

August 11, 1977.

- Q. You are telling me what your father's farm was like. You could put a pitchfork rihgt straight the way down? It was a bog area then?
I think I'd better say who we are talking to again, as we've missed a great portion of this conversation here this evening, thanks to our friendly tape recorder.
I am talking to Mr. Wilfred Barker and his sister Mrs. Violet Lohr. Their family were pioneers in the Saanich area, William James Barker was their father and James Barker was their Grandfather. He was one of the first pioneers in the Saanich area, coming from Nebraska. So, we've talked a little bit about that, do you want to try to bring the stories forward again and I'll make sure this thing is still running.
You told me a great story about the family coming up from Nebraska and they went over to Seattle and made their way along the Oregon Trail. How did your Grandfather travel at that point?
- W.B. On covered wagon. It was all covered wagon, all the way through. I came up there in later years and boy, I stopped several times along the Oregon Trail and I wondered how they ever made it. It is sure a rough bit of country.
- Q. It wasn't only rough, it was dangerous.
- W.B. Well, the Indians were still wild. Grandpa packed a six gun. He had his gun and holster with him all the time, when he came along and he needed it. You couldn't hide behind the trees and watch them go by and say "I'd get you if I could". They made it.
- Q. They came up to Victoria. Your Grandfather was a brick maker, not a brick layer, but a brick maker.
- W.B. He made bricks.
- Q. And where was the first place that he worked?
- W.B. Baker Brick and Tile. He made the first batch of bricks for Mr. Baker.
- V.L. It was on Douglas Street, or was it on Douglas Street then?
- Q. Wasn't it always there?
- V.L. I think so.
- Q. And then he was off and he worked in the Esquimalt Dry Docks and also the Jubilee Hospital?
- V.L. The old part.
- Q. So, the family then decided that they would move out to the Strawberry Vale area and that's where they first had the Holly Edge Farm?
- V.L. Yes.
- Q. How old would your father have been then, when they moved out there?

W.B. He was nine years old when they moved up to Victoria actually.

V.L. Well, I don't suppose he was much older when they moved to Holly Hedge.

Q. And that's where they bought the first thirty-five acres, up in Holly Hedge?

Mrs. B. No, no, this was after their Mom and Dad were married.

V.L. It says here, in 1883, his wife and family joined a party of forty families and with their possessions left Nebraska for the Pacific Coast. I knew they used to go around in a circle, you know, with the covered wagons and horses, the horses out and the covered wagons in. In 1885 they came over to Holly Hedge.

Q. Do you remember going to your Grandfather's farm?

V.L. Oh yes, we loved to go there.

Q. Tell me about it. What was it like at Christmas time?

Mrs. B. I told you how particular she was with her dairy. You daren't go in there.

Q. They had cows too?

V.L. Oh sure.

Q. Is that how he made his living on the farm? Where did he sell his milk?

V.L. Didn't sell milk. They made butter.

Q. They sold butter?

V.L. Yes. And all the fruit.

Mrs. B. Where did they sell the butter?

W.B. Atkins Market.

V.L. Where Rose's Jewelers is.

Q. Down in Victoria? And they would take that down in the ...

V.L. Express wagon with the stallion. Sure.

Q. That was your grandmother? Amelia Fair?

V.L. Yes.

Q. Did your father ever get to go on those drives? Did he tell you about those?

W.B. He never ever went down with Grandmother.

V.L. No, I don't think so.

W.B. Diamond was the name of the horse.

V.L. No, they had left and we were living on Old West Road by then.

Q. Tell me what Christmas was like at the Grandparents.

Mrs. B. They made popcorn and strung it and hung it on the tree.

V.L. Oh we loved going to Grandmas.

Mrs. B. They made everything in those days.

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W.B. What I used to like were the great big peppermint candies with the big red stripes on them. About that big around.

Q. Big as a Silver Dollar eh?

W.B. But, boy you had to be careful when you sat down there. You kept quiet. Uncle Rob used to say Grace and then we'd all have our Christmas Dinner.

V.L. And then we'd go into a tiny little room called the parlor, which is where the Christmas tree was.

W.B. We were allowed to pick the popcorn off the strings but that was all. Each one got one present. That was all.

Q. From the whole family. What was your favourite present?

V.L. I had a doll that bent over and said "Mama".

Q. You went to Grandmas and got that doll at Grandma's house, did you?

V.L. No, we got that at home. We only went to Grandmas for supper.

W.B. In 1916 we never got there though. Isn't that the year we didn't have Christmas at all. Mom made up cookies and stuff and put it in our socks as we didn't have a Christmas tree that year.

Mrs. B. 1916 was the year of the big snow.

W.B. Yes, I know it was. I remember that because Mother stayed up all night cooking cookies and all that stuff as there was nothing to put in our stockings. There was no Christmas at all. No presents or nothing.

V.L. Well we only got one at home anyhow.

Q. Why was that? Did you ever find out?

W.B. Bad weather. They couldn't go to town to do any shopping. At any rate, all we got was...well I can remember getting a little steam engine at one time, I thought that was great too. That was between Gib and I. Gib ran the little steam engine and I had strings hooked on to it to an erector set. We had everything going.

V.L. Us girls, we all had a new dress for Christmas. Always.

Q. Did your mother make the dress?

V.L. Yes. We always had a new dress.

Q. This book, Henny Penny, you got from your grandmother. Did your grandmother read it to you?

W.B. What was that worth? Fifteen cents?

Q. Yes, fifteen cents. That's a pretty expensive book.

Mrs. B. It was in those days.

Q. Did your grandmother read you the book? Do you remember it?

W.B. My mother used to read that one to us.

Mrs. B. But you got it at Grandma's. It has it right on it, hasn't it?

