

Interview with (Veda Moosman Behunin)

Interview with: Veda Moosman Behunin
Interviewer: Jay Haymond, Pat Haymond, Grant Johnson
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Jay: While we were talking a few minutes ago you said you had grown up here in Boulder. Tell us a little bit about that home where you grew up here in Boulder.

Veda: It's the home that Ray Thompson has now next to the mountains. It was a ranch- a one hundred and sixty acre plot. But we also had a home down here in the middle of town, closer to the school. We moved back and forth twice a year. We moved to the ranch in the spring and then we come down in the fall to go to school.

Jay: Your folks were involved in the stock industry I guess?

Veda: Yes very much so. That was their living.

Jay: And your father's name was...?

Veda: Christian Moosman. He was always known as Chris.

Jay: Sure, Chris Moosman. Where did he run his livestock?

Veda: Well on the Boulder Mountain in the summer time and then Steep Creek and Lower Bowns or the Little Bowns in the wintertime.

Jay: What was the routine about running stock, let's say down Lower Bowns? Would he go down there and tend those critters all the time or would he take them down, or... what's the routine there?

Veda: Well, he would take them down in the fall of the year when they took them off the mountain. Then he would check them several times in the winter and when they thought the feed was gone, then they had to bring them back out.

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Sometimes they could stay longer some years then they could others. They had a small spring down there, which my husband put into troughs. And that was one problem they had when dad was working, was the water situation.

Jay: It would dry out early in the spring.

Veda: Yes, it would dry out early and then they would bring them up and put them on the mountain in the summer time. Usually fed them some on the pastures you know, between the routes, either in the spring or in the fall. They would feed them what was necessary. And that was the same route that my husband took with them cattle.

Jay: Why don't you talk about the places along that route for identification purposes.

Veda: Well, it was a long ways down there to have to drive cattle. They went down through Deer Creek and the Gulch and then on down and up on Horse Canyon Bench and then on the Lower Bowns. Little Bowns was just this side of Big Bowns. It was quite a slick rock trail that they had to keep up there. Now my dad just took tents as he went. They rode horses and took their pack and there they went. But my husband built a cabin down there. And I guess it still stands. Up on top of the Little Bench, and also in Steep Creek. So he didn't have to take too many supplies. One pack outfit usually took all their stuff that they needed.

Jay: You have been over that trail I take it?

Veda: I have been over it a lot of times. Drove cattle.

Jay: Did you participate in the drives with your father?

Veda: No, not too much. I had nine brothers [*she laughs*] and only two sisters, so you can see why I didn't participate too much.

Jay: I do, yes.

Grant: Pat has what, five brothers?

Veda: Four. I had nine brothers.

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Grant: That is a good batch of brothers.

Veda: And they were all older than me but one. So I didn't participate much in the cattle when I was younger.

Jay: In a family like that, where the boys sort of take care of the stock work, how does a girl participate in a family like that?

Veda: Scrubbing floors and washing dishes [*they all laugh*] and peeling potatoes.

Jay: You went to school here in Boulder?

Veda: Yes, until the eighth grade. They kept all the eighth grades here. And then we went to Escalante or different places. I went to Escalante one year and then Logan one year, and two years in Wayne County. High school.

Jay: Did you go to Logan...?

Veda: North Cache.

Jay: I see.

Veda: I lived in Benson with one of my brothers. And I rode the bus from Benson the North Cache. It's up by Richmond.

Jay: Sure. In fact I had some interviews up there this summer.

Veda: Oh, did ya? Well it's been a long time since I was up there, I couldn't...

Jay: I was up in Paradise in January talking to a gentleman by the name of Marion Olsen. And I thought I was going to be snowed in [*Veda laughs*].

Jay: But that is beautiful country just like Boulder is beautiful.

Veda: Logan Canyon is awful pretty.

Jay: Tell me a little bit about how you came into contact with Max Behunin? Was he a native here too?

