hearing "Indian police" and I'm not—

LH: They were—they were both white—at the school, the staff and the house mothers and things, but a lot of them—well, I don't know if they were Indians from another reservation or probably somebody that was educated in a—Well, they were supposed to be really educated people but I don't know—It just didn't seem—Maybe there was a reason that, you know, maybe the kids would learn better if another Indian told them to talk English. I often thought about that—that I imagine that coming from a non-Indian, it would probably frighten the kids, you know, and there's a little bit of intimidation there, they think, you know. But—yeah, but, they've always had a few non-Indians on there. In fact, I think I like it better than—Because there's no special treatment, you [don't] want officers as relatives, you know, where he would let his relatives go and throw somebody else's relatives in jail, you know. Because a non-Indian, they're not partial to one bunch, everybody's treated the same, because he's really, he really doesn't know them to begin with and even if he did, he has the good sense not to favor people. that's the way I seen it and I really—I think it works better that way.

SK: What about—what about between Shoshone and Arapaho? Were there problems?

You mentioned the fights between the 'breeds and the full-bloods, was there problems between the Shoshone and Arapaho students?

LH: Well—There used to be this—It's kind of like this—It was the two, they were bitter enemies at one time, this goes way back and just very slowly, they started intermarrying and up until about forty years ago, I would say that there weren't that many people from each tribe marrying, you know. But now, see my two little—My son's married to an Arapaho girl, but it didn't work out so I got the babies and well, there's a lot of people that are—and now they're marrying. It went to that they are intermarrying with the enemy tribe and it's branching out to the other tribes now, so, you know, that's kind of a change there.

SK: So, it's changed—When you were a student, do you remember kids fighting because of their tribal affiliation?

LH: Well, no—Because there were Arapaho children there—Now, I'm speaking for myself—I got along with all of them. I never—well, there maybe a couple of girls that were—they were just plain mean, that's all I can say. It wasn't, you know, they didn't call you "derned old Shoshone" or "Damned old Shoshone" or anything, you know. It wasn't—It was just over, maybe, a swing or playground equipment . they wanted to play on the swing—One of girl wanted to play on the swing that I had. Well, I told her that I wasn't through, that I wasn't tired of it yet. So she pushed me off and she took over. But that wasn't—And I really didn't see any difference—You never knew they were Arapaho until you grew up to where you could really—to where it really mattered—

SK: Well—

LH: —But we were taught, my Dad always taught us to respect people—Until they done something really, you know, bad—you try talking to them or maybe you do something nice for them, you know, maybe they'll change their minds about you—well—

END OF TAPE ONE
BEGINNING TAPE TWO

LH: —That is your way, you know, that's what they all say—and that's—[tape off and on]

SK: I was wondering what kinds of things that the 'breeds and the fullbloods would fight about—What kinds of prejudice would come out?

LH: Well, it's the fact that they—maybe the idea is keeping the—they resent the half-breed because he is—maybe he's part white or maybe he's part black, but you know there—I think the black had—been in the tribe—they have married into the tribes faster than the Arapahos married into our tribe—It seems to me because, you know, because there's people still walking around that's fuzzy headed and

they got the negroid features—

SK: Do you think that still stems from when they had the black troops out here or do you think that's different?

LH: OK, there's the black troops and there the fur trappers. You know, they had the blacks with them. They had Chinese, they had French, OK, now, my name used to be St. Clair. Ok, that's a French name isn't it? Ok Finnegan is an Irish name. My grandmother was an Irishman. She was part Irish and she was red headed and Dad used to tell us about the four leaf clovers[2] and I guess her mother or father or somebody told her, well, her mother was an Indian but her father was a trader. And then she turned around and married a German who had been a trapper or something or maybe a guide of some kind, I've never—Now this—this German's name was Laughton. His name was Laughton, see—and her name was Molly Finnegan. It was just real—and I think now, there's some people here, I don't really like to say that, but this is where I get my feeling that there were black troops here. There were Chinese cooks and laundry people here and these people got with the—and they weren't married, you know, it was just kind of a relationship of some kind. But they had children by these Indian ladies so this is why, for the features and the skin is kind of—what would you say—What color is a Chinaman's—Yellow?

SK: Yeah.

LH: It's odd. It's not like an Indian. It's not olive. Yeah, I guess it would be sort of an olive skin, you know, but I always go, you know, think, you know, their ancestors must have been Chinese or Black—But I do know for a fact that a lot of girls had married blacks.