Q. Your grandmother, that's great.

Your father married your mother in 1889, was it? And that was Christy Scafe.
How did he meet her?

W.B. At a dance at Strawberry Vale Hall. That's where they met. And I guess they carried on from there.

V.L. They courted in horse and buggy, I know that.

Q. Courting was pretty difficult I expect, because the roads were...

W.B. When they used to go down to Metchosin Hall, it was always five or six o'clock in the morning by the time they got back and they would just change their clothes and go right to work. They'd milk the cow. They wouldn't do anything else, it takes so long to travel along with a horse.

Q. The Scafe family, they lived...

W.B. They lived up on Long Lake as I call it, but it was Pike Lake. Actually they lived at Long Lake, Pike Lake was where Todds lived, wasn't it?

V.L. Yes.

W.B. So it would be Long Lake where they lived.

V.L. They did the Esquimalt wash by hand. You likely have this down in there.

W.B. It was when the Royal Navy was here. That's the other side, on my mother's side. Her father did all the washing for the Royal Navy when they were here. And all the Commodores, Captains, Rear Admirals and the rest would get invited up there once in a while to go fishing in Long Lake and they would have a real ball up there, you know.

Q. Your mother, her parents, had quite an interesting life.

V.L. Oh very.

Q. They travelled all over the country-side. As a matter of fact her Mother was married in New South Wales.

W.B. That's right.

Q. Do you ever remember hearing stories that your Grandmother Scafe would tell you?

W.B. No. As a matter of fact I never did see our Grandmother Scafe. She died young.

Q. What about Grandpa Scafe?

W.B. Never did see him either.

Q. But did your Mother tell you stories?

V.L. Yes, but I can't say that I remember them too well.

- Q. So, when they were married then they moved onto a piece off of your Grandfather's place. Off of Strawberry Vale, Holland Road?
- V.L. That wasn't off of Grandpa's.
- W.B. It was a place of their own. They rented it. Another piece of property only a little ways from them, the old place.
- Q. What did they do there?
- W.B. That's where they had their dairy farm.
- Q. What kind of cows did they have?
- W.B. Just ordinary milk cows.
- Q. A mixed lot eh?
- W.B. Nothing special.
- V.L. The horse and buggy and pint measure.
- W.B. When they delivered the milk they just had a pint measure there and the people would ~~come out and have a tin can or anything~~ and they would just pour a pint of milk in and the people would pay for it and away they'd go to the next one.
- Q. So they'd go around to homes rather than deliver to any of the Royal Dairies etc.
- W.B. There was no dairies then. They'd just go from house to house and deliver it.
- Q. All around the Old West area?
- V.L. No, into town.
- W.B. All over town, down James Bay, mostly.
- Q. Fairfield area?
- W.B. No, Fairfield was hardly in existance then.
- Q. Just the James Bay area.
- W.B. My mother remembers Sir James Douglas riding around in this big cart, you know, and his horses and everything else.
- Mrs. B. Because you see, his mother was born here. What year did they move to the Old West Road?
- W.B. 1902.
- Q. We've got a paper here, its an Agreement of Sale between William Barker and Robert James Mathews and it's dated on Monday, the twentieth day of October, 1902 and they agreed to a payment of \$100 of a down payment on a total price of \$1750 for 35½ acres. And that was in the Lake District, Vancouver Island, Section 62, Range 3, Line to the westward of the West Saanich Road and more particularly described as commencing at the Southwest corner of the said Section, thence northerly 1320 feet, easterly to the West Saanich Road, 570

feet and once following the westerly boundary of the Saanich Road in a southeasterly direction to a point in the road where the southern boundary of the said Section crosses it at 1722. It's amazing that their surveying was so exact. Do you know who did the surveying? Was it Fred Pemberton?

W.B. No, I don't know.

Q. There was a house on the land at the time. And that was the house that your family moved to?

V.L. Bush right to the door.

Q. Douglas Fir?

W.B. What was the name of the people right across the road?

V.L. Perdue?

W.B. They lived there at the same time, but I don't think there were any other houses around there then, was there?

V.L. Of course, that's one of the oldest houses out there, the Perdue house. Do you know where it is?

Q. Yes.

V.L. Well, Mama's was the same,

Q. There was just a spring on the property at that time?

V.L. Yes.

Q. What did you do with all the cows? If it was all bush. Did you leave them down to pasture on Holland Road?

W.B. No. That's where we were kids.

Mrs. B. But the uncle was involved then, wasn't he? In the milk route?

W.B. Yes, when we were on Holland Avenue, but after we got over on the Old West Road, he took off and went to Edmonton or somewhere.

Q. That was his twin brother David?

V.L. Yes. I think they sold most of the cows. I don't think Pa had too many cows when he came over to the Old West Road.

Q. So he had the horse and cows, did you have any chickens?

V.L. Oh yes, and pigs. and pets.

W.B. We had a cat there that go so blinking old that it lost all the hair on its tail. But he was a good ratter, just the same.

Q. On Old West Road you sold butter.

W.B. Yes and my mother used to enter things into the Saanichton Fair and she'd win all the prizes.

V.L. But that was later. She got all the prizes, first prizes for vegetables at the Saanichton Fair.