Veda: No, he was from Torrey. That's Wayne County and he drove the school bus when I went to school. And he also went to school. And he was just a year older than I was, and he got out of school a year before I did. But then he drove the bus when I met him.

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Jay: How did you decide that he was somebody you wanted to throw in with?

Veda: [*she laughs*] Well you know them founded things just happen.

Jay: Did he pick you out of the crowd?

Veda: Well, not for a while. Not for a year or so. And finally we started to go together. That was all. And we weren't never separated after that.

Jay: Tell us about the stock operation that you and he developed.

Veda: Well, we took over the same stock outfit that dad had. We ran cattle on Steep Creek Bench and Little Bowns and on the mountain. Then Max bought quite a lot more ground and quite a lot more permit rights. We expanded our cattle and stuff. It was almost the same thing. We would put them on the mountain. Well it started out when dad was running them, it was the first of May, then they cut it down the fifteenth of May and then to the first of June, and then they cut it down to the fifteenth of June. I don't think they go up now until the sixteenth of June, and that's the way they kept cutting us on the mountain. They kept cutting our quantity down too. They kept cutting our permit numbers down. But we would put our cattle on the mountain say the first of June, and then when they would come down we would usually have our hay up or our crops up there at the ranch. We would keep them up there until it turned cold, then we'd have hay and that down here. Then Max run the cattle, he would take one bunch down to Steep Creek and he'd take another bunch down to the Bowns. Now he had to put a water trough, a big tank, on the east side of Steep Creek to water them in the wintertime. Because the canyon got so cold and snowy and icy, he had to build a trail out up there and run the cattle out for water. There was one winter here he thawed ice out every day up there in that tank to water these cows. He went down there every other day to water cattle. Now he'd melt the ice and he would pour it back in the tank to water the cattle. And at Lower Bowns it was a little different because he developed that spring and put it into what they call

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troughs and they pretty well had water about all winter. But there wasn't feed down there like there was up here at Steep Creek so they couldn't leave them down there very long.

Jay: When you use the words "develop a spring," describe what you mean by that.

Veda: Well the spring was there but it had just become a mud hole when the cattle tromped in it. They couldn't get much water, so he piped it and made a head for it and kinda rocked it up and put a pipe in it. He piped it out away from there in aluminum troughs. And then he also put aluminum background on it so that the heat would keep the ice thawed out when it froze. So that's what I mean by developed it. He just kinda developed what was there. But he did put it out so the cattle couldn't tromp in it. They tromped in it until it was just nothing but a mud hole.

Jay: So you kind of have to be ingenious to preserve the resources that are available to you.

Veda: That's right.

Jay: You said he built a cabin down there.

Veda: Yes he built an all aluminum cabin so the vermin couldn't get in-the mice and stuff couldn't get in it. It was just a small cabin just enough for a stove and a table and a bed. But we locked it up, no we never locked it, it was just there. And nothing could get in it.

Jay: Did you keep supplies down there?

Veda: Some supplies, yes. Like a little canned stuff, like a can of coffee, something like that.

Jay: In miles, how far would it be from here to the cabin?

Veda: Grant? You're better in mileage than I am.

Grant: Steep Creek or Lower Bowns?

Veda: Lower Bowns.

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Grant: Lower Bowns, from here isn't it about twenty? I believe it's about fourteen or fifteen from Deer Creek.

Veda: I'd say at least twenty.

Jay: That would take you about what, three fourths of a day?

Veda: All day on a horse. Driving cattle why it took two days.

Grant: Where you go from here to Deer Creek in one day and then on down.

Veda: Right, my husband built a trail down there along Deer Creek. We'd take cattle down off at night and evening you know, then we'd start them out real early in the morning.

Grant: He built the one that is there now?

Veda: Yes.

Grant: All right.

Jay: How did you fit into that cattle operation. Here you have a girl scrubbing floors and peeling potatoes, how do you fit into a stock operation?

Veda: Gosh that's the way I grew up; dad always had cattle. I milked cows and things like that. We herded sheep and herded cattle. Before they had alfalfa field on one part of the ground and meadow on the other, up there at the ranch. But there was a ridge that run in between and my sister and I, which is this one right here [*she points to a picture*]. We herded those cattle from getting over into the alfalfa field.

