

Fred Vivant

Interviewed by: Jacobs 02/19/1996

Transcribed by: Jennie Hakes 10/22/2004

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Cassette tape label: *Fred Vivant 2/19/96 Boatman*

Note

Mark is interviewing Fred Vivant (and Fred's wife sometimes chimes in), assisted by someone who unfortunately is not identified on the tape (I just call him "B"). There is a lot of background noise, so it was often hard to make out the conversation. They are going over plats to locate old schools, sawmills, and other landmarks in the McGrath area. References are made to Silver Star and Veteransville.

Side A

Mark: What we're looking for is like where some of the old logging camps were and like old schoolhouses. Just things like that. And with this map, what we're gonna do is just have locations, you know, and have them numbered and then on the next page have what the number corresponds to, so... We're mainly looking for locations.

Fred: (lots of clunking noises, can't make out what he is saying yet) All you're really interested in showing... all you're really showing is the south side of Pliny¹ Township. Do you wanna know where the schools were? The original school that was here in Pliny Township up here (unintelligible). It was right alongside of the creek right there, there was a log schoolhouse right there. And that school was the first school that they had (unintelligible).

B: What was the name of that school, do you remember?

F: No, I don't know what the name of it was, it was a pre-runner of the Wilson school, you know. See, the Wilson School was in this corner here, on this side of the road. That was put in there later. But this, this school actually (unintelligible) was moved out of there by (unintelligible). He moved it down there (unintelligible) down here. Right down there.

B: Is it still there?

F: No, I think it's gone now. It got so deteriorated. That was another story in itself, how they moved that log building there. What I remember them telling me about this school here was that Mrs. Art Nelson - she was an Eken. And their homestead was right up in here. And they walked across, the kids walked across the Snake River here, through that - what we call the Ole Olson - that was the McGrath logging camp - and it was right on the river here. And they would walk through that across the river there and they would walk down to the school. She just told me what time they come home from school. They (unintelligible).

¹ He pronounces it with a short "e" - sounds like "Plenty" without the "t". McGrath is in Pliny Township.

M: Do you have a plat book, Roger? That's gotta be in White Pine Township.

B: I got also the picture (unintelligible) pictures of this school right here. I think the logging camp was at this point.

F: See, I didn't really... I didn't explain that when that logging camp, that loggin camp was actually a McGrath logging camp. Just the foreman was Ole Olson. We called it Ole Olson's camp. That's how they would do that.

B: But it was actually in McGrath?

F: McGrath, yeah.

(unintelligible – voices are too low to make out)

F: First busses through McGrath High School.

M: And that was right in town here?

F: Yeah. (unintelligible)

B: Did that McGrath own that logging camp, then?

F: Yeah, it was his. Yeah, it was his camp. The only thing is, when they set these camps up, they sent camp bosses on them, and that's how they designated which camp... back there was the camp west of McGrath called the Frank McGrath Camp.

(so much of this is too hard to make out from the tape, so portions are skipped)

M: And that was up in (unintelligible)?

F: Yeah, and it was right, just there on the creek, so it would have to be probably right in here somewhere.

M: Care if I write in here?

F: Nope.

F: At that time (unintelligible). They crossed the river there and went down to this school.

B: About when was that school there?

F: It had to be somewhere around the early 1900s, in there. It would be after 1900, but it would be in that general area, because that was before she was going to school (unintelligible). I think that probably McGrath logged until '92, probably because his mill burned in '21 at White Pine.

B: It burned in 1921? Where did he have the mill at?

M: There was a main camp...

B: You mean this particular... where did he have the mill at?

F: Right there. Right there where Marvin Stalc's place was there. Do you see those, do you see those (unintelligible) down there next to the creek, down there?

B: It doesn't matter. There was a (unintelligible) here?

F: No. (unintelligible). That would be on the township above... White Pine (unintelligible). Do you see that dot?

B: 35?

M: Ok.

F: They not only had a sawmill there, they also had a store, rooming houses, and a blacksmith's shop. They had quite a setup. If you look there, you'll see that it is (unintelligible).

M: Um hm.

F: That's the original White Pine. When they talk about White Pine. That is the town of White Pine.

