

INTERVIEW

Ralph Herron

YEAR

2005

GRAY COUNTY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

NAME: Ralph Herron

DATE: October 18, 2005

PLACE: Cimarron, KS

INTERVIEWER: Joyce Suellentrop

PROJECT SERIES: Veterans Oral History Project for Gray County

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Ralph Herron was born and raised in the Cimarron, Kansas area. He enlisted in the Marine Corps and was sent to California to train. There he was given a medical discharge and sent home. In 1953, now married, he was drafted into the Army and trained in Texas and sent to Oklahoma to teach radar to recruits. After serving 2 years he was released and he moved to Wichita where he worked for Coleman Company and Boeing Aircraft. He returned to Cimarron after three years and lives in Cimarron. He farmed for many years.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED: Training as radar and electronics and life in the Army in the United States as an instructor. His return to civilian life and work in Wichita and the Cimarron area. His father's homesteaded farm was discussed.

COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW: none

SOUND RECORDINGS: 60 minute tape

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 1 hour

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: none

TRANSCRIPT: 18 pages

ORAL HISTORY
Ralph Herron
Interview Date October, 18, 2005

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

Interviewee: Ralph Herron (RH)

Tape 1 of 1

Side A

JS - You and a group of young men from here went to Dodge City to join the Marines. You, then, went to Kansas City on the train and were inducted? What did your parents think of that?

RH - My dad took us to the bus to go to Dodge City to catch the train and he cried. That was the only time I ever saw him cry.

JS - He didn't come right out and say that he thought it was a bad idea?

RH - No, I don't think so.

JS - What did basic training consist of?

RH - A lot of marching.

JS - Did you have other duties that you were expected to do?

RH - Not really, just clean the latrine and stuff like that. Marine Corps wouldn't let you do anything, like go to town, in the two months. You couldn't even eat candy bars. You were on a real strict diet.

JS - Did you have a time when you were not marching?

RH - They got you up real early and they had other stuff going too.

JS - Did they give you a uniform?

RH - Well, we didn't get one until we had been there a week and we marched and had our shoes worn out. Of course, they shaved your head like they always do and it got sunburned and it was bad.

JS - It wasn't a good experience?

RH - Not really. They wanted you to be rough in the Marines. They wanted to see how rough you could be.

JS - Somebody told you that you that you could get out if you had something wrong with you?

RH - Yes.

JS - It was lucky that you had flat feet?

RH - They were pretty flat. In the Marine Corps they wanted you in perfect shape.

JS - So, you came home and were you in the Reserve or anything?

RH - No, I got a medical discharge.

JS - You were right out of high school, when you came home did you go to work?

RH - I went back to farming.

JS - You were still registered for the draft and later did you get called up?

RH - I got a letter in '53 telling me to report for a physical for the Army. So they sent me down and I had a physical and they sent me home and then sent me down again. They said that I had flat feet and they didn't know whether they would take me or not. They sent me over to Fort Leavenworth and checked me there and sent me back home again. Then they sent me a letter that they were inducting me so I went down to be inducted in the Army. They checked me and said they thought they would send me home again. I said I had quit my job at Coleman to come down here. "It is the third time I have been down here. If you call me in again, I am not coming back." They said, "Okay."

JS - So, you farmed for a little while and then went to Wichita to work at Coleman?

RH - I worked there in the furnace department. Coleman is a pretty big outfit. When I first started down there, they sent me to school to be a riveter. I worked on the forward landing door of the B47s they were building then.

JS - Coleman?

RH - Coleman was building parts for Boeing.

JS - I didn't know that.

RH - So I learned to be a riveter down there.

JS - Where was the plant in Wichita?

RH - It was clear up in North Wichita.

JS - I spoke to someone who said they worked at Boeing because they got good wages. Did you get good wages at Coleman?

RH - I suppose, but I don't remember what it was now. Farming got so bad out here during the '50s that I went down there to get a job.

JS - Were you surprised when you got notice that they were calling you up again?

RH - Yeah, with a medical discharge, I was and I was married, too. I didn't figure they would call me back, but they did.

JS - So they sent you home three times and then drafted you?

RH - The third time I just told them I wasn't coming back. I had quit my job and moved my trailer house back to Dodge. I was living in Wichita with my wife. I couldn't play that game anymore.

JS - Did you think you were going in for a certain amount of time?

RH - Two years.

JS - Where did you go?