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- Q. The Fair would have been a pretty special event during the year.
- W.B. Well, that was a big "do". My mother ended up by being an honorary member of the Saanichton Society.
- V.L. She used to help the judges too. And she supplied the French store in town with all the cream cheese.
- W.B. But that was in later years.
- Q. So, your parents both went down to the Victoria Market and sold vegetables there. Do you remember what year that would be around?
- W.B. They were there a long time.
- V.L. About 1915 it started. For the first thirty years.
- Q. Up until that time they delivered in on a rural basis, just to the neighbours?
- W.B. No we had loganberries and we used to see loganberries and then when the Wholesome Packing, pickling works, was over on Quadra Street we used to sell cauliflower to them. We'd grow quite a few acres of cauliflower and sell it to them.
- V.L. We had strawberries at one time. But I think before we got on the market we just ate the food up.
- Mrs. B. And then your Dad used to go out and work, didn't her?
- V.L. Oh, yes.
- Q. Your father was still working as a Blacksmith?
- V.L. And with the team. Road work with the team.
- Mrs. B. And didn't he use to go out and plough for people?
- V.L. Oh yes, he did everything like that, with the horses, you see.
- Q. That was to bring in some money for the family.
- V.L. Sure, and then he worked on the Interurban with the team.
- W.B. He worked on the pipe line too, from Sooke Lake. When they put that pipe line in
- V.L. Well he had to work every place.
- Q. So, you remember the Interurban railway coming in then?
- V.L. Oh, absolutely.
- Q. What was that like?
- V.L. Beautiful.
- W.B. We rode on it.
- Q. The very first ride?
- W.B. No, not the first ride, but it used to run out to Deep Cove and there used to be sometimes three or four trains together. And a big air whistle, and you'd pull the whistle. They'd come down to Goward and we'd all climb aboard, you know, and away we'd go. It rocked going across the bridges going to town

but that was alright.

V.L. Beautiful little houses they built for that, with a little stove and everything in them when they were new.

Q. Along the railway, you'd have railway stops?

V.L. There was one a Prospect Lake, and one at Goward, one in Westwoodvale and all the way along.

Q. And all the men in the District helped to build that?

W.B. A lot of them helped to build it.

V.L. Yes, that's right. But they were beautiful, they even had a stove and wood, and everything.

Q. You were telling me that your family had fruit trees on the property too. Did you preserve much fruit?

W.B. Yes, we always had lots of fruit. All kinds.

Q. Did you can it or did you store your apples? How did you do it?

V.L. All canned.

W.B. Everything had to be canned.

Q. You didn't dry anything?

V.L. No.

W.B. We never bought a thing.

Q. No, dry, dry it.

W.B. Oh no.

V.L. Yes, we did Red, but you wouldn't remember because in the old house, the chimney, it was just a chimney, the brick chimney stopped there and this was just a chimney pipe, which isn't allowed now, and we used to have apples sliced all around that chimney and we dried them that way. But of course, we had a dairy with walls that deep, that thick out there, that dairy is still out there.

Q. About eighteen inches.

V.L. Yes, that was later on when they had the stall in the Market, you see.

Q. Did they build the dairy?

V.L. Yes, it had a cement floor and everything. Of course they kept the butter, the milk and the cream good there.

Q. Nice and cool there.

V.L. The separator and everything. No it all had to be canned, of course apples and vegetable keep a long time. But I hated haying. Oh boy, you'd get all those cows milked and then tea in the morning and then a big dinner and then tea in the afternoon and then a big supper and then they'd work late. Another time that was nice, when we were all home, was the First of July.

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W.B. When we went on picnics.

V.L. Pa's team, Watt's from Durrance Road and Mr. Reed, they took all their teams and their hay racks. And we would put roses all around, roses in the horses tails and manes and we'd go all the way..of course, then.. from Elk Lake over to Cordova Bay was an awful hill. Everybody would have to get out and walk except for one old lady, who was really old.

Q. What was that lady's name? Do you remember?

W.B. Gran Levy.

V.L. Yes, Mrs. Levy. Mrs. Jewell's mother.

W.B. She was in her nineties.

V.L. We'd all join together you see, and picnic together. Oh, it makes me feel bad on the First of July yet, we had such a beautiful time.

W.B. We'd go down to the Experimental Farm once in a while and picnic there too.

Q. On Vantrieht's place?

W.B. No, right in the Experimental Farm.

Q. Around the Gordon Head area.

V.L. No. Pat Bay.

Q. Oh, there is another Experimental farm in Gordon Head.

V.L. Oh that belongs to Vantrieht. No, Pat Bay.

Q. Who ran that then, the Experimental Farm at Pat Bay?

V.L. The Dominion.

W.B. It's still there.

Q. Oh, yes. I just wondered if it had changed.

V.L. Oh, there was the picnic on the First of July. It was always beautiful. Always chicken, and potato salad.

Q. Can you remember getting the food ready to take over there on the holiday?

V.L. Oh yes, and iron our white skirts with that poor old sad iron and the fire just about out because it was so hot. Oh, yes, we always had white skirts and everything else.

Q. You'd really dress up for the occasion then?

V.L. Oh yes.

W.B. The 24th of May we used to doll the old car up.

V.L. That was another big day. We went to town for that.

W.B. We'd go to town and see the 24th of May parade. That was quite something. We'd shine the old Model T up.

V.L. And all go to the Gorge and eat on the ground, with all the Scafes, Tom Scafe and his wife, we'd all go together and eat on the ground.

