

4-23-1996

## **Interview no. 907**

Margaret M. Humphreys

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### **Recommended Citation**

Interview with Margaret M. Humphreys by Michelle G. Benavides, 1996, "Interview no. 907," Institute of Oral History, University of Texas at El Paso.

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Mining in Mexico  
Oral History Project

Margaret M. Humphreys  
By Michelle G. Benavides

April 23, 1996

B: This is an interview with Margaret M. Humphreys. The interview, by Michelle Benavides, is part of the Mining in Mexico Oral History Project. We are located at the home of Mrs. Humphreys at 772 Bittersweet Place, El Paso, Texas. Today's date is April 23, 1996.

Okay, I think it's working now. All the dials are moving. How about we start off with a bit of biographical information?

H: Well, I was born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras because my father was a mining engineer. We spent our childhood down there in an American-run mining camp. I had two brothers and a sister. We went to a one-room school house and it took us through the sixth grade only, so after that, why, we had to leave the camp and go to school someplace else. Well, there was really no place close there. Not even in Tegucigalpa then was there an American school, which is what they used to have. They started a line of so-called American schools for, oh, military children and mining children, but that was after our time, so my parents sent my older brother and I out to Colorado to live with an aunt of mine, who had to move her children- she had

four children- off of a ranch to get them into school and we all ended up in Colorado Springs. So I spent my school years in Colorado, but we would go down and spend the summers with my parents. Eventually, when my sister, who was the youngest, was ready to go out, why, my father thought he'd better just buy a home in Colorado Springs. And my mother moved out there and had the four of us with her.

B: So how old were you when you moved to Colorado Springs?

H: Twelve.

B: Was it a large transition for you?

H: You know, I don't remember it as being so traumatic, but I think the reason that it wasn't is because I didn't go to a boarding school. I went to live with this aunt and her children. We already knew them and had spent vacation time with them and we are all the same age. She had three girls and they were just like my sisters. I don't ever really remember being terribly homesick. My brother, who was a year younger than I was, was more affected by it. He seemed to have a harder time adjusting to it, although when he and I talk about it today we don't ever remember being really unhappy. And we didn't see our parents for the nine months of the school year.

B: So it was almost like being away in a boarding school.

H: Yes, it was. And then in the summer we would go back to Honduras and spend the summer months there and then we would come back to Colorado and go back to school. Once my mother

and my sister and brother moved up and we all moved together we moved away from this aunt of mine. Of course, we all went down together and we'd all come back together. That's how I met my husband...because he was working down there by then.

B: For the same company?

H: For the same company.

B: What was the name of the company?

H: It was the New York and Honduras Rosario Mining Company.

B: And what type of metals did they mine?

H: Silver. It was a very old and a very large silver mine. And I guess, because that's where I first started out, I always thought if you're going to go to a mine go to a silver mine. (chuckles) It doesn't always work like that, but it was a beautiful country where we were. It was out in a rain forest on a mountainside. And as children we had such a close...it was just like one big family because we were all just in this mining camp and there was no place to go except to go over to Tegucigalpa. And when we were children we had to ride muleback to get over to Tegucigalpa; we didn't have cars then, yet. So I saw it go from having to ride over to them, eventually, making the road passable by cars and become really quite accessible. I can remember when there were no planes, either. We started out on these little, they looked like orange crates, planes that we'd first fly out to the coast on. We'd fly from Tegucigalpa down to the coast and then it would be a three-day trip on a banana boat.

big party for them. It was just a place to get away to because there wasn't much traveling that you could do. That was the social life that they had.

B: Well, from what you're saying the community was very tightly integrated.

H: Yes, it really was.

B: Was there any interaction with people native Hondurans living in Tegucigalpa?

H: Well, there was a large social gap, I guess I should say economic gap, which I suppose there still is, but there were businesses owned and run forever by Honduran people and they, also, were very good friends and were included in a lot of this social life. For instance, there was only one dentist and he and my father became quite good friends. Well, why in the first place? Because everybody eventually needs a dentist. And then, oh, there was a man who built the first hospital over there. This Dr. Nutter who, also, had worked for the United Fruit Company at one time, was put in charge of the hospital. So they met men who had businesses in Honduras who were Honduran. And I remember one family and, I think, they really were like farmers because they raised a lot of sugar cane at one time down there and coconut oil. And what were some of the other crops? Well, these Agurcias were a family who had children our ages and we'd be invited over to spend a weekend and to attend a birthday, for instance.

B: Can you pronounce their last name, please?

H: Agurcia.

B: Could you spell it, please?

H: A-G-U-R-C-I-A.

B: Thanks.

H: Agurcia. And I suppose that they are still there in Tegucigalpa. So we did get to know some of them, but mostly they were all Americans. There were a lot of Europeans in Tegucigalpa. Germans, there were quite a few Germans. There was a camera shop that my dad always bought his film at and had pictures developed at and it was run by a German.

B: Were they involved any with the coffee industry in that part of...

H: Yes, they were in other countries. I don't think so much in Honduras. I don't think that they grew an awful lot of coffee in Honduras, but there were quite a few Germans that had businesses in Tegucigalpa.

B: Were you exposed to any of the culture there?

H: Oh, yes.

B: I'm sure you continued to celebrate the American holidays.

H: Yes, within the camp we always had like a Fourth of July big picnic and a dance that night and on Thanksgiving we always had a Thanksgiving dinner at the club. They had a large clubhouse and there was always a Thanksgiving dinner organized. People from Tegucigalpa were invited over to this Thanksgiving celebration and, also, at Christmas time. But for the local people we also made a big thing of Easter, which

B: Three days?

H: Yes, to New Orleans. Of course, we loved those boat trips.

B: Was it more like being on an adventure?

H: Yes, it was like being on a cruise. (spouse enters room, taping stopped and started again) The coast, one of the things that made it so much fun, was that it was so different to get out of the mine and down to the coast because there were palm trees and the beach. The United Fruit Company had guest houses there that we could stay in overnight. We were usually there just overnight.

B: Well, what was the connection there because I know at that time...

H: Just the fact that they were all American companies is what made everybody help each other. My father knew all of the heads of all the American enterprises in Honduras. The American Consul, for one thing- I think in those days and maybe they still do it in foreign countries, I don't know- used to have one or two large parties a year: always a Fourth of July party and usually one other during the year. The head of the United Fruit Company would be there and the head of the Rosario Mining Company would be there and Standard Fruit and Pan American Airlines and all the enterprises that were American owned and run at that time. Everybody got to know each other socially and so it was quite common for somebody from United Fruit Company or one of the embassy couples to come over to the mine and spend a weekend. And there'd be a

was the Semana Santa for them, which was for the whole Holy Week. I remember it was Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On those four days nobody worked and it was because of their custom of the Semana Santa. We had a picnic up at the swimming pool and then they'd always have a dance and an Easter egg hunt for the kids Easter Sunday. The music that they would have for these dances, of course, was always local, that is, from Tegucigalpa. Local, local, there was no such thing, but in Tegucigalpa there'd always be a marimba band that would be brought over for the dances. And that was all Latin type music, so we grew up loving Latin music. And, of course, we grew up learning the two languages. We learned Spanish just like we learned English.

B: That's what I wanted to ask you. When did you begin learning to speak Spanish?

H: If you're exposed to it you learn the two languages together and it doesn't seem to take any longer because you're exposed to the two languages from the day you're born and you start speaking and you just know two words for something instead of one word. I don't know of any of the children that, for instance, my contemporaries or my childrens' friends who weren't able to handle it like that. Some of them had a little bit more of a knack. They were more, you know, linguistic than others, but all the children who started out hearing the two languages together like that just spoke the two of them. And just as easily as they learn it, though, you



can forget it if you don't go on and study it. But we grew up learning the "Star Spangled Banner." And just as we celebrated the Fourth of July we would celebrate the Sixteenth of September. And we learned all the words to the national anthem of Honduras. We knew the whole thing and we just never thought anything of it.

B: Well, I'm sure your father spoke Spanish. How about your mother?

H: Well both of them, you see, had to learn it when they went down there, but my father had been down there about, oh, I suppose, six or seven years before he and my mother were married, so he learned it first. And, of course, having come from Colorado he had been more exposed to it as a child anyway because his father was a rancher and they had had Mexican help on the ranch, so he knew the odd words, you know, and had been exposed to it a little bit. But when my mother went down then she had to go down with a Spanish book (chuckles) and...

B: It must have been pretty much of a shock to her.

H: And that's what happened to all the wives and the men, too, because a lot of the engineers who went down there to work, like my husband, out of engineering school, didn't know the language either. Everybody, the first thing they had to do was learn some Spanish to get by on.

B: Where did your father graduate from?

H: Colorado School of Mines. His brothers all continued to ranch, but his father said, "Look, I don't think there's

enough ranch land out here to really support all of you the way you would like to be supported. I think you should think about going to college." So he did. And since Colorado is a large mining state, also, that was one of the things that he thought of: "Well, what do you do besides ranching?" Well, of course, you mine. Colorado School of Mines was one of the original school of mines in the United States anyway, so it was just like that was the place for him to go.

B: So your mother went down there as a young bride?

H: Well, he met her. She was a schoolteacher. When he came up to Colorado on a vacation he met her. She was teaching school. She was originally from Colorado...Cripple Creek. Her father was a mining man. He was killed in a mine accident. So then her mother's family were in California. And they were moved out to California, so she really felt like a California girl. But she came back to Colorado to a teaching job and that's how she and my father met.

It was really rustic when she went down there. I've always thought, "Boy." There weren't very many women there at that time. This mining camp had gotten to be quite populous by the time that I can remember, but when she first went down there were only four or five other couples, or maybe three couples and two other single men. There used to be a lot of single men at those foreign mining camps. They'd work and they'd get bored with one company and they'd move on to another and then, eventually, they'd come back to the United

Everybody had a maid or even two maids; usually a laundress is what they would call one and just somebody in the house who was mostly in the kitchen because all the cooking was done on a wood stove. We didn't have refrigerators; they were iceboxes. The company had an ice plant. One of the things we used to love to do as kids was to watch them pull the ice out of these vats when it was frozen and then cut it into blocks with this big saw. Then they were delivered to everybody's house and we had this great, big chunk of ice. That's all they had for refrigeration.

