

THIS is an interview between myself, Larry J. Sprunk, and Mr. Frank J. Meier of Linton, age ~~eighty-three~~ ⁸³, who was born in Russia and came over to the United States with his parents. They settled in South Dakota and then moved later up into North Dakota. This interview was held the ~~twenty-first~~ ^{21st} of January in ~~nineteen hundred and seventy-four~~ ¹⁹⁷⁴ at ~~nine thirty~~ ^{9:30} in the morning in the lounge in the basement of the First National Bank in Linton.

LARRY: How did you end up in the United States, Frank?

FRANK: Oh, how we came here?

LARRY: Ya, why did you come?

FRANK: Oh, well, now wait a minute! It was really on account o' the military business. I had one brother then and one was born here. That's ^{really} why my dad really came over here ^{to} to get away from that! In those days, you know, you served so many years!

LARRY: The Russians wanted you to serve!

FRANK: In Russia, sure!

LARRY: But your dad was German?

FRANK: German-Russian, no, Russian-German!

LARRY: He moved to the southern part of Russia when....

FRANK: Well, wait a minute! To begin with his dad ^{which} which would be ¹⁸ my grandfather--I think my grandfather or great-grandfather--~~eighteen~~ of 'em went by foot from Germany to Russia! Did you ever hear about that?

LARRY: Ya, ya!

FRANK: And then some didn't stay! At that time, it was under Catherina! That's right see!

LARRY: She was German, too, wasn't she?

FRANK: I'm not gonna' tell you that!

LARRY: Oh, ~~no~~ o.k.

FRANK: I'm not gonna' tell ya that; I don't know! But some of the ¹⁸ ~~eighteen~~ came back again see and that would be my great-grandfather!

That's what ^{what} that would be. He stayed there and my dad was a blacksmith all his life! There, you know, you had to train with a blacksmith so many ~~years~~ years! That's a good thing! I think we should have a lot of that here! Train 'em some! Some kind of a trade. Don't ~~ya~~ you think so?

LARRY: Sure.

FRANK: ~~Ya~~ Ya. And then he became the blacksmith there. We lived what they called ~~Marsht~~ ^{Wurst (meaning wider)}! Now I knew ~~what~~ what a ^{Wurst} ~~Marsht~~ was against a mile! There was a difference, but I forgot that. Either a ^{Wurst} ~~Marsht~~ was a quarter longer than a mile or shorter than our ~~mile~~ mile. I ain't gonna' tell ya that, but anyway it was called ~~Twenty~~ ^{Twenty} ~~Marsht~~ ^{Wurst}. We lived southwest of Odessa, the ~~Black~~ Black Sea, you know that?

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: All right, well, we were on what they called the ~~Main~~ ^{Main} ~~Drag~~ ^{Drag} and there was timber on both sides. Just real timber and that's where the horse thieves were in there! They had a underground barn in Odessa for these horses that they would steal, see! They had 'em there. There you made the wagon and plow from pieces! You didn't buy 'em like here! So, my dad would hire a man with a wagon and he'd go down there and he'd buy his wagon spokes, his rims, his iron for the tire, and whatever he needed, ~~the blacksmith's coal~~ and the ~~blacksmith's~~ blacksmith's coal that time came from England through the channel! That's where the ~~blacksmith's~~ blacksmith's coal come from. He'd have his coal and then he'd go to ~~work~~ ^{work}, see? These horse thieves would be in that timber! Do you remember what we called here the "democrat"? That was a wagon between our buggy and our wagon here, get the point, see? Our wagon was a ~~good~~ ^{good} deal heavier, but their wagon was somewhat between strongier than our ~~buggies~~ ^{buggies} in those days see!

LARRY: Right!

FRANK: So, they wasn't as heavy! Well, they drive through there to

go to Odessa for something¹ and these horse thieves were in the timber. They ended the lariet they had around here and ~~when~~^{then} when you drove through they roped ya ~~ya~~, see? Well, when they got you you stopped and maybe they took just your team² ~~and~~ wagon and maybe they killed you on top of that and they took all these horses into Odessa to the head man ^(one word) that was running this horse thief barn! So, they got smart and they put on these four corners of the wagon a stake up! ~~A~~ A solid stake! Well, sometime when this fellow came around here and was ropin' for me the end would fall on that stake, but he had it around here! Then the driver went as fast as them horses would go and then when he'd turn around there would be part of the horse thief's body ^{see?} My dad's brother-in-law had a team of ~~sorrel~~^{horses} and when he would whistle to 'em they would whinney ~~back~~ back to him. So, one day they stole those two horses. We had the village well! There was only one ~~village well~~ well! You've heard of that, haven't ya? Just one village well! These thieves would go and they'd drive around to try to throw you off'n the track with the wind. So, ~~they~~ came over during the night to my dad and my dad couldn't read or write, but he could speak the genuine Russian. He was interpeted and so on. ~~Well,~~ "Well," he says, "they got away ~~with my horses!~~" "Well," my dad says, "we gotta' hire ~~somebody else~~ somebody else and go down to Odessa." They heard ~~them~~^{them} even rattling yet when they was gone. Got down there and my dad got in with the head guy that was runnin' the horse thief outfit. In a nice way he says, "Say, my brother-in-law only had those two ~~sorrels~~ sorrels. We haven't got much money, but that's all he has got and he'd like to have 'em. We'll give you what we got." ~~Well,~~ "Well, how do I know that them are ~~this~~ his," he says! "We'll, he'll whistle and they'll answer," he says. "If they do I'll give 'em to him," he says. By God, it worked out ~~and~~ and they answered him! Then they got the horses back for a ~~few rubles~~^{few rubles} see! (And then when you were in the service, you got a convention that you had to have with you! ~~If~~ If you wanted a

job you had to be able to show that! So, where we lived, the name was ~~Big~~ ~~Big~~ Bedeutsky. See there was a Small Bedeutsky and a Big Bedeutsky. Well, we were in the Big Bedeutsky and the sheriff was located there. My dad went down to see like what we used to call ~~here~~ here when the ~~hoboes~~ ^{hoboes} ~~used to come years ago~~ used to come years ago. They'd land down here at the stockyard. Well, there they were laying ^{at} the Black Sea lookin' for jobs like they did here! So, my dad went down there and he asked ^{the boys there} the men that were lay^o in there if there was one with blacksmith experience. ~~One-guy-gets-up-and-says-~~ "Yes!" One guy gets up and says that yes, he had experience. So, he hired him for the spring work and he brought him. This sheriff lived there, see, and he come in and visit my dad in the blacksmith shop. The hired man worked there a couple of days. When the sheriff came in he says, "Meier, your hired man?" My dad says, "Ya." The sheriff asked my dad for these conventions. The hired man was in the service, see? Well, the hired man didn't have it and didn't know if he'd mislaid ~~or~~ ~~or~~ somethin'. So, the sheriff tells my dad that today is the last day you can have him work here see. So, my dad ~~went~~ went down that evening after he closed up and gave the sheriff one ruble, bought him off, and the hired man stayed. There was swindle then ~~already~~ already, see?

LARRY: Ya!

FRANK: Ya! So, then in 1889, no, 1898, because my dad got married in 1888, ya, and was born in 1863. So, then in 1898 we moved from this Big Bedeutsky to ~~Monnheim~~ ^{Monnheim}. That was another village, ~~Monnheim~~ ^{Monnheim}!

LARRY: But that was still in Russia?

FRANK: Still in Russia! They appointed him and a man by the name of Weber to go ~~into~~ into Siberia and investigate that country. At that time, it was under the Czar and they'd give you so much land per head. If the family was bigger, you got more land! So, they went up there and investigated that country, see. The ambassador up there

told them, "No, this country is not for ~~you~~ you people! That's too cold up here!" So, they didn't go and that was in '98. Then in '99 we pulled out for the United States. We landed in Eureka on the ^{26th} ~~twenty-sixth~~ day of December in '99.

LARRY: Can you remember going from ^{Monheim} ~~Monheim~~ to the coast where you took the ship? Did you go by train?

FRANK: Well, wait a minute! We went by train for awhile and we took a ship! We were ~~in~~ in Germany on our way now comin' over here! That's on our way comin' over here! We ~~were~~ were in Germany and the ship's name was Columbia! I remember that! I'll tell you why I remember that. My mother finally destroyed kind of a canvass bag ~~---~~ oh, about like a pouch, a money pouch--and the ~~picture~~ picture of the ship was on there and I remember it was called ~~the~~ Columbia. We got on there and ^{then} ~~we~~ landed at New York!