- W.B. That's when the Navy and the Indians had a race from the Causeway up to the Gorge.
- V.L. That's right. And then watch the Indian races.
- W.B. The Indians were going to beat the Indians one year when we were down there and the Navy jumped out and upset the Indian canoes and there was a regular wild melee going on in the water. That was on the 24th of May.
- V.L. Yes, that was another big day. Of course, that was a long way to get all those cows milked and put on the other side of the mountain and go to that and come back and get them milked again and separate.
- W.B. We'd come home and go up on top of the mountain and watch the fireworks.
- Q. So that would be a pretty long day for you then.
- V.L. Oh yes, a big day though.
- Q. Did a lot of your school mates come along or did they go with their own families?
- W.B. No just on our own. We were given a nickel apiece and we could have an ice cream cone and that was it.
- V.L. No, no school mates.
- W.B. It's hard to believe that we got along on such a little bit of money.
- V.L. Well, those days, you'd go into the fifteen cent store, and which I still call the fifteen cent store, with a dime and you'd get a whole handful of stuff. And that was a lot in those days.
- Q. I guess that you really felt like you had something then, with ten cents, that's really great.
- What school did you go to then, Mrs. Lohr?
- V.L. I went to Heals'.
- Q. And after Heals'.
- V.L. Prospect Lake. It's boarded up. I went to Prospect Lake in 1915.
- Q. When you were going to the Heals' school, who was the teacher there?
- V.L. Miss Hardy, Mrs. Alderson, Miss Bus. Every year we got a different teacher. Miss Hardy gave us the measles.
- Q. Did you get them?
- V.L. Yes, we all got them. She had them and came to school with them.
- W.B. Miss Bradshaw was my teacher when I went to Prospect Lake.
- Q. Did you ever go to Heals'? No, just Prospect Lake.
- That was a little closer.
- V.L. Yes, it was.
- W.B. We had an old bus that used to come and pick us up and take us all down to Royal Oak. It had a wire cage and all us kids used to get in the back.

- W.B. George Wenselwhite used to take us and then Marconi took us.
- Q. Do you remember helping your father clear the land?
- W.B. Blowing stumps and burning them up.
- Q. Oh, you had powder at that time?
- W.B. Oh yes.
- Q. A lot of families, I think, couldn't afford the powder. But your father had his team...
- V.L. Well you'd go around and around with the horse and pretty soon it would come out.
- W.B. Yes, what you'd call a stump puller. You'd hook a cable on to it and take the horses around and around and they'd pull the stump out. We'd blow them a little bit with stumping powder.
- They'd never believe it these days, when Elk Lake and Beaver Lake and Prospect Lake and so on were so frozen that you could drive a team of horses over it and drag big logs right across those lakes.
- Q. Wasn't it because it was much bogger than it is now?
- V.L. No. It was colder.
- W.B. No, it was just the same, but it was so much colder in the winter time.
- Q. You were saying earlier, that a day like today is like summers in the old days.
- V.L. That's right. We'd have three months like this.
- Q. Just really hot. The place on Old West, that was quite a boggy piece of property.
- V.L. Yes. That was a lake.
- W.B. It was what was called Duck Lake and we drained it, Dad drained it, and took all the logs and bruch out of it.
- V.L. As long as ever we were there, there were still logs coming up.
- W.B. Always logs coming up. All the years that we lived there.
- V.L. You could put that pitch fork right down like that.
- Q. All the way down to the bottom eh?
- V.L. Yes, right in.
- Q. In the spring time would you sink?
- W.B. Oh yes, it would be flooded. We always kept it flooded a certain amount in the winter so that it wouldn't drain all that good soil off.
- V.L. On occasions the cows and horses would be right down, you know. We'd have to pull them out.
- Q. You kept quite a few cows at that time too?
- W.B. Oh yes.

- Q. Do you remember how many, Mr. Barker?
- W.B. Well, the most that we had was fifteen. We used to have to milk them by hand. And herd them down by Elk Lake at that time.
- V.L. Yes, you see there was no pound and you herded them on the road. Oh Gee, you had an awful job chasing cows all the time.
- W.B. When we got the horse and dog though, that helped out. Cliff and I trained this horse and dog. We could go about a mile and a half down to a big rock down by Elk Lake and I'd say "Listen" and the horse would take in his breath and the dog would take his tongue in and all you'd see would be his ears moving. I'd say "Do you hear them?" "Okay". They'd let their tongues out and wherever they were I'd say "Okay, find them". And they'd find them. They'd hear the bells ringing, you know.
- Q. A pretty dependable group, eh?
- W.B. It took some training, you know, to get the dog to take his tongue in, because he'd be puffing to beat the band, you know. And the horse was too. But when they got to that rock they knew they had to listen. All you could see was ears going. The horse would let his wind out, you know and then the old dog would start puffing again. It was really quite comical.
- Q. They cut a piece off the property on the Old West for the Observatory. Do you remember when that was, Mrs. Lohr?
- V.L. 1911, someone said.
- Q. And you lost two and a half acres. How did that work?
- W.B. Well, they just took it.
- V.L. The Government bought it to put the Observatory on, that switch back.
- Q. Did they buy it from your family or just pre-empted it?
- V.L. They gave them enough to pay off the final payment on the ranch. I remember that.
- Q. The final payment was made on July 27th, 1911, for one dollar and fifty cents.
- W.B. It was right where the hairpin bend was, up there.
- Q. And that would be the boundary of your property then?
- W.B. No, it went higher than that. It went up above the hairpin bend there.
- V.L. Right up to where the Observatory is, that's all ours. Right up to there.
- W.B. Yes, right up to where the houses are.
- V.L. That's where we used to run the cattle.
- Q. Who were your neighbours then, on either side?
- W.B. Perdues, they were the only ones years ago and in the latter years the Thompsons were across the way.