B: So you had an icebox?

H: So we had iceboxes. And the same way with irons. We didn't have electric irons for a long time. You just used the old kind. We'd heat them up on the wood stove. We had to get the wood stove hot before you could get the iron hot; it was very laborious.

B: You had to plan?

H: Yes, you planned and you had to have help to do it all. There was no such thing as drip dry or polyester or nylon or anything like that. Everything was cotton or linen and everything was ironed. I learned how to iron just sitting watching this woman because when I'd get bored or I didn't have somebody to play with I'd go up to the little laundry room that was behind the house there. I'd go up and talk to Goya and pester her while she was ironing. I was always fascinated by how she could go through all this stuff and have

it look so nice and new and everything. It was fun to be around people like that, too. They had such simple likes and needs and they were always so kind and sweet to us. Hondurans are awfully gentle people. I didn't find the Nicaraguans, for instance, to be like the Hondurans. They were quite different.

B: What were the housing arrangements like at the mining camp?

H: Well, you know, a mining camp is kind of like a military base. All the houses are built by the company and they're all alike and they're all furnished with basic furniture: the beds, the couches, the chairs, and that sort of thing. You're just assigned a house. They were all the same size. The ones in Rosario in Honduras were frame houses. They were wooden houses. And because it was built on a hillside they were on stilts on one side. That was kind of nice because it was sort of a protected area under the houses that was open that we could play in because it rained an awful lot in Honduras. And it would always be more or less dry underneath these houses because they were all of them on stilts, at least on one side. They'd come out of the mountainside and they'd have stilts on the outside. And every place you went was uphill or downhill. It was no place for somebody (chuckles) who wasn't...

B: You were in good shape climbing all those hills.

H: Everybody was in good shape...everybody.

B: So did the laborers live in the same type of housing?

H: No, they lived out of the campgrounds. They had their own

little village. Some of them lived on little farms and, maybe, part of the family would be trying to grow some corn and a couple of head of cattle and some chickens and stuff like that and one or two of the men in the family would work at the mine. They would walk all the way up to that mine every day and all the way back home every night. It was a long way.

B: How about the single men? What type of living arrangements did they have?

H: Well, they had single mens' quarters just like a motel...a line of rooms with communal showers. There were three of those. Rows is what they called them: they had Row A, Row B, and Row C. They usually had the miners in one- because they got up earlier and got off to work earlier in the morning- then the office force and the mill force. A lot of the mill men would be on shift and so they kept different hours. It was kind of noisy...a whole bunch of just single men like that living together, so they kind of segregated the mining group from the office group from the mill group.

B: The same with the wives?

H: (chuckles) Well, no. When they got married everybody got a house, but this was just for single men that they had these apartments in rows.

B: And where were they fed? Was there a boarding type...

H: There was what they called a club and it was like a large, well, like any big club house. It had a large kitchen and a

dining room. They all ate in the dining room. It had a large library and then it had a large recreation room. They had two pool tables and a ping pong table and a large phonograph with a very large collection of all kinds of records. They were all just the 78's then.

They had what they called a club meeting every month and everybody paid dues and they elected officers. And they had an entertainment committee and it was passed around amongst everybody; they had to take their turn. But the parties were planned by the social committee. And then they had a library and they used to take turns seeing who would be elected the librarian because the library was only open two nights a week so that you could check out books. It was run like any library. You had a library card, but the dues were used to buy books for the library and to buy records. They'd have somebody draw up a list of what were the newest records that were out. All of this could be ordered and shipped down from New York.

B: You had mentioned that each household had a maid, a laundress, et cetera. The cook prepared the meals according to what your mother instructed her to prepare or was she given free rein and could prepare anything she wanted?

H: Well, (chuckles) back in my mother's time most of these maids didn't know how to cook American food. Staples down there for the native people, as we called them, were red beans and rice and tortillas. They hand-made tortillas on a stone and it was

the most wonderful food in the world. Even though we ate our American food we always had a pot. They had these earthen pots and they just fit in one of the round things on these wood stoves. There was always a pot of beans on the stove. If they wanted to make rice they could. And they almost always did. And then they'd make fresh tortillas every day. They could eat anything that we were eating, too, but the different women would teach the woman that they had working for them how to do the things that they liked to do. And, I mean, we went back and the women did an awful lot of their own cooking. Most of this other help were cleaning up and keeping a stove going. My mother was in the kitchen all the time. And I was, too, when I was down there.

B: Did she have any problems procuring certain types of food?

H: Well, I was going to tell you. The company also, besides providing this club facility and all of this for the single people and the married people... . I mean, the women would have a shower for somebody. They'd have it down at the club and have the facilities there to do that with. They had, also, a commissary that would be open two mornings of the week. It was just like a little grocery store. They had to order all of this. This was all ordered through the office and sent off to suppliers. I don't know whether it was New Orleans or New York or Miami. I don't know where it all came from, but there were always these cargo trains of these wooden boxes coming down with supplies for the commissary. And it

was always kind of like Christmas when a big shipment arrived because it would begin to get pretty depleted, but they carried everything that you needed like salt and pepper and peanut butter. They bought local shortening because it was called *blanquita*. It was coconut oil...like a Crisco-hard shortening. But our butter was canned and all the milk that we had was powdered and beaten up kind of like our Coffeemate now, except it was whole milk. And you had to make your milk from scratch or you used Carnation milk. Even our water had to be boiled, but then they had everything that you needed, really. They had the flour and the sugar. Mother used to buy a hundred-pound sack of flour and a hundred-pound sack of sugar. The kitchens were pretty large in these houses because they had to be to store this stuff. They had a large variety of all of the canned fruits and vegetable and spices and everything like that that you'd want. So you had to go to the grocery store...

**End of Tape One**

**Side A**



## Beginning of Tape One

### Side B

- H: To buy fresh things we went down to a little local market that the merchants would have every Saturday morning. It would be down close to a little marketplace that a Chinaman had. All the little local stores that were out of the camp were run by Chinese people. They had a Coca-Cola bottling plant. The first one that was bottling anything like that down there was run by a Chinaman. This little market that was close to the mine had a little kitchen in it where they were always cooking stuff. A lot of the single men would go down there on Saturday afternoon. They'd have their beers down there and he'd give them something to eat with their beers. And he sold to the local people beans, rice, brown sugar, and that sort of thing. These stores were all owned by Chinese. We found that in Nicaragua and in Mexico, also, that the Chinese were always the merchants on the outskirts of these mining camps. And the mining camps always had one or Chinese cooks in them, too.
- B: That's interesting. Were there any women employed in the camp by the company?
- H: No, just a teacher. We didn't even have a nurse, but there was always one or two of the wives that were there who had been nurses and they'd get in and help in a hurry.
- B: Your mom gave birth to all of her children in Honduras. I wonder what type of experience that was.

- H: Exactly. She only had a doctor, our local doctor. These mining camps always had really good doctors. I don't know how they got them. They were usually just employed to be able to cope with accidents more than anything else, but they were always very good internists, too, because we had a lot of sickness and stuff: parasites and that sort of thing.
- B: How about silicosis?
- H: That was always a problem for the miners, yes. Their specialties were mine accidents and lung problems and (chuckling) delivering babies. When my mother had us she always had a nurse come over from Tegucigalpa and stay. She would come over and she'd stay at the mine for a month. Very often there'd be two women expecting at the same time and this nurse would come and she'd stay at the mine. They paid her, but I don't know how much. I don't remember any of that, but I remember this one named Mrs. Rogers and she took care of my mother when my sister was born.
- B: Do you think, perhaps, in the back of your mom's mind she was thinking: "There may be a slim chance that I go in to labor and the doctor's not here. Perhaps the nurse can stand in as a midwife"?
- H: Well, the nurses helped and kind of took care of the babies for them because in those days there was none of this of getting you on your feet and sending you back home with a brand-new baby like they do now. Even I am amazed at what they're doing. I really don't think it's the thing to do, but

that's not for me to say. But in her days, why, they kept you very quiet and rested and everything for at least ten days. This nurse bathed the baby and sort of saw that the rest of the household was run as it should be and got you on your feet and then took off.

B: Nowadays, that would be a bit of a luxury.

H: Wouldn't it? Oh, unheard of. It would be like home (chuckles) health care on a grand scale.

B: Yes. Did your mom breast-feed?

H: I don't know whether she did or not to tell you the truth. I think that she did.

B: She may have had a wet nurse, too.

H: No. I think she probably tried to nurse some of us. I don't know. I know we always had bottles around. You know, there's eight years difference between myself and my sister. I'm the oldest and she's the youngest. I can remember bottles around the house, but I don't remember anything for my two brothers and me. I do know that when my sister was born there were two other women who had children born that same month. And I know that this Mrs. Rogers stayed for the whole time and took care of each of these women when these babies were born.

B: Was her husband working in the mining camp, also?

H: No. I don't even know that she was married. Maybe she was a widow or maybe her husband did something over in Tegucigalpa or maybe she didn't have a husband, but she was a professional nurse and she worked at the hospital in Tegucigalpa. But none

of the women went over to Tegucigalpa to have their babies. They all had them at home with this Dr. Avery because they thought he was so fine, he was so good.

B: He must have worn many hats if he was an ob-gyn...

H: That's right. (chuckles) No, he was really quite a doctor. I found that when we moved to Mexico I thought "How lucky we are. We have a good teacher and a good doctor." Those are the two most important things in your life when you've got four children, which I had by then. When I was a child in Honduras it didn't matter what kind of a little cut or anything we had- and sometimes we had some pretty bad things happen- he was always able to stitch everybody up and take care of them. This Dr. Avery was the doctor when I was a child there. When I went back then years later married to my husband and I had my own children my oldest son broke an elbow. We had a very fine doctor then, too...good enough that he said, "I don't want to touch this arm. You'll have to take him out to New Orleans." He knew of a doctor at the Ochsner Clinic and he sent a telegram off to him- there weren't any long distance telephones in those days- and made all the arrangements for this doctor to meet me and get my son into a hospital and get him operated on. His arm's fine today. It's not a hundred percent, but it's almost. So you have to have a certain amount of luck, too, when you live in places like that.

