

Herman Larson Interview by John and Maralee Brelage 1962-63

Side 1:

JB: A recording that was made in October 8, 1962 at Herman Larson's 95th birthday.

MB: Well Herman, it is sure good to see you and this is your 95th birthday. That's right?

HL: That's right.

MB: Can you tell us something about the some of early days. You know we live on your old home place. You should be able to tell us some interesting stories. One thing I do know - you planted the orchard that we get apples off of now. Maybe you can tell us some more things about it.

HL: Yes I certainly can. I can tell you a lot about the Larson Place because I was born and raised there... And now that you speak about it, I helped plant the orchard where you get your apples.

MB: In what year did you plant the orchard?

HL: I really don't know. It must be around 70 years ago. We had quite an orchard up there. My father, when I was pretty small, had me go up to him that day to spear the salmon and haul them down on a sled to fertilize the trees.

JB: Like the Indians did with the corn years ago.

HL: Yeah, right.... The Indians never did anything like it in this country. They never raised anything. They lived on roots altogether.

MB: When you were a boy Herman, were the Indians your neighbors?

HL: Why certainly. When I was born, it was the Indians took care of my mother.

MB: I've heard you say before that the Indians were very good neighbors.

HL: Certainly were.

MB: Did you play with the Indian children when you were small? Do you remember that?

HL: I sure do. I also remember when they took them off to the reservations. ... Up to Siletz. I was real small. There was an old squaw that had lived right close to the house there. They didn't get her. So she got onto a big spruce log and she had a bark covered on the side. I knew her. I was small. She says to me: "Whenever you see a ... man, you tell me." She was afraid they were going to take her away. So she stayed there quite a while under that old root. I don't know what become of her.

MB: In other words they took the Indians forcibly to the reservation, is that right.?

HL: No, not to the reservations, to the Siletz.... They took them. Why they shackled them together you know. Handcuffed them together and took them together in a boat. I remember that. And took them up the beach.

MB: Can you tell us some more about the early days. What about the hunting and the wild animals. I imagine it is quite different than it is now.

HL: Yes, I'll say it was. Quite different. The ... ,deer, bear ,elk were very much larger than they are today. You could kill a buck elk that weighed 900 to a 1000 pounds. A bear would be as high as 400 pounds. I've killed deer weighed 250 pounds right here in Coos Bay.

JB: Our big bear now are about what the cubs were in those days.

HL: That's right. And I've killed many of them.

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JB: Herman, could you tell us something about your father Julius Larson? How he landed here and how he got his start here in Coos County or on Larson Inlet?

HL: Yes, I certainly can. My father came here in '62. He was ship wrecked on the Coos Bay Bar. He stayed here on Coos Bay for about 18 months. Then he went back... he got a ship... he worked there at Simpson Lumber Company.. Also worked for a (Pushbacker....?) at Marshfield. Pushbacker had a sawmill there at Marshfield. He got a ship back to San Francisco. From San Francisco he went back to England ... got an English ship and went back to England and went to Norway and was married. He stayed in Norway somewhere around a year, and came back to the Isthmus of Panama with his wife - Mother. They came to San Francisco and located in San Francisco there for about a year and a half. My oldest sister was born in San Francisco. Mrs. Rasmussen. Kelly Rasmussen. He stayed there and worked long-shore about 8 or 9 months and came to Coos Bay. At Coos Bay he worked down at South Inlet for a man by the name of Charlie Brown. He knew Charlie Brown in the early days when first he came to America. Charlie Brown was running a logging camp down in south slough. So Mother went down to South Slough and kept a cook house there for Charlie Brown. She lived there for about 8 months and moved back up to Empire. From Empire, they moved up to Larson Inlet. Larson Inlet - they stayed there for about 8 or 9 months and moved back to Coos Bay where my sister Lilly was born. The little log house in Coos Bay.

MB: Did your folks homestead their place up Larson Inlet?

HL: Preemption.... We had a preemption, a homestead, and a timber claim. We had three.

JB: That's new to me.