SK: And back then when they were fighting, what sort of things would they say to each other? Do you remember what sort of things was said at all?

LH: It was always just "Damn half-breeds, we don't like you! Why don't you move off the reservation? Why don't you just go?" you know. And there was more fighting than there was talking, you know, hair pulling and all that, you know, beating on each other—You kids want to go in there? Get your—

[tape off and on]

SK: So there wasn't any particular rational reason—

LH: No, it's just—maybe they resent the fact that these people had to go out of their, out of their tribes, or their parents and they thought that their feeling is that a half breed is better than they are. Maybe they resent the fact that they have lighter skin or that they speak English, you know, because a lot of these people don't speak that well and it's awfully hard to understand some of them that do because when you say something in Indian there aren't words for everything,

like—If you say "a wristwatch" you would say "A thing that shows you time" is what you would say in Indian. Oh, a lot of things that you would say in Indian lose their meaning when you say it in English. Translating just takes it all away. And you—

SK: So there really was a language barrier there?

LH: I think there was—It just really—Because I remember, when I worked with the Public Health, we had to make home visits and some of the old people—Ok, let me go back a little—We had the hospital and we had both white nurses and Indian nurses and we had white doctors and Indian doctors, Ok. It was so hard to get them to go to the hospital because they thought that there were all Indians in there. We talked and talked and talked to them. Of course, some of them didn't go, you know and they died—passed on—and finally, you get to the point where, I think, that if they can believe what you're saying or you never lied to them or you tell them—I've always gotten away by saying "I don't want you to get mad at me, I want you to take it in a good way, but this is what I am thinking, you know, and I won't—I've never lied to you. I've always led you straight, you know?" And they will, they'll believe you and they'll say "Ok. I'll go." My own grandfather, I had to do that with. He would not go to the hospital. So finally, I told him "Grandpa, you've got to go, you know, so you can be well and come back to us, you know, and I said they've got things in there. They'll give you medicine in a spoon. They'll feed you things that your body should have and then you'll get to feeling better again. Sure they've got stuff that they put in a needle" and I said "they put it in—they put it in your blood, but it will hurt just a little bit, but, you know, it's not going to kill you. It will make you feel good. You'll sleep better." You know, you just tell him—but you have to experience it in order to tell him the little things that maybe they're afraid of, you know, and I have had to go down and I've had to—for people that I couldn't talk to, I could draw, you know, the characters, I could draw or, even sign language, you know, and I thought "I've got to get across to them some way." You know, I thought about the sign language. I thought about drawing picture of things, you know, and they know, you know, and when they know that you're there to help, you know, they'll trust you. But it's just the idea that they've never been in a hospital, I think, and they don't know what goes on. And, you know, for your first time, like if it's going, you know, to find a job for the first time. You've found one and you wonder "Oh, gosh, I wonder what all does it have? What all do you have to do?" You know, what do you wear and all that, the little things.

SK: It's scary.

LH: It's scary, you know, and rather than be scared, you know, they'll just stay home and suffer, you know.

SK: Well, what about traditional Indian medicine? Is there still that going on or is that not really an alternative any more?

LH: No, it's not. Not now. In psychology there is. Now we have some people that,

they're usually one of the elders, you know, that, Ok, there's another thing, too. Now I have, I neither have my dad nor my mother and I don't have any uncles. See, I only had one uncle and he's gone. But when—years and years ago they told me that when you had a family, ok, it goes in to this relationship like father, mother, your dad's brothers are your uncles, ok. You have, maybe you have three—Ok, in the event that something happens to your dad, your uncle will guide you and he will be sort of your mentor and your tutor. He'll show you how to hunt and he'll show you how to do things that men are supposed to do. Maybe it's the facts of life and all that, you know, and he's supposed to do—that's his—has designated—and he's designated to do that job and years ago they used to hold them to it. Ok, it's just—and now it isn't, because I don't see it being done. My mother always told me, "Now, when I go you are the older girl in the family and you have to—" and my sisters come to me and they talk to me. We talk about kids. Maybe it's a problem that she has. We work it out some way and sometimes, I just—It's one heck of a job. Your nieces and nephews come talk to you and vice versa. Your sisters are your children's mothers in Indian, see? Because that is your blood sister. So my children, they have seven mothers, see? I have seven sisters, only one's gone, and they have two uncles. Now, we call their—Now these little ones—it's not a great uncle, it's a grandpa to them see? It would be like, I have a grand daughter, that would be Dale's, that's his niece, but her little children are his grandkids, see? So it just goes on and on and on with each generation. Somebody has the responsibility in that family and I think it's wonderful thing that is not being done. There's too much alcohol and drugs around. Nobody thinks of anything but drinking, you know? and they don't take families seriously at all. I really noticed that. And it—it worries me, you know, I just think, it's like I told these kids of mine, I said, you know, you have responsibility, first to your children and teach ~em the ways—Teach them that somebody has to be a spokesman. He has to be a mentor to the little ones, you know, while they're growing up. You need somebody, you know, and you've got to have them, you know, that's one of the things that isn't being done and they take their children drinking, you know, and kids are always in the car, poor little ones sitting in the street. Well Lander doesn't allow that now, and I'm glad because more children frozen to death or be run over by a car and they don't take them into a bar, they leave them out in the car.