Jay: Sure.

Veda: We had to keep them onto the meadow pasture land and that was where they had a fence in there, and they fenced it. But we would always have to wrangle cows in whether we done anything else or not, out of the pasture into the corral for milking. I got up lots of mornings before it got light and rode a mile up in there on a horse to get cattle, milk cows out on a horse for a nickel. Mother put

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a nickel on the table and I had a younger brother-which ever come down first got the nickel but we had to go get the horse or the cows out of the pasture.

Jay: That's a good story.

Veda: On a horse.

Pat: Did you get lots of nickels?

Veda: I think I got my share [*they all laugh*]. Now we were only kids, small children at that time. You had to lead your horse up to the buggy, to crawl on the buggy to crawl on the bareback horse.

Grant: Did you tie it up or did you just lead it along the buggy and crawl up in the buggy and you had it?

Veda: Oh he was nice and gentle I just lead him up to the buggy, he knew what I wanted him to do.

Jay: He'd play along.

Veda: He slide up to the buggy and that let me crawl onto him.

Jay: We were talking with Ivan Lyman and he was saying they didn't have to go see a rodeo; they had a rodeo every morning when they got out on their stock. But you didn't have to worry about that.

Veda: They had rodeos around our corral about every Sunday afternoon, the boys did. But we never did participate in them. We always had some kind of a rodeo going on.

Jay: Describe how you worked with your husband in the family stock operation. Now I heard you say you had an upper property, and you didn't have corrals and stuff here around this house?

Veda: Oh yes, yes.

Jay: Oh you did?

Veda: Yes, this is where we calved our cows out in the spring of the year. We have this maturity barn back here in this big building back here. We had eight stalls

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back there. We would put cattle in those stalls when they calved. And we checked them night and day.

Jay: Sure.

Veda: I have a son that lives here and he, at that time, lived just right next to us here. And we would take our turns going down and checking the cows that was ready to calf. One of them usually took the early shift at ten o'clock and I took the midnight shift and then Max got up real early in the morning. If we had a cow going that needed help we would always come back to the house. We had buzzards, so all they had to do was ring down there at the maturity barn and it woke us up in here. On April fool morning I got up and went down to the trail, there was no cow having a calf, but I played April fool. I first hollered at Max, I told him Farland needed help down at the corral and I slipped over and told Farland the same thing and they met each other out here at the gate. [*she laughs*] and that was my April fool trick.

Grant: That was a good one.

Jay: Well, you helped with more than just calving.

Veda: Oh yes, we had to load about one hundred or such a matter of bails of hay every morning. And we drove out in this field out here. And I drove while he threw off the hay. Then we'd make another tour around the cows, and I'd count while he would look at the animals to see if there was any sick ones, or anything. So we would make two trips around the field every morning to feed. I also hauled hay when they got ready to haul hay. I didn't run the machinery. I never learned how to run a tractor or anything like that-my husband did all that. First we had teams and wagons, well teams and mowers and things like that. And then we graduated up to tractors. It was all done by tractor work. My husband and my son did that part of the work and when it come time to haul, why I drove the trucks as they loaded them. Then we brought them into the haystack. We

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just had small trucks to load them; it was all bailed hay. Years and years ago it wasn't bailed hay it was loose hay and they had hay pulls. And they would put the ropes on the wagons underneath the hay. And when they got to the stack yard they would pull it up with the hay pull. They had a pulley horse that pulled it up and dropped it down on the haystack.

Jay: Did you get to tromp hay occasionally? Or did you worry about that kind of stacking?

Veda: I got to drive the pulley horse. That was my job driving the pulley horse [*she laughs*]. That was when I was a kid, a girl. I guess I tromped hay and I loaded grain. And I helped thrash. An old hand thrasher on the tractor and we, Max and I, did our own thrashing. Pitch the straw in and let the machine run it out and catch the grain, and haul it into the grain yard.