HL: You people don't know about that.

MB: That was the same as the land grant then?

HL: Yeah.

MB: You were born at Larson Inlet - that's right?

HL: That's right. 1867.

MB: Did your folks live there from then on?

HL: No. We lived there for quite a while. I was able to go to school. They had no schools up there. So my father and mother moved to Marshfield in '74. So I and my oldest sisters could go to school...

MB: Your younger sisters were born in Marshfield?

HL: No, most of them were born there. We stayed in Marshfield until '79. I went to school and my oldest sisters went to school. School was up on First Street. ... I had one sister born in Marshfield in a old log cabin. That's Sister (?). She's born in the first log cabin in Marshfield. Mrs. Lightner.

MB: During the time you lived in Marshfield, what did your father do for a living?

HL: He worked at different things. He worked with a team. We had a team. WE had 4 or 5 cows and we sold milk there in town, He worked in the mill and also did team work around town. ✓

MB: After that you moved back out to Larson Inlet?

HL: Yes, we moved out there in '79.

MB: At that time, did you make a living on Larson farm from then on or did he work out?

HL: No, not after that. "&9 - that's the time we had the big fire. We moved back to the farm just after ten fire. Everything

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burnt out. Not the house. The barn burnt out.

JB: You were a young boy then - 10 or 12?

HL: Yes.

MB: When did you build on the building site where we live now? The old barn building and the house - when did you build those buildings that were there?

HL: I can't figure that out now. In '79 we were living down at the old orchard there. ... You know the old house we had to move out to the other place up there. We had to start to build a new house....

MB: When you lived there, you milked cows. Did you raise vegetables or other things? Other than for your own use? Where did you sell your milk? Did it go to San Francisco or did you sell cream or butter?

HL: I'll tell you. We first sold everything around the town - that's Empire City and Marshfield. We made butter there - milked cows and made butter the old fashioned way. We had rows and I was peddling them around town - Empire and also Marshfield. In later years, why then we shipped butter to San Francisco. When we first started we made rows. These old fashioned rows.... we had these squares - boxes, so square you know. So many in a box... with piano wire. We just cut those in certain lots. I know we ... they had shipped it to San Francisco. I don't remember exactly how many squares were in a box, but must have been about oohh, 50 rows or 50 squares. 2 pounds to a row and we shipped them in boxes to San Francisco.

JB: ... Someone said that you made cheese....

HL: Oh yes. We made cheese up on the ranch. Made Swiss cheese. 2 years we made Swiss cheese up there. We had a Swiss man and made Swiss cheese.

JB: Boated it down to Marshfield? North Bend?

HL: To North Bend or Empire... In those days you had to go by tide. ... | *

JB: That was before the slough was dredged then..

HL: Oh yes....

JB: You did the dredging, is that right.

HL: I certainly did. I dredged from the mouth of the slough up to your place. We had 4 feet of water at low tide up to the bridge where the boys drowned.

JB: ~~We~~ you the first dredging company around the bay?

HL: Yes, ...I designed the dredge and built the dredge all by myself. I had a hired man. His name was Lankley. He helped me build a dredge. I built the dredge in Marshfield where the fashion shoe store is now on Front Street. Within 9 months from the time I decided to build the dredge to we had it running. First time we had it up to Catching Inlet - the mouth of Catching Inlet at the mouth of Ross Slough to come up this way.

JB: You pretty much built it more or less out of your own head then?

HL: Oh, I designed the whole thing. I got the boom. I had the boom first. A 75 foot boom. Then I got the second boom up there at Hollow Stump. I put a ... cedar down on Hanson's place I took the tree out, and hewed her out and took her down at Peterson place, and I hauled her out up on the bank and hewed her out - 105 feet.

JB: ... You didn't order it like you do now...

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HL: I had a horse and block and so forth. I hired a horse from (Carly Kraut ?) lived up there around Hollow Stump and I pulled a tree out up on the shore where old Peterson's barn is out there.

MB: What are some of the other sloughs that you dredged out Herman? ... Did you dredge out Larson Slough?

