

BEGIN SIDE ONE

BIRCHETT: I have two things that I thought would be used. This is about the first street sweeper that was there when I came here, was in 1903. And he was a little old, bent over, Mexican man. And he made his brooms from the watamote that grew along the riverbank. Mill Avenue was just a dirt street at that time, and it was a long, long time before it was paved. And each day, you could see the little old man sweeping. And he did a very good job. It wasn't too much of it at that time, but this was on Mill Avenue that he was sweeping. And . . . I don't know who paid him, or how he was paid -- probably the businessmen along the street paid him -- but this was like he was. That was his broom.

HARTER: With a homemade broom?

BIRCHETT: Yes, he made this broom, and he'd go out and give that to 'em. Do you remember that man?

HARTER: No, but my brother [Jack O'Connor] wrote a book about Tempe recently, and he remember him.

BIRCHETT: But he didn't say very much about it, except that that was one of the things that he remembered.

HARTER: Uh-huh.

BIRCHETT: Well, anyway. . . . And then, do you remember this?

HARTER: No, I don't remember that.

BIRCHETT: That was the first garbage disposal in Tempe.

That was in 1932.

HARTER: Is this a man, or. . . .

BIRCHETT: No, she was a very tall . . . very tall Indian woman, and slender. In 1903, the water users had a camp near Scottsdale, for the Indian [Yaqui] workmen. They had them there where they just pulled them. When they wanted the ditches cleaned, they could just go there and get these men, you know. She lived there. And she walked barefooted from over there in Scottsdale to Tempe where this camp was. It's near where the old wartime camp was there in there. You remember that, where they held the prisoners [Papago Park P.O.W. Camp].

HARTER: I seem to have forgotten. Oh, prisoners of war.

BIRCHETT: German prisoners were there, uh-huh. And she used to walk from there, barefooted, to Tempe, every day, to rummage in the garbage cans. She always wore the same black dress, a black hat. Her eye-seeing dog -- that was just 40 or 50 years too soon, you see -- was also black. And she kept him on a wire leash fastened around her own body. And she was good protection for her. No one ever bothered THAT old lady. I tried to get a picture of her, and the Indians at that time wouldn't let you take their pictures. Then it got to the point where they would let you take one if you paid them something. But I paid her once to do it, but she was never so -- never got to the point where I could get a

good picture of her, you know. But that was the first garbage disposal that we had here in Tempe.

HARTER: Garbage was just everybody's job to dispose of?

BIRCHETT: Yes, uh-huh. So. Do you think that's worth telling? (tape turned off and on)

HARTER: Okay, go ahead.

BIRCHETT: Jerry used to tell me about the flood of '91 [1891], and that was, of course, a long, LONG time ago. And he said that he lived in Phoenix, was going to school over there in seventh or eighth grade, I think it was. And their home was out on Roosevelt and Central, and there was nothing between that and, oh, way downtown. So the boys got their horses. . . .

HARTER: It was out in the country.

BIRCHETT: Yes, it was out in the country. And they got their horses and went down to look at it.

HARTER: To look at the river?

BIRCHETT: To look at the river. And he saw them there rescuing somebody out there. You know, there's always someone out in the sand there that couldn't get out and they rescued those. And I don't know, that was one of the earliest memories of a flood that I knew anything about. And then. . . .

HARTER: And what year was this?

BIRCHETT: Well, that was in the sixth or seventh grade of

school. It was '91 . . . (HARTER: Ninty-one.) . . . that's when it was, fall of '91. And he lived in Phoenix at that time. And then there was the flood here in 1905, and I was here for that. We was living outside here.

HARTER: In this same house?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, right here. And all night long we could hear buggies and wagons -- and people, just on bicycles or anything they could get hold of -- going across a little bridge that went over here, so they could get to the Butte.

HARTER: Across the canal?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, across the canal. It was on College that they went down, on College.

HARTER: I remember the Hayden Canal went along the Butte then, didn't it?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. I think we heard them all night long. And around four or five o'clock -- that was in the summertime, you know, and the sun got up, they could see -- and they could see that the river had just gone done the middle, you know. And so then the trek began to come back in, and that was quite an experience to listen to all those conveyances going up there, so they could be up above the river, you know. They thought that at that time that the flood was going to come in AROUND Tempe, and . . . but they built up all kinds of sandbags and things like that, to keep it from doing that. But it -- when the river first started

-- it came from up this way and made a straight line towards the Butte, and it would dig out -- it took out those Japanese gardens that were in there.

HARTER: Oh, there were Japanese gardens along the river then?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, all over there. And they had. . . . Oh, I don't know how many acres was taken out. And they figured that if it got very much higher, it would go OVER that and come right in on the southeast side. And Jerry always said that early, sometimes, that had happened, because we can dig down just, oh, a couple of feet here and dig into river boulders, and all out here. And you could trace that going through town.

HARTER: Yeah, way out by Holdemen School there's all kinds of big boulders.

BIRCHETT: You could go right on down like that. And he always said that had happened at one time. But you see, as long as the river could strike this place, it would dig it out. But when it got so far that it began to get an eddy, then it didn't have the force and went on down. And that's their stop ditch you know. So that was the flood that they had in 1905.

HARTER: Did it wash out the bridge at that time?

BIRCHETT: Let me see, I don't know. Of course these bridges across here weren't there at that time.

HARTER: Well, the railroad bridge?

BIRCHETT: I don't think that picture that you saw was washed out at that time, 'cause I wasn't here when that washed out. I don't think it washed out that railroad bridge at THAT time.

HARTER: And what year did you come?

BIRCHETT: I came here in 1903. And . . . you see, Tempe wanted a bridge. They'd been going across -- Dr. Moeur used to have to cross, you know, and the quicksand was terrible.