B: So then, uh, the mill burned down. What did they call the mill?

F: Steam Run Sawmill. If you look here, you'll see that it started at a hog farm, and (unintelligible). You can still see that spur where it is.

B: Where is Solena?

F: Right there. That's the track right there.

B: Oh, this road here?

F: That's right – they got a road out of there (unintelligible). If you look at it, you can see it (unintelligible). There was an awful lot of timber back there.

M: Yeah, that was one of the biggest sawmills in the state that I've read about. In fact, we found a... stumbled onto an old dam, walking through the woods. There was a big mound that went all the way to the river, and we couldn't figure out what it was at first. And we followed it, and then we got to the river and we could see it continued on the other side there. That was up by Silver's Tower (Silver Star?). Up in there.

(unintelligible for awhile)

M: I'm jumping ahead there.

F: Now this, we were talking about this school here. See the... what we're talking about here, see there's the Snake River went around. This particular branch - you can see there's two branches of the Snake River, one around here and the other one up here. You come to the – this is it - you see it come out here? And he's got that sawmill right on this. He had a dam back around this, back here, and he had just a little – whatever you call that – there was a small dam right there where the plantation is.

B: Does it show in there? That's where he formed the millpond.

F: Yeah, on the river. I'm just looking here. They had a small dam up here and then behind the Robinson's right in here somewhere, they had a bigger dam. That's what formed the, where they had their pond to float. According to Wicklander, his dad was the... Emmett Wicklander's dad was the cook in this mill. He said that you could take a boat from this mill and you could go right around, get around there, right here. Ole Oleson's ford. That water was backed up way up in here. 'Cause you could tie the boat to the log cabin on this ford right here. See where the creek is there? Creek goes by

there? That's where that water used to be. And then, the next dam where they got down here, that was Robert Zimple. That was the next dam. Right behind their house. And Jim Dougherty, when he had that camp... there was a camp and dam right there. Robert tells me (unintelligible).

M: That was in 17 of Pliny?

F: Yeah.

M: And the other dams were one right about here? 35? And one up in back of Robinson's...

F: This is back... yeah... this one here should be right, I would guess in here somewhere. It's called a row (or road?) dam. It was a small dam, and I don't really know what they (unintelligible) description of a row dam. It was a small dam right here. You can still find that, too. See the state has now got this area here all planted now with (unintelligible) weeds.

B: Did they have to have all those dams to create that millpond?

F: It wasn't necessary for the millpond. They built the dams up to get the water. Before they had the mill, the dams were in there for the purpose of floating... they floated the logs to Stillwater. OK. So these dams... they built this big flood of water up here, and in the spring when they loosed these dams, all the water came flowing down. They had that one... the next thing they had, was at Silver Star, was where the Malloy dam was, and then when they got down Wood's corner, there was a bean dam.

B: Bean dam?

F: B - E - A - N. (unintelligible) about here.

B: Do they... was that on here, is this for the?

M: Silver Star would be...

F: The Silver Star one would be (long pause)...

M: That's where the ford is anyway. Is that close to where it was at?

F: Let me look at this. (long pause) You go down here and you could walk right down to the end of this field... you know where that gravel pit? You just walk to the edge of that field, and you'll (unintelligible).

M: That's the one we run into down there. We were walking down south of this gravel pit. Yeah, that's in 21 of 4323.

F: See, you would... the bean dam would be in Kanabec?

M: Yeah. Must have been a fun one down there. Some pretty good rapids down there.

F: Yeah.

F: We used to walk in that bean dam years ago, fish there. Lots of ducks (unintelligible) beside the dam, so I was quite familiar with that. (unintelligible)

B: Where was this Wilson school you said this was...?

F: The Wilson school is... it starts to show the road going north there, it should be in there. OK, Wilson's school is where that house... this is... she lives in that house. See, that house she lives in was in town, and there was a school there, and in 1952 I would guess, the school district moved this Wilson school down and made it apartments for teachers here. (unintelligible) Around the corner.²

B: It's in town here now?

F: Yup.

B: Where is it in town here?

F: I'm not sure. Let's see... right here. They put that school there and then they just (unintelligible) another... (unintelligible)

B: And that's the old Wilson school, huh?

