# TWO INTERVIEWS ON THE MINIDOKA PROJECT: August 1990

## Mildred ("Millie") Culley Fournier
## Ann Johnson Weeks and Floyd ("Mike") Weeks

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STATUS OF INTERVIEWS:
OPEN FOR RESEARCH

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Oral History Program
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# INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 1990 the Pacific Northwest Regional Office provided limited support for oral history interviews on the Minidoka Project of the Bureau of Reclamation. Part of the support for the interviews and subsequent transcription of the interviews was provided by the Denver Office of the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Denver Office provided draft transcripts of these three interviews to Lynne MacDonald, Regional Archeologist, for regional use. This transcript is an edited version of that original transcript.

Brit Allan Storey, Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation (D-5300) did final editing and transcription of the interviews.

Bracketed material in the text was provided by editor or interviewee for clarification.

# MILDRED ("MILLIE)" CULLEY FOURNIER INTERVIEW

# MILDRED ("MILLIE") CULLEY FOURNIER

Mildred ("Millie") Culley Fournier was born in Idaho in 1920. Her father, Thurman Culley, came to Idaho to homestead, an enterprise in which he failed. In 1922 he got a job as the Dam Tender at Minidoka Dam, a job he held for thirty-nine years. Millie grew up at the dam and married in December of 1942 Henry "Hank" Fournier, a Chicago man who had come to Idaho with the Civilian Conservation Corps.

After World War II Hank and Millie returned to Idaho where Hank was employed by the Bureau of Reclamation at Minidoka Dam. He was there for seventeen years. He transferred in 1963 to Hoover Dam, where he remained until his retirement in 1975.

Mildred was very open during the interview, describing her courtship and marriage to Hank and her life at the dam. The interview was recorded August 30, 1990, in her home at 1609 G Street, Rupert, Idaho.

# ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
## Millie Culley Fournier

Watson: I was just going to ask you to start with when you first remember about the dam. Because you grew up [there].

Fournier: I can remember when I was five years old.

Watson: OK. Just things that you remember about living at the dam. The house that you lived in. What it was like to live up there.

Fournier: Well, I really don't remember ever having lived anywhere else, but I know it was all modern. The children we went to school with had, you know, like outside facilities. Course, we always had running water and nice modern bathrooms. Warm.

Watson: The government built all these houses?

Fournier: Those were government homes.

Watson: And what year did your father move up there.

Fournier: December of 1922.

Watson: And he was the dam tender.

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: And when you moved up there, do you remember how many families were first living up there?

Fournier: No, I don't -- because I was just two years old, (laughter) but there was probably, let's see, probably, houses, maybe at that time about twenty homes. And, I think at the last before the government sold the homes, I think there were about fourteen. (unintelligible)

Watson: Would you describe your house -- besides having indoor plumbing and

running water? How did you live?

Fournier: Well, as far as bedrooms, it had one bedroom. The first one I remember, but my folks had lived in different homes up there. But it had a big glassed-in front porch [we used as a bedroom] so we just lived out there. And then the folks moved to a three-bedroom -- it was a two-bedroom with another glassed-in front porch. So my brother got one bedroom, my parents the other, and then my sisters and I shared the front porch. It was all glassed-in and nice and warm. I was the middle girl, so I always had to sleep with one or the other of my sisters. When my older sister got her own room and bed, then I had to sleep with the younger one. You know, she was old enough to get out of the crib.

Watson: How many kids were there in the family?

Fournier: One son -- he was the oldest. And then I had an older sister and a younger one.

Watson: Is there a lot of difference in ages?

Fournier: There's four years between my brother and I. There's two between my older sister and I, and three between my youngest [sister and me]. We all live here [in Rupert] except my brother. He lives in California: [Healdsburg], California.

Watson: What was the school you went to?

Fournier: My first year was called Walcott. One teacher, a man, Mr. (¿¿Hawk??), I remember, for all eight grades.

Watson: For all eight grades?

Fournier: And I was the only one in first grade.

Watson: Where was this school?

Fournier: It was located about three miles from the dam.

Watson: Was it a country school?

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: How did you get there?

Fournier: Well, there were no buses, so, I think when my folks moved there, they didn't have a car either. The government had a few and so they would take us down. And when the weather was warm, we walked home sometimes or there was a man that worked at the dam. Can we talk about him?

Watson: No, it's all right.

Fournier: It was Mr. Jimmy Russell, he lived right there by Walcott. [Mr. Russell was an operator at the dam powerplant.]

Watson: Oh, yes, I've heard his name.

Fournier: So, he had an old Ford that didn't have a top on and we'd all jump on that and ride home with him. And since I was the only one in first grade, all I remember is I ate breakfast at home then I was going to Russell's [on the first recess] and had breakfast again. (laughter) and play, and I remember having reading [writing and arithmetic "3Rs"].

Watson: How long did you go to Walcott?

Fournier: Just one year. And then Walcott School consolidated with Riverview School.

Watson: Then where did you go?

Fournier: [Riverside] That was a two-teacher school. Four grades with one, four grades with the other. So the teacher at Walcott said I could go on [to the second grade], but since I had been the only one in the first grade, it would be better if I started over, because there would be more students. That's when I took a interest and realized it wasn't all just play.

Watson: Was that at the same place or did you just go to a different building?

Fournier: It was [at Riverview]. It was about six miles, maybe, from the dam. And, I believe then they had a bus -- I can't remember. It was called Riverview and

it included all the children [except high school].

Watson: It was a country school too, though?

Fournier: Oh, yes.

Watson: Did you stay in there until you graduated from the eighth grade?

Fournier: Yes. I did.

Watson: Do you remember when your parents first got a car?

Fournier: I don't believe I remember the first one -- I probably do [remember] the second.

Watson: Do you remember what kind it was?

Fournier: It was a Ford. I think it was the last Model T they sold in Rupert. Really a pretty [one]. Had side curtains -- and you take them off [in good weather].

Watson: So, what was it like growing up, I mean from the period of time you started at Riverview until you graduated? What was it like then growing up at the dam? I mean, did you have a lot of freedom to play around the area?

Fournier: Oh, yes. Yes. And that's where I raised our son, too. We played on the hills. We never worried about the water. I never knew anyone that lived there that had any children that drowned. There were others that came in the summer [for picnics and swimming]. No worries didn't have to worry about anybody's upbringing. Well, in those days you didn't.

Watson: Did you come into town a lot or did you stay up at [the dam]?

Fournier: Well, no. At first when we didn't have a car, the government would take the women into town to get groceries. And then in the winter, at that time, they [Bureau of Reclamation] had a barn with horses and they had a big sleigh. I remember the (unintelligible) of women and some of the men would come clear into Rupert here and get groceries. But then [those days] you bought groceries for more than a week. They'd always bring us [children] something. And then,

of course, they'd (unintelligible) well, they'd come into town a lot. Because those days, maybe, "a lot" was once a week.

Watson: Did you feel like the dam was a separate community, like a separate town, or was it just part of (unintelligible)?

Fournier: Well, when I was little, of course, I thought it was . . . -- I don't know really what I did think. But, as the years went by, they called all of us the "dam kids" or the "dam people". They sort of looked at us as though we were a cut above -- I don't know -- maybe because we had all those modern facilities.

Watson: So they looked at you differently?

Fournier: I don't know how they felt about it. I didn't realize we were any different.

Watson: What were the feelings of the townspeople toward the Bureau of Reclamation?

Fournier: Oh, I'm sure they loved us. (¿¿Because we bought a lot in the town??). They got all the business. That helped the economy.

Watson: The people that worked up there, did they work closely with the community?

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: (¿¿ I was reading that there had been some pretty good feelings between the community and Reclamation??).

Fournier: There was, and as the years went by, 'course as I realized more about those things. Yes, there was.

Watson: After you got out of the eighth grade where did you go to school?

Fournier: Acequia High School. Have you heard of the little town of Acequia.

Watson: Yeah. I've never figured out how you pronounce it.

Fournier: I call it "Ah-see-qua". It's an Indian name, [so] it might be a little different, but "Ah-see-qua." It was a high school [mercantile store and gas station and a few homes, surrounded by farms.]

Watson: You had to take a bus down there?

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: That was in the town, right?

Fournier: Yes, right in town.

Watson: Were there a lot of dam kids your age that were going down there?

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: What I'm trying to get at, there were these kids from the dam and these kids from the town, did you split into groups or were you all mixed together?

Fournier: We were all mixed together.

Watson: You all had friends?

Fournier: Yes. We sure did.

Watson: And you didn't cut off as a separate group then?

Fournier: No. And of course, like when I graduated, there was probably about fourteen [that graduated in my class]. Now there might be a difference if I'd come into Rupert [a larger town].

Watson: It says in that article that when your husband met you you were working as a clerk?

Fournier: For the [M.] H. King Company here in Rupert.

Watson: After you graduated, you started working?

Fournier: Well, I started just working extra-like at Christmas and Saturdays (unintelligible); and I was still in high school when he [Hank] came out with the C's. I knew of him, but I didn't go with him. My girlfriend had her eye on him. She was from the country down the road, and we just grew up together. So there was no difference between the country kids and us.

Watson: When did you start working, in your junior year?

Fournier: Yes. (unintelligible)

Watson: And did you date him before he left to go to the Marines?

Fournier: [Yes.] How this was, is after my brother-in-law and my husband, they were both from Chicago, and they got out of the C's. They went back home to Chicago. Well, they looked the situation over and worked for a while. Then they, they decided [to return to Rupert] -- my brother-in-law liked my sister, see. So he (Hank) decided he'd come out, not to see me, but to see my girlfriend. So they come back out. They took a caravan of cars from Chicago to Waco, Texas, or someplace like that and then, I'd better not tell you this -- then they just . . . those days you could hitchhike. They didn't hitchhike, they came on the train, not as a paid customer. (laughter) I always say I married a bum, but I didn't, really. Then they got separated. He [Al Massio, her brother-in-law] didn't catch the train so he [Hank] never knew what happened to him for about three months. When he [Hank] came back out he got him a job. Well, his girlfriend just acted like well, "hello," like he'd always been here. So, when he [Al] finally got here he started coming up to see my sister Gladys and he'd [Hank] come too. I said to my sister, "Well, he doesn't need to think that every time he comes up here I'm going to be going with him." Well, one thing led to another, and we started going together. So he was out of the C's.

