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OF ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW OF  
Jack Hart**

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Date: Aug. 27. 03

Signed: Jack Hart  
Jack/Hart

INTERVIEWER:

James M. Bailey  
James M. Bailey

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Archivist of the United States

Oral History Interview of  
Jack Hart

Bailey: Could you please state your name for the record?

Hart: Jack Hart.

Bailey: And now just could you spell that for me, please?

Hart: J-A-C-K.H-A-R-T.

Bailey: Very good. And you're currently retired, at this time?

Hart: Been retired for twenty-two years. Retired in 1981.

Bailey: Let's go ahead and talk about where were you born and raised?

Hart: I was born and raised right here in the valley.

Bailey: So, you're a native?

Hart: Yes. Definitely. (laugh) I'm happy to be here.

Bailey: Loves the area.

Hart: This is my home from the time I was three years old, until I got married at 23.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: This is the home ranch.

Bailey: This is your home ranch right here?

Hart: Uhm-hmm.

Bailey: Okay. What year were you born?

Hart: Armistice Day. November 11, 1916

Bailey: Yeah, but a couple years before.

Hart: Yeah. A couple years.

Bailey: And, what is your education?

Hart: To high school.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: Went to the same school all my life.

Bailey: And what did you do immediately after school? Did you start as a ditch rider?

Hart: No. I worked for my dad. We had cattle, and I worked with him, and around here on the different ranches. In the fall, most generally worked in one of the cold storages and fruit warehouses. And, let's see. I went and worked in the shipyard during the war, for a couple of years. And came back over here and worked on ranches.

Bailey: Is that the Bremerton Naval Shipyards?

Hart: Seattle, or Tacoma. SeaTac. [Tacoma Naval Shipyards]

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: And you can't take the country boy out of the country. I didn't like it. (laugh) So I came back and went to work for dad, and then I went to work for my uncle, in the orchards. And then, in 1947, the Yakima-Tieton district was paid off to the Bureau of Reclamation, and the farmers were taking over, and several of the ditch riders in this area were civil service and they were going on to civil service jobs. So, I knew the water master up there, at that time. was Earl Crosier [spelling?] so I went up and talked to him, and he said, "Well, he wasn't doing the hiring but Guy Findley [spelling?] was doing the hiring," and Guy had been one of the engineers that helped layout this project when they were constructing it. And so, I went and talked to Guy, and he was acquainted with my parents, and my grandparents. And, he never gave me a direct

answer at that time. He said, "Well, we'll let you know." And, so I gave him the folks' phone number and one noon when I came home from lunch, he had called my folks, and my wife had, and they'd told my wife that he wanted to see me. So, I went up there to talk to him and he said, "Well, we're going to put you on and see if you're worth a damn." Just like that. That was Guy. And, so it was just, just a few days after that that we moved into the patrol site at Tieton. And, that was in March.

Bailey: 1947?

Hart: 1947.

Bailey: That's when you started doing the ditchriding? (Hart: Uh huh.) What were your impressions of the job when you first started?

Hart: Well, the first thing I had to do was I took a crew of men and started cleaning ditch. And, I had done some of that for ditch riders, so I knew something that had to take place. But, as far as running a crew, I had -- I can't remember for sure, but it runs in my mind that I had eight or nine guys. And, so I got right in and showed them what I wanted done, and worked right along with them. And Earl come along one day and I was working, and he said, "Hey," he said, "You're supposed to be running this crew not working with it. You get up on the bank and show them what to do." So, from then on, why it was, wasn't too bad. (laugh) And, but boy when I started learning how to figure water. Earl should have been a school teacher because he had all the patience in the world with me, and I was pretty darn dumb. It took me quite a while and, to get the schedule all figured out, and the E-week, and the D-week, and the how to figure so

many points on certain size blades. You get, after a while, so you know. Then it all just comes naturally. I can still tell you today some of the points on certain-sized blades.

(laugh)

I stayed in Tieton four years, and during that time the directors decided to cut down from ten ditch riders to eight ditch riders, and increase the size of each guy's, each ditch rider's district. Oh boy. That's when I started getting an ulcer. I had all the north side of the Tieton area, and down the ridge, pert near to headquarters. And, it was pert near impossible to get your schedule on before noon. And, I don't know, I always figured that if a water user didn't get his water before noon, why he'd lost a day. So, you'd go like crazy. You'd try to get everybody set. And then, of course, you had to go back in the afternoon and check it and see if everything was right. So, we done an awful lot of running around. I might add that when I first started I was getting \$190/month, and a place to live, and I furnished my own vehicle. And that was a big, big item.