Jay: Where there times of adverse conditions with the weather or economic conditions that you can remember that you had to make special provisions for or sacrifices for?

Veda: Well yes, we have had some real bad hailstorms and some real bad floods. One year I can remember in particular we had a real bad hailstorm and the floods come down through the middle and piled the hay all up down along the fence. It washed the hay right down towards the fence. And then we have had some awful drought problems too. Especially down in this place down here. When we didn't have enough water.

Jay: Describe some of the conservation practices that you used to survive those draught periods.

Veda: We just figured it would be better year next year [*she laughs*]. Well the year Farland was born, which was 1940, it rained for two solid weeks. And Max had the hay cut. Well you know what they look like after two solid weeks after it

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rained. So they just hauled it, piled it all together, and salted it and it was just as black as black. But with the salt in it, the cattle will eat it.

Jay: Where is the salt supply?

Veda: We just had to buy the crushed salt.

Jay: Did you get it up in Salina country?

Veda: Yea over towards Redmond.

Jay: When the Depression started in '29, what effect did it have on your operation?

Veda: Well we weren't here at that time. You see that was when I was first married. So we were living in Happy Valley at the time of the Depression. And we just existed, that's all. Sometimes we didn't know where the next meal was coming from.

Jay: What did you do when you didn't know that?

Veda: Fished and raised a garden and went hungry. We didn't have the ranch at the time of the Depression; my folks had it.

Grant: Describe Happy Valley.

Veda: Well Happy Valley was a place that we leased and it was just farmland. And Max had quite a few cattle that we put in there. We did lots of fishing and we did lots of poaching and we did lots of logging. We got out logs to build us a house. Then Mr. Dolly, he was a German, bought Happy Valley, and he hired Max for forty-five dollars a month. I raised a garden and he raised acres and acres and acres of potatoes, seed potatoes for certified seed.

The inspector would come in and inspect them to see if they were all right you know. Then when harvest time come they had a potato digger and they hired quite a few extra men. Max built a well, I guess a good fifty-foot long potato pit that was underground that was lined with bins on both sides. And we filled that potato pit full of potatoes. Then in the winter time they sorted them, Max and another guy they spent all winter down in there and they would sort them out- a

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baking potato in one and the hulls in another and the certified seed in another and then so on and so forth. Then they were shipped out to the main road and put on big trucks and then they sold them. We done that for two years and then Dolly wanted to cut Max down to forty dollars a month. Max wouldn't do it because we had a chance to come to Boulder. So we came over here and leased the ranch from dad for a year before we bought it. It was a pretty place down there in Happy Valley; we had all them potatoes and things you know. And it was a pretty place.

Jay: Where is Happy Valley?

Veda: It is on the east side of Boulder over there about half way over where Single Tree campground is. It is just east of that.

Jay: It's actually in Garfield County but it is close to....

Veda: No, it's in Wayne County- uh huh its in Wayne County.

Jay: It is?

Veda: Yes, it's in Wayne County.

Grant: Barely.

Veda: Just barely um hum. It's in Wayne County.

Jay: Well it does sound like a fun time.

Veda: We were young and we had a lot of fun [*she laughs*]. It was hard work but we had a lot of fun. We had to ride the horses then, for a long time we didn't even own a car.

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Veda: In the depression, once we got married, we didn't know where our next meal was coming from or anything but we survived [*she laughs*].

Jay: If I hear you right you fasted, would that be true?

Veda: Well, I guess, yes. We did.

Jay: A minute ago you mentioned you leased the operation from your father.

Veda: Yes.

Jay: For what, one year?

Veda: One year. Well no, yes one year, we come here in November 11th, on Veterans Day. We bought the place on the first day of January, 1940. That's when we bought the ranch.

Jay: Whenever people get involved in using the land, I think they do so if they have a good deal of hope and anticipation for the future. Can you describe your feeling at that time?