Watson: And then after that he went into the Marine Corps?

Fournier: No. Then they both started working for the telephone company. Then World War II came along. Well, they decided to go back to Chicago. Because he [Al] was going to be drafted. He's older. He married my youngest sister. So they went back there. And then my husband [then boy friend] decided [to join the Marines too.] Because he always felt he wanted to be a protector [of Al] because he was bigger -- or something. So, then they decided they wanted to come back

out here [to Rupert] and sign up. So when they had their first leave they come here to see us girls, they come back out. They were in a little over a year and they got their first leave. They come back out and we got married. We got married in February -- no, December 30, 1942. February 1943 they went overseas. I was reading in the paper where they were all crying around about their husbands going [to Iraq]. I didn't see my husband for three years.

Watson: What did you do while he was gone? Did you work, or . . .?

Fournier: I was working at King's -- my sister [Gladys] and I, we [later] went to Portland, Oregon, and worked in the Oregon shipyards -- [building] liberty ships.

Watson: Did you go out there because you wanted to work out there? Why did you go out there?

Fournier: Yes, and my brother lived there and his family. Well, I did skip a little bit. My sister and I was in Oceanside, California, when they [Al and Hank] shipped over[seas]. So I said, "Hey, this isn't good for a couple of young girls when your husband's overseas. I think that we ought to go where somebody knows us. So then we did leave from Oceanside and went to Portland, Oregon.

Watson: You worked there the whole time during the war?

Fournier: Oh yes.

Watson: Well, when did your husband come back?

Fournier: Well, he came back in, let's see [She searches through an old article on the CCC's followed by unrelated conversation] OK, he went in[to the Marines in] 1942 and come out in 1946.

Watson: That was quite a while after the war ended.

Fournier: Before he got out of the marine corps, he did come back, and he was going to be stationed at the Marine Ordnance Depot at (unintelligible) in Pocatello but

he was only there a short while and they [Marines] called him to San Francisco. He had to go over to transport and bring back [troops from Japan].

Watson: And then when he got out, did he get a job right away with the Bureau of Reclamation?

Fournier: Yes. First we come here to see my folks. Then we was going to go see his [parents] in Chicago. (unintelligible) [I had never met them]. So then when we come back, I was all set to get him a job -- at the Oregon Shipyards -- was still going then. They hadn't closed everything. So, I thought "ah, we'll just go there." And I still knew people there. But when we stopped at the folks', they were building some new homes at the [Minidoka] dam. So he [Hank] went over there and talked to them and he got a job. (laughter) So we never got back to Oregon.

Watson: So did you work after that?

Fournier: I did. I worked at King's until my son was born. And then when he was born in 1948, I was going to be a mother so I stayed home with him. I gave it up when he was born.

Watson: You and your husband lived at the dam after he. . .?

Fournier: For five[1] years, and then we built a home down [in Rupert], just a block [away from here] -- it was 1509, and we lived there [at the dam] for five [years]. He was still working at the dam. I said, "I'm tired of the dam, I'm going to move to town." When I told him that, he said, "A year from now we will have a home in Rupert." I said, "ohhh, we don't have any money." But we did, so then twelve and a half years later we come back and built one [a new house] at 1609. It was just a block. I'm telling you too much, too soon, aren't I?

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[1]. Interviewee suggested changing this to ten years, but did not suggest changing the "five" later in the sentence.

Watson: No, that's all right. It doesn't matter. I did forget to ask you, though, what you remember about the Depression. Did you think it affected you as much as it affected other people?

Fournier: I don't think that I realized it as much as my husband. That's why he joined the C's because he couldn't get jobs. His parents live right in Chicago. You stepped out and there was a streetcar and he had an opportunity to come out here, and he sent money home to them all the time. It really affected city people. My folks had a garden, and Dad had a cow -- he could have it up there. It was across the canal, on one of those carrier things.[2] He pulled himself across [the canal on one of those carriage things used to measure the water] and came back with a bucket of milk. I used to think, "oh my gosh". Every time we opened up -- well it was an icebox at first, and every time we opened it up, that was all we had was milk, and cream, cottage cheese, butter; and I didn't know how lucky I was.

Watson: The government paid them regularly and everything, didn't they?

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: So that they didn't have any problems?

Fournier: No. We didn't get a lot of money, but I didn't realize that then.

Watson: Did you notice that the town's people and the other people were getting a lot less? I mean did you know that. . .

Fournier: I realized that the children in school were poorer. It was hard times. I do remember my dad saying, "Now, we bought too many groceries last month," or something like that. There was a grocery store that would deliver up to the dam. That was in later years. But maybe they'd spend $35 a month, you

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[2]. This was probably a small box suspended on a cable to permit measurements of water depth at a gauging station.

know, [on groceries] with having four children. Like I say, we had that check that came in -- my Dad did. We could depend on that. But as far as savings, I think that came later when all of use kids was gone and wages went up. When my husband started working at the dam, he got 78 cents an hour. And his reason for leaving the Minidoka Dam, because we were completely happy here, was that he was getting more men under him and they didn't give him a raise or anything. We had already talked about transferring, but I could never find anywhere that I thought I wanted to go. So we had been to Hoover Dam one time.

And they'd said, "well, there's no opening, but we'll keep you in mind."

So the day he went over to Burley [projects office in November of 1963] to ask for a raise, he no more than got back -- they said they couldn't give him one, I believe -- they called and said "Hoover Dam called, and they'd like for you to come down there."

He said, "O.K., that's it. If you can't give me a raise, I'm going." It was the best thing that ever happened for us. Our son was in school, the last part of his junior year. And I thought, "oh that's terrible." But, he stayed here and finished his junior year and graduated from Boulder City High School . It was great. They've got lots of spirit there. Everybody's involved.

Watson: What year did he transfer?

Fournier: 1963. [November. Hank was Plant Mechanic Foreman, then Supervisory Mechanical Engineering Technician.]

Watson: [What is Boulder City like?]

Fournier: Well, you know that's just a desert all around no farmers or anything around, so you come out of that and they call it "clean, green Boulder City". It 's a small town. But the residential part has grown because people in Las Vegas

with children want to get out. And they have no gambling there. But its on each side of you. If you want to gamble there it is, it's no problem. But yes, it has the atmosphere of a small town. I've never been anywhere where people were so eager to participate in school activities, political -- I couldn't believe that. Around here, you know when my son [was in school] they almost begged someone to come and work in PTA. There they fight for it. They all are so involved. I'll tell you they're proud of Boulder City, the home of Hoover Dam.

Watson: Hoover Dam was a major accomplishment.

Fournier: Oh, yes. I know. I don't see how they accomplished it. They didn't have air conditioning then.

Watson: Major accomplishment for the Bureau of Reclamation.

Fournier: You know how they hewed that out of the rock and that, it really is.

Watson: Going back because I don't think I asked you. How did your Father come to start working for the Bureau of Reclamation?

Fournier: Well he came out from Missouri. They were originally from Illinois. He had brothers who had already migrated out here to [the Minidoka Project] -- they were homesteading in those days. So, he came out and tried his hand at farming. And it was kind of bad. First he had a son-- he already had him. He was born in Illinois. Then they had my sister [Mary Joe, Gladys was born at Minidoka Dam]. Then they had me. And, times were tough. So, he heard about this job and there was a man, I think he said his name was Lundy he had a car, my folks, I guess, had a wagon or something -- I don't know. So he went to the dam and he told Mom, he said, "It's a modern house and so much money." And she said, "Oh, let's take it." So he stayed there. He never worked anywhere else after that.

Watson: He worked there what, thirty-nine years?

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: And did he always have the same job or did he trade jobs around?

Fournier: No, he had that job, and he used to be the storekeeper too. Maybe I shouldn't say this. After he retired, they rehired two men.

Watson: To be storekeeper and dam tender?

Fournier: Yes, and the storekeeper, yeah. He helped with that. I can remember he had to go over the dam to turn on the water anytime they called, and he didn't get overtime on it until the last years. You'd be all ready to go to town, you know, because we were in high school by that time. Dances in those days were very important, everybody knew how. Young people didn't have cars like they do now, so my mother and dad they'd take us and then along the way we picked up our best girlfriends and they'd take (unintelligible) always to dance on Saturdays. That's how we got acquainted, too.

Watson: At the dance?

Fournier: They had a Camp Minidoka dance too. But they [Hank and Al] were from Kimama [Camp].

Watson: What were they doing out there?

Fournier: Let's see. . . . Cutting fire breaks, performing pest control, building roads, or building reservoirs. Occasionally, some of them were then on fire fighting duty -- when needed. They had three Cs -- let's see, they had a Camp Minidoka, at the dam. And then they had one at Kimama, that's where Hank and Al were, and one at Paul. And they riprapped canals -- the one at the dam did a lot of that.

Watson: The one at the dam, was the CCC camp at the dam close to where you guys lived or was it --

Fournier: Yes. That road that goes all the way around, have you been up to the dam?

Homes all around, and then up on the hill, by the lake as you first come in, you know, beyond that turn up in there was the CCC camp. So, we had bicycles and we'd ride around camp in the evenings -- the guys'd be in the park. My mother says, "don't you stop!" If we was gone very long, I knew my mother'd be coming over the hill. But we got acquainted -- with some real nice friends. And they allowed us to have some of them at home. (unintelligible) I could have married one [and] went to Kentucky. And I said, I didn't want to go to Kentucky.

Watson: You guys met a lot of the guys that worked here?

Fournier: [Yes.] And they had a dance, and the officers' wives would ask I and my girlfriend to help decorate the hall.

Watson: Now, the CCC was paid by --

Fournier: It was by the army, I believe, but, you know, they didn't get any credit toward any retirement or anything. There was some talk about trying to get that, but when they get something like retirement they said "no."

Watson: But was your husband only in the CCCs for two years?