LARRY: Then you took a train from....

FRANK: From New York we took ^{then} ~~a~~ train, ya!

LARRY: Frank, how did you end up in Linton?

FRANK: ~~What~~ What do ya mean?

LARRY: Well, you went to Eureka!

FRANK: Oh, oh, well, wait a minute! Wait a minute!

LARRY: Gettin' ahead o' ya, huh?

FRANK: Ya, there was some boys here yet! One got into trouble not long ago. Then my dad--we landed ~~at~~ Eureka in '99 on the ^{27th} ~~twenty-~~ ~~seventh~~, second day of Christmas--had an uncle and three cousins, ~~the~~ boys, ¹³ ~~thirteen~~ miles ^{Southwest} ~~west~~ of Eureka. They knew we were comin' and they come and got us. We stayed there until the next spring. We were in a sod house, a three-room affair, ~~and~~ the back ~~end~~ end we had a cow, and that was a wonderful thing in those days, a cow. He just left us there. We ~~were~~ were at that time--wait a minute--myself, three, four, five, of us kids. He went ~~to~~ to Ipswich and he worked in a blacksmith shop under the ~~regular~~ regular ~~owner~~ owner. He didn't own the

blacksmith shop yet; he just worked there. Then from there he went to Bowdon. ~~We lived in Bowdon in the spring of 1900~~ We lived in Bowdon in 1900 and he was blacksmith in Bowdon in the spring of 1900. Then they built the railroad from Bowdon to Selbia branch. ~~He~~ He and another guy ~~was~~ here in town, his dad, worked there when they built that railroad. They carried-in other words they brought the rail and the tie on a flatcar-all that stuff as they ~~loaded the stuff~~ ^{on a shoulder} went and moved ahead! Take a tie ~~and carry it for a dollar and twenty five cents~~ ^{81.25} a day! I remember my dad telling me about the foreman, he was an Irishman, that could work the men ~~to~~ ^{to} beat hell! Well, then he came in 1901-oh, about I would say about ~~ten~~ ¹⁰ ~~days~~ ^{from} before Easter-and he knew a guy ~~from~~ from Russia that lived out here. He borrowed a ~~hay~~ ^{rack} and two horses from him and came down and got us and we had that cow! ~~It was from Eureka~~

P ~~down to here.~~ Well, from Eureka down to here its.... ~~we~~ We landed at Mount City the first day-I remember that-and we stayed at Mount City overnight. We had nothing to speak of, but ~~there was a long bench~~ we had-there was a long bench and then us where we were, I remember that ~~and~~ that woman, she died here only about two, three years ago and she was a girl at that ~~time~~ time gettin' pretty old in age, got us some warm tea anyway the next morning and a ~~piece~~ piece o' bread. I'll never forget the first piece o' bread I ate in this country with syrup on! I'll never forget that! I can taste that yet how good it was! ~~When we walked to school that was~~

P ~~the winter~~ That winter we landed there we started right away at school. We walked to school. We had to walk out in the country ^{to} see! We had these ~~little~~ little syrup pails that you carry, but we had nothing in it! There was nothin'! There was a family lived by the name of Delzer not far from the schoolhouse and that woman took me and my sister over there and gave us each a piece of syrup bread. I can still taste it how good that was! Then we got up the next morning. Strasburg wasn't here then; but north of ~~where~~ where

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Strasburg is now was a fellow by the name of Anton Baumgartner, he got a brother here in town, and the cow played out! So, we left her here, see, and then we went in here and dad unloaded us. About two, ~~days later~~ three days later my dad said, "You and Margaret, (my older sister ~~of~~ by two years), go down there and get the cow! Now just do it!" ~~Well, go down!~~ Well, go down! We didn't know east from west or ~~west~~ north from south! ~~Go down,~~ Go down," he says! We went down! We walked down! God almighty must have been with us! There's no other way that I can figure it and we got there! The next day she'd lead her, I'd follow, and then change you know. The next day we brought the cow up there, then see? But before we got there about a mile and a half out there was a cutbank, no pavement around you know, and ~~here~~ here comes a fellow by the name of Charley Parison. He run the ~~first~~ first hotel down in the old town and he couldn't ~~talk~~ talk German and he couldn't talk English! We wanted to know where Linton was! He finally found that out and he says, "You, you, you, you, you, just go ^{(youst or yust)?} ~~with this~~ youst go this way, this way!" So, we got home with the cow!

LARRY: What did you think, Frank, when you came to the United ~~States~~ States? Did you think it was going to be a new life or....

FRANK: Oh, yes! Oh, y-yes! OH, YES! M-m-m-m. You know this ~~goes~~ goes back to Russia. There was a lot of people ~~killed~~ killed there which had it comin' and I'll tell you why. Now that where my dad ~~went~~ went down there in the Black Sea there and hired that fella? ~~Well,~~ Well, some farmers would do that too! Go down there and maybe hire one or two, see? Took 'em! That's why the ^{Bolshevik} ~~Bolsheviks~~ broke out in '17. They would work 'em and wouldn't let 'em eat a darn thing! ~~And~~ And when they got done they pounded the hell out of 'em and send 'em away!

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: That's right! Have you heard of that before?

LARRY: No!

FRANK: Yes, yes! So, about in 1922 when I was here in the lumber-yard a guy who lived west of Linton-I ain't gonna' mention the name-and still has a boy or two up here at ~~Odessa~~ Hazelton, came to me at the yard. He says to me, "Say, could you tell me where I could get a couple o' guys to help me ~~harvest~~ harvest?" Well, we had two fellows here that used to go out in those days, see? I ~~mentioned~~ mentioned them to him. "But," I says, "I don't know if ^{they're} ~~there~~ in town yet!" "~~Oh, he says, "Ah, this fella says! "I knew one of them, "I wasn't gonna mention them people by name. "I knew he knew "Ah, this fella says, "I know one of them." I wasn't gonna mention them people by name. I knew he knew he was my cousin. "Oh, ya, that is the one who hired out to a man at Odessa." "That farmer worked ~~him~~ him, ^{didn't pay him, and sent him away."} ~~and didn't pay him~~ "Then he went home and told his brothers and away with their family!"~~ Told me that!

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FRANK: I says, "What~~!!~~" And he repeated it, see? By golly! Next evening I went down and saw my dad. He was alive yet and a black-smith. I mentioned this guy ~~my~~^{by} name and he was my dad's cousin!
~~Yea.~~ Ya. He says, "Yes; he told you the truth, but don't get it in your head that everybody did that! I had got men, too, ~~the-let~~
~~at-our-table-and-I-paid-lem~~ they 'et at our table and I paid 'em but ~~yes,~~" he says! Then these men would go home and they would tell their sons where this happened. They'd even tell them the village and where that house stood! Then they came when they broke out. They took maybe just dad, maybe dad and mother, maybe the whole family, ~~took~~ took 'em out and killed 'em; and some had it comin'! Didn't they?

LARRY: Sounds like it.

FRANK: Well, it sounds like it! To work a man and kick him out!

LARRY: Right.

FRANK: Well, then we came to Linton just before Good Friday in 1901~~,~~ down in the old town.

LARRY: The railroad wasn't here then yet?

FRANK: Oh, no, ~~no, no, no, no, no, no,~~ That came in '03! The Milwaukee came as far as Strasburg in '02. It would up in '02; they quit then. It was gettin' winter in '02. In '03 in May^o the Milwaukee came ~~through~~ through with an excursion. Had a band on her^{VI} remember that! In October ~~in~~ '03, the MP came in.

LARRY: How much did that change Linton when the railroad came in?

FRANK: Well, I'll tell you. What do ya mean by change?

LARRY: Oh, did the population get a lot bigger quicker or....

FRANK: Well, I don't know that^t the population would get so doggone much bigger because ~~the-population-~~ I don't think the population wasn't so ^{awful} big then! But, you see, I remember the Methodist Church was going to build a church down in the old town~~-~~ I know just the place, too, where- and then when they heard about the railroad comin'

they didn't. So, then that was the first church that was built up here. It was when the railroad come in that they changed it and built up here and everything was up here. We had the hotel down there, the Patterson Hotel, and that was facing south, the street going east and west, and they went up here to Williamsport and stole the courthouse. There was nothin' but a big safe⁻nothin' else! Well, our bunch went up and stole it and took it down and then they came and stole it back! We got it the next time and kept it! On this hotel facing south, the Patterson Hotel later on moved up by the ~~the~~ railroad horses ~~up~~ up here—I know where they located it—there was a lean^{to}. It was facing south, but there was a lean^{to} on the west side of this hotel! That was the courthouse and that's where the safe was, see? Then in 1902, they built the courthouse up on the hill. The second courthouse, in other words, see? This is the third courthouse!

