

SUMMARY OF TAPE C107 INTERVIEW WITH FRED CLARK

April 23, 1980

Interviewer: Helen Waters

Fred Clark's father, Charles Henry Clark, traveled from Wisconsin in the late 1800's. His mother came west from West Virginia with her first husband. Following the death of her first husband, she married Fred's father in Lakewood and they homesteaded in South Turkey Creek in 1898 when Fred was three years old.

Fred's memories from his early childhood include traveling to buy turkeys from a family named Phillips (after which the town of Phillipsburg was named). He remembers meeting Alfred Packer, "the man that ate all these five guys." His mother and father separated in 1905 and Fred lived in Denver with his mother. In 1909 she homesteaded property in the Turkey Creek area. His mother's health forced them to move back to Denver after three years.

While on his father's homestead, and later his mother's, Fred attended the Medlin School on Turkey Creek. On their lunch break, the children would hunt for arrowheads in the field behind the school. He rarely attended for a whole term because he had to help his mother with the crops. Other childhood memories included Dave Connelly's saloon and a shack built by a family named Lytle that was used for a Sunday school. In the summertime his mother would buy vegetables from a man named Wallach who traveled all over the mountains selling produce from a covered wagon drawn by four horses.

Fred served in World War I. In May of 1922 Fred married Maude Adams. In 1924 they homesteaded an area that is now referred to as the "old Silkett place". He talks about the progression of the road up Deer Creek from the one-way road of his childhood, to the wider well-maintained road he and Maude traveled. In 1931 or 1932 four feet of snow fell. Fred remembers helping a woman dig to her farm to feed livestock.

Memories of other local families, towns and ranches are related by Fred including the Critchells (town of Critchell) and the Williamson's ranch. Ben Cook's Ranch was owned by a bootlegger. Fred's half brother, Van Murphy, owned a sawmill above Homewood Park, and Fred helped him when he and Maude were first on their homestead. Murphy's Gulch was named after this brother.

The story of a fraudulent land sale that was supposed to be a promotion for Maxwell House coffee is laughingly related by Fred.