

TAIT 1999  
Rena Chamberlain

## Southern Utah Oral History Project

The Southern Utah Oral History Project was started in July of 1998. It began with an interest in preserving the cultural history of small towns in southern Utah that border the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The project was managed by Kent Powell, from the Utah Division of State History, who oversaw the collection of oral histories conducted in Boulder, Escalante, Bryce Valley, Long Valley, Kanab, the Kaibab Paiute Reservation, and Big Water, by Jay Haymond and Suzi Montgomery. Also in cooperation with the state was the Bureau of Land Management and the people of Garfield and Kane counties, with support from the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The goals of the project were first to interview long-time local residents and collect information about the people and the land during the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, the interviews were to be transcribed and copies of the transcripts were to be made available to the public at the Utah State Historical Society and at local repositories. Lastly, to build a relationship with state agencies and the local communities and provide a medium for the local communities to express their interest in preserving their own history and culture in the areas that are now included in the GSENM. Thank you to everyone who took the time to care and share their memories and stories.



INTERVIEW WITH: Rena Chamberlain Tait  
INTERVIEWER: Suzi Montgomery  
INTERVIEW NUMBER: One of one  
DATE OF INTERVIEW: December 3, 1998  
PLACE OF INTERVIEW: Her house in Orderville  
SUBJECT OF INTERVIEW: Her life and childhood in Orderville.  
TRANSCRIBER: Vectra Solutions/JN  
DATE: April 1, 1999

SM: So, Rena, I know we've been talking sort of a while already but I just want to start with your birth date and then go onto something a little about your childhood and what it felt like to grow up in Orderville.

RT: Okay. I was born March 7, 1920 and I really had a wonderful growing up time here in Orderville. Nobody was rich or had any money but we didn't know it. We didn't know anything different. I never, ever felt poor. We just had everything we needed and we had lots of fun things besides going to school and then of course I started to work in my dad's store really young so I always had a job, but I didn't get paid. (Laughter) But I loved it. My brother and I and my older brother, Lavell, I think we worked in it more than any of my other brothers and sisters.

SM: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

RT: I have four others. So, six of us in the family.

SM: And who was the oldest?

RT: Lavell, and then me, and then Quinn and then my sister, Vernell, and my brother Ken and my sister Ramona. And one time we were in the store and the salesman was in there and he said, "Hans, are all these kids yours?" And Hans was my dad, and my dad says, "Yes, we had a boy and a girl and a boy and a girl and a boy and a girl, and just about that fast." (Laughter) And I was so embarrassed (laughter) to think that was funny! My dad was a

joker. (Laughs)

SM: Tell me about your dad. How would you describe your dad?

RT: He was a good natured, generous, warm-hearted man and he was in World War I and with the army of occupation and he came back and taught us kids some French and German, 'cause he spent a lot of time there. He went on his mission to Oklahoma then he came home, met my mother and they were married and had their family -- about that fast. (Laughter) Anyway, my mother told me once that no two people could be as different as her and my dad were. But they stayed together all those years and had a wonderful...

SM: Were they different in a compatible way or were they different in a non-compatible way?

RT: They got along really well, but he was raised in a easy-going family and she was raised in a family that everything had a place and it was supposed to always be in its place and the family was always on time and meals were on time and the Chamberlains didn't eat meals on time. It was just an easy-going family, but they were fun and I just loved to work in the store and I tell you I can get things done at home and my dad taught me how to straighten shelves and sweep the floor, you know, and keep things dusted and clean. And then I thought it was really neat when I could stop to work the cash register but I had to get into that for a while. And then he taught me how to count change out. And I've been in the store all my life until I sold it after...in 1989.

SM: Did you sell it to members of your family?

RT: No, there was nobody that stayed home...stayed here. They all got an education, all of our children, and left home. So, they all live away from here but they come back as often as they can, it's still home to them. But I loved the store and I had such a good growing up in... Listen, here's a funny-looking picture I wished you could...

SM: I could take a picture of it later.

RT: This is me and my brother Lavell. Isn't that a...we looked like a couple of orphans, but that was us and that's the way they dressed us in those days. (Laughs)

SM: Oh, wow!

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RT: And then this is me and my doll and this is me and my two uncles. And this is the back...I bet Nan showed you the old Chamberlain home. Down the street from here just on the other side of the other side.

SM: Oh, I think so.

RT: And it's kind of built up steps up to it. Well, this is the back of that house and my dad and mother lived in there `till they had three children.

SM: I see, now that was the Chamberlain home, the home that your father grew up in.

RT: Yes.

SM: Now, was that with all the families, or just one?