B: You become a bit of a survivor, too, I would imagine.

H: Yeah. Well, and some people...that's the thing. You either adjust to it or you just can't and you don't stay. You know, there was always a certain amount of turnover. It was too foreign and too...they just couldn't adapt to it and a lot of people were homesick. They couldn't adjust to the two cultures and they weren't comfortable with it. Some people had problems with their parents at home and had to leave and go back, so there was always quite a bit of turnover in those foreign mining camps.

B: So your father retired and moved back to Colorado?

H: To Colorado.

B: And by that time you were married?

H: Oh, yeah. I had been married quite a while.

B: How about backing up to your courtship with Mr. Humphreys...or how you met him?

H: Well, we went down there in the summertime, as I said, to be with my father and Jack was working there as a single man. That's how I met him. Eventually, (chuckles) we convinced my dad that we wanted to get married. And, of course, he liked Jack. He didn't have anything against me marrying Jack. He just didn't want me to marry him that soon. And, of course, what we had really thought was, well, that then he would...he was young enough. He didn't feel he was tied to that job down there and he figured that he would come out to the States and, maybe, go back to school himself and I could continue in school. That way everybody would be happy, but then the war

came along and we couldn't do things like that. He felt he should get into it, so he went into the navy and I went back and stayed with my mother and I never went back to school. I could have except that I felt like I had to be with him as much as I could. We all felt like that. We didn't know how long the war was going to last. We didn't know if they were ever going to come back after the war, so any time that I was able to get on a train and go down and be down where he was, why, that's what I did.

By the time the war was over then everybody felt like, "Gee whiz! We've lost three years of our life. We've got to get back to work and start making some money." So we went back to Honduras, then, as soon as he was out of the navy and back to this same Rosario Mining Company.

B: But you went back as the wife of one of the engineers now.

H: I went back married, yeah, but I had all of my children out here. I always came out to the States to have my children.

B: You did?

H: Uh-huh.

B: Why?

H: I guess that's just progress. I don't know. In the first place, we didn't have the same doctor anymore.

B: Dr. Avery had retired! (chuckles)

H: And we didn't have this nurse that would come over. Even my parents just all thought it was just better to have these babies born out in the United States, so I always came back

out here.

B: To Colorado Springs?

H: Yeah, to have my children and then I'd go back down. We were still using these banana boats to travel on back and forth. (taping stopped and started again) Well, then I was still traveling, making the trip from Tegucigalpa by plane to the coast and then on the banana boats up to New Orleans. Then I'd get on a train from New Orleans up to Colorado Springs.

B: Panama Limited? Was that the train?

H: (chuckles) No, I don't remember what it was called. I used to love those train rides. I wish the trains would get back to where they used to be. I'd like to go on a train ride right now. Jack's the one who isn't interested in trains, but I'd like to start doing some traveling on trains again.

B: It would seem to be very...

H: You see the countryside, you know, and it's...

B: You don't have to worry about traffic.

H: No, you sit back and read a book and when you get stiff you can get up and walk around. I don't know.

B: Take a nap.

H: Take a nap. (chuckles) We enjoyed those trips. They were kind of fun when I look back on it. After my second son was born the oldest one was just three. He was very active and into anything. I'm telling you, those three days on that boat going back to Honduras were a nightmare.

B: Taxing.

H: Because I didn't know whether he was going to want to go over the edge (chuckles) into the ocean or not. They had rails, but they were open rails and my children loved to climb up on everything. But there was an awfully nice Honduran couple that didn't have any children of their own and had been wanting so badly to have children. They just took Johnny over for me on that boat trip. I don't know how I would have made it otherwise because I was still having to take care of this six-week old baby, but they were a big help. Johnny still remembers that boat ride he said, so that was kind of nice for him, too.

I guess, really, that was probably the last boat ride I had. Then we started flying up through Mexico to Colorado and back. We didn't go into New Orleans anymore, but I really have a soft spot in my heart for New Orleans. I love it there. When he had this arm fixed I had to stay there until they could change the cast- they changed it twice- and were sure that there was no infection or anything set in because it was in pretty bad shape by the time I was ready to get him up there and he was getting restless. But I used to get on that streetcar.

B: The St. Charles streetcar?

H: On the St. Charles streetcar. We'd ride it all the way to the end and then we'd ride it all the way back. (chuckles) The conductor knew us and he got to the point where he didn't even want to charge me for the ride and I said, "It's no reason not



to pay you for it. It's the only entertainment I've got for him."

B: Riding through the Garden District?

H: Yeah, it was so nice. It was fun and it kept him busy and quiet because he couldn't do anything. Then we finally were given the permission to go back home, but we flew back then. We flew on Pan American into Tegucigalpa.

B: And how far was the mining camp from Tegucigalpa?

H: Well, when they used to have to ride it took all day. Can you imagine riding a mule for six or seven hours? They'd stop. That's what my mother did. I never had to do that. By the time I had my children and was back there, why, they had opened up a road and you could drive over. It was, oh, about two, two and a half hours over a very winding, twisted mountain road. Sometimes the fog would be so down on the ground you could hardly see. Well, if it was that bad we just didn't go. We stayed in Tegucigalpa, but we could go by car then.

And, really, the women had fun because there were things to do. There was nothing else. You couldn't go shopping. There were no beauty parlors, but there was always somebody who was pretty good at doing people's hair so you'd end up going to see Fay Connel to get your hair cut. Well, somebody would come along with you and pretty soon you'd have a party going; a tea party or coffee party or something. There'd always be somebody giving somebody a permanent.

There was, also, a bowling alley. Eventually they put in a bowling alley. That was nice because you can bowl inside. We lived with a lot of rain, so you couldn't play tennis and you couldn't go riding. And, of course, a lot of the women...it was so much easier for me because I had already learned to do these things, but many's the person that I taught how to ride a horse and hold a tennis racket because we had all of those things to do if the weather was nice enough to do it.

B: Well, the newcomers- I don't know what other word to use- was there a support system for them?

H: Oh, yes. We always took casseroles over to them and helped them. They already had a maid. Our maid would have a sister or they'd have somebody, so at least they'd have somebody in the house that could get that wood stove going for them. It was just one big happy family. The general manager's wife was sort of more or less like a cheerleader. She was supposed to kind of (chuckles) keep everybody doing things for each other. If somebody got sick there was always somebody else that was over there looking after the kids. If somebody wanted off on vacation, why, they could just close up their house. Nobody worried about any kind of vandalism or anything else. We'd look after the garden. And we really didn't have to do much watering. Mother Nature took care of the things.

B: It rained all the time!

H: Things just grew like crazy. I had a big beautiful patch of

these lavender orchids in my front yard and we just went out one day on horses and picked them up off of the hillside and brought them in and planted them and they grew.

B: I bet they were beautiful.

H: They were just gorgeous. And poinsettias...we had our poinsettias growing in the ground, you know. They weren't in pots (points to plant) like that poor thing over there. Roses did pretty well there, too.

But an awful lot of the foodstuffs that we take so for granted here now, fresh things, don't grow in a climate that's that wet. We never had very nice potatoes and we never had very good onions. We used to have some very small little purple onions and the natives always sold them in bunches of about six. We'd go down and buy a bunch of onions and it would be about the size of one nice good onion up here. And in Honduras we didn't have chiles like we had in Mexico. They didn't use a lot of chile in their food and, I think, its because there, again, the climate didn't lend itself. Certainly not in the rain forest where we were. And the meat was tough. I mean, we ate an awful lot of beef and pork, but there wasn't any fat on it. (chuckles)

B: Stringy.

H: Stringy. So we ate an awful lot of stews, that kind of food: Swiss steaks and liver and stuff like that. Steak was never even heard.

B: Was the climate nearly the same year-round? Was there any

discernable change from one season to another?

H: Well, they have what they call the dry season and that was like our winter season up here. It would be like January, February, March, in through there. It would stop raining, so there wouldn't be the moisture, and it would be sunny and it would be warm enough to go ahead and go swimming because the pool was not heated and, boy, was that water cold. It was really cold, but we went swimming anyway. It didn't bother us. We could get out and do more. But you learn to live with rain. Well, you know if you're from Louisiana.

B: Yes.

H: Why, you just take an umbrella with you wherever you're going and you do more things inside. You know, as a woman, you couldn't go down there and survive if you didn't learn how to knit or to crochet or to do needlepoint or some kind of handwork because you'd get together in a group. A lot of people, if somebody new came, they'd have a tea party for them. Well, you took your handwork with you and you'd do stuff like that.

B: Did you gossip a lot?

H: It could have been a problem, yeah. You know, it's kind of stressful in a way to live and to work and to play with the same group of people all the time. That's why one of the first things that people had to learn, the women, when they got down there, was that they had to stay home a little bit. You're so inclined to just go to every group that you're

invited to or do everything that there is to do, like bowl every day or go swimming every day or do something with other people all the time...trying to adjust, you know. Why, you're better off just to stay home and try to live your life and just occasionally go out and do something until you get to know the people because everybody had their own personality; some would be abrasive and some wouldn't be, some wouldn't have as many children to look after, some didn't have any so, of course, then they didn't understand why other people were so tied down with their children and didn't want to drop everything to go off and play bridge. But they did. There were those who liked to play cards. Well, they'd get together and there was always a bridge game once or twice a week. Then they had bowling tournaments and, as I said, reading. If you didn't like to read you were really...I just don't know how anybody can survive in a mining camp or on an army base if you don't enjoy reading because it takes you away from your surroundings. You know, you have to get out of that.

B: And, perhaps, the monotony.

H: The sameness of it, you know; the sameness of the people, the sameness of your routine. It's a very structured life because the men worked. In the first place, they worked six days a week, so you couldn't put a three-day weekend together and go over to Tegucigalpa or anything like that. Most people saved their vacation time and would take a month a year.

