

Warm Valley Historical Project
Interview with Dolly Rowan
Interviewed by Sharon Kahin and Bernadette Oberly
Spring 1992

SK: Autobiographical information. You were born at Ft. Washakie?

DR: Oh sure. Out there. On the reservation.

SK: Can you tell us when you were born?

DR: I was born 1910 or 1911. Something in there. I'm getting to be old. I'm eighty years old.

SK: You could have fooled me. [laughter]

DR: You can't stay up with me because—I don't know. I'm just very active and I haven't showed my age too much. Just this frisky dog makes me frisky. I guess taking her outside and booting around once and a while. [laughter] Okay?

SK: Yes. How old were you when you went to the Roberts Mission?

DR: I was just a little whiper-snapper. I imagine around ten, or maybe eight. Someplace in there.

SK: And your sisters went there as well?

DR: I had two sisters. My youngest sister, Lydian—she has passed away—[Brody] and myself. The three of us. The rest went down to a boarding school. My father split us because he said we were too young to be down there and he said they were mean down there. So we went to the Mission.

SK: When you say down there, which boarding school is it?

DR: [—ski] boarding school, or what did they call it. It was a government school at the time. We stayed there all week and then went home on Saturdays.

SK: So at the government school, students would stay at school all week and go home on Saturdays?

DR: Yes. We did at the Mission too. We would go home on Saturday and then would have to be back Sunday in time for church.

SK: Nellie said that her husband only got to go home one month out of the year, during the summer. Do you think things had changed?

DR: I remember my sisters, my father and we... We didn't used to have cars. They would go in wagons and they would go pick them up. Mother picked us up in another wagon. We didn't have no fancy cars.

Third voice: You don't remember that Nellie and them lived clear at—.

SK: Oh that's true. Maybe that made a difference.

DR: Well, Nellie—. He might have been. I don't know about Dewey, but I know who he is.

SK: So your dad would come pick you up on Friday?

DR: No, my dad would go pick the kids up that went to boarding school. My mother would pick us Mission kids up.

SK: On Friday afternoons, or when did she pick you up?

DR: Well, if the roads were bad at school, we would have to stay there. If it was nice, we would come home Friday evening and be back Sunday before church. See, I was a religious little character then—[laughter]. Oh well. Let them know how I feel.

SK: Going back to when you were age ten—if you can remember what it was like back then. Can you describe what it felt like to be taken to Roberts Mission and what your first day of school was like?

DR: First thing, your always kind of scared. You kind of don't trust nobody. Then after you got used to it, I like the Mission. It was just like home. It was a wonderful place for the little Shoshone girls. Just the girls. Not the boys. It was a nice place.

SK: What were some of the things that made it nice?

DR: It was more like home. You helped in the kitchen. I helped bake bread. We had little chores we had to do. I remember some of them used to have to empty the old potty. [laughter] They went upstairs and then downstairs. They didn't have running water. We would all take a bath in that old tub. When we got back from home, we would all have to take our bath and get ready for church.

SK: That was Sunday morning?

DR: Sunday afternoon. We would have church around four I guess.

SK: Now, when you say that you all had to take a bath in the old tub—did you have to take it together, or one after another?

DR: No, we went one after another because they were just little old square tubs.

SK: Were they the kind you sat in?

DR: Yes, but the older girls used to bath the little girls—and comb and brush their hair and braid it. Everybody wore braids. They didn't have short hair.

SK: They didn't cut your hair then?

DR: No they didn't. But if you wanted it cut, that was your privilege.

SK: What about your sisters that went to the government school? Did they have their hair cut?

DR: Well, it's kind of hazy in my mind. Some of them—their hair would get full of bugs and they would have to cut their hair. Head lice.

SK: I'm just going back to your baths. Did the older girls have to heat all the water?

DR: Yes, we had to heat the water.

SK: And that was the job of the older girls, to bath the little ones?

DR: Yes. Bath the little ones and empty the water. They had kind of an old catch-all, and we would pour the water down there. Kind of like a drain. In other words a drain. I don't know where the water went. I was no plumber. Anyway, us older girls would take a bath after everybody was through bathing.

SK: Did you do the fires and everything to heat the water? That was your job as well?