M: It's in Section 31, 45 down there.

F: See, that school was in effect there until probably 1939 or '40, then they joined the McGrath school district. That district was (unintelligible) kids bussed in for that. First the high school kids came. Then there was a school at White Pine. It had to be somewhere (unintelligible)... one the north side, the north side of the road right in here. It seemed to be just beyond Marvin's. This land has been sold so many times that I don't know (unintelligible). Here it is in Section 36.³

M: OK. That was the White Pine school?

F: I think the White Pine school now, is...

B: Is it there?

F: I don't know (unintelligible).

B: The barn? You think that's the school?

F: (unintelligible)

B: Oh – that's where it was.

F: They tore that down and rebuilt it into a barn.

B: Oh, I see! Well, that covers... that covers the schools up there.

F: There was a school also in (sounds like Jewett).

(long pause)

B: (unintelligible)... White Pine school location there?

M: It was in 36⁴.

B: In 45, not 25.

M: 45/23.

² Where Rudy's live now

³ Section 36 White Pine

⁴ Assume they are talking about section numbers.

F: You know where Bayerle's are there, there?

M: Un hn.

F: I think the school, I think the steps are still there. You can mark the Bayerle's (unintelligible). It was before... it was on the right-hand side north of Bayerle's, just in that field. For a long time, there was just the front steps sittin' there. I don't know if you ever saw it.

M: No, I never did.

F: Before you get up to the curve here (unintelligible).

M: What did they call it – the Jewett school? On the corner here was the Seavey Post Office?

F: Yeah, the Seavey Post Office was right there.

M: Hm.

F: Just go around the corner and you come up just a little ways, on the north side, you'll see there's a new barn up. Right in the brush right to the east of the field, you walk in there. The building just went down. And that was the Seavey Post Office.

M: Oh, I see. It's in 14 of 45/24.

B: What happened to 7?

M: That was the school. Jewett school.

B: OK.

M: 23.

B: And what was this one down here?

M: The Seavey Post Office. It's 14 of 45/24.

B: 14.

M: Yeah, section 14.

F: I remember when that post office opened. (unintelligible) Mrs. Holman was quite familiar. She said, see Holman's, not Holund's, but she was a (unintelligible), and their farm was right on the corner right here.

B: Edna?

F: Edna. Right. And she talked about, that sometimes they'd get their mail there, and sometimes they'd get their mail (unintelligible). There was a mailman that come down this road from Clear Lake down, right around there, and sometimes they got mail there. And sometimes at the Seavey Post Office. Seemed to me that Pete Larson – now this is what she told me – but Pete Larson delivered mail up here and around here with horses and (unintelligible).

M: Was that Wally's dad?

F: His uncle.

M: His uncle?

F: (unintelligible) he was a mailman here (unintelligible) somewhere I have a picture of him. There was a time I remember (unintelligible) he only went to the Seavey Post Office. That was back in the '30s that I remember.

B: Was that Seavey Township then at one time there?

M: Jewett.

B: Seavey is one (unintelligible).

M: Seavey sits right over here (sound of tapping pencil).

F: Why it was, why it's called Seavey Post Office?

B: You don't know.

F: People (unintelligible) right now.

B: I know the names, too. I have trouble with names, all these names.

F: I know what you mean.

(unintelligible)

M: How about down in Wagner? Did you know anything down there? By, near Dick?

F: (unintelligible) we gotta come down to (unintelligible) road. There was a school where Mrs. Fenske lived. Right there beside the tower, you know, she had a trailer house right there? That was a school there.

M: Ok.

F: On the corner as you go down the road a little from... let's see... you go down this to... turn the corner. There had to be a school right behind...

M: There's a little one-acre piece.

B: That's where there... 19?

F: Before you (unintelligible) Most all of this (unintelligible) to try to turn them all back to the original owner. To whoever owned the land then. Also down here, this was (unintelligible) township here.

B: You don't know what the names of those schools are, do you Fred?

F: No, I don't (unintelligible).

M: We can probably find that out from the courthouse.