We used to go hunting a lot, and always hated to get in around the river, because the quicksand. I've been in it, so I know it was around there, like on the Indian reservation and places like that. And so we could . . . we always had to watch out for it. And Tempe wanted a bridge.

Well, as usually happens, they wanted a bridge down on Central Avenue. And . . . of course, there were more people in Phoenix, and they thought it was going to develop into South Phoenix and all around there, you know. So they got the first bridge. And then it was in 1914, I think it was, that the first bridge -- we got the first bridge that's standing there now, you know, on the other side of. . . .

HARTER: The old bridge, the broken one.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. That was in 1913. And then afterwards, they got this other. But we didn't get the first (chuckles) bridge. So I don't know that. . . .

HARTER: I read somewhere that that old bridge was built by

convict labor.

BIRCHETT: It was.

HARTER: And that kind of checks with something that happened in MY family, because I know my youngest aunt, Irene's, husband, Bill Carrothers, was an engineer, and they were first in Florence, and then they came here and he was in charge of construction of that bridge, I think. I remember that from my childhood.

BIRCHETT: I remember when they were here. That was a case of getting the bridge -- we didn't get it then, because there were too many people in Phoenix. They just outvoted us, naturally, you know.

HARTER: Now, you told me a while ago this story about the elephants, before I had the recorder turned on. Do you think you could tell that again now?

BIRCHETT: I think I can tell it again.

HARTER: The way you first heard the sounds and all that.

BIRCHETT: One morning -- we had a little, we called it, sleeping house just outside.

HARTER: A screen house?

BIRCHETT: . . . a screen house, just outside of our home, because it was built up on the sides to about three or four feet, boarded up around, and a board floor, and then a tent was put on for a roof, and the sides of the tent came down and made a screen. But it was . . . above the boards there

was about a three-foot stretch of screen for a screen, all around the whole thing. At night we'd always leave those curtains up, and it made it very cool, you know. And anytime you're out on the desert, in the summertime even, you'll pull up some cover before morning. It was always cool out on the desert. So we were sleeping out there, and one morning I heard the sound of (thump, thump, thump), and I wondered what in the world it was. And Mr. Birchett had gotten up and gone into the house, and to shave and get ready to go down to the store. And I heard that sound, and I hadn't gotten up myself. And so I raised up and looked, and I was so astonished I was flabbergasted, really. There was a man with three elephants going down my street (thump, thump, thump) just like that (thump, thump, thump) going along. And I wakened my son, because I was naturally anxious for HIM to see it, you know. So he looked and he couldn't believe it either. Well, anyway, we came in -- I came in, and I told Charlie's mother about the elephants going down, and they thought, of course, I was seeing things, they didn't know what was the matter with me. And I said, "Well, if you don't believe me, you can go out there and check the tracks." We had just a dirt road, then, you know, dirt street. And I don't know whether he did or not, but anyway, he dressed and went on down to work. And then the first thing he did, he went down to the bank. He had

some money to deposit, I don't know, but anyway, the man who was in charge there at the bank lived on Second Street just a block west of us. And Mr. Birchett said to him, "Did you see the elephants this morning?" And he said, "No, but my wife did." And so that rather confirmed that we did have the elephants through there. And we found out about it afterwards and found that they were bringing those elephants in here to Phoenix, and they were unloaded at Maricopa. And he found out it was about 20 miles through to where he wanted to take them. And so they wanted \$200 to bring those three elephants up to Phoenix.

HARTER: That was another line, wasn't it? Another railroad line?

BIRCHETT: Yes. An old line. And so the man thought, well, he could drive those elephants through in a night and save that much. Well, he miscalculated a little bit. He intended to get in WEST of Tempe, but he didn't. I don't know just where he came in up here, but the first thing I knew, the elephants were going by our street, here. And so they went on, and down into, I guess past Mill Avenue and a little west of Tempe, crossed the river there, and there were some Mexican huts in there, and they had quite a time with them. They spread out and the man couldn't. . . .

HARTER: The elephants did?

BIRCHETT: Yes, the elephants, I guess, scared after they

had been. . . . Maybe it was the first thing that they saw, foliage, that they could eat or something -- I don't know what. But anyway, they scattered, and one of them had stuck his head in the doorway of an adobe house and women were screaming. They were scared to death, you know, and they couldn't imagine what had happened. The man was having quite a lot of trouble getting them together, but he finally got them together and took them on over to Phoenix. (tape turned off and on) Yes, I was going to say, that the Goodwin brothers had a brickyard up there in East Tempe, and it was where there were a lot of date palms around it. It was right close to the Ritter School. I think that I saw where they had this there in '91, I think it was. See, that was . . . they were her brothers. I think she bought the brick and built. This was one of the first BRICK houses around here.

HARTER: Oh, Mrs. Birchett was a Goodwin.

BIRCHETT: No, Mrs. . . . Hm, I'm trying to say now. This woman who owned the -- who built the house. . . .

HARTER: This house here?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, was a Goodwin, and her brothers up here had just started this brick. . . .

HARTER: And it was built with their brick?

BIRCHETT: And I'm sure that it was built with their brick. So that's how they happened to have it here. Ruby Woolf

told me that they lived in this house. It had. . . . Joe used to come down here and visit a boy who was going to the Normal School, and he was here, and Joe graduated in '95 [1895], so it was before THAT time, you see, that it was built -- I think only about ten years, something like that.

And of course it was really new at that time. And he used to come down and visit with this boy, and Ruby told me that they lived, that she and her mother and father lived in this house before they moved someplace else. But I think she wasn't just right when she said that to me. I think she got it mixed up. . . .

HARTER: With another house.

