

Kella Aivey
2002



INTERVIEW WITH: Rella Alvey
INTERVIEWER: Marsha Holland
INTERVIEW NUMBER: one
DATE OF INTERVIEW: February 6, 2002
PLACE OF INTERVIEW: Rella Alvey's home, Tropic, Utah
SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW: Early life in Tropic, Yellow Creek
TRANSCRIBER: Marsha Holland
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Tape 1, Side A

MH: Hi, Rella. I am in Tropic, Utah with Rella Alvey. It is February 6th. Hi, Rella.

RA: How are you?

MH: How do you spell your name?

RA: R-E-L-L-A. I told my mother that she should have spelled it R-E-E-L-A because everyone that doesn't know me calls me Rella. [As in Cinderella]

MH: What is your middle name?

RA: Ott. I was an Ott. I was born March the 24th 1922 in a little house out by the cemetery. My folks told me there was four feet of snow when I was born. My father had to almost carry the nurse to get her out there.

MH: Who was the nurse?

RA: She was Mrs. Chapel. She was a lady that lived here. We have had two or three midwives.

MH: There was four feet of snow in March.

RA: Yes, in March. I was born in 1922. In the 30's we would get so much snow in the winter that we could walk over the fences.

MH: You said you were living at a place over by the cemetery

RA: Yes, right there in the corner by the cemetery.

MH: Was the cemetery there yet?

RA: Yes. A dentist, Dr. Rainbolt owned the place and when he left my father bought it. That is where I was born. Then we had to go back to Sandy. My mother's folks lived there and they weren't well. Mother had to go up and help take care of them. When we moved back, you know where Dean Winch lives, that was our first home.

MH: in the same house?

RA: No, it was an old house, three rooms. Then, again, we had to leave to go up to Sandy. Her father passed away, then her mother was ill. They rented the home to a couple and while we were up there in Sandy, it burned to the ground. So, we didn't have a house. My first grade was in Sandy and then we moved to Henrieville, my father was the bus driver that brought the kids to Tropic.

MH: Who was your father?

RA: Joseph Alma Ott. I went to my second grade in Henrieville. Then my father's father, James Robert Ott, was called to be a bishop in Henrieville and he wanted my father to take over the ranch in Yellow Creek. So my father turned the bus-driving job to his brother Wallace Ott. We had the first old bus body out to Yellow Creek for a number of years and I don't know what ever happened to it.

MH: The first old bus body was out to Yellow Creek?

RA: Yes. It came up missing. They wanted it up at the school for kind of a shrine, but...and I don't know what ever happened to it. Anyway, we lived our summers at Yellow Creek and then we would move back to Tropic when school started. I

can say I had the most wonderful childhood. I had the greatest parents, two brothers, and one sister.

MH: Tell me about your mom. What was her name?

RA: She was Mable Charter and she came from Sandy and taught the first grade.

MH: Is that how she met your father?

RA: Yes, that is how she met my father.

MH: She came from Sandy. What was your dad's name?

RA: Joseph Alma Ott. [They were out] At Yellow Creek. We had a lot of responsibility when we were kids. We helped plant gardens. We had to weed the gardens. We had to herd cows. We had to milk them in the morning then take them way over to the White Cove during the day to pasture and herd them so they wouldn't get into the alfalfa fields. About four in the afternoon we would start to round them up to bring them back home.

MH: How would you round them up?

RA: Just by foot. Walk around them. McCune Ott and Stanley and myself and we would just all go each direction and get them together and bring them home.

MH: How many cows did you have out there?

RA: Oh, gosh, we milked about ten or twelve.

MH: So you had extra milk then?

RA: Yes, I knew how to milk cows. There was creamery in Panguitch. The man who drove the mail truck retired and so my father decided, shall we say kill to birds with one stone, to take the mail with the milk and cream that people had around

the Valley...he would gather it up and take it over to the creamery. We had a lot of responsibility. My mother, bless her. She was a great help mate to him.

MH: Now, she was a teacher, but then she became a farmer's wife.

RA: Yes, she became a farmer's wife.

MH: Did she ever talk about that?