HL: Larson Slough, Haynes Slough, North Slough, and Willanch Slough.

MB: I believe several years ago you told me you did a lot of work up around Reedsport. ...Dredging? Was that after you dredged the sloughs here.

HL: No, I dredged before and after, you see, down here. I was up and back and so forth. I crossed Coos Bay Bar with equipment 28 times! ...With equipment, you understand dredges? I had three at one time.

MB: In other words you had a little knowledge of the ocean waters.

HL: Certainly. I sailed. I was just raised on it. Yes Sir.

MB: We certainly enjoyed talking with you. I know everyone else does. We talk about it all year from the different things that we tell you. Another thing I'd like to ask you about: I understand that in the early days there were Indian camps. I understand there was one about where Glasgow was. Maybe I'm not calling them the right name, but where villages - Indian villages...

HL: There was Indian village at North Bend, old town North Bend. There was a village at the mouth of Larson Inlet and an Indian village at Glasgow. And one at Goose Point. There was a good one at Goose Point and also at Hollow Stump - the old Peterson place.

JB: ...Were they teepees or were they something else?

HL: They were principally bark. They didn't have any lumber.

MB: Bark and skins. Did the Indians speak English or did they have their own language?

HL: They had their own language. A lot of them could talk a little English. When they took them up to the reservation, there was a lot of these white men went up there and married these young girls... and brought them back here to Coos Bay. There were three on Larson Inlet. There was old Billy Buckhorn. His name is William Whyte. He had Grosseen's place. There's Jordan. And there's Henry Miller had Weir's place. They all had squaws. A fellow down there at the mouth of the slough, ... just where you turn up Larson Inlet... his name was Wilson. He had a squaw too.

MB: When they took the Indians to the reservation, the Indian men and women both went, is that right?

HB: Yeah, definitely.

MB: Then when the white men went up there and married the Indian girls, they brought them back? The girls back, but what about the men? ✓

HL: They had to stay there....

JB: Were there quite a few so called squaw men?

HL: There was 3-4 on Larson Inlet. There was no white families for a long time. There was no white women.

MB:... When Herman first came there, there were no other white people.

HL: No whites at all. It was years. I don't know that I was quite a sized boy before I saw any white people outside of the family.

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MB: Maybe you spoke there language too when you were a child. ✓

HL: I could talk Indian alright.

JB: Could you talk Coquille? Was Coquille an Indian name?

HL: (No.) "Coquel". (Speaks something in Indian tongue).

JB: What does that mean? You don't know what it means?

HL: Yes I do, (laughing)

MB: You better tell us.

JB: Maybe you better not tell us by the grin on your face.

HL: No. Counting: Ich Muck Krone Krimet (?)..... That's counting.

JB: Like one, two three four?

HL: I could talk pretty good in "gargin" they called it. *Jargon*

MB: What about the customs of the Indians? What about their ... How did they keep their food in the winter...?

HL: They lived principally on clams, fish and so forth. In the summer times, they'd gather berries and nuts. In the early days in this country, there was lots of hazel nuts. They'd gather bushels and bushels of hazel nuts. They'd dry them for winter. And also had different roots and so forth. They principally indulged in fish and clams and so forth. |

JB: There's quite a difference between now and years ago isn't there? Refrigeration...

JB: Maybe that's where the prunes got started... or the raisins.

HL: Yes, they had to dry a lot of food. We had to dry a lot of food.

MB: How often did you buy supplies?

HL: Generally for winter we'd buy big supplies. In summer time, I'd go down to Empire and Marshfield, and peddle eggs and butter and so forth. Then we got supplies every week.... Things were very cheap then. A sack of flour was 80 cents or something like that. About 4 cents a roll for butter. About 20 cents for eggs. ✓

MB: ... [The Indians] got the wild animals too didn't they or did they live more on fish.

