

Doug and Millie Hay Interview

by Vi Kowalchuk

Hay: We belonged to this young people's group and we played tennis up here.

Kowalchuk: Tennis?

Hay: We had a tennis court out on the lawn.

Kowalchuk: Who built the tennis court?

Hay: These teachers that we had, we had two teachers that played tennis and they come and played early in the morning. Sunday morning they'd come here at 9:00.

Kowalchuk: Really, and this was on your property?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: So your dad and mother had a tennis court?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: And they built it or they had someone build it?

Hay: It was a lawn court, you know.

Kowalchuk: Well.

Hay: And we used to go skating on the lake up there.

Kowalchuk: Lake, which lake?

Hay: Right across from Colinton corner, you know. You know there's a bit of lake in the bush just up on the highway.

Hay: We call it Fraser Lake.

Kowalchuk: Is that what it's called?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: You don't mean between Athabasca and Colinton.

Hay: Yeah, right where the Colinton filling station was, just across the road, there's a little lake there.

Kowalchuk: Yes, yes, oh sure, all right, I know now.

Hay: We used to clean that off and go skating, and there was one night, Dad's hired man was so busy putting the coffee on, you know, he used to take a ten-pound lard pail to make coffee in, and he says, "I'll put the water on for the coffee," and he puts the lid on tight. And I'm sitting there lacing my skates and this thing exploded, and I was burned from the knee right down to my ankle. It all came up in a big . . . and we were there with a team. I didn't dare say anything when I got home, because my Dad would have been . . .

Kowalchuk: Would have been quite upset, eh?

Hay: You were so foolish to be . . . should have been working.

Kowalchuk: Yeah, oh sure.

Hay: And then . . .

Hay: There was about that, you know, we had that team out there and nothing else and it took quite a while to get in. There was two people living, two men, I don't know what their names were, now they were supposed to be some kind of carpenter or wallpaper people or something like that, they lived in a hut dug in the bank there, and we went to them and asked for something, and they said, "Well the only thing we have is some flour here," so they give us this flour to put on . . .

Kowalchuk: Really, on your blistered foot or leg.

Hay: And then we used to take in all the little schoolhouse dancers. There was a dance out at Key school a couple of nights after that. We went to that dance and we were sitting having lunch and of course everybody brought their kids and these kids were sliding on the floor, and this kid went to fall, and he grabbed my leg and just tore it up, twisted right up.

Kowalchuk: Dear, so you didn't do anything more for it other than put the flour on.

Hay: Well, what could you do?

Kowalchuk: Well, did your mother and dad know about it?

Hay: My mother did, but my dad never did.

Kowalchuk: You were afraid to tell him. So did it get infected at all?

Hay: No problem at all.

Kowalchuk: These dances, you'd have a live orchestra.

Hay: Well, yeah, usually a violin and maybe a guitar and a drum, and sometimes if there were a piano in the school, they had someone chord on the piano. Mrs. King used to chord a lot on the piano. And . . .

Kowalchuk: Would it be local people then that played?

Hay: Oh yes. Usually the Mitchell brothers.

Kowalchuk: Oh.

Hay: There was Abb and Bill and Bob.

Kowalchuk: Oh is that right. I haven't heard the name.

Hay: Frank, and then Marion Mitchell played the drums and he was just a little sawed-off kid like this, and he played the drums until he fell asleep, he'd go to sleep, and then we wouldn't have any drums anymore.

Kowalchuk: How much would you have to pay for admission?

Hay: Well, the ladies took lunch and the men paid 25 cents.

Hay: Yeah, and lots of them didn't have 25 cents.

Kowalchuk: Yes, so what happened?

Hay: But I was a rich guy. I always had 25 cents so I paid the way and the guy that took me there, he had a car. I didn't have a car.

Kowalchuk: Oh, you didn't.

Hay: But he didn't have very much gas so he usually pinched the gas out of his father's tank, you know. And when he didn't get a chance to do that, then I had to buy a little gas.

Kowalchuk: How much was gas then?

Hay: 25 cents.

Kowalchuk: A gallon.

Hay: It finally got very expensive. It got up to 35 cents.

Kowalchuk: Dances, so that would have been a fun . . .

Hay: And then we went out to one out there with team and Bart Gight. ^{Gyte}

Hay: We used to go as far as Silver Fox by team.

Kowalchuk: Oh, did you? And concerts, did you put on concerts?

Hay: We put on concerts; we put on quite a few plays. We put it on in Colinton, Athabasca, and Boyle.

Kowalchuk: Oh, you'd go to different, oh.

Hay: And we put on Charley's _____ one year. And I played opposite the minister, Mr. Jones, and he could not remember his lines, so he come somewhere near and then I would have to make up . . . to carry on.

Kowalchuk: And church, of course, was church quite a central thing in your lives?

Hay: Yes, it was. We never missed it on Sunday unless you were ill or something, and usually ended up here for tea.

Kowalchuk: Did you?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Tea at the Hays on Sunday afternoon. Now when you say . . .