RH - I was stationed at Fort Bliss for my basic training. I was at Fort Bliss for fourteen months and marched and got my clothes and then they sent me to Fort Sill. I went down there as a radar instructor. They had radar school for the second eight weeks I was at Fort Bliss.

JS - Was the basic training in the Army different than in the Marines?

RH - It was entirely different. The first weekend you got off and could go to the beer joint there on the base and the second or third you could go to El Paso, even. It was entirely different than the Marine Corps.

JS - You could eat candy bars?

RH - You could do anything, eat candy, drink beer or do anything you wanted to.

JS - Basic training was usually how long?

RH - You had eight weeks of basic and eight weeks of advanced where I went to radar school.

JS - And was radar new at that time?

RH - Oh, it would be pretty crude compared to now, but I went to anti-aircraft radar which was tracking the planes in the air and stuff. At Fort Sill, when I went there, it was different radar. They were tracking mortars on the ground. I was an instructor there for ten months.

JS - I don't know anything about radar. Did you have a screen that you were looking at? This was while they were training on the range?

RH - For anti-aircraft you sit there and track for aircraft coming in. The radar shot big guns, their ninety-millimeter guns. They fired them.

JS - Was it difficult?

RH - No, I guess it wasn't too bad.

JS - So you went through the training and became an instructor?

RH - Well, at Fort Bliss, for twelve months, I mostly marched trainees around and became an instructor when I went to Fort Sill. A lot of it I kind of had to learn as I went. It was a different radar.

JS - it was anti-aircraft?

RH - At Fort Bliss it was anti-aircraft, but at Fort Sill it was Field Artillery, ground troops.

JS - When you were marching the trainees around, were you trained for that?

RH - I just kind of started doing it. They took me in May and after eight weeks they were supposed to send me home for a week, I got a notice they were going to send me home, but just before I left they pulled me off the roster to come home and sent me to the recruit center that they had just started at Fort Bliss, then. A lot of people from here went through that at Fort Bliss. In fact, two or three came through there that I knew.

JS - What did your wife think when you had to go?

RH - I don't know. That was my first wife.

JS - Must have been hard.

RH - That was probably part of what caused the divorce, she found other men. She lived down at Fort Sill and Fort Bliss with me part of the time and she had a

baby when I was at Fort Sill. That was a couple of months before I got out of the Army.

JS - So, your time at Fort Sill was teaching radar?

RH - Yeah.

JS - Was there a time when you wanted to do something else? Did you have a choice or did they just tell you what to do?

RH - When I signed up at Fort Bliss they wanted to know what school I wanted to go to and I said radar school. I got my choice there. When I got through training, I didn't go to it for fourteen months.

JS - But eventually you got there?

RH - Yes.

JS - Was there ever a chance that you would have been sent overseas?

RH - When they weren't going to have that base for recruits, I had orders to go to New Jersey, which would have me go over to Germany, probably, but like I said they pulled me off of it. That was just before I was supposed to come home. They kept me till Christmas, but in the process they goofed up and sent my orders on to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. When I came home at Christmas time for leave, I got home and a cop stopped me and I said, "What's wrong?" He said, "You're a deserter." I said, "What? I spent May to December and never got off the base. How can I be a deserter?" When the orders got to New Jersey, there I was at Fort Bliss so I couldn't really be in two places at once.

JS - Were you able to explain it to him or what happened?

RH - Well yeah, I had my leave papers to come home. I about goofed up on that. The guy that was on duty said I might as well take off early and come home and not wait till midnight to pick up my orders. I told him I had better wait and have my orders when I got there. If I had gone early, the police would probably have had me in jail if I hadn't had my orders with me.

JS - What was it like when you were being the radar instructor? You worked five days a week?

RH - It wasn't too bad. It was more or less teaching the radar to kids who were coming in there. I lived off base so I got off at five or six and went home and didn't have to put in Saturday or Sunday.

JS - Basically, you lived a lot different than a single person would have?

RH - Yeah, I could live off base.

JS - And you had all your weekends free?

RH - Most of them, once in a while we would have to go in for a check on Saturday, but very seldom. That was when I was at Fort Sill. Fort Bliss was entirely different. They didn't know what a three-day pass was, there. You had to pick up your pass at night and turn it in when you came in the morning if you lived off base.

JS - Was it hard to follow orders and take all the discipline and rules?

RH - Not really, I guess.

JS - Did you ever get in trouble?

RH - Not real bad trouble.

JS - Would some of the soldiers that you were teaching, then, have gone overseas to fight the Korean War?