HL: They didn't get many wild animals.... They hunted deer but they .. in early days, had big pits.. They'd dig out these pits and cover them over with brush... in the trails. The deer would come along and the elk, and drop into these pits. They had big spears, sticks, sticking up in the bottom of the pits. They'd drop down and drop on those spears. Lots of them. Big holes I seen when I was a kid. ... They'd have it covered over so deer and elk couldn't get out. That way they caught the big game.

JB: That's the way they catch elephants now isn't it?...

HL: I don't know.

MB: How did they take care of their meat? Did they make jerky?

HL: Dried. Dried everything.

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MB: I imagine your folks did canning when they were there.

HL: Essentially dried and smoked.

MB: Well Herman, it has sure been interesting. I could talk all night.

HL: I could tell you a lot of things that nobody knows.

MB:.... You had to bury a squaw on Larson Inlet one time, isn't that right?

HL: That's right. I buried two.

MB: ... [Why did you have to make the coffin?]

HL: Because nobody could make the coffin for her.

MB: If you hadn't have done it, they just wouldn't have done it?

HL: I don't know who could take care of her at that time. At that time, the weather was awfully bad... Rainy. An old fellow came up to me and said "My squaw is dead....He said "Can you make a box, coffin for her?" I said yes. I had some half-inch boards up there and some horse cable. I was working up there at the time. He came upstairs. He was a little old fellow ... just about 5 feet tall. he came upstairs and said my squaw is dead. He said can you make me a "memaloose" box? Yes. His name was Lyman. Yes, I guess I can. I got some lumber - nice lumber. So he went home again. He went downstairs - down to the horse stables. So I went to work on the coffin. So I made the coffin. The next day it was raining something terrible.

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HL: So I made the coffin. Next day it was raining somethin' terrible. I took the coffin and put it in the boat. In those days, It wasn't dredged you know. I took it down to the mouth of Larson Inlet, and carried the coffin up to the old shack up there on the point. I went into the cabin there and the blinds closed there. And sittin' on the floor, and the corpse was laying in the bed. So the old fellow told me to put the body in the coffin. So I put the body in the coffin. The old squaw, she got a lot of stuff. I laid everything in that coffin. I made it big enough but he piled stuff in... she had so much stuff I couldn't get the lid down.

MB: What kind of things did you put in?

HL: I don't know. I didn't look. And then after I nailed the lid down on, then I had to drag it out. I dug the grave just a short ways from the shack there. So then I had to drag it out myself. The old fellow could not do nothin'. I mean it was raining something terrible. So I dragged the coffin out there. I asked Lyman "How deep shall I dig it?" He had a stick from a hip bone and he said like this. That's how deep to dig it. I said "Where shall I dig it?" He looked and looked and finally he marked it out with the stick... the place to dig it. So I dug it. Nice rainy ... nothing but clay. So finally I got it dug. I had drug it out there you know. So I put some dirt on the grave and covered it up. And that's about it.

MB: Well, we sure have enjoyed talking to you Herman. Maybe you could tell us some more sometime. I think you have been waiting a year or two years for John to do this, is that right?

HB: I think so too.

JB: How old are you today?

HL: 95.

JB: Herman, another birthday has passed and we are visiting you again. We've had last year's October 12th storm and thought we might ask you a few questions about things as they were years ago with respect to the storm and the like. One thing Herman, could you tell us some of the old timers, old settlers that were on Larson Inlet? I think you mentioned something about Brown and Jordan on the place there.

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HL: Jordan and Brown and Billy Buckhorn. Henry Moore and a fellow by the name of Wilson was on the Inlet at that time. That's all I know about the people that was living on the Inlet at that time.

JB: You know a lot about the old times there. There was a fire. I think it was in '79. Do you recall that very well?

HL: Yes, I do. Certainly do.

JB: Could you tell us a little bit about it, how it started, where it went and where it come from?

HL: We were living in Marshfield at that time when it broke out. It came from Schofield's Creek; came down to about the head of Larson Inlet. It spread, from the coast to over as far as Golden Falls..

JB: Let me hold that for you. You talk better with your hands. Maralee says that if we tie our hands up, she couldn't talk at all see.