Fournier: Oh, it was a lot less. [Eighteen months.]

Watson: Cause, wasn't the maximum two years? I'm not real sure on that.

Fournier: Then that's what it was, I believe. I think my brother-in-law was in somewhere else once before, too.

Watson: Was there a lot of trouble, or do you know of trouble or problems with the bureaucracy or were pretty much people left on their own? I mean, was there a lot of overseeing by people in the Bureau of Reclamation from Denver? Or were the dam people pretty much left on their own?

Fournier: People come from Denver, and then every winter, of course, they overhauled those big things [generators] in the plant, what are they? Generators and whatnot, and usually somebody come from Denver. But then they did their own

work up there. I understand now that they have a crew comes in and works on them.

Watson: Some of the things I hear Mr. Weeks said. He liked being his own boss.

Fournier: Oh yes. It was like an open shop. Like, if your work was done and you wanted to go and haul the trash or something, you were free to haul the trash or the garbage. And [you could] do different jobs. Now at Hoover Dam, I think that was what they call a closed shop. He [Hank] was a foreman. He was not a working foreman. He explained it [the work] to his crew. But, he could not do it for them. [Hank's last title at Hoover Dam was "Supervisory Mechanical Engineering Technician.] I think thats what Mike Weeks said that he liked -- "this is where you learn. This is where you learn. In a big one, you just learn what you're doing, but you don't have other things to do." My husband was a machinist for a time at the Minidoka plant. I've heard him say, "you'll learn in a plant like this."

Watson: Were your parents still living there at the dam when you and your husband moved to the dam?

Fournier: Yes. Yes, they were.

Watson: You were all close?

Fournier: Yes. Real close. I used to tell my husband, I shouldn't say this but, "when you make me mad I'd go home, but why should I when I can sit over there and see you doing the work?" (laughter) Just jokingly, you know.

Watson: What was the house like that you moved into there at the dam?

Fournier: Well, I lived in two different ones. We lived in a new one called a home for veterans. It was only attached by a double garage, but they called it a duplex. But, when an older one came available, I decided it would be more private and I wanted to be -- the whole yard wasn't running together with this other one so

we moved into it. It was an old one, but I liked it. I was happier in there. It was just like my parents'.

Watson: What -- did it have an enclosed porch too?

Fournier: Yes, it was really a two bedroom with a big glassed-in front porch. The only house at the dam right now is the one my folks lived in. Its up at the wildlife -- it's been remodelled. That was my parents'.

Watson: But, the Weekses were saying that they know what happened to a lot of those houses that were up there.

Fournier: I know where one is right now. One of the last ones they built was right straight back here. It's been remodelled. You can't see it for all my trees. It's that green two-story house.

Watson: Oh really?

Fournier: Uh huh. That's one that was moved and used again.

Watson: Pretty nice house.

Fournier: Yes.

Watson: I guess that's amazing to me because I've been talking to people that were settlers, that were farmers around here. You know, a lot of them didn't see electricity or indoor plumbing or running water for a long time.

Fournier: Well, that's true. That's why everybody might have thought that the dam people were a little cut above or something is because we -- I don't remember having anything but indoor plumbing, running water, and the whole bit.

Watson: You always had electricity?

Fournier: Electricity. All electric heating. See, I didn't realize that I was lucky.

Watson: When you and your husband lived up there do you remember was your electricity and heat and stuff, the utilities, were they paid for, or did you pay them?

Fournier: My folks had to pay just so much [around $14] for rent. And at first everything else was free. When we moved up there, they metered the houses, the rent [went up, but] not a lot. We never had to pay for water, I don't think anyone ever has up there. But we did pay for electricity, which was a lot cheaper, I'm sure, than they thought we'd pay for it in town. No, I always said "Well, after we moved there they metered them."

Watson: So then when you moved down here, your husband drove up every day?

Fournier: Yes. My father, my brother-in-law, and my husband. All of them worked there. And the reason they were allowed to do that -- none of them worked under each other or together.

After this they looked at her photos and her husband's retirement book.

# FLOYD "MIKE" WEEKS AND ANN JOHNSON WEEKS INTERVIEW

# FLOYD "MIKE" WEEKS AND ANN JOHNSON WEEKS

Floyd "Mike" Weeks was born January 12, 1904, in Moscow, Idaho, to Joe and Milla Smith Weeks. Mike's mother died when he was ten years old. Mike helped his father until seventeen, when he went out on his own. In 1926 he landed a job with the Bureau of Reclamation as an operator in the powerhouse, first at American Falls, and later at Minidoka Dam. That began a career with Reclamation that ended only with his retirement from Reclamation in 1963.

Mike enjoys talking about his experiences, and often his sentences are punctuated by laughter. It really is not mentioned on the tape, but Mike has built his own airplane, built race cars for his kids, and even built his car in which he rode to the dam to get his first job for Reclamation.

Ann Johnson Weeks was born February 9, 1916, in Missouri to John A. and Eliza Morgan Johnson. Three years later, her family moved to Idaho and occupied a farm near Acequia. Anna married Mike in 1936, and they have two kids. They lived at Minidoka Dam from 1937 to 1951, when they moved to the house they now occupy in Rupert.

Upon moving to Rupert, Ann was employed by the Idaho First National Bank where she worked for thirteen years.

Ann does not talk a lot about herself, preferring instead to talk about Mike and his life. During the interview, she helped Mike to be clear and stick to the subject; and she tried to fill in any information that was left out.

The interview was recorded in their home at 714 E. 3rd Street in Rupert, Idaho, on August 29, 1990.

# ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
# ANN JOHNSON WEEKS, AND
# FLOYD "MIKE" WEEKS

M. Weeks: Well, to start with, I have, well, Mom, you can tell the story about this picture.

A. Weeks: Well, Mike, start with diversion dam.

M. Weeks: Oh no!

A. Weeks: Well, yes, that's when you first started working!

M. Weeks: Well, I know it! I took this picture on a time exposure with a little (unintelligible), and I had one of the inside the island plant and the outside of it, and the same with the west side plant. But, something happened with the west side plant--I don't know what happened.

A. Weeks: This is American Falls.

M. Weeks: But, this was enlarged in Washington D.C. A gentleman come through and told us about this. This was faithful John, and this is pretty washed out. The west side was a White elephant -- that was their name.

Watson: I wonder if we have that picture somewhere that you got an enlargement of?

M. Weeks: They have it in Washington.

Watson: We do have it in Washington?

M. Weeks: (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: A man from the historical society back there came out and talked to Mike. And he took that picture back with him and enlarged it and then sent it back to us.

M. Weeks: But that's the only one I have now. Well, I had a small one, the one he used, and some others but they're gone. [Several minutes of conversation focussed on retirement party photographs.]

Now here's the wages I was earning. (laughter)

A. Weeks: Ninety dollars.

Watson: Is that ninety dollars?

A. Weeks: Ninety dollars a month.

M. Weeks: That's about it. How I happened to get the job. I'll start with that, O.K.? I was working in a garage part time. It wasn't a very good job, and I didn't like it; it was pretty hard. Anyway, that don't need to be in there [the tape] -- that I didn't like the job. I went in the barber shop on Groves Street, to get my hair cut, and the gentleman, the barber said, "Hey you know a lot of people around here Mike; you know anybody that would operate in the powerhouse? I says well sure, I operated in the powerhouse. I did! In fact, I got it [a picture] here somewhere. It was a diesel plant, and I told him all about it, in a mine. "Well my brother-in-law is hiring, and they want an operator real bad -- operator. They have one, and he's going to go to college, the operator." That was in April, but they need another one! And he said, "If I was you, I would run out there right now." So I did. And, here's the diversion dam.

A. Weeks: [to Watson] It's out of Boise. You know, you've been out there, haven't you?

Watson: I haven't been to this one.

M. Weeks: Oh, haven't you.

A. Weeks: It's historical.

Watson: Yeah, I know.

M. Weeks: I can give you a little history of that. That was built to supply to Arrowrock Dam. And that supplied all the juice for Arrowrock Dam, and they figure it paid for itself there.

Watson: (unintelligible)

M. Weeks: Yes, and

Watson: I've never seen the photographs here, and we have all of these in the Bureau of Reclamation. (unintelligible)

M. Weeks: But that was when the Minidoka Project leased that from the Boise Project for one year. And the lease was going to go out that coming up January, and then I would be out of a job. Ben Hoagland, he quit too; and he was an operator. He went to college. I don't know whatever happened to Bill Hoagland; he just left. Left me to take care of the darn plant. I had to charge (unintelligible). I stayed right there. The first of January, I was to be out of a job. But, Mr. [Claude] Gleason, was superintendent at the dam, (unintelligible) he said, "Well, if you want to come down -- back up to Minidoka. We could use an operator there quite often. If you want to come." Well, I sure couldn't find the other job. But I pulled out of Boise and come into Minidoka Dam down in January -- bout the (unintelligible). Minidoka, and, oh gees, you know leaving Boise and having a lot of fun. Stick me out there, of course. Thought I'd earn enough to get out of there -- never did.

Watson: You didn't live right there at the dam?

M. Weeks: No, I went there. They didn't have an operator job then, but they said they would be needing one pretty quick. They put me on cleaning generators. On my first paycheck I should leave there and get out of there. That wasn't my hardest job, but one day they came down to me,

cleaning the generator, now that was in the morning. They says, "Now, do you think you could operate this plant?" Oh my gosh, I don't even know this plant; but I can try and operate it. He says, "Jim might want a day off and you'll have to operate it." That's all they said. I said "Well, I'm going up there right now and find out something about that board." Because that was mid-morning. And then you had to be an operator, not bragging, but, we had to handle your own speed. You know, we didn't have the Idaho Power to rely on. Now if an operator has trouble he can just kick in the automatic bar and it'll take over, you know. But, at that time, you had to handle your own speed and everything. Boy, I'll tell you. Jim showed me all he could about it, and then he left. He had to leave that next morning. I got by the whole day without any trouble, just reading the meters; and the next day Jim came back. Then I was working in the plant, and Gleason comes down and says, "can you leave here tomorrow?" and I says, "Well, sure I only have one suitcase." And he says, "Well I'd like to have you go with Roy Smith." Maybe you might need that name later; he was a good, good man.