Hay: On a Sunday afternoon, the whole congregation.

Kowalchuk: I was just going to say, you said "we," but you didn't just mean your family?

Hay: No, the whole congregation.

Kowalchuk: Really, how did that start?

Hay: Well, mother always expected some people so I don't know how they, sometimes there were room for us all around and sometimes us kids had to wait until . . .

Kowalchuk: Right in this house?

Hay: Not this house. The other one. We very seldom went to a show because you had to go with a team, too, and the show was 20 cents, and it cost you 10 cents to put your horses in the living stable.

Kowalchuk: And then you'd have to go to Athabasca.

Hay: And occasionally Mr. Jack brought a show into his hall.

Kowalchuk: Oh, he had, now . . .

Hay: He had a hall.

Kowalchuk: He did.

Hay: Yeah, you know, where his hardware store was. It was above the hardware store.

Kowalchuk: Oh, I see.

Hay: But then it got condemned because the floor was beginning to . . .

Kowalchuk: So he had dances up there.

Hay: Oh yes.

Hay: Do you remember anything about Bill Birge?

Kowalchuk: The name, I remember the name.

Hay: Because whenever they talk about that Norman Zak hall, you know, he was up there, he was a pretty tough guy, you know: rough, and not very nice. And we were having a dance up there; we were all there; I was just learning to dance. I don't know anything about her then, but the thing that took me some fancy about this, Bill Birge was trying to bring in a bunch of guys for nothing, you know, and Norman didn't like it very good. He said everybody had to pay, and he was having

quite a little fuss about this, and I heard my Dad and Pat Flynn. Says, "You know, we should toss that guy down the stairs." And, you know, they grabbed him so doggone easy, one on each side, and they took him to the foot of the steps and they said, "Look out!" Like that, and he landed at the bottom there.

Kowalchuk: Oh my.

Hay: And he never come back into the halls.

Kowalchuk: Isn't that something. So did he build that store specifically with the idea of the hall up above?

Hay: No, he had a _____ stable down by the river crossing and when there was no call for that, he moved it up and renovated it and he had a garage underneath and the hall upstairs, and then he went into the hardware and built that other piece on. By that time, they turned the other part into living quarters because he couldn't use it as a hall.

Kowalchuk: Yes, that's right, I remember them when we came to Colinton, they were living upstairs. That's right, yes. So you were married then in, you parted for a couple of years, you were married in, what did you say, 1938, on January the 11th.

Hay: That's how I come by that. I didn't buy it.

Kowalchuk: Of course not. So when, now did you have to ask her parents or her father for her hand in marriage?

Hay: My dad never spoke to me for two years.

Kowalchuk: What are you saying?

Hay: I'm saying that my Dad said I was the youngest one in the family and it was my duty to stay home and look after them.

Kowalchuk: Oh, I see.

Hay: And so when I got married, he never batted an eye.

Kowalchuk: He practically disowned you.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Well.

Hay: I don't think he ever set foot in our house.

Kowalchuk: Really, because those old country people were like that sometimes, I guess, weren't they?

Hay: Mother did though.

Kowalchuk: Mothers are different though, aren't they?

Hay: My Dad was very obstinate. You know he weighed about 250 pounds and my mother weighed about 95, but when she shook her finger at him, he moved.

Kowalchuk: Well.

Hay: But when he . . .

Kowalchuk: He didn't like that.

Hay: But what he said was law otherwise. But he didn't boss her around.

Kowalchuk: Isn't that interesting, eh? So he didn't like the fact that you were going to get married.

Hay: No, he said that it was my duty to stay home.

Kowalchuk: He probably didn't attend your wedding then.

Hay: No, never even closed the bar.

Kowalchuk: So obviously you didn't go to her dad to ask him for her hand in marriage, eh?

Hay: I didn't think . . .

Kowalchuk: You knew how he felt.

Hay: She was of age and I was of age.

Kowalchuk: And you knew how Mr. Talpash felt.

Hay: We always got along good together.

Hay: Yeah, but it wouldn't have mattered who it was.

Kowalchuk: That's right, it has nothing to do with you.

Hay: No, it has nothing to do with me. But he just felt that it was my duty to . . .

Kowalchuk: And I'm surprised in those days that you didn't obey and that you were quite independent and decided you would go ahead and get married.

Hay: Well, you know, there wasn't what was a future? Now if I stayed with them, you know . . .

Kowalchuk: You thought about that.

Hay: I thought about that, and my dad didn't believe in dancing, he didn't believe in cards, and what were there have been for me? You couldn't have people in, you know.

Kowalchuk: So you realized at that, even when you were eighteen . . .

Hay: That wasn't any good.

Kowalchuk: That wasn't any good, no.

Hay: Well, you see, like my sister-in-law would want to go to a dance and so we'd say to mother, "There's a dance at so and so place, and we're going." Well we'd go into our bedroom and get dressed and lock the door and go out the window.

Kowalchuk: Really, because that's the only way you'd get to go.

Hay: Otherwise, he'd be after Mom.

Kowalchuk: Make the girls stay home.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Very strict, very strict. My goodness.

