

**ERMA OLENE MORTENSEN
& ROBERT E. ANDERSON
Emery, Utah
November 30, 2004**

**World War II, Women on the Home Front
Oral History Project
Emery County Archives
Interviewed by Dottie Grimes & Shirley Spears**

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Dottie: Let's start by having you, Olene, tell us your full name and where you were born and what your parents names were and when you were born.

Olene: My name is Erma Olene Mortensen Anderson, now that I'm married. I was born April the 10th, 1920. My mother's name was Ellen Marie Olsen Mortensen, and my father's name was Marion Authnel Mortensen. I was born and raised in Emery. Went to school the first grade up to the sixth grade in Emery, then we were transferred over to Ferron to junior high school and high school. And then after I graduated from there, I went into the L.D.S. Business College in Salt Lake, and then I came home and worked over at the South Emery High School as a secretary, and then I married Robert Anderson from Emery.

Shirley: What year was that?

Olene: 1940, wasn't it?

Robert: Don't look at me.

Olene: Right now we've been married 64 years.

Shirley: Oh, that's great!

Olene: After we raised three boys. We lost our oldest boy. He had Hodgkin's disease, and we lost him at 17. Then we have Randy. He went in the service and spent his time in Germany, but now he is married and has raised a wonderful family and is the postmaster here in Emery. Our other boy Kerry lives in West Jordan. He is a carpenter—builds cabinets and does beautiful, beautiful work. He has done homes all over the state. He does lovely cabinets. And we have eight grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. We enjoy them to the fullest, and we just feel like the Lord has blessed us so much by giving us good families. They all work. They're all doing the good things in life and just let these trifle things slide by.

Dottie: How nice! Okay, Robert, tell us your full name and when you were born.

Robert: My name is Robert E. Anderson. My mother was Virtue Duzett and she married Arthur Anderson and raised a big family—eight of us in the family, and most of us were born in the Quitchumpah Ranch up here. That's where we was born and that's where we were raised.

Dottie: Tell me again your mother's name?

Robert: Virtue. She came in here when she was small, she says from down South, and . . . that ranch up there where us kids were born and raised.

Dottie: Who settled the ranch first? Was it your father or grandfather?

Robert: Well, it's one of the oldest places in here, but I just couldn't tell you that.

Dottie: Why was it named Quitchumpah? Do you know that? It sounds like an Indian name.

Robert: (laugh) Shall I tell you what everybody calls it?

Dottie: Uh-huh.

Robert: Quitchipah Shit Creek. (laugh)

Dottie: Is there still a ranch there?

Robert: There is, and it's a good ranch.

Dottie: Is it still in your family?

Robert: No, Castle Valley Outdoors owns it now.

Dottie: Where is it, actually from here?

Robert: Right straight above town here—right up there next to them hills, right back there right in them hills.

Dottie: You and your brothers and sisters were all raised out there?

Robert: Yeah.

Dottie: Tell us what it was like to live out there.

Robert: Well, we never got to town much, and we just had no way to get into town like we're used to. It's an awful place for rattlesnakes. My mother cooked for us eight kids, and about that many hay men all the time. Lots of times, she would get rattle snakes out of her cupboard.

Dottie: Was anyone ever bitten by one?

Robert: No. That's real funny. I was real small, and I would run away and go up in the rocks and

go to sleep amongst the rattle snakes. No, nobody ever got bit; nobody got hurt. 'Course we kids had to start school, so the kids moved back to town in the winter and go back to the ranch in the summer.

Dottie: Where would you live?

Robert: Right here in Emery. We had a home right up here.

Dottie: Did your mother move with you? Or your whole family?

Robert: Yeah, the whole family. My dad wouldn't. He'd stay on the ranch.

Dottie: Then would you go home on the weekends?

Robert: No.

Dottie: As soon as school was out then you'd go back to the ranch.

Robert: Yeah. We'd go back to the ranch. We'd walk from here back to the ranch, us kids.

Dottie: Wow. How many miles is that, do you know?

Robert: I'd guess it was about 10 miles.

Shirley: What did you raise on the ranch? Was it just cattle?

Robert: Cattle and hay.

Dottie: Were you part of the Cattlemen's Association?

Robert: Well, in them days, there wasn't much of an association. We run together and got along good.

Dottie: Where did you run the cows?

Robert: We'd run them here on the desert in the Winter, and Fishlake Forest in the summer.

Dottie: What part of the desert?

Robert: Right straight down here.

Dottie: Did you spend a lot of time on the desert?

Robert: No really.

Dottie: Did you spend a lot of time on a horse?

Robert: A lot of time. Yep. And we'd raise lots of hay up there, and the family had no way of making money, so we sold a lot of hay. One of the hired men had a team, and I'd take the ranch team, and we sold a lot of hay. We'd haul it over them hills, and you was lucky if you didn't tip over.

Dottie: You'd haul it in a wagon?

Robert: Yeah, a wagon. I don't know how many load of hay I tipped over. And this hired man was pretty disgusted with me, you know we'd have to load it all up again.

Shirley: How old were you then?

Robert: Oh, I'd say about 12. I was real young.

Shirley: Wow, that's a big job. Was it loose hay?

Robert: Yeah, it was loose hay, so we would have to fork it on. He used to cuss me for tipping over, I remember that. (laugh)

Dottie: How were the roads back then?

Robert: Bad. There wasn't hardly any roads back then. That's why I tipped over all the time—over them hills.

Dottie: What did your father do, Olene?

Olene: My father was a rancher, but he had asthma, so he was sick a lot of the times, and so it was up to my mother to do the chores at night. I've seen Daddy come home a lot of times after he's ridden all day, and my mother would have to go down and help him off the horse, because he was too sick to get off the horse. I never remember a Christmas that Daddy was out by the tree with all of us on Christmas morning. He was too sick and couldn't get up. But he always seen that we had a good Christmas.

Dottie: Asthma must have been so hard to deal with back then. You know now with what they've got - inhalers, and nebulizers. . .