RT: His family. One thing about Grandpa Chamberlain, he saw that every one of his wives had a separate home. He was a smart man. Don't you think? (Laughs)

SM: I think so.

RT: And they each had a home, there was homes in Kanab, two homes in Kanab, and there was the one here and then they had one in Provo where, when the kids got old enough in the family to go off to school, why, they would go and live with that family. My dad said it was like I had six mothers instead of one. He was welcome in any home that he went to. But we had a good...

SM: So, there was six wives all together.

RT: Six wives, (yes).

SM: And then so one of the houses that he grew up in was in Orderville.

RT: Yes, and it's this house right here, this is the back of it. My dad and mother lived there. I can remember us coming out on the lawn to play; we were in a little car. Here! (Rena shows a picture) And that's Lavell.

SM: Oh, yeah.

RT: And that's Lavell and me. (Laughs) And then let's see, this picture's me and my little brother Quinn and Lavell was -- I wrote under here long time ago -- Lavell was mad and he wouldn't come out and have his picture taken. So Quinn is turned around looking at him. But we all worked in the store, it kept us all busy and my mother worked in it some too but she had her hands full at home.

SM: What did she do, what was her role and what do you remember about her?

RT: She was a musician and a seamstress- she made clothes for everyone. She made these

costumes that we're wearing. ( picture of butterfly costumes) and she made wedding dresses. Everything! Made over things, she was very good at that. And we all wore made-over dresses. (Laughs) `Cause she could do it so well.

SM: So you got...all the clothes that you wore were basically made by your mother.

RT: Yes, I didn't have what we called a "boughten" dress until I must have been about sixteen. And my dad sold clothing in his store. The store that we had was a one-stop shopping center, I guess you'd call it now. But it had...

SM: What was the name of the store?

RT: Chamberlain's store... and off to the side where the bank is, now you've been down on Main Street?

SM: It's on Main Street on the west side of the street.

RT: Let's see, if you're going down this way, yes, it's on the right hand side. I don't know...as long as I've lived here, I don't know east, west, north and south for sure. (Laughs)

SM: I think that's the west side of the street.

RT: Okay, but the store's gone now, `course, they tore it down.

SM: When did they tear it down?

RT: They tore it down not very many years ago...we sold it to a couple here in Orderville,

Scott and Cheri Golding. And they ran it for four or five years. I got out of it in '89 and so it hasn't been torn down very long. I don't even like to go down and drag Main any more. (Laugh)

SM: It's a bit heart breaking.

RT: It is! 'Cause it just isn't the same. But anyway, where the bank is was a cafe. We had a fountain up in the main part of the store; we had all kinds of groceries. We had a meat case. We had everything that you could imagine. There was two barber chairs also, which wouldn't be allowed now, of course. Right in the main part of the store. Then in the back room was hardware and you went upstairs and there was all kinds of clothing and bedding and shoes and dry goods of all kinds, in the upstairs.

SM: What was stocked in the dry goods, let's get into the details, do you remember?

RT: Okay, all kinds of shoes, socks, underwear and dresses, coats, over boots and, oh, and bedding -- all kinds of bedding. It was the full length of the store and it was full, too. And then, let's see, in the front were gas tanks and oil and coal oil. In those days everybody had coal oil lamps and we sold it, they be the cans like a half-gallon or a gallon can. And I would go out and pump the coal oil and fill up their can and this was the first time I knew about coal oil and kerosene was the same thing. I sold some coal oil and... I didn't know it, I was just a young, dumb girl and I was working and just enjoying it. So I sold some to a person and they paid for it and left and pretty soon someone else came for some coal oil, but they asked for kerosene. So I said, "Papa, have we got any kerosene?" He says, "My gosh, you just sold some!" Well, I did not know they were the same thing! (Laughter)

SM: How were you supposed to know? (Laughter)

RT: I do now and I did then. I always remembered it. Then behind the store was a granary that we <sup>had</sup> food in and rock salt -- everybody had cattle and sheep and they bought feed -- chicken feed and everything, you know.

SM: And salt to lick?

RT: And salt for the cows, (yes). They always had to have a salt block. And then, this was at the time they were building the Zion Tunnel?

SM: Right, 1930?

RT: It was finished in 1930 and so this was -- our store burned down in 1932. All of that.

SM: What happened, tell me.

RT: Well, before I got through with what all's in the store,

SM: Okay, let's go back to that.

RT: This is the interesting part. We had a shower, a place where you could have showers -- the workers would come in and we furnished the soap and the towel and the hot water for a quarter and it was -- in my mind there was about three stalls. And they would get their hair cut in my dad's barbershop. My dad and his brother were barbers, Robert Chamberlain. And they would get their hair cut maybe, or whichever first, and have a nice shower and then they were ready for the dance up to Hidden Lake. We had an open-

air dance hall up there. And, ooooh, that was...