BIRCHETT: With the Manley house, don't you know. She had. . . . That was her aunt. They were, I think they did live in there for a while. But I never said anything about it, and WOULDN'T say anything about it, because. . . .

HARTER: Is that when she was elderly that she told you that?

BIRCHETT: Well, that's just before she died. And she was confused. And I got to the point where I didn't feel like I could go down to see her, because she'd be off and say something that I KNEW wasn't just quite right, you know. And then all of a sudden she'd be all right. And I always thought, well, she realized then that she had been confused. And I thought it would cause her more -- she'd feel

terrible about it, you know, because she was such a nice person, you know, and all that sort of thing.

HARTER: Very proud.

BIRCHETT: And I kind of hated to have her say that. (tape turned off and on)

(bird chirping)

HARTER: Mrs. Birchett, what kind of a bird is this?

BIRCHETT: Just a little black-chinned hummingbird. About half grown.

HARTER: Did it fall out of a nest here?

BIRCHETT: No, it was blown out, I think, and a little lady and two children brought it down to me last night. They're happy. I took it out of the box they had and put it on this little stand that I have for them. I just keep that outside, _____ hummingbird _____. So I put 'em on that, fixed him a little bottle of sweetened water. He took it right away.

HARTER: Oh, you're going to feed it right now.

BIRCHETT: Yes. Uh-huh.

HARTER: And what is it that you feed it?

BIRCHETT: Sweetened water.

HARTER: And what is this that you're using?

BIRCHETT: A medicine dropper. And this is just a little tiny bottle, isn't very big, it's only about three inches

high.

HARTER: And when he's hungry, he calls?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, he calls. He never sings, but he calls.

He calls, too. I mean, he makes himself known, yes, when he really wants to be fed. See, he's been begging here _____. (to bird) Are you hungry?

HARTER: When did you get interested in taking care of birds?

BIRCHETT: Oh, I guess after I started banding. The children would bring the crippled birds, you know, and then I'd just, well, take 'em in and do the best I could for them.

HARTER: Do you remember about what date that was that you started?

BIRCHETT: That was in 1940 when I started . . . (HARTER: Nineteen forty). . . I got my bird-banding license to trap and to band the birds. I tell the children, "to trap them," _____ "I can trap a lot of birds and bring to you to band." And I said, "Well, _____." He said, "No." "Well," I said, "I guess you'd better not do it then." And I told him that _____ a long time ago, because I saw in the paper here about, oh, two, three months ago, where one man was fined \$50 for trapping birds without a license. So I tried to tell the children those things, because I don't want to see them go to jail.

HARTER: Now, how soon after you started banding birds did you start having classes of children come here? For your. . . ?

BIRCHETT: Well, I had the classes, children that came, you know. So as soon as I had my license, why, they just started.

HARTER: And it just sort of happened? You didn't announce it or anything?

BIRCHETT: No, I didn't. I started in the first place with a young man at the University -- the College at that time -- wanted a place to band birds. He had a license to band birds, and he wanted a place where there'd be an open space and yet trees, and somebody who liked, you know, the birds. So he came down to see us and he wanted to know if he could leave his traps here.

HARTER: And of course this is close to the school, too.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And so we told him sure. And he would come down every morning, and at noon, and before he went home. And, of course, when he wasn't here, he wouldn't set the traps, you see, _____ birds. Never kept the traps overnight at the time. Of course we took them out, took them right out and banded them and turned them out -- never KEPT the birds, you know.

HARTER: As soon as they were banded, you would release them.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, that was a government regulation. So we were -- I was going to say, they banded birds down here for two years before I took over. But it got to the point where Vic depended on US to check 'em when he set the traps, you know.

HARTER: So you might as well do it yourself.

BIRCHETT: Right, yes. And then I applied for it and got it, and been doing it until this last year. I said _____ bands, you know, and decided that I wouldn't do that. I could see in the _____ that they were getting ready for _____, doing this. And there were some of the things that I think they asked that were rather complicated in some ways. They might ask me "how old is the bird?" that I had just banded. How would I know?! You see?

HARTER: Yes, you decided it's a good time to get out.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And so and then all the cats and dogs. The cats just came in, I got out, I had the traps, _____ one morning and I went out and there were five cats running around one of the traps I had. _____. Another morning I went out and there was six dogs, and some of those dogs would get up on top of the trap and mash it almost to the ground.

HARTER: The traps are made out of wire.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And so. . . .

HARTER: And they could knock it over, too.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, they could knock it over. The birds would be frightened, and they'd stick their heads out through the wire mesh, you know, just about one-inch chicken wire.

HARTER: Yes, trying to get out.

BIRCHETT: Trying to get out. And the cat would just grab their little heads off, just like that, you know.

HARTER: I suppose some of them were frightened to death, too.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, they would be. So I didn't think it was worth it to have that happen. When Mr. Birchett was living, he was going back and forth to his shop, and mowing and rolling and doing this and that in the garden or something.

HARTER: And he kept the dogs and cats away.

BIRCHETT: Kept the dogs and cats away. And he had his ammunition, he said (chuckles) always ready for 'em. Those were the sour oranges he'd throw at them. But I can't do that. Can't be out there every minute to watch. (to bird) Well, here, you want something to eat, huh? Do you want something to eat? That's right. Oh, you'd better open your mouth, or stick your tongue in there. That's it.

HARTER: Isn't that cute?!

BIRCHETT: He'll take about half of this. His little tongue's a "T" you know, and he sticks it up about halfway in there. I feed him about every, well, up to this age, I

feed him about every 15 minutes. But then when they get to be almost grown, I can stretch it out to about half an hour.

HARTER: You give them more, I suppose -- more at a feeding?