Veda: Well it was kinda scary because we were just young people. We had a young baby at the time, and sixteen thousand dollars sounded like a heck of a lot of money to have to pay off. We didn't pay for it down; we had to pay for it as we could. And it sounded like an awful lot of money to have to pay off.

Jay: Did you owe this mortgage to your father?

Veda: No, my father had a debt in the bank. We just changed it over from one holder to another. They just kind of took Max instead of dad, on most of the money.

Jay: In those few years, mostly it's hard work I think. Describe sort of a routine day for us.

Veda: Well, we would get up at daylight in the morning and the first thing we did we had to milk a herd of cows. We milked about twenty head of cows, twice a day. And we would usually do that before breakfast. Then we would have breakfast, Max would go into the field and I would tend to the chickens and the garden,

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and the household my kids, my children. And that was about all there was to it until the haying come and then we would mow hay and put that up.

Jay: Did you use all of your hay for your stock operation?

Veda: Yes. We fed our hay to our cattle that we raised.

Jay: You had a lot of milk. How did you peddle the milk?

Veda: Well first we shipped cream. We had a milk separator that separated the cream from the milk. We shipped it in five-gallon cans all across, on the mail. And went to Old Sauras creamery. And then they put the cheese factory in down here. And then they would haul the milk from the ranches to the cheese factory and make cheese.

Jay: Did you ever work in the cheese factory?

Veda: No. I have made cheese at home. I made cheese at home a lot. Mother always made cheese, and I made cheese, butter and cream stuff like that we raised. We had our own chickens; we had turkeys; we had pigs; we had a small bunch of sheep.

Jay: Was the purpose of that diversity for your own consumption or did you have a market you anticipated trying to meet with uh, you ate most of the pigs?

Veda: Right.

Jay: And the sheep, did you sheer and use the wool and that sort of thing?

Veda: Yes, mother made jackets and socks we washed the wool and cleaned it up when we were kids. That was work we had to do. We had to wash that wool through suds and suds of water and then clear water and then put it out on top of the lean-to house to dry. And then mother would card it and we would make our own quilts out of that wool too. That's how the quilts was made, that's the only batting we had was carded wool. I've still got cards stuff like that.

Jay: What about turkeys, was that strictly domestic...?

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Veda: No, they picked the turkeys and shipped them, in the fall of the year. About November, about Thanksgiving time. They would pick them and ship them- I think they went out on the mail too. The way I remember it.

Jay: And the chickens of course were eggs.

Veda: Right.

Jay: They were domestic kind of food.

Veda: Right. We had lots of hay men and lots of thrasher men to work on the thrashers that we had to feed. And Boulder was like a big family. We went to church on Sunday. We never went home alone, or we would go to somebody. It was a real social community. We always got together for them kind of things. So we fed lots of people.

Jay: Did you sort of rotate that community feed, in other words did you plan on...

Veda: Having someone for dinner or we would go some place for dinner.

Jay: Was that strictly a social affair besides eating, you kinda kept up the relationship between friends.

Veda: Yes, we did, we had quilting bees, we had rag bees, we had cornhusks, and you know, we had candy pulls. It was just a social fair that's all. Everybody was friendly, and that was our entertainment, dances.

Jay: With an operation like that what purpose does the church fill for you and your husband? Was he a churchman? Did he have a church position?

Veda: No. My husband wasn't too much for church. He didn't care to go to church much. But I went to church. My folks were that way too. My dad didn't care much for church. But that wasn't saying he wasn't a good man [*she laughs*]. They just didn't participate too much in church.

Jay: When you talk about having these other activities associated with the big Sunday meal. I can hear you recycling a lot of material that all ready existed, like a rag bee.

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Veda: Yes.

Jay: And then you used those rags how?

Veda: My mother had a loom that she wove these rugs on. What they did in the rag bees was cut, tear them and sew them together in long strips so that they could go through the loom.

Jay: Did she teach you how to weave rugs?

Veda: No, I didn't ever learn how. My brother did. And the loom is still up here now in town but he is gone. His son-in-law learned how to weave. So there are still rugs there.