Bailey: Getting your own vehicle or getting your own place to live?

Hart: Getting your own vehicle.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: No. They always furnished a place for us to live. In later years, after we joined the union, why they made us start paying rent. (laugh) Give us a raise, and then take it away from us in rent. (laugh) But that was alright. It was a good job.

Bailey: Talk about the houses that you lived in. Are these the ditch rider houses?

Hart: They were all ditch rider's houses. The first, well, the first ones were all built when the Bureau of Reclamation had it. And, I remember how happy we were when they put the bathroom in the one up at Tieton. And, then they moved me down to, what'd they call that? District Five, and that was just west of Yakima. And, there was an old Reclamation house, and I can't remember exactly the year, but I think it was -- Grace do you remember? Nineteen sixty-three, when they built the new house?

Grace: (laugh)

Hart: The first new house they built was the one that we lived in up at Tieton.

Grace: Yeah.

Hart: And, then we were the next one. I don't know why they picked us, but they did. Because we had a pretty good old house. But, we, they started along in the fall of the year and they didn't get it done until Christmas time. They moved the old house out of the way, and we lived in the old house, and it wasn't level. We couldn't get in the back door.. We had to go in the front door and then you leaned back to keep from winding up in the bedroom. (laughter)

Grace: It was... wonderful.

Hart: But, we moved into the new house in December. And I can't remember what year it was, for sure. It runs in my mind it was 1963.

Bailey: Was it about the time that they switched from open to pressure?

Hart: Oh no. They didn't, they didn't start pressure until after I retired.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: Thank God.

Bailey: Alright, I'll have to go back with Leo, because I think he had pressure up a little bit earlier.

Hart: Oh, is that right?

Bailey: Yeah. I think Leo was talking 1960s for pressure.

Hart: No.

Bailey: I'll check that out.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: Did you like living in those houses? I mean, once they got them leveled, and bathrooms, and everything?

Hart: Well, I always said that after they built that new house, we had four kids (laugh) and three bedrooms which was great. Two of the girls slept in one and one of the girls slept in the other. Wait a minute. Three girls slept in one bedroom and Jerry slept in the other (Grace: Yeah), and the girls slept in the other, and we had one. (laugh) Well, we had bedrooms, anyhow. And I always said that it was not a place that I could have afforded to have rented if we had been working on our own. (laugh) It was a nice place. (Grace: Yeah.) It is a nice place. It's still a nice place. One of the main laterals came down off the hill and right around it, in our yard, and then on east. It was nice place for the kids to play. We were back off the road. Hill way above us. The kids could get on their horses and take the dogs and be gone all day, and go over the hill to the creek. And, we never worried about them at all. It was great.



Grace: Yeah. They were pretty good kids.

Bailey: So, how long did you live in those houses?

Hart: I lived in the one up at Tieton for four years, and the one down on North 96<sup>th</sup> for thirty years.

Bailey: And this is all part of your family ranch here?

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: And when you retired you moved back in here?

Hart: The folks gave the ranch to us before my father passed away. And, my mother was still alive and so we had to, we'd come to, then I bought this mobile home from one of my water users. It had been his mother's. And, when she passed away they rented it for a couple of years, but they were real particular about who they rented it to, and it was spotless. And it was in our price range so we bought it, and had it moved up here. And, my mother lived there until she passed away, in the other house. And then when she passed away, why our son and his wife moved in here, and I took care of the ranch. It's all open pasture. Had a little hay field on it, but it's all in pasture now. I took care of it until I had a light stroke and couldn't get up and down the hill changing sprinklers anymore and so we gave it to Jerry. Now he's taking care of it.

Bailey: Let's talk about your time here going as a ditch rider. Discuss with me some of the duties that you had to do, challenges you faced, and everything else associated with the job.