B: A month?

- H: Well, you have so far to go, so most people would save up. They'd go every two years and they'd take two months, so that they'd be able to go out and visit their parents and do what they wanted to do up here: get their teeth fixed, go see eye doctors, maybe have an operation, or whatever.
- B: Well, you mentioned that you went several times back home. Did your husband accompany you many of those times or did he stay at the mining camp?
- H: Well, he usually stayed. When we moved to Mexico then, of course, that was a completely different thing than Honduras because we were so much closer to the United States and by then we had a car and roads to drive on and I could drive up to Colorado with these children. I did that every summer and then he would come up. After I had been there for a month he'd take his vacation and come up and we'd all go back to the mine together before school started, so it was quite different from being in Honduras when they were little. It was just kind of a nice transition for us to be able to go from the one area to something a little bit more closer to home.
- B: How did you end up in Mexico?
- H: The mine in Honduras, the Rosario Mining Company, was going to close down. They had run out of ore, so Jack, because he was in the mine, could see it coming and he knew he was going to have to be looking for a job someplace else sooner or later. One of the traveling salesman that came through, a mining machinery salesman, and Jack were pretty good friends. They

had developed quite a friendship I should say. So Jack was talking to him about the situation and he said, "I think I know of a place that just might be what you are looking for." So he gave Jack the address and all of the details and the whole thing and Jack wrote to them. They said yes, that they were interested, so he sent them all his résumé and all this rigmarole. The paperwork involved to work in Mexico is just something you wouldn't believe, but we got through all of that and finally, why, they hired him. It was kind of a gamble we took, kind of like, "Well, we'll try and you can try us" sort of thing because they had had two other men that they had hired for this position and neither one of them had worked out. But Jack just was sure enough of himself that he figured he was better than they were and that he would work out. (chuckles)

So he went there and I went up to Colorado and stayed with my mother until he had gone through this two-month probation, I guess you would call it, stage. Then finally they said yes, that they wanted him to stay. And this house was almost finished, so he could have this new house that they were building. This oldest son of mine was the one who really suffered because I had to take him out of his little schoolroom in Honduras and take him up to Colorado Springs and put him in a big public school up there. In those days schools weren't that big but, nevertheless, for him it was a traumatic thing; we had to take him out of that and take him

back to this little school in Mexico, (chuckles) so that was a pretty rough year for him, but children are so adaptable, you know. He doesn't look back on it as a miserable experience at all. I was just feeling terrible for him the whole time.

And there, again, in this mining camp, well, we had just the one-room school and it was a little bit larger than the one in Honduras. Oh, I suppose when my kids started there must have been about fifteen or sixteen children in that school with one teacher...all grades. But she had such an interesting background. She was Mexican and her family had come out here to El Paso when Pancho Villa ran everybody out of Mexico. Her mother brought all of her children out here to El Paso. They went to school here in El Paso and, of course, eventually she became an American. She met a Texan boy, at Texas Western it was called then, and he got this job at the San Francisco del Oro Mine, so she came back down there with him as the teacher.

B: As a husband-wife team?

H: He went down as an engineer and she went down as the teacher.

B: Well, back then that must have been fairly unusual.

H: Well, I think it was, yeah. She was really an excellent teacher and she taught all four of my children. They all graduated from her grade school.

B: So she was on the payroll of ASARCO?

H: Not ASARCO. This is San Francisco del Oro.



B: Okay, excuse me.

H: That's a different company than ASARCO.

B: Could you, more or less, geographically tell me...

**End of Tape One**

**Side B**

**Beginning of Tape Two**

**Side A**

H: Parral is, I guess, two and a half or three hours by car south of Chihuahua City. And then there's a triangle of Santa Bárbara and San Francisco del Oro off to the west out of Parral. So the three camps make a triangle.

B: And they were all owned by different companies?

H: Well, two of them were AS&R and then the San Francisco del Oro was, originally, a South African-owned company. Eventually, you know, the Mexicanization program came into Mexico and they had to sell to the Mexican government the controlling interests. Eventually, the Mexican government bought the whole controlling interest. Well, that is, it wasn't the government. It was Mexican-owned. It was bought by a bank, but it had to be Mexican-owned. It couldn't be foreign-owned...the controlling power.

And so those were the three mines there. Ours was really

the largest colony of people, but they were all run the same way. They each had a single-room schoolhouse and we all celebrated the Fourth of July and the Diez de Seis de Septiembre for the Mexicans.

As the kids got older and were able to drive they'd drive back and forth and spend a weekend with each other and made friends. That's how this youngest son of mine and his wife met because Kay Byrd would have them come over. He could spend the night along with a couple of other friends. She'd have a houseful on the weekend and then they'd all come over and I'd have a houseful the next weekend, so those kids knew each other before they were ever in high school up here, much less in college.

B: Let's back up a little bit to Parral. That was the first mining camp that you lived in in Mexico, correct?

H: Well, no. I never lived in the Parral one. I lived in the San Francisco del Oro.

B: What did you think when you arrived there? I'm sure the terrain was so different.

H: Oh, it was a traumatic change for me. It really was because I had lived in damp, lush climates and in the Colorado Rockies and I had never been in a desert. I just thought, "Boy, this is the end of the world." I arrived here in El Paso with these little children and had to get this passport all fixed up and all of this. I was here for four days when they had one of the worst consecutive wind storms that they have ever

had.

B: What a welcome.

H: What a welcome. Really, I was just ready to turn around and go back to Colorado. I thought, "Really, this has got to be the most awful place I've ever seen in my life." Finally the wind quit. I couldn't leave until it did quit because the sand dunes between here and Chihuahua at that time didn't have any growth on them at all. And this company agent who was helping me with all of the passport work said, "I can't let you get out on that highway alone with these children in this sand storm. You have no idea what those sand dunes are like. It's just like a blizzard in North Dakota, so you have to stay here until it stops blowing."

B: Where did you stay in El Paso? Do you remember?

H: It was a little place. Do you remember the Caballero that was out on Montana out by the airport? I think that's where I stayed.

B: Vaguely. I've heard people speak of it.

H: Yeah, it isn't there anymore. I think it was called the Caballero. I'm not even sure, either. My father came down with me because he thought I had to have somebody stay with these kids in the motel while I was going back and forth to Juárez to the consulate. So he was locked into this motel with them in this sandstorm (chuckles) and he was beginning to wonder whether I should go any farther south, too. So it wasn't a very happy beginning.

When I got down there I thought, "Oh, gosh. You know, really, I really miss Honduras," or "I would be back in Colorado." But we had a nicer, larger house than we had had in Honduras. All the homes were nicer and larger. And the children were older, so it was nice for them to be able to have more of a larger social contact with these other colonies, these other mining camps, and the children over there.

We really did find that we really enjoyed having a mild winter because Parral, really, and San Francisco del Oro probably have the most ideal climate in this world. It never gets excessively hot. And, still, we had snow at Christmas, oh, two or three times. Not every year, but once in a while we would get just enough snow so that they had a snow storm. And, of course, that was just marvelous. The first Christmas we were there it snowed and, of course, the kids thought we'd have snow every Christmas. Well, we didn't, but once in a while we would have a snowstorm there because it's just high enough that it would catch the snow.

B: Did the colony where you lived...did it have a name?

H: It was called San Antonio, the San Antonio Colony. There was the San Antonio and the San Luis. That was something that we didn't have in Honduras. Ours was an all, what you would call, foreign mining population, but by the time we got to Mexico to San Francisco del Oro they had two camps: one for the Mexican population and one for the foreign population.

The San Luis camp had its own school and then we had our own school.

B: Was there any interaction between those two colonies?

H: Only on the Sixteenth of September. They always had a big celebration, big party, and they always invited us all to go over to it and we would go. But there wasn't too much interaction. In the first place, they were busy doing their thing and we were sort of busy doing our thing, you know. And like in Honduras the houses were all built on sort of the same house plan. There was a large club with a dining room and the same thing that there had been in Honduras: the school, a bowling alley, a tennis court, and a swimming pool. All newer and more modern than what we had had in Honduras.

B: Who ran the club?

H: Well, the club members. Like they did in Honduras. They had an election. All the members met in January and they'd pick their president and vice-president. A social chairman would plan the picnics and that sort of thing. There were a few single men, not too many, at the Mexican camp when we got there. But the thing that was hardest for me to get used to was having to go into Parral, which was a half hour drive in, to do all of my grocery shopping.

B: Why did you have to go to Parral?

H: Because there was no commissary.

B: Oh, that was a big difference.

H: That was a huge difference because we were used to just going

up to this commissary, which was within walking distance of the house, twice a week and getting whatever we wanted and then we'd walk down to this little market on Saturday mornings and that's where we'd buy our fresh things: tomatoes and oranges and that. Now I had to drive as far as Parral to get anything, but I kept thinking of the plus sides because that's what you had to do. We had a nice, comfortable house and we had a good teacher and a good doctor and for the first time we could drink water out of a tap. The camp had its own purification system. Now, we never drank water in Parral, but we could drink water out of our tap. And we had pasteurized milk. The accountant, Dick Watkins, who was- you may have heard of him here in El Paso- he was head of the sheriff's posse here for quite a while. He had a dairy down there. He was from Texas originally. He was the chief accountant at the AS&R camp in Santa Bárbara and on the side he put in this dairy. He had the pasteurization, the whole thing, down to a fine science and he had it delivered over to our camp. Every day we got fresh milk...or twice a week. I forget how often it came. About every other day, maybe. That was a real bonus because we had been beating up this powdered milk forever down in Honduras and the kids didn't like milk. It was just one more chore. And then another thing that was a bonus, too...we didn't have to make our own bread. It's the first time I'd been any place where I could buy bread (chuckles) that I didn't have to make myself.

B: What a novelty! Bread in a loaf.

H: (chuckles) And everybody complained about this terrible Bimbo bread.

B: There's still Bimbo.