HL: The fire started up at Schofield Creek. It came down as far as Glasgow down there.. It spread from the coast to Loon Lake. About 15 miles long and about 14 miles wide.

JB: The logging that was done there was done after that is that right?

HL: Very little logging was ever done there. The only logging that was done there was just us. We logged there.

JB: How was this logging done Herman? They didn't have cats like they did now. We know that.

HL: Bull team. We got a bull team from Sumner. We fed them...One year they owned the ranch... One winter rather, so the next winter we took the bulls up to the ranch. instead of hauling the hay to Sumner. We logged that winter with the bull team.

JB: I imagine that was quite a chore to feed those bulls, wasn't it?

HL: I should say so.

MB: Herman, what did you do with the logs that you logged? Did you use them for building there or sell them to the mills?

HL: We sold them to Empire. Empire City was running at that time. Luce was running in the mill. That's before the big mill was built.

MB: When you built our barn, you helped your father build it didn't you?

HL: Certainly.

MB: You logged out the timbers for that didn't you? Those big timbers - they are still there. They are not in as good a shape now Herman. You got the timbers right off the place, is that correct?

HL: Right off the place.

JB: Another thing Herman. What kind of not bothers me but I kind of wonder about is when your folks settled there, how you found the valley of Larson Inlet. It is all cleared and smoothed now. How was it then?

HL: It was noting but alder, crabapple, vine maple. As far as the house down there, way up to the head, skunk cabbage. The creek was all blocked up ... the water was all over everything.

MB: A swamp in other words.

HL: A swamp. Yes. We ditched miles and miles of ditches on that place there. ... We had to get hogs to kill out the skunk cabbage. A lot of hogs then. They killed out the skunk cabbage.

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MB: Since we were here last year, it was four days after we were here, we had a pretty big blow. Most of the old timers say that it was the biggest storm that they remember, but I believe you remember a storm that was worse. You told me last winter. ✓

HL: That's true. That was in 1880.

MB: There probably aren't too many that remember that. Can you tell us what you remember and where you were at the time? And how much damaged... that you remember that it did.

HL: It was 1880 and we were living up at the home place. My father was working down on south Slough. My mother and the family was there on the place. The storm came in the morning somewhere about ten o'clock. I could look across on the side hill and all the trees were standing there with limbs on yet. It was just like a mowing machine. The trees was a-falling. Lots of them got rotten and the trees just somethin' terrible. The worst of the disaster was a couple of steam boats laying at Empire. They were river boats. there at Empire. There were quite a few ships laying down at the bar. A schooner by the name of Dennis Sellar (?) She drug her anchor and she landed up on a rock there. There's a big rock just about west of the mill down there. She settled on the rock. She was loaded with coal and ready to go out. She was bow bound when the storm came. She sunk there. A fellow by the name of Davis took the coal out from her and then Old Man Kruse took her up and hauled her up on the sand spit where the railroad bridge crosses and hauled her up broadside. Patched the hole in her and she went up to Eastport. That's Englewood. And loaded coal again and went to sea. The riverboats, The Coos and The Satellite: The Coos landed up in Jordan's Cove and The Satellite landed between North Slough and Goose Point. ✓

MB: Were there any lives lost in that storm?

HL: Only one. Marshfield.... But we lost three cows.

MB: We had quite a little damage. It took the roof from our silos... Some pieces of the metal went clear to the top of the ridge. ... We lost no cattle so we were quite fortunate. We did lose a big fir tree ... that fell right between the house and the barn. A little bit too close for comfort wise.

JB: You mentioned something about the coal here Herman. they did quite a bit of extensive coal mining in the early days didn't they?

HL: Libby was the best mine they had. There was the East Fork, and Newport. Newport was Libby now. Southport and Hardy mines. Taht's about the coal mines that was here. ✓

JB: They didn't use so much of that here did they? Did they ship it out? How was it used?

HL: It was shipped to San Francisco. When they struck oil in San Francisco, why that cut out the coal.

JB: They didn't want the coal any more because that was easier to handle?