RH - The Korean War would have been over just a couple of months after I got in. It was over in '53. I was in the Army about two months before the war ended.

JS - Why do you think they brought you back in?

RH - Well, the war was still going on when they drafted me back and I was twenty-five and they couldn't draft you at twenty-six. I found out at twenty-five, you weren't near like an eighteen-year-old kid running around (laugh). You lose out trying to run around with a bunch of eighteen-and nineteen-year-old kids, which most of them were.

JS - Was the draft still in effect for the eighteen-and nineteen-year olds?

RH - Oh yeah, I don't know when they did stop the draft.

JS - That's right, because in the Vietnam War they were still drafting people. Their numbers would come up.

RH - Yeah, that regular Army didn't come up for quite a few years.

JS - When your time was up, did you ever think of staying in?

RH - No.

JS - Any particular reason?

RH - I just didn't like it. Course, I went back to Coleman when I got back. If you were drafted, they had to hold your job until you got back and then it was just like you were working there that time. I went back and worked at Coleman for about six months. I was still kind of farming with my brother. They had some maize they were going to cut and I told them it was no problem to get a couple of weeks off. They told me I could have the time off, but the day before I was to leave they said they needed me too bad at Coleman and I couldn't take off. I said I would just quit, then, which wasn't the best thing to do. I lost all my seniority there. I went back in and they took me back, but I got laid off in December, right at Christmas time. A lot of us ended up with no jobs with wives and kids and stuff at Christmas time. I signed up for unemployment and the same day I went down at Boeing and they hired me so I never did draw unemployment.

JS - When you were in the Army, do you remember how much you made?

RH - I think I got about forty dollars after the allotment went out of it.

JS - You, actually, made more money when you were at Coleman?

RH - Oh yeah, I didn't make anything in the Army.

JS - When you went back to Coleman after you got out of the Army, was it back in the furnace area?

RH - I was in the furnace area, not the aircraft because they had quit working on B47s then.

JS - What did you do at Boeing?

RH - I went to work out there on the flight line and they were modifying these B47s, redoing the whole thing. I was doing that about ten months and then they sent me into the plant. Then they were just starting to build the B52s. I was in the wing section and that runs to hard work. They've got great big rivets up in there in the sheet metal part. In the process, I had gone to TV school. I was going to school and working, too, so I would go to school at eight o'clock in the morning and get off at two. A guy would pick me up at school and I went to work at three. I went directly from school to Boeing and got off there at eleven or twelve and I would go home, just in time to get up and go back to school the next day.

JS - You were a busy person. Where was the TV school, in Wichita?

RH - Down on North Broadway.

JS - I suppose TV was just then becoming more available?

RH - Yeah, it wasn't out here very much.

JS - And you were trained to repair them?

RH - I was in the first colored TV school they had down there. I went clear through color school and never saw a program in color. There were only two color programs a night. Bonanza and Dinah Shore, I think, were the only two color programs they had. They were at night and I didn't go to school then so I never saw one. I had worked on TVs and knew how to do it and had never seen one in color.

JS - Did you have TV at your home?

RH - Not a color.

JS - Just black and white. How long did you go to school?

RH - It must have been over a year.

JS - Did you get a certificate?

RH - Yeah, I got a diploma out of it. I also got a radio license to be a radio operator, but I never did use it. I could have worked on two-way radios and stuff. I just had a second class FCC and would have had another threemonths to get a first class. One of my buddies had gone to work for a TV station and he didn't make anything there so I thought, "What's the use?" I stayed out at Boeing and beings I got that hard riveting and stuff, I decided I would just go over in their radar and electronic part of Boeing. They paid more to start and everything so I went down and asked this guy if I could transfer over to electronic division. He said, " We need you lot worse in the riveting section. We'll make you a lead man." I told him that was pretty hard work down there and asked if he was going to lay me off, how much notice would I get. He said it was twenty-four hours. I told him, " I'm giving you twenty-four hours notice and quitting." So I quit.

JS - What was so hard about the riveting job?

RH - Oh, you had great big bucking bars and a big gun. You were shooting those big rivets on there. On the B52s they had probably, three-eighths or one-half- inch metal on there.

JS - It was just hard physically?

RH - Yeah.

JS - Let's go back to the B47s. You say they were modifying them. They had been used in World War Two?

RH - Yes, they were running them all through and re-doing them and I was riveting a deal on the side. Some kind of special radar went in there and I had about the same job for the time I was in there.