Hay: So, when they sold the hotel and moved down there, you know, and Mother Talpash wasn't feeling very good that day, so she says, "You better do the washing."

Hay: She wanted him to buy her a washing machine. He said, "For two people you don't need a washing machine." So mom was ill this day, and she'd started washing, and she went to bed, and she said to dad, "You finish the washing." He come up to the store, sweat was pouring off him, Order me a washing machine.

Kowalchuk: Uh, he realized how tough it is. When you said when they moved down there, what are you saying?

Hay: Well, they bought the little house just right across from the Anglican Church. A little stuccoed, it was stuccoed, and it's got siding on it now.

Kowalchuk: I see. So without your father's blessing, then, you went ahead and got married. What kind of plans, who helped you with the plans, and what was your wedding like? You just celebrated your fiftieth anniversary . . .

Hay: I think we had twelve people at our reception and Edith Ring was our bridesmaid, Doug's brother, Angus, was our best man, and we were married in the early afternoon.

Kowalchuk: In the Anglican church?

Hay: In the Anglican church we were the second wedding in the new church.

Kowalchuk: Were you?

Hay: No we were the third wedding because Mr. and Mrs. Jones, the minister and his wife were the first ones married, my brother and his wife were the second, and we were the third.

Kowalchuk: Oh, who was the minister there?

Hay: Jones.

Kowalchuk: Oh yes, Jones, T.L. Jones.

Hay: T. Dale. And we borrowed his Dad's car to go on our honeymoon to the city, just to Edmonton, and on the way in a horse, it was really icy, and a horse decided to cross right in front of us. So we hit the horse and broke a headlight off the car.

Hay: But the horse fell down on the road and slid along on the ice and then it jumped up and run across the road.

Kowalchuk: Oh, so it was okay. But it scared you.

Hay: Oh yes.

Hay: But she didn't tell you the funniest part about it. Before we left, Sam says, "You're going to Edmonton, eh?" "Yeah, I'm going to Edmonton." "Well," he says, "how about me coming along with you on your honeymoon?"

Hay: Well, I never heard of that before, but I said, "I guess you can come if you want to sit in the back seat."

Kowalchuk: Oh you took him.

Hay: Yeah, we took him.

Kowalchuk: Did you have a little meal after the ceremony?

Hay: Yes.

Kowalchuk: And where did you have it?

Hay: At the hotel.

Kowalchuk: Oh I see. And your Dad was not there?

Hay: No, he never showed up at all.

Kowalchuk: That must have hurt you and hurt your mother.

Hay: Well, we understood him.

Kowalchuk: So there you went to Edmonton on your honeymoon. Where did you stay?

Hay: At the King Edward hotel, and some friends took us out to what was the Chasta, do you remember the Chasta?

Kowalchuk: That name, I don't remember, I just have heard the name.

Hay: Anyway, it was supposed to be quite a _____ in the city at the time, and this friend took us there and we had quite a party. And one of his friends borrowed his car to take his girlfriend home, and we waited and we waited, never come back, and nobody showed, and the people wanted to close up and so they said you better break this up pretty soon, so we're just waiting on the car to pick us up. Pretty soon another fellow comes along and has this girl and this man with him and they had run into the ditch somewhere along the river, and she had just high heeled shoes and silk stockings and it was forty below. No he came back, and we asked him where the girl was and he said, "I left in the Gavin's barn with some horses to try and keep her warm."

Kowalchuk: Sure.

Hay: You know, when you go along that river road there, this is where these guys were when they run into the trouble, and he realized, this guy that was with her, realized that she'd never stand anywhere with these nylons and dressed the way she was. They were both dressed real light.

Kowalchuk: You did have nylons then?

Hay: Yeah.

Hay: He says, "I think there's a barn up here somewhere. Be better than standing out in the cold." And so they went up. She was scared to death, but he says, the closer you can get to the horses, the warmer you'll be. And so when we she was right in the stall between the horses and she hadn't got a frostbite at all.

Hay: So then they picked her up, her fur coat was covered with straw.

Hay: First of all, she'd laid down on the floor, you know, and then when she got cold, she moved in towards the horses.

Hay: So anyway, this was about 1:00 in the morning, here we're taking this couple up to our room with this straw. I was so ashamed.

Kowalchuk: Is that right? How much was the room? What did you pay for a room?

Hay: Well, I don't remember.

Kowalchuk: You didn't, eh?

Hay: It was mighty cheap.

Kowalchuk: Was it? I suppose in those days.

Hay: I don't remember.

Kowalchuk: Had you gone to the city much previous to that?

Hay: Yeah, quite a bit.

Kowalchuk: Quite a bit. You probably did, too. So it wasn't anything that new to you then.

Hay: No.

Hay: But we had a hired girl that was fifteen and she decided that she would like to finish her education; she lived out the Vincent way, so we said, "Okay, you come and stay with us and go to school. When you're not at school, you can help milk." And you know that girl had never seen a street car, never been to town.

