

**1979 Tractorcade to Washington D.C.
Interview with Jack Wolfe
September 26, 2012
Conducted at the Kinsley Library, Kinsley, Kansas
Interviewers: Joan Weaver and Rosetta Graff**

PAGES 1-16 covers Jack's life, 1916 to 1950's; PAGES 17-26 covers AAM & Tractorcade

Joan: Jack, what is your full name?

Jack: Jack Wolfe.

Joan: Where do you currently reside?

Jack: 2 ¼ miles north of Lewis.

Joan: When and where were you born?

Jack: Newton, Kansas, 1916.

Joan: Do you remember the month and the day?

Jack: February the 1st.

Joan: What were the names of your parents?

Jack: Clyde D. Wolfe and Alice M. Wolfe.

Joan: Do you know her maiden name?

Jack: Matthews.

Joan: And so your grandparents, do you know the names of your Grandparents Matthews?

Jack: G. L. Matthews.

Joan: And his wife?

Jack: Minnie Matthews.

Joan: And the Wolfe grandparents?

Jack: Robert A. Wolfe and I believe her name was Jean Wolfe. She was gone before I ever knew her.

Joan: Did you have any brothers or sisters in your home?

Jack: Seven.

Joan: Seven!

Jack: Seven of us.

Joan: Okay, how many boys and how many girls?

Jack: Well, there were three boys and four girls.

Joan: And where were you in the lineup?

Jack: I was number one.

Joan: So you were the oldest of seven. Now, you said you were born in Newton. When did your family come to Edwards County? How did you get here?

Jack: Well, my mother and dad were born and raised in Edwards County. After they got married, they decided they were going to go to eastern Colorado and start a new home.

Joan: And then they came back?

Jack: No, do you want all the moves that they made?

Joan: Well, but you ended up being born in Newton.

Jack: Yes.

Joan: When did they come back here to Edwards County then?

Jack: Well, I suppose when my mother and I were able to leave the hospital.

Joan: Oh, I see!

Jack: I was born in the hospital in Newton.

Joan: You went there for maternity care when she had the baby.

Jack: And then my oldest sister was born there too.

Joan: And so the family was already living on the farm here?

Jack: I don't think my mother and dad ever established a residence here. Dad went off to eastern Colorado and bought a (I think) quarter section of land there. He built a nice little frame barn that still stands, and a two room house. A windmill, I suppose, was the first thing. He built fences. My Granddad Matthews furnished him with some registered Hereford cattle. Dad drove a team and wagon from Lewis to Flagler and they started off from there.

Joan: About what year was that?

Jack: 1916.

Joan: So right when you were born.

Jack: Well, they told me I was three months old when they moved me to Colorado.

Joan: And you moved in a wagon?

Jack: No, the team and wagon went out there so they'd have something to haul fence posts and lumber. I wasn't there when the wagon went out.

Joan: So is that where you grew up as a little boy?

Jack: I lived on this place until... well, I was born in Newton, and my oldest sister was born in Newton. The second sister was born in the two room house. Then they decided they needed more house room. They rented a home about a quarter mile south that had a larger house and more buildings. We lived there for three or four years and then Dad bought a quarter section of land north of town three miles.

Joan: This is still in Colorado?

Jack: Oh yes. We used the same mailing address. The first building site was two east, and about a quarter north. The second residence was about two more east of Lewis. The third residence was one mile east and three north. We lived there until 1934.

Joan: Where did you go to school?

Jack: Flagler. Twelve years to the same building.

Joan: How many students were in the building, about?

Jack: There were 24 in my starting class. Now, when we got to be freshman, we had 30, because the outside schools come in for high school. When I graduated, we had 16.

Joan: Were you living in the country then? When you weren't going to school?

Jack: One mile east and three north.

Joan: And you went into town for school?

Jack: Oh yes, the school bus picked me up, most of the time. There was a year or two the Page's lived about half a mile east of us and they had five girls. Mr. Page hauled his girls and my brothers and sisters to school in the car.

Joan: That would be a busload!

Jack: He had an open touring Buick car. I expect I was in high school when (I think) Mr. Hyde bought three school busses. He had three sons that drove each bus. One of his sons picked me up every morning. He got married and his wife was my schoolteacher for five different years. She was one of the grandest people I know. She was one of the people that really taught me what was right and wrong. She taught me to read as good as I can. And she lived to be 100 years old!

Joan: Well, it looks like you are taking after her in that regard, too!

Jack: Her husband was a real horse man. Well, after I got about eight years old or something, Dad had cows and he always had four work horses. He got me this cattle horse from the Hydes. I rode that horse for years and years.

Joan: What was its name?

Jack: Well, Dad called her ... well her real name was Beauty. She was tall, blaze faced.

Joan: So what were your chores on the farm, growing up?

Jack: Well, I went with Dad wherever he went. Mostly it was to the field. But well, he had a Model T Ford, and he taught me to drive that thing through the gate while he opened it when I was six years old. In the morning, I was milking cows and feeding pigs and going to school. There were times when I would come home from school before the fall of the year when he would have a team and wagon harnessed up and we'd go get a load of feed.

Joan: So you pretty much spent your time with your dad?

Jack: Yes, anytime he was farming he had me under the steering wheel. By the time I was six years, nine years, he sent me to the field by myself. Crank her up and go. There was no starter, you had to crank it. We had a disc, and a drill and one of the first combines in the country. All of our family had something to do with that. Dad would run the combine. When the girls got big enough, one of the girls drove the tractor.

Joan: So they drove the tractor too?

Jack: I think all of them did. Well, when Charity, the oldest daughter, got big enough, she drove the combine and I drove the pickup hauling wheat. In those days, there wasn't any elevator; we had to put it in the bin. Shoveled it.

Joan: A lot of work.

Jack: Yes. At that time, we had about a dozen milk cows. We had to milk cows twice a day.

Joan: Did you sell the cream? Or was it all for your use or the pigs?

Jack: We separated the cream and sold the cream. We fed the milk to the hogs. We always kept ground grain around for the milk cows and the horses. The pigs got their grain soaked in that milk, and I mean they'd go for it!

Joan: Happy pigs. Were you able to do any extra-curricular activities at school like sports or anything? Or did the farm keep you too busy?

Jack: Well, I wanted to, but Dad said I need you at home. In my senior year, I rode a bicycle from three miles north and a mile east and practiced basketball. But really, I didn't make the first team. I was a lost cause, I couldn't keep up with them. I played second team.

Joan: Now, you were born in '16, so you were still at home during part of the Depression?

Jack: I never left home until Uncle Sam called me into the service.

Joan: What was it like during the Depression and the Dirty '30's? Do you remember any of that?

Jack: You know, in '32 we had a pretty fair crop. Well, you know, I think '33 was pretty good. Wheat was 25 cents a bushel and corn was ten, barley was ten and hogs were three cents, a milk cow was 20 dollars.

Joan: So on the farm, you probably didn't feel the Depression very much. There weren't the dust storms that were in Kansas? *(Jack said later that there were very bad dust storms in Colorado.)*

Jack: Well, my folks butchered their own hogs and mom was great for raising chickens. We had chicken and pork and Dad would generally buy a quarter of beef somewhere in the fall. We raised our own potatoes. He raised enough potatoes to last us a year.

Joan: Did you irrigate at all where you were?