DR: It wasn't really our job. It was the cooks job and they had kind of a chore man. He helped do all the hard work—lifting. He did all that. We had to wash all the kids' hair. Some of them at home didn't have water. They had the hot water. had to wash and shampoo their hair—braid it.

SK: You were ten. Were there some children that were younger than you?

DR: Oh yes. Some of them, maybe their parents died. or they didn't have a home so they would put them at the Mission.

SK: So the Mission took orphans too?

DR: Yes. Not too many, because we didn't have enough space for them. We would have to hang them on the wall I guess.

SK: How many girls were there when you were there?

DR: I think about twenty-three. That was all they could hold. They had a big bedroom

upstairs—maybe as long as that. We always slept downstairs. My two sisters and this other girl all slept together. She had the little cot by herself. We had kind of a double bed. Two of us sisters slept in that.

SK: How was that different from the home you were brought up in? Did you have beds in your home?

DR: Yes, we had beds. I came from a large family. We were twelve or thirteen strong. If there wasn't enough room, you slept on the floor.

SK: Did you grow up in a log house?

DR: Yes, I grew up in a log house.

SK: Was it near Ft. Washakie?

DR: It was up where Mary Lou [Heenan] lives. We had a log house up there. Two of them. One was a bunkhouse. All the boys slept in that. We slept in the other house.

SK: Is it still there?

DR: No, it's gone. They built near houses.

SK: How many kids were there in your family?

DR: Thirteen. But two passed away. We had one set of twins. A boy passed a,-ray and our older sister passed away.

SK: You didn't have running water?

DR: No, we had an outhouse. We had a sign out that said "go that way." [laughter] We had to go down to the creek and get water. Carry water back. We each took our water down.

SK: I was just trying to get an idea of how different the school was from your home life. Did your parents bath-.you at home in a washtub too, or did you go in the creek?

DR: Well, they didn't bath us on the weekend because we had a bath at the Mission. Why should we haul a lot of water and take our baths when the Mission could haul it for us?

SK: But I mean before you went to school and in the summertime.

DR: In the summertime we would swim in the creek. Catch frogs. That's why I know how to go frogging. I bet you don't know what it is either. Do you want me to tell

you?

SK: Yeah.

DR: Okay. My little grandson Robby here, when we lived out there by the Fort. Right by the Sacajawea cemetery there is a lot of frogs. I told him, "Let's go frogging." He said, "Grandma, I don't know nothing about frogging." "Well, I'll teach you," I said. So I took him frogging. You catch frogs in the little nets you fix and, he would put all of them in a little bucket and took them home. So we went frogging. It's fun. You catch the big ones and small ones.

SK: Do you eat their legs?

DR: No, we never did eat them. Then I'd get mad at him because he would have so many frogs and let them loose, down at the creek. [laughter]

SK: What were your parents' names?

DR: Charles Snyder and Viola Snyder.

SK: Were they in ranching?

DR: They were ranchers, yes. They had sheep. We were sheep people.

SK: What kind of chores did you do at home before you ,cent to school?

DR: There was always eggs to get. We had to go an gather eggs. The boys had to sop the pigs. We had two old pigs. You always had pigs so that you could have your pork and make all your own lard. See, we were old timers. And we had cows. We had milk cows. About two or three milk cows.

SK: So you did those kinds of chores at home?

DR: Yes.

SK: What about when you went to the Mission? What kinds of things did you do then?

DR: Well, then it was up to the parents to do it. The kids were gone at school. [laughter]

SK: So they lost their help?

DR: Yeah. But that was in the summertime. We always went barefoot. There were no shoes. Didn't know what it was like to wear shoes.

SK: What happened when you went to the Mission? Did they make you wear shoes.

DR: Oh, it about killed us off, but we had to live through it all. [laughter]

SK: What were the uniforms like?

DR: To church we had funny little hats. They remind me off an old sage chicken. You had kind of gray little feathers sticking up there. We wore kind of—we all dressed the same. We wore all the same kind of dresses.

SK: Were they hard to get used to like the shoes were?

DR: Well, no. We knew we had to wear them so why fuss about it. Wear them. Get it over with. I'm not the fussing kind. [laughter]

SK: What about your chores at the Mission? What did you have to do there?