F: I also know there was a school here (unintelligible) on 61, you take... here on 61. Just the north edge of... see, now that's Marie Flanagan... but she's a Haas. That's the original Haas's homestead. Right on the corner, if you notice there's a house right there, a bit north of that there was a little creek or pond right there, and there was a school right there.

M: In section 10.

F: Yeah.

M: 43/23?

F: We'd call it that – call it the Haas school.

B: You called it what?

F: The Haas school. Next to the Haas', that's how we identified a lot of these, these... I think they... now that I think about it, the one around the corner, we called that the (can't really make this out, sounds like "Etwinger")'s school, because the Etwingers lived close by there, because I wouldn't necessarily say that's the actual name of that school. This is how we identified everything years ago, was... my dad always told me well, that's so-and-so's place and that's so-and-so's place, and those original people who owned it, they marked the place by the original name, no matter who it was. That's how all the old-timers would designate these (unintelligible). Then as the years go by, you kind of lose that knowledge, you know?

M: Yeah.

F: There's only one other thing here in Wagner Township here that I can tell you, as you go down right on the corner, where the road comes out at Giese's store, down on this corner right there was a big halfway house. It was halfway between Finlayson's and McGrath. This lower road was the original road, you know...

B: The original highway to that?

F: Yeah. See, the lower road was the first highway. (unintelligible) they built that later on. This is where they moved. But anyway, at the junction of these, there was a big halfway house. It was right on the northeast of the corner. Between McGrath and Finlayson. A lot of times they'd stay over with a team at the halfway house.

M: Hm.

F: But I think through the country, a lot of places had halfway houses. That's what they were called.

B: It was halfway between where and where now?

F: Well, between McGrath and Finlayson. It was in that general area. I think it wasn't halfway, but it served as stopping point.

M: Um hm.

F: Then as you go a little further on this road here, where you come to Pine Lake, there was a schoolhouse right, right down... See the road originally went right to the lakeshore. And then it went thisaway. And right next, on the west side of that road, was a schoolhouse.

M: Ok.

F: Now you cut that corner out, it's all (unintelligible), that's where that school was.

B: Oh, yeah. You bet you are.

M: It's probably in 23 of 43/22. Right by Pine Lake.

F: And that's about all I can tell you about the schools there.

M: Did they have any up in Dick township, or was that...

F: That was kind of out of my... (unintelligible) Now Dick is – why are you calling that Dick Township?

M: That's what it used to be when it was organized.

F: Now you're talking about (unintelligible).

End of Side A

B: And it was right in that little town?

F: Yeah, there was a town of S...

B: ...and it was right in that town?

F: The town of Solena was right, you see the square right here? That's mainly where the stores were at. And the depot was across. The school was up here on the hill (unintelligible)

M: ...right in here.

F: That's where it was.

M: That was the Solena school in... 14?

(long pause)

F: Borg's... Borg's had a store.

B: They also had one at ah, ah...

F: The Bird's history was – I don't know whether you know where the original school was - but McGregor was built on Borg's homestead (unintelligible).

M: Hm. I've heard that name.

F: And a log cabin was the first school in McGregor. When you get down to (long pause) right on 65 comin' south, you see a lake there, and over to... they had a store there.

B: Did they have the store in McGrath?

F: Not in McGrath.

M: In Solena.

F: They were timber 25 and between (unintelligible) timber.

B: I see. So they bought from the loggers and sold...

F: Yeah. They were kinda brokers.

B: Brokers.

F: Three of those brothers. They were a pretty big outfit. And they had stores. That was the last store that was in Solena (unintelligible). But today, you walk... you look... you go there, you would never know. They got no sign. That's where a sign was, but you'd never know it.

B: But that's all on state of Minnesota land over there.

M: That was part of the Soo Line right-of-way.

B: Oh, it was?

M: I think it was.

B: Did that siding... did that belong to the county now then?

M: Part of it, I think.

F: Seems to me that somebody told me they purchased some land here (unintelligible) but it doesn't show here. See, the people kind of lived down here – Tripps - right here, see where the Giese White Pine truck trail goes (unintelligible). It was called the Giese Truck Trail.

M: I think they might call that (sounds like "Urban") Creek. No, that's over here.