Jay: So the loom is sort of an artifact, isn't it?

Veda: The loom is still here in good condition, yep it is.

Jay: Well that's a great machine.

Grant: Is that the loom that your brother Doyle used?

Veda: Yes. Paul has it now, but it still sits up there in the greenery.

Grant: Wasn't that old even then?

Veda: Yes. Before mother got it, her brother had it before that, so it was years and years ago when that was brought into Boulder.

Jay: Let's return to the stock operation that you and your husband operated. What part did you play let's say on a trail drive. Where you just one of the hands that kept the cows going down the trail?

Veda: Right.

Jay: Did you ever feel like it was a dangerous operation, did you ever experience danger on those trails?

Veda: No, not if your used to riding a horse. I was. There was a time or two when Max's horse bucked with him and about dumped him over the edge of the ledge one thing or another like that.

Jay: You never let your horse get away like that?

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Veda: I was always on a gentle horse [*everyone laughs*].

Jay: You know sometimes cowboys always talk about not pulling leather, meaning they never held on to the horn. How about you?

Veda: I've been thrown pretty well a time or two [*she laughs*]. I remember one time when I was coming around up there by the ranch my horse spooked. Boy, I pulled leather that day! All I got a hold of was the horn.

Jay: Was there ever a time your husband was hurt in a stock operation? Did you have to nurse or apply medication?

Veda: His horse fell on slick pasture and broke some ribs. They had been bumped a time or two. Quite a few times.

Jay: You didn't have to have any special training to help that man did ya?

Veda: No, a doctor bound him up with uh...well he didn't really know his ribs was broke until he got off down the Iron Top. That's several miles farther down, and he kept getting a little worse and a little worse. Ivan was with him and they sent him back. When he went to a doctor in Richfield why they bound him up and he had three broken ribs.

Jay: Was the road all paved in so it was a smooth ride?

Veda: No, no, no.

Grant: I hear them talking, that's way down by the Colorado River.

Veda: Yes, down by Bullfrog, down that way, Iron Top is.

Grant: It's like fifty miles isn't it?

Veda: Yea, easy.

Grant: Sixty?

Jay: I was going to make a joke about life flight, but that didn't happen.

Veda: No he rode his horse back out.

Jay: That sounds awful sore.

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Veda: Well he didn't realize he had broken ribs-he hurt. If you ever have a bone broke they don't really get sore until about three days after they are broke. He didn't realize that he was that bad until he got down there. He had to turn around and ride back.

Grant: When you went to Iron Top did you go down through Grand Gulch and Halls Creek?

Veda: We went down the Boulder Creek down the Escalante River. Going down the Escalante River with him and another guy by the name of Lester Baker. They were both on horses and they come to this great big block in the canyon and there was a great big hole of water underneath and the only way to get down through there was to jump their horses off into that water. So Max had this big light roan horse that he called Jim. So he went first, and when he went in he went in out of sight. The other guy said no way! He turned around and come clear back. But Max went through, went on through. They went down that, it was either the Boulder Creek or the Escalante River, I'm not sure Grant, where this block was. I think it was the Boulder Creek. When his horse went in out of sight the other guy wouldn't go, he come back.

Jay: Did he ride him off?

Veda: Yes he rode him off. He rode him off and it was that deep, he went that deep he went clear out of sight.

Grant: I made the mistake of asking Max if he walked his horse over a certain trail, and he looked at me like I was crazy [*Veda laughs*]. He said I didn't bring him to walk him [*they all laugh*]. Scary trail too.

Veda: Well that's what I always figured, I figured the horse was safer on foot then I was. I rode a little mule that we called Ted a lot. I never did get off of him I don't care how rough the trail it was, I rode him, he was safer on foot than I was.

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Jay: In other words the animal was much more sure footed than you thought you were.

Veda: A lot of them are, I'd always stumble and fall down and the horse came tumbling down on top of me so [*she laughs*] I walked. Very seldom I got off a horse to walk.

Jay: Did you personally have a preference for a mule over a horse?

Veda: No.