Watson: What did he do?

M. Weeks: Well, he was a all-around machinist, he was a operator, he was just a good man. I'll bring him up again later. We went up there in an old Model T, Ford pickup, and looked it over. There was a big pedestal there, about that big, it was the west side plant.

A. Weeks: Now, this is in American Falls. He never told you where he went.

M. Weeks: Oh, this is American Falls!

Watson: Oh, OK. I was wondering.

M. Weeks: Yeah, this is the plant at American Falls. We put that in. We was both

pretty good mechanics, you know. The darn manhole that we put it in -- the bearing was bigger than the old one that come out of there, and we couldn't get it in. Finally, we decided to throw it over in the forebay and hook up to it some way and drag it up through the (unintelligible). Oh Jiminy, but when they welded that in they just welded pieces of sheet iron down as they went and all jagged and we got it caught down there -- whole big bearing. But we kept on. We thought we were gonna have to hire somebody to dive down there and free it, but Roy and I, we fought that thing back and forth and we finally got it up there and put it in. And he stayed with us for awhile to help us overhaul the plant. That was in April that we started it. Both plants and the government had a line up there then and they put a lot of juice up through there. Roy, they finally needed him at Minidoka Dam pretty bad. (unintelligible) They wanted to know if I could handle it from then on. And I said, "well sure." (unintelligible) God, he knowed I was only twenty-one, I was only 20 when we went, and I turned 21. (unintelligible) There wasn't any operators -- sometimes farmers. (unintelligible) Roy had to leave to go back to Minidoka Dam. And we went ahead from then on and started the plants in the summer, you know, and we pumped water for the city. They's moving the town.

Watson: Which town?

M. Weeks: American Falls.

A. Weeks: They flooded the town that was American Falls when they built the dam.

Watson: Oh, so they had to move it?

M. Weeks: They had to move the town. Now here's building the dam. That is their cement mixer and all the stuff we used to have power for, you know

emergency [power]. You don't need to put this in, but I couldn't handle that darn mixer. I didn't have enough power. Of them two plants, see, one was only 900 kilowatts and the other one was 1200. With two generators 1200 and 900, I couldn't handle that darn cement mixer. It would just drag right down. Anyway, we had to wait for the line . . . the line fell down and we had to put the line up there, you know, to get it working again. And then they come along with the plant in Minidoka. But we went ahead and run them darn things and we had quite a time. Here's the island plant -- that was the 1200 kilowatt plant. But I don't know what happened to the plant on the west side plant. It's tore down now.

Watson: You don't have any pictures of it?

M. Weeks: I did, but they're gone! I don't know what happened to them. (unintelligible) But, I'll tell you one thing of the trouble we did have. The turbine was all built right in back on the two generators, and the construction crew throwed wedges [wood] over and they floated down and went into the turbine, ohhhhh. (unintelligible and not directly related to the discussion) When them wedges went into the turbine into there [referring to a picture] and blocked it so we couldn't even get it to shut down. Finally, we was about to (unintelligible). I had read up on this. I read that you could take a generator that was running hollow; you could tie it in to the operator, cut this loose on its own, and whirrr (high-pitched sound effect). Ita'd blow hot. I'll tell you I was scared. But, I had read that article about them. You can put a runaway generator on the line if you kick all the feeder line.

Watson: All the what?

M. Weeks: The power, you know, the DC power. And you can throw it in with the other generator. And I thought, "well, (unintelligible) but something's got to be done." So I did. I backed all the feeder [line] off, (unintelligible) and I throwed it right in on the other generator. Taking the chance. It wasn't hooked in to the Minidoka Dam at all. But, I put it in on "Old Faithful John" (unintelligible) and she pulled it down all it could with the governor. And then when we took some 8x8 and drilled holes in them and put her on this wheel. And cinched them down; you know we had it laid out here across this here [referring to pictures]. And the smoke was just flying, but we just kept cinching it down and cinching it down, and finally we got it stopped.

Watson: That's how you stopped it?

M. Weeks: Yep. We finally got it stopped, and then we had to go into the turbine; and it was impossible to get parts for that turbine.

Watson: Why?

M. Weeks: It was old. They didn't make them no more. So we get the back (unintelligible) the building. So we took the half of the turbine off; and that only left us about 200-and-some kilowatts on that, but we went ahead and buttoned her back up and run with what we could (unintelligible). That was in, I think, 1928. We went ahead and finished the season out, then, and then when we shut down that Fall why I was sent back to Minidoka Dam to be an operator. We operated in that plant off and on (unintelligible) until finally I got out of there altogether, and electrician (unintelligible), and then I got into a job I liked. (unintelligible) I don't remember when that was.

A. Weeks: Well, Mike, we moved down here in 1951; and you were out of the

powerhouse then.

M. Weeks: Oh, yes. (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: I'd say you'd been out four or five years then.

M. Weeks: Well see, and then I was a substation foreman. I took care of all the substations. (unintelligible) Maintained them and stuff like that. I liked that. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: You were a lineman too.

M. Weeks: Oh, yeah.

Watson: What does a lineman do?

M. Weeks: Change insulators and hike up poles.

A. Weeks: You probably understand about as much of this as I do.

Watson: Not really.

M. Weeks: (unintelligible) Now I'll jump onto another field when pretty near all of us got fired. Would you like that?

Watson: Oh sure.

M. Weeks: Well, before I go to that . . . they don't believe me, I know they don't, but we had a tennis court and we had a golf course up at the dam.

Watson: You had a tennis court and a golf course?

M. Weeks: Now I can prove that. I got pictures of that.

A. Weeks: Well, she asked if you lived up there.

M. Weeks: Well I batched up there.

A. Weeks: You didn't batch. They had a mess house. They had a boarding house; and the people that lived in the boarding house -- she cooked for the men who roomed upstairs in the boarding house. Mike didn't like the food very well, but that's all they had.

END TAPE 1, SIDE 1.

BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE 2.

M. Weeks: Well, I wasn't going to, but I'll bring him in now. He was superintendent. He was a feller, the superintendent, that he wanted his employees right there. In fact, I'd like to have that brought up in any article. Joe Talla just didn't get a fair shake from the superintendent. In fact, I think they laid him off. But when he come . . . he was a navy man.

A. Weeks: Mike, the reason was that he wanted you all under his thumb -- 24 hours a day.

M. Weeks: But anyway, he was all for it [a golf course]. Now, he come there and we all worked on it. It didn't cost the government nothing. We even paid for the net. Bought our own rackets and everything.

A. Weeks: He was a golfer wasn't he. That's why he wanted to build a golf course.

M. Weeks: You might want to see that picture again [showing picture].

A. Weeks: That's the mess house.

M. Weeks: Now here's the mess house.

Watson: And this is at Minidoka?

M. and A. Week: Minidoka [Dam]0.

M. Weeks: Up on top--that's was our gymnasium there. We all pitched in and bought boxing gloves. We had a boxing ring and punching bag. It was a great big room -- the full length of that whole top, you know. Joe Talla he boxed in the Navy. Rufus Kendrick, he come in from Arizona, (unintelligible). He was too old to box with that guy. He started using his bare hands. "You hurt me!" He quit boxing, but we kept on with the tennis court. And we rolled it down, got a big roller and rolled it down. And when they built the golf course, they just

started clear down by the canal -- that's where the houses were right by the gates. And it ended up finally on the hill. Where we lived way on this side of the park. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: But it ended up over there where that kiosk is now. You've been up to the Dam haven't you?

Watson: Yes, I have.

A. Weeks: I think they call it a kiosk, don't they.

M. Weeks: But I thought that was really nice to have him think of his men to have something to do, you know. (unintelligible) But anyway, a lot of guys didn't like him. But (unintelligible) I liked him. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: You remember putting that willow tree (where you first come in), we planted that.

Watson: Oh, you did.

A. Weeks: It's the first big willow tree as you go in. You'll see a great big willow tree, and that's where we lived. And, a lot of people don't know that people lived at the dam. When we went up there to the dedication, I talked to people who didn't know there were houses up there. They had sixteen permanent houses at the Dam.

Watson: Did the government build those houses?

A. Weeks: Yes, the government built them. We had sixteen permanent homes, and then they turned the CCC camp -- they had several apartments in the CCC camp. There must have been four or five families who lived there. So at one time there were probably about twenty families lived there.

M. Weeks: [Showing picture]. Here is the first house we lived in.

A. Weeks: That's the first house we lived in. They called it "the shack".

M. Weeks: Now Joe Tallow comes in on that too. Ann and I lived in a garage, just one-room in town, in Rupert. And I'd go back and forth. He promised a house. Finally, George Barnard -- somebody quit, I don't remember who it was -- but anyway George Barnard was living that place; and it wasn't even modern, and Joe Tallow says, "Now, Mike, you can move up into that place where George is living." I went out and looked at it, an outdoor toilet and everything, and I said, "Well, Joe, how about if I buy the toilet and put it in and the bathtub and put it in, would the government kind of help me do it?" "Oh, I couldn't let you buy that." So he went to Burley, and they decided they'd do that.

Watson: So the government did it?

M. Weeks: (Laughter) This is kind of laughing stuff. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: It was just a little three-room house. A kitchen, and the living room, and a bedroom. Right along side each other. And then they built the bathroom out of the front room. But the bedroom was big enough that we had our bed and two cribs in it for our children so we had plenty of room; and that was during the depression! And we were just living in a little one-room apartment in town. We were lucky to even get . . . A lot of our friends had lived in . . . all the furniture they had were fruit boxes -- stuff like that. People that didn't live during the Depression haven't lived.

M. Weeks: We made our own heaters out of ???micron??? wire. One of them out the _____ place. (unintelligible) I give it to the museum.

A. Weeks: We paid $9 a month rent on that little shack, and all of our heat and water was furnished. All of our utilities furnished, and Mike, I think, was the first one that put a thermostat on the heater so you could turn

it to low, medium, and high. And Otto Adamson said, "Well, why put a thermostat on it -- just open the window!" Because we didn't have to pay for any of our electricity. No utilities. When we left there in 1951, they was going to raise our rent to $35 a month.