Jack: No irrigation except the garden. Now for the garden, we had a windmill and we watered the tomatoes and cabbage and carrots and watermelons and cantaloupe and squash and sweet corn.

Joan: So you were pretty self-sufficient.

Jack: Mom canned everything. Rhubarb! That was our fruit! We didn't have any fruit trees, but we could raise rhubarb. Mom canned it up. Rhubarb, at least a 100 quarts in the fall, and tomatoes. She'd have 100 quarts of tomatoes sitting up on the shelf in the cave.

Joan: It was in a cave?

Jack: Yes, you had to keep them from freezing. So they were down in a hole in the ground, a cave. It was probably six foot deep and had some kind of a roof over it and then dirt up over the structure so it wouldn't freeze. In the fall we'd have potatoes, cabbage, carrots, beets. I don't remember what all.

Joan: Did you have electricity? Or do you remember when you got it?

Jack: Well, I think electricity came to the farm up there at Elizabeth in '47. I came up here in '48.

Joan: So she was doing all this canning and everything without electricity when you were young.

Jack: Well, sure. We had gas lights and kerosene lights.

Joan: How about indoor water and plumbing? Did you have that?

Jack: Well, Dad dug a cesspool off there by the house, and we ran water from the house to the cesspool. We carried water to the house. That was one of my jobs, carrying water from the windmill to the house. Then the waste water went down into the cesspool. That was after we got established. When we moved there, there wasn't any.

Joan: Right, just the outhouse.

Jack: Out here at Lewis, there was just an old pump handle outside the house. There were no bath facilities.

Joan: And when did you come to Lewis?

Jack: '48.

Joan: And there still wasn't.

Jack: And no electricity!

Joan: Staying back in Colorado, what was Christmas like in your home? Did you celebrate Christmas? Did you get presents?

Jack: Oh yes. Do you know Minnie Matthews?

Joan & Rosetta: No

Jack: She went to the Methodist Church here (*Kinsley*), and she was very religious. My mother was very religious. For Christmas, Mom and Dad would get us clothing. I'd get overalls and shirts and underwear and the girls would get their dresses and what-have-you. Socks, everybody wore socks in them days.

Joan: Did you hang up a stocking or anything?

Jack: Oh yes.

Joan: What would you get in your stocking?

Jack: You took it off your leg and hung it up!

Joan: Did you get candy or nuts and fruit?

Jack: Oh yes. Dad was a good provider. After we got a big family, at that time we lived 25 miles from Denver. He could go up there and buy apples by the bushel and anything else we needed. Honey, he always came home with a five gallon can of honey.

Joan: That's a good sweetener.

Jack: You could buy canned food in Denver cheaper than you could here. He'd come home with a case of tomatoes and green beans and pork and beans. Whatever. He'd get fruit: peaches and apricots and plums.

Joan: So you were a church-going family at that time?

Jack: Well, mom and the girls always went. Dad didn't go to church.

Joan: Was it a Methodist church?

Jack: No. They went to the Baptist church that was at Flagler. My mother had something to do with establishing that church.

Joan: Well, is there anything else about your childhood that you'd like to tell us? Any other special memories that you have?

Jack: I got my first aircraft ride with Charles A. Lindberg.

Joan: You are kidding me! Tell us about that!

Jack: Well, it was feed planting time. Dad was out in the field planting feed for the cattle and horses in the fall. It was in the paper that Eddie Brooks was going to be in town. He was a barnstorm pilot. He was going to take rides off of airport hill there in Flagler. Dad says, "When I get done drilling, we're going to unhitch these horses and go up and watch them boys fly." Well, they were flying continually. Everybody wanted a ride. A little before sundown, Dad walked up to old Eddie Brooks and he says, (You know, I was just a little fellow, seven years old. I was small for my age.) He walked up to old Eddie, and he said, "Would you give Jack and I a ride for one fare?" "Can't do it."

So he walked over, there were two pilots and two planes, he walked over to the other guy, a big old tall, slim guy, and they got to visiting. And Dad says, "Would you take Jack and I for a ride?" "Get in!" he says, "I'll give you a ride, five dollars." He took us up around and over the city and back down. It wasn't over five minutes, I suppose. But after Charles A. Lindberg flew the Atlantic, it came out in the paper, "Charles A. Lindberg was here with Eddie Brooks." (*on Airport Hill in Flagler*)

Joan: And you didn't his name at the time?

Jack: Oh no, we didn't know anything about him at all.

Joan: Isn't that something!

Jack: But after he flew the Atlantic, Dad loved aircraft, and after he flew the Atlantic in the old Spirit of St. Louis, he wrote a book about his trip across. Dad got that book some way, and my oldest sister was good at reading. We read that book that was written by Charles A. Lindberg and Dad said that if he ever comes to Denver, we would go see him. Well, he was watching the papers, and Charles A. Lindberg was going to be in Denver on a certain day. We went up to see him come in.

Joan: That's quite a story! That's great!

Jack: I was rubbing shoulders with him one other time.

Joan: Oh really?

Jack: You know I told you that how I'd been overseas, we was on Bougainville. It was really a hot place at that time. Charles A. Lindberg came off there to show those pilots that they wanted to reach farther, but they didn't have fuel enough. He says, "Boys, after we get airborne, we're going to cut our fuel mixture back so we don't use as much fuel. Now if you get into a dogfight or a place where you need fuel, turn it on!" But you could get quite a bit more mileage by cutting the fuel back. He flew right along with the regular pilots just going on their regular air runs. He was there several days in Bougainville, but I didn't get to see him. He was on a strip where the aircraft was, while I was in camp area where our tractors were located.

Joan: Okay, let's just back up a little bit then. You weren't drafted, you enlisted. Why did you enlist?

Jack: They sent me a draft notice.

Joan: Oh, so you got a draft notice and then...

Jack: Well, in the meantime I had an appendectomy. On the fourth day of December, 1941, I was lying there in that hospital recovering from the surgery. Franklin Roosevelt, the president, came on the air and said, "We are at war." The Japs had hit Pearl Harbor. They gave me 90 days to recover from the surgery, then I was either going to be drafted or join something. Well, I didn't want to be in the army. I tried to join the navy with one of the neighbor boys, and they turned me down. "You cannot see." I don't know why they turned him down. Then we went to Colorado Springs and tried the same deal. "Can't see, can't use you!" So, well, the draft was right after me. Dad and I were in Denver, and we walked right past that Marine recruiting station in Denver. I walked in there and said I had to join something and I really didn't want to be in the army. "Can you use me?" They looked me over and said, "Do you want to ship out tonight?" I said, "No! I don't want to ship out tonight! I have cattle and horses I have to get rid of." "Well," he said, "You get rid of those cattle and horses and come in here. We'll ship you to San Diego." In about ten days, I was in San Diego.

Joan: How old were you at this point?

Jack: How old? 26. No, 22 I guess. I was 26 when I got out. Anyway, I joined in '42. (*He was 26 when he went in and 30 when he got out.*)

Joan: No, you would have been older than 22. You were on the upper end of the age. (*He would have been 26.*)

Jack: I was one of the oldest men in my outfit, except for some of the fellows who were spending a lifetime in the service. Some of those guys spent 20 years, but I was older than a lot of the officers!

Joan: So you were still living with your folks, but you had your own cattle.