Olene: Yeah, but he smoked a . . .he'd get so choked up in the night, that he had a powder in a can. I think it was just called "asthma powder." He'd put some on the lid, and put the match to it, and he'd breathe the smoke off from that. But he was good to all of us, and made it real

comfortable, as he could. I have two brothers—three brothers, Bruce, Blaine and Buddy Lee and a sister. I can see why the Lord only give me one sister, because he put everything fine in her.

Robert: This is her dad's old boots.

Dottie: Oh! How neat!

Robert: Them are old, old boots.

Dottie: Now, how did you preserve those?

Olene: Well, my brother Blaine took them when Daddy went. He took them into Provo and had some outfit do them for him. And just a few years ago, my brother Blaine passed away. He was a lot like Daddy. He never knew what a well day was. So his wife Ellen said she wanted us to have them. I didn't ask for them; she just brought them by one day and said, "I feel like you should have these."

Shirley: That's a neat thing to do.

Robert: Yeah. Quite a keepsake.

Dottie: What's your sister's name?

Olene: LaVona. She lives in Salt Lake. She married Lynn Williams from Emery.

Dottie: Where do you fit in the family?

Olene: There was LaVona, and then me, and then Bruce, then Blaine and then Bud. So I was the second one.

Dottie: Robert, who were your brothers and sisters. Will you tell us their names?

Robert: I'll start from the oldest and go down. The oldest one is Elmo, then there was Bonnie, then Bertha, then a brother Melbourn, then me, then Lyle, and then Bessie and Duane.

Shirley: So all your brothers live around here in Emery County?

Robert: Some of them do; some of us are gone.

Dottie: What year were you born in?

Robert: 1919

Dottie: Who were your best friends growing up? Tell us who your friends and neighbors were in the area. Did you have any neighbors at all out in Quitchumpah?

Robert: No—long ways from neighbors. 'Course we moved to town to go to school there, and we'd get friends there, but not many.

Dottie: Did you own a home in town that you came to?

Robert: Yeah. This one right up there.

Olene: His friends—this picture right up here that was the gang of boys that he rode. . .went with. (enlarged photo on the wall of young cowboys) This is the gang of boys that he One was Lavar Christiansen, then one's Robert, then one's Dewey Jensen, and Jude (?) Larsen. We just had a little tiny snapshot of them, and our son Kerry, that's the carpenter came home one day and wanted to know if he could have the picture, and Robert said, "Yes, but don't lose it because we may want to see it again sometime." So he took it and when he came down the next trip, he'd had it enlarged and made the frame and give to us.

Dottie: That's a beautiful frame! How nice! What about your friends? Who were your friends?

Olene: Oh, I had good girlfriends. When Robert went in the service, there was. . .well while I was going to school, the neighbors was Barzilla Brinkerhoff and Ora Anderson and Bessie and Becky Brodrick. We all just lived right there. We had a lot of fun. We'd play out at night. We didn't have cars or anything in those days to do, so we'd play out at night and play "hopscotch" and "Run, my sheep run" and all those fun little games, you know, and then when Robert went in the service, then there were six of us war wives that lived here in Emery. I was the only one who owned my own home. It wasn't like it is now. We just had some of it finished. There was Verda Olsen, Zola Anderson, Genevieve Hansen, and Una Williams and myself, and Cleone Killpack.

Shirley: Boy, you've got a sharp memory.

Olene: And we come here quite a bit at night, and we played "Rook." I don't know how many Rook cards we done away with, but we played Rook, that's what we done. Then we'd take a day once in a while and go to the temple. At that time I was Relief Society President. I'll never forget the day that they said the war had ended. This Genevieve Hansen—we were all over in the old church house over here quilting—and she ran home and got her little radio and brought it up here so we could hear the war was through. We had a lot of fun. We all had one child except Una Williams, and whenever we got together, she'd bring a little paper and write down what she should do when she had her children. (laugh)

Cleone's lost her husband now, and Genevieve lost her husband, and Verda and Paul are both gone, and Zona—she married Elmo, Robert's brother—he's gone now too. So I think I'm practically the only one that has stayed. . .well Una, she's still got her husband too.

Dottie: So how did you meet?

Olene: We just grew up here in Emery.

Dottie: You knew each other forever?

Olene: Yeah.

Dottie: Did you have town dances?

Robert: (laugh) Every Saturday night.

Olene: They'd bring an orchestra from over the mountain and every Saturday night. . .Robert worked in a coal mine, but every night after he got home late at night, he'd get ready and we'd go, and would we ever dance! They had it up in the old school house—up in the upstairs in the auditorium. And everybody danced with everybody. They didn't just dance with one all night long. We danced the Virginia Reel, and . . . we'd all dance, and that old building just shook.

Shirley: That sounds like so much fun.

Olene: It was! And I'll have to tell you, they would decorate for Halloween and Valentine and all. They'd decorate that big old building. That's where we went to school, and we were having a dance up there one night, and it was Halloween, I guess, and everybody was dancing, and all at once everybody just stopped and looked down at the door, and there was Robert's mother. She had dressed up like a Hawaiian lady, and she'd come in and she was just really dancing! (laugh) That's just what kind of a person she was, and we all just laughed.

Robert: She was quite a lady!

Olene: She sure was! (laugh) But we used to dance every Saturday night. Every Saturday night, how we would dance!

Dottie: Did you ever go to Wilberg Resort?

Olene: Yes, we were there. Should I tell them. . . (laugh)

Shirley: Well, of course you should.

Olene: The boys all went. . .I've heard Robert's mother tell about this. . .she said that the boys all went to the Wilberg's that one night, and she said, "Now you mind your own business, and don't you do any drinking or anything like that." And they said, "Oh, we won't." After they'd gone, somebody come and asked his mother to go over and sit and watch them dance.

Robert: It was Bonnie and Art.

