

Stockton, J
Early education in
Kern County

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no. 6

ORAL HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY PROJECT

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE, BAKERSFIELD

INTERVIEW FORM

1. Name of Interviewee: Jess Stockton
2. Date of Interview: February 8, 1969
3. Place of Interview: the home of Jess Stockton
4. Address of Interviewee:
5. Date and Place of Birth: December 17, 1896, Horse Shoe Ranch
6. Place of Longest Residence: Kern County
7. Length of Tape:
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Sheeps, Cattle, houses lived, family, School,
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memoirs of Jess Stockton (general)

13. Names mentioned in tapes: Preacher Duit, Jerry Slough,
Marian, Warren, Irven, Ralph, Frank Stockton
Miller, Pedit Place, Uncle Will Stockton
August Begal, Dave Engels, Robert L. Stockton
Burks, Teresa, Nora, Mary Ricors, Mr. & Mrs Williams
Aunt Mary Engels (Layers) Dr. Chris Stockton,
Mrs Williams, Florean, (Mrs. Edna, Elden, Howard Dixon

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X 1930-1940; X 1940-1950; _____ 1950--

Names: Dave Shirley, Higgins, Leo G. Poly, Mr. Herold
Sam Stockton, Dave Ingel, Wright Brothers,

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CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE, BAKERSFIELD
PIONEER PROJECT

EARLY EDUCATION IN KERN COUNTY

Jess Stockton

Interviewed

by

Orville Armstrong

on

February 8, 1969

Transcriber: Juanita Millican

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I'm Irma Wilde and (ah) I'm repressing for one thing, Mr. Conservency, which is in part a sponser of this series of interviews. (Ah) Our interviewer today is Mr. Armstrong who will speak for himself, and (ah) I will introduce Mr. Jess Stockton, who is our interviewee. We are meeting in his house, looking at his beautiful garden and (ah) he looks very comfortable here, eyeing his notes and anxious to get going. (Laughter)

A: Jess, we are really honored this afternoon to interview you because your name, the Stockton name, has represented a good many things in this county of ours. You and your family have been very influencial over the years and it is our pleasure to have some of these things recorded. Well Jess, what do you have to say on this beautiful day which is (January) February 8, 1969? (Laughter)

S: Well, I was born at the Horse Shoe Ranch (pause) on December 17, 1896, so I am one of those old fogeys from the 19th century. They named me Jesse Duit Stockton, my middle name was after a minister who many old timers thought was the outstanding citizen of Tulare County, Preacher Duit. The (ah) environment in which I was brought up in was Quadruple. (Ah), the hills were near with no tress for the most part (ah) the mountains with trees so thick in many places, you can't walk through them (pause) and streams and so forth, meadows. The city of Bakersfield claimed 2,500 people, probably no quite that many and later the ponds and sloughs around Jerry Slough near Buttonwillow. My report today is going to be slightly different from what you intended I'm afraid, because I'm going to give personal experiences of a child.

A: That's fine Jess.

S: (Ah) and memoies and I do have a very clear memory of these things. The first memory I have was when I was slightly over two years old, and I was running around the hills, probably in April, because the wind was blowing through my long white curly locks, pure white. If I'd had red eyes, I'd been an elbeno (laughter) dressed in overalls or in dresses because they changed me into overalls again when I was five. They also cut my hair when I was five. I loved the life when we'd go out and herd goats, the small group around the house. There were twenty or thirty goats. Marian would be, possibly

Warren, Irven and I would go and that kept us busy and out of mischief.

A: Where was the home located?

S: At Horse Shoe Ranch. (Ah) we were all born there except Ralph and Frank.

A: Is that near Poso?