JS - And they stopped doing that?

RH - They got through doing the modifying. That was out on the flight line and they transferred me into the main factory after they closed the flight line.

JS - So when they wouldn't let you use what you had been learning, you quit?

RH - Yeah, electronics. You could start at more than I would make as a lead man over in the other division. Anyway, I had gone to work for a TV company there, in Wichita. The thing was, about the time I got my license to work on TVs, I got a divorce about the same time.

JS - Then what did you do?

RH - That was in '58 and I had been up there three years and I was still in the farming deal with my brothers. They didn't raise anything there in the '50s and one year they didn't even plant wheat. In '58 we had a big harvest so I came back here and started farming and been here ever since.

JS - Did you repair TVs on the side?

RH - Yes, I did here in Cimarron for several years. I did that for two or three years and then I put irrigation in on the farm so I had enough to do without working on TVs. I would be out working all day and people would call me at night and want their TV worked on. Back then, all they had was TV so if it quit, they wanted it fixed, so I just quit.

JS - I remember when we first got TV and it seemed like tubes were always going out.

RH - That was the trouble, the tubes, and I quit the TVs and it was about the time they went to transistors. I wouldn't know anything about TVs now.

JS - Now, when one quits, you just get a new one.

RH - They just pull out a board and put a new one in. When I worked on them you had to find what part was actually bad, a tube or resistor, etc. I worked up there for Bruce Ferguson for several years.

JS - While you were farming, too?

RH - Yes, I and my brothers farmed together.

JS - Did any of your brothers go into the service?

RH - Yeah, I had two.

JS - About the same time you went?

RH - One of them graduated a year before I did, so he went a year before I did.

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

Interviewee: Ralph Herron (RH)

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Side B

JS - So what you actually learned like the radar and electronics certainly helped you when you came home?

RH - It wouldn't have really helped that much. Like I said, I went into TV, but it was entirely different. I was teaching operation, not working on them. That is different than teaching how to run one. It's like teaching someone to run a TV, a little more complicated.

JS - Would you say then, that the Army gave you the means to go back to school with the GI Bill?

RH - I suppose. Otherwise, I would have probably stayed there and farmed and not gone to TV school. It didn't pay that good, anyway.

JS - What else would you say about your experience in the Army? Did it change you in anyway?

RH - It didn't hurt that much because the years I was in there, they didn't raise nothing on the farm. It was the filthy fifties, I guess. Like I said, I went to Coleman and Boeing and stayed there in Wichita for three years.

JS - How did you get to Coleman in the first place, from Cimarron to Wichita?

RH - I just went down there and got a job.

JS - You had heard that they were hiring?

RH - Yeah, we had a trailer house so we pulled it down there and parked it. It was an eight by twenty-eight trailer which people now-a-days wouldn't think was much fun living in.

JS - That was big then?

RH - It wasn't big, but after we were down there awhile we traded for a forty-seven foot one. So if you go from twenty-eight to forty-seven foot, it was quite a change. Still, the trailers now are ten by eighty or something.

JS - Did you like living in Wichita?

RH - Oh yeah, it was alright.

JS - You came from a very small community.

RH - Wichita was safer than it is now. I worked on TVs and would go out at night after dark, to the Northeast part of Wichita and work on TVs in the colored section. Now, I don't think you would even drive up there at night to drive through it, let alone get out and work on a TV set.

JS - And, you didn't think anything about it?

RH - Well, there weren't drugs and stuff back then and I never thought nothing about it.

JS - You have certainly seen a lot of changes in your life with the technology. You were born in '28 and were probably raised without it and you sort of went into different fields of technology.

RH - We didn't even have electricity out at the farm. We got a wind charger about a year before I left there, but it was just thirty-two volts and you just had lights and no indoor plumbing. We had a three bedroom house and there were eleven of us kids and two parents so that made thirteen of us. My older brother had gone into the Army before the last one was born so the most that were in there were twelve at one time in a three bedroom house.

JS - Did you put boys in one and girls in the other?

RH - We just kind of stacked up, I guess.

JS - Were those good times?

RH - I suppose, we didn't know anything else. One thing that was funny, the year I graduated in '46, I was up there farming by the neighbors. The kids came over there and said, "I see you got a little baby sister." I said, "What?" I didn't even know about it. My mother was fat, anyhow.

JS - Where were you in the family?

RH - I was next to the oldest.

JS - Did you have chores when you were growing up?