Jack: Well, it was a partnership deal. I spent my entire time with Dad and his farm.

Joan: And no girlfriends or anything at this point?

Jack: No. I was too poor, couldn't afford them. No vehicles.

Joan: So when did you actually go in? What month?

Jack: I think it was the 26 of February, 1942.

Joan: And you went to San Diego on the train?

Jack: They put me on the train with six other men out of Denver. First Class! With a sleeper! I got to see the ocean for the first time. You see the train went from Garden City and La Junta on out to Los Angeles. Then we went from Los Angeles down to the coast line to San Diego.

Joan: Had you done much traveling before this?

Jack: The only traveling we ever did was going from Flagler to Kinsley and Lewis.

Joan: So this was all a wide world out there for you to see.

Jack: Well, in those days there weren't any major highways. It was all dirt and gravel, except in Finney County. Finney County had pavement.

Joan: Were there a lot of servicemen on the train besides you? It wasn't like a troop train?

Jack: Well, at various times they had them.

Joan: I mean when you first went out there.

Jack: Like I told you, it was on the Santa Fe Railroad, first class. And there were six men shipped out of Denver that night.

Joan: So then was there a boot camp type thing? What was life like when you got out there?

Jack: Well, of course, we landed in Los Angeles; then they put us on a different train to San Diego. Then the Marine Corps bus was there to meet the train. Well, they had what they called a six weeks boot camp, but they put us in barracks and we were on the work force to do whatever they needed, whether they wanted us to pick up cigarette butts or unload trucks or whatever had to be done. When you got on schedule, the military training started. Of course, just as soon as you get there, you got a haircut like that... it didn't make any difference what you wanted, that was what you got.

Joan: He's showing us a bald head right now.

Jack: But well, you know, everything was so different for me. I'd lived out in the sticks and didn't know what a service man looked like.

Joan: What did you think of the ocean?

Jack: Well, it was a lot of water. And it was smooth, depending on the weather, the ocean could get rough, but it was smooth water maybe for 100 feet on out to where you can't see it. In them days, you know, there was little town, just now and then, between San Diego and Santa Barbara. I guess now it's built up solid.

Joan: So how did they place you in the Marine Corps? How were you chosen to be in the...

Jack: Well, everybody had to take that boot camp training – six weeks of it. They taught you to walk and march. All the commands were foreign to me. I didn't know what they were talking about. But you know, out there I'd been feeding hogs and carrying a big old bucket of stuff. This old drill instructor tapped me on the head and said, "Swing those arms! Get in step!" They treated me rough. I suppose because I was dumb. But then we got that four weeks of military training, then they shipped us to the rifle range. We started out shooting 22 rifles with 22 ammunition and the old 45 Colt. The bored out 22, I could shoot that and do good with it.

Joan: Had you done much shooting before the Army? Had you been a hunter at all?

Jack: Well, out there in eastern Colorado, we had lots of jackrabbits and a lot of prairie dog towns. And well, Dad was always a hunter. He had a 12 gauge automatic Remington shotgun, which I have now. Where he built his new home, there was a prairie dog town. Well, I told you my mother was a chicken

fan. She had a little shed out there that she had those baby chicks in. And the owls that lived in the prairie dog town were flying out there and getting Mom's baby chickens. So the guy that I told you took the team and wagon to eastern Colorado, he had a motorcycle with a sidecar. Dad would get his shotgun and those owls would share the burrows with them. So Dad with that motorcycle would shoot the owl if he took off and hit him. But they cleaned up the owls so they weren't getting Mom's chickens.

Joan: But you didn't do the shooting? It was your father?

Jack: Oh well, at that time I was less than a year old.

Joan: So your first real shooting was in the Marines?

Jack: Oh no, no, no. I began shooting shotgun when I was six years old. Dad set up a tin can out there and I'd shoot it full of holes. And I always went with him when he was hunting rabbits. You know, them rabbits were so thick that in 1934, it was a real dry year, like we got here now. He had planted summer fallow wheat. It came up and looked nice. Those jackrabbits came in there because it was all prairie around there. They ate the tops off, and then they ate the roots. So he got to hunting those jackrabbits to thin them out a little bit.

Then they got organized, and they established rabbit drives. They'd set up a pen somewhere and invite anybody that wanted to walk on this rabbit drive with their shotgun and drive the rabbits into that pen and kill them and send them to the packing house for fox feed.

You know, after World War II, you couldn't buy any new equipment. It had all gone to the military. Dad had an old Model T Ford. You know what a Model T Ford is? He gave \$35 for it. The preacher's son had it, and he was going to make a race car out of it. He cut the top half of the windshield off and took all the upholstery out and cut the back seat down. It had no fenders. But Dad gave \$35 for it. Then he went to the junkyard. There were lots of those out there, and he got fenders and a box to put on it, and we drove it around there. But it was WWII, and you couldn't get rubber. So it sat in the barn for until I came home. Then he said, "If you can find tires, you can have that old Model T."

So, it had those high pressure tires on it, and they just weren't available in those days. Now, you could take the old-styled car tires off and put them on the Model T, and they were 450/21 tires. That was the model. So I got those 450/21 tires and put them on the old Model T. I drove it there and during my military days, I saved my pay. I bought a war bond every month. A \$25 war bond cost you \$18, and I bought a bond every month. I didn't start right off, but after I got to drawing \$21, I was buying a bond every month. But anyway, I saved enough money during my military days to buy a quarter section of land. You know, it was \$35 an acre in those days. It was good, level land.

Joan: This was in Colorado?

Jack: No, this was in Elizabeth. The Dust Bowl and the jackrabbits ate us up. I graduated from high school in '34, and I worked around home there helping Dad. It was a real dry year. '34 was real bad, and '36 was bad. One of the guys, well actually he was going with my older sister, he got him a job up in the North Platt river bottom. And he says, "If you want to go along, I'll get you a job!" So, well, there wasn't nothing going on there at home, and Dad didn't need me. So I went up, and he got to driving around there where he was working, and we met an old irrigation farmer. He wanted to know, "Can you drive a team and wagon?"

And well, "Yes, I grew up with them."

"Well, the threshing machine ain't going to be here for a couple days; can you cultivate corn? Four horses and a go dig"

“Well yes, I spent many hours on them.” So I cultivated corn until the threshing machine come. Then I drove that same team and wagon for a month up in the irrigated country. We threshed his and then we threshed the whole neighborhood. I drove that same team and wagon for 30 days, threshing. You know what a threshing machine is?

Joan: Yes.

Jack: Minneapolis Moline tractor, but I can't tell you the name of the threshing machine anymore.

Joan: So that's what you were doing before the war?

Jack: Yes. It was just that one summer.

Joan: Then you enlisted, and we had you off to San Diego. You've been to Rifle School now, and then what happened after Rifle School?

Jack: They sent us back to the Marine Base in San Diego, and they sit us all down on the parade ground and gave us a math test. Anybody that got 70% or better on that math test was automatically shipped to aviation class.

Joan: So you got better than 70%?

Jack: Well, any 8th grader would be able to handle it. There was one algebra problem! But any good 8th grader should handle it. I thought I got 100% on it.

Joan: So where was Aviation School?