RA: (laughter) Everybody thought that she would never be content here, that she would want to go back to Sandy, but she loved it here. She wanted to stay here and she worked side by side with my father. After they were married then she quit, of course, teaching school. I remember the things we used to do when we were herding cows. We would get an old pasteboard box and an old Sears and Roebuck catalog scissors and cut our curtains and make a playhouse out of the box, cut out beds and make bedrooms, kitchens and living rooms, in the box. My brothers'... one brother was very scared of bees but we used to tease the bees. He always was the one that got stung. We sat under the oak trees while I was watching cows and then I would jump up and head them back if they got to straying away. My brothers, they made flippers, or slingshots. If the cows got too far, then they would give them a ping with the flipper.

MH: Is that because there were no fences that you had to tend them?

RA: We had some fences, but my father had a big hay fields that we had to keep them out of. There was a place we could drive them around the hayfield to drive them home. Then the same thing happened over again the next morning. Mother would fix a lunch and off we would go.

MH: How would you carry your lunch?

RA: Paper sacks.

MH: What was your favorite lunch?

RA: Oh, she had chicken. fried chicken. and we had beef. and different lunch meats, [along with] Mother's good cakes and cookies. Let me tell you my father could never kill anything. He had to hire someone to do it. I have never known my father to go deer hunting. You see those big brown eyes looking at you...

MH: How sweet. So, he had to hire someone to kill his beef. What other kind of animals did you have?

RA: Oh, we had pigs. sheep. horses and cows. anything you want. Money was scarce, but we had everything we wanted to eat. Anything you could mention; milk cream. We grew strawberries, all kinds of berries. Mother was a wonderful cook.

MH: What was it like spending the summers in the Yellow Creek? Would you explore?

RA: We would. I maybe shouldn't say this. We had a matchbox full of rattles from rattlesnakes that we had killed.

MH: Well, you had to live there.

RA: We had to live there. We had two wonderful dogs too that kept the snakes away from the house. I can see the one old collie, if he saw one he would grab it and shake it until there would be nothing left of it. He was a very good watchdog. His name was ole' Colie.

MH: Would you go with the dogs out and up the creek?

RA: Oh, we would climb the hills. In the fall we would hunt pine nuts. We loved to take a picnic lunch and pick up pinenuts. I remember we picked up enough pine

nuts to buy an ice cream freezer, a hundred pound bag. Each day in the after noon we all would get together, Dad Mother, the children and we would go over across the creek and hunt pine nuts. It was really a time to remember. Oh, we looked forward to the holidays. Then we could come into town for our Fourth of July celebrations and our Twenty-fourth of July celebrations. I remember mother was a beautiful seamstress: she would make me the cutest dresses and see that I had a pair of .98-cent shoes. That was what we paid for them. Patent Leather. They always had little kids' dances. We had a man that played a harmonica and a little lady, Elizabeth Barton, that carded on the organ and the kids would do the Dixie Stomp, back and forth and back and forth. We had fun dancing. Then we had the children's races. We had done well to have twenty-five cents to spend that day. Money was short, but we were all happy and we all had the same. There wasn't anyone who had more than anyone else.

MH: A lot of the people I talked to had such happy times growing up. They didn't know about the outside. And so what you had was most enjoyable, it was yours.

RA: We didn't know about the outside. We were content in our little town.

MH: You never felt isolated ever?

RA: No, we never did. I remember when school would start, we would move in from the ranch. One Thanksgiving I remember, which was to be my father's last, we had an all white turkey out to Yellow Creek. My Dad drove the mail over to Panguitch, Utah. He said if he had time he would go out and get that turkey for Thanksgiving. I said, "Oh, Dad please let Stan and I go out on the horse and get it." So, he consented. We had an old gray mare. We rode her up through the

canyon. over Merrill's Bench and down through into Yellow Creek. We got out there. He was kind of a mean old tom turkey. We took a little bag of grain with us. When we got out there. we could hear him gobble gobble. Stan said he would sprinkle the grain all the way into the house, then we will get him in there and shut the door. (Laughter) He followed the grain and come in the door. and my brother grabbed him and wrung his neck. We hung him up a on a nail and we began to pluck the feathers off. All at once, he jumped up and off that nail and ran. a bare turkey running around and around. We were laughing so hard. Finally we caught him again and finished him off, got him plucked and in the bag and got him on the back of the horse. I had it in front of me. Stan was guiding the horse. We got up the canyon away and it began to snow and snow. You could hardly see it came down so thick. My brother said, "If I hadn't of brought you I could have gone faster!" I said, "If you hadn't of brought me, we wouldn't have gotten that turkey so fast." Anyway, we got home, wet and tired and cold. We had the old turkey. It took the place of honor on Thanksgiving Day on our table.