F: This is the east trail here. See, originally there was people lived on this road down here on that ridge over here, lived right in this area here. And there was homesteads in there and the road ended right there. Right just a little bit beyond this. Then the state forester came in there and he built... these were dredge ditches in here. But you know, along the dredge ditches was those banks, so they built this truck trail down here, and they crossed the swamp here and they built this one down here. They call this the Giese Truck Trail.

M: Ok.

F: I get mixed up if they used like White Pine, the truck trail north of Dad's corner, that's what they called (sounds like East – something). I think they may call this the Herubin Truck Trail now.

M: Um hm. Yeah. That's right.

F: This stuff comes to me (unintelligible).

B: Herubin, huh?

F: Yeah. (can't make out the first name) Herubin. The name is right...

B: How do you spell that?

F: It's right there.

B: Oh, I see. (unintelligible)

F: That's a (unintelligible)

M: (unintelligible) Where is Veteransville?

F: (laughing) Veteransville has the name Veteransville was when... that was where the headquarters were of the (unintelligible – sounds like regiment). That you would call Veteransville was more than one...

Woman's voice (unidentified): Well, they even had a dance hall up there in that place where you were showin' 'em, where that logging camp or whatever the...

F: The dam.

M: Right by Stulc's there?

Mrs. V: Yeah, they even had a dance hall there.

F: Well, yeah. See, that's what they call Veteransville and Silver Star was a part of this operation, but Silver Star was the section down here. Veteransville was the one in White Pine. I got the information here somewhere.

M: So Veteransville was here, originally?

F: Yeah. In White Pine. Veteransville headquarters. See, and all these farms that you... this road, you see, goes back in here, and this one right here? And whose name is on this one?

M: Adams?

F: Adams. Ok. Tom Adams, original. He was one of the original veterans. There was Sandkamp had this one here... These were all farms, and they were all veterans and they were all part of Veteransville. Kinda hinged in this...

M: That would be in 35, White Pine.

B: It was all in 35.

F: Well, it was around. And that on the south side, so there was from Kenneth Bartholomew's (?) across there was (unintelligible) there was some places on this side of the road, and then we... and in this circle, this circle here. So it was built all in the general area. Frenskie.

M: So 34 and 35, then.

B: Is that what those little lots are, little parcels?

F: Could be. Yeah, it was kinda set up there in the town of White Pine. And McGrath had the middle there, and Veteransville was there. It was all part of it.

B: So that had to be how long ago?

F: Well, the veterans come in there just about – they were there before the mill burned. Right after World War I, so that had to be around 1920. The mill burned about '21. And her dad worked as a mechanic for Veteransville. He worked for the government and they used big cats and tanks to break the land up for the veterans. Seems to me that there was a period from '20 to '23 – it didn't last very long. (unintelligible) but somewhere, I've got the brochure that shows where these – it was taken from the University of Minnesota. They were also at Moose Lake there was another segment of this, and then down there...

Mrs. V: You didn't get that when a gal came down here to the Senior Citizen's Hall, did you?

F: I don't know if I got it there, or where, or if I got it myself. Also at Orchard Lake there south of Minneapolis they had another one. Yeah, they raised bees and... but it was all... it come out of the University of Minnesota ag school, and then Sioux Falls. It seems like they had somethin' goin' on at Sioux Falls. Government. And in McGrath here, if you want a little history on that, the banker here in McGrath – Buhler - he was the one who was selling this, supposedly selling this land to the veterans, you know. And they were settin' 'em up, and this, this history, this brochure tells – he actually wasn't

honest about it. He was kinda like he laid out all these for them to buy, and he never knew...

B: It was supposed to be better land than what they were getting'.

F: It was all rocks - was here (unintelligible).

(taking a little break for refreshments here)

B: So he told them all the rocks were on top of the ground! (Laughs)

F: All the rocks you see. He said it such a way that, you know, that someone who was payin' attention wouldn't take it. On top of the ground! That's all you could see, so that's all you would have. But anyway, it come out of the Historical Society – they have some information on this. How he worked it, and the government forced him to (unintelligible). First he wouldn't give them a deed or title, but he was takin' payments on it. (unintelligible) It wasn't a good thing for the veterans. And what her dad told me was that these – they come in with this big plow, a big brakin' plow with a cat and they plowed – he was a farmer, he knew they shouldn't do this – they plowed quite deep so they turned the topsoil under the... (unintelligible) he was objecting to that, 'cause he was a farmer himself, and he knew this was foolishness. He was just kind of a mechanic, so he had no say.