Olene: Was it Bonnie and Art that asked her to go with? So she got over there and was just getting out of the car and walking up the road a ways, and there was Elmo. He was just going to tip the bottle, and she patted him on the shoulder. (laugh) And he thought he'd seen a ghost. (laugh) So we've laughed a good many times over that.

All: (laugh)

Olene: I'm going to tell you something else that's funny. When Robert and his mother and all of them lived down in this little house down here, Robert was upstairs, and he took a bath up there in these round tubs, you know, and when he got through, he said, "Mom, I can't find my underwear." She said, "There right there. Just pick them up and put them on." He called down a little later and said, "Well, they don't fit." She said, "Well, they do fit. I put them there, and you put them on!" So he put them on, and he said, "Mom, the legs are too long." So she said, "Cut them off, then." So he cut them off and come to the door, and she looked up and said, "Oh, my Lord! You've cut my garments off!" (laugh) So we've laughed over that too.

When we first got married and built part of the house, we just made rocks for steps, and it was kind of dangerous. Whenever you walked out you wondered if you was going to fall or not. And Robert and I just had a few milk cows and we sold cream, and that was mostly what we had to live on—was just the cream, and there was a guy who'd come and pick the cream up. One morning Robert wasn't here, so I carried the five gallon can of cream out for the guy to pick up, and when I got down on the step, I fell. So Robert, when he come home that night, I said, "Do you know what? I fell of that step today, off of those rocks." And he said, "Oh! My good Lord! Did you spill the cream?" (laugh)

All: (laugh)

Olene: I've got to tell you something else that's funny. When he went in the service then we had to get rid of the cows and everything. Before he came home, he took in washings and started to cut hair on board ship, so he sent the money home to me. So I just saved it, and just before Robert came home, I thought, "Well, it's time to get in the cattle business again, so I bought four heifers, and I was so tickled over it. When Robert came home, I told him what I'd done, and he went and looked at the heifers and I'd bought steers! (laugh)

All: (laugh)

Shirley: (laugh) That sounds like something I'd do. Were you proud of her?

Robert: (laugh) Yeah, I was.

Shirley: So what did you do with them? Did you raise them or sell them and buy some others?

Olene: We just kept them and got some heifers to go with them. Well, I've done all the talking. You go ahead.

Shirley: You know what? I'd like to know how you asked her to marry you. If you knew each other forever, what did you do?

Robert: I don't think I asked her. I think she just followed me home. (laugh)

Olene: I remember after I got my diamond, I went in and showed my dad. I said, "Isn't this pretty?" And he said, "Hmph. You can get those out of any box of popcorn." (laugh)

Dottie: How long did you date each other before you got married?

Robert: and Olene: Quite a while.

Olene: Yeah. I imagine two or three years.

Dottie: How old were you when you married?

Olene: I was 20. No. I was 19 and you was 20. But we've had 64 years. . .it's been a good life. We've worked hard and raised a good family, and the Lord's blessed us, so what more could you ask for?

Dottie: So before you went in the service, you earned your living with the cows?

Olene: Yeah. We had to sell them.

Dottie: How many did you have?

Olene: I can't remember.

Dottie: But you got a five gallon can of cream?

Olene: That was our milk cows. We had about 10 milk cows and we bought a little seperator.

Dottie: How long did it take to get five gallons of cream?

Olene: Oh, about a week.

Dottie: Where did they sell it, whoever picked it up?

Olene: This Peacock guy that bought it, he took it into Price and sold it. He took it up there. I don't know just where he took it.

Dottie: Did you raise other cows too? Did you raise steers?

Olene: After Robert got home from the service, we went into the cattle business.

Dottie: How old were you when you went into the service?

Robert: Oh, I don't know.

Dottie: How long had you been married?

Olene: Let's see. He went into the service on August the 9th, 1944, so 19 from 44 is 25.

Dottie: And you had one child, right, when he went into the service?

Olene: Eddy.

Shirley: Did he have Hodgekins disease from the time he was born?

Robert: No.

Olene: No. It just come on him.

Robert: He was healthy. He worked hard, and he was always nice to have around.

Dottie: When did he get sick?

Olene: When he was about 15. He was sick for two years—in and out of the hospital. It's something you don't forget, but you learn to live with it.

Robert: See that picture with that big elk?

Shirley: Wow, that's a big elk.

Robert: He was in the hospital at the time, and he wanted to go hunting so bad. We talked to his doctor, and he said, "No, I can't let you go. I just can't let you go." And every time we'd see him, we'd ask a doctor if he could go, and we kept on. Finally the doctor said, "Yeah, you can go, providing you'll bring me back an elk steak. So we go up there and take him out for a walk. We'd take him out for a walk every day. We spent a lot of time up there. And we got back to the hospital, and he says, "Dad, look." I said, "Show your mom." He said, "Look Mom, I bought an elk call." She said, "Oh, Eddy, you shouldn't have done it. We don't have any money." I said, "Oh no. Hell, we can buy an elk call." That doctor was so sure we wouldn't get him an elk. I said, "Don't you worry, we'll get you an elk." The first morning. . . 'course I ran cows up there, and I

knew about where to go. . . right up there, we got off our horses, and he says, "Dad, you care if I try my elk call out?" I said, "No, that's what it's for. Try it." So he did, and he got an answer over the hill. We got on our horses and took off over there, and got just about to the top, and I says, "You better whistle again to see if we're going in the right direction. " And he did, and he got an answer over the hill. We jumped on and went over the hill, and went right on top, and there was a Greek answering his call. (laugh)

Shirley: I had visions of a big old elk coming up over the hill. (laugh)

Robert: A little old Greek come up over the hill, and he had an elk call, and he though he was hearing one, and we thought we was hearing one.

Olene: But you got one that morning.

Robert: Yeah, that morning, I said we'd have to leave to go down to different country, and we did, and I got him an elk, anyway.

Shirley: That's great that he got one before he died.

Robert: Yep.

Dottie: So tell us about your experience with the Depression. Did life change for you and your families when the Depression hit the nation about 1929?