Jack: Well, across the bay there was Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Marines... Everything was there. I got 30 days mess duty. They put me in what they called the “Spud Locker.” It was where they prepared potatoes, cabbage, lettuce, carrots, onions, strawberries... After we got done with that mess duty, they put us out in pup tents, little two man tents. We were waiting to be assigned to something. They'd come through that area every day asking for volunteers for this or that or something. One day they came through and said, “We need truck drivers!” Well, I could drive a truck. So they fixed me up with two master sergeants. We had ten trucks to drive from San Diego to Santa Barbara, California. They were establishing a new air base there on a civilian airport. There was a nice hangar and a good airstrip. We stayed in that air hangar and those old master sergeants marched us from the air base was in a little town that was about a quarter of a mile away. They'd walk us down there for dinner a couple, three times a day. But then when the old cook came, then they set up a mess hall in the hangar, and we slept and ate in there.

I didn't finish that story; they gave me a fire truck with another guy with me. Because I drove that fire truck to Santa Barbara, I automatically became the fireman! Well, I didn't like sitting on the fire truck waiting for something to happen, so I got to driving trucks around the base. Well, they kept getting in more men and more equipment and more planes. Finally, here come in a whole raft of tractors! I told that old transportation officer, “I'd like to have one of those tractors to take care of.”

He said, “Now, wait a minute,” he says. “Are you a tractor man?”

I said, “I'm an old farmer. I've been on those ever since I was big enough to walk.”

He said, “If you're a tractor man, you go right now and warm up the whole fleet.” Of course, I was used to wheeled tractors, and these were all track-type tractors.

Joan: What is a track-type tractor?

Jack: You know what a Caterpillar is? That is a track-type tractor. International and, oh I can't think of that other one, but anyway, there wasn't much do on the airport there. It was all oiled, and the contractors were building the barracks. But the planes would fly around there, and the wind had drifted the sand out on the runway. This tractor had an angled dozer blade, so you could set it and plow the sand off. Well, that was one of the first jobs I got.

Joan: So how long were you there?

Jack: Well, we were there from June until... you know, I don't know just exactly what day we shipped out. It was probably after January in 1942. We went out to Hawaiian Islands and we were there for...

Joan: Which island?

Jack: Oahu. The Marines had an air base clear up on top of Oahu. You could look over there two or three miles and see it raining every day up there where we were at, it never rained. Of course, that was a nice place. There were some things to do with a tractor, and they had a bunch of old Seabee's that had been out down in the action, and they brought them back to Oahu to rest a while. They installed a pipeline from Oahu, Pearl Harbor, up to the Marine Air Station. They had a six inch gas line, and we had the tractors and the equipment to do the machine work, so they had us (somebody else dug the ditch) but we had cranes and we'd pick that pipe up and lay it in the ditch and they'd backfill the ditch after we got done doing that. We got to do that in the Hawaiian Islands. And then the colored fellows had an artillery group there, and we built some ground embankments for them to put their guns in. They had artillery and 50 caliber machine guns. They put them down below the surface so strafing aircraft couldn't touch them. They had to have a direct hit from a bomb or something. We did some of that for the army boys. They were all colored boys.

Joan: They were segregated at that time.

Jack: Oh yes, there were separate outfits.

Joan: Those guys were army?

Jack: Yes. You know, we were all out there for one purpose. It didn't make any difference --Army, Air Corps, Navy, or what, we helped one another all we could.

Joan: Then did you go somewhere else in the Pacific? Or were you there the whole time?

Jack: We were there maybe six months. Then we went to the New Hebrides Islands. They put us on an old banana boat. We run our equipment up there, and they were made to haul railroad cars loaded with bananas. They brought them in from the land, but that's what they hauled us to the New Hebrides Islands on. Well, we just ran our equipment up there to the side of the old banana boat and they had a crane on there to pick it up. It didn't make any difference what it was, trucks or tractors. In the meantime, my commanding officer and I got a big TD 18 International track-type tractor, the biggest they built. We got it up there, and, "Wait a minute, we can't pick that thing up! You got to tear enough stuff off of it so we can pick her up." So lord, we didn't have any tools. Except, when I was in Santa Barbara, I told you I didn't have any tools. So I went downtown, and I bought a six inch, eight inch, and 12 inch crescents, a hammer and a hacksaw and a few things like pliers. Well, we knew we were going

overseas. The boys that I worked with, we bought candy bars and some things that we liked. That gas truck had a nice bin on the side that you could hang a padlock on. When we got to those Hawaiian Islands, we took a troop ship to go from the states to the islands. Well, when we got over to Oahu, why, we found that whoever took the battery terminals off just did it anyway they could, broke them off, and it took several days to fix them. The tools and the candy bars, somebody broke the padlock off and took our stuff.

But to get back to my story, on that 18 deal. I had to take it all apart, and I had to have some blocks to block it up. I went around the airbase there, Honolulu there, to find something, and I saw a Navy truck sitting over there with a new $\frac{3}{4}$ drive socket set, just what I needed. I looked all around, and I could see nothing. Well, they stole my tools, so I was going to get what I need.

I robbed that socket set, went down there, and took both tracks off. That tractor had a five-man seat on it; it was made to pull artillery pieces or a six inch gun or something. There was a big winch on the front, so we took off the winch and the tracks and the drawbar. The old crane operator said, "Let's see what I can do with it." He set it on. But when we got to the New Hebrides, I had to put all that stuff back together out on the bare ground. The old transportation officer gave me one man. He said, "You guys get busy and put that tractor together! Don't quit until you get done." It was 24 hours to get her put back.

Joan: Then what did you do there?

Jack: Well, the New Hebrides, it was kind of a rest place for pilots and people that were coming in and going up north. They were flying in when they were needed and had transportation. We were there, I don't know, two or three months, I suppose. But while we were there, it was hard to land. They got coral rock somewhere; I don't know where, I didn't go with the truckers. But our tractors would load that coral rock on the trucks, and they'd put it over the road bed in the Hebrides. Then they put us on LSTs. Then we went up to the Russell Islands. We were there for a month or two. Then they loaded us up on those LSTs and took us to Bougainville. Now, that's where we really saw the action. The Jap aircraft was over there; they were teasing us. The US had pretty much control of the air, but they'd come over here at night and tear the heck out of us and drop some bombs around. We just moved in there and landed on Bougainville, when they put us on LSTs. We just put the front end of the ship right on the beach, dropped the door down, and the last thing on was a bulldozer. It would push the sand or dirt or whatever up so you could drive off with the rest of the stuff. At that point, they'd send half a squadron one week. They didn't want to send the whole squadron off in case something happened and they'd lose it. So they always left me to bring up the last echelon. Then they pulled up to the coast and looked over the tops of the trees. They were all shot off. And man, I didn't know where we were going. But they said, "You stay here with this LST and see that everything gets off. If you haven't got it off by sundown, we take it back to sea."

So that was my job there. I had to see that we got that LST unloaded by sundown. Then they left my old gas truck there and said, "You can drive this to camp, just follow the trail." I'd never been there, you know, but "Just follow the trail." After a few miles, I came up to the old Marine Air Group site. Well, you know, I told you they sent us up there with the second echelon. When I got up to where the first group was, the old commanding officer came to me and he said, "Jack there are two or three of these tractors down. There's something wrong with them, can you get them fixed up?"

I said, "Sir. I don't have any tools."

Well now, he says, "You make up a list that you want, and if the quartermaster has got them, you'll get them!"