M. Weeks: Something like that. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: Well, we were paying about $18 a month at that time; and they were going to start charging us for utilities. I don't know whether they ever did or not.

M. Weeks: They were going to put a meter on. This is our front room in the new house that we moved into.

Watson: When did you move into a this house?

A. Weeks: Do you know when was construction over at the dam?

M. Weeks: '42.

A. Weeks: Well, that's when we moved. See they built two new houses while they were doing construction. They built one right out in front of that shack, and that's the one we moved into. They built one for sleeping quarters for the men, and then one for an office. The one out in front of our house was used for an office, wasn't it?

M. Weeks: Yeah, during construction.

A. Weeks: And then when construction was finished, we moved in it.

Watson: And this one was for an office before - the one you moved into?

M. and A. Weeks: Yeah.

Watson: How big was that?

A. Weeks: It was a big living room, two bedrooms, a full basement, a front porch, that was it -- two bedrooms, bathroom, a big living room.

M. Weeks: (unintelligible) a rock house. That's out on the highway here, yet, but

they took all the rock off to move it.

A. Weeks: We know where most of these houses the school bought are.

Watson: Where is it now?

A. Weeks: It's out at the high school. Both of those houses -- they're just alike. They're both out at the high school. They use them for offices, at least I think, out there.

M. Weeks: (unintelligible)

Watson: Is it still there?

A. Weeks: Uh huh. And then there's one of them right over here, and there's one out on "H" Street, there's one out toward the hotel highway, there's one on the way over to Albion. They just sold them off.

M. Weeks: I think ours was the last house built. How many houses was lived in, Mom?

A. Weeks: I don't know, but I counted them the other night. There were sixteen houses. There were sixteen families that lived there. And then these were the people that lived over in the apartments that the CCC's left. But there were some other people that lived over in those apartments too, but those were the most permanent ones.

Watson: These people lived in here when?

A. Weeks: In the 1940's and '5O's.

Watson: Now all these houses have been moved?

A. Weeks: Yes.

Watson: And they were sold by the Bureau.

A. Weeks: They were sold by the Bureau. One of them is the wildlife [building] at Minidoka Dam. They've all been sold. We know where a lot of them are. We do know that our old house, that one big house, and those two

houses were just alike that they built during construction, is out at the high school.

Watson: How much was rent at the bigger house?

A. Weeks: I think it was about $18. I think they kept raising it a little bit. I think it was about $15 when we moved in. And I think when we left it was about $18. (unintelligible)

Watson: So where did you move when you moved down here?

A. Weeks: Right here, we moved here.

Watson: And you've been here ever since?

A. Weeks: We've been here . . .

M. Weeks: This wasn't much of a house, though.

A. Weeks: We moved here in '51. Well see, our children were in high school. We lived at the dam for fifteen years -- from the time our children was born until 1951. (unintelligible) Then there were some other people that lived over in those apartments too, but those were the permanent ones. I think they had about five apartments over there -- don't you think they did Mike?

M. Weeks: Yeah. [referring to the picture] Them (unintelligible) were the first guards during the war.

A. Weeks: A lot of people don't know that we had guards up there during the war [World War II] either.

M. Weeks: We was restricted.

Watson: I read that during World War I, they were real afraid of German sympathizers and they've got these pictures [of people] guarding over at the powerhouse. And I read that in World War II, (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: Down there on the bridge, as you're coming down [to the dam]

(unintelligible) they had a little guard house; and people that was coming into the dam had to check in there; and [they would] call us to see if it was alright for them to come in. And then I think we had to call and tell them who we were meeting, too. We had a bum come down one day. And of course we were never used to seeing anybody down there (intelligible) to the dam. And I went to the door and I said, "Where'd you come from?" And he said he came out of the desert. And a friend of mine was there, and her husband was the head of the wildlife; and she said, "You folks fix him something to eat, and I will call the powerhouse and tell them that -- they've been trying to catch that guy -- in the desert! He's living out in the desert, and they can't catch him; and they think he's a draft dodger." So I told him I'd fix him something to eat, and [she] called the powerhouse. By the time I got him something to eat, why he was going down the road with two guards standing on each side of him. But they never did find anything out about him. He wasn't a draft dodger, though. And it beats me why he was living out there in the desert (unintelligible) at home.

Watson: But you guys didn't just -- because a lot of people you know that lived in town, especially during the Depression, they saw a lot of people like that during the depression?

A. Weeks: Well, this was during the war. Only once that we ever have a bum when we lived at the dam and people wanted to know how to get to Pocatello. But during the Depression, there were lots of them around here. That was the only one I ever had at the door.

M. Weeks: (unintelligible) I was operating one night and oh boy there was a big excitement, you know. "Bang! bang! bang!" The guy down in the

forebay, was surprised, you know. They flashed the flashlight out and there was a big jumble of weeds floating by, and they thought it was a big bomb; and they had been shooting at it. Oh Jiminy. I was running, and when they got down to the trash rack it was a big tumbleweed. (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: Well, now, the guards that were down at the guard house; and then they had guards at the powerhouse too, though.

M. Weeks: Oh, patrols. This one swore up and down that he seen something down by the carpenter's shed; and he says, "Would you go down with me?" he says. I said "oh, yes." I was sorry I went because he had his darned old gun a-waving and around, well I didn't want -- he was nervous and jumpy.

A. Weeks: Well, they were all World War I veterans who were the guards during World War II.

M. Weeks: [Referring to pictures] Oh, here's where I learned to operate in that powerhouse right there. (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: The dam was a wonderful place to raise children.

Watson: Really, (unintelligible) why?

A. Weeks: Well, everybody looked out for everybody else's kids, and they all had a home safe to play in, (unintelligible)

M. Weeks: There was different religions. There was Mormons, Catholics, Christian Scientists, Methodists. I got along with all of them.

A. Weeks: They all got along real well. It was really very seldom we ever had any . . . Sometimes we had community parties. It was just a really a good place to raise kids. There weren't a lot of kids up there, but we had a campfire group up there. We had, I think there might have been

five girls around my daughter's age. (unintelligible).

Watson: Did you really feel separate from the communities, separate from the other towns around here?

A. Weeks: We probably might have if we hadn't lived here all our lives. I grew up here. And, we had lots of friends in town. If we had just moved in here, we might have felt kind of isolated.

M. Weeks: We square danced.

A. Weeks: Not out there, though. We came to town to square dance.

M. Weeks: No, not out there, but we practiced out there a lot.

A. Weeks: I think our kids felt that they were quite privileged. Because a lot of the people (unintelligible) had a lot less than they did. We all had nice homes up there, and, I know, our daughter always said that when she thinks back about going and staying with her girlfriends, you know, they didn't have modern houses. I think they felt quite privileged and everything.

Watson: All the homes were modern at the dam?

A. Weeks: Oh, yeah. Even when we first moved out there. You know, they made our little shack modern when we moved out there. Yes, they were all modern.

Watson: So a lot of the people that were farming didn't have modern homes?

A. Weeks: No, they didn't have; and that's why my daughter always said she thought we always had a really nice home, because all her girlfriends and people that she went to visit (unintelligible) A lot of them, their houses weren't modern; and I think everybody, especially the kids, felt quite privileged to live at the dam.

M. Weeks: [Looking through pictures, pulls out one showing the old boarding

house]. My room was right here in this corner. (unintelligible). Before I was married.

Watson: Just one room?

M. Weeks: Yeah. And then we boarded down in the mess hall. We ate down here.

Watson: Did you have to share a room?

M. Weeks: This was the cook room over here.

A. Weeks: You just stayed in one room. You didn't have to share a room.

M. Weeks: Oh no! No, we had four, five rooms up there. That was on the top part. In fact, you probably heard of an engineer from Denver named Plumb?

Watson: No. Who was he?

M. Weeks: He was a good engineer. He come when they were putting in new generators and new equipment. And he and I got along pretty well. They put us on a job testing volts to ground. And him and I run around with test equipment. He was a nice fella. I sure liked him. He was from the Denver office.

I got something interesting, if you'd like. [showing a photo of American Falls.] This place right here, this in number 6 transformer, right here. (unintelligible). From here way out into the lake was all man-made [referring to the island plant at American Falls]. But anyway. Now these are what they call air blast transformers, all five of them. This might be interesting to the engineers in Denver. Now, I was operating. Number 6 went dead. We just had to fix (unintelligible). And this, right here, we had two water driven exciters. But when they put (unintelligible) they had to do away with them, and they tore them all out and used the penstock (unintelligible) and they put in electrical exciters.

The night I was . . . Mom will never forget this night. I was operating, and we started having a little bit of trouble; but then lightning comes in, and forked over to no. 1 transformer and no. 2, and started a fire -- oh we had a fire. But I was out operating, and I got the flash in my eyes and you [Ann] spent the better part of the night putting tea leaves on my eyes. (unintelligible). That was the worst night (unintelligible). [Considerable conversation centered on the pictures which doesn't make sense without them.] Another interesting thing is this bridge wasn't there. The CCC's blasted all that out and put a road there. [More conversation which relies on the photographs.]

END TAPE 1, SIDE 2
BEGIN TAPE 2 SIDE 1

Watson: Well, when you were out there, especially early on, did they have as many safety rules as later on?

M. Weeks: Oh no, no, when I was operating, I think I was on graveyard shift, but a man, Ralph Hall, well, Ralph Hall was oiling, and just fooling around walking up them iron stairs on his hands, and his finger slipped, and he fell and broke his hip; and that wasn't on the government's safety, but we didn't have no protection on a lot of the stuff -- the belts and things underneath until OSHA come. You know, in regard to making them more safe. And then, there was one man killed, that was on the (unintelligible) that was uncalled for, but he should have had trainers and not tried to work that high.

A. Weeks: They didn't have any restriction on noise, and that's one of the reasons why Mike's deaf now. Because now they make them wear ear guards and stuff like that.