DR: They had a little old cart shaped like a barrel, and it had two wheels on it. Two of us girls used to push it down and—You know the slop water in the kitchen—and kids had to wash their hands in the basin. They would put it in the bucket and the biggest girls would go empty it in this little old cart. We would take it down and dump it, over the fence.

SK: They didn't have drains?

DR: They didn't have drains until years later. When they put in water. When the water came through—I don't know where they get the grater—they would run pipelines to the Mission so they could have water. They had a cistern. The old men used to every week—twice a week—go down to Wind River and bring this big old tank of grater and put it in there. I guess it was a cistern, or well. I don't remember. We had to use that water to bath and use for, you know, wash our faces and for whatever the cooks used it. We used so much that we used to have to go twice a week. It was cold in the wagon. They took this big old wagon with a tank in the back and would go get water at Wind River.

SK: That was the kind of general maintenance man that had to do that?

DR: Yes. He was the maintenance man.

SK: I know they had their own cows and chickens.

DR: Yes, they did.

SK: Did you have to pick up eggs and work with the farm at all.

DR: Yes, we had to pick up eggs but maintenance men did all the milking and they did the separating. But we had to churn butter I remember. They had a big barrel with a handle you would turn. We would each take turns. Ten times. The biggest girls. The cook took care of the butter after we turned it, but we could always have

buttermilk.

SK: Did you work in the gardens too? Were there gardens?

DR: No, they had gardens but I didn't—That was during the summer. We were home then.

SK: Did someone put up the food from the garden?

DR: Yes, and they had an apple orchard up there. They put a lot of apples in a barrel down in the cellar for us kids—for our treat on Friday. We had apples.

SK: Before you went home.

DR: Yes.

SK: Did you have to help clean the dormitory or do anything like that?

DR: There was one dormitory upstairs and one down stairs. And they used to have classes in the dining room. First when we went there we went to the church. They had desks there for our classes.

SK: Which church would that be?

DR: It was the Episcopal Church. The little log house. On Sundays they told us to put a curtain down where the alter was. We used to have school in there. That big old pot belly stove.

SK: So when you started out, you had your classes in the little chapel?

DR: Yes. The chapel there.

SK: How on Earth did you all fit in there. Twenty students in that little—

DR: Well, I don't know. Some how we all fit. We did it. But I don't know how.
[laughter]

SK: And sometimes you would have classes in the little dining room?

DR: Yes. If the snow was too deep. We had a lot of snow. We had it right in the dining room before we ate. They had long tables.

SK: There were about twenty to twenty-five students. Were there more girls that wanted to go to the Mission but couldn't because it was too small?

DR: I don't know. My opinion is, come to think of it, some of them didn't want to send their kids down to the boarding school. They would rather have them at the

Mission because they thought that they would be more adapted to their religious life. A little every day good old religion don't hurt anybody.

SK: Were there more girls that wanted to go there?

DR: Yes. There was a lot of them, but when the quota was full they couldn't take no more. There was no room for them. Gwen Roberts was my teacher.

SK: Reverend Roberts was?

DR: Gwen.

SK: Oh, Gwen.

DR: She was his daughter.

SK: How did they decide which girls got to go there? Was there any way or was it first come first serve?

DR: I don't know. They just picked you out I guess. Your parents went up to see if they had any vacancies and if they had any room, you went there.

SK: Did you enjoy your school more than your sisters enjoyed the government school?

DR: I'd say the government schools were kind of belligerent. They always wanted to fight each other.

SK: The students?

DR: Yes. They would fight amongst one another. It's just like any other school. I went to boarding school all my life. Some were feisty and some were pleasant. There you are.

SK: How long were you at Roberts Mission?

DR: I don't know. Until I was about fourteen I think. Then I went to [Shemal] in Oregon.

SK: Why did you change schools?

DR: I went through the Mission. That's all I could figure

SK: They stopped at about age fourteen?

DR: Yes. They stopped at a certain age.

SK: How did the Mission compare to the school in Oregon?

DR: There was no comparison. That was an out going school. The Mission was just a little religious school where you learned the ten commandments and all those things. It wasn't up to standard with [Shemal] It was a bigger school.

SK: Can you describe a typical day at the Mission school when you were about ten or eleven? Starting from the very first thing in the morning.