Robert: Darn that, it was depression all the way when we was kids.

Shirley: You didn't notice much difference?

Robert: Didn't notice it.

Dottie: That's what I hear if you lived on a farm. The people in the city, I think really suffered with it.

Olene: Yeah. We've always had to work hard and get what we could and be glad for it.

Dottie: What about when the war started? Do you remember when you heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed?

Olene: We were on our way through the canyon. We were going someplace, Robert and I, and that's when we heard it on the radio.

Shirley: I bet that was a shock.

Olene: Yeah.

Dottie: Had you ever heard of Pearl Harbor before that happened?

Olene: No. No.

Robert: Done well remembering Emery.

Dottie: How did life change once the war started? Did you feel any changes? Did the rationing impact you at all?

Olene: They rationed sugar and things like that, but it didn't affect me much because I was here alone with Eddy, and so we just made the best of it.

Dottie: What about gasoline. Did you have a car then?

Olene: We had one when Robert went in the service—a little pickup. We sold that, so I was president of Relief Society, and I walked. And we done a lot of service then that they don't do now. We had two ladies that were bedfast. We spent night after night sitting up with them, and helping them. But Robert sold our pickup and went in the service.

Dottie: Did you take turns sitting with them—the whole Relief Society?

Olene: Every woman in town was on their second turn-around, that could sit up. And I had a wonderful mother. She had a boy in the service, and she was there, but she'd come and stay with Eddy when I'd sit up at night. But usually when I had to go, he'd go with, and we'd take and clean ladies' homes that were old. We'd go and help clean. They don't those things now, but that's what I did as Relief Society President.

Dottie: Tell us some other things you did. Sitting up with the sick, . . .

Shirley: Did you make things for the war effort or anything?

Olene: Well, we did a lot of quilting then. I didn't know how to quilt when I went in. . . I was young when I went in as Relief Society president. I didn't know how to quilt, but I soon learned. (laugh) Then they quilted a quilt every month for people that wanted a quilt. They quilted it and then we'd charge them so much for quilting it.

Robert: Should have told you a little earlier. That four head of heifers that she got, we built them up until we got four hundred head of heifers.

Shirley: Wow! That was quite a build-up!

Robert: Yeah.

Shirley: What did you do when you went into the service? Were you drafted? Did you join on your own?

Robert: Well, kind of half and half. I expected to go. My dad had a ranch up there, and he had more than he could do, and he said, "What do you want to do?" He could tell I wanted to be doing something. He said, "Do you really want to go war or do you want to stay and help me?" I said, "Well, I should stay and help you, but I feel like I better go to war." So I did.

Olene: You were drafted though.

Robert: I was drafted.

Shirley: What branch did you go in?

Robert: I've got a book of it over there.

Dottie: When you were drafted, could you have gotten off by saying that you had to stay to help your dad farm?

Robert: Yeah. I could have done.

Dottie: Where did you serve then?

Robert: In the Pacific. I got quite a book on it.

Olene: He had four brothers in the war at the same time, and then a brother-in-law.

Robert: There were five of us took out of family. Our dad needed one and that satisfied him.

Dottie: Who stayed? Who worked with him on the ranch?

Robert: Well, there's usually people around town that was looking for a job. In them days, nobody had any money.

Dottie: Did one of your brothers stay behind to help?

Robert: No. We left him alone, all five of us.

Shirley: I bet that just really worried your parents, that you were all in the war. Were you all in the Navy? Or different branches?

Robert: No, other branches. My oldest brother was in the Army. He got wounded three times, but he still stayed.

Dottie: Did they all come home?

Robert: They all come home.

Shirley: So did you see action while you were in the Navy? Were you in fighting of any kind?

Robert: Yeah. That book's full of it.

Shirley: Alright, and you are going to let us look at it right?

Robert: Yeah. I was a gunner on the ship. A small ship the LCI. I was a gunner on there. And I strapped in my gun, a lot of times, 40 hours.

Dottie: Wow! Did you ever participate in the recycling drives? Scrap metal or newspapers?

Robert: No, we didn't ever get tangled up with that.

Dottie: Do you remember the Red Cross? Did the Red Cross ever do anything in your community?

Olene: I didn't ever have anything to do with the Red Cross?

Dottie: Did the Relief Society ever do anything to send overseas?

Olene: No, we just mostly did the quilts for the people in town.

Dottie: What about President Roosevelt's death? Do you remember hearing that he died before the war was over?

O and Robert: I can't remember.

Dottie: How did you feel about President Truman when he took office? Had you known anything about him at all?

Robert: Well, if I could see him today, I shake his hand and say, "Thank you!" He's the president that dropped two atomic bombs in Japan. We had the next one ready to go when they surrendered. If it hadn't been for that, there would have been millions of us boys killed trying to get in there. I don't think we could have made it.

Dottie: In your opinion, how was the Pacific war going before the bombs were dropped?

Robert: Well, we was a gaining a little bit, but it was slow and awful expensive in lives.

Dottie: I interviewed one lady whose brother came home from the war just before the atom bomb, and he said they were five years away from having victory. So she said that was why everyone was so glad. It put an end to something that looked like it was going to go on and on.

Robert: It would have done too, if we had lasted long enough. You go up to Tokyo Bay to get in Japan, before we could have done any good, and I don't think we'd a made it. It took us all day going up there. Right in all the sides. . .all lava rock, and you couldn't penetrate that with bullets, and it was just loaded with guns and that stuff, all the way through there. It was pretty spooky, I'll tell you.

Shirley: Quite a fortress, they had.

Robert: Yeah.

Shirley: Was the ship you were on in Okinawa when you came home?

Robert: No. The war was over. We was in Japan. Japan had surrendered, and we had to stay there to make sure things didn't blow up again.

Shirley: So were you there when the bomb went off?

Robert: Yeah. Not in Japan! They moved us clear back to the Philippines. They never had no more idea than we did—blow the whole world up, you know? So they moved us back to the Philippines.