Hart: The main thing was, after I moved down on North 96 there was -- a good share of that

around West Park and all that was all an orchard at that time. But, it kept building up and you kept having more and more people to deal with all the time. I think I had -- I probably didn't have the biggest district but I had more people to deal with than any other riders, and consequently my green-sheet book, that was where we kept all the records of the deliveries we made, was -- the D-week, where we had all the contiguous flows was twice as big as the E-week, which was alternate flows. And, you had to record those. You checked three times a week. Mondays you checked, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and you wrote that down on your green sheets, and the time. And, then Tuesdays you checked Thursdays. Thursdays you checked -- let's see. Thursdays you checked Fridays and Mondays. Wait a minute. I missed Wednesday. Wednesday you checked Monday's and Friday's. Thursday you checked Tuesday's. Then Saturday, well you just done general checking. And, up until we got into the union, we had to work until noon on Saturday. And, then we had every other weekend off, and then we were on-duty. And, that weekend that you were on duty you checked your district and your partner's. We had partners. And, we were on duty twenty-four hours a day. And to this day I hate a damn telephone. (laughter)

Bailey: I just might turn my off. (laughter)

Hart: We've got two. We have that one, and the kids got us one over there that I don't have to get up and go answer the phone.

Bailey: Which union was this?

Hart: Laborers.

Bailey: Just general labor?

Hart: General labor, yeah.

Bailey: General labor union? Okay.

Hart: I think the greatest thing that the farmers done for us was -- the first thing was, of course, was building the nice new homes. And then, they put us on a retirement system. And, let me tell you, that is okay. As far as I'm concerned. As far as we're concerned. It's been great for us. I have said so many times that "I wish everybody could enjoy their retirement as much as we have." Except for growing old, as people do, why we're doing okay.

Bailey: I'm just following up on this ditch rider question. What were some of the aspects about the job that you dreaded, if you had any, or you didn't like to deal with?

Hart: The things, the thing I dreaded more than anything else was those green sheets. We had to sort them numerically every month, and turn them in. And that was really a job.

Bailey: So basically just the general office paperwork?

Hart: Yeah. Just so much paperwork. Of course, you had to figure your water every day, what you were going to use the next day, and get it on your -- what do they call those? I got -- buff [spelling?] cards. So that you need what each lateral was supposed to run each day. (laugh)

Bailey: What did you love about the job? What did you absolutely get up every morning and go, "I love this about my job. This is what I like doing."

Hart: The thing I liked best about it was the feeling of being able to contribute to the

community. And I think I made more friends with my water users than I did enemies.

That pert near proved itself in my retirement party. (laugh)

Bailey: What else did you like about the job?

Hart: Well, it was, well I said before it was a wonderful place to raise our family. We had good schools, and a good neighborhood, and all of our kids all graduated from the same high school. Another great thing they did was, after we got that manager that none of us liked, was start furnishing vehicles for us, and that was a big plus. One of the biggest things.

Bailey: Were they pickup trucks?

Hart: Yeah. Pickups. First ones we got were little Chevies ... they were 6-cylinder Chevy pickups, with no power steering. Try to turn those around on a tight spot on a ditchbank. (laugh) It ain't no fun. And, after we wore them out they got big, not V-8s. I don't think they were V-8s, but, and stick shifts. And, they were good vehicles. But I only got to use that one one season. (laugh) I, after I retired they -- I broke in one ditch rider before I retired. And, he was single, didn't last too long. Ditchriding was too confining. And, so then I broke in the one that's down there now, Ken Sainsbury. And, when I was breaking him in we had a wreck. A guy ran into us. I was, as you come out, on Summitview, I suppose you come out Summitview? That extension of Summitview, where the extension takes off, there used to be a grocery store right in that little triangle. And, I had a delivery box. We started up that hill on Summitview extension, and their driveway turned off to the left. And. Ken and I were going up

there to check that delivery box and a guy come roaring up over the hill from the west and smacked into the back end of the pickup. Called the State Patrol. I never got a ticket or anything from it. I don't know what come of it.

Bailey: Did you ditchride your whole career or did you do watermaster work?

Hart: No. I never did [watermaster].

Hart: Another thing I might add. Before we got the two-way radios, I rode horseback a lot.

Bailey: Did you have to supply your own horses?

Hart: Oh yeah.

Bailey: Any funny stories? Any ditchriding stories you'd care to share with us?

Hart: The only funny one I can think of right off hand was, I was running a crew, cleaning ditch, and we had kerosine weed burners that worked just like the old gas lamps, had a generator on them. And, you had to warm them up before they'd, before you'd get a flame. And, two of my guys was with me and they were squatted down in the ditch getting this burner lit, and all of a sudden it flared up, and both of them just, out of a squatting position, just raised right straight up. That was one of the funniest things I ever remember.