DR: First thing in the morning, we got dressed. They rang a bell and we got dressed and went down and had to brush our teeth. Then we would sit around the table and wait for breakfast and say grace. Then we had breakfast. Then after breakfast, you would start doing your chores. Whatever you were supposed to do.

SK: Just out of curiosity—what time did they wake you up?

DR: Seems like it was the crack of dawn. [laughter] I imagine it was about six or seven. Six-thirty. In that neighborhood.

SK: And then classes after you finished your chores?

DR: We just went to school half a day. We worked in the morning. If there was ironing to do or if we had to do the washing. The older girls. The smaller girls were given color crayons and they had to color. After dinner we went to school.

SK: So you had your classes in the afternoon.

DR: Yes.

SK: In the late afternoon, did you have sports or anything like that?

DR: Well, we were all through after three-thirty, I guess. Then we would all come back to the building and it was almost supertime. Some girls were assigned to set the table and some helped in the kitchen.

SK: I remember seeing an old photograph of a tepee structure in the front yard where the younger girls could go and play. Do you remember that?

DR: It was a building. It was a chicken coop, back over that way.

SK: Was that where the children were allowed to play?

DR: No, we wasn't allowed to play around that because they had stock in there. They had cattle too. We didn't have to buy our beef. We would butcher and we would have plenty of meat.

SK: Well maybe this was before your time, but I remember seeing a photograph. It was a playhouse that Roberts had built.

DR: Well maybe before my time it was a playhouse, but it was built like a tepee.

SK: Yes.

DR: There was one down this way someplace. I seen one. I said, “Oh boy, that reminds me of the Mission.” But then later, it was a chicken coop. It was old and rickety and might fall down with a bunch of kids in there. But there was one. It was made out of boards.

SK: A playhouse?

DR: Yes. It was built like a tepee like this. The roof was boards and the sides; out it was round.

SK: Yes. That’s it. Someone told me that Reverend Roberts built that so that the younger girls could go in there and speak the Shoshone language and bead and play with their dolls.

DR: When we went with Gwen, we didn’t talk to much—the language. She said that we would always be in white society. Which is true. We always had to speak English. You could talk. She wouldn’t punish you but you couldn’t talk to her. If I talked Indian to you, you might punish me. But they got over that. They decided that it was their native language. Why not use it? Mom uses it. That’s the only thing they know. But only English was spoken in their homes.

SK: Did you speak English before you went to the school?

DR: Yes. My father was from a different reservation than my mother. So my mother didn’t [understand] my father and my father didn’t [understand] my mother so they talked English. We spoke English, but I learned to talk Shoshone at the Mission.

SK: From the other children?

DR: Yes. I was professional at it. I can say a lot of words now. I get in practice with some of these old girls out there.

SK: Do you remember playing in that round playhouse?

DR: No, I don’t. It’s big in my mind. It was just a chicken coop when I went there.

SK: What about your sisters that went to the government school? Did they get punished for speaking Shoshone?

DR: Yes. They used to punish them. They always wanted them to speak English. But my sisters couldn’t talk because, you know, we always spoke English.

- SK: When you were talking to your sisters and trying to compare experiences—was one school stricter than the other as far as the teachers went?
- DR: I don't know. Maybe the boarding schools were stricter than the Mission. But we had rules. Every school had rules and regulations that you had to go by. Whether it's the best school in the world. You can't do this. You can't do that. You knew where you had to be at a certain time. They would ring the bell. They had an old fashioned bell.
- SK: I was wondering if you could describe the people at the Mission like Reverend Roberts. What was your impression of him?
- DR: That he was the most wonderful person that I've ever known. He was just the nicest person. He was just awfully nice to us kids. But our teacher [Winnie]. She would get kind of rough if we wouldn't mind, maybe. But he was nice. And we all went to church and lived happily ever after, I guess. I enjoyed it. It was a second home to me.
- SK: Do you think that most of your fellow students felt that way?
- DR: I think we all did. Christmas time, we had a ball. We got lots of presents. That was the main thing. People in the east would send presents to the Mission for us little girls. We had a Christmas tree and all. We had a ball [laughter]. So I couldn't see nothing wrong with the Mission.
- SK: What about Mrs. Roberts. What kind of a person was she?
- DR: She was a very nice little person. She was small, but she was very nice. She made us mind and if we were good she would give us candy. So we always wanted to be good. She was very nice.
- SK: Were there any of the other daughter teaching there?
- DR: Yes. Mrs. [Markely] used to come and play the organ on Sundays. And there was Gwen, Nellies the one that played the organ, Marion, and Gladys. Gladys was kind of our matron. At one time, Marion did the cooking because our cook got sick and left. She got our meals for us and I helped her in the kitchen.
- SK: Did you ever have Elanor Markely as a teacher or did you just have Gwen as a teacher?
- DR: Gwen was a teacher and then she went to college to get her degree. Marion Tinnell—she married old Mr. Tinnell. She taught us after Gwen went to the University to better her education.
- SK: Do you remember what kind of classes you took? Do you remember what the subjects were?