S: It's near Granite station four miles (pause) south-north-west of Granite. I'd better get back to the goats. (Ah) we had a tool with us, in addition, we kept our eyes open as a pass time, for what we thought was a very dangerous animal, which happened to be a poor old hairy tarantula, which has a web over the top of his home. We would carry a long straw with us and (ah) when we came to a hairy one, that is with the web over the top, we would reach down there and tickle it and make it angry. It would grap a hold of the straw and we would pull it up and with the sheep sheers, the sheep sheers which we used to shear goats of course, we would tip him out and there he was (ah) revealed to the world where he didn't want to be. We thought thier bit was deadly and that they could jump over a hill. They could jump quiet a little bit, but not over a hill. Another thing, thier bite was not deadly as we know today. They were red, they weren't theses brown ones you could find over in San Emilio and mostly through out the county today. I've seen some lately but none in the last two or three years. Our taratulas are getting much more scarce.

Then there was the crack door spiders and icidently they are much smaller very seldom seen any more. They were a very shinny and slick looking spider, with a lid on top. The way we would get them was by tapping on the lid and the trap door spider would come up and bite into the lid and pull down tight, now I'm not giving to many details?

A: No, no I just thought that perhaps your brothers too. Did you raise goats mostly or did you raise sheep, or what?

S: We raised cattle and goats. We really went on into the cattle business, mother and father did and the family, through goat culture. Around the time I was oh, about three or four years old we sold the goats, about 2,500 of them and we always understood that we had the largest herd of pure breed Angora goats in the United States, in our day. I think they sold them to a man by the name of Miller and they also traded for cattle because when we moved out of goats, we moved into cattle. The reason for that was that we didn't have any hearders that could keep up with the goats and it was difficult to get reliable hearders. Many times Ralph, who had to be in school, that's my oldest brother alive today, would have to go and herd goats because these men left and of course my father had to be in school teaching. Mother had to run the family and the ranch, also the cattle and all of us. Finally it was quite a problem, but there was usually some help for her. I'll describe the enviroment of the place and some what, it might be

of interest. (Ah) the house was our second one on the location, the first one having burned in a fire. This one eventually burned, it's no longer there. This one was made out of old pine flooring, with wood knots on it and yellow pine siding with batings over the cracks. If the knots had a tendency to fall out, we would nail tin over that place. That was both on floors and on the walls and it was sealed, as far as the roof was concerned that I can remember, you see they built it gradually as they were able to. I can remember when they put a ceiling on it and also put a cloth on there so it would hold paper. They didn't get the papering yet until we moved to town, for we moved to a better environment and house no doubt.

A: How was the house, Jess?

S: Well (ah) it had an upstairs with outside staircase, which was traditional building on ranch country at this area at the time. The downstairs had about six rooms, they were not large. The men folk and boys, other than the boys, slept upstairs and the girls downstairs. We only had one girl so there was just one, that was Clare she was the baby and (ah) after me. And that's the house now, the barn was located about fifty yards from the house on the windward side, that's the one that blows away from you. And (ah) it was seventy-six feet long and seventy-six feet wide. It was lined for goat corrals and for sheering time and also for corral and cover for supplies of hay for (ah) the horses we used in riding after the cattle.

And (ah) it was built out of cedar post that were in the ground even on a hard pan that would expand up maybe twenty feet. The (ah) rapters were made of white fur and the singels on top were cedar sugar pine shakes.

A: Jess, where would that lumber come from? Were there saw mills up in that (ah) around in the mountains?

S: We got all of this timber up at Evets Flats, practically all of it, which is above the Pedit Place, which we still own, and above Davis Station or Davis Fire Station they call it now. About two or three miles and used to be a meadow in there which my uncle had bought before they created the forest reserve, the Pesserey Interest, but he never filed on it with the result, they put in the forest reserve and he lost it, he lost everything he had in it, and he didn't kick about it, he thought it was a good idea. That was Uncle Will Stockton. (Ah), we had for the large herd of goats, a goat camp about one half mile away from the house and that's where headquarters were for August Begal, who was our herder at my time, but he was getting to heavy and I know that he, goats are very hard to keep up with. That's why a young runner, that's why Ralph was such a fast and swifty runner in High School you know. He was one of our best football players we ever had at half back or in any other place you wanted to put him in, full back even. He weighed 135 pounds so they had some big boys then too, but not like now. The animals around the place were, cottontails,