BIRCHETT: Yes. Well, they take more, and then I can stretch the time out.

HARTER: Do you measure the sugar and water?

BIRCHETT: I take two teaspoons full of sugar to a small, six-ounce glass of water. And then. . . .

HARTER: What was that, again?

BIRCHETT: Take a six-ounce glass of water and two teaspoons of sugar. . . .

HARTER: And that's level, or heaping?

BIRCHETT: No, just heaping. And I've seen where people _____ feeders, make it half and half. You don't have to do that. _____ little birds. In fact, someone said, "What color do they like?" Of course they've got all kinds of flowers. "Well," I said, "I tried that out. I had three tubes: one blue, one yellow, and one red. And I found that I had to fill the red one twice as often as I did the other two, so I've never bothered trying to put up the other color glasses." So, I've had. . . .

HARTER: That's interesting, they DO choose the color.

BIRCHETT: I think so. It proved to ME that they did. And not only that, but in putting -- they think they have to, sometimes, half and half, I'll see that advertised, you

know, for these feeders, have your sugar and water half and half. I don't think so, 'cause I've tried 'em out, and I don't think they like the heavy syrup as well as he does. . . .

HARTER: Maybe in this dry climate they need more water, too.

BIRCHETT: Well, that might be true, too, but I think that they just don't like it so heavy, because none of the flower nectar is that heavy.

HARTER: Uh-huh. Well, now, is he still hungry? (bird has continued to cheep)

BIRCHETT: Yeah. He may take a little.

HARTER: Or is he just talking?

BIRCHETT: Oh, he talks a lot. (pause) See, he's taking it. See his tongue?

HARTER: Oh, that little tongue! Oh, it's just as fine as a hair.

BIRCHETT: (to bird) Come on. Well, stick your tongue out.

HARTER: Yeah, I can see it.

BIRCHETT: You see how long it is.

HARTER: Oh, isn't that amazing?

BIRCHETT: It's twice as long as his bill.

HARTER: Isn't that amazing?!

BIRCHETT: He's about half grown.

HARTER: He's just about as big as a pecan, isn't he?

BIRCHETT: Yes, he is.

HARTER: One of the longer pecans, just about that size.

BIRCHETT: He weighs about 20 grams, I think it is. I weighed one and sent the weight. The government wanted to know the weight of hummingbirds, and I had one and weighed it and sent it in. And they said they had had four sent in to them. What I sent in was regulation size and weight. I had. . . . They're so light that you have to have a specialized scale.

HARTER: Yes, I guess so. Apothecary scales?

BIRCHETT: Yes. Uh-huh. I wish you could see him scratch his ear.

HARTER: With what?

BIRCHETT: With his little claw.

HARTER: He's got just an ordinary leg and foot, just like an ordinary bird.

BIRCHETT: No, he can't walk, he doesn't walk. And he has claws. If he'd light on you and I went to pull him off, he'd just hang on like that. He hangs on.

HARTER: He doesn't really have a leg, then?

BIRCHETT: Well, yes, he has a leg.

HARTER: Just a tiny little short leg.

BIRCHETT: About three-quarters of an inch long. And then he has his little claws. You can see how he does that. But when he wants to scratch his ear -- I've caught him at it --

this is the way he does. He wants to scratch this ear. Now, instead of putting it in front and scratching the top, he goes this way, behind his wing, and up here and scratches. (laughs) It's the funniest thing you ever saw!

HARTER: Must be double jointed!

BIRCHETT: Well, I think he is. But he does, he _____.

First time I saw him, I was so surprised.

HARTER: Will he step off on that, then?

BIRCHETT: On here?

HARTER: Uh-huh.

BIRCHETT: Yes, I believe he would.

HARTER: Look, his mouth is open! Oh, isn't that cute? Those are the shortest little legs.

BIRCHETT: I taught some classes, I said, "I'll have to teach him to fly next." Oh, boy, _____ "How can you teach him to fly? You can't fly."

HARTER: That's a sensible answer!

BIRCHETT: I said, "Well, I'll show you," and I put him _____. The next thing _____ exercised his wings, so they get stronger, you know. And the first thing you know, he just takes off and he goes off like that. Wouldn't you say that was teaching him to fly?

HARTER: Yes! There, see, he's exercising some more now.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, I do that often with 'em.

HARTER: Well, this is a treat, because I have never seen a

hummingbird. . . .

BIRCHETT: Close up, I guess.

HARTER: Close up -- or quiet -- they were always hovering.
Would he get on your finger?

BIRCHETT: Yes, but he likes something that he can. . . .

END SIDE ONE

BEGIN SIDE TWO

HARTER: Mrs. Birchett, I would like to have you tell me today about what you did for fun early in the century. Can you remember some of the things that you used to do for fun?

BIRCHETT: (inaudible)

HARTER: For instance, you were telling me the other day that they used to go swimming. Where did you swim?

BIRCHETT: At the Point of Rocks, over on the north side of the Butte, and. . . .

HARTER: Was that quite a deep swimming hole?

BIRCHETT: It was a deep swimming hole. The water ran all year round then. That was before they put in the dams.

HARTER: And there were nice sand banks?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes.

HARTER: And willow trees and cottonwood trees?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes.

HARTER: And watercress?

BIRCHETT: Everything there. And so they always went down.

(aside about flies) So. . . . And they had hayrides, you know, and dances -- they called them *bailes* at that time.

HARTER: *Bailes*?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh.

HARTER: That's the Spanish word.

BIRCHETT: That's the Spanish word for 'em.

HARTER: Did they have horse races?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, horse races. And they had badger fights.

HARTER: Real badgers?

BIRCHETT: Well, you wouldn't think so, if you saw them do it. That's what they TOLD them they were. Did you ever see them?