SM: Can you tell me where Hidden Lake is?

RT: Hidden Lake is above Glendale and I've got some pictures here of it. But anyway, it was an open-air dance hall and oh, everybody came from all over. We had good music, orchestras that came from other places.

SM: Did Jack Maxwell play up there?

RT: No, he was too young. (Laughs) And then my dad, since he had the store, we had a concession stand; we called it "The Joint" across the lake. The dance hall was right here, here's the lake and across the lake was The Joint and we sold sandwiches, candy bars, Sen-Sens -- do you know what they are?

SM: I have Sen-Sens in my pocket right now.

RT: You do? I've not seen any in years. (Laughter)

SM: I love them.

RT: I've sold so many of those! Because, you know, most everybody drank and they wanted to kill their breath, you know.

SM: Oh, so were people drinking up there at that time, even though it's a Mormon culture? I was always wondering about that. Everyone's hush-hush about that, you know.

RT: No, they did.

SM: Did the girls? Or just the boys?

RT: Mostly the guys.

SM: Mostly the guys. So there was...was it moonshine?

RT: But they did drink a lot of it. Yes. (Laughs)

SM: I want to hear about that culture, that subculture. I never get to hear about it really. Here it is, my package of Sen-Sen.

RT: Oh, I've sold so many of those packages of Sen-Sens! I didn't think you'd know what they were! I was going to tell you.

SM: Would you like one?

RT: No, I just had a cough drop so maybe I can talk better. Anyway, since I worked in the store, why I was too young to go to dances, but when I would go out and help in the concession stand, then after we got so we weren't so busy my dad would let me walk around the lake -- walk around the lake -- and go over to the dance hall. Ooooh, but we could hear that music drift across the lake and it was just wonderful.

SM: Did your heart just want to go over there so bad you just...

RT: Yes, oh, I couldn't wait. And there was one guy, he was older, I was too young to go, but

my dad would let me 'cause I worked good. (Laughs) And this one guy would always ask me to dance. Oh, it was wonderful.

SM: Really! How old were you at this time?

RT: Let me see.

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SM: You were probably ten.

RT: Well, no, I was a little older than ten. (Laughs)

SM: So it had to be a little past 1930 'cause you were born in 1920.

RT: No, it was before 1932, I was born in '20. Oh, okay, I see what you're saying.

SM I was figuring that the tunnel was done around 19....

RT: ...'30, it was finished in 1930. So, I was about ten.

SM: You were fairly young.

RT: Too young. (Laughter) But I figured I could dance, and I loved to hear the music. I think that's when I really had a love for orchestra music. I think so; I think that's when I really started to want to play in an orchestra.

SM: Well, you sure painted it a pretty picture. I can feel that lake right now.

RT: Oh, and I'll tell you a story about this guy that was pretty drunk. And the steps just came out on the edge of the lake. You came on the steps this way but the lake was right here and he came down the steps and he was going to walk across to the stand and get something. And he walked right off in the lake. `Cause it made a path across the lake. The light from the concession stand looked just like a path. (Laughs) And of course I guess if you were drunk you wouldn't know the difference. (Laughter) He sobered up...he ended up on the bottom I think!

SM: Did you see this happen?

RT: No, I didn't. I didn't see it but my brother must have seen it, he's told it so many times. And in the day time we would get a group together and my uncle had a truck and we'd enough money together that he could fill it up with gas and he'd take us up to swim in the day time. And they had a raft out in the middle of the lake and when you couldn't swim very far you'd swim out to the raft and rest and then you could swim back or on over and back, or whatever. But I got so I could swim clear across the lake and back. And, oh, we had some good summers up there. It was wonderful.

SM: I bet! Did it have any kind of diving board?

RT: Yes, it had a diving board. I never did like to dive, though, I didn't do that, but they had some dressing rooms too. They weren't very fancy but they had some.

SM: So how would you get to Hidden Lake from Orderville.

RT: Go to Glendale and then just on north and on the left hand side of the road, when you go back -- are you going back up this way? There's a fence that closes it off. Right now...it

belonged to the Chamberlain family and they sold it recently to a couple in California, so...

SM: It's a private property.

RT: Yes, it is now. But it's sad to...aaaah, I wish the Chamberlain family had bought it and kept it for a resort. But anyway, it was a beautiful place, it's still a beautiful place with that lake, all circled with willows and then over on this side my aunt and uncle had a house over on this side and then there's the big house down this way.