So I went to the quartermaster with that list, and they just shelled them right out to me! So we got those old tractors back into operation. But they needed them to tear down the jungle and put up our tents, mess hall. We just moved into dense jungle. The officers and men all got their mess gear out and

ate in the same area, sitting on the ground or on a stump, anywhere you could find to sit down. We had carpenters and welders, all kind of transportation people and ordinance people, magneto men and calibrator men, metal smiths, plumbers, parachute men... We had a good specialist for about everything you could think of. Painters!

Joan: How long did you stay there?

Jack: Bougainville? We ate Christmas dinner on Bougainville. They got turkey for us. The next Christmas we pulled under the Golden Gate Bridge. We were shipped back to San Diego.

Joan: Was the '43 or '44?

Jack: 1945. No, let me see, I guess that would have to be '44.

Joan: So you spent two years in the Pacific?

Jack: Yep.

Joan: Are there any other memories you want to tell us about that? Anything that happened?

Jack: Yes. You know, we were the United States Marine Air Corps. We had six square miles on Bougainville. That's all we held, and we were surrounded by Japanese. After we were there awhile, they got to dropping shells. They were just up there on the mountainside a mile or two up. They were dropping shells in our camp area in the morning when we were eating breakfast. They got the mess hall several times, and I had to run like heck to get to the fox holes. But anyway, when they dropped one of those old shells and hit our master sergeant's tent, where the master sergeant was staying, well. They'd been watching them Japs trying to figure out what they were doing or what they were going to do, and after they did that, they called the U.S. Navy up there with their old battle wagons. They shot shells right up over our heads. You could see the tracers just up above our heads on that mountainside. I expect that went on three or four hours. The next days, our own bombers spent all day bombing that mountainside. You'd see them take off, see them go into their dive...they were all dive bombers. They'd hit their targets, and you'd see the bombs fall and hear them go off. The next day they came down to the old cat-shop, and said, "Take the dozers up to bury the dead."

They wondered if I didn't want to go. And I said, "Why don't we let the regular drivers go? I'd rather have them do it. Why pull them off the job when they have a job they like?" That's another thing that happened. Anybody in my crew volunteered, I'd have to go "Okay" and help him get there. They'd let the boys kind of do what they wanted to do, or could do, or liked. So, all the tractor drivers I had were those that liked the dirt. We had those old rough, dirty suckers, rough riding, out there in the jungle where it was as tough as you could dig it.

Joan: What do you think about this time that you spent in the Pacific? How do you feel about it? Or how did it affect your life?

Jack: Well, I told you I was with they some of the best men in the world. Honest, they were special men. It didn't make any difference what you come up with, you had somebody around there that was qualified to handle it. I'd rather have my four years in the United States Marine Corps than a college education. You learned to work with men. I was in the middle; you were working with your privates and corporals and so on, and the officers above you had to get along with all of them. You had to learn to work with humanity. It was a good experience. Like I say, couldn't anything happen to you that

there wasn't somebody in the outfit that was qualified to work on it. If they didn't, they'd call in a meeting to figure out what we'd got to do. It was rough. We had earthquakes about every day.

We had an active volcano on Bougainville, out there. I don't suppose it was five miles away. We had earthquakes there. One of them was very, very severe. We hadn't got up yet in the morning; the sun was up. Why, that old bunk wobbled and I didn't know how I was going to stay on that bunk! Then we were parked right where my tractors rolled. That big TD 18 and the gas truck, various other things. Why that old big tractor rolled back and forth on the road and the gas truck was bouncing like it was running lister ridges. The big old tree out there, a limb that big around broke off and fell right down close to us. That was where we lost all our manpower, was through accidents. One night came up a big windstorm that blew a great big tree over. I mean it was great big, four to six or eight foot in diameter. It just fell on top of a foot or so. The tree was coming over like this, there wasn't any tap root. Well, that tree fell right down on a tent row and killed four men. It got my big tractor driver; it broke his back, and he was in the hospital until we got ready to come home. Then they said, "Now, if you can find somebody to take care of you, we'll let you go home." He was in a body cast. "Well," I said, "I ain't got nothing to do. It'll be a good job; I'll see you get home." I did his wash, and we had to move I'd carry his baggage and help him with whatever he needed.

Joan: Was the war over when you came home?

Jack: No. We came home in '44. They gave us a choice, "You can stay on the west coast, or you can go out here to the east coast." Well, I'd never been to the east coast, so I said, "I want to go to the east coast." Then one of the old best boys that I worked with all them years, he chose the east coast. So we were together three years and a lot of the other men were together three years. You get to know one another pretty good and know what his qualifications are and what kind of a man you are. A lot of them was the best men in the world.

Joan: Where were you stationed in the east?

Jack: Well, Cherry Point was our base. Cherry Point, North Carolina. Marine Air Base, the Marine airbase on the east coast. There was aircraft by the hundreds. They had little outlying fields, so they shipped me and my old war buddy out to an outlying field. Well, the war ended in September, didn't it? Anyway, when the war ended, they began to dismantle and anybody that was signed up as reserve and had the points got to go home immediately. My old war buddy was a reserve, and I had signed as a regular for four years. But anyway, we were back to Cherry Point then. They dismantled one outfit and then they transferred me to somewhere else.

Of course, I just had four or five more months to serve after the war, and they asked me, "Are you going to go back overseas? Or are you going home?"

I said, "I'm going home." Well, then they just kept me there until my time expired.

Joan: Then when you came home, did you go back to Colorado?

Jack: Yes.

Joan: So what made you come to Edwards County then?

Jack: Well, I bought a quarter section of land when I came home from the war. Dad had just bought a brand new tractor before I went to the war. He said, "I just don't feel like we've got enough tractor to farm the land that we've got to farm." Well, do you know Harry Wolfe from Lewis?

Joan: I'm new in the country; I've only been here 20 years.

Jack: Well, now we're talking about 60 years. Anyway, he was retirement age and decided he was going to quit farming.

Joan: What was his relation to you?

Jack: My uncle. Well, I had a younger brother who went south with another brother. They wanted to follow the harvest, and they went down into Texas and Oklahoma. They stopped at Uncle Harry's to see if they could get on his crew, and they found out that he was talking about quitting and selling his equipment. So when my brother told me that, I immediately got on the telephone and called Uncle Harry to see if he still had his tractor. "Yeh." "Would you hold it until I get down to see it?" "Yeh."

So Dad and I come down to look at it, and it was a nice looking tractor. I decided to buy it. "Well now that you have a tractor, how about using it right here?" He wanted to rent me a bunch of his land! Which he did. So, I bought the tractor, but I used it here! So I sold out in Colorado.

Joan: So when did you meet your wife? How did that get started?

Jack: Well, in 1949 we got electricity over at Lewis. Every now and then I'd go down to Larned for parts, well, I saw a sign up on the wall, "Square Dance!" in Woodsman Hall (*Modern Woodman of America*). I'd been a going there sometimes and was a little bit acquainted there. Anyway, there was square dancing, and there was a pretty little girl over there, and I hit her up! Then I took her home from that square dance. About every week we square danced somewhere, and I got to know her folks.

Joan: Where did you get married?

Jack: Here in Kinsley.

Joan: At the Methodist?

Jack: No, what is this across the street here...

Joan: Methodist, Episcopal, Christian...