M. Weeks: We operated right out in the open. No closed booth or nothing. The desk was right out in the open, you know. And the noise is loud out there. We didn't know that . . .

A. Weeks: Well, they didn't know then that noise bothered.

M. Weeks: We'd get a ground or a flash. You know, a flash, why then my eyes would go blink.

A. Weeks: But he's 86 years old so . . . --his ears and eyes are worn out anyway.

M. Weeks: When I was operating, now wait a minute, don't put this down, but I think I was the first one that demanded a clearance. The line crew called up on the high line, they had the high line open. They was doing work on it. I'll try to tell you just about like it happened. One of the line crew called and wanted me to open it in the plant there. They wanted me to open it up and they were going to work on it. But then after they got done working, another man come and wanted me to heat it up. "Whoa, wait a minute, you didn't have the clearance on that did you?" "No." I said, "How do you know they're off?" He said "I know they're left there because they're not on the line." I said, "I don't know. You don't have clearance at all on that, no clearance." Another man come and wanted me to throw it in. And I wouldn't do it. They finally had to go (unintelligible) I think that's the first clearance that was demanded on them lines. But that might not be right either. That was a time they could just call up and want a line open. It didn't make any difference who come back. That's no way to . . . I knew better than that! (unintelligible) Now they do have good clearances. Really, too strict now. That's all right. When a man's life (unintelligible) you shouldn't have to let anybody clear anything. But I think that happened one time.

I can't remember (unintelligible) on one of the pump stations.

A. Weeks: Mike tells another interesting thing about Mr. Heath who was going to work on the generator, and they were supposed to be cleared. You tell her, Mike.

M. Weeks: Well, see we had . . . then . . . at that time everything was a little different in the powerhouse. We had 34,500 coming into these jackets -- better start from these generators. The generator come up here as 2200 to 2400 and then it boosted out to 34,500, 34,000, to go outside. That bunch run all full length of the powerhouse clear along this side. And Mr. Heath was going to work on, I don't know what generator, two or three, and had a ladder right up under 34,000 volts. It was supposed to be opened up between 2400 and 34,000. And he started up the ladder. Tallow was in charge then. Don't put it down though. He had enough trouble without that. But anyway, he says, "Alright, now climb up there." He had that kind of voice (imitates a gruff, impatient voice). "Climb up there." And he went up. He put his arm up towards the disconnect and the hair stands right up on his arm. He said, "That is hot!" "Oh, no, can't be." [said Tallow] He come down the ladder. "If you want me to open that up up there, you'd better check it." (unintelligible) He went up there and showed him. His arm -- the hair was standing right up on his arm. Boy, I tell you they chased it down a little bit more and disconnected down in the shaft. That wasn't open.

A. Weeks: I always thought that was kind of interesting. That they test them with the hair on their arm.

M. Weeks: But anyway. That's all changed now. There's no (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: You know when I was a kid, we'd go to the dam. It was a favorite

place to go, and we ran all over around the powerhouse, the spillway. I couldn't have been more than, oh probably ten years old. With all that electricity up there and everything, we didn't think anything about it. We'd walk on those barricades going out to the powerhouse and like that. I mean out to the spillway if we'd fallen in, we'd have drowned. But we didn't think anything about it. (unintelligible)

M. Weeks: But now I think it was about 1939 . . . When did the CCC's leave? (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: I think they did, Mike, because they were up there when we moved up there; we moved up there in '37.

M. Weeks: But anyway, they tore this down, the skid, before that. Nooo - a little later. I think mostly . . . most of that done in 1928. I think they put number 50 in there. They had to take the penstock, you know, the penstock right here [referring to a picture apparently] for number 6. But anyway, I was kind of interrupting (unintelligible). And they moved that hill . . . They moved that whole hill so you could drive right in there. Before, the blacksmith shop, I could come around the back to get something out of there; but now, heck, something like that you can open it and drive right up to the powerhouse. (unintelligible -- apparently referring to the picture). (conversation which is not understandable because it is tied to pictures)

Watson: Well, the other thing I was going to ask you was like during the depression and stuff, you worked the whole time -- I mean, you had a steady job with the Bureau?

M. Weeks: Oh, yes. I never lost a day's pay. (unintelligible)

Watson: They were paying everybody and everything and keeping them on?

M. Weeks: In fact, we were all real lucky to have a job during the war.

A. Weeks: During the Depression, he means.

M. Weeks: Yes, during the Depression.

A. Weeks: Nobody was lucky to have a job during the war. Everyone had a job.

M. Weeks: But no, we all had a paycheck coming in.

A. Weeks: And our government checks were always good. A lot of the school teachers got paid, but their checks weren't any good. (unintelligible) They got paid in ummm -- I don't know what they did get paid. They'd get a warrant, but the warrant, the county didn't have any money. So the only way they could get their warrants cashed was to . . . for somebody to buy them. They would buy them at a discount. I knew that there were some people up here that had a creamery, Mitchells, and they said that that's how they made all their money. They had cash, and they would buy the school teachers' warrants with a 10% discount. Eventually, they'd be good, you know, but the school teachers couldn't wait. And so they'd buy them at a discount and then save up those warrants.

Watson: But they always took your government check?

A. Weeks: Oh yeah. We never had any trouble getting our checks cashed.

M. Weeks: I was going to tell you about when we all almost got fired. Well, Chief electrician and the engineer, Claude Gleason, their wives got, I might not have it right but I think so, they got to arguing between them. So it come up that they was going to transfer . . . Claude Gleason was going to get the chief electrician transferred away from the dam, so he'd move his wife.

A. Weeks: This is all because of two wives.

M. Weeks: That come as such a shock to everything, they kind of ganged up. They

didn't take me in on either side. I was in the powerhouse most of the time. I had went out with the foreman. Fred Anderson was the foreman -- the shop and powerhouse foreman. Claude Gleason was the superintendent, and E. H. Smith was the chief electrician about (unintelligible). Well, they got to arguing back and forth. Roy Smith was in on it, too. George Barnard was on and (unintelligible) was on one side. And Gleason was on the other side; so they didn't know what to do about it. They called for investigation. (unintelligible) And they had a regular trial. (unintelligible) They didn't know how to begin, so they questioned everybody; and it come out that they fired E. H. Smith and they transferred Gleason, I think. George Barnard was fired, Roy Smith was fired, (unintelligible) was fired. And they put me on the stand. For here, I'd been with both of them. I'd worked for both of them. Bud Anderson, you know, in the powerhouse. I worked with E. H. Smith a little bit, not too much. But George Barnard worked with E. H. Smith, and he got fired. (unintelligible) It was a mess. They was thinking about firing me. Joe Tallow saved me, "Now, he might have been involved with them." But he explained to them that it was only on a friendly basis. They wanted to fire me. I never told you that, did I? [to Ann].

A. Weeks: Well, yeah you mentioned it. That was before we were married.

M. Weeks: Finally, they said well, "what job would you like to have? I hear that you don't like it out there." I said, "Well, if its all right with you, I'd like to get on a electricity gang. Work's all right. Something I could get interested in. After you operate for a few years, you know, it's pretty boring." And I was pretty ambitious, and I wanted to become

(unintelligible). Anyway, that sure was a mess. (unintelligible)

Watson: Did they call in for this investigation. Did they call in people from Denver of somewhere else?

M. Weeks: I'm not sure. I think I was working . . . I was working the relief shift. I would operate one day; oil the next day -- on days. The next time it would be graveyard. And graveyard got me down, (unintelligible) with two children and a wife.

A. Weeks: Well, Mike, that investigation, I believe it was before we were married.

M. Weeks: Oh yeah, that was before we was married. [to Ann] You were never when Claude Gleason was there?

A. Weeks: No, I didn't know him.

M. Weeks: You'll have to look up the dates on that investigation. Maybe there might be some records of that.

Watson and A. Weeks:

(unintelligible)

M. Weeks: Fred Anderson was the powerhouse foreman, and he got fired. (unintelligible) You see, they'd picked out little incidents like Mr. Fred Anderson did -- went on a toot one time. I heard, now this is hearsay, he (unintelligible) had some company showing them through the powerhouse; and gosh (unintelligible) asleep and -- I don't know. I wasn't there, and I just heard about that. And I think that's what they had him fired for -- for drinking.

A. Weeks: It was all caused by the two wives. That's what I always thought was kind of interesting.

M. Weeks: I can verify that because I was putting lights in the camp. Well, poles and other kinds putting lights up. There wasn't very many. They didn't

want to pull in a lineman to do it. So I'd do it. I was walking up the roadside to the big house that was Gleason's house, and E. H. Smith was right across the road -- was their house. The wives was out there talking and [arguing]. And the next day I heard something about getting Gleason fired. They were all out to get Gleason fired. Because he was causing trouble (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: (unintelligible) It didn't pay to get too friendly with people because then if you got too friendly and had a falling out, it could be bad 'cause you worked with them too.

Watson: I would be interested to know who was running that investigation and why they got so picky.

A. Weeks: You don't remember who came in and run the investigation?

M. Weeks: Oh, no. They didn't tell me nothing.

A. Weeks: Who questioned you? When you went in to be questioned who questioned you? Who questioned you?

M. Weeks: I don't know--it was an outsider from Denver. He just acted as judge. You just felt like you was in court. Didn't know which way the ax was going to fall. (unintelligible)

Watson: Did you get a lot of people in from Denver and stuff looking around or a lot of problems from Denver.

M. Weeks: Well, they'd come off and on, Mr. Plumb, he was mostly you were on your own.

A. Weeks: Well, Mike, what were they investigating the time the FBI came in up there?

M. Weeks: Well, someone had stolen some equipment from the dam.

A. Weeks: Well, Mike said that one of the mechanics or somebody said that car out there "you should see the engine." There was an FBI man, wasn't it, that was up there.

M. Weeks: Yes, (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: But how did they get in to look at the motor of that car?

M. Weeks: Oh, I see. It laid there inert.

A. Weeks: Anyway, it was really a high-powered car, and (unintelligible) with that high-powered motor in it. 1

M. Weeks: (unintelligible) They thought I was bootlegging (unintelligible)

Watson: They thought you were bootlegging? During the prohibition?

