

SUMMARY OF TAPE L.102.5 INTERVIEW WITH ELIN LEWIS

October 31, 1977

Interviewer: Connie Fahnestock

This is a continuation of the interview on October 31, 1977. Elin recalls that there were many Methodists in Evergreen during her childhood. They held services in the Stewart Hotel dining room. There were several other hotels in the town and, in Kittredge, there was the Hine's Hotel. She again talks about how Evergreen was surveyed by George Bancroft, then developed by Mrs. Rennell with funding and advice from Mrs. Douglas. REA Electric first provided electricity to Evergreen in the 1930's.

At the time of this interview, there was still a great deal of equipment and horse-drawn machinery left on the ranch. This is discussed in some detail. One of the original settlers in Evergreen, and the homesteader for Elin's family ranch was Johnny Everhart. He, like most early settlers, was from the East, educated and literary. He cleared timber and had a sawmill for a while. He also sold hay to mining camps in the area. Initially Johnny Everhart feuded with the Indians (probably Ute). His first cabin was burned to the ground by the Indians. There is also a story that Elin relates about two men, Gloss and Genoll who worked for Johnny Everhart. They fought and Gloss was fatally shot by Genoll. Johnny had business difficulties that led to the decline of the ranch. Elin's parents bought the property in 1889, and Elin's mother took care of Johnny as he grew older.

Elin was apparently a precocious, curious child. She tells stories of getting into trouble and how difficult she was to raise by her Swedish immigrant parents. Her parents came from Sweden to Idaho springs originally. Her father worked in the mines. They moved to the Everhart property as an opportunity to farm. They raised hay and grain, potatoes and root vegetables. They also had milk cattle, pigs and turkeys. In order to earn cash, they sold turkeys, milk, butter, and eggs.

At 21 Elin left home to work for the Rennells and Douglas's. She knew the families very well, working as a cook and whatever other services were needed. She was married in 1923. Her brothers took over the family ranch after her parents died.