HL: Certainly.

JB: One thing here that I enjoyed listening to you before Herman, was the story you told me about the two cougars. Or however it was, number of cougars it was that you met on the trail. You had a little dog with you..

HL: No, I didn't have a dog with me....It was in the Spring of the year. Planting time - early potatoes. My father wanted me to go over to Henry Sanford's to see if I could get some early potatoes... I went over the school road. The school house was over on Haynes Inlet. I went over by my sister's. They rent the school. Sanford told me I could get some potatoes, but I'd have to take a horse to carry them over the trail. So I come past the schoolhouse and was on my way home close to the top of the ridge between Larson and Haynes, Why I saw a cougar standing in the trail. I stayed there for a while. Maybe five minutes or something like that. Not that long I guess. Kind of stepped out of the trail and went east toward Larson Inlet. Then I started home for my dog and my gun. I came back with my dog and my gun and put him down on the trail and made him slow track. I traced him down to Larson Inlet - Peterson's place at that time. Came back over across the trail just about two or three hundred yards south of where I saw him in the first place. Where they call Westman's Garden. A picket fence around the garden there.

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It was five-foot pickets. I made the dog slow track and he tracked him down to the garden. He wanted to get over the fence. I didn't think that cougars would go over the fence. I lifted him over the fence. He went straight across the fence bottom there, the other side of the fence ... a bigger fence was there so I kicked off a picket and the dog went outside and just about a hundred feet outside of the fence, why there was a four-point buck laying down in a hole. So then I knew it had just been killed. He'd killed it since I first saw him. I only saw one, but there was two. When I saw the deer there, I looked at him, and then told the dog to go and get him. And up the gulch he went and I went up on a spur to hear the dog. I knew he'd tree him. I went up on the spur road and listened... Pretty soon I looked down below me on a deer trail and I was standing right in a deer trail that led down to the bottom, side-bottom. I saw a cougar there. And I heard something behind me ... I was between two of them. I first thought I'd shoot the one below me. I thought the other one would run, but he didn't. I shot one below me. He was looking back over his shoulder at me. The one that was up on the spur behind me, why he just squatted down. I shot one below me first, wheeled around, and I shot the other one right in the breast here. The bullet came right out the back of his shoulder. Soon as I shot, why the dog happened to come and he dragged the cougar by the trail and up an alder he went. Then I finished him. But he jumped straight towards me. So I finished him. They both just about had kittens so I got six there in three shots!

JB: Well that was a thrilling moment. When you think about that you get quite a thrill even thinking about the old times.

HL: I killed lots of them. I killed one. I stayed all night with one in a tree and I shot him in the morning. A big alder. he was out on a limb. When I shot him, he just rolled over and he hung by his claws on a limb and got a death grip there. It was a long slim alder, a big alder. I couldn't get him down without cutting the alder down. I had to cut the alder down to get the cougar.

MB: Herman, you mentioned you stayed all night. Did your dog tree him in the evening, and then you were afraid to leave?.... What about the bear Herman? Did you kill many bear when you were young?

HL: I should say so. I killed I don't know how many.... I killed three one morning.

MB: Since I've lived there, I've seen one up by the orchard that is right along the side of the county road. I understand that there are signs of them up on the road between Haynes and Larson... on the ridge, there, but we never see them.

HL: There are bears around here too. Four or five years ago there were bears come out and robbed three stands of bees for honey... right out here.

MB: There aren't nearly as many as in the early days.

HL: Not so big. They're small. That's the thing now. Take the early days. Nobody'd of killed 'em! I've seen bear there that had just gray face.

MB: What about the elk? Was there a lot of elk?

HL: Oh my yes, a lot of elk. They grew large. Nobody would kill them. The Indians would get in those pits there and ... (not discernable).

MB: Your family used quite a bit of the wild meat. Did you use quite a bit of that?

HL: Altogether.

MB: You didn't have to raise beef to get meat like we do now to get us any meat?

HL: I should say not. No no no - it was all ducks and geese... the country was just millions and millions of ducks, and geese.