B: Now who was that?

F: His name was Tagtow.

B: Tagtow.

F: And after this (unintelligible) from Canada (unintelligible).

Mrs. V: My mother's dad had the first building put in this town, McGrath.

B: Oh, is that right? When was that built?

Mrs. V: Well, it isn't there anymore. It started out as a poolhall. That was before 1908, I s'pose.

F: Yeah, he built it on the Snake River.

B: Where was that located? Here's a map of...

Mrs. V: You show 'em where it was located.

M: It might not show it.

B: That's (unintelligible), right, Fred? (laughs) (unintelligible) ...the poolhall.

F: Originally, (unintelligible) place on the north side of (unintelligible). Right down next to the railroad, he built this (unintelligible)

B: So it's more... actually in the town when they built it?

F: The railroad come in 1907 and '8, he moved it uptown.

Mrs. V: It ended to be a rooming house.

F: See, this rambles on and on, we're on one subject (unintelligible). James E. McGrath had another logging camp that was right down there at the mouth of Bear creek, where Bear Creek runs into the Snake? And then...

M: Right by...

F: Snake River. On south side of Bear Creek, there was a big logging camp there.

B: That was a McGrath camp, too, huh? Boy, he was in a lot of operations.

F: So... you can still go down there in the summertime and you can recognize where the cook shack was.

B: Now?

F: Yeah. You can see there is still out there, a pile of dirt against the foundation (unintelligible). You can just about (unintelligible). And it's still pretty much open. It hasn't grown up that much. But anyway, McGrath was very, very... he didn't want any liquor around his camp. So in order for (unintelligible) you had to be that far away from... (unintelligible) Bear Creek comes in up there by the (unintelligible) how close he would build his establishment for the loggers.

M: Hm.

B: That was around 1900 then?

M: So – just one more time back in Veteransville here. Silver Star was kind of just a branch of that...

F: It was the same operation, it's just a different group of Veteransville.

B: They had more territory.

F: Mrs. Laswell is still alive up there, and she and her husband would remember it.

B: So there was some people that came and stayed?

Mrs. V: Oh, yeah.

B: Does it show the Silver Star on it? I remember seeing Silver Star Road.

M: Yeah. That square where that ford is, where you drive through the river?

B: Oh, yeah. That's where we were then. I was thinkin' that was at this other place that you were talkin' about.

F: (unintelligible) I just remember, like where that gravel pit is there on the Snake...

Mrs. V: I think I just came across that the other day. Where'd I see that? Let's see. (pause) Here, this is the building right here.

B: Did James McGrath have all these logging mills goin' at the same time?

F: First he had (unintelligible).

B: That's the one, your dad, was the pool hall?

Mrs. V: It was a pool hall and then it ended up being a restaurant and a rooming house.

B: Where did you say it was on here, now?

F: When he had it in town, it was right...

B: Oh, they moved it?

F: Yeah, it was in the river, you can see it there. Now it's in town there, now. But it had been on the river, so they had to move it (unintelligible). It was halfway about... 2nd Street... it would be right there. The pool hall there. I got another picture to show you, earlier than this one. 2nd Street's right there now. I remember the store, and built right next to it. And another store right there.

B: So it's really in here then? "The original McGrath Pool Hall" (reading title of photo)

Mrs. V: Yeah. (laughs) My folks moved out in Dakota and went to farm and I was born and raised out there, and came back here and many of 'em were in school.

B: Oh, I see! So they... so your folks had that, then you left.

Mrs. V: My grandparents.

B: Your grandparents.

M: What was their name?

Mrs. V: Butler

F: (under his breath) She should have stayed in South Dakota!

(Lots of laughter)

B: What was his first name?

F: Charles Butler. The history is so extensive, you know?

B: Oh, yeah.

F: This is somethin' I probably should have did... sit down and talk, get this on paper.

M: What do you know about the – I don't even know if we should get into that now – the Jones farm?