H: I said, "Boy, don't complain about it. You don't know what it's like not to have to make your own bread because I made bread three times a week in Honduras if I was going to have any bread in the house." That meant hamburger buns or wiener buns or anything, plus the cakes and the pies and everything else. Well, at least when I got to Mexico I didn't have to make my own bread. And, of course, the produce was so much better. When I'd go into Parral we had a much larger selection. We always had nice potatoes and onions and *calabazitas* and good oranges. We had a lot more fresh produce to choose from than we ever had in Honduras.

So, little by little, I got used to it. It was a pleasure to garden at the mine, too, because the weather was dry enough that almost anything would grow well and we had enough water most of the time that when it was really dry and warm we could water things. We had a grass lawn for the first time in our lives. You know, we never had that much yard in Honduras because it was too steep. We had a lot of flagstones and stuff like that, but we didn't really have grass. The only grass that we had in Honduras was down at the club house. It was on the only large flat spot on that mountain.

B: So you didn't have many hills to climb?

H: Once we got to Mexico we didn't do any more climbing hills, but I did do an awful lot of driving all of a sudden. (chuckles) I wasn't used to it. I felt like I had to learn to drive all over again because I hadn't driven in Honduras at all and now, all of a sudden, I was where I was going to have to drive again. So it took me a couple of days to feel really comfortable in a car again.

But we had a golf course there, too, which we didn't have in Honduras. After the first few years that I was there somebody got hold of a man in Torreón, a golf pro, and he would come up and spend two days in San Francisco del Oro and give golf lessons.

B: And what would entice him to go to San Francisco del Oro?

H: Well, money. We paid him for our lessons. The men took lessons and then the women. We had a group of women- at one time there were about ten of us- that took lessons from him twice a week. And I really liked golf. I really could get hooked on golf. I just loved it, so we played a lot of golf. The weather was nice enough to be able to do that. We played a lot of golf. And the weather was nicer for swimming there, too. All the kids learned to swim when they were very young because the pool was open early and closed in October.

And being able just to go from the mine into Parral was a little bit of... . There were a couple of little restaurants in there and sometimes on a Saturday afternoon when Jack would get off work we'd load the kids all up and



we'd all go into Parral. I'd do my grocery shopping then instead of driving in in the morning and then we'd go and have some food at this little restaurant. It was attached to a motel. And it was always pretty good. It was Mexican food that was always good and it was a change. And they felt like they had been off on a little trip.

B: Did you get your hair done in Parral?

H: No, but there was a beauty parlor. And, eventually, there was a girl who opened up a beauty parlor in the village of San Francisco del Oro. The village where the workmen lived was within walking distance of the camp where we were. There was a tiny, little vegetable stand down there that you could run down to in a pinch and pick up a couple of oranges or onions or something or a loaf of bread. This girl opened up a little beauty parlor down there, so that when we'd have these visiting dignitaries come over and be at the mine for four or five days. When there was going to be a big dance Saturday night I'd have to go down and find Aurora and ask her if she would mind. I'd pick her up and I'd bring her up to my house and we'd hook up. We'd get everybody's hair dryers and get these womens' hair all done for them and their nails and the whole bit, so it was a little more civilized than it was in Honduras.

B: How did you keep up with the latest fashions? Did you have fashion magazines?

H: Oh, yeah, I subscribed. When we first went to Mexico, before

the Mexicanization came in and the communistic influence hit Mexico, the mail was so much better. I subscribed to the *Sunday Denver Post* and I'd pass it around and then somebody else would subscribe to the *Los Angeles Sunday paper*. And then I took *McCall's*, *Time* magazine and, oh, Jack would take the *National Geographic* or something like that, but each of us would order a different magazine and then we'd pass them around. They didn't have as extensive a library as we had in Honduras, so the women all got together and we formed a book club. We'd meet once a month and we'd read the different articles in *Time* magazine or in the newspapers or wherever and we'd vote on which books we were going to order. And we'd order the books and they'd come through the mail. We could do all of that easily, but at the end, the last few years I was there, I dropped my subscription to the *Post* because it never got to me and the magazines no longer came through. So we were really quite cut off from all the new things that we were interested in. We felt more isolated.

B: Do you think that it was still a man's world there?

H: Oh, it was there, yes. (phone rings, taping stopped and started again) I say it was really a man's world because everything that you did revolved around his job. He was the only one who had a job, although they wouldn't have made it without the women doing what they were doing. There was the teacher and there were three nurses at the hospital. Eventually, they did have some women secretaries, but that was

just in the last five years that I was done there. Up until then all the secretaries were men, too.

B: That's interesting.

H: The general manager and the assistant both had secretaries. And there was a secretary up at the mine, but they were all men.

B: And most of the managers, were they married?

H: Yes. And you think, well, what did women do with themselves? Well, there still was so much that you had to do just to keep a house going. I had a Maytag wringer washing machine and I was one of the lucky ones that had that. A lot of people were still doing their laundry by hand. This was in 1953 when we first went there. As time went on people began to get automatic washing machines, but nobody ever had dishwashers. And, of course, we thought it was just wonderful that we had a refrigerator instead of iceboxes, so it was a big jump: electric irons and the whole shebang. We even bought a freezer in Parral and I thought that was just great.

B: Did you have as much help in the house as you did in Honduras?

H: No. I found the people harder to train. Now, I always found that I had better luck if I did more of the work myself and only had one girl because the minute you get two girls together you run into a thieving problem because one can blame the other. You have no way of knowing or they get along so well that they'd spend all their time visiting instead of working or they would fight over who was going to do what kind

of work. And, to me, it just made life too complicated and they just didn't do that good work anyway, so I always tried to get by with just one girl and I would do all the washing. For instance, I'd do all of the linens, the towels, the sheets, and all of that one day. The next morning I would do all of the clothes for the week. I would have a second girl come in just on Sunday and while we were picnicking or doing something else, usually with the kids, she ironed. That's all I would have this weekend girl for; to iron and to babysit, maybe, Saturday night. Usually there was some kind of a social function Saturday night. Somebody was having somebody in for dinner or we'd be invited to something at one of the other mining camps or we'd be having people in or something. But I always let my main girl have the weekend off because that seemed to be the most important thing to her, was to have Saturday afternoon and Sunday off. I taught them how to do things, but I would do most of the cooking and I would have them do the cleaning up. I found that that way I knew how much I was using of everything in the first place and I never had any trouble with thieving and stealing. I never lost anything. I never had anything stolen that was valuable. A lot of people had a lot of trouble with that. And, of course, there again I was used to being around help like that and I could talk to them so much better than a lot of people could. When they would come in I would sit down and I would talk to them for a long time and tell them exactly what I expected and

what they could expect from me. I always made my children respect them and be as polite to them as they were to me and I never had any trouble with them. If you haven't had that experience, if you don't know how to do that and you can't speak to them it's awfully hard to train somebody when you can't explain to them why it's important to you.

B: Were there any incidences of crime or anything like that that happened in the camp?

H: No. No, there was never any. We had a gate. You had to go through a guard gate to get into the colony, so there were people up there checking who went in and out, but we never had any incidence of violence of any kind.

B: Did you know of any prostitution or any other vices?

H: No, not in the colonies. There may have been in the village, but I never knew of any of that. Our children were very protected from all that sort of thing. They were really very naive when they came up here. And, I mean, El Paso was really a nice, small, little town when I moved up here with the kids in [19]64. Coronado High School had just been built. My second son graduated in their first graduating class. That's how different it was then.

B: Well, why did you move to El Paso?

H: Because our school there only went through the eighth grade. And then what to do? When you live in a foreign country like that your children- and I knew this from my own experience- just grow up feeling like they're both, but you're neither

one. And, I think, you have to reach a point where you identify with something. And sending them to school in Parral it would all have been done in Spanish. The whole curriculum, the whole thing, would have been Spanish. All of their friends would have been Spanish. It was an all Mexican atmosphere. I just think that there is a time when a child has to learn to become an American because by then there was no future for an American in Mexico as far as them going on. Say we sent them to Mexico City or to Guadalajara or one of the larger places to school. What were they going to do as Americans down there? The business climate is not that good for an American in Mexico now, so we wanted them to make the break and become adjusted and become American citizens one hundred percent. They still love Mexico; they go back there on trips, they love the music, and they love the food. All we did over New Year's- I had four generations of kids and grandchildren and great-grandchildren here- all we ate was Mexican food. Every single one of them has said that hard as it was to make the break and come up here permanently they were ready for it.

B: How did you prepare them for that break?

H: Well, you see, we came up every summer. I used to bring them up and we'd spend two or three weeks with my parents in Colorado. My dad took the boys on fishing trips and I sent them out to YMCA camp a couple of times, so they liked it. They always felt comfortable being up here, but to really sort

of begin to identify with a country and its customs and not have a big culture shock does take a while. To go from a one-room schoolhouse like that to a public high school is quite a jump, but it didn't seem to bother them. And I'm not the only one who was like that. All these other friends of their's who graduated from that little old schoolhouse, they all came up here and they were all good students.

B: So you think the quality of education in a one-room schoolhouse is...

H: They had such a wonderful basic education. And because we didn't have television they were cued into reading like children up here just aren't to this day. They grew up with books. And on Friday nights the club always had a movie. Well, we made a big occasion of that. Everybody had to get dressed up and go to the movie at the club Friday night. And they went to all the movies. There was no restricted or not restricted or anything. If it was a movie they went to the movies. We all went together. And, once in a while, we'd go to a movie in Parral on a Sunday afternoon if there was something special for kids on, but that was all the entertainment they had. The rest of the entertainment was just amongst themselves. And, of course, they had a lot of freedom because you didn't have to worry about them getting run over. They all had bicycles that they could ride and they had a swimming pool. We had restrictions on the pool. They had to be with an adult at the pool until they were sixteen.

B: I sense that women and children were a civilizing influence upon the camps because if you weren't there...

H: Oh, yeah. All of these picnics and things had to be planned. Well, who did them? The women did that. The men didn't do that because mining people work long hours and they don't get home for lunch. Jack would leave the house in the morning and he didn't get home until four thirty, five o'clock, which sounds early, but when you get up at five o'clock in the morning to go to work and you've worked all day... . They'd have half an hour off for lunch up there. We'd send the lunch up to them. That was a nice break, too, by moving from Honduras to Mexico because they had to take cold sandwiches in Honduras and here they sent a truck down. And I had to have his lunch ready to send up to him by 11:30 so that they would have it at twelve o'clock. They'd have half an hour for lunch and then they'd be back underground.