Oh, another, another one was -- he was another ditch rider too, and we were burning weeds. Had a crew. And, he had an old straw hat that was really beat up. And, (laugh) I kept kidding him about his hat. And one day I said to him, "What will you take for that hat?" He said, "Four bits." And I just reached in my pocket and tossed him four bits, and grabbed his hat off, and threw it in the fire. (laugh) He didn't like

that very well. He had the four bits.

Bailey: How did you get along with Reclamation?

Hart: Yes.

Bailey: Good relationship.

Hart: Yeah. I never had any problems. Reed [Thomas] had a short temper. He used to get ticked off at us, but after all he was boss.

Bailey: Now, who's this?

Hart: Reed Thomas. He's Ray's dad [actually grandfather]

Bailey: Yeah.

Hart: Reed was good to me, as far as that's concerned. Well, they were good to me. One fall Grace had heart problems and wasn't able to do the housework. We had four kids, and wasn't able to do the housework. And let me, they let me stay home there, take care of her, and just work around there on the patrol site just cleaning up, cleaning up brush and pruning trees. I don't remember as I done any painting or anything. But, come Christmas time Reed drove in and he had a, pert near a pickup load of candy and cookies, a big ham that the folks up at headquarters had set up, sent down to us at Christmastime. And I really appreciated that.

Bailey: Any times you didn't like your job?

Hart: Oh yeah. You get water users that give you a bad time. I don't now. I was really disgusted with myself, because I did get an ulcer, because it worked on me. But, as far as doing the job, it wasn't all that difficult. There was nothing really difficult about it.

You had to -- oh, I remember Reed told me when I first started, "You got to remember that each water users problems are important to him." And I tried to keep that in mind as much as I could. But, like I said before, I think that most of my water users are my friends.

Bailey: It was a good relationship?

Hart: Yeah. Yeah.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: I tried to be as consistent with my time as I could, you know, so they could plan when I'd be there. They'd get there and take care of their water, set their sprinklers, whatever they had to do, and go on with their day's work. And I think that meant something to them, because they, lots of time, they'd meet me at the headbox, and we'd sit and visit a while, and I'd go on. They'd go take care of their water, and what else they had to do.

Bailey: Did changes in irrigation technology change the nature of your job?

Hart: Oh. No. Not really. There was more and more sprinklers came in over the years than the real irrigation, of course. That was about it.

Bailey: Were any crops more water-intensive than others?

Hart: This time of the year brings to mind that it's pear season, and we always figured after pear season was over why we had it made as far as extra water was concerned because the demand really slacked off after the pear season was over. Everybody wanted lots of water to swell up their pears to build up their tonnage. And after that, why it was -- and the days were getting shorter and the nights were getting cooler. It was pretty easy

going from then on.

Bailey: So, I take it pears were probably the most water-intensive (Hart: Oh. Yeah.) crop?

Hart: Yeah. Yeah. Another good thing that happened to me, after Leo was watermaster, I learned to run a backhoe. And I ran the backhoe until, in the off-season, until I retired. And, that was something different than running a pick and shovel crew. (laugh) Yeah man.

Bailey: Well, it looks like we're about ready to flip here. So, we'll just stop.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. AUGUST 28, 2003.



BEGINNING SIDE 2, TAPE 1. AUGUST 28, 2003.

Bailey: Jack, were you around when Mt. St. Helens erupted?

Hart: Oh yeah.

Bailey: Talk freely about Mt. St. Helens, because this is important.

Hart: Well, it happened on a Sunday. It was my weekend on duty, and I had made my rounds and came in, and was home. And, we didn't know what had happened. It started, that fine sand and everything started coming down. We didn't know what had happened, and my daughter called us and told us that Mt. St. Helens had erupted. Of course, then we went out to look and boy, the sky was getting all black. And, I went out and got the horses and put them in the barn, get them out of the sand. But, it filled an awful lot of the laterals, really made a mess out of the laterals. And, so that's when my backhoe experience came in handy. And, then we had the washout up the canyon, and it washed out sections of the main canal. And, they sent us up there to work on the canal. And, it took them, they had two backhoes, and I was running one of them. But, I didn't like that very well. It was -- well the area I had to get into, I was a little nervous. I had tipped one over once and I was pretty jittery about on side hills, and so I asked Bob Herr [spelling?], he was the crew foreman. I said, "Why don't I take that backhoe and go back down the valley and start cleaning canals?" And he thought that was a good idea, so I did, and started working on the laterals, cleaning out sand out of the laterals.