B: What about the Jones farm?

M: I've seen what it's like now. It must have been quite a place.

F: (can't make out anything here – too far away from the microphone) I worked there once in awhile. He had a (unintelligible) across the railroad track, he used to rent out. It's still there. (unintelligible)

Mrs. V: That's what always happens.

M: I wanted to get it on here before the tape runs out. But I've seen it. I've been out to the... quite a few times. Actually the farm is right down in here.

F: Yeah. You'll see it shows right here, that you can... this is the... when I'd haul stock outta there years ago, this (unintelligible) I had to go to Red Top (unintelligible) truck to get to this farm, because... yeah, here it is, across the track right there. Go in here. I'm not just exactly sure where... because the original... on 65 it don't show Williams Township... the last 40 – they never finished the road off, the township wouldn't take

over this road for him. So he built a good road goin' outta here. Then he stopped at 140 short of the highway. Then...

B: So you couldn't go all the way through, then?

Mrs. V: Yeah. (Laughs)

F: I'll show you right here! He owned the (unintelligible) Jones's. Here. So what he did, was, in order to get on that road, you had to go through the yard – this guy's yard. He had a cabin on the place right there, and you could drive in there if you knew him, for fishin', you could cross there, and then get on that road. In later years, the county (unintelligible).

B: That's right down on the county line there.

M: Yeah, just right where the mouth, where the exit of Snake River camp is. What did they do back in there?

F: They had a farm, a dairy farm.

M: Oh, a dairy farm.

F: Yeah, he had two big barns, and they were big. Monstrous big barns.

Mrs. V: That must have been all hand-milking back then.

F: I would assume that they had people workin' for 'em.

M: Hm. What year is that?

F: Well, I can't give you the exact years of it, but I remember that in the late '20s and early '30s they were in there. And I was in... I hauled cattle out of that farm in 1941.

B: Is it still there today?

F: The state's got it.

M: Yeah, but (unintelligible).

F: There's a few people down there – I won't mention their names – they went in there after they moved out of there. And the barns are there – they went and stole the stanchions, and put 'em in their place. (unintelligible)

B: What happened – why did the county get it?

M: Forfeit, I guess.

F: (unintelligible)

M: The foundation and stuff is still there?

B: Does that show on there now?

M: I'm not exactly sure where it's at.

B: What did you call it?

M: It was the Jones Farm.

B: The Jones Farm.

F: It would have to be...it's funny they don't show it here. (unintelligible) It had to be in here somewhere.

Mrs. V: Maybe it's in somebody else's name?

B: Does that road still go through there?

F: Well, you can get back... I don't know... there was a lot of timber back here now.

M: It's pretty much... This road ends about here, then. There's one that goes north, and then this one comes out to about here, and then it's swamp in between.

F: There's a big swamp. We were back in here lookin' at some timber (unintelligible).

B: Was that farm actually in Idun?

M: Yeah.

F: So I suppose – they had two townships they had to deal with. (unintelligible) the township road (unintelligible). See - this is another thing about the townships, this is what I've learned about the townships – like Williams Township, they never bought the rights. Any of these township roads you see, where it's owned by the people that own the adjoining property. And all they did was, they got permission to cross, and as long as they maintained the road easement. That's how they built the roads in Williams Township. We run into this McGrath here, now they're kinda talkin' about tryin' to get the county to build that road across (unintelligible) center cross, community center, the Catholic Church here? And we (unintelligible). The engineer, he wasn't concerned about the roadway, because there actually is no right-of-way, per se. Because at the time, in 1914 when they put that addition on this side of town – see the original additions you show there, it shows it plotted here. In 1914 they added this section on here, and it isn't on the plat map. The township was running the town because this was Williams Township. The town wasn't incorporated then. So then when they built these streets in here, and these streets are like the township roads – there's no right-of-way! Just easement to cross. This was given to an engineer to see what (unintelligible) went up the other day to talk to him.

B: John Walkup.

F: Yeah, and he...

B: Was it this street here that they want to bring all the way through?

F: Yeah, they'd bring it right... see, there is a dam right here, too. A locomotive logging dam right there on Bear Creek.

B: Right in here?