MH: Do you remember when that was?

RA: It was about 1940. My father died in '41.

MH: Was he ill or did he have an accident?

RA; He had peritonitis, a ruptured appendix. We took him to Richfield. The doctor there said a year later if we had had penicillin when Joe Ott was down here we could have probably saved him.

MH: That was problem when you had appendicitis.

RA: We had to go so far to a doctor.

MH: How old were you?

RA: I graduated that year from high school, in 1940. We had Thanksgiving and my father died the next February. I worked at Bryce Canyon National Park 1938, '39' and '40. Then I worked at Ruby's for twenty years. I have to tell you a story about a little lady that lived here, Ruth Marshall. She lived up there where the new high school is. We lived in the house right across the street. Where Agnes Littlefield is. That was our home then. You have been to Helma's? They lived in the house where Zeke and Kay are. Another cousin lived down where the Winters live. We all lived in that neighborhood. We would all go over... when she was young girl she was nearly burned to death in a home and so she would never sleep in the house. She would sleep, winter, summer, fall, and spring out on her porch. We used to go over there. You should have seen the quilts. She would tell us stories and cuddle us up under her quilts. To build a fire, she would get these big logs and stick them in the front of her cook stove and have the other end out on a chair and as it burned she would keep pushing it in. She would make cakes and everything. We just enjoyed her so much. She was a little old maid lady.

MH: What stories do you remember? Were they scary stories or fun stories?

RA: She would tell these fairy tales to us. Hansel and Gretel [and others]. We had a wonderful time with her. My school years, I don't know. I have the first two years books ever published in Tropic, '39 and '40. They were just made out of composition paper and taken photos and pasted in. They were made by hand. They are very choice to make. When you see down through the years how they

have changed. they were special. Have you ever gone on a school trip for ten dollars? The Seniors and the Juniors in 1940, the year we graduated, went on school trip to California. We went to Los Angeles, through the Redwood forest, San Francisco clear down the coast and up around Salt Lake and home. We were gone ten days for ten dollars. That was what we had to spend. We made money through the year, had bake sales. We went in a truck, with canvas over the top of it.

MH: Like a troop carrier?

RA: They put seats along and we had our luggage under the seats. You never saw a happier group of kids. I got home with fifty cents from that ten dollars and brought my sister a skirt. (Laughter)

MH: Do you remember what you thought of San Francisco?

RA: I thought it was quite cold there. It was a big city and it was fun. We went out to Alcatraz. We went over the San Francisco Bridge [the Golden Gate Bridge] and all on ten dollars.

MH: Who drove the truck?

RA: Mark Johnson.

MH: And you must have had a woman come with you?

RA: Oh, we had teachers. Mark Johnson and his wife Hannah Johnson and our principal Jay Oral Christensen and his wife Fern Christensen and then we had two or three others. There were three or four chaperones. For a dumb bunch of little country kids that was quite a [trip] It is so much different now. After the trip, it was time for graduation. We had a lovely graduation exercise. And the War was

on. The War was on and every Friday or every other Friday we had a farewell for one of our boys that were leaving.

MH: A lot of the boys from here went.

RA: Oh, yes. I am working on the Memorial list with Lamar. Instead of going on to college I went on to California and worked at Lockheed.

MH: I heard about this trip to Californian. Who did you go with?

RA: Helma.

MH: You two went together. How did you get out there?

RA: Well, I'll tell you what. We had a little peddler come up from LaVerkin. He sold fruit and vegetables he would bring up from Dixie and peddled around and we rode down with him and then caught the bus from St. George.

MH: What did your parents think about you leaving?

RA: Well, my mother hated to see me go, because she was alone, my dad had passed away. But anyway we felt like we needed to help with the war effort. I had friends that went to Manti. They went to work at the parachute factory.

MH: They sewed parachutes in Manti?

RA: They had a plant there. Helma and I went to Lockheed.