Kowalchuk: Of course, in those days, Edmonton was full of street cars. What do you remember of those days? Oh sorry, I'm interrupting your story; finish your story.

Hay: We decided to take her town, and by gosh, she wanted to go. And we signed up at the desk there, you know, and we walked across the lobby into the elevator, and I guess she wondered walked into something like this, was wondering what kind of a room this is, and all of a sudden it starts to go up. (Takes a deep breath), oh sheez.

Kowalchuk: Well, never seen it. Imagine that. Totally new experience for her.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: What do you remember of Edmonton in those days?

Hay: Well, I can remember going staying in with a girlfriend and going skating on the rink and skating to music.

Kowalchuk: Oh yes.

Hay: And I remember going to shows.

Kowalchuk: Did you?

Hay: We never had anything to spend.

Kowalchuk: No, nothing extra, that's for sure.

Hay: Not very much.

Kowalchuk: So were you quite well off when you decided to marry Millie?

Hay: Was I well off?

Kowalchuk: You were quite well off, were you?

Hay: Yeah, I was really well off. I had a few cattle, you know. When I got out of school, I decided that cows were pretty cheap then, so it would be a good idea to buy a cow once in a while whenever I got that money. Sometimes I got a cow for \$25. Sometimes I had to pay \$35. Sometimes I got them for \$30. I accumulated maybe thirty head of cattle. So when I decided to get married, I turned nice cattle into money. And so I said to _____ which was the Pool man, then, the Pool Elevator, and he had a buyer that would come to look at your cattle and tell you how much. He was in partnership with this fellow. So he come, he says, "Where are your cattle?" He was drunk. So I says, "There up on the other place, I'll go get them." So I jumped on the horse and went and brought the cattle down, put them in the corral. And you know he would fall off the fence, and he'd climb back up on the fence, then he looked at them a little bit, and then he said, "Well, maybe a \$150." And I says, "Maybe you won't buy them." "Well, I don't care." And he fell off the fence again, and away he went. And so I went back to Si the next day; it was Monday, and I says, "Si, what kind of a guy was that you sent over there?" I says, "He offered me a \$150 for the cattle." I says, "I know they're not worth very much but they're worth more than that."

Kowalchuk: Oh yes, I was going to ask what you would expect for a cow.

Hay: So he come . . . Oh, well, they were down from a lot from what I paid for them. I didn't expect to get what I had paid for them. These were days when some people shipped cattle and they got a bill for the freight. So Si come along and he says, "Well," he says, "he was a little low all right." I says, "What do you mean by a little low?" "Well," he says, "I'll give you \$225 for them." So that made us rich.

Kowalchuk: More than enough money for the honeymoon, eh? Well, you did all right then. So, you only sold the one when you got married?

Hay: No, this wasn't one, this was the whole bunch.

Kowalchuk: Oh, for the whole herd?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh, I see. So you didn't do that well. I was thinking you got that much for a head.

Hay: No, for the whole heard. But then there was cows, and there was steers, and there was calves.

Kowalchuk: How many would you have had?

Hay: About thirty head.

Kowalchuk: About thirty head, \$225, oh my.

Hay: So then we started buying the odd cow again as we could build up our dairy herd.

Hay: See, his wages were \$40 a month. We ate off of that. We bought some stuff, we furnished a house.

Kowalchuk: You must have managed your money well. You were making \$40 a month working at . . .

Hay: For his dad.

Kowalchuk: For your dad then, yes.

Hay: And then, you see, the way that I finally that, Dad said, "Well, you better buy into the business." "What am I going to pay for it with?" You know, "I just have enough to pay my bill, and sometimes we have a little bit over." That wasn't what

was worrying me, because I was thinking Mill, you know, the way she was working, holy cow, she'd go out and get these cattle and bring them in and sometimes when there wasn't a man around, she'd start milking. We delivered milk all over town.

Kowalchuk: So you people had a dairy farm when you were first married.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: And you provided the town with milk.

Hay: Yes, 10 cents a quart and 20 cents for one of those jars of cream.

Kowalchuk: For heaven's sake. It wasn't pasteurized at that time. It was just fresh cream.

Hay: Just fresh cream.

Hay: Actually they were just getting to the stage where they were trying to get you to do different things all the time, you know.

Hay: So then we quit.

Hay: Actually what made me quit, really, was that you see the war was on then; you couldn't hire a man. And especially when you wanted him to milk cows, he might work for you any other job, but he didn't want to milk cows. If you have a dairy farm, a man that won't milk isn't going to be any use to you.

Kowalchuk: So you had your work cut out for you then.

Hay: Sure did.

Kowalchuk: My goodness. And you continued working at the store.

Hay: Mhm. I worked at the store and helped my mother at the hotel.

Kowalchuk: Certainly, that's right, you still had the hotel.

Hay: We thought we should have her helping us at the store once a while and she also had to run the farm and she had to look after the kids when they started to come along, and she had picked all the fruit and looked after the garden.

Kowalchuk: Oh, my goodness sakes. When was Barb born?

Hay: Barb is 42. She was born in 45.