SK: When do you think this started to change, in your experience?

LH: Well, I think its—as far as I know, probably after World War II. Uh—wait a minute. There was a law that permitted Indians' going into a bar, I think that was somewhere in the '40s. '44 or '45.

SK: Oh, I think that was '50s.

LH: Oh, alright.

SK: '52, yeah.

LH: People I have known to be respected people, you know, they were devoted couples. Nice families, just started crumbling. First thing you know, the man started drinking and, oh, my goodness, he's drinking, you know. The next time you see them, she's with him, you know. My husband drank a lot. In fact, I think that he was an alcoholic, but his main gripe against me was that I wouldn't drink with him. I did. I started to and then I thought "well, what if something happens to me? What is going to happen to my babies?" So, I just swore off and I didn't. Well, on occasion, I would drink, but I just, I just hadn't drank for, I don't know how long, but I just thought, "If I can do it, at least one parent ought to say—" But you see I lost him though. We were in the process of divorce when he died of a massive heart attack and that was it—But I just think, I knew I had to give him up. I had no feeling, I had no respect, I had nothing, no feeling at all for him. I didn't want to be around him or anything. And I thought "This is it. This is something that I should have done years ago." So, I took the babies and I walked out. I—I practically raised them myself, so it really wasn't that much of a loss.

SK: Talking to some people for this project, so many of them lived with their grand parents—

LH: That was a custom. That's a custom that they helped. See, there were bad times. People were starving and there wasn't much to eat or hardly anything. You know, I think, I don't know how they—but I remember my grandmother—this was—this is the reason she took me was my dad and mother—I think I was born a couple of years after they were married. Ok, they were having a rough time. They were living in a little frame tent, you know, with a little stove in there and—Those winters were hard then and—but they kept us warm. So my grandmother came from Montana and she asked my mother and dad, I guess, if she could take me. Well, I missed them for a long time, so when that spring came, oh, we came down from Yellowstone, I remember these great big trees and these fancy building and the people. I remember I had this outfit, a little elk tooth dress, it had on it, I don't know how many—and it was velvet, red, and I was a tiny thing, but I used to love to dance and we came down so and I said, "Why can't—" and grandma said, well, we got to go so you stay with mother and dad for a while and we'll come back and get you next year. And I said "When is next year?" and she said "It's not such an awfully long time." And I said "Oh, I'll try it, but could you have my mother write me a—write you a letter and tell me that I'm lonesome and I want to come back?" and she said "Yes." But you know, that never—I had the time to adjust again, you know, the—One day, I remember asking my dad "What's your name?" [laughs], you know—I think it kind of hurt him, but you know, and I asked "Did I say something wrong?" and he said "No, my own little girl can't say Daddy." I said "Oh, are you my daddy?" "Yeah." [laughs]. It kind of threw him, I guess, but it continued that way, you know, every year, I'd come back and see my mom and my dad and I would stay the summer and she would come and pick me up, you know, it went on like that—But it—I asked my mother one time how come I ended up with grandma, you know, and she said "That's one of our ways." They called their customs their ways, you know. She said we were having a rough time and then I had three—two sisters and a brother, then, you know, and—but it's

always the first one they take by then. Mother and dad—they weren't rich, but they weren't that bad off, see.

SK: I see—so that's how it was?