Bailey: Did it affect your work in any other way besides the laterals?

Hart: Oh yeah. Your headboxes all filled up with sand and you had to keep mucking them

out so you could get an accurate measure on them. And that was kind of a pain in the neck. Other than that it wasn't too bad.

Bailey: How long did it take you to get back to normal?

Hart: I don't think they ever really got back to normal, even, until they went on the pressure, onto the pressure system... Things were operating okay, but then we still had a lot of that sand to work with. It was sure hard on pickups. We took our pickups in at least once a week and changed the oil, changed the filters. And, that lasted for quite some time before the sand was all gone. Speed limit 15 mph.

Bailey: So you couldn't see during some of it?

Hart: No. No. Of course, on the ditchbank you weren't driving much faster than that anyhow. (laugh) So, that didn't bother us too much until you got on the highway.

Bailey: Any other thoughts from St. Helens?

Hart: Not really.

Bailey: Did it affect how, the farmers crops, in any way?

Hart: No. It really didn't, as far as the fruit was concerned. Most of them took their speed sprayers and blew the sand off. I don't think it affected anything too bad.

Bailey: Okay. Well, there's always the question of technology, in your job. And I know you were doing ditchriding before the pressure system came.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: Can you think of any technological changes during your time as a ditch rider that had an effect on you?

Hart: No.

Bailey: Nothing?

Hart: No. We done it all. Done it the same way from the time I started until I retired.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: Yeah. The only improvements was more pipelines. When the farmers took over in '47, that was right after the war, and there hadn't been a great amount of repair work done, during the war. And, consequently, why the farmers had a lot of repair work to do. The old wooden lines were getting rotten. And, there was a lot of that to do.

Bailey: So, the war kind of set everything on the back burner and then you found yourself trying to catch up and keep things maintained?

Hart: Another thing I might mention is, after the water season was over, generally they would take the maintenance crew and several of the ditch riders and work on the main canal from the intake down. What we would do was put in new lining on the main canal to cut down on friction. And that was quite a job. I enjoyed that. It was hard work, but I enjoyed it. I got so I wasn't too bad at smearing the concrete up and down the wall and getting the glaze on it and making it smooth. The way they worked that, they took a big -- the canal is round. The bottom of the canal is rounded. They cut a two-by-four that just fit in the bottom of the canal and then on each side they put, yeah, two-foot planks. One on one side -- two on one side and two on the other, that you stood on so that you was up about eight inches off of the bottom of the canal. And then they mixed the cement in a mixer up on top the canal. And, you took a wheelbarrow

and went down there and they filled up with cement and brought it down to you. And you took your trowel and you held it like this. (laugh) That won't show on your tape. (laugh) And they put a shovel full in and then you just built up the side of that curved canal and then smooth it all down. It was slick laying. It was really amazing. You could see, where you put that new cement on, that the water level would drop five to six inches when it hit that. Made a difference.

Bailey: Did you notice any difference in water delivery during drought years, or years of extreme drought or extreme wet?

Hart: I think it was seventy-two. We had a, that was the only really dry year that I had to go through. We had to cut down to seventy-five percent of the deliveries.

Bailey: This was on the dry year?

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: When Rimrock Lake went pert near absolutely dry.

Bailey: And Rimrock is the storage facility behind Tieton Dam, right?

Hart: Uhm-hmm.

Bailey: How about in wet years? Did you have any, did your job change any?

Hart: No.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: We just didn't make as many deliveries, and it wasn't too bad. (laugh) I think in real wet years some fella would plug his delivery and it'd all go down to the tail end and

flood out somebody on the tail end. (laugh) That's happened a few times.

Bailey: Any other anecdotes you can think of about your . . . ?