- Q. Which Thompsons were those?
- W.B. Harold Thompson. And then down the road was the Allison family and they are quite an old family here too, really. Gales, and then...
- V.L. But there were no houses, you see, right down to English Church, and..
- W.B. Well, Clarks' house was right down at the end of the road there.
Ivan Clark. That's Uncle Dave's mother, wasn't it?
- V.L. I don't know. But there was nobody on the roads you know. No houses.
- Q. You were pretty isolated then weren't you?
- W.B. Eight miles from town was a long way.
- Q. How long did it used to take you folks to get to town when you'd go to the Market?
- W.B. Well, with the old Model T Ford, it used to take quite a little while.
- Q. Would it take you a whole morning and then some?
- W.B. Well, no, it would take us a couple of hours.
- V.L. I think it took us an hour by horse. Because our horses travelled pretty good. Express wagon you see.
- Q. Where did you go when you got together with your neighbours?
- V.L. We didn't get together.
- Q. Never had an "at home" day or anything like that? Not much time as dairymen is there?
- W.B. That's why Vi is saying why we enjoyed the picnic on the 1st of July. It's the only time when any of the neighbours would go along with the rest of us and we'd all get together on a deal like that. And have this picnic. But that was the only time we'd pick up the neighbours and do anything.
- V.L. Well, Christmas Concerts of course. That was back in 1913 and 1912. Those Christmas Concerts were just beautiful.
- Q. And everybody would have a piece to play?
- V.L. Everybody. All the kids. Sing and all kinds of dialogue we had to do. Everything.
- Q. What was your specialty?
- V.L. I was so shy. One time I had to say a piece about thistles. Little thistles. Gee, my knees were shaking. But I got through.
- W.B. I had to sing once. I had got just about through the song when I couldn't remember the words. So I had to stay behind and I still had to sing the darn thing until I started to cry and then they said "You can go home".
- V.L. And we had another dialogue one time. We were in little white dresses, a half a dozen of us, and we had castenets with bells on them. We had to sing a song and jingle these things along. I always remember that.

- V.L. And we played Blue Beard once. Do you remember the old Blue Beard? We played that. I was in that too. But it was a lot of work getting these old costumes made and the stage built and everything.
- Q. Did you go around to get all the materials or did the teacher bring them to the school?
- V.L. No, we got them from most of the families. They were dyed flour sacks. And the curtains for the stage would be gunny sacks, dyed. From the barn, and then string to pull them.
- Q. Never wasted a thing.
- V.L. Oh no. Well we didn't have any money.
- W.B. People don't realize, not now a days.
- Q. At Christmas time you were saying, you used to go to your Grandmothers.
- V.L. Yes, have our own lunch at home and then go to Grandmas. We looked forward to that, I'm telling you. In that little parlour.
- Q. Well, I don't think, Mr. Barker, that you were so keen on it. You were saying earlier to me, that you had to be awfully good when you went to Grandmas.
- W.B. I'll say you did. If you weren't you'd get a cuff in the ear and you'd use your manner and you'd say "Aunt Sarah" and "Aunt Margaret" and "Uncle Jim" and "Uncle Rob". You didn't just say any old thing to them. You didn't say "Aunt Maggie" to Aunt Margaret because you know you'd get a cuff in the ear.
- Q. Why are you saying you know. Did that happen to you one time?
- V.L. No, but you couldn't call her Aunt Maggie. I always wanted to, but you couldn't.
- W.B. They were alright.
- V.L. Well, Aunt Millie, was an old maid, she never got married. And Aunt Maggie, excuse me, she never had any children. And of course, Grandmas, she always worn a long apron, with crochet around the bottom. She came to visit us on the Old West Road from over at Strawberry Vale with a stallion. And she'd come in with her long white apron on with the lace around the bottom. After she had come all that way. I've got a picture, it's in my bedroom on the wall, of Grandma standing there and Uncle Dave and Uncle Jim and Aunt Maggie and the whole bunch of them. Grandma's got her long apron on with the crochet around it.
- W.B. I remember one year going around in the old Ford and it was snowing to beat the band. And one of them little screech owls, down there at the corner, where Scafes store used to be, hit the windshield and it fell over onto the side of the road and we kept on going. We said "Well, it broke its neck anyway". So we kept on and had our Christmas and coming back my Dad stopped

and we picked up the screech owl and took it and got it stuffed.

V.L. You've still got it.

W.B. Well, Jean's got it now. I gave it to Jean. She has still got it. I wasn't very big then.

Q. That's your daughter?

W.B. That's my daughter.

W.B. Stan Guy hued a log and made a spring board out of it. It taped from one foot to about two and a quarter inches at the other end. And it was about thirty-five feet long. And Hum Tupman...

Q. Is that Maurice Tupman? Or a different one?

W.B. Well there are a lot of Tupmans.

Q. Well I guess it doesn't make much difference. It was one of them.

W.B. And any rate he'd go out...he had it set up quite high, the spring board, and of course it was this time of year, and we'd all go down there. Hum was about the only guy that could go out there and spring that spring board the whole distance. And he'd take off, he'd hold his arms up like this and he'd plunk into the water. It would throw him away out.

Q. At Prospect Lake?

W.B. No, Elk Lake. At the far end of Elk Lake. And Gon McCullough and Stan Guy used to go in down there and swim clear over to the East Road, which is now the Pat Bay Highway, and swim all the way back just for a little swim at night.

Q. And Gon grew up to work for the District of Saanich.

W.B. That's right. I've seen him today too. He just waved, him and Elly. Stan Guy used to go down with his horse and buggy and we'd come home and pretty soon, Stan would be late getting back because he'd swim across every night. And we'd hear tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, of the old horse headed for home.

V.L. He rode horseback.

W.B. He had a little cart.

Q. Where did they live?

W.B. Just past the bottom of Grants hill to the next road to your right. That's where the Guys lived. And Zilda Guy tried to teach me music and I never learned a thing.