LARRY: How did they move freight?

FRANK: ~~Oh, well, by wagon!~~ Oh, well, by wagon! Oh, yes! I remember, ~~wait~~ wait a minute, when W. Petre store was the first store here and then there was a Chris Wolfer store maybe a year later after that. Braddock, you know, was on the Soo Line and they went up ^{there} with the wagons and brought the kerosene and all the stuff here, ~~oh, yes~~ from Braddock! Our house, the house that's down in the old town, that came from Braddock!

LARRY: The lumber?

FRANK: Why sure! Oh, yes! The very ~~first~~ first lumber that came in here ^{was a man}. I talked with an old-timer just the other day at the filling station. He says, "Frank, who was in that house where you lived before?" "Oh, hell, I can tell you who that was ^{he says} "John Hayde was his name," I says! See, ~~he finally~~ when the railroad come in he had some lumber come in here. He didn't have a lumberyard or an ~~an~~ office or nothing like that, but he stacked it! In those days, what they got was two by four, shiplet, and so on—if you know what I'm

talkin' about!

LARRY: Ya, I do.

FRANK: Just rough stuff, see ^{start} to ~~stat~~ with, and tarpaper, and ~~laths~~ ^{laths} that was your outside siding!

LARRY: Right.

FRANK: He was the first man and the ~~first~~ ^{very} first man was Joe Horton with the bank! Joe Horton. That building is still here! It was moved up. ~~WOW~~

LARRY: The first bank building?

FRANK: You doggone right, ya! It was tin outside and I could prove that. They went and stuccoed it now, but I know if I knocked through there they'd have stuccoed on the tin! That was the first bank and it was built by Joe Horton!

LARRY: What year was that?

FRANK: Oh, well, you mean when they moved it up here?

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: Well, that was in '03!

LARRY: 1903.

FRANK: Ya, when the railroad came in! The railroad horses moved these big buildings up. Course, this wasn't a big building. Now my dad had a blacksmith shop down the old town. The very first one. Just a frame, you might call it! Nothin' fancy. Well, all they done ^{is} was put somethin' under it and dragged the thing up from the lot that's there yet! That's how that came about.

LARRY: Did you go along or did your dad go along or did you know any people that went along when they went down to Williamsport and took the court records?

FRANK: Oh, no. ~~no, no, no!~~ No, now wait a minute! That happened before we came! Oh, yes, I'm not gonna tell you how many years! Course, I knew some of the guys that were in on it. I had a brother-

in-law that was in on it! Course, he's dead now. I had a picture and I should o' kept that stuff. In 1936, I think it was, when Emmons County became ~~thirty~~³⁰ years old. I think it was ~~thirty~~³⁰ years old. I had a picture of them Indians that they hung at Williamsport. There was three of 'em! I had a picture of that and I took that doggone picture I remember and set it in some business window and I never got the thing back! I should have never ^{of} taken it down. When I asked him ^o he didn't know anything about it! I know he kept it and didn't give it to me.

LARRY: Where did you go to school, Frank? You started school in Eureka?

FRANK: Oh, no, out of Eureka out in the country! I only got to the third grade altogether!

LARRY: Well, kids didn't go to school ^{that long} when you were here or when you first came, did they?

FRANK: Well, I think they had six months! They didn't have nine I know that! Some only ~~had~~ four months, but that wasn't the idea!

~~They had no compulsory in those days see~~ There was no compulsory in ^[education] those days, see, and dad needed the money to pay for the house and so on. He says, "Go on, get out, and go to work!"

LARRY: What's the first job you had when you quit school? Do you remember?

~~FRANK: When I quit school?~~

~~LARRY: Ya, after the third grade?~~

~~FRANK: Well, then the very first job that I ever... Well, now wait a minute, wait a minute!~~ Go out in the country and work!

LARRY: For farmers?

FRANK: Why sure! Pitch a headbox or somethin' if you know what that is!

LARRY: Ya, I do!

FRANK: I pitched when I was ¹⁴ ~~fourteen~~ years old! I'll never forget

that and that's where I got all this here! Do you think they'd do it today?

~~LARRY: I don't know.~~

~~FRANK: You don't know?~~

~~LARRY: I don't think so!~~

FRANK: Yes, and then the next job I bought cream. A cream buyer in a cream station!

LARRY: How old were you then?

FRANK: Well, when I done that I was the first year married in 1913. Then after that I went second man into lumberyard in 1919.

LARRY: And been there ever since?

FRANK: Ya.

LARRY: Until you started working for the bank.

~~FRANK: Huh?~~

~~LARRY: Until you worked for the bank?~~

~~FRANK: Bank?~~

~~LARRY: Oh, that was your dad! No, you were telling me the story about you were getting out of the lumber business and you retired from the lumber business.~~

FRANK: Oh, no, then I was city auditor!

LARRY: Oh, city auditor! Oh, I see! I see.

FRANK: Not in the bank. Oh, no, city auditor! City auditor. Ya, ~~then~~ then I quit in '54. I also got a guy for that job like for the lumberyard. I knew the family, the mother was sick, and the store closed that he worked at. You know I put those fellas right through the mill 'til they was ~~sweatin'~~ sweatin'! I'll never forget the guy I put over at the lumberyard! The auditor says, "Now, Frank, you stay with Frank ~~for a week anyway.~~ a week anyway." His name was Frank Wahl. I didn't answer the auditor. In three days, I hired a truck and went over to Hazelton and left that guy that took the yard over that I recommended, see?

LARRY: Right.

FRANK: So, he calls me up at the end of the month when they make the balance sheet out at ~~the end of the month~~, you know. He says, "Frank, I'm a dollar and a quarter off!" I says, "Send it in! They'll tell ya where that dollar and a quarter is!" You just go and send it in!" When I run the yard he'd stop there. About three years ago, I think it was, I went over there to see him. He's been there since you know! That's a hell of a long time! I'll tell you just what he said. Are you gettin' this damn stuff in here?

~~LARRY: Ya, ya!~~

~~FRANK: I'd better look out what I say!~~

LARRY: Oh, that's alright!

FRANK: No, it ain't alright.

LARRY: Well, they're not gonna talk any different twenty-five years from now than we do now.

FRANK: So, he mentioned me, you know, and he called me somethin'. "If you'd o' stayed," he said, "just a day or two longer, I'd o' walked out o' here!" I says, "I knew that and that's why I left ya!" That's just why!" The salesman used to come over to me and say, "Say, ~~that~~ that guy over in Napoleon the sweat was runnin' down off'n him!" And he's still there! So, here I told the city council I says, "I'm quittin'." "No, you can't quit," they said. "Well," I says, "you ain't gonna stop me." I'm quittin'." "Well," they says, "we ain't got nobody." I didn't answer them. I thought, "Wait, I'll fix that." So, it kinda went around, you know, and some guys would come in and ask me to recommend them. I didn't know; but I picked this guy, see? His mother was sick, he'd lived here all his life, he was born here, and ^{I'm} ~~I was~~ gonna try and give him that job. The city council had said, "We can't get nobody!" "Well, then," I says, "it's up to me!" So, I run into him. He worked in a store and the store closed. I says, "Ben, what are ya doin'?" "Oh," he says, "mother's sick and I don't know." I says, "Why in the hell don't you take my job?" "No," he says! I says, "If I tell ya why, will ya take it?" "Well, maybe,"

he says. "You're scared of it," I says. "Ya," he ~~had~~ admitted. "Well," I says, "I'll tell ya what I'll do. I'll stay in with ya a whole month." I didn't talk to the city council about that though. His ~~brother's~~ sister was a teacher, see, and she could do some typewriting and so on. "Alright," he says. Well, I went down there a few days and the first meeting that came up I didn't go down there. I let him get stuck. I came down there a few days later and he says, "What's the matter?" "Why didn't you come down here?" "Gosh, almighty!" "I didn't feel good." ~~I had a awful headache, I says.~~ I had a awful headache," I says. I was alright, but I just put him through the mill. He just stayed here and, I guess, he just quit about a month or two ago! That's the way I put them guys ~~through~~ through.