Hart: Not that I can think of right off the top of my head. Oh, in snow years we used to have to go up and shovel the trench and some of the laterals to get the drifts out so we could run cistern water. I always ran one cistern run right around Thanksgiving, and it wasn't too bad if it wasn't freezing. But, if it was freezing weather, why, then you'd have to get out in the middle of the night and punch ice to keep it from flowing over. I only had to do that once, that I can remember. It was Thanksgiving night. We had been up here to the folks for Thanksgiving dinner and went home, and they called me that evening and wanted me to come up and start punching ice. It was down here on the Heights. And, I don't remember, I probably worked until about midnight, something like that.

Bailey: Did you use any special tools to punch that ice?

Hart: We had pipe poles and shoves, weed hooks. That was about it.

Bailey: Talk about some of the people you worked with? What were your impressions of some of the other ditch riders, and others?

Hart: I'd rather not.

Bailey: If you want to just be general, and not name names, that's fine.

Hart: They were a good bunch of guys. It was only natural that you'd like some better than you did others.

Bailey: So, you didn't have anybody like Leo, Leo having to deal with someone trying to get

rid of Leo? And the request for that?

Hart: I didn't know anything about that at all.

Bailey: Yeah. Okay.

Hart: I haven't any idea who it was, or he never named any names I don't suppose.

Bailey: Well, I didn't ask for any.

Hart: When Leo was elected to be watermaster there was three of us ... I had more seniority than Leo. But, both of them, both of us were several years older than Leo, and I think that was the reason that they picked Leo, because he was a younger man, and in good health. Well, four years at it. And I don't, I didn't care because I was happy where I was. It didn't bother me a bit. Leo was a good boss, as far as I was concerned. Like I said, he never bothered me. He never -- well, he never bothered me.

Bailey: The hands-off boss?

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: The best kind.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: So you're saying that you thoroughly enjoyed what you did with the ditchriding experience?

Hart: Yes.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: You bet. Yeah. No regrets. Like I said before. I wish everybody could enjoy their retirement as much as we have.

Bailey: What are you doing in your retirement now?

Hart: Oh. Well, right now we're not able to do anything. But, gee whiz. We traveled all the Western United States, able to drive a good car, stayed in motels. And, been to Alaska once, and Hawaii twice.

Bailey: Well, I have not been to Alaska. You've got that on me.

Hart: We had relatives in Alaska and our daughter-in-law and brother-in-law, their kids lived in Alaska. We went up there with them. Going up was fine, but coming back with an illness. (laugh) Man I never was so sick in my life. (laugh) It was at night. Came back at night. And, boy. It was, it got rough, and I got sick. Man oh man oh man. My wife, bless her heart, she found a plastic bag. (laugh) I don't know how many times she had to empty it.

Bailey: If you were going to say one thing to today's current generation of ditch riders, as you probably know the job is probably one day going to be phased out completely.

Hart: No doubt.

Bailey: Because of technology.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: This one reason why we're doing (Hart: Yeah.) this project now.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: If you had to give today's current ditch riders, like Ray Thomas, or any (Hart: Ken.) of his friends, any kind of advice, what would you tell them? Be prepared, or . . . ?

Hart: I wouldn't know how to tell anybody to prepare for the future, really. But, the main

thing that I can think about is the security of the job that they have, and the service to the community that they're doing. That was, that was the most important thing to me, was being able to raise our family. When our youngest son was born, we had four children, the doctor told us, "It's good to raise a big family," he said, "they'll take care of you in your old age." And we are very, very fortunate. One lives right there. One daughter lives out at Terrace Heights, that's retired. Another daughter lives in town, that works for a public accountant. And they take care of us.

Bailey: You're a very lucky man.

Hart: We know it.

Bailey: Very lucky.

Hart: We tell ourselves that every day.

Bailey: You're lucky to have your family still in the area.

Hart: The oldest daughter lives in Olympia, and they get over, oh quite often.

Bailey: That's good.

Hart: Yeah. And fortunate, no major illnesses. One major accident. A grandson got killed in an auto accident. That's been the worst thing. (laugh) All three of our kids have been divorced and married again, all four of them. (laugh)

Bailey: That's consistency.

Hart: My wife and I have been married for sixty-- oh, longer than that. We were married in 1941. No, 1940. Sixty-three years.

Bailey: My. That's good.



Hart: Last month. No. In June. Sixty-three years in June.

Bailey: To wrap this up -- we've got some more tape left on here. Any final thoughts or reflections or anything on your job?

Hart: No. Not really.

Bailey: Anything you remember?