MH: Good money?

RA: Not good money. About a dollar and a quarter an hour but that was pretty good for those days.

MH: What did you do at Lockheed?

RA: I did a dozen things. We had to count wings,, airplane wing parts. We had to kleak, they called it kleako. You had little pliers and you put a little bolt in the

wing part and get them ready to attach. [Then they were] welded and finished for the airplane.

MH: So, you worked on the wings?

RA: Wings and then I counted gas caps and inspected gas caps.

MH: Did you work outside or inside?

RA: Inside. I made so many dear friends down there. They were from all over Utah and everywhere. Lot of good memories from there.

MH: Let's talk about home again, when you were little. Did you live in Henrieville?

RA: One year. That was the year my dad gave up the bus driving to my uncle Wallace. Then we moved here like I said, he took over the ranch and did that full time with the milk and cream and mail drive. Growing up...how great! The kids growing up here now don't know what fun is.

MH: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

RA: I had four brothers and just one sister and I'm the oldest: McCune, Stanley, and Bob and my youngest, Joe, Joseph who lives in Cedar and then my only sister Janet Pollock. Where you see me you see her. I'm so lucky to have her. She lives at the end of the same street as me.

End of Tape 1, side A

Begin Tape 1, Side B

RA: My mother was the town clerk until the day she died in Tropic. And a notary public. She never wanted to take anything. She wanted to help people out. All I need is just enough to renew my notary.

MH: What happened after your father passed away?

RA: Well, bless her heart. She did substitute teaching at the school. My mother could leave on a half hour notice. She always said, "When you get up in the morning do the most important thing first." She would get up and roll her hair in curlers. Then she also said. "If you haven't laughed in a day then you haven't lived." And she did. She had a great sense of humor.

MH: So, she did substitute teaching at the high school?

RA: Yes, high school, elementary. There was a little girl up there. A little Dennet girl. She said, "Is Mrs. Ott here today?" The [secretary] said that she was not in today. And the little girl said, "I'll kill myself, I'll kill myself!" She loved her.

MH: How sweet. When you went to school in Tropic, what were some of your memories of elementary school?

RA: I'll tell you. We were disciplined. I got a crack or two with the yardstick for talking. And, my parents, they upheld it. We knew if we went home and told them we might have got another spanking, if we didn't behave ourselves. We had very good discipline in the school. Oh, I loved drama, poetry and the many plays we put on.

MH: What was the play you remember the most?

RA: *Covered with Blushes*. Of course I always had the part of the old maid or the funny old lady parts.

MH: So you had costumes?

RA: We did. We put on operas. Mr. And Mrs. Colvins were our music teachers. They were really nice. And then we put on a Stephen Foster operetta. Mr. Davis was

the director. I remember all the songs we sang of Steven Fosters. You don't hear them much anymore. do you? Whether the television was the cause of putting a stop to the special entertainments that we used to have...

Tape stops and then resumes

MH: The bane of our society.

RA: It is the ruler, which is sad. Oh, I remember mother would say when you get your work done, you will have the afternoon to play. I remember we did roam the hills. The old sliding hill up here. when I think that homes are nearly at the foot of it right now. We used to drag tires up there and roll them down and watch the cows run. (Laughter)

MH: They still do! Did you ever take boards up there and slide down.

RA: No! We had a canal that went around it, around the hill. We would go up with old clothes on and mud crawl in the canal.

MH: Mud Crawl?

RA: It wasn't deep enough to swim we would just mud crawl through it.

MH: There is no water up their now?

RA: No, they don't have it up there now. We have the sprinkler system now. There was a little knoll up there close to the sliding hill. Some days our mothers would fix us a little [lunch] We would have some hot dogs and roast them and have a picnic lunch, the whole neighborhood of kids would be there. At night we would
- have night games. We played Run My Sheepy Run, Wolf Over the River, Give Me a Wave. What fun games.

MH: What was Wolf Over the River?

RA: Well they would just try to get signs of where people were hiding, you know. Someone would say, "Where is the wolf?" Someone would hoot like an owl or growl like a bear or something else. We played all over, and then we would have bonfires. We would get some potatoes and put them in and roast them. They would just be black potatoes because we didn't have tin foil to put them in.

MH: So, the skin would burn black?