DR: Reading, writing, and arithmetic.

SK: The three basics?

DR: Well sure. You did your times tables. You could say your times tables backwards and upside down. We had to learn those times tables. Gwen insisted.

SK: What about other skills?

DR: Oh, we did some sewing too—mending. We had to get on the old fashion machine and stitch them up. But most of our clothes came from back east. They would send us clothes to wear. I don't know what else I can tell you. That's it, I guess. Amen [laughter].

SK: Well, I got a few more questions. [laughter] I would like to know—when you went to Oregon after you finished at the Mission school. Were you ahead of the other kids your age who had gone to other schools or were you about the same?

DR: I wouldn't say that I was ahead of them because it was a big school and they were more advanced than we were. They had kind of the same subjects. But I knew the times tables. That's something. [laughter]

SK: If you were comparing yourself to another fourteen year old—

DR: My way of thinking, they were more advanced than we were. But then you had to study and catch up with them.

SK: Do you remember in what subjects they might have been more advanced in?

DR: Well, they took more subjects like Algebra, History, Ancient History, Modern History, any kind of Mathematics, and you always took English so you could speak good English. Then they had Home ec. Some took sewing and typing and a lot of things. As I said, they were more advanced.

SK: So you just took the basic three. The reading, writing, and arithmetic at Roberts Mission?

DR: Yes.

SK: You didn't have Geography or History?

DR: Oh, we had Geography. I liked Geography, come to think of it.

SK: Did you have any History classes at all?

DR: No. That's all that was taught in those days. Reading, writing, and arithmetic.

SK: Did you use the McDuffy's reader?

DR: I don't really remember what kind of books they were. Books, books, books.

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SK: So you had prayers every night?

DR: Yes. It was a mission school. Otherwise you—

SK: Otherwise, your not a mission school. [laughter] Was that led by Reverend Roberts?

DR: Yes.

SK: And everyone just got together? You had to have prayers.

DR: Yes. We would sit around the table and we would sing. Somebody would do one of the hymns. A special hymn. They were numbered. They would say, "Let's all sing that," so we would all sing it.

SK: Did your sisters have that in the government school?

DR: I don't know.

SK: What about Bible study? Did you have that?

DR: Yes. We studied that from the first page to the back page. Knew all the Ten Commandments by heart.

SK: Was your teacher Reverend Roberts for that?

DR: No, he just held services for us. He would come in there to hear us sing, but Gwen would teach us all this. Or some other teacher. Whoever thought we needed more religion in our everyday life. But it was wonderful, now that I look back on it. I got a lot out of it.

SK: What do you think was the best thing you got out of it? Well, I liked Geography. I thought that was neat. And I kind of liked Mathematics. I learned my timetables. I could say them backyards and upside down. But now—oh, I remember them kind of vaguely.

SK: How was the atmosphere different than when you went to Oregon? Was it hard for you to adjust from this sort of small friendly school?

DR: It's never hard for me to adjust. I could be a stranger going in with strange people

and I would come out knowing everybody. I'm a good mixer. That's my ace in the hole. I could just talk to anybody. Maybe they don't want to talk to me but I'll talk to you.

SK: So you didn't have a hard time adjusting?

DR: No, I didn't have a hard time adjusting to school. It was just kind of different.

SK: How was the school in Oregon different than the mission school?

DR: They didn't have so much religion. That was the one where you had to get down to basics.

SK: Was it as warm and friendly?

DR: It was sort of warm. I thought it was cold, but after you get adjusted, you have everybody for your friend.