Dottie: How did you and your company feel when they heard the news that we had bombed Japan with the atom bomb?

Robert: We was tickled to death.

Shirley: Did you have any idea what devastation would happen with the atom bomb?

Robert: NO. They didn't either.

Dottie: Olene, so you were home while he was at war. How often did you write letters to him?

Olene: Every day. I never missed a day.

Robert: She'd write every day. We didn't get the mail call sometimes for a month. I'd have a stack of letters that high. (motions 2 feet high) (laugh)

Dottie: Did you read them all?

Robert: Yes, Sir! I'd put them in dates. . .

Dottie: Chronological order?

Robert: Yeah.

Shirley: Did you save them?

Robert: No.

Dottie: How often would you write to her?

Robert: I'd write whenever I could. We was fighting. We didn't have time, you know.

Olene: I heard quite regularly from him. The war wives, we would meet over to the post office every day to see if we got a letter. There was a good six people that got together.

Dottie: What time did you meet over there?

Olene: About mail time. About 10:00, we'd all meet there.

Dottie: Every day, huh?

Olene: Yeah.

Shirley: Did any of your friends lose a husband in the war?

Olene: No. They all come home, but they've all gone since.

Dottie: Did you get any news on the radio about the war? Did you follow the war through the newspaper or the radio or the newsreels?

Olene: What we could get from the newspaper, but I took mostly what Robert wrote and told me. I felt like I could go more by that than anything.

Dottie: Did you ever go to the movie and listen to the war news on the newsreels?

Olene: No. I went down to California two weeks before Robert shipped out, and there was a girl from Price and her husband was down there too. I was so glad, because I could never have made it alone. We went down on the bus, and got down there at night. I didn't know anything about it, but she was more forward. We couldn't find a taxi, and she said, "Oh, we'll walk to where was are

going." We was going to the USO. We finally found it, and the door was locked! And when they opened the door, they were clear full, they said. But they let us in--the officer in the big waiting room that night. And we finally got a room. So I made the one trip down. I left the baby with my mother. . .no, my sister in Salt Lake took Eddy first, and she was pregnant. I don't know how she ever took that little boy. Then at Christmas time, Robert's mother and dad took my mother up to Salt Lake and they brought Eddy home to be with Mom during Christmas.

Dottie: How long did you stay in California?

Olene: Two weeks, and the morning that he had to go, well then I took Eddy and went back down one time, and we stayed there with him. That's when he shipped out. And the morning he left, it was raining.

My son Randy served in the military too. He volunteered, Randy did, to go in the service. He couldn't settle down to do what he wanted to do, and he felt like he had to get that off his chest. He felt like he couldn't go on with his life until he had that behind him.

Dottie: To Viet Nam?

Olene: To Germany. That's where he served. He would call us every couple of weeks; we always got a phone call. He's always been good to let us know right where he was. We're glad he served his time, but I'm glad the rest are home.

Robert: I should have told you, when we was first married, we had a few milk cows. We just moved in here and didn't have a corral built yet. So my dad and mother lived right down here on the corner, and they had a big corral, so we moved our milk cows down there, and I was working in the coal mine and had to get up before daylight to get to work and get all them cows milked before I get to work. I went down there that morning to milk the cows, and our neighbor was in there milking one of our cows. (laugh)

Dottie: Oh, whoops! So what did you do?

Robert: I didn't have to do nothing. He felt so cheap. I walked right up to him patted him on the shoulder. I turned around and looked, and he said, "By God, this is the littlest thing a man could be caught at." I said, "Yeah, I believe you are right." (laugh)

Dottie: Did they just need the milk really badly?

Robert: Oh, yeah. He didn't have nothing—that family. He says, "Here's your milk." I said, "No, I don't want that milk. You take it home to your family."

Shirley: What mine did you work in?

Robert: This mine down here. What's it called now?

Dottie: Consol?

Robert: Yeah. My granddad owned it then. I got in there when I was fourteen, on account of there wasn't no law or nothing then.

Dottie: What was your grandfather's name?

Robert: Ham Duzett.

Olene: He owned a big store over here in town. It's tore down now, but he owned the store.

Dottie: And his first name is . . . ?

Robert: Hamner and called Ham.

Dottie: Is he the first of your family to settle in this area?

Robert: Yeah.

Dottie: And what was his wife's name?

Robert: Rose.

Dottie: Oh, Rose. I've heard of her.

Shirley: So did they come from Manti or somewhere?

R. Yeah they came from somewhere east—Panguitch or somewhere.

Olene: She was a Slaughter.

Dottie: What kind of a store was it?

Olene: It was a grocery store, but he had everything in there—shoes, and groceries, and embroidery floss-- oh, he had everything. He had a little meat shop, too, in the back of the store.

Dottie: What was the name of the store?

Olene: E.H. Duzette and Son

Dottie: Do you remember shopping there?

Olene: Oh, I worked there!

Dottie: You did?

Olene: Oh, yeah. I worked there in the store for quite a few years. There was a hotel attached to it upstairs. I worked in the kitchen for a long time, and then I worked in the regular store too.

Shirley: Do you have any pictures of the store?

Olene: I'm not sure if I've got a picture or not.

Robert: Yeah. I'm sure you have.

Dottie: Then he built or bought a coal mine or started a coal mine?

Robert: Yeah.

Dottie: Did your whole family work there?

Robert: Yeah. Not the whole family, but I guess quite a few of us. My dad worked there in the winter when he couldn't farm.

Dottie: How was the pay, working for your grandfather.

Robert: Not very good.

Dottie: What was the work like? How did you mine back then when you were 14.

Robert: Shovel and pull the car, pull the coal out in a car by horse. I would always have to drive the horse.

Dottie: Did they get it out with picks or did they have other machinery?

Robert: They'd drill a hole with your hand, just like a brace and bit, and you'd load that with powder.

Dottie: Oh, scary.

Robert: Yeah.