LH: And then sometimes, if your parents pass away, then your grandmother will take you. But, you know, grandmas are always around, anyway. But still, grandmas always took care of the babies and I knew a case where the children were in their teens but they took really good care of their grandmas. Their grandmas by then was getting feeble and probably senile but they took care of her so I thought that was a fair turn about. So, maybe that's—good—but now—I've done it and I'm doing it now—and I think I know more about—having experienced, having raised my own kids—I know what to do when they're not feeling well. I can sit and talk to them and carry on a conversation that has meaning to it and they understand and it's really nice. I think that's the only thing that keeps me going because, after I had this operation I went into a real deep depression—and I don't know. I don't remember. It's like someone cut out a page in my book, you know, I don't know what happened. I know one thing, I ran out of medication which I had to take the rest of my life and—well it just—I ended up—But I never had this feeling that a psychiatrist was a head shrink, you know, a shrink, I don't like that word any way, I mean—and I always explained to these old Indian people—I'd take the—I always believed in the doctors and the nurses going out in the field with me and meeting the people, you know. and I'd tell them what he did, and this one psychiatrist, I felt "God, how am I going to explain this?" So I told him: "This is Doctor So-and So, now him, he—" I said "You know, we all get—" in Indian, I could say in Indian, "We all get sick up here—"

SK: In the head?

LH: Uh-huh—and it effects the rest of our body and we don't feel any good at all. I said, "This guy, he'll talk to you and you talk to him and you get together and pretty soon you're feeling good, real good. That's what he's for." I said, "Our young people need that." And I said "A lot of them don't know, they're hurting up here and they're hurting down here—"

SK: In the heart?

LH: Right—and I said "You got to have somebody to do that. These people do that, they help. They talk to those kids and they find out those kids have to talk. That's something typical of an Indian. They'll be dying and they won't tell you. It's hard to get them to talk. I learned that out in the field. You know that they're not looking well and you say, "Aren't you feeling well? You're looking a bit piqued today and you're a little quiet." Because usually, they want to eat and I picked up so much weight that I never did lose it. Because it is insulting not to eat when they ask you to eat. And I said I drank so much coffee and I ate so much fry bread [laughs] I ate what was there to eat, you know.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: But, I always tried to explain it the best I can and you know, they were sending their kids and this thing about sitting at a desk—You know, if you are counseling or something—when I worked in the alcoholism program at Sheridan, I just did away with all that, we had couches and chairs, sitting just like in a home, you know, and we had coffee and what ever they wanted to drink—except the alcohol. Or we did the counseling or we took a walk and we'd go to the V.A. canteen or walk down the road a little ways, you know. You did counseling anywhere and anytime that they needed it. You were there for them and I just—I didn't use the desk—with me—it scares me, you know, and I thought—this was sort of a—I don't know, what do you call that a self—you know, where you—it was where you—you had to make things work, you know, like you had to improvise ways to get to somebody and I thought of all the things that I didn't—It scares me to go to a shrink, you know, like they say, a shrink, you know, and he sat behind that desk and I think I had Dr. Miracle and that was after my mother passed away and I told him, "I just feel, well—" then the other time was when my son was shot to death, see, and he was a young police officer and I was teasing him [the psychiatrist] about being a shrink, you know, and I said "Oh, I hate that word!" and he said "Why? What does it do to you?" [laughs] I said "I don't know, it just makes me boil, you know." I said "The idea of pinning names on everyone—" and I said "I hate using nicknames, you know, they've got names." But anyway, I said "You scare me to death witting behind that desk. Can't you sit in a chair?" and he said "Thank you for being so truthful." and I said "Well, I don't know," I said "just watch me or ask me questions or whatever it is that you do, you know." So he said, "Ok" and he'd ask me questions and he'd say "Go on. Just ramble on," you know. He'd tell me and that small talk really loosened you up. Plus him sitting in the chair, you know, I hate the other and it really bothers a lot of people. I used to take kids to him too and they'd say "Geesh, you know, why can't he quit getting after us, you know. I thought he was supposed to talk to us and we were supposed to talk to him." And I told them "You're not supposed to be afraid of him. He's a doctor." And I said, "Remember, 'doctor of the mind'." And they'd say "Oh yeah, Ok." There was a pitiful case too—You got all that about the shrink?

SK: Yeah, yeah, I agree with you.