RH - Yeah, when we got a little bigger we had a trap line and we went out and shot skunks and stuff and then we came in and milked and got ready to catch the bus.

JS - Before school?

RH - Before school started.

JS - Did you go to a country school?

RH - No, I went to Cimarron. We caught the bus.

JS - And in your trap line, it was mainly skunks?

RH - That's about all we caught.

JS - And you shot them?

RH - We would just shoot them and bring them in and skin them at night when we got home.

JS - What would you do with the fur?

RH - You would skin them, stretch it and sell it. I think they were worth about a dollar apiece. A dollar was a lot of money back then.

JS - Who would buy them?

RH - They had a place over at Dodge that bought furs and stuff.

JS - What did they do with them?

RH - They sent them, I suppose, to make coats or whatever they could make out of the fur.

JS - Did you do other hunting, like pheasant hunting?

RH - They didn't have pheasants back then. They came in later years and deer hunting too, was later. We had a lot of rabbits though, they were awful thick.

JS - Did you ever go on a rabbit drive?

RH - Yeah, I went on a couple of them.

JS - So, the pheasants weren't out here then?

RH - No, they stocked them in later years and of course, the deer season, they didn't have an open deer season here till the '70s, probably. We had never even seen a deer before that and I can't remember how far I was in school before I even saw a pheasant. They didn't have open season till then.

JS - What else do you remember about World War Two and the rationing and the things that you did for the war effort?

RH - People would hate to live that way now, where you couldn't get tires, gas etc. Of course, the farmers could pretty well get gasoline for tractors and things and that is what they used in tractors, then. Tires were hard to get, and canned foods and meat. They rationed sugar, coffee and everything. You had to have your stamps to get them.

JS - Was there a tradition of being in the military in your family? Was your father in?

RH - No, he never was in it.

JS - Not in World War One, did you know anyone that had fought in World War One?

RH - I don't think so.

JS - When did your family come out here?

RH - My dad was born in 1882, and I think he was six when he came out here, probably about 1888.

JS - Where did they come from?

RH - Iowa; and he homesteaded the place up there. We still have the farm and I have the deed that was signed by President Howard Taft, who was president then. It was actually signed by President Taft. They didn't stamp like they do now.

JS - Do you have sons that help you farm, that farm it now?

RH - No.

JS - You still own it?

RH - I still own a half-section of it. It is just in grass now--CRP.

JS - Did your father have stories about growing up out here when it was still homesteading days?

RH - Some, I suppose, he used to say when he was farming up on that homesteaded ground they would load up a wagon with wheat. It was probably 50 bushel and they would bring it to town and try to get to town by noon and unload. Then they would drive back home and load up another wagon load so it would be ready to bring to town by the next morning. They spent all winter hauling wheat to town.

JS - And, they would sell it?

RH - Then, there were no roads so they would just cut across country. We lived 10 miles north- east of here. I never asked him when they put the roads in. There are a lot of things I would ask him now. They could go on a piece of ground and mow around a low spot and even if they didn't own it, they could claim the hay in that spot. The railroad owned every other section.

JS - That was smart.

RH - It was a little different than it is now, I guess.

JS - I suppose they started putting in roads when the automobile became more common. Do you remember your first car that you had?

RH - The first one I had was a '36 Ford.

JS - Do you remember the first one that your parents had?

RH - They had an old Oakland, I think. Then they got a '36 Chevy. The one I remember most was the '36 Chevy they had when I was going to school. If I came in to play in on the football team at night, I had to drive an old truck in to play so we didn't drag around in them. We would just come in and play the game and go home, that's all.

JS - Did you play football or just go to the games?

RH - I played football, but I would just drive in to play.

JS - Did your parents come and watch you play?

RH - Yeah, they used to come and watch.

JS - What chores did you have to do besides milk cows?

RH - We had cattle to feed and cane to bind and shock and haul it in and put it in the hay loft. So, you were usually busy for at least five or six days a week.

JS - In the summer were you busier?

RH - Yes, we farmed about a section and three quarters. My brother would go run the tractor till about one-o'clock and then I would run it from one till dark which would be about eight hours each to run it. I started when I was nine years old, I think. That was a lot of hours for a little kid.

JS - Were there just two boys?

RH - No, there were more, but the two of us ran it.

JS- You were the oldest?

RH - Yeah. Dad sold the one place north of town in '47 and we were just getting out of the Army so he just turned that farm over to the two of us and we farmed it together for years.

JS - Are all your brothers and sisters still around here or did they move away?