lots of them, ground squirrels, lots of them, foxes, coyoties, bobcats, racoons, lints, and I say lints in advisably because I read that the so called Mexican link down on the Colorado River and the Canadian links to the North. Now they don't have any in here, but in those days that people did have links and the last one was killed out at Jerry Slough when I was fourteen or fifteen years old, and they were a very big animal and made big cuts too. (Ah), and mountain lions of course. And the mountain lions we didn't know it at the time, we thought it was unusual but they actually would range clear across the valley and still you'll find that in the best books right there at the put out National Geographic, they still do believe it or not. Bears in the moutains. The last Grizzly bear on Greehorn was killed or died about the 1900, so you see, he died after I was born. My Granddad, Dave Engels, was suppose to have killed the last grizzly bear on Atulie River area in Tulare County. I understand there was one moved in there afterwards but he loved to hunt them and he hunted them with a double barrel, ten gauge muzzel loading shot gun, which he loaded with slougs and plenty of powder. (Laughter) And it was very dangerous to you on both ends, but you didn't dare miss. (Ah) school. When I was four years old, my brother Irven persuaded me to run away with him and go to school, he was lonely at school and while it was against the law then is now, to go to the first grade where they don't have kindergarden at that age. (Ah), it was only

three and a half miles there and that was easy and coming home was easy but we were used to running around over the hills and every foot was very interesting, every rock pile, every squirrel, every animal track, every bird.

A: What did you do, did you walk or did you go on horseback?

S: Walked! Why we were running ~~away~~, we had to walk.

A: Oh, I see, I see. (Laughter)

S: Coming home, they'd send after me in a cart thinking I was tired. The only thing that was dissappointing to me was in school. I'd been going to the last day of school picnics, simmilar to our family picnics of today, the whole community would come with thier children and everybody brought something to eat and they put it down on a picnic spread and we'd eat. And I mean the teachers sung because my father was my first school teacher. The next year he ran for County School Superintendent and was elected, but I had the prevailage of going to my father. He had enough judgement to realize that a four year old child, didn't have a very long attention span. Something that would be interesting to us teachers, was that I couldn't count to one hundred. I could, that is by one's, I could count five's and ten's and I've always wondered why I couldn't count by one's. Then it suddenly came to me, what every teacher should know and every parent should know, that my attention span wasn't long enough to count to a hundred. I could get at eighty or ninty and finish off. I could count up to fifty by

one's, but there I would lose interest. Is this interesting to you?

A: Were you disappointed with school because you thought it was going to be another big family picnic?

S: No, I thought I was going to have a picnic when lunch came. Somebody gave me a dry questured, another one there, it was quite disappointing. (Laughter)

A: O.K.

S: Now the places of interest around us were Woody, where mother took me over to get a half sack of figs which we ate when I was about that age. And they had a tremendous fig orchard, I thought, that is I could see the orchard ahead there then I could look out at these white trees with their leafs off at a distance which I thought were a continuation of this fig orchard. What an enormous orchard! Of course those were buck-eyed trees, beyone the initial ones, so they fooled me. But I figured it out, nobody told me about it, later I figured it out. Then (ah) as far as I can remember, I never was in town, though I might have been when I was a baby, probably was, when I couldn't remember, in the city of Bakersfiéld. I never was there till we moved there when I was six years old, when father became County School Superintendent. Incidentally, we called him "Papa" and we called mother "Mama". And that's what the neighbors (interuption)

A: What was his first name, Jess?

S: Robert L. Stockton. (Ah), at school we had neighbors that went to school with us. The Ricors, the Burks, Teresa, Nora, Mary and so forth. (Ah), some very fine teachers out of that time.

A: Now were these (ah) was this at the school in the mountains or in Bakersfield?

S: In the hills, in the hills when we went there. The one that was three and a half miles away. Had I run away a year or two before, I'd a had to run five miles. They moved it down toward the center of school population and where there were six Stockton boys in it at one time.

W: Was this a one teacher school?