Kowalchuk: Right at the end of the war?

Hay: No, she must have been born in 44 because the war was still on. Because I went to Edmonton to wait for her and when I needed to go to the hospital, I tried to get a taxi and there wasn't a taxi available to go to the hospital, so I phoned my doctor and he says, "Hold tight, I'll come and get you."

Kowalchuk: Oh dear.

Hay: So he come and got me and he was just going out the door. He said, "I'll see you later, I'm going to have my lunch." and the nurse says, "No you're not."

Kowalchuk: You had the baby instead.

Hay: Yeah, that was it.

Kowalchuk: My goodness. Was that the General . . . was that the . . .

Hay: The Royal Alex.

Kowalchuk: Royal Alex at that time. Oh, I see. So when did . . . do you people still own land?

Hay: Yeah, we have a half section.

Kowalchuk: The farm?

Hay: Yes.

Kowalchuk: Oh, you do, eh? But you just gave up the dairy business.

Hay: Yeah, we don't farm.

Kowalchuk: Do you rent it?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh yeah. But when did you give up your dairy farm? What year was that?

Hay: 59, 60.

Hay: Oh before that.

Kowalchuk: It must have been before that because I remember Mr. Griffith delivering milk.

Hay: Yeah, he took over from us.

Kowalchuk: I was going to say, he must have taken over for you people. Would have been the late fifties. About 56, 57, somewhere in there. Now, it's 5:00. I'm just going to stop this for a minute. We have a couple of books here that I was going to ask about.

Hay: Those are minutes of the Key School and Dober.

Kowalchuk: Oh, I see, school records. You used to have registers, too, Mrs. Hay, but you say you gave those to the Archives.

Hay: I gave some, I have some, I still have some.

Kowalchuk: Oh you still have some. Oh my.

Hay: That was when Key School first started. Isn't it, is that Keys?

Kowalchuk: Key school district, yes. All of them, 1909. Oh my, these are old, aren't they? 1910. I imagine this would be interesting reading for some of us now. It tells a little bit about how things were running—what life was like in those days. Oh yes, great.

Hay: Edited by N.O. Jack.

Kowalchuk: Oh, N.O. Jack, Norman?

Hay: And he always wrote something, I don't what that read, but he always wrote in red ink opposite to what the secretary.

Hay: And this is the ^{Dover}Dober one.

Kowalchuk: ^{Dover}Dober one.

Hay: I'm trying to find the year.

Hay: This one teacher that used to board at Keys, he used to board with Mr. Billaut, and Mr. Billaut was one of the trustees.

Kowalchuk: How do you spell that Billaut?

Hay: Oh, it's a French name.

Kowalchuk: Oh, it's a French name.

Hay: And so when we say this, it said, Mr. Billaut called a meeting. The business of the meeting was to pay the teacher. The teacher boarded with Mr. Billaut and Mr. Billaut couldn't get any money and the teacher got paid. And so the auditor wrote on the bottom of that: "One man cannot have a meeting by himself." But he

had it and they paid however much money was in the treasury, they paid it out, and Mr. Billaut got it.

Kowalchuk: That's right. This is 1912.

Hay: Well that was after that.

Kowalchuk: 1913, now here. So these are very old records. My goodness. I just can't get over the beautiful writing. Some great . . . I'd like to see all of this; I'd like to read all of this. What have you got here?

Hay: That's the one, but he doesn't say anything about being paid.

Kowalchuk: Must have resolved then, oh there's the way you spell it, B-i-l-l-e-u-t or a-u-t. Let the school teacher be paid up \$200. That's Symyrozum.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Nick Symyrozum, who was eventually the councillor. Oh, this is already 1928. Was Mr. Symyrozum, well he wasn't a councillor then, of course, he must have been on the school board. Okay, we're going to stop here. We're just going to say a little bit more here. Go ahead.

Hay: He, the man usually come in pretty good but sometimes he got the idea that he needed to be over at the beer parlour more than he was at the farm, so we always had a police dog, you know, and he was a pretty good police dog. And so Mill said, "Well, Bill, I've been keeping the dog in, but you better be in before I turn the dog out, because from now on I'm going to start putting him out early." So Bill, "I know the dog. You can't scare me that way." So one time we heard the dog bark, so Mill went out there and he was on the ground, and the dog was right on top of him.

Hay: Every time he tried to get up, the dog pushed him down again. He didn't bite him.

Kowalchuk: No, he was protecting the place. For heaven's sakes.

Hay: And I had asked him so many times because he'd come in, you know, 12-1:00, and I had to be up early.

Kowalchuk: How many hired men would you have had?

Hay: Nine or ten.

Kowalchuk: That many at one time?

Hay: No, the most we ever had at one time was three.

Kowalchuk: Three.

Hay: And we got three by accident because we couldn't get a man and so I got an old fellow there, and I knew that he wasn't that he shouldn't be working because he was too old, but he wanted to help me out, so I said, "Yeah, take it." That was Mr., what the heck was his name, he lived out there, and anyway the next day, the fellow that I wanted that said he wouldn't milk cows, he lived right in town, he decided he'd work for me so . . . That was, you probably know them, what was that lady's name, Mrs., she was married three times . . .