SM: So there's houses right around this lake.

RT: No, just this one house, up kind of across from the lake. It was on the same side as the concession stand. But anyway, oh, we thought it was so neat to go up there.

SM: Is the dance hall; are there any remnants of the dance hall at all?

RT: No, not a thing. And it's in our memories, the ones that went there, nobody's got a picture. I have tried and tried to find a picture and nobody's got one that I know of. I've got a picture of the lake in one of these books though.

SM: We'll look at that, I'd like to see it.

RT: (Yes,) it was a wonderful place.

SM: So that was a real source of entertainment for you.

RT: That was our growing up years and we all, oh, all of us that are old enough to remember going up there to dance.

SM: Did you finally get old enough to go up to the dances?

RT: Oh, yes.

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SM: Is that where you met your husband?

RT: No, we went to school together. (Laughs) And I met him...these are school pictures in the third and fourth grade and the fifth and sixth grade. I thought you might like to look at those. That's the way we dressed- see all those boys in galluses -- we call them galluses. (Laughs)

SM: Overalls, you mean? Galluses.

RT: People wear overalls now and they think they're neat.

SM: How do you spell "galluses?"

RT: G-A-L-L-U-S-E-S I guess, we just called them that. That word comes to my mind. And, anyway, we went to school together and I thought he was pretty neat from the very first. Here's a couple of pictures of him when we were young. (Laughs) Let's see, me and my sisters' pictures are on that page, too.

SM: Yep, this is so great! You still look the same.

RT: Oh, thank you! Thank you! You know, I told you that the biggest part of my life has been working in the store. And I loved it. I really had enjoyed all the years I spent meeting people and working in the store.

SM: So, did the store evolve into different phases as time went on?

RT: (Yes), it was very different when... Oh, Alan ( Demille) brought me a sketch of the way... He found a picture of the store...a sketch of it the way it used to be. This is the way it was when I was probably a teenager. And that building over on this other side was a barbershop. My dad's store burnt down, all this big store burnt down, and then he built this smaller one, this one right here, and then he let my uncle Heber build a theater- this is the show house-onto the store so the store doesn't look like very big but it went back in there. But this was the barbershop. After the store burnt down he didn't put a barbershop back in the store.

SM: So, how did this even happen, that the store burnt down?

RT: Oh, I was going to tell you. At the time we had a trailer out back that we would take out the trash, you know, the boxes and everything and just pile it in that trailer and then my dad would hook it onto the car and take it up to the dump and set it on fire. And I think it was on a school day and I think some boy that maybe was smoking threw a cigarette in it and it just caught on fire and nobody knew it `till it was too far gone and we didn't have a fire engine or a fire department or anything, no insurance. I don't know how my dad ever recovered from that -- but he did! And he built a little store up on the side street and started it up and I worked in that, too. And of the funniest things I think about that little store, we had a lady that had just got her new false teeth and -- her name was Sister Siler and my dad... Everybody knew everything that was going on in the town, you know my

dad had false teeth from the time he was a young boy. And so, Sister Siler came up to the store and was coming in and there was a big rock that you had to step up on and then up on into the store, it seems like it was quite high then. And she was an older lady and my dad says, "Well, Sister Siler, how do you like those new teeth?" She opened her mouth to say something and she was a swearer, and she opened her mouth quite wide and they flew out across the store floor! (Laughter) And I was there, and it was so funny! (Laughter) And we didn't dare laugh!

SM: You didn't laugh?

RT: She swore all the way across the floor and picked the damn things up and put `em back in her mouth. (Laughter) Dad says, "Well, I can see how well you like `em!" (Laughter)

SM: Nice fit! (Laughter)

RT: I think of that every time I think of that little store.

SM: She was a sister, was she...

RT: We call the older women sister. And then we called my Grandpa's other wives "Aunt" like Aunt Mary. (Laughs) But in our church we call the older ladies sister. I've been called Sister Tait and I sure feel old when they do that. (Laughter) Anyway, let me see, where are we now?

SM: The store burned down and then your father was working a store on the corner there while, I suppose, while the other one was getting built.

RT: Then it was a while before he could build this one.

SM: He built it himself?

RT: No, no, he had to hire it built. He had to borrow money. I remember. I remember the man's name that he borrowed from and it was sure good when he got him paid off. But then we went back to...

SM: Who was the loaner?