Hart: I told you about everything that has happened to us, and how satisfied we were with the job, and the people we worked with and for, and how fortunate we feel we are now. I can remember we had some Arkies working on the maintenance crew, when they decided they'd put us on the retirement system. "You can't eat that," they said. They had to have it in a raise. (laugh) Man oh man. That retirement system is all right. (laugh) We get a cost of living increase every so often, and it comes in regularly every month. We know what to count on.

Bailey: Kind of like a federal salary.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: And federal retirement.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: Then you get your social security. And, we have an annuity that pays us a little bit.

Bailey: The ranch that's been in the family.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: For, how many generations has this ranch been in the family?

Hart: My folks moved here in 1919. I was three years old.

Bailey: Was the original house this one?

Hart: No, my folks built this one in 1957, if I remember right.

Grace: This one?

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: It kind of looks like '57 (Hart: Yeah.) bungalow style. Forties and fifties style.

Hart: It was shingle siding, and stained. And after they lived in it a few years, why it started weathering and didn't look too good so they put aluminum siding on it. And then, after Jerry moved in it was green, and they had to paint it. And then it had shingle roofs, and Jerry had the metal roof put on after he moved in. That's about it. Before we moved up here, I had the barn built, and I had it built in 1980. Then we moved up here the fall of '81, November of '81. And, (laugh) a neighbor down here had an old warehouse, over on the heights, that was torn down and they gave the lumber. And, I helped him to build a rabbit house for him down here. And we had some lumber left over and we didn't have a garage. He said, "Well, why don't we build you a garage?" So, I said, "Okay." And so, being on as we're carpenters, we carpented a garage together and we used it, oh, several year, and then one side got to leaning real bad. (laugh) I was here telling Grace, "We got to do something about that garage. We ought to build a new garage." And, "Oh," she said, "At our age we'd just be building it for somebody else." (laugh) One day Jerry was looking at it, and boy, it was leaning bad. And, he said, "You know, we get a big snow you're going to find that garage on top of your car."

Her eyes got about that big around, and so I had a friend that was a good carpenter, and contacted him, and he and a buddy of his built the garage for us. And, we really enjoyed it.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: One of the things I forgot. You asked me, some of the things I disliked about ditchriding was the crop reports. Every year the Bureau of Reclamation required that we make a crop report, and each ditch rider made a report of his own district, contacted all the water users and made a report of what kind of crops they had, the amount they had, and -- I'm trying to think of some of the other things. But, you had to contact each water user, and some of them are a little reluctant, and you'd have to explain to them, "Well, this isn't going any further than headquarters." And, you could, well, you'd talk them into it, maybe. But, I hated those things with a passion. It was too much like being a Fuller Brush Man, as far as I was concerned, going around and knocking on everybody's door. I didn't like that at all.

Bailey: Trying to sell crop reports?

Hart: Yeah. Right.

Bailey: Okay.

Hart: Yeah.. And then what the district did, they just made one report for the whole irrigation district. I guess they sent that to Boise or Denver. I don't know.

Bailey: Probably to Denver.

Hart: Yeah.

Bailey: No, it probably went to Boise, and then go on its way to Denver. Fuller Brush Man?  
So, I take it sales was not something you really wanted to do?

Hart: No way. (laugh) No way. Of course, when they started furnishing pickups, we had to use our own gas to do that too.

Bailey: Well, too bad you don't have to -- it's a good thing you don't have to use your own gas now, at the price of gas.

Hart: Well, and another thing the ditch riders don't have to do now, they don't have to figure water at all.

Bailey: It's all automated?

Hart: Oh yeah. It's all measured through those [Baileys] orifices. Nothing to it. (laugh) I guess. I don't know. I'm glad I'm not doing it. I was glad to get out of there.

Bailey: Very informative. Anything else, Jack?

Hart: No. I guess that 's about it.

Bailey: Okay. I thank you for your time today.

Hart: Like I say, I've enjoyed it.

Bailey: Very informative interview. It's not length but substance within that length to make it important. And, I have to write a report out of this, I'll probably get it published in a journal of some kind.

Hart: Well great.

Bailey: And if that should happen, too, all you guys will get copies of that.

Hart: Well, that'd be great.

Bailey: Okay. And I thank you very much for your time today. And that is the end.

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1.  
END OF INTERVIEW.