B: What was his position?

H: Well, he started out as the mine superintendent and then there was a mine something or other they called the next step and then he was the assistant manager and then he was the manager. And, of course, he wasn't in the mine all the time. By then he was in an office and he...

**End of Tape Two**

**Side A**



## Beginning of Tape Two

### Side B

B: (telephone rings, taping stopped and started again) Once Mr. Humphreys became manager of the mine there, how did it affect you? And what was expected of you as a mine manager's wife?

H: Well, everybody, I think, has to sort of approach it in their own way. When we were in Nicaragua for a very short time we lived under a manager and a manager's wife who ran everybody's life. I mean, if they said, "We're going to have badminton at twelve o'clock on Sunday," they expected everybody to be there.

B: How did you feel about that?

H: I thought, "That's the craziest thing I've seen." I resented it because I had never lived anyplace where anybody was like that. My father was a general manger and he never acted like that and my mother never did either. They always thought you should let people live their lives the way they wanted to. You can show some leadership in times of need, but I always felt that the best thing that a manager and a manager's wife could do was let people do as they pleased and just to set a good example.

You would have to be in charge if there was a large dinner. We had a twenty-five year watch party, for instance, for all the employees who had been with the company for twenty-five years. They all were mentioned and then there

might be new one, two, or three, inductees. We never knew how many. There was always one or two, but this was a joint camp. You were asking if we did anything with the other camp. Well, we didn't do a lot, but this twenty-five watch party was for everybody who had worked for the company from the lowest laborer to the manager. When they had been there for twenty-five years they got a gold watch, so it was the biggest do that there is. And that always took a lot of planning because people would come up: the owners of the company- they had men from South Africa- officials came from the London and Mexico City offices. There might be five or six guests, couples, that would arrive. You'd have to plan and schedule what rooms they were going to have and see that the rooms were neat and if they wanted, like you said, their hair done we'd make sure that the hairdresser was going to be able to come and plan to take them into Parral for lunch and give them a Cook's Tour of the mine. You had to plan things like that and do things for them, but except for special occasions like that I always felt that... .

We used to have a New Year's Eve party before the dance at the club just to get everybody together. We'd invite everybody in the colony to that, but otherwise I just let people do as they pleased. I didn't organize, for instance, that every Tuesday somebody should get together and play cards or that on Thursday afternoons everybody should just have lunch together or something like that because by then our camp

was integrated enough that a lot of people didn't have too much in common with each other.

B: What do you mean by integrated?

H: Well, we had more Mexican couples. We weren't as completely English-speaking. To me, the biggest difference between the old camps and what they became after Mexicanization was the language barrier because the Mexican girls didn't speak English, either. Now, over there the American and English, or whatever they might be, girls in our camp had learned Spanish, but most of the Mexican girls had not learned English and it was hard to get them to enjoy each other socially around a card table or at a luncheon or at something like that. The book club, for instance, fell apart because they weren't reading the same books and weren't interested in reading the books that we all had read before.

B: Well, can you explain to me about the process of Mexicanization?

H: Well, what it meant was that everybody who- in our camp, anyway. I don't know how it worked with ASARCO, but a lot of our employees who were Americans didn't see any future for themselves because the idea behind it was that the control of the company and the influence was supposed to revert back to the Mexican population. So everybody who would be hired from there on would be a Mexican, would not be a foreigner.

B: In the managerial positions?

H: Yeah, in the managerial positions. And we had an exodus.

Jack lost all of the foreign miners. There was a Canadian, Joe Laskoff [?]. There was Vince Belugi [?], who was American. The head engineer- what was his name- Norman, and several of them started looking for jobs up here. They found jobs up here and they left, so those jobs were all filled by a Mexican man from either some other mining company or a graduate from one of their mining schools. And, slowly but surely, the foreigners left.

B: So were they asked to leave or they just...

H: No, most of them just left on their own. They wouldn't have had to. I don't know why a lot of them did, but they did. Part of it was just a psychological thing. They could have stayed on. The man who was Jack's assistant, Tom Scow [?], stayed on until he was ready to retire. And he came to work for Jack from the Fresnillo Mining Company. These people didn't have to leave, but there seemed to be just an exodus. Mexico did change radically then. They really did.

B: Who was president of Mexico then?

H: [Gustavo] Díaz Ordaz was his name.

B: So all of these changes were affected under Díaz Ordaz?

H: This Mexicanization program started with Díaz Ordaz. And the man who was owner of the bank that bought our company never interfered at all. He was delighted to have Jack be the manager. He admitted that he didn't know anything about mining and he wanted a good miner running his mining company.

B: And what was his name? Do you remember?

H: Manuel Espinosa Iglesias. He was a wonderful man for Jack to work with. He never had any problems, but it wasn't like that in some of the other mines. People did feel that they were not encouraged to stay. They were not going to get raises. They just left.

B: Do you think the Mexican nationals that came in to fill those positions were just as qualified or better or worse?

H: Well, they weren't as qualified and that wasn't their fault. It's just that that was the level of education that they had gotten. The thing is it happened too fast.

B: There was no rumbling. It just happened: "Boom!"

H: No, because the man who went in as Jack's mine superintendent after this Harry Bars (?) left had worked for the company. I think he had already gotten his twenty-five year watch. Well, he had learned as much as anybody because he had worked with other people all these years and he was certainly as well as qualified as anybody. So it's very hard to say who was qualified and who wasn't, but the general run of the men who replaced the ones who left were not of that caliber.

B: Did it affect mine production?

H: It affected the camp life a lot. It affected the school, for instance, because then they didn't see any point. The first Mexicans who moved into the camp were happy to have their children continue in this American-style school because they saw the value of their children learning English and they knew

that they were going to learn it if they went to Mrs. Araujo's school. And they did. Some of those children today have wonderful jobs now just because they went to that little school and learned English so well. And not only that; she instilled the idea that they should further their education, which wasn't necessarily a Mexican idea. An awful lot of Mexican people that we knew in Parral who had inherited money from generations back didn't put any importance at all on educating their children. Or they'd send them out to the States to school to become a dentist and then they'd go back and they'd put them out on the ranch ranching instead of making them practice what they had gone to school to study.

B: Sort of a reverse career decision.

H: Exactly! Just a very different way of thinking than you think of an American approach to life. It was very different.

B: So do you think the Mexicanization was a dampener? Did it dampen social life at the mining camp?

H: Oh, yes. It definitely changed life at the mines. People started to go more their own way and it was very hard to get people to cooperate. The women would bicker amongst each other and the men didn't cooperate either; Mexican men socialize differently than American men do. I'm not saying that it's better, or worse, or anything. It's just different. It's a different culture. It just really is.

B: I sense that there was a tear in the social fabric that you all had worked so hard to make tight.

H: Oh, absolutely. And they were much more permissive with their children, so pretty soon we were having trouble down at the swimming pool because there'd be children down at the pool without somebody there to take care of them and they'd leave stuff littered around. We'd get together and all say, "Look, let's try and tell our children to do this, that, and the other." Well, some would and some wouldn't. It's like they really weren't quite prepared for the change. It happened too soon.

B: By then your children were...

H: By then, all my children were out here.

B: Oh, okay. And who were they living with here in El Paso?

H: Well, I moved out and we bought this house and I would go back and forth. I commuted back and forth.

B: Commuting.

H: For years, yeah.

B: Was that difficult?

H: Yeah, it was hard, very hard, because I'd just get involved in something up here and then I'd have to drop it and go down there. I'd stay for awhile and then I'd come back. I'd go down and I'd spend the summers. It was awfully hard to keep this place alive during the summers, although off and on most of the time one or two of the kids were old enough then that they stayed in the house while I was gone in the summer.

B: Was that a hardship on your marriage...being separated from Mr. Humphreys?

H: It was hard. Well, I tell you, it wasn't hard at the time. What I find is that this had been my responsibility. Everything in it was my responsibility and I was used to taking responsibility for the whole thing. When he retired and he came up here he didn't have anything to do and I had so much to do. He resented a lot of the things that I was doing. He couldn't understand why one time we had trouble with one of the toilets and I just went to the phone and called up the man that I had called for years to come and fix my toilets- he always fixed them right- and he was kind of insulted that I hadn't called him and said, "Come and fix this toilet." Well, I didn't think that he would be able to fix it and as it turned out he wouldn't have because it needed a whole new part. It was that old.

B: His pride was bruised.

H: His pride was bruised. It's very hard for men to retire when they lived in those places. If you see the Byrds you'll find that he had a lot of the same problems. They really have a culture shock that the women don't have. I don't know why. In the first place most women, I think, are more resilient than men. They have to make adjustments. And they make adjustments. And the men, they've been running this great, big thing and been so busy and so tied down with that and had so many people doing things for them and know their way round, they come up to El Paso and they don't even know where to go and get a driver's license, for instance, or where to get a



safety sticker or anything and they hate to admit it. It took Jack, oh, four or five years to adjust and to be able to admit that, "Boy, I've got to get in and find out how to do some of these things." He just was lost...just lost.

B: So nothing prepared them for that change?

H: Now, my father never seemed to have that problem, but he was a completely different sort of a person. He had always stayed in touch with his alumni class from Colorado School of Mines, for one thing, so he always went back to Colorado School of Mines' functions. And then he had a brother and a sister in Denver and he used to go off go alone. But Jack was like he was afraid to be alone. If I didn't have this to do today, he would have loved for me to have gone to that doctor's appointment with him. That's too much. Yo get too much togetherness, so a lot of it has to do with a particular personalty. I thought he was going to come up here and join a group up at the country club and go out and start playing golf. He didn't do that. It was like he didn't feel comfortable being with his own age group.

B: Well, do you keep in contact with other mining families?