LH: Yeah, but anyway—when I was working with the same program, I was working with the drug and alcohol program, in fact I worked with the juvenile officer from up here. Well, there was a young kid. Had been in the Korean—war? ok, he said, you know, there's so many things I don't understand—He had broken his—he was in a car wreck, he was drinking and he just never drank—had [never] had a drop to drink in his life. His dad was an alcoholic and he went off to war and when he came back, I had never seen him sober and he passed away. I think he was killed in a car wreck. But he had broken his foot and he was supposed to have been talking to Dr. Miracle, see, and he was counseling him and he said, tell me, he said, is it against the law to kill people? and I said "Yeah." And he said "Why did I have to go over there?" And he said "My grandpa and all them say that when

people—It was right until I came back." And he said Oh gosh who there was a murder here Oh, man I can't think, but he said, "how come—?" He said "That guy killed—" Who was it now—But he said "That guy did wrong so this other guy killed him," and he said "now they put him in jail and he's going to go to death row—" He said "What's the difference?" He said "They got my mind so screwed up," he said, "I don't know what to think." and I said "Well, that's what you call—that's—" He said " there's God's law and there's man's law," and he said "we're supposed to listen to God." He said "We're supposed to take his word because he is the Sup—"

END SIDE ONE
BEGIN SIDE TWO

LH: That's really—I don't know, it gets you to thinking. I think that I really, I've had more of an education than when I went to school, just being out, talking with people, you know, and you get so involved with their lives and I just love that, you know, you've got to sit here at home and you can't—you know, what I always wished that I was rich so that I could just do the little things for him, you know. The Arapahos—I used to work down at the other end because nobody from around here wanted to go down there. They were afraid of them and I said, "They're people just like we are." I thought, Well, maybe it's because my Dad told me that they're people like we are. They're Indians too, and you know, if we just put this feuding, this enemy thing way at the back of your mind and just leave it there—that's the past, this is, what did he say, 1960 something, you know, and I thought, well, you know, well this is where I benefitted from going to school. These kids down here, because I knew a lot of them and eventually I got to meet the parents and work with them and it—it was a real nice experience, I always get this nice feeling when I, you know, when I visited with those people—they were so courteous and so, you know, you just felt like you were at home—

SK: With the Arapahos?

LH: Yes.

SK: Well, what about, Lilian, when you went to Lander to school, you said you went to school in Lander—

LH: Oh, that was horrible!

SK: How old were you then?

LH: Oh, I was probably 13.

SK: And what was that like?

LH: Oh, it was murder. Ah—well some of the teachers, I thought, just looked through you and over you and past you.

SK: Because you were Indian?

LH: Yeah.

SK: Uh-huh.

LH: And the kids was twice as bad. I remember having fallen down the stairs. Now, they used to have initiation when you started. When you first started high School they initiated you and you did—simple little things, like pushing a peanut across the floor if a senior asked you to do—You had to do his bidding, no matter what it was. Oh, so this so called football hero, was a great big—His mother was a math teacher there, an algebra—she was my algebra teacher. And he was a big-shot football player. Well, he got these Books of Knowledge and I was a tiny little thing—I think I weighed 110 lbs, 108—something like that—and we had this—what do you call it? An up-down staircase—you go up one way and then you go down the other way. We had the library clear over here—

SK: Oh, yeah, uh-huh.

LH: —on the third story—I don't know. He just singled me out—Made me do outlandish things, you know, and didn't—I really didn't care to, but I was afraid of him, you know, and—I'd look over and there would be one of by friends, probably kneeling on the floor, kissing his shoes or somebody's shoes, and I thought "Gee, that was terrible, you know. In fact, I saw one kid get kicked right in the butt, you know, and—for not doing what he was supposed to—

SK: An Indian kid?

LH: Yeah. And then they would do things like take your books and they would cut them—cut the pages out—and you know—because nobody does that, you know—Got to use that book and then they'd tell the teacher that you were cutting your books and things, you know, and it—and then our lunch. They'd take your lunch—I don't think they are it, and you had to walk downtown during your lunch hour and do without lunch—and that happened a lot of times and they'd steal your pencils and lockers, you couldn't lock your lockers, just certain ones had keys—locks for their lockers. And I lost things like pencils, money, my lunch money was gone and my coat—I remember one winter, my coat was missing and—But the kids that lived on the reservation were really wonderful. They'd back you up, you know, they'd get you out of that mess if you were surrounded by a bunch of kids, you were it—you were the main feature and there was an audience. You had an audience and they would laugh. They wound jeer at you, you know. And I told my dad, I said, "only my English teacher—" I wasn't used to that much tension, you know, and she'd call on me to get up—and maybe I'd do a book report or I'd give a speech, you know, I wasn't too good with speeches, you know, but I could answer a question. Or she'd—I can remember having read, we had this for a lesson, it was—Oh,gosh, I can't remember that right now—It escapes me again—well, anyway. It was Shakespeare—

SK: What was her name?