LARRY: ~~You always had a guy to replace you, huh?~~
 Frank, ~~I was reading in a history book about North Dakota that they~~ ^{did} used to be lignite mined in Emmons County?

FRANK: Yes!

~~FRANK~~LARRY: Where?

FRANK: Alright! ~~Now wait a minute.~~ When you drive here on Highway 83 and go north before you get into Hazelton, ~~let's see now how~~ ^{that would be about Cranville, and} about three miles before you get into Hazelton, and when you drive up on your left side there's a farm there that's still the Brendall Farm. Brendall! From the buildings you go east to get on the road. This pavement ~~on~~ ^{and stuff} highway wasn't there then! Don't forget that! It was just prairie. On their land though ^{and} on the ~~left hand~~ ^{left hand} side as you drove up and along there the section line you might call it that's where they used to dig down and get coal. Hazelton is under coal!

LARRY: It's sitting on coal, huh?

FRANK: Hazelton is under coal! I found that out when I was up there! Before they had water ^{and} sewer there, they had these cesspools—you know what I'm talkin' about—~~they'd~~ they'd dig down eight, nine feet and

there was some coal!

LARRY: How did they mine the coal?

FRANK: ~~Well, wait a minute there!~~ What little they mined around here they ~~got~~ done that by pick and shovel! That's all!

LARRY: But did they take the dirt off the top? Did they strip mine?

FRANK: Well, of course! Of course!

LARRY: They didn't go down in a hole and dig?

FRANK: Oh, no, ~~no, no, no, no, no!~~ They never went down that deep!

No, no. There wasn't too much coal from this place I'm talkin' to ~~you~~ about now. ~~later on~~ Then later on, of course, bigger outfits started up and the coal came in.

LARRY: They brought that in from other parts of the state though, didn't they?

FRANK: That's right! That's right. That's right.

LARRY: Is that what people burned for fuel? Lignite?

FRANK: Well, sure! Sure. Lignite only! Lignite and wood! And how about cow chips?

LARRY: Ya, ya

FRANK: We picked up a lot of that and stored it away! ~~If we had one blizzard, they'd freeze to death!~~ If we would get one blizzard, ~~like~~ like the one in March ~~in~~ in 1903, they'd freeze to death. I talked with a man who is dead now, ~~elder than~~ good deal older than I, lived here, name of Jones, ^a Sheriff, and so on. I had it the ^{13th, 14th, and 15th} thirteenth, ~~fourteenth,~~ and ~~fifteenth~~ ^{14th, 15th and 16th} of March and he had it ~~the~~ the ~~fourteenth, fifteenth, and~~ ~~sixteenth~~ of March! Three days and three nights! IF somethin' like that would happen, they'd freeze to death. Yes, they would because you couldn't go out and try and fix a line! ~~See!~~ You couldn't see your hand in front of ya. There's a ~~woman~~ woman who lives in town ~~with her~~ ⁱⁿ her sister lived on a farm, ~~and her grandparents~~ and this sister's grandparents ~~was~~ were only a little distance away in a ~~sod~~ sod house. The sister, only ^{15, 16} fifteen, ~~sixteen~~ years old, wanted to walk over to the grandparents and never made it! ~~She froze.~~

LARRY: Froze, huh?

FRANK: Froze. We'd ALL freeze to death if it wasn't in the summer.

~~Of course~~ Of course, the ~~country~~ country was open and wild, see? Your blizzards were different. YOUR prairie fires were different! You couldn't stop them! No way to stop them!

LARRY: Do you remember some bad prairie fires?

~~FRANK: Oh-h-Oh-e-Oh-e-O-e-h, boy-O-O-e-~~

~~LARRY:~~

FRANK: O-o-o-h, boy! Oh, boy! All we had was take and put a barrel ~~o-f~~ ^(one word) o' water on a wagon, forks, and gunny sacks, but that didn't stop it!

~~LARRY: No!~~

~~FRANK:~~ No! This "crik" down here? We got Beaver Creek and Spring Creek comin' down here. Well, the grass hung in on both sides and your horse chips and stuff ~~with a big wind~~ lay there. A big wind would pick 'em up and throw 'em ahead! They'd run over that "crik" like there was no "crik"! Yes! Oh, yes!

LARRY: Frank, you came over from Russia with your parents and your family. Were they disappointed that they came over here where it was dry, prairie fires, and cold winters?

FRANK: No! ~~no, no, no, no!~~ Got along good.

LARRY: Never got depressed?

FRANK: No! ^{Well} ~~well~~, we were kids!

~~LARRY: Ya.~~

~~FRANK:~~ My mother swung the six-pound hammer in the blacksmith job to help drive out the plow shears. She took in washing! Not with these machines but with a washboard! Took ~~in~~ in washing, took care of ~~ten~~ ¹⁰ kids, worked in the blacksmith shop, and got to be ~~eighty-eight~~ ⁸⁸ years old before she died! I wonder how many of these hens could stand anything like that?

LARRY: But nobody ever felt bad, huh?

FRANK: No! Well, of course ~~if~~ you didn't have everything you wanted, you know, like some people better off ~~do~~ do, but we got along! Oh, yes!

But if you made a nickel anyplace you took it home and give it to dad! You didn't spend it for candy by a hell of ways!

LARRY: Right, right.

FRANK: No, no! Pick up whiskey bottles at a penny a ~~piece~~ piece. Pick up the chewin' tobacco, ~~no, no, no~~ "Horseshoe," "Star," "Climax"—them ~~was~~ were three names—and we had a barber here that bought them. He must o' got a premium or somethin'. I brought four of five ~~of them~~ of them to him and you got a penny, but that penny went ~~to~~ to dad! ~~God darn—right!~~ God darn right!

LARRY: Ya. Frank, what did you do for fun when you were a kid? ~~I mean before you started working. I know that you started working early, but what kind of ~~del~~ activities did you have? What'd you do for fun?~~

FRANK: For fun?

LARRY: Ya.

~~FRANK:~~ Well, if you want to call this fun... My dad had a single buggy and a horse. One time he says, "I'm going to drive down to Pollock on the ^{4th} ~~Fourth~~ of July and see if I can't make a trade with our horse." He took me along and I had two cents. Got down there and there was a fella from Linton, kind of a cowboy-like, and he met ^{me} down there. ~~He~~ He gave me a nickel and then I had seven cents! In those days, you could buy a big bag of cookies for seven cents! I had a hell ~~of~~ of a good ^{4th} ~~Fourth~~ of July and I brought some home for the ~~other~~ other kids, yet! And when we was probably ^{14, 15} ~~fourteen, fifteen~~ or ^{Somewhere} ~~someplace~~ around ~~there~~ in there we used to dance in this house down in the old town. They finally tore it down. It was called the ^{Bachus} ~~Bachus~~ Place. The daughter, Mrs. Gabner, still lives here. ^{I can still see} ~~Her~~ ^{her} mother would sit in the chair and watch us dance around the kitchen, you know, and ~~we~~ had these combs with cigarette paper on ^{it}. Did you ever hear about that?

FRANK: Why sure! Take a comb and put a cigarette paper on....

FRANK AND LARRY: and then blow it!

FRANK: Or a cheap, little mouthorgan ~~and~~ and we was ~~dancin'~~ dancin'!

Oh, they would sit there and laugh like that! I can still see ~~her~~ her sittin' there! Well, then later on we had ~~the~~ ^a hall there and there was roller skating ~~later~~ later on. If you wanted to do any ice skatin', you had to go down to the "crik"! That was it! There was no doggone place built for you to go like ~~now~~ ^{nowadays}! Now they're too lazy to go down!

LARRY: ~~That's right.~~

FRANK: ~~And then we'd go out in the country, east of town here,~~

FRANK: And then we'd go out in the country east of town here. I

~~forgot~~ forgot his name now. I had it here the other day! He had a upstairs for the dance and in the middle they had some kind of a rig for the ~~musician~~ ^{musician} musician to sit up there, you know, with a fiddle or somethin' and you danced around there! Then you got a sandwich and a cup of coffee and paid for the music ~~for~~ ^{25 cents} I think it was ~~twenty-five cents.~~

LARRY: For the whole evening!