Jay: Just happened that was the one.

Veda: Just happened that I rode him quite a little bit cause he is sure-footed. No I have had lots of good horses that I liked.

Jay: Some people get attached to their animals whether there are riding horses or work horses, or even cows or stuff like that. How did you feel about your animals?

Veda: I loved them [*she laughs*]. I had a little red horse that when we were up there to Happy Valley, when we would come in and I still had him when we come to Boulder I still had him. I really liked him. Yea, you do get attached to them kind of things. Max had an awful lot of good horses.

Pat: How did you make that trip from Wayne County over here with all of your stuff?

Veda: First time we came, we came with a pack on a horse. No that was when we went back, when Max come to get me. When I took my stuff back to Wayne County. And the next time we come when we come to Boulder, we drove up so we had a vehicle then, and we come by car. But it was dirt road.

Jay: I was going to ask about communications between you as a rider and that mule. Is there anything special about how you communicate? You know you have pressures on your knees.

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Veda: I had a pair of spurs and I still got them! And if you had a pair of reins then if you wanted to guide him you guide him. And he would know which way you wanted him to go, not the way he wanted to go.

Jay: Did you ever turn it over to the animal because you thought their instincts were better than yours?

Veda: Well lots of times they do, yea. I haven't ever been caught up like that but Max has in a storm or something like that. He turned it over to the horse.

Jay: And so it would be them kind of finding their way home.

Veda: In a snow storm or something like that they were better than the man was.

Jay: That stock operation depends on not just the immediate supervision of the person and some herders, but also from an economic sense to be part of a larger economy. Did you participate in that sort of decision-making process. In other words did you help with the way the stock operation fit into a larger economy?

Veda: Well I don't hardly quite get what you mean.

Jay: Well, for instance if the year looks like its going to be a good year do you put more stock on the allotment? Or if it's going to be a bad year do you put fewer stock on the allotment? How do you work that?

Veda: They had allotments up here, we had allotments for so many cattle on the mountain. That was controlled by BLM or the Forest up there. BLM controlled it down here. They told you how many you could take and how many you couldn't and that is what you done. You did just what they said you could take.

Jay: So the number of stock wasn't really an issue it was what ever they said.

Veda: Yes.

Jay: But there are other things that you do or didn't do that fit into the way the economy was.

Veda: Well if we had more cattle than we could see we had feed for we would have to sell them.

Interview with (Veda Moosman Behunin)

Jay: Sure.

Veda: If we had more cattle than what our pastures and what our allotment on the mountain did, why we had to get rid of them. We couldn't keep any more cattle than what our feed would feed. We had to watch that, cause there is no sense in trying to feed something if you haven't got the feed to do it.

Jay: But if I understand the way an operation like this works you are always trying to get ahead, there's a drive to get ahead.

Veda: You want to make the dollar.

Jay: Right. So where would you turn? Besides cattle what would you do to help pay the expenses and that sort of thing?

Veda: Well we first started out milking cows and that made us a profit. And I think that was about it.

Jay: Did you have turkeys?

Veda: Now mother had turkeys, but I didn't. No I never did raise turkeys. We kept our expenses down. When we didn't have cattle to sell and one thing or another we tried to tighten our belts as they say [*she laughs*]
But most of it was cattle; we depended on cattle.

Jay: Is there anything you could do about the price? In other words was there a way to treat the stock to keep the price up there?

Veda: Well keep your stock in good condition and good breed so that the buyers wanted them. It used to be Herefords and then they got to mixing them. But when we ran it, it was mostly Herefords stock and that is what the buyers wanted. You have to have a good material or you couldn't sell it. Couldn't have colds or bloaters or anything like that they didn't want them. You had to have good stock.

Interview with (Veda Moosman Behunin)

Jay: How did you keep up with what the demands were, was it the magazines that came to you, or word of mouth, friends, and that sort of thing? You know a Hereford breed is that out of Scotland, originally?

Veda: I think so.

Jay: And that was a replacement for Texas Longhorn. Have you ever seen Texas Longhorn?