Olene: Well, the wages weren't all that high either. They were what?

Robert: When I come out of the Navy, we never had no money, you know. So I went to work down there, at a dollar and a half a day. I worked there for a long time—a dollar and a half a day.

Shirley: Olene, what did you do in the store? Were you a secretary or did you clerk?

Olene: I was the clerk when I worked in the store, but when I worked down in the hotel part, in the kitchen, I washed dishes and did housework.

Shirley: How much did you make?

Olene: I can't remember. Isn't that awful?

Dottie: You said after you went to business school. . .you went to L.D.S. Business School?

Olene: Uh-huh.

Dottie: So you moved to Salt Lake for a while?

Olene: Yes, I went up there for six months, and I worked for my room and board with the family I went in and worked for my room and board. They were good people. They weren't Mormon. They were Episcopalians, but oh, they were just really good to me.

Shirley: How did you find them to stay with?

Olene: The school found them for me.

Dottie: How was tuition paid?

Olene: Well, my father paid my tuition, but I knew they couldn't keep it up, and that is why I went and worked for my room and board and helped them that way.

Shirley: The sign over here says, "Olene Anderson Secretary" where did that come from?

Olene: That come from the school. I worked over to the school as a secretary for 20 years. I enjoyed every minute of that. You know I found that it didn't take much to make a little child happy. There was a little Indian boy that was going to school there. Somebody took him into their home. One day he came in and said, "Here Mrs. Anderson, this is you." He had drawn that little picture. I'll show you. I thought it was so cute. I said, "That must have been how I looked to him," so I framed it. I had it on my desk all the while I worked over there.

Dottie: What years did you work there?

Olene: Oh, let's see, I worked there when Brad Jensen—his last couple of years there. I worked when Dr. Mower was there. I quit when I was 65, and I worked there 20 years.

Dottie: You started to working when your kids were in school?

Olene: I started to work when I had Kerry home. And Robert drove the school bus, and Kerry was in school, and I worked, and we'd all get on the bus and go and come home together.

Dottie: Oh, Wow—how fun!

Olene: I quit the school and decided I would go up to the nursing home. I got up there and I couldn't take that. I just couldn't take those sick people, and one of them wanted to go home with me every night—a little old lady. So I was down in the store one day, and Dr. Mower was down there; he was the principal, and he said "Olene, would you like to come back to school next year?" And I said, "Oh, I'd just love to!" And so I went back to school and stayed there 21 years.

Dottie: And was that the elementary school?

Olene: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Dottie: Oh. Well, I just know that the secretary was the one I depended on as a mother. I said, "You are my child's friend, you know?" They were friends with the secretary. The secretary never scolded or gave bad grades. I just really appreciated the secretaries.

Olene: Yeah. The teachers were all nice to me, and I would just love those little children. What would break my heart is where a family would separate, and the mother would bring this child in and get the little child registered and say, "Now, my x-husband, so and so, comes in you are not to let him see this little child." Well, I took it as long as I could and finally I said to Dr. Mower, "I just can't take part in these divorces, and I'm not going to!" So I didn't have much to do after I'd said that. But one guy come in one day and seen his little boy and took him right out from under our nose, and I wasn't going to be held responsible for something like that. Every time they'd come in and register, cold chills would just go down my spine. But it was a good place to work. I liked it. I said that if I lived now where there was a school, and I could walk, I'd volunteer just to be a listener.

Dottie: Oh, how neat!

Olene: They're just too far away to drive in sloppy weather, so I just stay home.

Dottie: There was a school here when you were young. Do you remember your teachers names?

Olene: Yeah. Mrs. Forbes, and Mrs. Worthington—Edna Worthington and Dessie (sp?) Worthington—they were good teachers. And Mr. Brinkerhoff—Darlon (sp?) Brinkerhoff. Mr. Fry--he was the principal. He was the one that moved in. They were good teachers.

Robert: There just ain't many of us left, is there that age? I can't hardly think of nobody.

Dottie: Do you remember anything about your ancestors. . .did any of your ancestors live on the

Muddy Creek?

Olene: Seems like they did. Some of the Olsens did. I'll get those histories out within the next week or so, and go over them and then I'll get in touch with you.

Dottie: Good. Okay. Do you remember the changes in the roads? When you were young, I imagine they were dirt roads?

Olene: Yes. This road out here that goes to Salina, that come around them little old hills out there, didn't it?

Robert: Yeah.

Olene: I remember that road, but I don't remember any more. Hasn't this one to Ferron been. . . Well, it went down around Moore.

Dottie: Do you remember when they paved them? Did that make a difference in your travel? I talked to a lady in Huntington, and she said that she lived in Castle Dale, and their roads just weren't that muddy, but when she moved to Huntington, she was stuck all the times. So I was just wondering how the roads were here.

Olene: Well, I don't remember our roads being too bad. Do you?

Robert: 'Course we didn't. . .

Olene: We didn't have a car, and we didn't go much either.

Robert: We didn't; we just stayed around here.

Dottie: What was your first car?

Olene: That little pick-up. What was that?

Robert: I don't know. I never give it a thought.

Dottie: You sold that when he went into the war? And then when he came home, did you buy another car, or was it a while before you could afford one?

Olene: It was a while before we bought one.

Dottie: After the war, the economy of the nation generally boomed. Did you feel that? Did the economy pick up in your area at all after the war

was over?

Robert: I think it did, but not really that much.

Dottie: The price of beef, did that go up?

Robert: No.

Dottie: Was your ranching more profitable than before?

Robert: No. It didn't.

Dottie: What about your grandfather's coal mine. Did he ever make money on that?

Robert: You bet!

Dottie: He did?

Robert: Yeah. He was making the money and we was doing the work. That's about the way it is.

Dottie: How did you feel about your grandparents?

Robert: Oh, I liked them. They was good people.

Olene: Oh, I loved mine too. When we moved to Price, we'd go up and spend a week with them. Oh, Grandma was so good to us, and the uncles and all. Oh, I couldn't have asked for a better grandparents.