S: Yes, oh ~~yes~~. Now when Ralph can first remember, there was some thirty-eight (ah) children going to school, a one teacher school. At the old school house which was just a board and batten deal and didn't amount to much. You can still see it, as a matter of fact, well you can't see that school house, it wasn't much. (Ah), socially we had that picniced and we had roeders they call it, that would be what we'd call rodeo today and which is properly pronounced, of course, rodeo, and (ah) so we mispronounce it now and we mispronounced it when I was a boy and we don't care much whether we do or not, that's typically Western American. We called a long eared calf, one that hadn't been marked or branded, of course being a cattle community, we were deeply interested in this, we called them "an orejano" which we got from the Mexicans, in Spanish of course, if it

was a bull calf or if not it was heferd calf. (Ah), today most of the people around here have copied after Texas and call the Mavericks. (Ah), we called (ah) a calf without a mother a "leprie calf" and they call them doggies down in the Texas country and of course you know many musicians used to pronounce that "doggies" when they were singing about it, it's of great interest to me. Now about transportation. I can remember my first automobile I saw. It was red and it came up to the ranch, where we lived on the hill above the water well which was fifty or a hundred yards away down on the flat, and we had to haul the water to the house on a sled in a barrel. And (ah) had a terous for stock around there. Horses would come in for water but the auto was red and it was just of Mr. and Mrs. Williams, he was the cow boss on the ranch for my father at the time and a good one. And (ah) the auto drove away and I would wake up and I'd think, no I didn't see that thing, you know, I didn't talk to anybody about it because it was so silly. The thing moved and it didn't have any horses in front of it, it just didn't happen. I was sure of it. Then when we moved into town when I was six, my Uncle William took my Aunt Mary Engels, Layers now, school teacher, you all know her, up town, that was Bakersfield from out where we lived a mile and a half, out from the center of town on 'H' street. We crossed the Santa Fee tracks on the way after dark, just after dark. And those days they didn't have the fire box control as it is now. They had big red eye

looking out there coming down the tracks. All that noise that thing made and a flashing, stuff like that and my Uncle William had to hold the horses, they were attempting to run away and I'll tell you the rest of it. My Aunt Mary had to hold me. I was scared to death of that thing. (Laughter) I knew they were railroad tracks, but that was the first time I saw them after dark. And it made quite an impression on me.

A: You were coming from your home into town. Now where was your home again?

S: Down there where Dr. Chris Stockton lives today. We lived in the old Slater house which is the first place, or was the first place, south of that at that time.

A: On what street block?

S: On 'H' street.

A: 'H' street?

S: 'A' street.

A: 'A'.

S: 'A'. Let's see. Now on the mountains, well while we were still up on the mountains and my father was running for office, (ah) the great big woman and the one that's had this place up there, was our teacher. And (ah) she was a very strict teacher.

A: This is Mrs. Williams?

S: Mrs. Williams, Florean (ah, ah) Mrs. Edna, Elden.

A: Elden?

S: Edna, E-l-d-e-n.

A: Elden!

S: They named a game preserve for her father down in Arizona, at the foot of Mt. Elden. Then they misspelled the name but we'll try to get that straightened out. (Ah), I mention this because she was our teacher and somebody came up with commercial hunting of the quail, which in that time were in what is now our big field and was then. And it sounded like a battle all day long. By that time I was five, not six yet. And they were killing all of our quail, and I'll bet you that these various cobbles of quails are almost solid. A half mile long and a half mile wide. And (ah) it must of been a great hazard to us (laughter in between the lines) in also stock food but (ah) that didn't bother us, we liked our quails. And I wanted to go over in Stockton, so did cousin Edna, we always called her cousin Edna, that's when we got started she wanted to differentiate. The other children called her Mrs. Edna because she would be known. She said no, they'd just laughed at her, but I got a hunch that I'd gone over there and told them about it and I had a hunch that those people quite shooting, (laughter between the lines) because they were that good to children, those people were in those days, in that country. (Ah), now in the wild flowers. I loved them and we all did and we didn't call niger toes, niger toes because our folks didn't let us, even in those days. We called them blue bells and of course the proper name for them, which my cousin Edna told me, is

Rodeia Capatada, if you want to be there. (Ah), and then we had our poppies, luedbens, snowdrops. They were the little white flowers, that got so thick some years and the (ah) what we called Indian paint brushes, but they told us that was wrong we should call them Owls Clovers, so cousin Edna got me away around that. That burns me up, from here to there. We call them by the Spanish name, which is a very appropriate little name, let's see, it means, dear little broom, "escobita, escobita", did you know that.