RT: Knapp. I can remember. And then in the Depression, my dad went broke and of course that was before the store burned down but I can remember the man that came down from the Credit Association from the State of Utah 'cause my dad couldn't collect any money that was owed him and he couldn't pay his bills. So the Credit Association took the store over and my dad worked for a wage and I can remember his name, Mr. Mook. And I feel bad for him now when I think that he was only doing his job but nobody liked him, they hated him. 'Cause he came and took the store over, away from my dad. But my dad couldn't let anyone have anything on credit and so it put a lot of people in a bind. It did. Because a lot of the people would...they would get things on credit and then they couldn't pay for it until they sold their crops in the fall. And so...

SM: So they would come and pay their bills at once?

RT: When they sold their crops, (yes). When you think about... Oh, my dad must have owed a lot of money, now I don't know how long it took him to get back on his feet again. We all worked, we just worked as a family.

SM: So you lived a pretty frugal life then- you didn't spend a lot of money.

RT: We didn't have a lot to spend. We couldn't go to the store while the Credit Association was running the store. We couldn't go and get things like we could, but let me tell you, my mother was frugal. We didn't go down and get anything you wanted out of the store. She was *very* frugal.

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SM: `Cause that's her upbringing.

RT: Right, she was raised that way and before we'd go down to work she'd say, "Now, come and have a dish of..." whatever she had -- we always had soup or beans or macaroni and cheese or something like that. Really not fancy foods. We ate good, but we didn't have frills. And she'd say, "Now, you come and eat some of this before you go down to the store to work so you won't start in on junk down there." (Laughter) I still remember that to this day.

SM: And did you not eat anything while you were working? Were you pretty good about that?

RT: Yes, we were, we really were.

SM: Did you have more candy than the other kids? Was there any kind of segregation?

RT: I think a lot of people thought so but I don't think we had as much as some other kids, even. It was not a necessary thing for my mother. My dad would give you anything you wanted; we knew that. (Laughs)

SM: Right, but your mother...

RT: But she had a stand, (yes), she was the...

SM: So, what was your mother's maiden name?

RT: Blackburn.

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SM: Blackburn, I see, and how did she grow up all her life in Orderville as well?

RT: Yes. Both my dad and mother did, right here in Orderville.

SM: Wow, so you have a history here. Did she grow up...was there any livestock in the family when she grew up... how did she grow up?

RT: Her father was a freighter and he, course, he came from England. I have a picture of his home in England. And joined the church and came over to America and his parents came. And they were very different, they were raised very different, right here in Orderville. But they said you could set your watch by when he'd go to church 'cause he was so precise about the time and everything. And I was...I really had it good growing up. 'Cause I could go and play, we'd go up to Grandma Chamberlain's and play around up there with our cousins, then we'd go down to Grandma Blackburn's and they had a nice big yard and they had every kind of a bush and grape arbors and trees and everything. And she was a good cook. And Grandpa was about twenty years older than her. So she'd say, "Now, you can stay and eat with us but you mustn't make any disturbance at the table, you just sit up there and eat." In those days children were to be seen and not heard. And so, boy, I'll tell you, we did. We minded pretty well in those days.

SM: You were very quiet.

RT: We were. We were pretty good kids.

SM: Oh, that's great. And that's how it was back then, it's kind of changed...

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RT: Yes, it has changed a lot.

SM: ...lately. It's interesting to talk about the change. I don't necessarily want to get into the change right now but I do want to touch on that. But, I want to talk about looking back into those times. In retrospect you can kind of realize what values you have and what would you say were the values of Orderville. Like, what values did you get of this place?

RT: I think I got a lot of good values from living here and one value that I got from my dad, working with him in the store, was that you're always honest with everyone. You *did not ever* try to cheat anybody and the customer was always right (Laughs) even if you didn't believe so. And...but to have fun and enjoy what you are doing and I always enjoyed working. And my mother, she was a good musician, she taught every one of us to play the piano. Course we all played another instrument or two, but I had the talent of playing by ear. And I started...and I didn't realize...

SM: You were wondering where your son got it! (Laughter)

RT: ...but you know what, I didn't realize that it was such a good talent. And the older I've got the more I... Oh! I do love it!

SM: Do you still play?

RT: (Yes) We still have an old time orchestra and all of us play by ear. We don't have any music. I can read music though because my mother insisted that I learn to read music. All of us learned to read music. And then, the music and the store business was the biggest part of my life.

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SM: So you think the values that you got were honesty. What is your relationship to the area, to the land? Do you look back and think, "What an incredible place," as you look at the mountains?

RT: I do. I've never been anywhere that I would rather live. I want to stay here as long as I can. And...

SM: What is it about this place that you just love so much?

RT: It's home.

SM: Yeah, its freedom, its vast space, I guess...