FRANK: For the whole evening! Course, it was out o' town here, oh, ~~twelve, fourteen~~ ^{12, 14} miles. A couple of us boys would go out there. Sometime we went out with a livery team, see, and came home during the night. I remember one time we went out and the fog came out! An awful fog that you couldn't see in front of you! Well, now by golly! We ~~couldn't~~ ^{didn't} see how in the hell that could be, ~~we couldn't see where~~ but we couldn't see where we was goin' anymore, ~~see~~? Remember those derby hats, huh? He had a derby hat on and he lost that! Finally when the fog broke, these horses just went around the stone pile. Finally we got home! Well, then I got bawled out because I was workin' the ~~store~~ store then, ~~see~~? The boss gave me heck, you know, for not being here to open up the store! That was on a Sunday or on a Monday and I was supposed to open up.

LARRY: How could you go to a dance ~~fourteen~~ ¹⁴ miles, dance, ~~the~~ ~~the~~ have a good time, and come ~~fourteen~~ ¹⁴ miles back? How late would you get home?

FRANK: Well, we'd o' got home in plenty of ~~time~~ time!

LARRY: If it hadn't been for the fog?

FRANK: That's right ! ~~Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Yes. Yes.~~

LARRY: ~~How many miles could a team o' horses pulling a buggy cover in a mile? How fast would they go? How long would it take ya to go~~ ¹⁴ ~~fourteen~~ miles from here to the dance? Do you remember?

FRANK: About two and a half hours with a horse.

LARRY: So, you'd leave home for the dance probably about ^{6:00.} ~~six o'clock~~

FRANK: That's right, yes! Yes.

LARRY: Frank, ~~what years were the worst years that Linton had? I mean can you remember~~ what years can you remember as being bad for drought or bad winters or fires?

FRANK: Oh, I thought about fires! They burned the doggone town out in 1922!

LARRY: That was the bad fire?

FRANK: That was the bad fire of 1922. It burned.

LARRY: That was up here in ^{the new town,} ~~Newtown~~, wasn't it?

FRANK: Ya, up here! ~~Yes~~ I'll tell ya somethin' about a guy that came down. His name is Rothschöller and he still lives at Mandan. I used to go up there and I never did go to see Frank Rothschöller and I should of. He was a young fella and he'd be about my age now. His dad's name was Frank and he was quite a politician. ~~His dad!~~

~~LARRY: M m m.~~

~~FRANK:~~ Now I forgot the governer, but I knew who the governer was that time. His dad, by being a politician and in with the governer, used to go around and collect for poor people in Russia. Got his young Frank by being a politician in the ~~Penitentiary~~ ^{Penitentiary} for fingerprinting printing. Well, when we had these fires here the States Attorney was George Lind. I was in George Lind's office when I was back in the lumberyard there. Before that ~~my brother-in-law~~ and my brother-in-law and our wives ~~we~~ went up there to see this young

Rothsch~~eller~~ for the reason that his wife was a kind of a little bit related with my wife and the other ~~guy~~ fella's wife. So, I knew this young Frank. ^{Then, they} ~~They~~ sent him down here to take fingerprints on these guys that they figured that set these fires! So, he went in and saw the States Attorney first and he asked, ~~where~~ where I was. ~~He told me~~ He says, "Well, right back here in the ~~lumber~~ lumberyard!" So, he came back over there. Young Frank Rothsch~~eller~~! First time he was ever in Linton! I says, "What are you doing here?" "Oh, I'm sent down here to catch your firebugs," he says! Well, I didn't say nothin' to him, but I thought to myself now there's a young fella and what the hell is he gonna find out? "Well," I says, "Frank, how about you comin' up and stayin' with us?" "No," he says, "I got a room at the hotel." ~~Well,~~ "Well," I says, "but wait a minute. You can go up with me for supper?" "Ya, I'll do that," he says. "Well," I says, "then you come to the yard when you're done." He was doin' his business in the ~~lumber~~ courthouse. He said that he would come up. So, we went up and my wife was gettin' supper ready and we ~~we~~ went in the front room. He says to me, "Frank, now you've lived here a long time." He mentioned these guys that he was fingerprinting. He says, "My finding is on this fella, this fella, this fella, and this fella." And there was five guys that he fingerprinted. He says, "My finding is on this fella and this fella." He says this to me. I says, "I wanna tell you somethin', Frank!" "You know when you first came here this morning?" "I'm going to be honest with ya... I thought what in the hell could you find out! You know what you did?"

P "You hit him on the head!" So, then we had these carts for our fire protection. ~~Do you know what I'm talkin' about?~~

~~I said~~ Right right!

~~FRANK:~~ So, Fred Petre was the fire chief on these carts and he heard that this guy saw me, see? You know Fred Petre was one that was

that was born the same year as I, but he won't ^{talk} expose his stuff like I. I don't know whether he'll like ^{this} or not. →

~~LARRY: No, go ahead!~~

~~FRANK:~~ So, he came up and he said, "Say, what did that fella tell you?" "You want me to tell ya what he told me ~~me~~," I asked? I knew ~~me~~ how Fred ~~me~~ felt, too! "Just what you and I think, Fred, is just what he told me," I says! "So," Fred mentions, "I don't care if it's this fella!" "He's got to go this time!" I says, "I'll tell ya what I'll do." "I'll betcha nobody goes!" "What do ya ~~mean?~~ mean," he says! "Oh," I says, "I'll tell ya ~~what.~~ what." ~~We~~ We had three banks ^{attorneys} ya, we had three banks. ~~We~~ We had three or four ~~attorneys~~ and they was one-sided! Well, one guy belonged to this side! Get the point of what I mean? →

~~LARRY: Ya, ya.~~

~~FRANK:~~ And the other guy over here of these two. "No," they says! ~~We~~ We ain't gonna go! None o' 'em! And they never did!

LARRY: But they set the fire?

FRANK: Ya.

LARRY: And that was in 1917?

FRANK: No, no, '22!

LARRY: '22! And that was the worst fire that Linton ever had?

FRANK: Oh, yes! At that time we had the steam whistle in the light ~~plant.~~ plant. If the weather was right, you could hear that frog! ~~0-0-0-0-0,~~ ^{0-0-0-0-0,} ~~that~~ that was powerful! You could get yourself ready about ~~two~~ ^{2:30} ~~two~~

~~that~~ ^o in the morning. When it's nice and quiet here goes the whistle and another fire! Get up and go! Oh, ya, that burned a lot of 'em down?

LARRY: How many buildings burned in that '22 fire?

FRANK: Oh, my gosh. Hotel and, oh, I would say altogether around ~~10,~~ ^{10, 12.} ~~ten,~~ twelve.

LARRY: Did they organize a better fire department after that fire?

FRANK: Well, not right away. ~~Well, no, not~~ You see we didn't have nothing! No extra protection but them carts I was talkin' about until 1926 when we put the sewer and water in here!

LARRY: I see.

FRANK: We didn't have nothing extra ~~just~~ just them carts up to that time.

LARRY: What were some other bad ~~things~~ things that the town went through? ~~Can you think of any real bad winters or bad droughts?~~

FRANK: Well, how about the depression?

LARRY: Ya, I was going to get that. How bad was that around Linton?

FRANK: It was pretty bad! It was pretty bad. They ~~couldn't~~ couldn't pay their taxes! The county offices up there only got half of their wages and the other was a certificate of indebtedness they carried there. I think they got an interest on that, ~~carrying that thing~~. I think so! But people couldn't pay their taxes! You had to contract 'em! ~~Finally contract 'em~~. I contracted mine!

LARRY: Frank, did people help each other more then?

FRANK: Oh, yes! Oh, yes! ~~Oh, yes/Oh, yes. Oh, yes.~~ Course, there was swindle in that too!

LARRY: Can you think of some examples?

FRANK: Oh, you bet! ~~The government~~ The government kind o' helped you out, ~~on that~~ you know. They brought the cattle in here and slaughtered 'em and gave you some of ^{that} meat. And hell, they'd come in here and maybe with a few ^{small} pigs and turn 'em ^{loose} ~~lose~~ right on the street! Turn 'em ^{loose} ~~loose~~, you know! They'd send some kind of fruit in. ~~It~~ It was grapefruit, I remember ~~and~~ and peddle them out. Then the welfare office started up. I was working on W.P.A. and one day an ^{investigator} ~~investigator~~ by the name of Miller saw me downtown. It was cold and there was some snow. He says, "Say, come on ^{and} ~~and~~ go with me down to Hague. ~~to see~~ ~~some people down there~~ I've got to see some people down there." I says, "Now wait a minute! ~~What~~ What time we gonna get home?" "Well,

we won't stay too long," he says. I says, "We better throw in a shovel in case we need one!" ~~Well~~ All right, I went down with him.