W: No, I didn't know that.

S: And, I think that it's not a clover, so why do they call it Owl's Clover? And I like that name so cousin Edna and I called it that. And then we had a great delight in going down later to see the adobe lillies, which are near there and they're only on the north-east side of the hill in the adobe along the contact between the Granite and Sedimentary rocks and exist only in Kern County, from Kern river, north to the county line, and then only rarely. That used to be the county flower, that's what my teacher told me when I was a very little boy.

W: Would you describe the lilly?

S: Adobe lilly, huh? It had a sort of a run color on the inside, on the outside it was white and it's by-colored with several little lillies to a stem, like you find on some mera-poso lillies. It has a very delicious oder when taken for one, but if you put three or four in a room, that's too strong in

oder in the room in the long run. They throw out that much. I thought you might be interested in that. And (ah) but my favorite flower, I used to call a Blue Daisy, but it wasn't you know that was your little pale blue, you know, with the white center and they'd go up clear to cousin Edna's, they grew up on that place up there.

W: Baby Blue Eye?

S: Baby blue eye, and that's the right name for them. They would grow all over our hills. And then of course there was various and many other flowers that I will not take time to describe now, but they were very beautiful, I expect there were a hundred different kinds. Now Howard Dixon has done a wonderful job of getting pictures of those together, so he hasn't got all of them yet, my favorite flower in those days, by the way, was the tiger lilly, which they now tell us we should call leopard lilly. Why shuld we give a euration name to a California flower? And they call the cat the largest member of the cat family in western hemispher, the people that live there call it "tigre" and by the way they used to be here, they have been in Kern County I'm sure of that, and they have been in California and they actually ship pelts. Out of this state, (ah) the jaguar, which the Latains call "el tigre", you know that, so I guess, am I off the subject to far? Armstrong shakes head indicating 'no'. I am deeply interested in the birds and one of my favorites is the blue collar California Roadrunner but

(laughter) they don't call it in other places. (Ah), the Mexicans call 'el piesano', the country man. And you know they always jost in such a way you couldn't tell whether they were going or coming, because they had two toes in the back and two toes forward. And something I'd forgotten, they don't classify them in the song birds, with your National Geographic book on the song birds and so forth, and they should be. They have a better song than a dove does and a dove is classified in that category. I thought that would be interesting to you. And I've heard their song and I recognize it after I heard it, I asked my brother Ralph, I've forgotten I said, I remember that song but I can't think of what and he said, "that's a roadrunner". Then I remembered it was and you don't hear it very often. Well, I guess I've talked you to death on that. Our favorite birds were, of course, the American Eagle. When we were very little, we went owl hunting down at the big cliffs, there were cliffs of the place and these owls we thought, nobody was with us. Marian was about nine I guess, and Irven was about seven or six and I was about four that's about it. Marian must of been eight then, eight and that's what it was six and four. And these owl's came out and they were little young one's. They still had fuzz on top, but they looked very fierce to us, we were children. Whisssssssss, like that, (laughter) and Marian said huh, their breath is poison and he's blowing his breath at us. (Laughter) So we got busy with our

rocks to take care of these fierce animals. I'm afraid we killed two of them and we skinned up another one but we captured him and boy how he clawed us. A young owl can be very ferocious in your hands (laughter) but we managed, we carried it oh, over half a mile home. And mama had a different idea and she taught us right there not to kill anything. We didn't tell her about the one's we killed but this one was all skinned up. She said, "oh that poor little owl, you took him away from his mother, look at his skin, his toe, he was in awful shape. He belongs right back there where you found him, so we took him back and put him down at the cliff and we treated birds better after that. (Laughter)

A: Now when you came down to Bakersfield, did you miss all of that?