HARTER: No, what is a badger fight?

BIRCHETT: Well, a badger fight is something that they have a dog and a badger. The badger is a good fighter, and they have to -- they have some newcomer, you know.

HARTER: Tenderfoot.

BIRCHETT: Tenderfoot come in, and they work this up into a badger fight, so that you could see a badger fight. And they had a box that they had the dog in, you know; and they had a box where they had the badger in; and somebody would pull the string to let them out, you know, and have the fight and all that sort of thing. So they decided that they would kill this newcomer, (HARTER: Tenderfoot.) . . . tenderfoot, how they did it. And the badger was supposed to be -- he IS a good fighter, and the dog, of course, he HAD to fight if he was caught. But that was what they did. And. . . .

HARTER: And it really was a badger?

BIRCHETT: (chuckles) Well, that's what I was going to tell you. No, it wasn't. In that box they had a chamber.

HARTER: A chamber pot?

BIRCHETT: Yes. And it was filled with I don't know what, but you know, you can imagine all the things that were in there. And so when they got everybody all just ready, you know, to fight, why, then they had this man go sit down in a certain place where it was just right close, you know, to where they were gonna open this box and pull the string, and all over, like, you know. . . .

HARTER: Oh, and the box was up in the air?

BIRCHETT: Well, no, it was on the ground someplace, but some way or other they had it fixed so that it was. . . .

HARTER: When he pulled the string, it would tip it.

BIRCHETT: Yes, would tip it. He got the benefit of it. Of all the things, I thought that was the most terrible thing I ever heard of, you know. And of course. . . .

HARTER: I think that's fairly typical of that time.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes. And the men, oh, they got such a kick out of it, you know. And of course I think, I'm not sure but what this man from the creamery was introduced to THAT before he got into this other _____.

HARTER: You were saying something about this trick they played on the new manager of the creamery who came out from St. Louis. Can you tell us about that now?

BIRCHETT: Well, that was the man that was sent out, and he was a very congenial sort of a person. But he was rather

citified, you know, and he wasn't afraid of anything.

HARTER: So he said.

BIRCHETT: Yes, so he said. Of course they had Indians around here, you know. At that time, there were LOTS of Indians. And they used to come into town all the time. And these men who were working there at the creamery, they decided that they'd see how brave he was.

HARTER: How brave he REALLY was.

BIRCHETT: Yes, he really was. And so different men, different days -- they worked this up -- a number of days, so that he'd live there, and they'd say, two of 'em

_____. "Do you know if the Indians are coming, yet?"

"No, I don't know, but they ought to be in here pretty soon." And: "What are we going to do about it?"

"Well. . . ."

HARTER: And they'd always be careful to say it where he could hear it.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And every day there'd be a little something that he would hear, so as to warn him, you know, about these, until he got to the point where he didn't know whether he liked 'em or not. So Mr. Cook's wife was away. . . .

HARTER: Mr. Cook was the original manager of the creamery.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, and his wife was away. And they lived in the old Hayden place out there, two-and-a-half miles from

town, here, you know, right close to the creamery. So this Mr. Cook had asked this man to come and stay with him. And they had rooms upstairs. And so one night a lot of Indians came in, and some of 'em had bandannas around their head, and they had on these. . . .

HARTER: Were they on foot or on horseback?

BIRCHETT: Oh, a lot of 'em were on horseback, you know, and yipping and yelling -- and they could do it, too, you know.

HARTER: Oh, and it was. . . .

BIRCHETT: It was _____.

HARTER: They were just dressed up as Indians, they weren't real Indians.

BIRCHETT: Oh no, oh no, they were the _____ his workmen that were working out at the creamery _____. And so that night, why, here they came, roaring around the place, and they were sleeping upstairs. And they were yelling like Indians do. This man, Johnny Jones, he was part Indian himself, I think. At least, he could be a REAL Indian. He was. . . .

HARTER: He could act like one.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes. And he had a good voice.

HARTER: Like they're supposed to act.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And so they got up there and they were making all this noise, and Mr. Cook said, "Well, we gotta get out of here. If we just stay here, they'll burn the

house down on us, and they'll kill us, too." And so this man decided that he was going out on the balcony, he was gonna slide down on the column, you know, to the ground. And Mr. Cook said to him, "Well, it's a chance for you to get away." And so he did. He ran down outside. . . .

HARTER: I suppose in his nightshirt.

BIRCHETT: Oh, in his nightshirt, yes. And he slid down that post there, you know, that held the veranda up, and away he went. No shoes or anything. (laughter) He was barefooted.

HARTER: Right through the stickers.

BIRCHETT: And he went right through a stubble field. They had cut the corn, you know, and the stubbles were like that.

HARTER: Oh! And in the dark.

BIRCHETT: In the dark, and he went through a barbed wire fence, and he went just as hard as he could go to get down to the creamery. And there was a man there at the creamery kind of subdued him a little bit, you know. He took him home that night. Well, the next day, he didn't have much to say. He come back to work that day. And then the next day, he decided he was going back home.

HARTER: Oh, he went back to St. Louis?

BIRCHETT: Back to St. Louis that next day.

HARTER: He'd had enough Indians.

BIRCHETT: He'd had enough Indians. And I was told he came

through here once afterward, and he couldn't help but laugh about it then, you know.

HARTER: Did they tell him that it was just a put up job, that it wasn't real Indians?

BIRCHETT: I suppose they did, I don't know. I assume they would. But they got scared, 'cause he was going over those stubbles. You know, why, he could fall and had an eye put out, you might say. A lot of things there. And he was scared to death when he got down there. At the . . . I don't know whether you remember Olive Griffin -- it was her husband.

HARTER: I remember the name.