SK: One of the things we are trying to do is —

DR: Are you about through talking to me? Are you going to talk all night? [laughter]

SK: I've got a few more questions, unless you're getting restless. I'm trying to get some idea of what Reverend Roberts' house—that little cabin.

DR: Oh, it was so nice. Just like being home.

SK: Did the students go over there sometimes?

DR: Oh yes. He would invite us over. Providing that we didn't have any marks.

SK: Black marks? What kinds of things did you get black marks for?

DR: If we didn't comb our hair, or maybe if we were sassy, or maybe if we didn't eat our food—say, “ech. What's that.” [laughter] When I was working for Washakie school, the kids would come through there and say, “What's that? Ech. I don't like.” “Well, try it,” we used to say to them. That's where I got that.

SK: Can you describe what Reverend Roberts' house looked like? How was it set up? Because we are trying to get some idea so maybe we can reconstruct it.

DR: I think there were just two rooms. A front room and a bedroom. They had an organ in there, I think. I didn't pay too much attention at the time. They had scattered rugs and nice chairs in there.

SK: Was the bedroom on the right hand side?

DR: I don't remember that. It could have been right or left. I just went in there. I wasn't supposed to take inventory. [laughter].

SK: That's true.

DR: I was only a guest.

SK: Speaking of food. When you went to the government school—was that the first time you had been away from home? I'm sorry. When you went to Roberts Mission.

DR: We had better food than they did at the boarding school, I think. We had a nice cook and she could cook pretty good.

SK: But how did it compare with what you had been having at home? Was it different?

DR: Well, it was different, yes. Some food we didn't like you know. No kids liked spinach, or vegetables. Ech.

SK: But it wasn't terribly different from what you were used to?

DR: No. Just something knew. They weren't used to it.

SK: I only have a few more questions. You celebrated Christmas. What other kinds of holidays or special events did you have?

DR: Well, there was Easter. Easter, we always dyed eggs, gathered our Easter eggs, and went to church. That's all we had to do.

SK: Did you celebrate the other girls birthdays or anything like that?

DR: No, we didn't. Didn't do that. I don't remember them doing that. Maybe they did. No, I don't think so.

SK: Did you have plays or recitals that you put on for parents?

DR: No. Sometimes she would give us a poem to recite. That was about it.

SK: You recited that in front of the class then?

DR: You could memorize it upside down and backwards. She would call on me and I would whip it right off and say it. No problem.

SK: Did you play supervised games or any kinds of sports?

DR: We used to play games. Drop the handkerchief, I think it. That's a good game.

Drop the handkerchief. Then they would have a marble or stick. You ,could hold your hands like that and you would drop it in somebodies hand and guess who had it. I don't know what they called that.

SK: But you didn't play anything with balls or things like that?

DR: No. We were ladies. We weren't supposed to play with balls. That was in the olden days. You weren't supposed to play with balls. You were supposed to be a lady.

SK: Did you play ball and stuff at home?

DR: Yes. I had brothers. We used to swim with them and dunk them and they would dunk us.

SK: What about swimming. I know it wasn't summer. Did they let you go swimming or was that considered unlady like?

DR: No we couldn't go swimming. They had a creek, but we weren't allowed to go down there and strip—go swimming in natures bathing suit. That was a no-no.

SK: So looking back, did they try and make you behave like ladies?

DR: Yes. Act like young ladies. We couldn't use our French freely either. And you know what I mean by French. Cuss. You couldn't use bad language. That was a no-no.

SK: So you were told to act like—

DR: Act like a lady should.

SK: Did you hear that same kind of thing at home, or was this a new kind of message?

DR: It was a little different at home. We had brothers. We would fight with them all the time. [laughter] We would bomb them or play a trick on them. That's how we got even with them. We had a lot of fun. We were a big family. We had a lot of fun. So, no complaints.

SK: When you finished your education—how far did you go in Oregon?

DR: I graduated from Haskell. Went to Haskell and took up Home Economics. I wanted to be a cook, but I never made it. But I can cook for anybody else, I guess.

SK: So how was your education the most useful to you? What was the most useful thing about your education, after you graduated from school?

DR: I don't know. You can always have a job if you're a cook.

SK: So you did end up cooking?