RA: The skin was on it and we would break them open and eat the insides.

MH: What about in the wintertime? What would you do to stay busy?

RA: Oh, heavens, we would have candy pulls, go to each others places and play games, *Sorry!*, etc. . and we read. I loved to read. We used to sleigh ride. We went to a dance one night. Norm Ott, who lived down the road here, had a big old sleigh. Just before the dance let out, he went over and got it and parked it out in front. When the dance let out we all run out and got in the sleigh. When he cracked the whip and the horses went off, the sleigh just fell apart. (Laughter) The runners were frozen to the ground. We all fell out and went in every direction. So, we didn't have our sleigh ride. But anyway we used to go over on the old "T" hill and slide down with inner tubes. No one could have had a happier life than I could have growing up here. When I think of now, it is harder now really, with all our modern conveniences.

MH: Did Bob take over your ranching?

RA: Well, he is out there. Janet and I own so much, but he took it over. Bob didn't know what we had to do. My older brothers and myself knew what had to be

done to make it the ranch our father had. Bob was a little young boy when Dad passed away. My youngest brother was two years old.

MH: Joe?

RA: Joe.

MH: When your dad did pass on, did you and your older brothers kind of keep things going?

RA: My mother rented the ranch to different ones. I hadn't ought to say it, but it went down hill. Our beautiful fruit trees weren't taken care of and they all died out. I told the kids, "I wish you could have seen the ranch in its heyday when my dad had it."

MH: It was beautiful?

RA: Beautiful!

MH: Who lived out there in that Yellow Creek area?

RA: We had an Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Marion Frost. There is a little house just as you start down to Kodachrome. The cabins are still there. Twitchells own it [now]. Then on up, the Duttons owned a house. There is the Georgetown cemetery then up around the turn is the house. The George Duttons owned that. The place across the street [is where] my granddad and grandmother had a place there. Janet and James Robert Ott. She was a Johnson and that is where she grew up, was in Georgetown. From there we just went on up to our ranch. The one that goes up over to Willis Creek and the LeFevres owned a ranch out there. We were all ranchers making them pay during the summer months.

MH: The LeFevres still have the land out there. You have to go out Sheep Flat road. Now I have gone up Yellow Creek. up past the diversion...

RA: Now, you see the old cabin up there. That is where we lived. Then we had the old tin granary there. you've seen that, what Dad would put the grain in. We used to get in there. It is a wonder we didn't smother. Then, just for past time, there would be little holes in the ground. We would go and get water and pour it down these holes and up would come a sand cricket. It was fun to watch them come up out of their hole.

MH: Was there quite a bit of water up there or how did you hold back the water?

RA: Now, let me tell you, there was many a day when we came to town and we wanted to make sure that we got home before afternoon. Every afternoon we had a cloud burst and big floods that would come down that creek and sometimes we got stuck and my father had to walk back to the Dutton home to get him to bring his team to help pull us out. Just as he got us out, the flood came down and the truck would have been in the creek.

MH: Now they just have a little culvert there. There is nothing.

RA: We don't have anymore like we used to, the storms. There are not that many [anymore].

MH: Do you think it will start again?

RA: I think sometime again. I don't know how the cycles [work]. I know people back East are getting storms that should be in the South[west].

MH: What would you do for water up there?

RA: We had a little ditch. There was a little spring up in the head of the canyon. My dad made a ditch and it came right past the house. Every morning we would get up. We had two barrels and we would fill those barrels out of the ditch. The ditch that came down from the spring.

MH: How far was the spring down to your place.

RA: You know the fence up where the pond? It was from up there. When we had communicable diseases...

MH: Like what? Measles?

RA: Measles, mumps. We had a quarantine officer in town. He would come and tack a red flag on our gates. That meant stay in. We would all cut through the lot and come in each other's lots and play anyway. It was kind of mean, but we would get so lonesome to play. And we played a game of Old Sow. You dig holes, so many holes around. There was a can and you had sticks. [You would dig] the holes in front of you. There was one that would be it and he would hit that can and try to get it in one of your holes. If he got it in one of your holes, then you were the old sow and you had to get in the middle and try and get it in.

MH: What a neat game.

RA: It was fun. See we just made our fun. And then Purg, marbles. Boy we played marbles!