Q. But you were pretty musical though. Did you play that piano that your father bought?

- W.B. Yes, I played a little bit. Just by ear though. That's how I played the violin with my Uncle Tom. They used to say it sounded like one great big violin, that's all. And there was two of us playing.
- Q. So you matched along pretty well then.
- W.B. Oh yes, always by listening.
- Q. Did you go to the Royal Oak Hall?
- V.L. Yes.
- Q. And that's where you used to have your do's?
- V.L. Always. We used to play at Metchosin and the Saanichton Hall.
- W.B. I don't think we missed a hall in town. All but the Empress. We never played at the Empress. But we played everywhere else.
- Q. Got invitations to everywhere else. What was closest hall to the Old West place?
- W.B. Royal Oak.
- Q. Did your Mother belong to the Royal Oak Womens' Institute?
- V.L. For years.
- Q. Do you know when she first joined? Was she one of the charter members of 1913?
- V.L. I imagine that's in one of those books.
- Q. So, she belonged to it from the beginning?
- V.L. Oh yes, for years. And also belonged to the Pioneer Society at Saanichton.
- Q. Do you remember going to the Womens's Institute meetings?
- V.L. Yes, I didn't go very much.
- W.B. Miss Oldfield used to come along and pick them all up. The Oldfields, you've heard of them. They lived in the big white house.
- Q. They were up the road from you quite a piece then, were they?
- W.B. About a mile.
- Q. But you wouldn't see them much outside of gatherings at the hall, or anything else?
- V.L. In the summer I used to pick fruit for them. Cherrie, strawberries, gooseberries, cut off runners, everything H. Oldfield and Miss Oldfield. You had to clip the cherries with little clippers in those days. The juice would come right down and drip off your elbow, but she always brought us tea in the afternoon, because they had a Chinaman cook, you know, at the top of the hill. Boy, we used to get awful sticky. And then they would bring us home with the chauffeur and the big English Bulldog riding on the running board too, from the Red Cross meetings. That was Miss Oldfield too. We thought that was awfully nice, you know.
- Q. She was pretty active in the Red Cross?

V.L. Oh, she was a marvellous lady, Miss Olfield was, yes.

Q. Did you ever run across Mileva Todd? She worked for the Red Cross, but over on the other side of town quite a bit.

V.L. No, I don't remember. No.

Q. Do you remember any of those Womens' Institute meetings, what they were like?

V.L. I didn't go to them actually.

Q. But you were quite in demand for all these parties at the hall. Was that sort of once a week that you would go, or once a month?

V.L. Once every two weeks, at Royal Oak. Then there were other places.

W.B. We played in between all over at the other ones.

V.L. On Friday night at Royal Oak.

W.B. I was just thinking of all the stupid things.

V.L. We're on tape, don't forget.

W.B. Well this was in the latter years too. We were playing old time music out there after the Saanichton Fair was over and old Joe Bull was our Chief of Police down here. You've heard of him? Well he and some of the other fellows had a bunch of Logana wine out there and they were all touching that stuff up. And Joe said to me "Come on and have a drink" and so I went down and had a couple of drinks of this blinking stuff.

Q. How old would you have been then?

W.B. I guess I would have been about sixteen. At any rate, I started swaying. Uncle Tom played the waltzs you know, and I started swinging and swaying back and forth and he got scared. Uncle Tom said to me "Look out, you're going to fall down". I sure got a kick out of that because I was alright but he sure thought I was going to fall down because I was swaying so far.

Q. How much did you use to get paid for those do's?

W.B. Three Dollars.

Q. A Night? Between the two of you?

W.B. No, each. That was big money.

Q. I guess you thought you were a pretty rich man?

W.B. Well when we had to buy the strings there wasn't much left out of it.

Q. It was fun, all the same.

W.B. It was fun. It wasn't really the pay, it was the fun we had playing.

Q. Well it was a pretty good deal for you too because you got to meet all the people around,

W.B. You knew everybody.

V.L. It was all country people really, that came to the dances.

W.B. The Michells and the Derrinbergs, all the old timers out there.

- Q. Turgooses come down?
W.B. Turgooses, yes. Brooks.
Q. Butlers?
W.B. Butlers, yes. Sluggetts.
Q. Oh, Sluggetts and the Stellys? Where did you go to church?
V.L. Yes. We went to the English Church on the hill
Q. Which was called? Just the English Church?
V.L. Yes. And then we used to go to Wilkinson Road.
Q. Do you remember who the Rector was?
V.L. Well.. they changed quite often in those years too. No I can't say I do.
Q. What were the chores you had to do around home before you could get out to one of these do's? From sun up to sun down.
W.B. Milking cows and feeding cows and pigs and chickens and all the rest.
V.L. Clean the barn.
Q. You had pigs eh? Did you keep the pigs..
W.B. Like all farmers do. We had to do the same thing.
Q. You had pigs. Did you keep them just for home use or did you sell those?
W.B. Mostly. Mostly for home use.
Q. Did you use to cure the bacon?
V.L. Yes. But we had to get those barrels and dip the pig in boiling water to get the hairs off. And then Mama used to get liquid paste, liquid smoke and just paint it on the outside.
Q. And you'd take this paste and just paste it on.
V.L. Liquid smoke. We didn't have a smoke house.
Q. And did you salt any of your pork?
V.L. I think so but I can't remember too much.
W.B. We salted some, yes.
Q. What about storing meat? How did you store your meat?
V.L. We didn't store any.
Q. How did you distribute it, did you give some to a neighbour?
V.L. We used to bottle some, put it up into jars.
Q. Canned the beef?
W.B. Canned the beef and the chickens.
V.L. We used to sell most of our calves and such like to the Market you see. To the butchers in the Market.
Q. Where would that market be?
V.L. Where the Senior Citizens is.
Q. Which is where?