DR: Yes. They had college when I went to Haskell. I went through ninth grade, then, when I went to Haskell, I took the ninth grade over. I figured that it would be easy for me. So I repeated. I took four years of high school.

SK: Did you ever cook at Roberts Mission?

DR: No. I Just helped. I just peeled potatoes.

SK: Did they try and teach you how to cook?

DR: Yes. The ones that kind of knew how would help the cook make bread, or whatever. Because we made our own bread.

SK: I think I've run out of questions and we're almost out of tape; but, are any of your siblings—any of your brothers or sisters—still alive that went to the boarding school?

DR: No. My oldest brother Ben—he's gone. And Clara and Gladys. And Delilah—the other one. Ruth is still living. She lives in Santa Fe. She has a son now. They're mostly all gone. Just us Mission people are still living, I guess.

Third voice: Gertie is still alive, isn't she?

DR: Yes. She is in Denver. But Lydia passed away. Our youngest sister.

SK: Well, I guess that's it unless you have any questions for me.

DR: It's nice visiting with you ladies. I might answer my questions— [laughter] So what. Somebody has to be goofy in their life.

SK: Do you think you have any old photographs that you might be able to dig up?

DR: Us little Mission girls when we used to go down to church at Wind River. Every Easter, we used to go down to Wind River in a wagon. Little buggies, and we wore these crazy little hats. I don't know if they would have pictures or not. I don't have any myself.

SK: I just want to show you the pictures of these people with their hats and make sure that—You called them sage chicken hats?

DR: Yes. We put on our sage chicken hats. I might be in the picture. Maybe my sister.

SK: See, this looks like the government school to me though. Is that the Mission school? Yes it is. You're right. Are those the sage chicken hats?

DR: Yes. They were funny with little feathers. They were grey. This is the Mission. I don't care how you see it. This is our bedroom down here. Te other girls slept up there.

SK: I don't know why it looks so different in these pictures. It looks bigger. It just looks huge.

Third voice: Do you recognize those girls, or are they too far away?

DR: I don't even recognize them.

SK: [In response to the last question] Who went to school with you?

DR: Margie Tillman and Bessy— I don't know. [break in tape]

SK: The fireplace?

DR: It was by our room at one time. Gwen told us that some of the girls sneak out and if they caught them—

SK: I know why this looks so big. It's because the girls are so small.

DR: It doesn't even look familiar. I don't know if I'm there or not. Maybe I am.

SK: About that uniform. Is that your summer uniform?

DR: Those were what we wore to church.

SK: With the dark stockings?

DR: Yes. We always had dark stockings. This might look like me.

SK: Is that your everyday uniforms?

DR: This is are Sunday go to meeting uniforms. When we went down to Wind River, to church.

SK: And that's when you would wear the chicken hats.

DR: Yes.

SK: So the hat pictures are probably the Sunday ones?

DR: Yes. That was our Sunday go to meeting clothes and these are our every day.

SK: Everyday with the little dark stockings and the white collars. Did the little white collars come off?

DR: No.

Third Voice: Which one did you say might be you?

DR: This light looking one.

SK: You think that might be you?

DR: Could be—or my sister Gerttie. She was always taller than I was.¹⁹

SK: Yes. Whoever it is does look quite pale. Six from the left of the pictures with the little white collars.

DR: I have another sister, Lydia. She was kind of on the dark side. Yes, maybe that's Lydia. Gertties someplace in here.

SK: That's Lydia here. That's ninth from the right.

DR: I'm not sure. It's vague in my mind. It's been so long. We were light and we combed our hair in braids.

SK: Well, you have solved the mystery of the sage chicken hats. [laughter] You can't see the feathers here, but they did have feathers.

DR: They did have feathers and we didn't dare take them off. That was a no-no. Why take a feather off your hat. Feathers were stylish.

SK: I can't imagine these hats being stylish.

DR: That was before your time.

SK: I know. I know. You don't happen to remember what kind of feathers they were, do you?

DR: I don't know. Chicken feathers, we would call them, but I don't know.

SK: And they came from back east too.

DR: They sent all of our clothing from back east. I don't know who in the world made them. We would sew, and we had to do all the ironing.

SK: These Sunday dresses. They all look slightly different. Where they all kind of different?

DR: Yes. They were kind of different. Our better dresses. You always wore your best on Sunday when you went to church.

[End of tape]