~~and we saw him~~ So, we saw ~~out of town~~ out of Hague there's a fella livin' and he was full of rheumatism and he had a few children. ^{You} ~~You~~ know what they call a summer kitchen?

LARRY: No.

~~FRANK: WELL, that was a smaller building. They had them on the ~~farm~~ farm. A ~~smaller building than your ordinary house and they called it a summer kitchen. They do some washing in there and so on.~~~~

LARRY: ~~Right, right! O.k.~~

~~FRANK: WELL,~~ ^{Well} this fella had lived in one of those ~~places~~ places and when we got there I saw that there was a bunch of manure piled up that he was burning. The investigator, Miller, said, "Come on in." I said, "No, I'm not going in." ^{Well} "You go on in!" I walked around the barn ~~and~~ and there was a dead cow laying there. He came out and he says, "Now, I'll tell ya ~~get a couple little boys~~ there's a fella, sick, ~~got a couple little boys, got no coal, and I want to help him. I wanted anyway to get a little pair of overalls for his boy and give him some clothes and he won't do it and he won't take it. He's gonna~~ ^{gonna} ~~going~~ to get what they call them a corn check ~~from~~ from the government. Some kind of a corn check of some kind." Now he says, "We'll go over and see another guy." So, we drove over to another place. I ain't gonna mention his name. The house ^{was well} ~~was~~ painted up, you know, and a big gran^gary. I says, "You goin' here?" "Ya," he says, "they told me to come up." So, we got there and a young fella comes out ^{that} stands on the porch. ~~We asked, "Well, where's your parents?" "What is it?" "What is it," he says? "Well, where are your parents," we asked? "Well, they went to Linton to the welfare office," he answered. "To Linton to the welfare office?" we asked? "Ya," he says, He says ~~to~~ "Come on in." ~~Well~~ "No, I ain't goin' in." ~~Well~~ ~~in!" I went.~~~~

any better. "I'm going to change your card!" You know, you had a working card. I thought, "Well, he's half drunk." "Where is he going to change this card?" He went down to Strasburg, got tangled in a fence there some damn ~~way~~ way, and ~~somebody~~ ^{they} had to pull him out! ~~Now~~ Now before this came, I was Republican, see. Before this came, the Democratic chairman lived here and he sent a couple guys to me to ask if I would change ~~myself~~ and go Democrat and then I could pick me a job at the courthouse. I told this guy, "You go back and tell this guy (I don't know who he was) I'm no fence jumper. I'll never jump the fence." About a week later, by God, I gets a card for a ~~hun-~~ ^{\$125.00} dred and twenty five a month!

LARRY: Because he changed your card?

FRANK: Ya, ^{and a \$125.00} ~~and~~ hundred and twenty five dollars, ~~and~~ ^{and} that was a lot o' money. A lot o' money ^{and} And I still stayed on the other side!

LARRY: But you think Roosevelt's programs were good?

FRANK: Absolutely ^{0/15} sure. ~~We~~ ^{those} We built those, you know, Roosevelt's- what did ya call 'em-those outhouses?

LARRY: Ya, ya.

FRANK: Do you remember them? I had that job ^{too} ~~too~~ Engineering it! ~~We'd~~ We'd take 'em out to the country and put 'em up you know. No, I think he did the right thing! Well, ~~my~~ ^{too} God, look what ~~we're~~ ^{too} we're doing today with ~~other~~ other countries! There's a guy comes over ~~TV~~ ^{really} TV I listen to and, boy, he ~~really~~ tells the truth! I think he's in Canada. About what we done in other countries and they haven't done nothing ^{for us} ~~for us~~ ~~Never~~ ^{Never} help and it's true, isn't it? We wouldn't need nobody. We got our noses into every other country.

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK; Oh, ya. When you wanna run your neighbor, you better look out! I think we've gone too far! That's my opinion and that he don't know nothin' about it, ~~no~~! I don't believe that for a moment.

If you got a hired man, you ~~wasn't~~ prett'i'near know what that boy is doin'! I know that ~~was~~ from experience!

LARRY: What did the community do under WPA around Linton? Were there any buildings built or parks?

FRANK: Yes, yes! We built a cesspool down there, but that's changed now. ~~We~~ We built that and built the city hall! Ya, you bet! WPA that was!

~~LARRY: I read in a book that this one year-I don't remember what year it was-'32 or '33-it was so dry that the farmers took their fences down and let their cattle run?~~

P ~~FRANK: Oh, ya, well, wait a minute.~~ The first drought that I remember was in '10 and '11. That was before the depression; ^{but} ~~yes~~, yes, sure where your land was sandy, it blowed it prett'i'near as high as ~~the fenceposts.~~ ~~Oh, yes,~~ the goddarn fenceposts! ~~And the~~ And the Russian Thistles, or what they called it, the Hexa. They picked them up and used them for feed, too, ~~some of them.~~ ~~Oh, yes,~~ ~~And your hay~~ And your hay was shipped in! You made government loans!

LARRY: Were ~~you~~ ~~you~~ working for the lumberyard during the ~~depression~~ depression?

FRANK: Yes.

LARRY: How did people pay bills if there were no jobs and there wasn't any money?

FRANK: Well, that was one thing that I was very careful of. I didn't do much credit. I got even bawled out ~~once~~ once from the president of the outfit. He told the auditor ~~if you see Meier again you~~ if you see Meier again you tell him that its always cash, cash, cash! ~~The auditor was dif-~~ The auditor was different; ^{the} the auditor was like I! He had to go through the mill, see? The president didn't, ^{and} ^h he maybe didn't know a ~~two by four~~ ^{2 x 4} two by four from a shiplet.

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: And then the auditor would say, "Frank, you just run that the ~~way~~

way you want to. ~~What no agent Agn~~ "You do alright." ~~Pay no~~ "Pay no
 attention!" ~~I don't tell that to everybody, but I'll tell you.~~ "I
 I says, "Don't ~~worry~~ worry about me." When I left Napoleon, there
 was just one job under construction; otherwise, nothin' in the books.
 When I ~~went~~ went over there, there was six thousand and somethin' in
 the books. I got acquainted pretty ~~fast~~ ^{goddarn} fast! Even your government
 then-I cut them out. You know they used to ship in those grain bins
 and then they had a foreman over there, ~~the county agent did~~ ~~the~~
 had a foreman over there. I can't remember exactly, but there was
~~something~~ something about the government in ~~ninety~~ ⁹⁰ days, I guess, you
 were to have your bills paid. I'm pretty sure it was that way. I
 noticed in the books, by golly, they owe ~~for~~ ^{for} over ~~ninety~~ ⁹⁰ days already!
 So, the county agent sends this foreman down. They ship these
 grain bins in and, you know, they'd have holes in ^{'em} and poor lumber and
 then they'd take tarpaper and ~~lath~~ ^{laths} and plug 'em up and so on. So,
 the foreman came in ~~when~~ when I took the yard over. I'd only known
 two guys over there! That's all I knew. I says, "I ain't givin'
 you nothin'!" "What," he ~~says~~ says! ~~I've been~~ ~~gettin'~~ "I've been ~~gettin'~~ gettin'...."
 "I don't care what you've been ~~gettin'~~ gettin'!" "You
 haven't been ~~payin'~~ payin' your bill," I says! So, we up and told the
 county agent. So, I didn't give him ~~nothin'~~ nothin'! "I want this
 bill paid!" "This three hundred and somethin' in the books," I
 says. I got 'em all down to.... ~~I~~ I just cleaned ~~out~~ the whole
 goddarn works out! So, he comes down and he says, "I've been ~~gettin'~~
 gettin'...." I says, "I can't help you what you've been gettin'!"
~~That's government stuff and that's to be paid and you haven't~~
 paid!" So, finally I got to ~~talkin'~~ talkin' with the county commissioner
 over there. I says, "What the hell do you want with that guy?" ~~Ya,~~
 "Ya," they says. Finally they let him go. I ~~went~~ went in the bank
 and ~~in the bank~~ the woman workin' in there ~~says~~ says, "Mr.
 Meier, don't you ~~think~~ think it was awful bad to have Mr. Olson quit

here?" ~~I thought, "Wait a minute!"~~ I thought, "Wait a minute!" I'll tell you too!" I says, "No, I don't think it was at 'tall because after they let him go, in about a week after that I got the money. I got paid." I just cleaned 'em up. There was a mail carrier ~~and~~ ~~he~~ he had a bill in there ~~for~~ for.... Well, there was accounts in there ~~ninety~~ ⁹⁰ cents and ~~two~~ ^{\$2.00.} dollars. When I made the balance sheet out, I had to have two sheets for the ~~god~~ goddarn report! So, I run into this mail carrier and they at that time had to pay their bills! ~~the~~ the mail carriers! So, I asked him. "Well," he says, "nobody.... ~~Now wait a minute," I says, "If you don't wanna pay me, that's o.k."~~ "Now wait a minute," I says! "If you don't wanna pay me, that's o.k." "You don't have to," I says. But I think he smelled a rat because I got orders from the head office after I wrote down what he owed. The credit man wrote me a letter and says, "Don't bother him!" He mentioned my name. He says, "He'll come." ~~He'll pay!"~~ He'll pay!" And he come in and paid too. They took a hold of it down there, see? So, I cleaned the ~~whole~~ whole darn thing out and in Hazelton I cleaned that all out when they put a new man in there! So, the accounts were alright, see? It was Taft! The first crop they ~~got~~ ^{got} was in '39! '39 was the first crop and they had money] boy! ~~The~~ ^{You know,} price was good, too, if you remember that? Your cattle and everything else. You had all kinds of doggone money! So, I thought, "Well, you got the money," ~~in~~ ^{Why} in the hell not pay for it?"