RH - Most of them. There are three here and they live in Dodge. I have had two brothers die and one sister.

JS - Do you have any stories of things you know how to do that young people now, don't know how to do, like shocking, etc.?

RH - Well, that is something they won't have to do. All your stuff is done by hydraulic, baling etc. None of that stuff is done by hand like we did. Like wheat, you had to shovel it in the bin and then get in there and mound it back. It would be 100 degrees and you would be in that steel bin mounding the wheat back. We can't even walk into one now without cooking so I don't know how we did it as kids. You can't get into one of those steel bins when it is hot. You were used to the heat because nobody had air conditioning.

JS - When you went into the Marines and later in the Army did you meet people from all over the United States and was that a different experience?

RH - Yeah, we met different people, we had some Cubans down at Fort Sill. They talked Spanish or whatever it was and they weren't supposed to. People were only allowed to speak English on base, but they spoke their language. It wasn't like it is now, when they bend over back to speak Spanish at schools and everything.

JS - Do you have any reflections about your life during the time you went to the Marines and then the Army?

RH - I just farmed between the Marines and the Army time. In fact, I tried to get a deferment from the Army to go ahead farming and they wouldn't give it to me.

JS - Why do you think they wouldn't give it to you?

RH - I couldn't figure it out. I had a medical discharge and was married. I went over to the draft board and they said since I only spent a couple of months in the Marines they would send me to the Army and see if they could keep me longer.

JS - Was the draft board in this county or in Dodge?

RH - It was Ford County.

JS - This memorial is for World War Two and they plan to recognize those who were in the Korean and Vietnam wars later.

RH - Of course, the Korean vets were about like the Vietnam vets, they didn't wear their uniforms at home because people didn't respect them. In World War Two, a lot of them volunteered and wanted to go and they were heroes. At the start of the Korean War a lot of them went to Canada or took off and wouldn't even serve.

JS - I know in World War Two there was a feeling of patriotism and that it was for a just cause. Did you pick that up in school or in the community or where?

RH - I don't know. It was just something you did.

JS - Did you know anyone who fought in Korea from this community?

RH - I don't know if we lost anyone in Korea. There were some that went over there. We still have people in Korea and Germany and places at the bases.

JS - Do you think it is good for young people to have to go into the service? Do you think it teaches you anything?

RH - I think it probably would. The young people don't know what money is. They grew up in a society and had what they wanted. If they didn't want to do something, they didn't do it. We didn't think about it. If somebody told you to do something, you went and did it.

JS - So taking orders wasn't hard?

RH - No, because if your parents told you to do something you went and did it. You didn't argue whether they were going to give you ten dollars or five dollars to do it. The first year we worked we got new bicycles and they cost ten dollars. People said they only got a dollar a day when they worked. We thought we had worked all summer for those ten dollar bikes and that was good wages. We had helped with the cattle all winter, too, and we thought we were rich when we had new bicycles.

JS - Where did you ride the bikes?

RH - We would ride it to the field to run the tractor and the other one would ride it back home.

JS - Did you have trouble keeping the tires pumped up? Were there stickers?

RH - Oh, I suppose, but I don't remember having that much trouble with the tires. Back then, I don't think we had the stickers we do now.

JS - Were you the only ones who got bicycles? How could they get bicycles for eleven children?

RH - We quit riding them and the others got them, I expect.

JS - Anything else you can think of? Growing up in the time that you did, you saw a lot of history go by.

RH - But, they had already quit farming with horses. Dad had a team of horses, but I never did drive the team. I had a horse that I rode some, but I never did farm with a horse.

JS - Were political issues discussed at your home?

RH - Not much, I don't think.

JS - Do you remember the first president you voted for?

RH - No, I don't remember who the first one was.

JS - Was there any fellow soldier or officer that you knew in the Army that you kept in contact with when you got out of the service.

RH - No, one or two sent me Christmas cards, but I never did keep in touch with them.

JS - Is there any particular memory that you have about the Army

RH - I suppose I had good times along with it. My wife was in town at the bases.

JS - Did you socialize with other soldiers?

RH - A few times I went to Juarez and had a few drinks. But after I went to Fort Sill, I didn't do any of that.

JS - Because it was in Oklahoma?

RH - Well, I was an instructor and I got off at five o'clock and went home. In basic training for sixteen weeks my wife wasn't there so I went out once in a while.

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

Interviewee: Ralph Herron (RH)

Tape 1 of 1

END