MH: What did you call it, Purg?

RA: Well, we had three holes and then we would lag and the one that got the closest to
– the hole was the first to start and if you could get that marble in all those three holes before someone knocked you away from it then you would win.

MH: So, that was a marble game?

RA: Yes, a marble game. Then jump the rope, hours and hours of jump the rope.

MH: How would you get your marbles?

RA: We could buy all kinds of marbles and now you can't find them anymore. It is just those games that have gone out now. TV.

MH: I remember playing marble in elementary school when it became a craze again. We would run out at recess and play marbles. It was fun. Not anymore.

RA: You see the little kids in front of the TV. When I have my little grandkids over, I get books, seat them around, and read to them.

MH: We were talking about the water up at Yellow Creek, which you got from the spring.

RA: We got it from the spring and it would come in front of our house in the ditch. We would put it in barrels so it would settle and then we would wash clothes on the scrubbing board. We had a big tub. Mother would put a big old tub on to heat. After breakfast we would start to scrub clothes, then she would always boil the white clothes to get them white and then hang them out. We had them out by eleven o'clock hanging on the clothesline. Hip Hooray! We got to go play.

MH: Did you laundry once a week?

RA: Yes, once a week. And we bathed once or twice a week. We put the old number 3 on the stove to heat. And we would bring in a tub to pour the water in.

MH: If you were the oldest did you get to go first?

RA: (laughter) When there was a dance I would get an extra bath, but I think every day we showered. Everyday always washing, now. Clean clothes. We used to

come home from school and change our clothes and hang them up and put on our play clothes. Then it was gather the clothes in. starch the coloreds. sprinkle them down and roll then up and put them in a basket and Tuesday morning get the old irons on the stove and do the ironing.

MH: Nobody irons anymore.

RA: No, unless you have to get a few wrinkles out.

MH: Would your mom do all the sewing?

RA: Oh, yes. She made clothes.

MH: How would she get all her material?

RA: There was material for sale in the store. My Uncle Charlie Wintch owned this store down here. J. Austin Cope had the first one and that is where Bob Joe's shop is. Then Charlie, Uncle Charlie Winch bought it from him when he left. It has been handed down and then all at once it has gone to a pizza place.

MH: Would your mom use one of the pedal machines to sew?

RA: Yes, she had Singer Sewing machine a 1921 model.

MH: Did you order things from the catalog?

RA: We would order from Walterfield, Aldens, Sears, Pennys and then there was Spiegels.

MH: Would you come in to town once a day or not?

RA: No, there were days we would not come in. We would in when we needed something, or once a week or [sometimes] every two weeks.

MH: Were there more places out there by Marion Frost's?

RA: Yes, there were the Baldwins that live there. It is all but fallen, the little cabin down there. There were other houses out there, but of course they are gone now.

MH: Would you go into Cannonville if you had to go to town or would you go all the way into Tropic?

RA: We had to go through Cannonville and on to Tropic. We had an old truck. Like I said, after my father passed away my mother rented the ranch out and we just stayed in town. Mother couldn't handle it anymore and my brothers went on to school.

MH: What did your brothers do when you went to California?

RA: My brothers went to the Service. McCune was in the Pacific. Stanley was in the Pacific. Then Dean Wintch and Jack Chynoweth, they went to the Germany. When I think that we were fighting two wars at once, then we would get word that we had lost someone.

MH: It was hard for such a small community.

RA: It was like on the little plaque they are going to have, "We served to save you." Those were hard years. Thank goodness for President Roosevelt, who started the Social Security and the CCC, There was work he started. I just can remember President Hoover. That was in the Depression. You know I am glad I lived through a depression. I know I could make it, survive it if we had another one.

MH: I think that is a real concern for older people now. They wonder if the younger people could survive a depression.

RA: That is what worries me. They are so used to the fast food places and...I remember we made our soap.

MH: Not many have all those skills anymore. special skills to survive anymore.

RA: We saved all the lard from the pigs that we killed and then one day mother would get a soap day going. She would build a fire. We had a tub that we made it in. Put all the grease and six or seven cans of lye. It was dangerous. And that would boil up and boil up and boil and then you would leave it over night [to harden] and then they had a big knife that they would cut it.