F: They were gonna use the length of that dam... well, they still might do that. Bring the road out of this road here. We kinda suggested (unintelligible) build this in here, if you just connect that up so they'd have two exits out of this... (unintelligible). Then he suggested that they'd like to come and blacktop this, if that would satisfy us.

B: So this road, this street and the ditch will come...

F: They didn't want to do it.

B: Oh, they didn't want to do it?

F: See, what they did, they took our state aids away from us. State aid road. We kinda of caught 'em at it, and we put the screws to 'em a little bit, and in order to quiet us down, they... See, If you live in Aitkin County, you'll find out that you're a –

B: You're a foreigner, huh?

F: Yeah! (laughs)

B: There's another place up on the other end, they call it Jacobson's. They're foreigners, too!

F: They come down, and they took a number out – there was more than one – way out in (unintelligible) and they took that state aid right off and give it to the (unintelligible) in Aitkin, y'know? This was part of the... we got it down here... and we said OK, we redid it (unintelligible) access road in tar. So this is county road up here. So this was the agreement, or they'd be puttin' it off. This has been many years ago, and they keep movin' it on the schedule, they won't do it.

M: And that's the state that's doing that. Because it's all tied into a trestle called 65.

B: What will happen when that... this is 65 now, but when the highway changes up here...?

F: Well, where they're going to change it is down here.

B: Right.

F: But I don't think they'll try to change this down here.

(cut in tape, then it resumes very faintly)

F: ... to the east, there's an old logging road that went right on down to the river down there, and that was another loggin camp (unintelligible). I think that also may have been (unintelligible).

M: And that was where – by the campground there someplace?

F: If you go right straight across... let me see what we've got here... there's the campground. This is (unintelligible). OK. Right here, and the Snake River is right here. They were logging right down here to the river, and it went all along the river. And this was, I believe, the log landings they hauled their pile of logs there. And I think they had a camp there, too. I'm not too familiar about that. But I do know, we always could ride up there.

B: Can you drive in there now?

F: No. It's private. It's private then, too, but the reason we could drive in there, was when our kids first (unintelligible).

M: What number have you got?

B: 20.

M: That would be (unintelligible) from McGrath camp?

F: See, the history there, of that (sounds like Malloy) dam, was Malloy built that dam – McGrath didn't build it, Malloy did. And he went in there, to where you guys got your park, now. From the county line, and the river in here, and when I was a kid, you couldn't walk through there, because of the big trees that were layin' in there. That were cut down and never were skidded, you know? And as a kid we had to climb up to get over! And we went... we used to go in there... walked in there from the gravel pit. We walked back, let's see... we went down to the county line, this was the gravel pit, and we walked right down to the river here. And this area was all full of felled timber, that according to history of it, McGrath come in there after Malloy did, and he tried to salvage some of the timber. What happened was that Malloy had a real bad winter, maybe on the border of what we're getting now, and they couldn't skid their logs after they cut 'em. And then he went bankrupt. He wasn't able to come back the next year to salvage this. And they lay there. Nice logs.

M: White pine logs?

F: Yeah.

M: What year was that?

F: Well, it had to have been around... the loggers had to have been around 1900 or right around there in that time, because he built that Malloy Dam. And was I walkin' in there, when we were kinda walkin' in there, that timber was layin' there for 30 years. The logs were still there. If you go back in there now, all you can see are (unintelligible) timber. And all you can see, it shows just a red (unintelligible).

B: How big a trees were they?

F: Ah, 30, 40 feet. As a kid I had to get up and climb!

B: Yeah, that's what you were sayin'.

M: These were Malloy's logs, or what were...?

B: McGrath's.

F: That was Malloy's. He did sell some of 'em. But Malloy was different from McGrath.

B: Was he still skidding with horses?

F: Oh, yeah.

B: Well, it had to be 1900...

F: With the snow so deep, they couldn't skid. The snow got so deep. (unintelligible) So when (unintelligible) come, they couldn't get it done and the following year they went bankrupt. The company wasn't able to salvage (unintelligible). They couldn't salvage it.

B: Mark is working on a brochure now for the campground.

(tape cuts off)

(End of side B)

(End of tape)