RT: ...and the quietness of it. See, I can sit here and look out the window and see activity, the cars go down the street to go to school and this lady across the street gives piano and I watch the kids come and go. I used to give piano lessons, but I couldn't do it any more. (Laughs) I don't think. Anyway, and I have a lot of friends and I also have a lot of people that come and order Avon and then come and pick it up. So I never get lonesome. I mean I miss my family and I miss my husband, but I find a lot of things to do. And you know what, living in a small town, you may have disadvantages but you have so many

advantages, that I feel like...

End of Side One, Tape One

Begin of Side Two, Tape One.

SM: What I was going to say to that was maybe a value is a sense of community in this area  
then.

RT: Yes, yes it is.

SM: Do you feel a big support still with everybody?

RT: Oh, yes. I have so many people bringing me food and they're that way with everybody, it  
isn't just me. I mean, you know everyone and you know when they're having a problem  
and they're sick or anything. And we're all concerned about each other.

SM: Genuinely concerned.

RT: Yes, and we meet the kids and find out who they belong to, you know, my newsboy isn't  
one of my favorite little guys. (Laughs)

SM: He isn't?

RT: He is, and he comes in and visits with me. And he'll do anything for me that I need done.  
And, course my family come home as often as they can but they're all getting grown up.

SM: So, would you say even though that a lot has changed in the community, as far as the

industries have changed from, you know, livestock, farming, your father having the store to more of a tourism kind of industry, do you think the sense of community is still strong, or has it changed at all? What's your interpretation of that?

RT: I think it's changed in a way, but I think it's still strong. Because we have had people move in that don't understand a lot of the things the way we do and live and yet, I've not seen anything detrimental. But we do have people that I don't know that have moved in.

SM: Yeah, and they're not members of the church and so you don't get to know them?

RT: Well, most everybody's a member of the church. I told you everybody you're interviewing is a member of the church.

SM: ...was a member of the church. Yeah.

RT: And that's good. Though I don't get to church any more because I'm too crippled up to go. I miss it. But I listen to the Tabernacle Choir and the Spoken Word every Sunday morning. That's my church. (Laughs)

SM: That's wonderful. That's great.

RT: Yes. And then I'm kind of living in my grandkids' lives 'cause I've told you how many missionaries I've got out and going.

SM: Yeah, and they're all over the place.

RT: Yes, yes, the one that was in France. You know, we talked about France because you

came from Canada. And he's home, he's been home about a month. And then I have one boy in Málaga, Spain. I don't think I'm saying it right, or Ma-la'-ga. I don't know. Anyway, it's in southern Spain. And then my daughter's son from Las Vegas is going into the MTC, now that's the Missionary Training Center. And they learn the language there, you probably know.

SM: Yeah, I kinda' know, I'm remembering as you're speaking, all of that.

RT: (Yes,) anyway he goes in on the 30th and he goes to Barcelona, Spain.

SM: Which is supposed to be a fabulous place.

RT: Yes, I've heard that it is. Jack and Clara were there on a mission.

SM: Yeah, we talked about that. And Jay was on a mission there too, or visiting there, anyway. I don't know if he was on a mission there.

RT: Who was?

SM: Jay, my partner. He spent time in Barcelona.

RT: I've heard a lot about it. And of course the Olympics were there. And then, the fifth one that is going, and he will go in the MTC on the 20th of January, and he's going to Brazil, and he learns Portuguese. So, it's exciting to hear them all and...

SM: Yeah, it's interesting that kids these days are really moving fast.

RT: All over the world, aren't they!

SM: Yes, and that's a really positive experience. Although in another sense, it doesn't keep everyone in one place and keep the community small and solid, so there's an advantage and a disadvantage, I would suppose.

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RT: Yes, but the family's all live away anyway. Ryan Tait is the one that just came back from France and we were sitting here the first time he came to visit me, the whole family came, and his sister's going to school at Dixie College. And we all were here together and everything we'd say, he'd say it in French language. And oh, that was fun. And it's just so interesting to think that they learn that in such a short time.

SM: Do you feel like there was much... You probably didn't have a whole lot of awareness of other cultures growing up?

RT: No, not when I was young we didn't. We did have missionaries go out but not very many. Not like... I remember one man went to New Zealand and quite a few went to England, it seemed like. In fact, my Grandpa Blackburn was married to my Grandma and they had two children, my mother was the oldest. And she was about two years old, a little older, and she just cried and cried when he was going on a mission. They did it in those days. They don't now if they're married, they don't go. Until they get all their kids raised and then the couples go, like Clara and Jack did. But anyway, she said she cried so hard that he said, "If you'll quit crying and be a good girl while I'm gone, I'll bring you a doll." And he did. And she told everybody that he was bringing her a doll with a pretty purple dress and they went and met him in Marysvale where the train came in, and she was so excited that he had to get the doll out of his suitcase right there in Marysvale. (Laughter) And it was naked, it didn't have a dress on it. And she was so disappointed.