M. Weeks: Yeah.

A. Weeks: See, Prohibition didn't go off until, what, 1938 did it?

Watson: I can't. . . I never remember the date. (conversation which is not of interest because it wandered from the subject)

A. Weeks: I don't know whether you're just interested in the dam -- are you just interested in the dam?

Watson: No. Well, we're really interested in everything that has to do with the Bureau of Reclamation. We supposed to be just concentrating on the (unintelligible), but we're not. I'm interested in whatever information I could get.

M. Weeks: Well, if you think it would be a black mark against the Bureau of Reclamation, that investigation out there, you don't have to mention it. That is something you can look up, I'm sure!

Watson: Well, I'll try. I'll find out about it.

M. Weeks: A long time ago.

Watson: Well, we have all the Project Histories. Sometimes, you know,

sometimes the project histories, the engineers that write those, say "well, we had a little bit of trouble and had to fire a few people." I was reading over at Minidoka at the powerhouse they

END TAPE 2, SIDE 1.
BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE 2.

M. Weeks: Jim Russell was operating before I got there.

A. Weeks: He was operating during World War I.

M. Weeks: He told me about it, you see, I operated quite a little bit with the oilers. We used to have oilers, you know. But now, anybody can operate now. Cause you get into trouble, just clear the board and cruise out to Idaho Power -- let them handle it. But before you used to have to handle your own speed. And the lift, when they got kicked off from the lift you'd lose all three pumps (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: Mike, wasn't there another interesting thing, that I thought was interesting, didn't during the construction at American Falls, didn't they run a line from Minidoka Dam to American Falls? I don't know if you were interested in that or not.

M. Weeks: Oh yeah. You see, they had to do that to take the power from the north plant. Here's another interesting thing. I was in charge of the two plants at American Falls. And I put them on, and I ground out every darned kilowatt we could get; I (unintelligible), you know? And one day, I don't know who he was, but he was Idaho Power man come over one day, and he says, "What're you running them old water hogs for?" "Orders," [I replied], I was sent up here to run -- get every kilowatt hour out of em I could. He says, "Why don't you shut them down and let us put that much power in?" Right up on this end they another plant there. They had a

line right up there and they could put that juice right in here and I could have closed the west side plant.

A. Weeks: You mean Idaho Power could?

M. Weeks: Idaho Power could. But now, this one here they paid a million dollars for them two old plants.

Watson: Who paid a million dollars?

A. Weeks: Idaho Power.

M. Weeks: Wait, let me start with the (unintelligible). The Minidoka Powerplant had this diversion dam, had it leased for I don't know how many years; but the year that I was working there the lease was still on for getting power, and they were getting shorter juice at Minidoka Dam with them five old generators. They were was only 1500 apiece. That wasn't very much juice at that time. That was kilowatts. The lease run out that year. Idaho Power was getting half of it, half of the juice we generated there was transferred down to this plant. (unintelligible) The lease run out the first of the year. I worked until the first of the year, and then my job was done. And then they found out they were building a dam and they wasn't too sure they had enough juice [to] build a dam to furnish power to the cement mixers and all that stuff -- equipment. So, now here's a guess, they got a chance to buy them old plants from Idaho Power. (unintelligible) They was fighting to keep enough juice out at Minidoka Dam to build that dam like they did the Arrowrock Dam. To get the Diversion Dam power. They figured, well, they'd buy them two old plants, and that'd help them to do do it. You know, they could do it then. They had that line built up there (unintelligible). By golly, now this is hearsay too, along in the contract, if could ever find that -- I don't know

whether you could or not -- to buy them two plants. They were to get the water rights on them plants. Now there might have to be a -- I never seen that contract. I just heard that in that contract they got the power or the water rights of them two old plants. Idaho Power was pretty darn mad, I think. But I don't know what happened after that.

Watson: Do you know what year, about, that was?

M. Weeks: I think, I never inquired about it, but I think that someone name of Youngblood run them old plants before I went in there. But I don't know. . .

A. Weeks: Mike, what year would that have been.

M. Weeks: 1926. But they bought the plant and everything in 1924. I don't know. Between 1924 and '26. Best I remember '27. But I was running them plants in '26 and '7. (unintelligible) I come to Minidoka Dam. . . Well I worked the Diversion Dam in 1925 -- in April. And then in January we (unintelligible).

Watson: I was going to ask you. There's this old picture of the three women that worked at the powerhouse there. You ever see that picture? They're wearing guns.

M. Weeks: Oh, (conversation not of interest for the purposes of this interview) they was gone when I . . . Because they had an old gentleman name of Ables, Mr. Ables. Those guys, older fellows, I can name them off Winton Walker was . . . he'd had a college education in agriculture. He was really a smart guy. He married one of Ables' daughters. He was a oiler. He did work up there all the time.

A. Weeks: They were all farmers. They worked there part time.

M. Weeks: Adrian Fails, he was an operator. That's about all I can remember.

The oilers didn't last long. Sometimes they'd come in and they didn't like it and they'd leave. In fact, I had an operator American Falls, some lightning hit, and we had the desk was right underneath the lines and they flashed together, and they made a big blur, he left, and I haven't seen him since.

Watson: He really didn't want to be there.

A. Weeks: Well Mike [had] a farmer to operate up at American Falls and he's say "What's that!" (laughter)

M. Weeks: I'd slap his hands and say, "that's 2400 volts." He (unintelligible) (laughter) "Oh." Well in the evening, about, I'd say before a fisherman crawled down below Island Powerhouse and was fishing right where the water tailrace come out. (unintelligible) All of a sudden it ran -- kicked off, the main switch in Minidoka Dam. And water rushed down and here that poor guy was on the rocks, and the water was rushing over him -- he just stuck his nose up; and we had to get a rope down to get him up. They was all excited about getting that man out; and this operator called us "Mr. Weeks, would you come over here, I'm about to have trouble?" See, we had two plugs, one for the voltage down here and one for the switchboard upstairs. He had the voltage plug on the one down to Minidoka, which was dead at that time. Here he'd built the rheostat up to where it was smoking, high as he could get it. And he was about to have trouble. Finally I run over there, finally I got that guy pulled out. A wonder he didn't wash away.

A. Weeks: Well, that's why they won't let them fish below most of these dams, I guess. I didn't realize that until we were up to Palisades, and that's what they -- they said they spent most of their time chasing fishermen

down from below the dam because they never knew when they're going to let water out.

Watson: They didn't have laws against that then?

M. Weeks: Well, I don't think they thought about any laws then.

A. Weeks: Well, it was against the law; but they did it anyway.

M. Weeks: Oh Jiminy. I'll tell you I've had quite the experiences.

Watson: I can tell. But sounds like you had a pretty good time.

M. Weeks: Oh yeah. I liked what I was doing. I was my own boss. They was good guys, but they never operated in a plant before in their lives. There were a lot of switches around there. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: Well, Mike said during construction of up there at the dam they had a, what kind of a dam did they call it, a "Crawford" dam.

M. Weeks: "Crawford" dam.

A. Weeks: Had you heard of that.

Watson: I hadn't heard of that particular "Crawford" dam.

A. Weeks: Well, anyway, they said that there was a fellow down there, they swore that one of the men crawled up through -- what Mike?

M. Weeks: [A vent pipe when the Crawford Dam broke and flooded the pit.] But, now, getting back . . . the only operators were Jim Russell and Mr. Walker. They was both good operators. Oh, and Adrian [Fails], there's the three operators -- Walker, and Jim Russell and Adrian Fails is the three operators. And the oilers, well, they just hired anybody. I know Mr. Whittle, Mr. Whittle was oiling for quite a while and Mr. Ables. Now we're getting somewhere. Now there's one more I got to remember. I can't quite get him.

A. Weeks: Like he said, they came and went.

M. Weeks: But see they farmed. They'd come operate and oil in the winter time and then come summer they'd quit and go farming, you know. But Mr. Ables, he oiled all the time. He walked up, you know, he had a farm down below. Jim Russell had a farm. Adrian Fails he did the same. They'd just come and go. But little Adrian Fails they was going to fire him one time. (unintelligible) tried. Talking about getting clearances, you know. They ordered him to open a line, (unintelligible). And they was going to be working on it, and they figured out that they got the other end open why he could ground them. He had to go up in the attic to ground them and open it. And, Lord, he was short, that probably saved his life. Because he was too short to reach up to get the ground on. He decided well, hell, while I'm up here, I'll just ground it; and he just throwed the ground chain over 34,000 . . . (booming sound effect) and it hit went to ground on this door. (unintelligible) Talla was in charge then. He figures out how come and then he had some more trouble, (unintelligible) finally he come to tell me, he said I'd have to fire him. He was going to fire him. (unintelligible) He used to borrow money from her [indicating Ann] to pay his tithe.

A. Weeks: Oh yeah, he'd borrow money from me. He'd borrow a $100 from me to pay his tithing, and then he'd bring me back $110; and that was before I ever knew anything about interest.

M. Weeks: Well, he didn't have any credit at the bank. Anyway, I hated to see him fired. Talla said, "If you operate with him, and make him do the operating, and if you stay with him and watch him and teach him to operate, then I won't fire him; but, he said, you're responsible. If he

pulls a boner, he said "I'll fire both of you." But anyway, I did, I taught him how to operate. We finally did get him trained. He'd go in there and think about his church. He'd never think about trouble.

Watson: What church was he with?

A. Weeks: He was LDS.

M. Weeks: And I would think up trouble for him. I'd say, "Now what'd you do, real quick, what'd you do right now?" And he tell me, "I don't know." How long did I work with him?

A. Weeks: I don't know. I don't remember how long you worked up there.

M. Weeks: Well, anyway, I made an operator out of him.

A. Weeks: He just was a fanatic about his church. He'd just go in there, and he studied his church instead of his work. Like Mike said, you've got to think about what you're going to do in case trouble does come.

M. Weeks: If you want to be an operator you have to think of the things that could happen.

A. Weeks: And Mike used to really . . . I can remember when he really welcomed a thunderstorm. It seemed like we had one about every day, but it broke the monotony. Operating was -- he hated the operating. He didn't mind oiling as much as he did operating.