Veda: Not in Boulder, but I have seen Texas Longhorn, but not in Boulder.

Jay: They a pretty tough breed.

Veda: They didn't have to breed too much, they just bought good bulls, and Max was an awful good judge on cattle. He knew what the cattle buyers wanted. He didn't need to read to awful much he just watched and knew what was going to sell and what wasn't. He was an irrigator when nobody could raise grass, when nobody wanted to try. Grant could tell you that.

Grant: I remember one day we had eleven- Max said there was eleven separate feet of water going into this ground. Everything from here all the way down...

Veda: Ponderosa.

Grant: All the way down about a mile down the road.

Veda: About four hundred and eighty acres.

Grant: He had water going in little streams everywhere, he was amazing. He had a lot of hay too it seems.

Veda: Well he took the water off of this place that I have got now and then it went on to the next place, and then on to the next place. We hauled thousands and thousands bails of hay every year- just Max and I alone. But it all went out to cattle; we didn't sell any. We put it all into the cattle industry. So you can see what we would have done if it hadn't of been for cattle. We couldn't of made it.

Interview with (Veda Moosman Behunin)

Jay: When you describe Max and his irrigating operation. It sounds like he had a very practical sense of physics and engineering principals to get that water to go as far as I hear you talking about.

Veda: He did.

Jay: A lot of experience behind that judgment I guess.

Veda: Yea, ever since he was twelve years old he irrigated and he took advantage of it. When he put that wheel down in Deer Creek he knew he could pump water with a water wheel. And he wanted to do it just to show that he could, and he did.

Jay: Are you saying he was stubborn?

Veda: No, [*she laughs sheepishly*] no he wasn't. He just knew he could do it. He talked to a lot of engineers, and they said it couldn't be done. You couldn't pump that water with a water wheel. But he did!

Grant: Could you describe your homestead, when you homesteaded Deer Creek?

Veda: Well it was nothing but trees, Grant, great big cedar and pine trees. We hired Lincoln Lyman to go in there and take those trees out. And we burned most of them. Leveled it up as much as we could. And then they put those big pipes in and put that wheel in, and let that water go down over the wheel. And then that wheel ran a bull wheel and that bull wheel acted as a pump to pump the water out on the land. And we had sprinklers, all down through there.

Grant: Max's invention had a water wheel twenty-two feet in diameter and the bull wheel was about twelve feet in diameter, a big wooden wheel. And there was seventy-five feet of rubber belts about six inches wide that went up into the pump house. Then there is a whole series of pulleys that geared it up to a tractor pump. He always told me the engineers couldn't do it.

Veda: They did they said it couldn't be done, but he done it.

Grant: We rehabilitated it, it was all broke down and we got it and rehabilitated it and it worked.

Interview with (Veda Moosman Behunin)

Veda: It was quite a job to keep those belts on that bull wheel. You had to be right there you know and to keep those big belts on or they would slip off you know. And then they would tangle up. Well he knew he could do it and he did.

Grant: Can you describe what your day was like then when you had three ranches?

Veda: Well we would start one place and tend water up there and milk cows and then we would come down here and tend water and sprinklers down here and then we would go on down Deer Creek and water and then we would probably stay there that night and we would do the same thing the next morning only backwards. We'd change sprinklers down at Deer Creek and then we come up here and change sprinklers and then we would go on up to the ranch and water up there, and milk cows again up there. That was only just while Farland was gone. See Farland was with us quite a lot. But it was a day's work. We never knew when morning or night was going to catch us depending on what we had to do.

Pat: Did you milk cows just once a day?

Veda: Twice a day.

Pat: Twice.

Veda: We milked cows twice a day.

Jay: How many children did you have?

Veda: Three.

Jay: Did they all help or get involved with the operation?

Veda: Well yes, to a certain extent. I had two girls and one boy the boy was always active on the farm. And the girls drove hay trucks. But Farland was always with his dad on a horse. They were good cowboys; they always knew what the other one was going to do.

End of Interview