Jack: Christian Church. She knew the Christian minister, and she wanted to know if it was alright with me, and "Well, sure. I don't care!" I was not acquainted. So, we were married over here at the Christian Church in the parsonage. My aunt and her daughter were the only ones present.

Joan: Did you have any kind of a honeymoon?

Jack: Well, I had the money in my pocket to go to Wichita for a honeymoon. In the meantime, her brother died in Washington D.C. And well, her folks didn't want me to go with her when we weren't married, so we stayed home and her brother, Gerald Shuss, her brother and her brother-in-law went to the funeral out there on the same day that we were married.

Joan: So that was a good day and a sad day.

Jack: Of course, I never met the brother that died. I met all the rest of the family. But I hadn't been in the family long enough to know him.

TRACTORCADE AND AMERICAN AGRICULTURE MOVEMENT

Joan: Well, we have other questions here, but perhaps we'd better go to the Tractorcade. We have your advance, so we're going to go now to you actually came here today for, the Tractorcade. You were involved with the American Agriculture Movement. How did you get involved with them?

Jack: Well, do you know any names?

Joan: Yes, we'll probably know a few names.

Jack: Well, what was that old guy's name out there...

Joan: In Colorado?

Jack: Yes. Alvin Jenkins. I wasn't thinking, but I've got a nephew out there. Well, he worked for me when he went to high school in the '50's. He drove my tractor in the fields and helped me cut the wheat, just a laborer. Then after he graduated from high school, he got started farming out there at Satanta. Well, you know, times was tough, and it was hard to make a living. He'd heard old Alvin Jenkins talk and he wanted me to come out and listen to him. Well, that's how I got interested in it, was hearing old Alvin Jenkins and the people that belonged to AAM.

Joan: Would this have been in 1978 or before? The Tractorcade was in '79.

Jack: I expect it would be '78.

Joan: So, were you one of the first farmers in this area that went and heard him then, or got involved with those Colorado farmers? Was Darrel Miller in there in the beginning?

Jack: There were several of us who got involved there. You talked to Scheuflers?

Joan: Yes, we did Monday.

Jack: Scheuflers...

Joan: Darrel Miller. Stapleton, we can't, because he's no longer here.

Jack: Well, Jerry (*Stapleton*) you can.

Joan: Yes, Jerry we can) talk to.

Jack: Oh, you will talk to more in the interview here. Well, you've already talked to the ones I am well acquainted with. The name deal, though. They live here in Kinsley now...

Rosetta: Darrel and Karen Miller.

Jack: Yes, Darrel and Karen Miller, they were very active and Scheuflers and Stapletons. Do you know anything about Lester Derley?

Joan: We hope to talk to him sometime. And Beverly Snyder. That's our core group of you guys.

Jack: How about Peggy Arensman?

Joan: We've got her on the list.

Jack: Well, she was very, very active.

Joan: But at this time, this was 1978, what was your farm like? Were you wheat or animals or both? How would you describe your farm at this time?

Jack: Well, you know, '52 was a real bad year, and that was the year I went up to North Platt Valley to work. Then I got in touch with flood irrigation. Well, '52 was a real bad year, and in the meantime, I put in an irrigation system, a Valley hand-moved system. We were raising wheat and milo. Those were my main crops; we didn't have any livestock at that time. Wheat and milo. I got a cow herd in the '60's, then we had to raise feed.

Joan: You were irrigating in '52?

Jack: '53.

Joan: That was early, wasn't it? You must have been one of the first.

Jack: I was one of the first. The Spence boys, you heard anything about the Spence boys? They were irrigating when I came here, flooding.

Joan: And yours was flood irrigation too?

Jack: No, I put in sprinklers.

Joan: You must have been very early, then.

Jack: Well, Wheatons, do you know anything about Wheatons? They got one of the first right here. I got one a month or two after. Carl Donovan got one on the same trip that my came on. Have you heard of him?

Joan: Yes. So that was giving you good years, because you had water? Your crops were doing well because you had the water?

Jack: In '56, it was kind of a bad year. I had pre-watered my ground in the fall. I had hand-moved sprinklers to start with. That was in '53 when I got the hand-moved. Well, we watered the quarter section with that hand-moved. Then in harvest time, I think we watered once in the fall and once in the spring. Then I had good looking wheat. We cut it, and there wasn't any active elevators. You had to wait in line half a day to get unloaded. So Uncle Harry had a good grain bin, and we put all that grain in the bin. Well, the dry land fellows, they had some wheat, but it was real low test weight. They didn't want to use it for seed. I hauled that whole 7,000 bushels for seed because it was irrigated, hand moved. But then the old Valley sprinkler, it was a lot of work to move that hand-moved pipe. It was a man killer, so in '68 we got the Valley, water drive.

Joan: So in '78, were you still just doing crops, or did you have animals?

Jack: Yes, I had both. At that time, we always raised, oh what do you call that stuff? anyway we raised sudan (*grass*) for them. We raised that for the cows. We always had horses. I always had one horse, and at one time we had six horses!

Joan: So you had beef cattle and milk cows?

Jack: No, just beef.

Joan: Did you raise hogs?

Jack: No, we never had any pigs.

Joan: So just beef cattle and crops.

Jack: Yes. Beef.

Joan: So the Tractorcade was about parity, right?

Jack: Well, we wanted parity. We needed parity to live.

Joan: Can you explain that a little bit?

Jack: Well, expenses were high. Fuel was nothing like it is now, but fuel cost money, and we had to buy a lot of equipment. It was hard to pay for it. If you were buying those sprinklers; they cost a lot of money. Not like they do today, but...

Joan: So did you borrow money to buy the equipment and sprinklers?

Jack: Yea, I had to borrow it. When I came to Edwards County, I had \$13,000 cash to buy machinery and seed and fuel and whatever. But yes, it was all done on borrowed money, putting those sprinklers in.

Joan: So you went and got involved in the AAM. What did you do before the Tractorcade? Were you in any of the groups that went to speak to try to get other farmers to join? What was your involvement with the American Agriculture Movement before the Tractorcade? What were your activities?

Jack: Well, the first meeting I went to, the first actual meeting, was to Hays. That was the first Tractorcade that I ever saw. It appealed to me.

Joan: So you drove a tractor to Hays?

Jack: No, it was just a meeting. Alvin Jenkins was there, and they had local farmers. I think they said there was 100 tractors there in Hays. Alvin Jenkins talked a lot about parity and AAM. It appealed to me, to see if we can't do something to get better prices for what we raised.

Joan: So did you come back and talk to the other farmers in this area?

Jack: Well, it got the boys around with those Tractorcades. I don't know if I told you we went to western Kansas. This nephew was out there, and he knew what was going on and was very much

interested in it, and he was kind of influential in me taking my old tractor to Topeka. We went to Topeka twice with the tractor. It was a Minneapolis Moline with no cab or nothing on it.

Joan: That's what we heard, that you were in a no-cab tractor.

Jack: There's a picture of it out in the car.

Joan: Did you bring it in? Is it in this folder? We'll look at it in a minute; you brought this in?

Jack: There's a lot of junk in it.

Joan: Well, we'll look at that in a minute. When you went to Topeka, was that in December of '78? You said you went twice. Was it just to Topeka twice? Or was the other time when you went to Washington D.C.?

Jack: Well, I drove that old Minneapolis Moline with no cab the first year to Topeka (1977). The next year, when we had another Tractorcade to Topeka, I drove my 1066 International.