BIRCHETT: Well, it was her husband that was at the creamery. And he (laughing) felt sorry for the fellow, and he stayed up most of the rest of the night with him there.

HARTER: Trying to get him calmed down.

BIRCHETT: Yes, calmed down. And he was scared, too, because he didn't know WHAT happened to him. And so he was back here once, and of course he then understood it all, you know. But he wasn't HALF as smart then as he was when he first came out here, you know. It was something fun to do.

And I know that Dr. Moeur was in on it, because he had this little old -- I guess it was a Maxwell car, I think the first one that he had. And . . . I don't know whether there was any top on it or not, but anyway, _____ he was driving

out on the hood of the car when they went in. They had the most fun _____.

HARTER: I know they did a lot of practical jokes in those days. That was typical.

BIRCHETT: Said you could see the whites of. . . . Just the thing to do, but they did it just the same.

HARTER: Yes. Mrs. Birchett, you said something about shivarees. Could you tell us about those?

BIRCHETT: Well, I know they were very frequent.

HARTER: Well, what . . . exactly what is a shivaree?

BIRCHETT: Well, it's when some of their friends were getting married, the boy and girl were there, and after they were married, and they went to go back to the car or whatever, they were supposed to get away from the place where they were married, the church, you know. They had all planned a shivaree. And they would abduct the groom -- and that was the main thing -- and they'd take him, sometimes keep him all night -- away from his bride, you know. And they would put up all kinds of stories and do all kinds of tricks. I couldn't tell you all the things that they did do.

HARTER: Did they make a lot of noise?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, they made a lot of noise.

HARTER: How would they make this noise? Shoot guns?

BIRCHETT: Well, they might, I don't know. But they'd have

tin cans tied together, you know, and make a lot of noise with that. They were doing all sorts of tricks to the car, so that. . . .

HARTER: Letting the air out of the tires and things like that?

BIRCHETT: Yes. I know there was a couple that got married up at the Methodist Church right up here, and then they started out, but these friends of theirs, they figured it out. They didn't ask 'em anything about it, because after a little while, before they got down here, a brother and some of the friends of the groom came into the alley and they were doing some things out there, and I wondered what they were doing. They were taking parts off of a car, or something, you know. And they. . . . But they took the part of the wheel where it goes onto the axle, you might say, and they put rocks in there, you know, so it would make a. . . .

HARTER: A horrible noise!

BIRCHETT: And then they had tin cans tied together.

HARTER: And they would tie those to the car?

BIRCHETT: Yes, and then they'd fix something on the car so that it'd go about a mile and then it would stop. They didn't know what they were going to do. I don't know what they planned then.

HARTER: Take out some of the gas or something?

BIRCHETT: Well, I don't know how they managed it, but that was what they told me afterwards.

HARTER: So the car would stall.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And I said, "Well, how in the world did they ever. . . ." See, the brother had the car, supposed to have the car placed out somewhere, where he could take them right to the car from the church, and the groom wouldn't. . . .

HARTER: Suspect anything.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, or the groom wouldn't be taken, you know, abducted. They were anxious to get away by themselves. And the brother was supposed to have a car parked.

HARTER: All ready.

BIRCHETT: And they parked it right down here in my alley. And I didn't know anything about it, but when I saw what was going on, I went out and I said. . . . Well, one of the boys -- the boy that got married, and his brother both had worked for me, mowing the lawn for me, for a number of years. And he just thought, "Well, now, that's a good place. We'll take it there, and nobody'll ever think about coming down there to find the car."

HARTER: Oh, he was afraid of a shivaree.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And so he told his brother that. And then, when they got the car down here, this gang came and they did all the. . . .

HARTER: The brother was in on it, then?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, the brother was in on it. And they did all kinds of things to the car, you know. The car, I don't know whether it was out of gas or what it was. Went about a mile after they got through. I never heard much more about it, the rest of the night, you know. But they had a lot of fun. Of course, they did that right along, all the time, you know. They had a lot of fun.

HARTER: I think if I had gotten married in that time, I'd have eloped.

BIRCHETT: Well, that's what they wanted to do after they left the church. They wanted to get out and away, you know. But the brother and these other boys were all in together. Of course the other brother trusted his brother, and it didn't work out. He said when HE got married, why, he's gonna pay him back, you know. He was married, this boy that _____ was married.

HARTER: Uh-huh, the one that brought the car down here.

BIRCHETT: And he said, "Now, just don't forget what they did to me when I got married." So he was paying off, you might say. Then they had these, oh, snipe hunts. They'd take some -- usually it was some schoolboy or a young man.

HARTER: A tenderfoot.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, tenderfoot. And they would go out hunting, and they knew of a certain place to go, and they

did this and they did that, and they talked to these boys about going, you know, like that. And. . . .

HARTER: All very serious.

BIRCHETT: Yes. And so they decided that they were going snipe hunting. You know that's the little bird -- a snipe is a little bird, you know -- and so they're going snipe hunting. So they'd take these boys out way off someplace. Then they'd leave him there with a sack. And. . . .

HARTER: Holding the bag.

BIRCHETT: Holding the bag. And then they'd go upstream or something like that, you know.

HARTER: And they'd say they were gonna drive this snipe down and he was supposed to catch it.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And of course they went away, you know.

HARTER: And just left him there.

BIRCHETT: And left him there. And maybe he was five or six miles from town, or wherever they wanted to have him where it was hard for him to get back. And he wouldn't get back before morning, hardly. You know, he had to walk back.