LARRY: Right!

FRANK: And I kept them right there and I got credit for that, too, from the company afterwards, see?

LARRY: Frank, what did people feel like during the depression? ~~Did they get depressed then? Were they down in the dumps? Was every~~ ~~body~~ ~~leaving~~ the country?

FRANK: Well, I don't know. I'll tell ya; I don't know. I wasn't.

I could see it wasn't just around here; it was all over! You couldn't

change it! You had to put up with it and do the best you could!
Course, in those days you didn't buy like ~~now~~ know either! If you had a car, you had the doggone thing paid for!

LARRY: Right!

FRANK: Ya, I got one that's ⁴²~~fourty-two~~ years old! A 1950 Plymouth!
Got her out here in front!

LARRY: So, people were more careful about what they bought?

FRANK: You betcha! ~~Oh, way way way way more~~ Oh, way, way, way
more careful! Oh, this is awful now! ^{I had a} ~~a~~ ^{businessman} ~~and~~ ^{we} got to
~~talkin'~~ talkin' about bad times and I says, "How about a real crop failure?"
He says, "Why not ~~cream~~ 'em?" I says, "That, I won't agree
with!" ~~MAN~~ "You're going ~~MAN~~ too far!" ^{"Maybe two," he says.} ~~MAN~~ He says,
"You don't know, " he says, "I know!" "I know of one!" "One real
~~MAN~~ failure!" "We'll fix him," he says! ~~MAN~~. I don't know.

~~LARRY: Ya.~~

~~FRANK: But I still say that's policy!~~

LARRY: Right! You don't need all this stuff!

FRANK: You know the old people used ~~to~~ say, "The begger can't go
with the millionaire!" The beggar ^{and} that ~~MAN~~ still ~~MAN~~ stands! ~~MAN~~
I had that experience over at Napoleon. ~~MAN~~ ^{MAN} If Barbara over ~~here~~ here
and her husband can afford a car, and over here is Lizzie ~~she~~ she hasn't
hardly got a pot to piss in, and she wants it too! Now that wasn't
in those days! That wasn't!

~~LARRY: No.~~

~~FRANK: They didn't have that in their head at 'tall that they
should go with Barbara, but now they do. You know I'm right! You
~~MAN~~ ~~MAN~~ ~~MAN~~ should know that!~~

FRANK: At all times you
will always have poor
among you.

~~LARRY: Oh, I know! I know that.~~

~~FRANK: Well, that ain't gonna work out!~~

~~LARRY:
FRANK: All the time there must be someone under you,
There must always be someone poorer than you are!~~

LARRY: Right.

FRANK: Supposing today that everybody, everybody would get a million dollars. Everybody! ~~They'd~~ They'd starve to death!

LARRY: That's right ya.

FRANK: Well, the station man ^{that} sells gasoline, ^{Why,} why he'd lock up and say, "What the hell do I want with it?"

~~LARRY: Right!~~

~~FRANK:~~ He'd say, "I got a million dollars now!" But if he'd come to the next town and needed gas that guy is locked up too!

~~LARRY: Right, right!~~

~~FRANK:~~ How about the baker? They'd starve to death!

LARRY: Can you remember the grasshopper years, Frank?

FRANK: Oh, ya, ~~very~~ sure! That was in the depression! Sure!

LARRY: How bad were they?

FRANK: Oh, they were terrible! They used to come in like clouds! Just a cloud of 'em; you couldn't see! They hit the side of the house and all splattered up! Oh, yes!

LARRY: I was reading that you couldn't even eat the chickens because the chickens ^{would eat} so many grasshoppers!

FRANK: ~~Yes, yes, yes, yes!~~ That's true! That's true. ~~That's true.~~

LARRY: ^{What year was that?} ~~When was that? Do you remember?~~

FRANK: Well, in '29 the banks closed. You know that?

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: Alright! '30, '31, '32 ~~was~~ was a ~~very~~ pretty good crop. No price! I think it went down to ²⁵ twenty-five cents and I think ~~seven or nine cents for rye,~~ ^{-- Somethin' like that.} ~~Something like that.~~ '39 it started again. Up to about '39 we had about three or four very bad ones! Very bad!

LARRY: Did you help farmers ~~fight~~ fight grasshoppers? Did the people in the town help or....

FRANK: No, no, no, I didn't help.

LARRY: What did they do to kill 'em?

FRANK: I don't think they killed 'em! I think they finally just disappeared again! I don't know. I can't recall. Now I'm not ~~going to~~ ^{a-gonna} argue that ^{point} with ya! I don't know ^{what} if anybody tried to do something about it! I'm not a gonna tell you that!

~~LARRY: But they cleaned out everything, huh? Gardens and....~~

~~FRANK: Ya, ya, ya, go in the field and clean it.~~

~~LARRY: A lot of cattle starved I suppose ~~spose~~ 's spouse?~~

~~FRANK: Yes, yes, ya.~~

LARRY: Did they bring in hay, Frank, for the farmers that didn't have any?

FRANK: Oh, yes! Oh, ya! A fellow by the name of Haggerot, Ben ~~Haggerot~~ Haggerot, was one of 'em that brought in ~~hay~~ ~~and~~ then you made a government loan? ~~Y~~ You heard about that?

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: I guess it was pretty high priced, too ~~and~~ and a lot of it was pretty rotten hay too!

LARRY: How many banks and businesses closed down in Linton? ~~Do you have any idea during the depression?~~

FRANK: Two for sure. I wonder if the First National here ^{did?} I think they did ~~but not for very long~~, too; but not for very long, The First National. But the other ^{ones} the Peoples State Bank and the German American Bank, those two closed down.

LARRY: What did people think? Did they think that this was going to go on for over or did they keep lookin' for a better day?

FRANK: ~~W~~ Better look for a better day that it would change, which it did!

LARRY: But it lasted a long time?

FRANK: Yes, ya, but it wasn't here alone! →

~~LARRY: No, no.~~

~~FRANK:~~ it was all over, so where was ^{a person} gonna go for better? [?]

LARRY: Were there a lot of people ~~was~~ leaving Linton and just tramp-
ing around the United ~~States~~ States? Did you see any bums come through?

FRANK: Well, now wait a minute! There was some went to Montana to
what they call the beet country, sugarbeet country? Quite a few ~~was~~
went up that way, ~~quite a few~~. Then from there quite a few went
out ~~West~~ to Oregon and out there, ~~that I know of~~. The farmer that stuck
out there, which was not a ~~big~~ big percentage, ~~that stuck out there~~, he
got back on his feet again. The guy that caught it!

LARRY: ~~Do you know of any farmers or did you know of any farmers then,~~
~~Frank, that really had a rough/7go of it, but they stuck it out? I~~

~~here~~ ~~Do you remember any farmers around here that really had it rough~~
but made it?

FRANK: Yes, I know of some ~~them~~ that stayed and made it and some of
them were not so ~~much~~ much on the grain raising as they were in cattle.
Them guys came out the best! Their big trouble was the feed, to get
the feed, but then they cut down on their herds, ~~see?~~ ^{was telling me} Now one guy ^{and}
~~we~~ talked about that. They had quite a bunch of cattle, but they had a
lot ~~of~~ of feed. So, he said, "We done ~~was~~ good!" "We ~~of~~ went and sold the
cattle ~~and~~ and we got a lot of money for our feed!" Now they was smart,
see? They got by with it.