- V.L. By the City Hall
- Mrs. B. By the old Fire Hall.
- Q. Oh by the old Fire Hall by City Hall.
- W.B. You know where the Police Station is? Well right along by the back of the Police Station.
- Q. And that's where the auction was?
- V.L. Yes, that's where the Market was. That was a busy, busy place.
- Mrs. B. Well, lots of people had stalls there didn't they?
- V.L. Oh yes.
- Mrs. B. They sold everything there. Everything homemade.
- Q. Canned goods.
- Mrs. B. Canned? Oh no. Fresh.
- W.B. Oh, there was a lady there that had chocolates. She sold chocolates and candies of all kinds. Butchers. There was just about everything that you could think about.
- Mrs. B. Bread, eggs, baked stuff.
- Q. Your dad, he was still delivering some milk, but he was on the railway then?
- W.B. No, he was working on the roads most of the time, with his team.
- V.L. And he would go out and plough for people. Like ploughing up their gardens and things.
- W.B. And fields.
- V.L. And he was a powder monkey, was what they called him. He sharpened steel to drill the rock.
- Q. Where did the expression "powder monkey" come from?
- V.L. I don't know.
- W.B. He was a blacksmith.
- V.L. Have you ever interviewed any of the Ferries?
- Because Mr. Ferrie, Grandpa Ferrie, and Pa were kind of rivals because ...
- Q. There was a bit of competition between them?
- V.L. Oh yes, because they had the same kind of jobs.
- Q. And the competition was not quite as friendly as it could have been, right?
- V.L. No, it wasn't.
- Q. Was he in the same area too?
- V.L. Yes. You know where Vanalman is? Right on the corner, that's still his little house. No, Pa and he didn't get along.
- Q. But he got along with most of your neighbours.
- V.L. Oh yes. It was just that he use to take the odd job sharpening steel and Pa thought that he should have had it.

- Q. Your Mom was from the Scafe family and they lived up in behind Prospect Lake?
V.L. The Highland District.
W.B. Long Lake, that's where they lived.
Q. What was it called before?
W.B. It was Long Lake when my Mother was up there but now they've changed it and they call it Pike Lake Road.
- Mrs B. What was the road called then? Thetis Lake Road?
V.L. No, Pike Lake Road.
W.B. As a matter of fact I think we've got an old map around here some place, an old blue one, where Pike Lake Road is written right on it.
Q. Was Barker Road in the Highland District named after your family?
V.L. Yes. It was Uncle Jim Barker wasn't it?
Q. Pop. Wasn't he known fairly well as Pop Barker?
W.B. He might have been. I suppose he got that name after he moved to View Royal. Because he was an old guy, ninety-two or something.
Q. Do you remember him coming to visit?
V.L. Who?
Q. Your Uncle Jim.
V.L. Oh yes. He worked for the Tods you know.
Q. Yes, he was the caretaker at the Tod's summer place.
V.L. Yes, that's where our cousin is now, Richard.
Q. Is he still caretaking there.
V.L. Yes, he's living in the same house.
Q. Oh, I hadn't realized that it had passed on like that.
V.L. Yes, it has.
Q. He had two children didn't he? Richard and Kay?
V.L. Yes.
W.B. You've been nosing around alright. She had to let us know too.
Q. Yes, to just make sure. So often its down wrong and if I can ask you and you can tell me it's so, then we'll know for sure. So, your brother Gib, was Gilbert, and he was your elder brother?
W.B. I'm the youngest and there was Gib and there was Cliff.
Q. And Irene and Violet
V.L. I'm the eldest and Cliff was hurt in a logging accident at Campbell River. He was hit with a log in the back and in those days...well he lived for about ten or twelve years and eventually he passed away. Then Irene is next, and then Gib. Gib died two years ago in Surrey. And then little baby brother over there, who I used to carry around all the time on my hip.

- Q. There is thirteen years between the two of you?
- V.L. Yes, there are, almost.
- Q. So, you'd be able to tell your brother what he was up to?
- W.B. Bat me around I guess, I don't know.
- Mrs. B. He was awfully spoiled. Long red curls.
- V.L. Bright red hair, he used to have, you see.
- Q. That's where you got the name Red.
- Mrs. B. Well, his name is Wilfred and I guess it all went together.
- Q. You were telling me about some of your chores you had to do. You said it was sort of sun up to sun down, hand milked the cows, you had fifteen cows?
- W.B. At one time we had fifteen.
- Q. By that time did you have enough pasture for them?
- W.B. Well that's when we had the eighty acres rented down by Elk Lake and that used to help us out.
- Q. You used to have to take them over there? At night?
- W.B. That's where we trained the horses and the dog to herd the cows along.
- Q. It gave you a bit of a break then.
- W.B. Oh they did a lot of work for us.
- V.L. Another thing, we used to take the cows, I did, ride horseback up to Hooles. Do you know who Hoole is, up by Oldfields?
- Q. Oh yes, I've run across the name.
- V.L. And right by there was some pasture. I used to ride horseback and take the cows up there and put them in a field and put the horse in the field and then walk across to school. Then come back through the bush, find the horse and put the cows together and take them home again. It was right by Hooles, was the place we had.
- Q. So, you had quite a few chores to do too. Were they quite a bit different from your brothers or would you say there was a difference?
- V.L. It was a little bit more modern I guess as he got older, I don't know. Everything was done then. Of course wood, they burned the wood stove right up until the day he died.
- Q. That was your father?
- V.L. Yes.
- Q. Your mother baked all her own bread?
- V.L. Well not in later years.
- Q. Got the flour from Atkins Market?
- V.L. Yes. That's right. Everything from Atkins Market. With the scoop.