Robert: I told you that Brother Duzette lived down south. I can't remember. . . way down in there, you know then they moved from down there up here. They came in a wagon. His friend come with him. Case. . . what was his name? Anyway he was a Case. They was always playing jokes on one another—he and my granddad. They was good friends, and he come up here and lived up there. My granddad had some cows that he kept there and some pigs, and he had one pig just ready to kill. He went out to kill it one day and it was gone. He felt so bad over that. Anyhow this old Case, he gave my grandpa part of this pig. Next time he saw old Case, he said, "Well, thanks for the piece of pig you gave me. I sure was good." That old Case said, "Well, it oughta been; it was your pig." (laugh)

Dottie: (laugh) So how did that go over?

Robert: They just laughed it off.

Shirley: So what do you do Robert? You're still active—you still farm?

Olene: He's still got his farm and his cows.

Robert: Yessir. Biggest cowman—farmer in Emery County. And I'm alone.

Shirley: You do it all yourself?

Robert: I do it all myself.

Olene: Well, we've got Randy over to the post office and he helps us when he can. But he runs those RMA horse sales, and he's real busy with them—he and his wife, and then we had Joel Jensen. He's been good to help. So we have to have help, but it's mighty hard to find.

Robert: Good help's hard to find.

Shirley: So do you brand? Do you do the actual branding?

Robert: When we brand, all of our kids come, and their kids, and their kids and their kids. They all brand.

Dottie: Oh, what memories!

Olene: And I always cook a dinner for all of them. We've had kids from up the county come and help us brand, but the last while, the family's come. They like to come. Our family's families.

Dottie: How many cows do you have now?

Robert: 400.

Shirley: Obviously they're not here. Is it on a ranch outside of town that you have your cows?

Robert: I got other fields out there. Right now they're about all on the desert. I put them on the desert in the winter and then I put them on the mountain in the summer.

Dottie: What part of the desert are they on?

Robert: Well, there's some. . .have you ever been down this way? (Points)

Olene: On I-70?

Dottie: Uh-huh.

Olene: It's down on both sides of that.

Dottie: Both sides of I-70? In Eagle Canyon?

Robert: Yeah. Then I got some more out here on the Salaradas, where you go that way to Salina—this way. Yeah. I've often thought about it. We started out with them four steers and ended up with 400 cows. (laugh)

Shirley: Pretty good job out of steers, huh? (Laugh)

Dottie: That is so neat, though, that you got all prepared for him to come home, and on your own initiative, went out and bought some.

How did you live while he was gone, Olene? Did you get a check from the government?

Olene: I think the check that we got—the war wives—was \$75.00 a month.

Dottie: Was that enough to live on?

Olene: Well, the ones that lived in with their folks, they got along pretty good, but I was in my own home, and I had a light bill and water bill and all that, but I made it reach and took care of my little boy.

Shirley: Did you have a garden or anything to help out?

Olene: I had a garden, but I didn't have one while Robert was gone. I didn't have anybody to plow it and dig and do that, but we've raised good gardens since he come home, but I don't do that now either.

Dottie: Where did your parents live while he was gone? Did they live close by?

Olene: My mother lived here in Emery, and my father, he'd passed away.

Robert: My parents lived right down here. They was good to her.

Olene: Yeah. They was always taking us. . . they had five in the service and they was always coming and going with one or the other all of the time.

Dottie: Robert, you said your grandfather made some good money. Did he have a nice house or build a nice house? Where did he live?

Robert: Well, I guess he lived up where. . .

Olene: Yeah, they had a good home. Well, they lived in the store until they sold it and then they built a home and moved in that, but they had a nice place in the store to live.

Dottie: Who was the wealthiest family in your town?

Olene: Oh, I don't know. I think we were tit for tat.

Dottie: Just all the same? That's interesting.
What year did you come home from the war?

Robert: '46

Olene: He was in about two years. He went in about '44 and so it was about '46 that he came home.

Robert: '47. I was there three years—going into my third year.

Dottie: Were there any celebrations when you heard the war was over?

Robert: (laugh) No.

Dottie: Were there any here at home? There was V.E. day first, and that probably didn't affect you much, but when you heard about Victory over Japan. . .?

Olene: I can't remember that anything went on.

Robert: Like I said, I was in Japan. . .when they surrendered, we was one of the first ships in Japan. We had to watch them real close, you know. All through the war, the (officer), next to the Captain, he was so good to me, and I don't know why. Like I said, I was strapped in that gun 40 hours lots of time, and I'd go to general quarters and hurry and get that gun strapped on, and he'd follow me. And I wanted to ask him so bad, "How come you are always here helping me?" But I didn't want to hurt his feelings, you know?

Dottie: What was his name?

Robert: Governor. I think. I just looked at the picture.

Dottie: Did you ever go into Japan—on the land? Did you ever see Nagasaki or Hiroshima?

Robert: I'll show you them in that book when you want to get into that.

Dottie: Well, let's do that right now.

Robert: I've looked through this so much. . . I was on the ship. . .and I left it in Japan before everybody was coming. And that old guy. . .I was out on the watch one night, and he come and he says, "You've got enough points, you could get an honorable discharge and go back to the

states." I says, "Well, I can't swim from here home." So I went the watch and pretty soon he come out and said, "You know I got on the radio where they're loading up an aircraft carrier down in Yokasuka. He said, "If we could get you down there, I could give you your papers and you'd go home." I says, "You give me my papers and I'll go home." He says, "Well, how you going to get down there?" I says, "I'll walk." He says, "You got more guts than anybody I ever saw." (Laugh) He says, "You get your sea bag packed and I'll have your papers fixed." I wasn't long getting my things. But I walked down the road, and when night come, I got to thinking, "Gosh, I'm down here all alone and the Japs. . ." So I crawled up in the bushes and hid out that night, and the next morning I come out and started down the road, and here come a guy in a jeep, and he said, "My God, Son, what are you doing down here alone?" He said, "You know if them Japs catch you, they'd cut your throat so quick. . ." I said, "Yeah, I know that. But I'm a going home." He said, "Well, you'll never make it." He took off down the road, and he got down the road a ways, and he turned around and come back. He says, "I can't leave you here alone. I know that's just what would happen. Get in and I'll take you down." (Laugh)

Robert—looking at the photo album: Here's the atomic bomb. Here's one and here's one, and here's one. (Photos of bombed cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima)

Dottie: Are these pictures you took?