Joan: So there were two.

Jack: And then the next year, we were going to go to Washington D.C.

Joan: I didn't realize that there were two trips to Topeka.

Jack: Yea, and I made both of them with a tractor.

Joan: Did you go in the wintertime? One was in December.

Jack: Probably.

Joan: What do you remember about that first trip, going to Topeka?

Jack: Well, I don't know, but I'll bet there were 50 tractors going down the highway. We went down old 50 to Hutchinson. One of those guys run himself out of gas, right on the street in Hutchinson, right on Main Street! He sat there for quite a while. Crowds of people would go looking and watching. We created quite a little sensation.

Joan: Were people supportive of you?

Jack: Well, a lot of people were. There were kickers too, you know, but we thought we were doing some good.

Joan: How about the people in Lewis? Were there people who didn't support you there? Or was it pretty supportive?

Jack: We had a strike office in Lewis after we got it going. It was one of the most active in the state. Somebody was there all business hours manning the telephone and answering questions. When we got ready to go on that trip to Washington D.C., lots of people called and made donations of food, cash, fuel. It cost a lot of money to be able to move and take two of them.

Joan: And your wife went with you?

Jack: Well, the day we were going to go on the Tractorcade to Washington D.C., we had a severe ice storm. The roads were as icy as all get out. We'd bought a camper with the idea of going on this trip to Washington D.C., and well, I took a lot of tools with me and things I thought I might need, like welding equipment and little light plants so we could have lights. Of course, with all those tractors, tractors won't start in cold weather. You have to put a heater on them, so I had a little light plant there to warm up the tractors. I'd been up all night during that ice storm, and Dosca was doing the driving, and I was asleep. We went down to Newton and on a big curve down there, she lost control and the camper jackknifed and we were headed the wrong direction on our side when we got stopped.

Joan: It actually went over onto its side?

Jack: The pickup and the camper were both on their side. Then when it jackknifed, why the bumper punched a hole in the corner of the camper and broke the front window out of the camper. Of course, there were plenty of police and they got stuff around there to set us back up on our wheels. I had to straighten the hitch on the pickup. We decided to...we turned around and went home.

Joan: Now, who was driving your tractor at this point?

Jack: Well, we were supposed to leave from Topeka. Greensburg Equipment was very active with the AAM. They offered to haul my tractor to Topeka; we were supposed to leave from Topeka. They hauled me back from Topeka one year. Alvin Wheaton hauled me back one year.

Joan: So the tractor was already up there?

Jack: Well, it left just ahead of us, through the ice. They got there. I don't know if they went clear to Topeka or not. Anyway, Lester Derley was going to stay with us in our camper. We had his clothes in our camper. But when we upset, then we had to transfer his clothes to somebody else who was going along.

Joan: Was that Scheufler's maybe?

Jack: You know, I can't remember. It might have been Scheuflers. They were good kids, I guess it probably was.

Joan: So you had to come back home then.

Jack: Well, I didn't want to go to Washington D.C. with the window broke out and one corner of the camper caved in. So we swung around and came home. We kept track of where the Tractorcade was and what was going on. And I was going to be in Washington D.C. when the tractors came in, so I flew down.

Joan: Did Dosca go with you too?

Jack: No, she stayed home. I flew down and actually got there a day or so before the tractors actually arrived. Do you know Leo Schinstock? Well, Leo Schinstock and his wife, Mary Ellen, drove down, and we had communication some way. Old Leo said, "Let's go out and meet the tractors!" So we went out to meet the tractors and just a few miles outside of Washington D.C., and there they all were. Do

you know anything about Jim Titus?

Joan: Oh yes, we're going to interview Jean next week.

Jack: Well, they're my closest neighbors. Where they lived was where my Dad was born and raised. But they took a camper and a tractor. So we followed the Tractorcade for a while and then they went back to Washington D.C. It was quite a thrill, to see them all by the Capitol Building. We heard all those tractors a coming! All the tractors were on the Mall. The people and the police weren't very supportive of us. Are you familiar with the Mall?

Joan: Yes.

Jack: Well, the city put busses all around there so we couldn't get out. They thought we couldn't get out. But you know, one of the guys drove his four wheel drive tractor with a dozer on it. If he'd wanted to get out of there, it wouldn't have been any problem to move a bus. But anyway, they had us bottled up there in the Mall. While we were there, they had a tremendous snow storm. The streets of Washington D.C. were impassable. They conceived of the idea of letting the old farmers with their tractors take people where they wanted to go. So, some of the guys used their tractors to take somebody where they wanted to go when the roads were impassable.

Joan: How long did you stay in D.C. then?

Jack: Well, it was real bad, cold winter here. Of course, you had snow in Washington D.C. after I left, but anyway, my wife called. We were in communication about every day by phone. She said, "The water lines are frozen here; you better come home." So I had to come home.

Joan: So were you there a week or a few days?

Jack: Well, I guess I was there probably four days. That's just a guess.

Joan: So you probably weren't in on any of the meetings with the legislators?

Jack: Well, we had a meeting with standing room only with the Secretary of Agriculture. There was standing room only in there.

Joan: And you went there?

Jack: Oh yes. All us old Tractorcade boys were there. The Secretary of Agriculture had something to do with our grain prices, you know.

Joan: How was your reception? How did you feel that you got your point across?

Jack: Well, had other states participated like Kansas did, I think we'd had have shook their timbers a little. Just one state didn't have much effect that I know of. It was more that we were very visible. Somebody got his tractor burnt up; I don't know who or why.

Joan: It didn't change the prices? Didn't get parity?

Jack: Not that I was aware of it.

Joan: Still waiting for it are you?

Jack: Well, grain prices are exceptionally high right now. I'm not in the program, so I don't know how the finances would work out. You know, corn is around \$7 and wheat is \$8 and soybeans \$15.

Joan: But your prices to produce have gone up also.

Jack: That's what I'm telling you here. Wheat is \$7 or \$8 dollars a bushel and corn is a little less. Soybeans are \$15 or \$16 a bushel. Cattle are a dollar and a quarter or something for calves.

Joan: Now, I'm going to back up a minute. Didn't Scheuflers tell me that you decided to go to Washington at kind of the last minute? And you went and bought a new pickup and a new camper?

Jack: That was Jim Titus.

Joan: So you had always planned on going to Washington D.C.?

Jack: Well, I planned it quite a while because I loaded up a lot of tools.

Joan: Now, I can see, you have quite a thing about always keeping your tools with you, after your military experiences.

Jack: Well, the tool box with me, and a welding outfit, and the light plant.

Rosetta: Did you borrow money from the Federal Land Bank? Or from the local bankers?

Joan: When you were buying your irrigation in the '70's?

Jack: Well, I had a Federal Land Bank loan as well as...well, that was when we bought the irrigation systems with the Federal Land Bank money. The operating money I borrowed from the local bank. A hundred thousand dollars, several times.

Joan: Did you ever have any fear of not being able to pay the loan back?

Jack: Yes! Sure! In 1978, my banker said, "You had better clean out." So we had a farm sale.

Joan: This was the local bank?

Jack: Well, the Lewis Bank. It's had several different names, you know.

Joan: So you had the farm sale, but you didn't lose your farm.