Hay: Stanford.

Kowalchuk: Oh, Mrs. Stanford, yes.

Hay: And then a fellow come in, and I was at the store and a fellow come walking in and he sat down in this chair there and the sweat was just running off him. He didn't look very healthy. So I got talking to him. I says, "Where did you come from?" He says, "I come from Boyle." "How did you come?" "On my feet."

Says left Boyle this morning, and this was dinnertime. So he'd been walking right along. And so we thought . . . he says, "I'm looking for a job." I said, "Too bad you didn't come a long a little sooner. I was looking for some men but now I got two. I only need one. What do you know about farming?" "Oh, I've been on a farm. I know how to farm. But right now I'm just anxious to get somebody that will feed me." So he says, "I don't want very big wages." So I says, "No use trying to take on any more men than I've got." He says, "By the way, you know, I didn't have any breakfast before I left Boyle. Be any chance of getting something to eat here?" "Oh," I says, "yeah, we could fix you up something." So we cut up some kubasa; we had opened a box of crackers, and he had them; he took a bottle of pop. Then he says, "I'd sure like to work for you." "Well," I says, "I'd just like to see how you work, too." So he come over to the farm and he had supper with us that night. He was a good worker. He stayed with me for three years.

Kowalchuk: Oh, did he? What would you have paid the men?

Hay: Hm?

Kowalchuk: What would you have paid considering milk was not very much?

Hay: We paid the men, that was the question that every man about that time asked. You know, "What do you pay?" I says, "That's entirely up to you." I says, "I got a farm, and I got to get a little profit off of that farm. Everything that you can make ^{above} about that profit that I want is going to be your wages." "Oh, we don't want to work that way, we want to know how much we're making." "Oh, I don't know how much I'm making so your wages will be \$15."

Hay: That was for the summer, and in the winter time, the government paid you \$10 to keep the man on all winter.

Kowalchuk: Oh really.

Hay: And they paid the man \$5 a month. So the man that stayed with us, we gave him the \$10 and the \$5 both.

Kowalchuk: Oh my. And did you have to board them as well?

Hay: We had to board them.

Kowalchuk: Of course, that was a lot of work. You've worked hard.

Hay: The biggest shock I got, you know, I used to go to Edmonton when it was hard to get people, and I'd put an ad in the paper, "Man Wanted," you know, and then I'd take a room in the hotel, and I'd put that room number on it for interviews. I'd interview maybe a dozen in a day. This one guy come along, he was pretty young, and he was clean and looked like a pretty nice guy to me, so I said, "Well, all we have to do is decide, I need a man, and you say you need a job, so the only thing we have to decide is how we're going to pay you. I already know that, so I'll tell you how much." "Okay," he says, "tell me." So I says, "You're not going to get any wages at all until spring starts. The government pays me that much." So after he gets started on the spring work, I says, "Everybody wants work now, and then in the spring when they can get big wages, they want to leave you. So, I've been stung that way a few times, so I'm not going to take that on anymore." So he had said, "Okay, that's good." So he come and he wasn't here very long. Well he was a good horseman. He really knew horses. And this guy come and about the second day he was here, he says, "How would you like to play a game of checkers?" "Oh," I says, "you play checkers?" "Yeah, I play checkers, a little bit." "Okay, I play a game of checkers, go ahead." We had a game of checkers. Well I knew right away that he had played checkers sure before, and I wasn't in his class at all.

Kowalchuk: Oh really.

Hay: So the CN had a bridge crew stationed over here on the track and he found that out first date that he was here. And he went over there every night, and he made pretty good wages playing checkers.

Kowalchuk: Oh is that right?

Hay: But he did his work what I wanted done in the winter time. Very good and I had no complaints.

Kowalchuk: Okay, I see you've got a certificate of naturalization, Mrs. Hay.

Hay: That's for my dad.

Kowalchuk: For your dad. Now I noticed they spelled Talpash differently. Did you change it afterwards? It's T-o-l-p-a-s-h.

Hay: It's T-a-l instead of T-o-l.

Kowalchuk: Right, United States, eh? 1919, well. Oh my, so that's when your dad became a citizen of Canada, 1913 Interesting. You have just about got everything I could imagine. I can't believe it, I can't believe it.

Hay: I decided that he was such a good guy, you know, I give him a little money, so I paid him about \$10, and like Mill says, we gave them the \$5 extra. We didn't keep track of this because I figured that if we started paying his regular wages which would have been \$20 a month which brings our . . . I got up one morning. Holy smoke, I had to catch the train you know to put on the mail and take it off, and he was out from his bunk house all dressed up, his shoes all shined. "Well, Joe, where do you think you're going?" "Oh," he says, "I'm going back to the city." I told him the day before, you know, I says, "You can break the horses in on the harrows; the snow is off that ground there now." He says, "These harrows are just

killing me.” He says, “I can’t walk behind harrows.”