(Laughter) So, Grandma made her a dress, just like my mother's dress, and I've got the doll. My mother gave it to me. And it was made in France.

SM: Really! I wonder why it didn't have a dress on?

RT: I don't know, it's a beautiful doll, got a pretty face, china. And she made the underpants and the petticoat and the dress and everything. And my mother would never let us kids play with it. That was her special doll.

SM: So, speaking of cultures, do you remember any Native Indians in your area?

RT: Oh, yes!

SM: Let's talk about that, how that happened, you know. What influence were they? How much did you see them around?

RT: Oh, yes! We had Indians around town a lot. And I remember, I used to be afraid of them when I was just a little girl. I was down to my Grandma Blackburn's, I remember, and they always came around at about Thanksgiving time and ask for food and Grandma always would give them a sack of different things, you know. And I was scared to death of them.

SM: Where do you think that fear originated?

RT: I don't know, because I never knew a mean one. I mean, I didn't know of anything that they'd ever done. But we saw them coming down the street and I ran to her back door and was going out and hide in the orchard and just as I got to the back door, why they had

gone around the house and came to the back door. And I just opened the door and met them face-to-face! And if that didn't scare me! But you know, I learned... I liked some... I had some good friends that were Indians. We waited on them in the store and they were... just people, like us.

SM: So they came actually down into town and into the store.

RT: Oh, yes, yes, we waited on them a lot.

SM: What would they purchase? Or trade? Or would they just ask for....

RT: They bought food, but the main thing that comes to my mind is that they liked to drink and, you know, the Indians could not handle liquor. And so this one day my dad had left Lavell, my older brother in the store alone while he went up to the house for something (laughing), and the Indians came in, these Indian men, and they bought all of the pure vanilla, which has got...

SM: Extract.

RT: (Yes,) vanilla extract. They bought all of that and they bought some rubbing alcohol. And when my dad came back he says, "Well, did you get busy?" Lavell says, "Yeah, I sure did, I sold a lot to those Indians that was just in here." My dad says, "What did you sell them?" He says, "They bought all the vanilla." My dad says, "Oh, my gosh, what are we going to do?" He says, and he called Dr. Aikin, and we had one phone on the wall, there was about two phones in town at that time, and we had one at the store. We had to take messages to people and like that. Anyway, he called...no, it would have been Dr. Norris, he was older than Dr. Aikin, and he said, "My son has really done something bad.

He sold a lot of vanilla and even a little rub alcohol to the Indians." He says, "Will it kill them?" He says, "What'll it do to them?" He says, "They'll just have a hell of a hangover." (Laughs)

SM: Yeah. That's interesting, so the Indians were involved in getting alcohol.

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RT: Yes, and nobody would sell it to them if they knew, you know, they could get it but for some reason they couldn't handle it. I don't think many people could handle it but I mean they *really* couldn't handle it.

SM: Yeah. Do you remember them coming up over the hill. I've heard stories of them coming up over the hill in different areas and just coming down. Do you remember seeing that at all?

RT: No, they weren't any... What would you say, fighters, that I remember. I mean, they were...seemed like they were quite poor. They were wanting handouts, most of them, when I was a young girl. But then they got so they...you know, there's...oh, we had some good friends that were Indians and we bought rugs from them and we sold rugs in the store. Bought rugs and we sold baskets.

SM: Then you sold their rugs in the store? That's interesting.

RT: Yes, my dad dealt with them and my husband dealt with them.

SM: Were you able to communicate with them?

RT: Oh yes, yes. They could speak English quite well.

SM: Was there any form of collecting artifacts in town that you remember? Was there any kind of....

RT: Oh, we picked up arrowheads. Yes.

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SM: Was it a hobby or just a practice back then.

RT: Just a hobby. I don't know of anyone that did it as a...you know, to really...

SM: Economic....

RT: No, I don't think anyone ever did then. As I was growing up I didn't know of it. I know now that people have got in trouble for doing it.

SM: Yeah, now it's a law, but then it wasn't, you know. But I always find it interesting to hear, you know, what people did back then, just like polygamy, you know, what were the practices. As little kids, you guys went through...

RT: We liked Indian and soldiers and Indian shows. We had that show house, well, we didn't have it when I was young. I didn't see shows 'till I was grown, practically. But my kids all loved to go to the Indian war hoop show. (Laughs)

SM: You'd roam the mountains in here, looking for arrowheads?