LH: Uh—Miriam Tweed was her name, yeah—She was Miss Ewers [spells it out] she would say "You're having a bad time, aren't you? I can just tell.. Well, maybe it would be on parts of speech or something and she would say "Give us the definition of a noun or an adverb—" And I'd get up and do it. And then they'd say "Teacher's pet, teacher's pet. Everyone ought to have one. Where do I find one? Where do I buy one." You know. And things like that. And it just hurt, you know. And I told my dad one day, I said "Dad, I'm not going to school anymore." And he said "Why?" And I told him, "I can't take that anymore." And he said, "That's it—Why don't you just let it bounce off your head?" And I said, "What? Rocks? They hurt!" He said as long as they don't touch you—"But carrying those four books, encyclopedia—I fell down that whole—even where the stairs come down—Oh, it was kind of a spiral, because it came this way and then it went down, you know, it's quite—and I never quit falling until I got to the bottom. I suffered two broken ribs and nothing was ever done. That kid was never expelled because his mother was a teacher there.

SK: Well, did the faculty—did the other teachers just ignore this?

LH: Well, my English teacher went down to the office and they told her that was just hear-say, you didn't—You didn't actually see it, did you? and she said, "No, I didn't, but some of the students were telling me—" And they wouldn't do anything. And boy, she really, she said that was just uncalled for. In fact she was instrumental in getting the—they couldn't—the just did away with all that—

SK: Initiation?

LH: Yes.

SK: Good!

LH: See? She was really—She was quite a lady and I always thought she was a strict teacher. She wasn't a kind person—but, she, I don't know, but there was something about her and I thought well, maybe, you know. I'm strict with the babies and I thought, still—maybe I patterned myself to be like her because it worked with me and it works with the kids—My own, it didn't because they were being pulled this way, they were in the middle, you know.

SK: Between you and your husband?

LH: Yeah. Uh-huh. It's just like each one of us had an arm, pulling them, you know. I'm surprised we didn't pull their arms out! But married life just wasn't—

SK: Yeah, what about—excuse me, go ahead.

LH: No, I had no regrets though I had to learn hard—I learned some lessons but the

hard way. You know, and I can—I can probably keep those little ones from making that mistake if I live that long to where they get to that crucial age where they're, you know, experimenting and what I think I'll do is to just keep talking to them about some—about drugs, I'll show them what it does to people and—Of course there's things like funerals, you know, and they'll ask—as honest as you can, and I just don't know how to go about it, you know. And I think that's a lot of things that you just have to be a very wise person or—Other things it's fine, other things are fine—I can handle it. But, I don't know—I'm sure having—

SK: Well, thank you Lilian.

LH: Well, I sure did a lot of talking, didn't I? [laughs]

SK: Well, it's fascinating—I was just wondering—One more question. What about when you were even younger—In the town—were there signs of racial prejudice in the town?

LH: Oh, you bet there were. I'm glad you asked that question.

SK: Yes? Could you tall me about that?

LH: Oh, well, my husband came back—in 1944, I think we went—

SK: Back from the war?

LH: Uh-huh. Yeah. Oh, we went to town—

SK: To Lander?

LH: We went to a movie and he wanted to know if I wanted something to eat and I said "Can we go in them places?" and he said "Oh, heck, I got my uniform on." He said "That ought to mean something, a little bit of respect, you know." "Oh," I said, "I don't know." And I said "do we have to? Are you that hungry?" And he said "Well, we can try." And so, ok, so I went in to what was the Standard Cafe.

SK: Un-huh.

LH: And boy! Everybody looked at us, you know, and boy, I thought "This isn't going to work." and so I sat down and that waitress went by and I remember him saying "Ma'am, can we have a menu?" And she said "You wait your turn." and she went back to the kitchen and he said, "Geez, I guess this is the only place that they do this." He said, "Boy, she was snide, wasn't she?" And I said Yeah." And I said "Let's leave." and you know, we sat there almost an hour and no one waited on us, just walked by us. And other times, they'd spill water on you, they'd slam those things down at you, you know, throw the cutlery, slam the tools at you, you know, slam your food and just bang down on the table. And I said "God!" and I said "I knowed we shouldn't have come in there-and he said "Well, let's go, it's alright.