Kowalchuk: So he was going to give up.

Hay: So, he was gone.

Kowalchuk: Is that right? Took the next train back to the city. Is that right? You just mentioned the post office, you people ran the post office, too, you said. And I’ll have to check and talk about that next day. All right, we’re going to stop here, and we’re going to have to have another session. Okay.

Kowalchuk: All right, we’re going to go back to the Post Office, Mr. Hay, and you know the picture that Gene just took, will you describe that building for us, and how you built it in stages and the fact that it served as a store and post office and so on.

Hay: Well, the first post office was on the Kanole farm, and it was made out of log and it was manufactured by my dad and a fellow by the name of Billy Smith.

Kowalchuk: Oh yes, that’s right.

Hay: And we had four customers. They had four customers.

Kowalchuk: Can you name those families?

Hay: Yeah, there was Browns and Millons and, I just read them before, now one of them was the Hays, and then the Days.

Kowalchuk: Now when you say the Browns, are you talking about the Browns from Meanook?

Hay: No, this is a different Brown. No relation to the Brown that’s here now at all.

Kowalchuk: Related to the Pitman's . . .

Hay: He was Bill Brown. He built the part of the Colinton hotel.

Kowalchuk: Oh, all right. And then you had a store in that same building. Tell us why you set up the store.

Hay: Oh, that was before my time.

Kowalchuk: That was your dad, then? Okay, tell us about that.

Hay: Well he said that after him and my uncle had unloaded this freight from Edmonton on to the shelves of the store, he said, "Gee, that's an awful little bit of stuff to get for \$200." But anyway, that was all the money they had, so . . .

Kowalchuk: It was a start, wasn't it? Complete stock, wasn't it?

Hay: Yeah, it was a complete stock, including shoes and whatever they thought they could sell.

Kowalchuk: Oh, you had dried goods there, too, then?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh, I see.

Hay: But I could never understand that. When we were in the other store over town, my mother helped dad then, and she understood dry goods pretty good, and had a fairly good stock at dry goods, but it always seemed to me as a kid that we had an awful big stock of dried goods, er shoes, boots and shoes, kids and ladies and men's for such a little place.

Kowalchuk: Now can you give us the dates? When you're talking about this Post Office and store, what dates was in in operation?

Hay: That would be 1906.

Kowalchuk: At two, how long now, two what, how many years was it in August?

Hay: 1912.

Hay: Then this one, the other one was built in 1913.

Kowalchuk: 1913, and when you say the other one . . .

Hay: When the red and white store was built, that was 1924.

Kowalchuk: Oh, that's the red and white store that we remember still when we were in Colinton.

Hay: Yeah, that's the one that you remember.

Kowalchuk: So you continued on this operation the whole time; it's just that you built new buildings, eh, never really quit.

Hay: No, that's right. The only time we quit was when Mr. Hay joined the forces and moved to Calgary.

Kowalchuk: That's your dad?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: And so how long a spell was that?

Hay: 1914 to 1918.

Kowalchuk: All right, I wanted you also, now we're just going to talk about farming for a bit. I wanted you to describe that thrashing machine with the lanterns.

Hay: With the what?

Kowalchuk: Lanterns.

Hay: Oh yes. Well, this . . . some unknown reason I don't remember now I had to change my thrasher man because when the one I was accustomed to having wasn't thrashing any more, and so I knew Ed Meyers pretty well. He had a John Deere tractor and a good pretty new separator, and so I was asking him if he would come thrash for me. "Well," he says, "I have a full schedule of people." "But," he says, "if you wait till the last, I'll thrash it." So that was okay as long as it got thrashed. And so they come to me in the last one in the year so it would be pretty late in the fall and it was getting dark. "Not going to start thrashing now in the dark." "Oh yeah, we use lanterns." And so they all lit their lanterns and they had them on the racks.

Kowalchuk: Honestly.

Hay: "Well, gee, I never heard of anybody thrashing with lanterns before." "Oh, Ed, he thrashes till 7:00. It don't matter whether it's dark or not."

Kowalchuk: Yeah.

Hay: And so, don't look just very easy to me, but, I says, there's the stooks all there. And I had them piled up in this corral, you know, because I had to pick the stooks off the two fields that were closest here and put them in the corral and turned the stock out in the fields, see. Was to get it before the frost did. And so these fellows drove in there, you know, and they thought they were driving into a field. First thing this guy's head turned around, another turned right around, they broke through reaches, and then they decided that they would quit.

Kowalchuk: But I also want you to describe those early thrashing machines where you said it involved wood and water and the whole bit.

Hay: Oh, that was the old steamers.

Kowalchuk: Steamers, tell us about that.

Hay: Well, there was only two thrashing machines in the country at that time run by steam.

Kowalchuk: Now, what year? Yeah, about what year were those steamers used?

Hay: Oh, I was pretty little. It'd be about 15, something like that, maybe 13.

Voice in background: Billy Smith had one.

Hay: Who?

Voice in background: Billy Smith.

Hay: Yeah, Billy Smith and Chebaot.