Jack: No. Well, I had three old combines, a '55 and a '95. Jim had a good bale wagon. He wanted to put up hay and we had a quarter of hay. Jim had a good bale wagon, and he thought he was going to get rich putting up hay! You'd just have to run another day if you made any money with that, and he didn't have the ambition to go ahead. Well, he gave \$26,000 for it and sold it for \$30,000 at the sale. The old machinery didn't bring a whole lot, my old combines and the tractors. See, I had the 1066, that was my newest and I bought it in '72. Jim got a 1486, a two liter. When we got to putting up that hay, we had an 806. Then we had a Minneapolis Moline G900, which was old but had a good motor on it. Well, he stacked hay. He had that bale wagon and my brother got one of those big 4x8 balers. Jim was stacking his hay with the Minneapolis Moline loader.

Joan: During this time, did you or Dosca have to work outside the house to make money? Or were you just making it on the farm proceeds?

Jack: Well, I told you that combine story. I came down here and I didn't have a combine. My Uncle Harry had sold his combine to the neighbors. But that fall, the Wheatons bought a new Massey Harris self-propelled combine. Uncle Harry used the old Avery because he had one. They just our neighbors there, and he knew what the condition of the combine was. So he put up the money to buy that old Avery. We ran that until 1951. It was a real wet year, just water everywhere on the wheat. I always went in to talk to Uncle Harry, daily about, and well I said, "There's just water everywhere." And he said, "Why don't you go get you a self-propelled." And I said, "I ain't got the money." "Don't worry about it, I've got the money."

So, they came over, the Massey Harris dealer, Ed Farlow. He was down under there getting the combines ready to go. He didn't give me no peace of mind. So I went over to the John dealer here. *(And he said)* "We've have a '51 here and we'll give you a little discount price for cash."

I went home and talked to Uncle Harry, and he said, "What do you think of a John Deere?"

And I said, "Them John Deere's cut my wheat in Colorado, and they did me good job. I like them."

So, "Let's go look at it." We looked at it, and he got his checkbook out and paid for it. Well, I put that John Deere combine in the mud, and the old Avery up on the hill where he could run without getting stuck. That's the way we cut our wheat. Then '52 was a real dry year, but the wheat was good. I've done a lot of custom cutting, fact is that in '52 we ran the both of them, the old Avery and... I cut my wheat and Gerald Shuss' wheat and his neighbor had wheat there, (Omack's) and then he had wheat at Otis Bison and over at another town east there. So we took both combines custom cutting.

Joan: Were you still doing that in the '70's?

Jack: Well, I had one in the '70's. No, wait a minute. That was in '52, but I just can't remember when we quit running the old Avery. We cut several years on it.

Joan: But in the '70's, when you went on the Tractorcade, were you just a farmer and was Dosca just a farmer's wife, or did either of you have to work outside the home in order to pay the bills?

Jack: Well, after I got my wheat and crops cut, I always cut for the neighbors. I cut their wheat and milo. Well, in '52, I loaded the combine on my truck and we took it to eastern Colorado where I'd lived. We cut for the neighbors up there. Then the next year, in '53, my brothers loaded the combine up and took it to eastern Colorado and cut out there for the neighbors.

Joan: Okay, back to the Tractorcade. Do you think being involved with the Tractorcade was a worthwhile thing? Would you do it again? How do you feel about it looking back on it.

Jack: Well, it was kind of an educational thing. We got to know our congressmen and senators and so on. But I don't suppose in dollars and cents it done any good.

Joan: How did your children feel about you doing it? Being involved? They were young adults at this time, right? They were born in the '50's. How did your son and daughter feel about you being involved? Was your son involved at all?

Jack: Well, I can't remember if they were involved in any way.

Joan: Have you stayed involved with agriculture since then? Did you even after this time period keep in touch with your legislators and try to work for improvements in farm bills and that sort of thing?

Jack: Well, I put some of it in the CRP. All the corners of the circles were put in CRP. I was farming... Do you know about the Arys? I farmed their half-section that lies up close to me. Anyway, I planted the CRP grass on the Ary land myself. We got a good stand. I haven't been down there; I don't know if it's still in CRP or not.

Joan: How did you feel about your senator, wasn't Bob Dole the senator back when you were doing the Tractorcade? And Nancy Kassebaum? I think she was in the senate too, wasn't she?

Jack: That name is familiar. I talked to Bob Dole several times.

Joan: Was he supportive of the farmer?

Jack: Well, you know I went to Topeka with the tractors. At night they run us into the Forbes Air Base, and Bob Dole came down to meet us. He got up on a ladder where he could see the crowd, and somebody booed him. And, "Now wait a minute, boys. I didn't have to come down here to get booed!" I suppose that was the first time I ever saw Bob Dole. But I went into his office and talked to him. But I've been to Washington D.C. several times. I spent two days just sightseeing in Washington D.C. when I got my discharge from the Marine Corps. Then we were down there with the Tractorcade, and you know, I went on the WWII Honor Flight. I've been on that. That was a very, very nice trip. Good food, good travel, good weather. We stayed in the hotel where the senators and the congressmen stayed. Everything was first class. One of my prides in that deal, you know, is they've got an air museum there, and it is just out of this world. You can't imagine what's there unless you've seen it. I'll bet there are 50 aircraft in there.

Joan: Including Lindberg's!

Jack: Well, now, the last time I saw that it was in the Smithsonian.

Joan: Yes, you're right, it's in the Smithsonian. You're talking about an air museum you said?

Jack: Special, it is new, put up in the last few years.

Joan: I haven't seen that.

Jack: I tell you, you can't imagine all the old aircraft that was in the Pacific when I was out there. They are in there. I got to lay my hand on the old Enola Gay that dropped the A bomb. I got to lay my hand right on it. That was sensational to me. That's the old boy that let us come home. Do you know Harold Hall?

Rosetta: No, I don't, but that's all right. Tell us that story!

Jack: Well, he flew fighter planes - P47, 85 missions over Europe. We just lost him a year or so ago. His old P47 was sitting under the wing of that B29. He got a picture out of his billfold and told me, "This is the best plane they ever made."

I said, "Why is it the best plane ever made?"

He said, "It had the most power of anything I ever flew."

It was something outstanding for him to make 85 missions over Europe and live to tell about it. But that was what he had to say about the old P47. She had the power.

Joan: You guys are really something.

Jack: Old Ralph Baird made 25 missions in a B17 over Europe. He said, "I was looking down over the side here one day and a bullet went right through the cab. If I'd been sitting up, it would have shot my head off." That came right from Ralph Baird's mouth. He had a B17 hanging up on the wall in his office. I bought an automobile and an irrigation engine from old Ralph.

Joan: Do you have any other concluding thoughts about the Tractorcade?

Jack: Well, we got to learn a lot of our neighbors and our politicians. We got to meet (*Keith*) Sibelius, the congressman, and Bob Dole (senator), the Secretary of Agriculture (*Robert Bergland*)

Joan: If you were younger, would you do it again?

Jack: Well, it was educational. We got to see the country and the politics. I didn't take no interest in politics until this came along. Sibelius came to some of our meetings and of course we took lots of pictures and kept track of what the Secretary of Agriculture had to say. Bob Dole, we got to talk with him, and of course Pat Roberts. He was just working in Bob Dole's office when we were down there with the Tractorcade. We saw him lots of times, at the state fair.