HARTER: I can tell you an experience WE had with that, but it was back in the East. We were up in Connecticut one summer and there was a city girl there that was a pretty good sport, but she didn't know anything at all about the country. And so we told her about the snipe hunt, you know, and it was something she really shouldn't miss. And so we

got her all lined up to hold the bag, you know. And so then we squatted down in -- it was an old cemetery. We squatted down behind the tombstones to see how she'd take it, you know, and we were giggling there quietly, and squatting there behind the tombstones to see what she would do. And then finally we sneaked off real quietly and went back to where we were staying. But the joke was on us. You know why? We were squatting in poison ivy! We got the most terrible dose.

BIRCHETT: (laughs) Really, you were well paid, weren't you?!

BIRCHETT: Yes, we were. (tape turned off and on)

HARTER: You were comparing the practical jokes that they did in those days with the kind of fun that they have now.

BIRCHETT: Well, it was all good clean fun, and nothing vicious about it, and nothing really that caused them any. . . . I think the man who made this man go across the stubble field and through the wire fence, I think they were more scared than they wanted to be, because they didn't realize that he would do such a thing, you know.

HARTER: You were saying that that night they shot off guns, too, to make it more realistic.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes.

HARTER: Did they have any drums, do you suppose, any tom-toms?

BIRCHETT: I don't know, but they made a noise.

HARTER: But you know they did shoot guns into the air.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes. And I think they kind of chased him, you know, on through this stubble field.

HARTER: Yelling.

BIRCHETT: Yelling and all. Oh, I tell you, that was -- I think it was kind of pretty hard. I was going to say that that building there, where Mr. Cook lived, was afterwards bought by the Hayden people, Carl Hayden and his wife.

_____.

HARTER: I don't know.

BIRCHETT: I have to remember now, who it was.

HARTER: Oh, Mrs. Birchett, the other day you started to tell me about your husband's grocery business.

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes.

HARTER: He was in the grocery business for quite a few years, wasn't he?

BIRCHETT: Yes, about '91 [1891] to 1917.

HARTER: Could you tell us what a grocery store was like in those days?

BIRCHETT: It was very different in those days. They had no refrigeration, you might say, as we have today. They had. . . . SOME of the grocery stores would have a little butcher shop in there. That came in. First it was just nothing but the . . . a butcher shop. But then they kind of added it.

HARTER: Combined it?

BIRCHETT: Combined it. And they had those.

HARTER: How would they keep their meat, then, if there was no refrigeration?

BIRCHETT: Well, they had ice, you know, and they kept those like that. And it was hard trying to keep fresh fruit or anything, you know. You had to just buy it up almost the day it came in. And at that time, most of the fruit, and lots of the vegetables, came in from California. They were shipped from over there.

HARTER: Oh, in refrigerated cars with ice.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And of course the town was small, you know.

HARTER: Did lots of people raise their own fruits and vegetables in those days?

BIRCHETT: Not many of them. The farmers, you would think that they would, but they never did. They said they couldn't fool around with that. They could buy it cheaper than they could have their men work it up and do that, you know.

HARTER: I suppose that if they DID have gardens, it was usually the womenfolks who did most of it.

BIRCHETT: Oh yes, they would do that.

HARTER: And they would can the fruit, too.

BIRCHETT: I remember Joe had _____.

HARTER: Yes.

BIRCHETT: Well, he went out in the morning and he took orders.

HARTER: Was that on foot, or in a car, or a bicycle?

BIRCHETT: On a bicycle. And he went to every home, and always kept track of the new people that were coming in.

HARTER: Every house in town?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And he canvassed the town. Of course, as I said, it was small, you know, and it wasn't too many. I don't know if they canvassed the Mexican town [Barrio al Centro], you know, but any new person coming in, they wanted to get the new customers, you know. And so he would go out in the morning and take orders and they would order whatever they wanted for the day. And he'd come back in and get in about, oh, half past ten. He'd go the first thing in the morning, and he'd get back in about half past ten, or something like that. And he'd pick all of these groceries up and send them out. . . .

HARTER: What would they send them in? Did they have paper bags in those days?

BIRCHETT: Yes, they had paper bags. And they sent them out. They had horse and -- I don't know what you'd call it. It wasn't a buggy, but it was. . . .

HARTER: A wagon.

BIRCHETT: A wagon, some kind of a light wagon, you know.

HARTER: Was a spring wagon a light wagon, or was it a heavy wagon?

BIRCHETT: I think it was a light wagon. This was a light wagon. It was painted black, I think, most of the time.

HARTER: Black?!

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, it wasn't like a real wagon, you know. I mean, it didn't LOOK like a real wagon.

HARTER: Not like what they called a lumber wagon.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And so. . . .

HARTER: It was painted black, like a buggy, is that it?

BIRCHETT: Yes. And this man would deliver these orders that he had taken.

HARTER: Mr. Empey would do the delivering too?

BIRCHETT: No, he didn't, it was a man that. . . . They all go in, everyone in the store go in and helped to put up those orders, and then they went out about eleven o'clock and they delivered everything, up to eleven o'clock. Of course there were people coming in and out of the store, but that's the way they started, you might say.

HARTER: Now, tell me, did people run bills in those days?

BIRCHETT: Oh, yes, some of them paid by the year -- the farmers would pay by the year.

HARTER: Oh, I heard about that.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And of course some of 'em paid by ____.

HARTER: The townspeople would pay by the month, maybe?

BIRCHETT: Yes, most of 'em did. And . . . I remember one that was always there the first of the month -- maybe a little more than that. But I also remember this man, it was G. R. Finch. That was the Finch that's in Washington now.

HARTER: The cabinet, uh-huh.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, his father.

HARTER: Was it his father or his grandfather?

BIRCHETT: I guess maybe his grandfather . . . (HARTER: His grandfather.) . . . because his father was born here, his boy was born here. The man in Washington. . . .