Hay: Chebaot, Whitley didn't have one yet.

Hay: They had steamers, and the thing that was different about steamer is you had to have wood to run the fire and you had to have water to make the steam. So they had a water man and a wood hauler. And he split the wood and he was responsible to keep the fire going, and the water man was responsible to keep the steam going.

Hay: They had the water tank and there were seventeen men on the crew.

Kowalchuk: Seventeen?

Hay: Seventeen.

Hay: So that was a pretty fair thrashing crew.

Kowalchuk: I guess.

Hay: That is if you had everybody.

Kowalchuk: I guess the mothers . . .

Hay: And men, of course, there was two men on each right, on each stack, and sometimes three, depending on how hard they had to work?

Kowalchuk: Would they feed the thrashing machine from both sides?

Hay: Yeah, they drove the thrashing machine, the separator in like that, and you stacked your stack so that he could go through there like that, you know.

Kowalchuk: On either side.

Hay: On either side. Then they forked in from each one. But my experience with forking like that when I was a kid going to school, Dad had the place rented to people by the name of Koots, and there was two boys and a dad, Mr. Koots. He was a pretty old man, you know, but he was a stacker, he was a German stacker. He knew how it was set, and so I asked the boys if I could come and help them, and they said, "No, no, you're too little." Finally, I persuaded them that I'd got a little older now so maybe I could . . . so "Okay, you get on the rack with us and you throw the bundles up. Dad's stacking up there." And Mike, he told me, he says, you know, "You have to be awful careful. You make that bundle land right there so that he can pick up with his hands and put it just where he wants it," you know. So I was doing that pretty good, but then I began getting a little tired. I guess I got a little careless and I hit him once or twice. So he looks down and he takes a big spit of tobacco, and he says, "Listen, you better get that kid of there. I don't want to get hit in the face anymore." So I said, "Oh I won't. I'll be careful. I won't do that

anymore.” So this old Mr. Koot to one of his boys, “If that kid hits me once more, I’m coming down to hit him.” So then I was really serious. I made sure I didn’t pitch my dad any bundles after that. I got off that rack.

Kowalchuk: But there weren’t any serious accidents ever that you could recall.

Hay: I beg your pardon?

Kowalchuk: No serious accidents during thrashing time?

Hay: No.

Kowalchuk: No. People worked pretty careful.

Hay: I never heard of any.

Kowalchuk: Yeah, that’s good.

Pearson: Oh, the odd fire, that’s all.

Kowalchuk: Oh, would there be a fire? This is Mr. Pearson talking her now from Calling Lake.

Pearson: There was fire, I used to get fire off them old steamers.

Kowalchuk: Can you remember a fire?

Pearson: No, but I remember Dad telling about it.

Kowalchuk: Is that right, what would they do then?

Pearson: Well, sparks come out of the chimney and then land on these other stacks that they wasn’t working on, so they had to have somebody there with a water bucket; otherwise, you’d lose another stack of hay.

Kowalchuk: A stack of straw or hay, or I mean straw, it would be straw, wouldn't it?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Okay, well, we're just going to change the subject a little. I want to get all these ideas that I have down. Mrs. Hay, you talked about Gold Meadow people. Now tell us about those.

Hay: Jim should remember about the Gold Meadow people, too. It was a company in ~~the~~ in Toronto, I believe, and you could either sell seeds for them or postcards, and you could sell so many, and you got a certain gift. I have a postcard album that we got by selling seeds.

Kowalchuk: It's beautiful.

Hay: And we also got a very small phonograph for selling seeds.

Kowalchuk: Oh.

Hay: It was a very tinny affair.

Kowalchuk: Nevertheless, it was a free . . .

Hay: Yeah, we walked a good many miles selling seeds. We found out that cards people didn't buy very often, but seeds if you got them right early in the spring, they wouldn't buy the seeds.

Kowalchuk: Was it mostly vegetables or flowers.

Hay: Vegetables and flowers.

Kowalchuk: All right, anything else you wanted to add there about that? Those albums are very old though, aren't they now? That would be in what year, in the early 20s would it be?

Hay: Yes, in the early twenties.

Kowalchuk: And the other thing I found out here was that Mr. Aberhart and Mr. Manning were here in Colinton once upon a time. So I want you to tell us about that.

Hay: Well, my folks had the hotel and we were asked to cater. I think it was about a hundred people that we catered to for this get together, and Manning and Aberhart were both here. And we got seventy cents a plate for this supper, for this catering.

Kowalchuk: Can you tell us what you had for supper?

Hay: We had we started with a fruit dish, with fresh fruit, and they had, I think there was roast beef and salad and potatoes and gravy and turnips and, I don't remember, peas I think, and then they had pie, they had their choice of two or three kinds of pie, and you did all that for seventy cents, with tea and coffee. And I wasn't very impressed by either one of them. I won't go into the details.

Hay: I have a little joke I can add to that story. After the meal, you know, they passed the cigars around.

Kowalchuk: These two gentlemen . . .

(Tape 3, Side A ends here)