M. Weeks: It wasn't that operating thing it was the darn night shift.

A. Weeks: It was the monotony of it. When he was oiling he could move around and do other things, he could make things or work on different things.

Watson: Well, how long did you operate?

M. Weeks: I'll tell you, seemed like forever.

A. Weeks: He operated off and on. You were operating before we were married, Mike. And you operated off and on, I'd say for, what, ten or fifteen

years. But he'd rather oil than operate.

M. Weeks: I built that little race car most of the time that I was oiling.

A. Weeks: He'd make furniture; he'd make anything. But when he was operating, he had to stay right up at the desk and be ready for trouble; but when he was oiling, they had to oil every hour. He had to make his rounds every hour.

M. Weeks: Now, I used to boat race. Here is my boat [shows picture]. (unintelligible) Gleason, I don't know why he got mad at me. They wanted to know if I had anything against Gleason -- you know, in this investigation. I says, "Well, no." (unintelligible) He was mad at all of us. He got the dogs in on us. He had let a employee, maybe I shouldn't tell you this. He let a employee, Good Taylor, he was working in cleaning generators, he didn't operate or anything. No kind of (unintelligible) he let him take the school bus and drive the (unintelligible), they didn't have a bus, drive a government truck I think it was to school, and the people (unintelligible) the people figured the government owed them that much for living that far out in the country and he let Taylor, on government employment at the time and he let him use a government truck to take the young ones to the school. There wasn't nothing wrong with that, I think (unintelligible). He slept most of his time in behind the turbine.

A. Weeks: His wife was the one that had the boarding house.

M. Weeks: Darn alcohol was getting him in all kinds of trouble. Anyway, one day Good Taylor says to me, "Hey, Mike, you know that bootlegger in Rupert that sells alcohol?" Well, I heard of him. I met him at the restaurant one time. (unintelligible) "Would you buy me, get me, a couple pints of liquor?" I said, "Oh sure, sure." I had a big overcoat on; it was winter.

(unintelligible) He had a cockeyed or I mean cross-eyed; (unintelligible)I was just a sweating, and every time I'd look over there, he'd be looking at me. At any rate, I got by and got out and got (unintelligible) and Roy took them back (unintelligible).

A. Weeks: Mrs. Good Taylor told me this, she said they [the men at the dam] always went up to Mike's room to play poker, and the women at the dam didn't like it. (unintelligible) But anyway, Mrs. Taylor, they had a kitchen . . . they had put new flooring in part of the kitchen so there was a step-off -- about so much, I guess. And they were all up in Mike's room playing poker one night, and some of the wives called and asked her to turn the electricity off. So she said, "I went to pull the switch, the breakers, and turned the electricity off; but," she said, "It didn't do a darn bit of good. They just lit candles and kept on playing; but" she said, "I stubbed my toe on the way back to bed that step-off and damn near broke my toe." (laughter) But, she said, it didn't do any good. Those men just lighted candles and went on playing poker. They had a lot of fun.

M. Weeks: I bought a radio for a dollar and a half. At a second-hand store in American Falls. All the parts were there, and the blueprints and everything. Taking care of six operators doing the operating for most of it. (unintelligible) Because I was operating, I didn't have time to fool with it there; but when I got to oiling, stead of operating, why I built a little four tube radio and I had earphones with it (unintelligible). The Jack Dempsey fight would sometimes be on the radio, so I made a paper horn and put it on so we could hear the fight. I got blamed for that -- the women didn't want to hear the fight but a lot of men did.

END TAPE 2 SIDE 2

BEGIN TAPE 3 SIDE 1

A. Weeks: We were discussing his poker game.

M. Weeks: Well, they called me and I was always the one that called the guys for the poker game. We played right in their dining room, you know. He had a little old radio, attached for them and everything, you know. (unintelligible) We was interested in that poker game, and had a little boy about yea high was there. He was babysitting the boys. All of a sudden we hear ka-blam. We didn't know what it was. Ran to that boy and there he sat. He was about half blinded. He had taken two prongs and put it in a 220 volt outlet. God, it blew that horn. That was the end of that poker game. But he was O.K. But anyway, we had a lot of poker games. You know, living that far out in the country, sometimes the route was about yea deep [mud] going back and forth to Rupert.

A. Weeks: You can't imagine the roads.

M. Weeks: Oh, they was terrible. But, anyway, one Sunday we were about to come up, and you know it cost money; and a lot of us guys had IOUs [out]. There were quite a few guys then, and I won $37. Boy, I'll tell you, the next night I went to town and bought me a new suit, every single penny. (unintelligible) Anyway they were sure mad at me about that -- I had to pass on IOUs again cause I owed some of them money. But they were all a good bunch. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: Mike was the ringleader, I'm sure.

M. Weeks: (unintelligible)

Watson: Did you have a car of your own?

M. Weeks: Yes. I finally bought a, I never can remember just exactly what I paid for that old coupe. It was a 1925 Ford Coupe, and oh, that was a good car.

That car could go through snow three or four feet high. (unintelligible) Had a lot of fun in that one. But I bought it at a auction. I don't remember what I did have to pay for it. It wasn't very much.

Watson: When did you buy it?

M. Weeks: Well, if I can remember, I was in American Falls for two years, so that was in '26 and '27; and then they put in No. 6 unit in '28, and that's when they did away with the old plants at American Falls; and so I come back right then, and I wouldn't doubt that I bought that car in '28 or '29. It was a '25 Ford coupe. You know, nobody had any money; nobody bid very much on it. I think I got it pretty cheap -- less than $200 -- I'm sure of it. I paid the money in American Falls.

Watson: Did you have that for a long time?

M. Weeks: Oh yeah. The next car -- I traded it in on a 1929 Chevy coupe. I traded it in on a coupe. That was a nice car. I really liked that car. Finally, I traded it in, got a '34 Ford. It took a case of oil to get to Boise and back.

Watson: A case of oil?

A. Weeks: Well, Mike, you had a roadster in between there. You bought a Roadster before we were married.

M. Weeks: You're right; it was a '31 Chevy -- I bought a '31 Chevy.

Watson: When were you guys married?

A. Weeks: In '36.

Watson: Oh, which was another question I was going to ask you. If you know any of the people that are still around here that I might -- that either worked for the Bureau of Reclamation or worked with CCC people for the Bureau of Reclamation or . . .

(During this discussion of people's names, Ann mentions some items of further interest that I got

on tape.)

A. Weeks: Mr. Culley knew a lot of the things [that happened at the dam]. I don't know if anybody's ever told you there was a baby's grave up there? There is a baby's grave up there, and Mrs. Culley's granddaughter told me that her grandfather, her grandparents raised Judy, and Judy told me that her grandfather showed her two other graves that were up there of people who died during the flu epidemic, and they couldn't get into town to bury them. But, she can't remember where it was. You know, where her grandfather took her. The little baby's grave is marked. It has a iron fence around it. It died in 1919. It has a little headstone on it. Mr. Clayton, now this is what Judy Culley told me too, that Mr. [Burdett] Clayton kept a running diary in his pocket of everything that happened at the dam. And I was intending to get ahold of that diary (unintelligible). Somebody told me that David Clayton [son] has it, but I don't know where David Clayton is.

[Considerable further discussion about the location of David Clayton -- "northern Idaho."

[After calling David Clayton it was found that probably the diary never existed; and if it did, Mrs. Clayton threw it away after her husband died. n.b., L. Watson.] (unintelligible conversation largely focussed around pictures)

END TAPE 3, SIDE 1
BEGIN TAPE 3 SIDE 2

Watson: What was Burdett Clayton's job?

M. Weeks: He made up the contracts around like Burley, Rupert, all these substations, he made out the contracts yearly with them, how much and he knew just exactly how much kilowatts (unintelligible). And after I took over the foreman job, then I made out a monthly report on every

substation. In fact, I figured it up, right on the job. In fact, Ann bought me a new slide rule every year. I figured up the kilowatts (unintelligible) and I think Clayton kinda making out the contracts. (unintelligible)

A. Weeks: Well, I was wondering, I thought Clayton kind of had charge of the powerhouse. One reason I thought Clayton kind of had charge of the powerhouse -- one time one of the fellows came to work drunk . . . is that tape on now?

Watson: Yes.

A. Weeks: Well some of this stuff (laughter) . . . one of the fellows came to work drunk; Sunday morning, he'd been out the night before and was still blotto. And Mr. Clayton told Mike, "Well, that guy is drunk. Would you stay on and operate for another eight hours?" And so Mike did it, and the drunk guy climbed up into an air shaft and went to sleep and Mike stayed on and operated. What I thought was funny was this Frenchie's wife called Mike and said, "Mike don't you eat that lunch that I made for Frenchie because I was mad at him when I made it. I'll bring you down another lunch." (laughter) But I know that Mr. Clayton was in charge of hiring and firing men to a certain extent.

(unintelligible and rambling conversation)

Watson: When did you retire?

A. Weeks: Let's see, he retired 26 years ago. I don't know how long ago that's been now.

Watson: 1964, does that sound right?

A. Weeks: (unintelligible) Let's see, he retired when he was 61. Well, I think it was about 1963.

(unintelligible and rambling conversation)

M. Weeks: Evelyn would help you. I wish you could talk to her.

Watson: Who is she?

M. Weeks: Evelyn Reece. She works for the Reclamation office in Burley. She helped out a lot when I was working.

(unintelligible)

M. Weeks: Why did they have so much throat cutting in Reclamation? Do they still have that?

Watson: Well, I don't know--what do you mean?

A. Weeks: We won't go into all of that.

M. Weeks: Oh no, no.

A. Weeks: Are you interested in anything that Mike did after he retired? He worked for the Burley Irrigation District you know. (unintelligible) He put in automatic gates [for turnouts].

M. Weeks: My son helped me. But northside Minidoka, northside they replaced all my gates . . . electric drill runners in there. Big, heavy, electric drills. You don't believe me . . .

(unintelligible and rambling discussions followed).

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