Robert: No. I don't know. . . I had some buddies on ship, and when the war was over, I come home, like I said, but they didn't have enough points to get home, so they stayed on it and when they got to the United States, they tore my ship all to pieces, and 'course they got in there and got all the pictures and stuff. They sent me. . .

Dottie: What's this?

Robert: That's Japan—New Year's Day in Japan.

Dottie: This one is after the atomic bomb?

Robert: Yeah.

Dottie: Do you know which city?

Robert: Well, Tokyo, but they didn't bother the castle in Japan. They stayed away from it for some reason.

Shirley: Is that you?

Robert: Yeah.

Dottie: Wow! How handsome!

Robert: We'll start over. That's D-Day when we was going into Hiroshima and blowing up all we could for we went in.

Dottie: Is this your ship?

Robert: I don't know whether it is or not. Here's my buddies. All these was my buddies.

Dottie: And is this of you and Olene? How neat. Is that in California?

Robert: Yeah. While she was down there.

Shirley: Well that sure is cute. You look happy there.

Robert: This is me here, in General Quarters.

Shirley: This one is when they surrendered.

Robert: Everybody sent our flares up and everything.

Dottie: That had to be so wonderful! Neat!

Robert: This was Lady. We was all back behind.
This one is on the ship.

Shirley: This is everybody on the ship?

Robert: pointing at another picture. Japan is thickly populated.

Dottie: Did you feel a hatred for the Japanese people?

Robert: Not really. They was doing the same thing we was a doing. They were there for the same cause. Couldn't blame them.

Dottie: Did you go to Okinawa?

Robert: Yeah. I was there in the invasion of Okinawa. There was a kid—me and him went in at the same time, and they always had a party for anybody that left, you know? They had our party the same, but when we got into San Francisco, why they separated us, and I never did see no more of him. But he went in. . .we got on our ship the same, and we went into the invasion of Okinawa, he got killed, and I made it, but he got killed.

Dottie: Oh, I bet that was so hard.

Robert: That's our captain on the ship. What we was, was a floating office for the everything, you know what I mean? And this is the captain, over our captain. He was over the whole thing—the old drunken cuss! He come on ship—the officers they'd have all the whiskey and that, that they wanted to drink. He'd go out every night and go over to another ship and have a big party, I guess, and he'd always go back on ship and he'd always be drunk.

Dottie: I had a cousin who was a Marine, and his brother was in the Navy, and at one point they were in the same area, so he took a boat and went out to the ship where his brother was, and he said he was treated to a shower and clean clothes and a meal. He said that was the branch of the service to be in, because he slept in the mud and went without whatever, and he said it was just wonderful to be on that ship.

Robert: Yep. The captain wrote all these here, and when they tore our ship up, my friends got these here.

Dottie: This was his log?

Robert: Yeah. You can read this one if you want. It might give you an idea.

Dottie: "11 May, 1945. At anchor one half mile south of Ioshima at 0850, went to general quarters and at 0900, two low flying enemy torpedo bombers attacked the anchorage from the west. All ships opened fire, and the one plane was driven off northward. Another plane continued on easterly heading and about 1000 yards dropped torpedo which missed target. Plane burst into flame and crashed the Dutch ship. . .at forward wale deck. Number two, four and five guns of this ship scored hits when the plane came in range." And it says Robert here. You were part of that?

Robert: Yeah. A lot of them.

Dottie: You were one of the gunners, huh?

Robert: Yeah.

Dottie: You remember which gun?

Robert: Number four. That's 23,000 casualties when we went into Okinawa. She cut this out of the paper and sent it to me.

Dottie: Oh, look. Here you are in your gun! Oh!

Robert: Yep. Day and night.

Shirley: We really do need a copy of this in the archives.

Dottie: Could you come to the Courthouse and watch while we scan it in?

Robert: Well, there's quite the stories there.

Dottie: Also, these type of pages that you have these photos on are acid and will cause the photos to deteriorate. If you allow us to scan these in, we can give you some archive quality sleeves to put these in. We would even do it for you.

Olene: How long would that take?

Dottie: Well, it's going to take a couple of hours, because the scanner is a little bit slow, but actually, you could scan a page, and I could remove it and put it in an archives quality. . .

Olene: Well, maybe you better let Robert think about it.

Robert: These suicide planes was our worst enemy.

Dottie: Oh, I bet.

Robert: That's where the Japanese got killed by our country, that was the greatest thing they could do. Suicide planes all the time. They think it's an honor.

Dottie: "May 20, 1945 at 1832, two low flying Japanese aircraft attacked anchorage from the north over east end of Ioshima. First plane commenced dive on ammunition ship and was shot down, missing target, by number four and five guns of this ship."

Shirley: Good job!

Dottie: Yeah, you're one of those that saved the world.

Robert: Yeah, but we sure had a time though. But that L.D. he come over the other night, and we got talking about-trying to buy us out. He got sitting in that and picked this up and looked at it, and he said, "What's this?" And I told him, and he got started reading this, and he never quit. He just forgot to go home. (laugh) I thought he was going to stay for a week.(laugh)

Dottie: It's so interesting. And so many people that fought don't have anything except their memories, and they are going to be lost.

Robert: We're in the process of getting sold out.

Dottie: Oh, where will you go?

Robert: I'll just retire.

Dottie: Oh, that sounds like maybe it's about time.

Robert: Yeah, so we're kind of busy all around. I just don't know, and I'm alone.