H: Well, we did. Most of them now, though, have died. He has outlived his friends. There was one of his friends, Buster Evans, who was down at the mine with us for years. His wife was killed in a car accident between here and Parral when we were all driving down there one Easter. But Buster, when he retired he retired here in El Paso, so we used to see him.

And Jack enjoyed Buster, but then Buster died. I have this Joe García. I invite him to come out occasionally when we have a couple in for supper or something like that. But Jack, when he retired, he really retired because he couldn't seem to keep motivated. For one thing, I think he stayed too long. I think he should have retired sooner than he did. He had neglected an awful lot of his personal business matters, also, because his time was so badly down there on other things that he had an awful lot of catching up to do up here: he had to get his books in order for Social Security, he had to get on to Medicare. He hadn't done any of that because our company there was not an American company. Now the ASARCO people don't have that problem. They were on American Social Security anyway, but we weren't. So he had to have these quarters that he had to make up. He had some because he had been in the navy and when we were in Honduras that was a Latin American company, but he had to make up those quarters. He just had an awful lot of organizing of our life that he had to do, too, and then he's been plagued with sick spells and one thing after another. He fell and broke an ankle. He had a very bad ankle. He just barely got over that and, I think, that's what triggered his back problem. Then he had to have a hernia operation and a back operation all in the same year and then a prostate operation. He just really hasn't had the best of health, so it's hard to get involved with any group or anything if you're not well.

- B: Do you think that if you all had chosen to stay in Mexico after his retirement that he would have had a different type of adjustment?
- H: No, I don't think it would have been any easier for him.
- B: Did many people choose to stay in Mexico after retirement?
- H: No. As a matter of fact, I don't know of any, especially because of the way Mexico has become. Had it stayed the way it was- a lot of Americans did retire in Mexico- he might of considered it then. I don't know. I doubt it because all of our children were up here. Really, the big thing in his life are his kids, so he would want to be up here.
- B: How about yourself?
- H: I feel like that we, maybe, would have done better not to have retired in El Paso because we didn't have any relatives. None of our children are here and none of our relatives are here, whereas when he retired he had a sister in Albuquerque and a brother in Colorado Springs and I had a sister in Colorado Springs and a son in Denver. Now that son has moved to Salt Lake City, but we have a granddaughter in Denver. And, I think, we would have had more family contact and met more people. I think we would have had a better retirement up there, I really do, but he thought he wanted to stay. He likes the desert climate- well, I do, too- and he didn't want to face the winters. I would have faced the winters myself and gone back to Colorado. I think it would have been a better retirement for him because he doesn't have too many

people here that he has much in common with.

B: Well, do you all ever have reunions with the people that lived in the mining camps?

H: No, because quite frankly most of them- if you can believe it- or dead and they don't live here. They're scattered all over the world. The closest people, really, are the Byrds, but there are two or three people that we knew that are in Arizona. When this youngest son of ours got married we sent invitations- or Katie's parents did- to all of those people, too, and we sent to the ones that we knew. And we did have a very large group of mining people at that wedding. They all came because between the two couples they knew us all. And their children knew our children that were getting married. That was, really, the last reunion that we've had. Really, they're all gone. George Persible [?] was in Santa Bárbara. We liked George a lot. He was at that wedding. And he's dead. What was the name? Chuck and Dottie Campbell...I don't know what's become of them.

Bill Baker is in Canada. We still hear from him. He was going to come through here. This is funny. We went to find a place for him to put his trailer in a park. He and his wife were going to come all the way from Vancouver down through California and over to here and then they were going to go down into Mexico. This was going to be his last trip to Mexico. Well, in the first place, he picked the wrong month. He started off in May and it's already hot here. But he and

Jack had several conversations on the phone and Jack found a place close by here where they could leave their trailer. We said, "You can come and stay at the house with us and we'll take you to the airport or to the train or whatever if you want to go on down to Mexico." (chuckles) Well, we got a phone call from someplace out in Arizona and he said, "Cancel my trailer appointment. We've had it. I don't know why I didn't realize I'm too old for this. We're going to stay here and we're going to go back out to California for a week and we're going home." So we didn't get a chance to see them. And then this Bruce Taylor, who was in Parral when we were there and we were friends with them, was killed in a plane crash. An awful lot of them have died from cancer.

B: Well, there's a physician here in town that was at one of the mining camps.

H: Dr. Quintaña.

B: José Quintaña. Dr. McAnulty interviewed him.

H: Oh, did he?

B: He was a physician there for years.

H: He's the doctor I was saying. We had a good doctor and a good teacher. Well, Dr. Quintaña was the doctor. He was kind of insulted when I had my last child. I went to Colorado to have him instead of having him deliver him there at the mine. We were always close because his oldest daughter was in my oldest son's class and his second daughter was in my daughter's class in school. I don't know if he told McAnulty that or not, but

his son is a cardiologist in El Paso now. He and my youngest son were school buddies or the same age.

B: And they both grew up in the mining camp?

H: All of these kids who went to this little school under Julia Araujo made this change from the mining camp to these schools up here without going through any great trauma. I think it's just because they were so well-prepared in their schooling, so that at least they didn't feel like dummies when they got in school up here. They all got good grades- this second son of ours was a merit scholar- and they've all done great things. They've all gone on and they're professional people. And then a lot of the Mexican ones who came in, several of those boys now, who went to Mrs. Araujo's little school and went on to school have great jobs now.

B: She must have made quite an impression upon the young minds.

H: Oh, she did. And not only that. In a little place like that you are involved in your children's education. There's just no way you can not be involved. And that's one of the things, I think, that's so hard for children now with both parents working all the time. They come home, they are so tired, and they are so busy; they don't have any help at all with who's going to get this dinner on the table. They just have a hard time being involved in their children's lives. But there we were involved in our kids's lives an awful lot. She put plays on. They had a Christmas play always. We were always making costumes for Christmas plays. I mean, you learned to sew if

you live in a mining camp. If you don't you're very good friends with somebody who does know how to sew. I mean, I have sewed for a lot of my daughter's friends whose mothers wouldn't sew. Somebody has to do it. And we always had a Halloween party. That was the biggest thing. They had a big party for them on Halloween; we'd have a big bonfire and wieners and everything and they all had to wear a costume. And, oh, the Halloween costumes that we used to make. And we'd have prizes; we'd have judges and we'd have a prize. I had a big trunk full of nothing but childrens' costumes when I left the mine.

B: And what did you do with the trunk?

H: I gave them to a man who taught dancing in Parral. That was something else Mrs. Araujo did. She heard of this ballet dancer. (chuckles) And he was a ballet dancer. He opened a dance school in Parral. About the time that we were all getting this guy to come up and give us golf lessons she talked this man in to coming out Saturday mornings to give the girls ballet lessons. She said, "Now, I've organized it, but I'm not going to give up my Saturday mornings to be there while he's giving the girls these lessons, so you mothers have to take care of that." And we said, "Fine." So we took turns and it would turn out that we'd all be over there every Saturday. We always made sure that somebody was there to meet him and to open up the school and to make the girls behave and to concentrate, play the music, which was just a phonograph

there. And we have pictures of those girls in their little ballet. They put on an exhibition for us.

And then she had a May Pole. We always we had a May Pole dance. We had a big picnic and the boys all had to have white shirts, I remember, and dark pants and sashes and the girls had to have fluffy party dresses. We had to make those clothes usually because where else were you going to get them? Sometimes you could come up here and find a party dress; sometimes you'd come up and there wouldn't be anything to buy, so I made most of my daughter's clothes until she went off to college. But we had a May Pole dance. Well, you're involved in all of this in a small community like that. You just can't be that involved in a big city.

B: No. And, I think, that sense of community is nearly non-existent now.

H: Non-existent. It's just a shame. We're seeing what the result is. I see it in my daughter-in-law who lives in Roswell. Roswell's a small enough place now that you can still get a little bit involved. And because she was raised in this mining camp with so much involvement she's just determined that she's going to be in everything she possibly can to the point that she quit a wonderful job that she had. She set up a business of her own at home so that her hours can be flexible enough so that she can go to PTA meetings and can get to know different teachers and find out how to get on a selection board for principal of the school and how to see



that when they have a party that it has a few decorations and some balloons and isn't just something thrown on a table, so that kids can have a little bit of fun and appreciation of pretty things around them. Because that's one thing; in Mexico everything grows so beautifully and they always use flowers for everything. And there's always music. Our kids were all raised with that. It was kind of a happy thing and, I think, they miss a lot of that up here. I notice the high school kids; they don't have any pretty parties that they can go to. Down there, even when our kids were in college up there, if there was going to be a big dance at the casino-like the Queen of the Casino is chosen from the group in Parral every year- they have a great, big party down there. All of my kids would try to get down if they could to go to that dance. They had two or three really nice dances they could go to through the years where they had to go out and get a party dress and the boys had to wear a coat and tie and learn how to dance.

B: Something they didn't do here.

H: Something that they don't do up here.

B: Were you pleasantly pleased when your son decided to...

**End of Tape Two**

**Side B**

## Beginning of Tape Three

### Side A

H: When Jack and I were at the mine our oldest son had two daughters. He was married very young, before he finished school, so those girls were kind of almost like my second bunch of children that came along. They'd come down and spend a month with us in the summer at the mine. Those girls, now, have these same memories even though they would just go down and spend a month with us. They did it for enough summers and met enough children down there and had enough freedom and fun that they still ask about the different daughters of the people that were there. They also tried to learn a little Spanish. They just saw it as another world, too. They just loved it. It's just very different.