RT: Oh, yes, yes, everybody'd just...

SM: And you'd find them, just around?

RT: And we would all go for hikes up on the hills and our 'V' for our school, have you seen it? We'd always hike up to the 'V' and then Red Hollow was over this way and we'd hike over to Red Hollow and different places. Behind my dad's barn was a big rock and we would hike up there and have corn roasts or marshmallow roasts or chicken roast, whatever. We had lots of fun on the hills.

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SM: So you did spend lots of time "in the land" as part of the land.

RT: Yes, yes we did. And in the winter we had sleigh riding parties, course there was no cars, hardly any cars, I should say, at that time and we'd go clear up to the top of the school, you saw where the school was, I guess. Nan told you wrong if she said I lived across from the school.

SM: Well, I don't know, I was probably wrong.

RT: But, anyway, we'd go clear up to the top or else that hill just beyond the school, we could ride on our sleds clear to the crick, which is way down here. (Laughs)

SM: Oh, really, so you had a big long ride. What kind of sleigh would you ride on?

RT: Well, just those board slats, five or six slats on the runners. It had a thing you could guide, like this. And we'd build a big bonfire out across from my parents' home and warm our hands and toes and then we'd go for another sleigh ride.

SM: So, do you remember anyone ever getting hurt on these big sleigh rides or anything?

RT: Not bad. No, I can't remember... Oh, we'd fall off and skin our knees, maybe, but we were bundled up good in the winter. And then also we had sleigh riding parties, on a big wagon, you know, that the horses would pull. I remember doing that and that was fun.

SM: Hay bales and things. (Laughs)

RT: That was fun. We had the most fun growing up. But you know what? Kids don't have that kind of fun now. I think they'd really enjoy it. But, it's just like the old dances, the old time dances. Kids don't dance that way any more. But one time I was up to my son's place and he had some teenagers and kids there and I started to play those old tunes and Greg and his wife knew them and they started to show the kids and they just had more fun! I just kept playing and playing and they kept dancing. And they said, "Gee, I wish they'd do this at the school dances, that's a lot of fun." (Laughs)

SM: Oh, I know. How would feel about playing a tune?

RT: I will!

SM: Okay, let's do that.

RT: (Playing piano.)

SM: What's the name of that song?

RT: That's called the United Order Song. And it was written years ago. They had a reunion from the United Order people and Samuel Claridge wrote that and nobody's got it in

music.

SM: So that was one of the first songs that came to Orderville then.

RT: Probably. But, anyway...

SM: 1830-- something.

RT: The United Order was practiced here for over ten years. You've probably heard about that.

SM: I've heard a little bit about it, yeah

RT: Anyway, he was a member of the United Order and my Grandma Blackburn was a flower girl. She gathered flowers for the tables; they all ate at one big table.

SM: In the United Order? Oh, interesting.

RT: And they put all of their property into the United Order and then they... It worked, really well for ten or more years. Now I'll play a Christmas one. (Playing piano -- Silver Bells).

SM: Play something you'd hear in your youth.

RT: In our old-time orchestra?

SM: Yes, from your old-time orchestra.

RT: Okay. (Playing piano – “Yes Sir, That's My Baby”) I missed it down there. (Laughter)

SM: Excellent! That is excellent. So what's the name of that song?

RT: That's... “Yes Sir, That's My Baby”. (Laughs)

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SM: Did you dance to that once upon a time?

RT: Oh, yes, yes! I used to love to dance and I didn't always get to. I started playing in a dance orchestra when I was about sixteen and it was a school dance orchestra. We had two teachers and Clyde, my boyfriend, and a guy that played the drums, Jimmy Esplin. We had a good group.

SM: Clyde, now that's your husband?

RT: (Yes) This is him right here.

SM: You knew him through school and he was also a musician?

RT: He played the saxophone. (Laughs)

SM: You guys must have had a blast.

RT: Yup! We did. (Laughter) We did, we had lots of fun. (Laughs) Anyway, I just play anything anybody wants. But the tunes I like are the old ones. (Playing piano -- White Cliffs of Dover) This is a war song.

SM: Oh, that's amazing.

RT: I love to play those old tunes.

SM: It's unreal. That was great. That was so great.

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RT: ~~The only modern song I ever tried to play, my grandkids tried to teach me "Achy, Breaky Heart."~~

SM: Oh, no! (Laughter) That's terrible. I think you should stick with your traditional stuff!  
(Laughter) Well, I'm going to turn this interview off now, so thank you so much for the great interview. It was excellent.

RT: I've enjoyed it.

End of Tape One, Side Two

End of Interview