- Q. With the scoop? Not by the bag but right by the scoop?
- V.L. Well, I suppose you got some by the bag but you bought everything by the scoop, you know.
- Q. (looking at cut hair) You've got your red hair there, yes you did have red hair, a real strawberry blonde.
- W.B. Do you want to see how long it is?
- Mrs. B. Those were his first curls. His first hair cut.
- W.B. My first curls.
- Q. That's great. Would you like to donate it to the Archives?
- W.B. Three and a half years old.
- Q. Are you going to tell us what year you had your hair cut?
- W.B. I was three and a half years old then and I'm sixty-four now.
- Q. So you're just an absolute baby. Where did you go to the barber?
- W.B. Oh, I just got it chopped off.
- Q. At home?
- W.B. Yes. I was about three and a half years old.
- Q. Your Mom did the barbering.
- W.B. Oh yes, ..
- V.L. I think mine is brighter red than that. I've got mine too.
- Q. The whole family had red hair?
- V.L. No, three of us. We missed a generation.
- Q. Who was red headed before, the Barker side or the Scafes?
- W.B. Scafes. And Barkers.
- V.L. Aunt Millie had red hair too.
- W.B. That's right. And Barkers.
- V.L. We missed a generation.
- Q. You're British folk though, not usually you think of Scottish girls with red hair.
- V.L. No. Mama's mother was Scotch though.
- W.B. Oh yes, all the Scafe side is Scotch. Sure.
- V.L. Yes. You see our Grandmother on our Mother's side is McKenzie.
- Q. Oh, yes. She was Eliza McKenzie?
- V.L. They were Scotch.
- Q. That's the girl that your Grandfather on your Mother's side went off to New South Wales to marry. When you think about it today, you know, in those days, that would be what? the 1860's. And off you go to Australia to marry the girl that you love and that's after she had travelled across the country and gone back to England and had gone around the Horn.

- V.L. It would be an awful tramp to go to get your girl wouldn't it?
- W.B. Another thing that Mother used to do that I used to think was pretty rare was when her and Aunt Jenny and a lot of them used to go out to Bazan Bay, where the old Bazan Bay Brickyard is, and they used to get Indians there and they'd take them over to San Juan to see Auntie Bella.
- V.L. In a row boat wasn't it?
- W.B. In Indian canoes. And Indians. They'd paddle clear across to San Juan Island and my Mother said there are whirl pools over there and the Indians would see the whirl pools and they'd hit the whirl pool and it would flick them around and away they'd go. And they wouldn't have to paddle then and she said it was quite a trip and they'd visit with Auntie Bella over there
- Q. That's Bella Scafe?
- W.B. Her name was Erickson.
- V.L. There were a lot of relatives on my mothers side on San Juan.
- W.B. And they would stay there for a couple of days and they'd make arrangements for the Indians to come back and pick them up. And then they'd come back, and paddle them all the way back and they would have to be met by horse and buggy.
- Q. Where did you meet them? At Cormorant Point or Margaret Bay?
- W.B. On San Juan Island? I don't know where they landed over there.
- Q. No, I mean on this side.
- V.L. Bazan Bay.
- W.B. Right down where Saanichton Spit is. That's where they used to go from. And they would go right across to San Juan Island.
- Q. Did the Indians run a regular ferry service there?
- W.B. No, they would just get them when they wanted them. They'd arrange it.
- Q. Did you ever go over with your Mother?
- V.L. No,
- W.B. No, that was before she was born. My mother was only a young girl like you.
- Q. Well, that was before she married your father?
- V.L. Oh yes. That was nothing to do with the Barker family.
- Q. No. But she would be able to tell you those stories.
- V.L. Oh yes.
- W.B. It was quite an experience in those days, I'm telling you. A bunch of those wild Indians around.
- Q. Well you had quite a few experiences with the Indian folk as well, didn't you?
- W.B. No, not me, but my mother, coming up the Old West Road there loaded and falling out of their buggies, slouching along and lying down on the side of the road

- and going to sleep. Not always going to sleep but making out they were asleep, but they were looking to see if they could go and steal something.
- Mrs. B. Sometimes they'd look for food wouldn't they?
- V.L. Yes. She'd give them a great big sandwich, butter and jam. A big one. And then she'd watch them, because we were scared you know. They'd go as far as that big old Maple tree there and they'd sit underneath. Mama would watch them, "We're going" "We're going". But they never did us any harm really, but you know, half tight.
- W.B. And Tommy Paul when he came to sell his fish you had to do a real sort of a deal with him. He'd catch the fish down in Brentwood and then he'd come with his squaw and a horse and buggy and he'd bring out these grilse, about so long. "How Much?" "Fifty cents" he'd say. My Mother would say "No, no way". "Fifteen cents". "Well, no, no." He'd come down and you had to barter. He had them all in the back of his buggy and he had them covered with ferns, green ferns to keep them fresh.
- Q. Sword ferns.
- W.B. No, just the ordinary ferns. And so then they'd deal for a nice fish about that long for about twenty cents.
- Q. That's about twenty-four inches. What would you say, about eight pounds?
- W.B. They'd weigh about three or four pounds. And then they'd make a deal. He'd lift his old hat, with a blanket over it, and they'd go down the road. That's how they sold their fish.
- Q. What would your Mom do with their fish then?
- V.L. Oh, we'd eat it.
- Q. Just eat it right away. Never canned any fish?
- W.B. We canned fish too.
- Q. Did you go down to the Lake and fish for trout?
- W.B. Yes, I used to get more Bull heads and Cat Fish then I did trout.
- Q. And didn't think those were fit to bring home to the table? Or did you?
- W.B. Well we brought them home and fed them to the ducks. And then we put some down by the spring and where they went to I'll never know.

Interview with Violet Lohr & Wilfred Barker

August 11, 1977 by S. Manson