S: Very, very much. I wanted to go back up and go to school at the country school and live there with the Shirley's who succeeded us on the ranch and running it for us.

A: Which Shirley was that?

S: That was Dave Shirley. They were old time family. I wouldn't be surprised if Shirley Meadows isn't named for him.

A: But you wanted to go up there and you were living in town.

S: Yes, I wanted to go up there and go to school but papa talked me out of it. He said, "no Jess, you'll be very home sick". People that lived in the mountains all the time, did their interesting in learning are interested in tress, flowers

and animals all the time.

A: Because that's more closer to them?

S: Yes, and much of the information they got was misleading. For example: our idea that (ah) lions would attack you, very dangerously and maybe they did in the early days to some degree because even the gizzly bears, with the exception of those in the parks, have learned to let people alone. (Ah), I have in my life time seen fourteen mountain lions, without a dog, just keeping my eye's open. But raised as I was or reared as I was in the mountain, I never saw a mountain lion till I was thirty-five years old. I bet a thousand saw me, because they are that skillful. And most people even in the mountains, even know what a mountain lion track looks like. And I wouldn't want to go into all the details but we have two different kinds of lions, at least in our mountains, with some variation in them. For example: some of them make a pointed heel mark. You know they have three pads in their foot very marked. And (ah) their track is flexible. Not like a dog, not like the coyoties. And they almost never show their claw marks. And they are wider than they are long. And four toe's show for the bear, that is five toe's show. And of course their hine foot looks like a boys foot that's been twisted out of shape, a bear. And a grizzly bear track is longer than a Black bear proportionatly. But of course, we don't see those any more, but that's what the old timers talked.

A: Were those things discussed in school or were they just discussed at home and where did you learn them?

S: Discussed by people I met in the mountains and (ah) they did discuss these in school and of course in the old days, even as late as 1914, a mountain lion attacked a child up on Sanoma County, out of Santa Rosa, where my father was born incidently. And she was a school teacher and the last day of school a first grader and maybe the kindergardeners together (interuption)

A: Jess, is that (interuption)

S: This mountain lion attacked them and she attacked that mountain lion to defend that child with her hat pin and killed him, but it killed her too. I thought that might be interesting to you.

A: Is this something about the educational background that you recieved, come through certain people in your family? You named some of them.

S: Well of course, that came indirectly down through cousin Edna you see. That Higgens influence was in her and Aunt Mary would be subject to that influence on the Higgens side of the family, which was quite academic. And of course, my father's family (ah) grandfather, those kids ran a newspaper out ther at Lakeside. Lakeside was named by them, that was their own home place, up there. You see they were Kentuckians in background.

A: Your grandfather then, lived in Kentucky and Illino and

crossed Missouri, coming to California. Where did they first live in Kern County.?

S: Lakeside, and they named it that, that was his homestead in Kern County and they called it that because it was along side the lake.

A: That was the Buena Vista Lake?

S: Yes, that would be Buena Vista Lake and the connecting sloughs.

A: With Kern Lake?

S: Yes, and it was covered at that time by tremendous numbers of wild pigs and hogs that ate on ahtulies. Ahtulie hogs they called them. And some of them had tusks that you could read about in the early newspapers of Kern County, five or six inches long. Very dangerous and big and (ah) these were tame hogs that had been released, old Spanish stock probably. They used to hunt for them and they would catch them and they would keep them alive and take them out and their means of handling them was that they would cut their feet and keep them alive and take them to the market so they wouldn't wpoil. Oh, what a brutial thing to do.

A: Now your family moved up (interruption)

S: My family wouldn't do that. Other's did.

A: Right, but from Lakeside Ranch, then they moved to the mountains.