MH: It would solidify in that big pot that you cooked it in.

RA; Yes, you would just cut it in that and put it in boxes and when you would wash clothes that was what you would use. Another thing, when we washed our hair, we would go out and get aloes root, bring it in and wash it and pound that and wash your hair. You never have seen [all] the lather that made.

MH: What did you all it? Uuse root?

RA: Uuse. What do we call it? The one that has the pretty white flower on it? Yucca plants.

MH: Yucca plant? Oh, really.

RA: That has great shampoo in the root.

MH: I'd like to try that. We do have a yucca up by our house.

RA: Oh, I'm just skipping around here.

MH: That is OK, that is how the story gets told.

RA: Then I remember one Mother's Day with all the cousin, we would get together and go up in the fields and come back with a big arm full of wildflowers and take
– them to our mothers for Mother's Day. They thought that was the grandest.

MH: Now, the flowers were at the top of town?

RA: Yes, way up in there. We had the lady slippers and bluebells. little daisies and sunflowers. There is nothing prettier than sunflowers.

MH: How long were you in California?

RA: I was there a year. I came back in '42 and got married.

MH: Who did you marry?

RA: My first husband was Monte Shakespear, Obie's brother and he had Hodgkin's disease. And I had my four children. Monte went up and had these treatments. Then they didn't know how much [medicine] to give and what, and he kind of lost his mind. Dr.Duggnas said, I'll say it just like he said it, "They cured the Hodgkin's disease but raised hell with his brain." So he spent eight years away. He came home once in awhile from the hospital and then I got a letter from the hospital board that said he would not be able to ever come home again.

MH: Do you remember what they treated him with?

RA: I don't know what it was.

MH: But you had your four kids and you were basically raising them no your own?

RA: Yes. on my own.

MH: Well, what did you do here, when you came back from California?

RA: Well, I just did what ever I could do and I got a little help from the State to help with them.

MH: Who were your children then?

RA: Florence is my oldest. and Carol, and Marvin, and Sonja.

End Tape 1, Side B

Begin Tape 2, Side A

MH: Does Marvin live over in Escalante?

RA: No, he lives here with me. But my two oldest, Florence and Carol had polio.

Well, Carol was one and Florence was three. I took them up to Salt Lake. Used to walk from Sugarhouse to the State hospital everyday to see those kids. I stayed with my sister-in-law Aleta Shakespear. Finally they got to come home and Dr. Pimberton who was their doctor, told me to do exercises with them. We had to go through exercises night and morning and noon to exercise their legs. You notice Florence has a limp. And my daughter Carol has had to go back to wearing a brace. They said the muscles, the old worn out muscles put such a strain on the new ones that they had her wear a brace again. So, she stills wears a brace.

MH: You get to see Florence all the time. She is here, right?

RA: She so good to me and takes care of me. She was up there after that. After that she had poor circulation in her feet and had to go back to the Primary Children's Hospital. She was up there nearly a year in the Primary Children's' Center. She moved from the old Primary Children's Hospital to the new one, the one they have now. I was invited to the dedication, which was wonderful.

MH: Did you marry again after Monte?

RA: Yes, after I married Royal Alvey. I had two boys, Kim and Kerry.

MH: Were the Alveys from this area?

RA: From Escalante.

MH: He came over here...

RA: He came over here and he married Mae Chynoweth's sister, Nina. And she passed away with cancer. She had cancer. Well, my little family needed a father and his needed a mother and so we got together.

MH: Is this the house you lived in?

RA: This is the house we lived in. Like I say, these houses grow old with you. You start out with a new one and then it goes bad. [It feels like] I am sliding into the quicksand.

MH: I don't think so. Your heart is still young. You seem to be doing well.

RA: I'll be eighty on my next birthday. I am thankful for my good health and all my wonderful friends and no better place to live than Tropic. They are all just wonderful. They all look out for you. They all care about you.

MH: We will take a break then. Thank you, Rella.

End of interview

UTAH STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW AGREEMENT AND DEED OF GIFT

I hereby give to the Utah State Historical Society the tapes and transcriptions of the interview/interviews recorded on February 6, 2002 and grant the Utah State Historical Society the right to make the tapes and transcriptions available to the public for such educational and research purposes that are in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Society's Utah History Information Center.

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