MB: There were geese around here then.

HL: Yes. Big Honkers around Goose Point and around to the North. Slough there. Why there'd be hundreds of them. Big Honkers. I and a fellow by the name of Fred Watson. I was 14 years old and I went down there to Goose Point. He was a bachelor. He was living there. I stayed all night with him and in the morning we went out to hunt geese. We killed 17. Watson says "What shall we do with all these geese?" I said "I don't know. We got plenty a home." well he said we could take

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them up town and see if we could sell them. We took up town to Marshfield and only sold 4 of them. The balance we gave away.

MB: Well, you weren't too good a salesman were you?

HL: Nobody could buy them.

JB: The towns of Coos bay, North Bend and Empire sure have grown up since those days haven't they?

HL: Oh my, nobody there.

MB: Herman, ...when we were here the other ... night, you were telling us about sailing over to Cooston and back? You could sail right across the bay in a sail boat.

HL: That's right. The mud flats are all grown up from... down the lower bay at Empire, only a couple of feet. Take it up around Cooston, the flats were about 7 or 8 feet.

MB: There weren't mud flats out in the middle of the bay like there is now?

HL: Oh no.

MB: You have seen a lot of changes not only in the ways of doing things, transportation and things like that. You've seen a lot of geographic changes.

HL: I've seen it all... Climate has changed ... for the better.

MB: Was it wetter or colder?

HL: Wetter and colder both.... I've seen 18 inches of snow right in Marshfield. And the bay froze over so the boats couldn't run to Empire except for about a week. The whole bay froze over.

JB: What do you think caused the change Herman?

HL: I don't know what caused the change. It's the climate. We couldn't drive. We used to have 90 inches of rain. Now we are only getting half that much.

MB: Next time anybody starts griping about so much rain, I'll just tell them what you said.

JB: There's some piling out there by Glasgow. Could you explain about those piling? Was there a wharf out there at one time?

HL: Certainly, there was a city there. There was a wharf out to deep water. Out to the ship channel.... about 50 by a hundred out to the ship channel. They had a hotel, a drug store, and quite a few buildings.... The wharf was 24 feet wide.

JB: A big one then. A wharf something like the one they have going out to the Cape Arago pulp mill where they load pulp there.

HL: That's right. About the same kind of wharf.

JB: From the air, I noticed that by Empire next to that some kind of coast guard station, there is a bunch of piling running out into the channel there. Do you know anything about that out there?

HL: No I do not.... There was where the ferry used to go across to Glasgow. In early days there was a ship there. An old hull that was out there by the edge of the channel... It lay there for a number of years. It was there in the 70's. It was in the road, so the government... it was a menace to navigation, so they blew it up with powder. It was just right there where I dug that canal that goes into the ferry at Glasgow.

Herman Larson Interview by John and Maralee Brelage 1962-63

JB: Oh you dug that channel?

HL: I dug that channel... from the main ship channel into Glasgow.

JB: That's real interesting. I suppose there are lots of things you've done that you can't think of... I don't know in particular because I don't know how the history of our area was. One time you mentioned something about the telephone line that came in here. Do you know about the time they had telephones in this area?

HL: Telephones? No I can't exactly tell you. What time it was. But the telegraph came in here in '76. Came into Empire. Empire was the head quarters. ... It came in from Roseburg over the Coos Bay Wagon Road.

JB: Was it like the International Morse Code or was it like the railroad telegraph?

HL: I don't know.

JB: You've no doubt heard of the old Coos Bay wagon road. I think a little bit,, sign of it close to Coaledo.

HL: Oh yes, I've been over it many times.

JB: Where did the wagon road come from and it went to Coos Bay... someplace in Coos Bay.

HL: Well, it came from Roseburg through by Sitkum and then to Sumner and across the Isthmus Slough there at Pierce's Mill, and then went over the hill to Englewood, and then to Marshfield. From Marshfield over the hills from Mingus Park to Empire.

JB: Well, that's real interesting....

End