They don't understand you know." And then we get to the Bijou, then it would all come out and he said "Why did I have to go and put my life on the line for something like that?" He said, "I'm sorry I made you go in there because," he said, "I knew it was going to be that way, but I thought, well, maybe they would change a little bit the way the feel." And then some of the—well, that particular cafe had a sign that said "No dogs or Indians allowed." And that hurt and it still hurts, you know. And I thought about that when that little gal here was raising Cain with the people at Crowheart—And that's another thing I'd like to make a statement about—After a while—My mother lived at Crowheart when she was a--gi-rI and she said that was such a close-knit community and that: there were both Indians and whites up there that lived together and were neighbors and she said, when somebody burned or their house was burned or if somebody was killed then everybody took food over there. If a house—if somebody's house burned down, they Wad that thing back up in a couple of days because everybody pitched in and helped. And she said there were no secrets, there was no fighting, maybe one or two. Maybe a couple of troublemakers up there but they were treated ok, she said, we didn't like them but everybody treated them good, you know, because they lived there. And, here comes this gal with this water thing, you know, and I said "My mother said we never had trouble." and I thought "Gosh, there was never any trouble with—with these people—" Everybody had water and it's beautiful country up there, you know, and I said, the Indians didn't care—And I've heard people say, from up there now—even today that, you know, they're fine. Why did that woman have to come in here and start trouble like that? Now we don't trust each other, you know, we don't feel welcome.

SK: Who was that?

LH: Oh, this lady that—She's the water master down here.

SK: Oh, is she?

LH: [too faint]—Anderson? And I said "This is something that's just recent and I don't get a real good feeling—and I too, I really wish I could have something to say about it, but there was never—this council that we had kind of sided in with here and we protected her and gave her tribal money that no one, because the whole body of the Shoshone tribe, that's what they call the General Council, ok, have to have a say in who spends that money and what is it being spent for. Ok, no one knew anything, but these two councilmen, they're not on the council anymore, so—I just went around to different ones, to older people and I talked to them and told them what was going on and they're off there not. And I thought, "Well, I've done my duty." and my Dad used to say that an Indian is never able to hold a position because his head swells too easily—and you know, I've watched that happen time and time again. He would always say, "Just be your self. Don't try to be something that you're not. Don't bite off more than you can chew by saying 'Well, I can learn'." He said, "People don't change overnight." And that was really good advice, you know, because—He also said "Be a humble person. Don't be braggy," he said, "be thankful for what you get." You know, a lot of little things,

you know, that—He's gone. He's been gone for a long time. But I still remember the things that he said, you know, I said, maybe my ears were better than I thought they were [laughs], yeah—

SK: Sounds like a good man.

LH: Oh—he was, he was a great guy—

SK: And how long did he teach at that school for?

LH: Oh, my goodness—to me it would be forever, you know, just—seems like I couldn't get used to the idea that he didn't teach there anymore. I think they started building this road to Lander and a lot of these Indians got work on there, you know, had these little old things with the scoop on the end and the horse dragging it—I don't know what they called it—

SK: Oh. Slips. Slips and fresnos.

LH: Yeah!

SK: Yeah [laughs] Yeah, they had those and—my dad drove the mail from Lander to Crowheart for—I don't know—maybe about seventeen years.

SK: Oh.

LH: And he wasn't—and Indians, they weren't citizens then, you know, and he couldn't draw—Let's see, what was it—Oh, they didn't take out for Social Security, because he wasn't a citizen, he didn't have a number—And so after he died—I guess, didn't that happen just about the same time that the Indians were allowed in the bars?

SK: Uh-huh

LH: Because he died before that—yeah—so it's been a hard life but an interesting life, you know, and I'm thankful that I have a roof over my head—I'm not a rich person. I don't think that I'd want to be rich, just for my sake—but you know, I see so much that has to be done and boy, that would come in handy.

SK: Yeah, I know what you mean. Well, Lilian, I sure appreciate you giving me your time for this interview.

LH: If I can ever help you out in anyway—just call me or—

SK: Well—
[END OF TAPE]

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[1]

[2]Does she mean the shamrock, which has three leaves?