But you were asking me about Katie. I knew Katie before. Well, she and Jimmy were in high school. Katie went to Loretto [Academy]. Her mother didn't come out here like I did. Her brother went to a boarding school in the south someplace and Katie went to Loretto. So once in a while, when the nuns would give them permission, Jimmy and I'd go over and pick her up and she'd come over and spend the day with us and we'd take her back. Then she went to New Mexico State to college and Jimmy was going to UTEP, so on the weekends she could come out if she wanted to. By then Jimmy had his own car and he'd drive up on Saturday morning and he'd pick up

Katie and he'd bring her down here. I had a little maid's room out at the house before we changed that end of the house to make a study for Jack that was always called "Katie's Room" because I didn't have a (chuckles) maid. But it was its own room and it had a little bathroom on it. So Katie would come down almost every weekend and spend the weekends with us. And I thought, "I wonder if some day it's going to be awfully hard if this blows up?" But it never did. They just made up their minds they were going to wait until they got out of high school and out of college before they got married. Jimmy was trying to get into the veterinary school and he didn't make it on the first draw, but they told him to try to get a job down there. They suggested that he apply to the pharmacy; if he got himself known amongst the bunch that do the choosing he would have a pretty good chance of being selected the second time around. So that's what they did. He got the job. So then we sent out the announcements for the wedding. Katie went got her master's down there while he was getting his veterinary degree down there. After they graduated from [Texas] A&M it was really her job that took them to Roswell because she's an agricultural engineer. They were just going to start building a series of dams or water retention things in that area. This was a government job, so Jimmy decided he'd better investigate the veterinary situation there. There was a veterinarian over there that was in a practice with two younger men and he was looking to retire in a short while, so

he offered Jimmy a job. He decided that since Katie already had this good job, he'd better just take that job. They had thought about Las Cruces or El Paso. I'm really glad that they picked Roswell because it is small enough that, I think, it's really a nicer place to raise children today for people who came from the kind of places that they did. Their Spanish has helped them an awful lot over there because there is a lot of Hispanic help in the dairies and in the horse racing business and all that. It's been a wonderful help to Jimmy over there.

B: Did you think that any of your children would ever think about going into mining engineering?

H: Well, you know, our second son went to Colorado School of Mines, but he's a chemical engineer. Jack never encouraged them to go into the mining part of it because he could see that the mining world over wasn't doing very well, so we never encouraged him to go into the mining part of it. He's a chemical engineer. He lives in North Carolina and he works for a Finnish company. They make shellacs and varnishes. Wood by-products is what they are in to. He's the manager of a plant over there that's a long way away. I've always been sorry that all of them are so far away.

Our daughter is in Vicksburg. She's a speech pathologist. She had an interesting experience...speaking about Honduras. She was called by a doctor one night at home and he said, "I have a patient in the hospital who doesn't

understand any English and she's had a stroke and her daughter is with her. I wonder if you would mind stopping by to speak to the daughter so that you can tell me, more or less, what's going on?" Because this patient was just dumped in his lap. He knew that she could speak Spanish; that's why he called her. So she went by to see this woman the next day and talked to the daughter and it turned out that they were from Honduras. When they found out that she had been in Honduras, why, they were just...

B: Tickled!

H: They were so tickled. And she said she's always known if you can stimulate some kind of happiness or pleasure in people that are handicapped and having trouble learning to talk again you can get so much more. They react so much better. They learn so much quicker and they'll try so much harder. She said, "That woman, I'm telling you, when I started talking to her in Spanish and told her what to do with that tongue she nearly wore herself out trying to please me." She said it was such a rewarding experience. Where would you ever expect to see somebody in Mississippi? Well, they weren't headed to Mississippi. They were headed to Chicago.

B: And that was where it happened.

H: And that's just where it happened. It just happened where she got sick.

B: I'll be. And she's in Vicksburg?

H: Yeah. She met her husband out here. She was going to UTEP

and was a senior there. He had been in the Army Corps down out at the Aggies and then he went into helicopters, so he was a helicopter pilot out here at Fort Bliss. That's how she met him. Some mutual friend introduced them and it was like instant magic (chuckles) and they took off. Our oldest son is in Salt Lake City. He's a microbiologist. He worked for the Health Department in Denver for years for about, oh, I guess, twenty-five or thirty years.

B: My goodness.

H: He got tired of it. He got tired of the traffic in Denver. He got bored with the whole thing and he was divorced from his first wife. He met this girl at a biology seminar someplace and she worked in Salt Lake City, so she encouraged him to come over there and go look up this small laboratory that she knows of over there. She knew they were looking for somebody to work for them, so he went over and interviewed with this guy and they offered him the job. So he decided he'd cut his strings with Denver and try it. He moved over to Salt Lake City and then they got married about six months after that. They seem to be quite happy now.

B: You must be very proud of all your children.

H: Well, I am and I feel very fortunate, too, very lucky that when I do look back on what all they went through. Everybody worries so much now how everything is affecting their children. They study so much more about it. We didn't have any of these guide books. Thank goodness! We just did it all

by instinct. We did the best that we could with what we had and they adapted to it. It wasn't easy for them to come out here, but it was something they had to do and they adjusted to it. We could have said, "Well, we're just not going to do that. What's the point?" We were lucky that they all were as adaptable as they were but, I think, there's something about that small life community that just gives people a good foundation so that they can cope with anything. It isn't like they've had just an awfully easy time of everything all their lives. They haven't. They've always had to work hard and they've always had to good grades to do what they wanted to do and they've had to work hard to get raises in their job, but they were able to do it.

B: Let me ask you one final question. What advice would you give to a woman that was accompanying her husband to a mining camp in Mexico or any foreign country? What words of advice would you give her before she left?

H: Well, I would tell her to always look at the good things because there are always good things, interesting things. Go with an open mind and just make up your mind that you're going to enjoy it. It's an adventure...it really is.

You know, I have a brother who's a mining engineer, too, and he worked for Kennecott in Salt Lake City for thirty years. Once his children were all out from underfoot he accepted a job with Exxon in Colombia. He never wanted to go out of the United States as long as he had children. He's the

by instinct. We did the best that we could with what we had and they adapted to it. It wasn't easy for them to come out here, but it was something they had to do and they adjusted to it. We could have said, "Well, we're just not going to do that. What's the point?" We were lucky that they all were as adaptable as they were but, I think, there's something about that small life community that just gives people a good foundation so that they can cope with anything. It isn't like they've had just an awfully easy time of everything all their lives. They haven't. They've always had to work hard and they've always had to good grades to do what they wanted to do and they've had to work hard to get raises in their job, but they were able to do it.

B: Let me ask you one final question. What advice would you give to a woman that was accompanying her husband to a mining camp in Mexico or any foreign country? What words of advice would you give her before she left?

H: Well, I would tell her to always look at the good things because there are always good things, interesting things. Go with an open mind and just make up your mind that you're going to enjoy it. It's an adventure...it really is.

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one that I said was more affected by the break when we were sent out to school. But once his children were gone he was dying to get back to something foreign. And his wife had never been out of the United States. She was a teacher, though, and she was a Mormon. She's very, very close to her children, but she made up her mind that if Ken wanted to do this that she was going to go. And she went. She wasn't a well person- she had a heart problem all of her life and she has since died of it- but she made up her mind that she was going to go down there and enjoy every minute of it. She went down there with a Spanish book and she learned Spanish. She looked up the Mormon church because they have a Mormon church in all of those places. She met a lot of lovely people. When the climate got so bad and she couldn't stand it she would come back out and she'd stay up here for two or three months, but she went back until he resigned from that job when he finally realized that it was too much for her and he had had his fun with it. I think that she was down there about five years with him before they came out and retired in Scottsdale, but she went down there with the right attitude. She just thought, "Well, I 've been a mother and I've done my thing. Now, I want to go down and just see something different." And, boy, was it different.

B: Would you have done anything differently...looking back?

H: No. Well, I would have if I could have, but I couldn't have because when the war came that upset everybody's apple cart

and put people in a vise. We had no control over that. The only thing I would have done differently could I have was gone back to school and just finished school. Not that I think I could have done any better with my kids or with my life or anything with it. I would just like to have been able to say that I had finished school, but that's not a big regret or anything. It's just something that I wish we could have maybe done, but even our war years were an experience. And they weren't all that bad either. We met a lot of interesting people that we kept in touch with after the war that were not in the mining business at all and we kept writing letters to them. They're all dead now, too. They were from all over the country. I only wrote to them at Christmas time, but I used to keep in touch with all of them because we had good times together when we were in the navy. There, again, it was a another smallish group.

I've never really lived in a big city and been part of a large city. I've never joined anything up here and tried to be an influence in any way up here. I never could because I was always on the road and you can't be committed even to volunteering. My neighbor tried to get me to volunteer down at the hospital years ago with her and I said, "Betty, I can't do that. I have to go down to the mine on a spur's moment, you know. I never know whether I'm going to be here or not." So I got used to being able to live out of a suitcase. I did that for a long time and it still doesn't bother me. I can

decide to take off and go someplace in five minutes just because I've done it for so long. I don't necessarily like to; I like to plan things.

B: Sometimes you can't.

H: Sometimes you can't. And so I just don't let things like that bother me.

B: Would you like to make any final comments?

H: No.

B: Or talk about anything else?

H: I'm just sorry that, really, the world is the way it is now. It has to be this way, I guess, but I do wish it was possible for more Americans to go and live in foreign countries and make their living there because I think it would make better people of them. I think it would make better Americans of them and I think it would make them kinder to foreign people because they'd understand that there are different cultures and different ways of thinking and that they are alright, too, but it would make them appreciate their own home, too. They wouldn't be bashing the United States if they lived in some of these other foreign countries. And they can't go and do it because these countries don't want us over there. It's very hard to go down to Mexico and work. Now that the maquilas are in, well, you can. That's alright, but the mining industry will never come around to what it was again with foreigners running it in Mexico. I don't know about other countries, but I know a lot of the people who are in the service in the

occupation forces in Europe. They wouldn't exchange that experience for anything because they got to really know the Germans and the French and the Italians and all of those people and their cultures. They still have friends over there, but when they came home they were awfully glad that they lived in the United States. I think that's the biggest problem with an awful lot of the young people here now; they haven't been through a really rough time, ever. They just don't have an appreciation for what they have here. Maybe they'll start changing. (chuckles)

B: Okay. How about we stop for now?

H: Okay, I think that's a good idea.

B: Thank you for your time, Mrs. Humphreys.

H: Would you like a coke or some iced tea?

B: I'm fine, thank you.

H: Really?

B: Yes, I'm fine. Let me go ahead and turn off the tape.

H: Okay.

B: This is the end of the interview.

**End of Interview**