LARRY: Let me change the subject, Frank. You came from a pretty ~~good~~ ^{big}
family, right?

FRANK: Ya.

LARRY: How ~~was~~ is the family different now than it was then? ~~I mean~~
~~Was the family more~~ ~~was~~ together then?

FRANK: Oh, yes, ~~ya~~, I should say so! You mean, was the family
more together in those days than now? Oh, yes, by a ~~big~~ ^{big} percentage! ^{Sure!} I
should say so!

LARRY: What did you do together as a family? Did you do everything to-
gether? ~~Were you closer or....~~

FRANK: Oh, yes! Closer and ^{of well} one thing for sure, ~~Before~~ ^{Before} you ~~of~~ went to
bed you always said your prayers with ^{the} ~~your~~ parents! Yes, all of ya!

Not missing either because if you'd o' missed they'd o' asked "Where was ya?" Yes, oh, yes! ^{Yes} ~~big~~ ^a big difference between now and then! Very big, not a little!

LARRY: What did you do at night after you finished supper? ~~you know,~~
~~before you started when you were younger? You know before you~~
~~started working when you were ten or twelve?~~

FRANK: I was ¹⁶ ~~sixteen~~ years old when I went over in here to Coast to Coast. The building is still there yet. Pius Volk owns it now. It was built in 1905. I'll tell ya, this is a good one! I went to school ~~to~~ only third grade, but this guy gave me not only a ~~high school~~ high school education but a college education that I worked for and he was a Jew! ~~There was~~ two kinds of Jews-- dirty Jews and clean Jews--and this fella was as clean ~~as~~ ^{is} a whistle! What I mean by that now ^{is} in keeping the place clean. So, you know, I was ¹⁶ ~~sixteen~~ and I was in the blacksmith shop with dad. ~~Magovitz~~ and Magovitz came over. He run the Linton Leader. He says, "I want this young man!" "He'll never make a blacksmith!" I went over there. It was built in ~~1905~~ '05 and I went over in '07. I was ¹⁶ ~~sixteen~~ years ~~old~~ so it was two years old, but there was a clerk ahead of me. ^{So} He told me what I had to do and I ~~went~~ ^h on and done it. He worked it ~~from~~ from the ground up, see? ~~Whenever~~ Whenever anything went wrong he just called me, "You're green as tea!" "You'll never learn ~~nothing~~!" And ~~he~~ just bawled me out ~~and~~ and that was all ~~just~~ just a lesson ~~which~~ which they wouldn't take today, no! I didn't dare to quit because my dad was the boss and hired me on it! So, finally he gave me the key, opened up, ^{told me} what I'm to do, and all that. This boy that worked ahead of me ~~his name~~ was Bill Rasmussen. In those days, they had these country school moms come to town. Him and a few more here that I could mention ~~but~~ ~~they~~ were a bunch of boys and somewhat older. ~~than I was~~ ^{They} did something here. So, here one evening the boss gave me the key and told me what to do. This other clerk comes to me and he ~~asked me for the~~ asked me for the key! Well, I thought this way, "You worked ~~there~~ there before I did. ~~Why~~

can't I give you ~~the~~ the key?" But the boss had checked on me once in a while because the business had to be open at ^{7:00.} ~~seven.~~ I could open five minutes before seven but not five after! So, ~~he~~ ^{hed} check ~~up~~ up, you know, and I knew where this other guy roomed. ~~Just~~ Just to show you how dumb you can ~~be~~, I could of went there and got the key. ~~Instead~~ ^I Instead of that I stood in front of the store and ~~where~~ here comes the boss. It was always in the morning that he was the worst and the rough ^I est with you. In those days, the Jews were stronger in their religion than they are today, see? They had a ~~girl~~ girl about ~~thirteen~~ ¹³ years old, see, and that kinda bothered him. That's what we had figured out! So, he went rattlin' on and he says, "What's the matter here?" ~~Well~~ "Well, I gave Bill the key," ~~I~~ I says. "You gave Bill the ~~key~~ key?" "You know you're green as tea!" "I can't do nothin' with you." "I have a good notion to let you go." "I wanna tell you somethin'." "I'll keep ya; but if my wife asks you for that key, she isn't to get it," he says! ~~And~~ ^{Then} you know, it came to me--responsibility--see? "Now," he says, "I wanna tell you somethin'." "Whatever is said in here stays in here--whether its we or the customer." "Whatever is said stays in here and don't forget that!" One day--the relation here yet--^{two guys} came in and talked about another guy stealing a calf. Well, I was the clerk there and I heard it! This ^{one} guy goes to that guy when he got to him and says that so and so said you stole a calf! This guy comes in, but this ~~guy~~ guy tells him also that there was a clerk there and ~~that~~ he maybe heard it, see? So, he came in and he asked me if I heard that. I says, "No." See now, if he o' said ~~that~~ that to me that what's said in here stays in here, I'd o' been ~~dumb~~ dumb enough to tell him, ~~that-I-heard-it~~ "Yes, I heard it, see?"

LARRY: Right, ya.

FRANK: That was all an education, right?

LARRY: Right.

FRANK: That time what my dad was out on the homestead.... ~~In other~~

In other words, my dad went out and contested. In those days, it was contested and in ~~fourteen days~~ ^{14 months} you could pay for it!

LARRY: Right.

FRANK: So, I stayed with my sister. My ~~brother~~ ^{brother-in-law} had a bowling alley and I was up there. There was a city hall there like I told you ~~awhile~~ ago. We had a city hall and he walked by ~~and~~ and he saw me sittin' in there in that bowling alley. "Where was you last night," he says to me? "Well, I was sittin' up there," I says. "Ya," he says, "I wanna tell ~~you~~ you something!" "You're green as tea and you never will learn!" "Come here!" He took me to the desk and he had kind of a little ~~plam-~~phlet there called Commercial, how to decorate the windows and so on, and he says, "You got no business running around!" "You take this ~~book~~ home and study!" "I don't wanna see you up here anymore!" Yes! What would they do today, huh? Oh, boy! Had a cast iron stove, you know, with the ashpan?

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: Two German-Russians came in or Russian-German and bought it. ~~My partner, Bill, was stronger than I. The boss sold it for twenty-five dollars.~~ My partner, Bill, was ^a stronger boy than I am. The boss sold it for ~~twenty-five dollars~~ ^{\$25.00}. Go out and help him load it and, you know, it had them four legs and you took it off! Now we was ~~the~~ ^{to} engineer how to load that stove, not the farmers! But Bill was pretty strong and some way ^{and} ~~or~~ other we didn't do the right thing and the oven ~~was~~ cracked. You know it was cast iron. I went in first and the boss says, "Stove loaded?" "No," I says, "it's broke." He jumped up from the desk and says, "How?" "Well," I says, "I don't know." "Ya," Bill says, ⁱⁿ to me, "We'll tell him that the Jews did it." That the two farmers had dropped their end. I didn't say ~~awhile~~ nothin'. I went in there and says, "No, I don't know." So, when Bill come in the boss says, "How did that stove get broke?" "Oh, them two fellas dropped their end," Bill says! See, the other clerk heard? Gave them their money

English
out
there

back. ~~At the end of the month he called me up to the desk.~~ "Ya," Bill says, "let's quit." "We can't take this much longer!" I says, "I can't quit!" "My dad!" You know we didn't dare to ~~rest~~ rest a dog-gone minute in that place of business! We had to meet the customer at the door, ~~fit~~ fit his shoes on--especially the women--fit their shoes on! Years ago, mind ya, that happened! "Let's quit," Bill says! I says, "I can't quit!" But he quit. When the boss came at noon, Bill quit. Got a job working at another store. At the end of the month, he called me up to the desk and he says, "You know what I told you about what's said in here stays ⁱⁿ here?" I says, "Ya." "You told the truth about that stove," he says, "and I'm not a gonna charge you." He charged each one of us twelve dollars and a half. I didn't know nothin' about the books, but the clerk when ~~he~~ went to dinner he looked it up and he says, "We're charged for the stove." He called me up and he says, "You told the truth about that and I'm not gonna charge ya and that stays here too!"

LARRY: You learned a lot from that guy, ~~huh?~~ huh?

FRANK: Oh, you may not believe ^{me} it! I think of him every once in a while!

LARRY: Ya.

FRANK: Ya, every once in awhile. I can't help myself. It just comes to me!