S: Well, my Uncle Chris, got Lakeside from my father. My

grandfather, he was one of the older sons and of course, my father and all the rest of them, he passed the teachers examination when he was eighteen years old. And the first class he had was at Tehachapi and (ah) the boys there were pretty old. One little boy was twenty-two years old. There was a gash there, she ran in front of the school house naked, when my dad first stared up there. And papa just grabbed a club and beat him nearly to death and that's exactly what should of happened to him. We didn't have problems like that and we don't have them today. Now you might think that was the wrong thing to do, my dad started rebuilding that man and when he ran for County School Superintendent, this man went on and worked for him, cause he knew he had saved him from being a bum and made a man out of him and that's pretty late to begin, when they are that old, don't you think so too?

A: Now, you father lived at Tehachapi?

S: He went up there and he taught a short term because six months and by the way, one of his students there at that time was Leo G. Poly. It was his first year in school. (Laughter) It must of been a pretty wild class because it was a pretty wild town. I heard about it from Mr. Herold too, who taught up there.

A: After the school was over, did he go back to the ranch?

S: No, no they lived up there. No he couldn't go back.

You were on horse back. That's one reason we knew Mr. Herold

so well. You see he used to teach at Longtree down near where McFarland is today, some what west. And he was going with this girl from Longtree up to Glendale where she lived.

A: And your father knew Mr. Herold very well?

S: Oh, very well. And when I was born they put it in the Californian. Unfortunately, they didn't put my name on, I had to prove I was a citizen of the United States after I had been County School Superintendent for ten years. You can't get out of this country without it.

A: Was it Mr. Herold that told you?

S: Mr. Herold told me stories and he was my father's great friend and mine too. He helped elect me County School Superintendent and he died shortly afterwards. And I asked him, "Mr. Herold, what's your advice, my father had passed away, so I asked him, what's your advice to me as County School Superintendent"? He said, "Jess, he blamed both me and Jess Storcy for being called Jess when we where named Jesse, he said, Jess you run the best school system they'll let you run, that you possibly can and that's what I plan to do.

W: How many Stockton's have been in the school business?

S: I don't know, I never took a censes, but Jim was.

A: Now was Jim your brother?

S: No, he was my cousin.

A: Your cousin.

S: His father, Sam Stockton, was so much like my father that

you couldn't tell them apart. I sometimes, I saw Uncle Sam come around the house that's Uncle Chris Stockton, that's Dr. Chris home today, and I thought it was my father. They both wore a mustach and you just couldn't tell them apart in those days.

A: Your father was a School Superintendent?

S: And they weren't identical twins, they were brothers.

A: Now your father was a teacher, and your grandfather was a teacher.

S: No, grandfather Stockton was a doctor and he had his license to practice from the Federal Government, which was probably a little better than the State. He went to school in Ohio even though he was a Kentucken. And my grandfather was born in the south, that was grandfather Stockton. He was strongly for the Union during the Civil War. And my grandfather that was born in Ohio, Dave Ingel, was very much Condederate for his entire life. This ought to be interesting to you. This shows that those boarders in there were mixed up some what. And this area in here was extremely Southern. Mr. Herold, and by the way, Mr. Herold got his education in the hills and mountains and valleys of central California, just like my father did. Those people had time to reflact, they didn't have any fast automobiles. Oh, by the way, I neglected to tell you that the Wright Brothers flew on my seventh birthday. December 17, 1903.

A: Now that's the records that we wanted, you see. (Laughter)

S: I come from the horse and buggy age for fairs, through automobiles, airplanes, rockets and I believe, the man on the moon and get back to my life time. You know, I told the kids back in 1945, that was near the close of the war, when I knew they had atomic power, in school when I was teaching, I told them and a lot of them will remember this, that we would be on the moon in twenty-five years, but I wouldn't guarantee we would come back, (laughter) that's what I told them. Is this interesting to you?

A: That certainly is. This has been a very interesting afternoon, Jess because you have recorded some remanacies here that we would not otherwise get. And has told something about the background of a boy growing up in the early days of Kern County and that's what we think is very worth while. We want to thank you and we want to thank Mrs. Wilde for coming and recording this for us this afternoon.