HARTER: Was born here?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. And they moved to California when he was a small child. I remember him. And so his grandfather, he was a Republican, for one thing, and that was a rarity at that time, you know, because everybody was a Democrat, you might say. But he always did a good job, and every first of the month. . . .

HARTER: You could depend on him.

BIRCHETT: He was always there, you know. And he ran the livery stable, and also had. . . . What did they call it now? He used to take groups of people over to a concert or something like that -- the tally ho. Uh-huh, he had the tally ho. And he'd take them over.

HARTER: Over to where, Phoenix?

BIRCHETT: Phoenix, for, like, Schuman Hite might be there. Something like that, something that would be very, you'd want so much to see it. And he used to take a whole group of 'em like that. . . .

HARTER: I guess it would take quite a while to get there.

BIRCHETT: Well, it did take quite a little while, I think.

HARTER: Several hours.

BIRCHETT: Well, no, I don't think so, because he had horses, you know, and he could go. . . .

HARTER: The roads were not very good, though.

BIRCHETT: No, they weren't, but the horses and everything fitted in, you know. But that was the way they had of going over to anything very unusual that they especially wanted.

HARTER: How many passengers would the tally ho carry?

BIRCHETT: Oh, I think 15 or 20 of 'em.

HARTER: Is that right?!

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh.

HARTER: Well, he must have had SEVERAL horses then.

BIRCHETT: Well, he might have, I don't remember.

HARTER: I suppose you could look that up.

BIRCHETT: Yes. I don't know as I ever went over on it, because we always had our own way of going over, you know. But there were a lot of people that didn't have, so that was the way it was done, and he was always nice about it. He could get these crowds up, like the Normal School, you know, when they wanted to go over. It was really a very, very fine thing that he would do. But I also remember that he was always there the first hour the store was open on the first day of the month, _____ always _____.

HARTER: Mrs. Birchett, what was it like -- what did the

store look like in those days? If you were to go into your husband's store early in the century, what would you see?

BIRCHETT: Well, he always had his fruit and vegetables that he could have delivered from the market in Phoenix. They'd go down and get the -- well, they delivered the fruit from California, they delivered. . . .

HARTER: From the Phoenix Market?

BIRCHETT: Well, might have been, too, but I was thinking it was sent direct, you know.

HARTER: Oh, direct to HIM.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh, to him. And he'd have that over to one side.

HARTER: Was there a telephone in those days?

BIRCHETT: Yes.

HARTER: There was a telephone.

BIRCHETT: Our telephone here at the house -- we had one at the store, I can't remember the number of that. I think it was 15, at first. But anyway, _____ they had _____ one, got 13 because nobody wanted 13. My husband said, "I'm not superstitious, I'll take it." So he was 13. And then they added a nine on it, making it 913. Now they have 967-2193 [sic].

HARTER: Oh, in other words, they just kept adding on numbers.

BIRCHETT: Two, nine, and then the one, three.

HARTER: You mean here at your own home?

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. But my phone was the 13th phone that was put in, in Tempe.

HARTER: Here at the house?

BIRCHETT: In Tempe.

HARTER: But I mean your house phone, not the store phone.

BIRCHETT: Yes, the house phone.

HARTER: And you still have the 13 in your number.

BIRCHETT: Yes.

HARTER: That's very interesting.

BIRCHETT: And of course there weren't so many people in these blocks around here. I don't think there was anything more in this block here. There was a little place over here where they made soda pop.

HARTER: Oh yes, a soft drink bottler, uh-huh.

BIRCHETT: That wasn't there. The building was there, it was never run after I came here, but the building was there. Torn down just the other day, a short time ago.

HARTER: Well, now, I remember from my childhood that Mother bought flour and sugar in hundred-pound sacks.

BIRCHETT: Yes.

HARTER: Was that common?

BIRCHETT: Well, I think so.

HARTER: And what about beans? Were they sold in sacks, too, or in bulk?

BIRCHETT: Well, in bulk or in sacks, too.

HARTER: Would that be cloth sacks?

BIRCHETT: Yes, I think that would be cloth sacks.

And. . . .

HARTER: And what about canned goods? Was there a lot of canned goods?

BIRCHETT: Yes, there was quite a lot of canned goods.

HARTER: But not all this packaged stuff that we have nowadays.

BIRCHETT: No, and it wasn't packaged like it is today, you know. And I know the fruit, and the flies of course. They had an open front to the store, you know, and the flies would get in, and they'd have this tangle _____ everywhere.

HARTER: Fly paper.

BIRCHETT: Fly paper. And they used fly spray and all that sort of thing. And I. . . . They had mosquito netting over the fruit and stuff like that.

HARTER: Things like very ripe grapes, and things, I suppose.

BIRCHETT: To keep them out, you know, and keep them clean.

HARTER: And there was a long counter, wasn't there? And you went to the counter and the clerk picked out the things for you.

BIRCHETT: Uh-huh. It was quite an experience, too. They would have with the Indians. The Indians came in, and they

looked all around over the store, and they'd pick up something and pay for it. That's what they wanted. And then they'd go around, maybe in a half-hour they'd come back and they'd get something else and they'd pay for it. And that's the way they used to shop. And when we were first in business, the Indians used to come in here and Lukin's Store was up here. Do you know where Manley's Store used to be?

HARTER: Was it over here across from the City Hall? No, Manley's Store was up. . . .

BIRCHETT: Up over across from the main building of the college.

HARTER: Oh, yes, across from Old Main.

BIRCHETT: Well, the Indians used to come in there, and they had a corral, I guess it was, there. And they didn't have to have a corral, they just untied the horses, you know, and let them stand. The wagons were there, and they. . . .

END SIDE TWO

END OF INTERVIEW