

# Oral History Assignment

Butte History Class  
323-01

Robert E. Chamberlin

Bob Chamberlin  
Oral History Assignment  
Outline of questions for Oral Interview  
Butte History Class 323-01

I. Today's Date

- A. Who is interviewed?
- B. Who is interviewee?

II. Go through family information

- A. How and why her family came to Butte
- B. All family members

III. Discuss 3 main topics

A. Living in a tent in Butte with a family of kids (16 siblings) while building a house.

- 1) Dad's jobs, affected by Butte Politics' in anyway?
- 2) House plans – address
- 3) Heat and cold
- 4) Building house yourself

B. Water Well

- 1) Who's? Dug or drilled? Who carried water?
- 2) After house built city water?

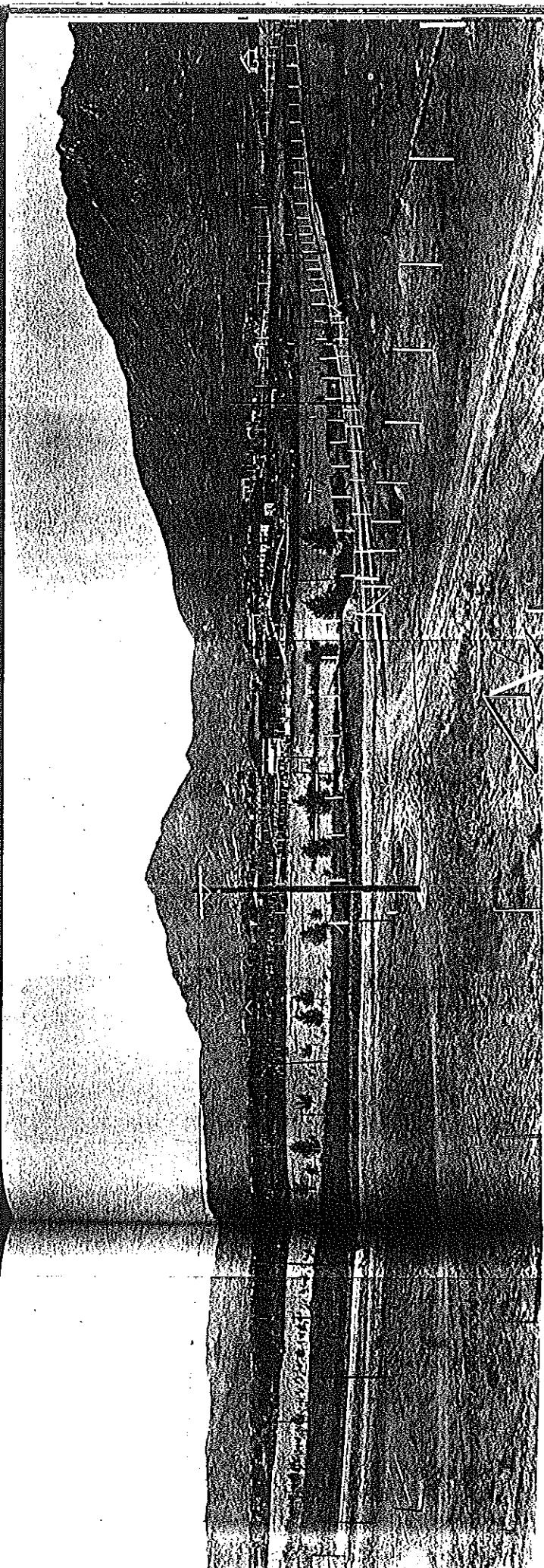
C. Lake Avoca

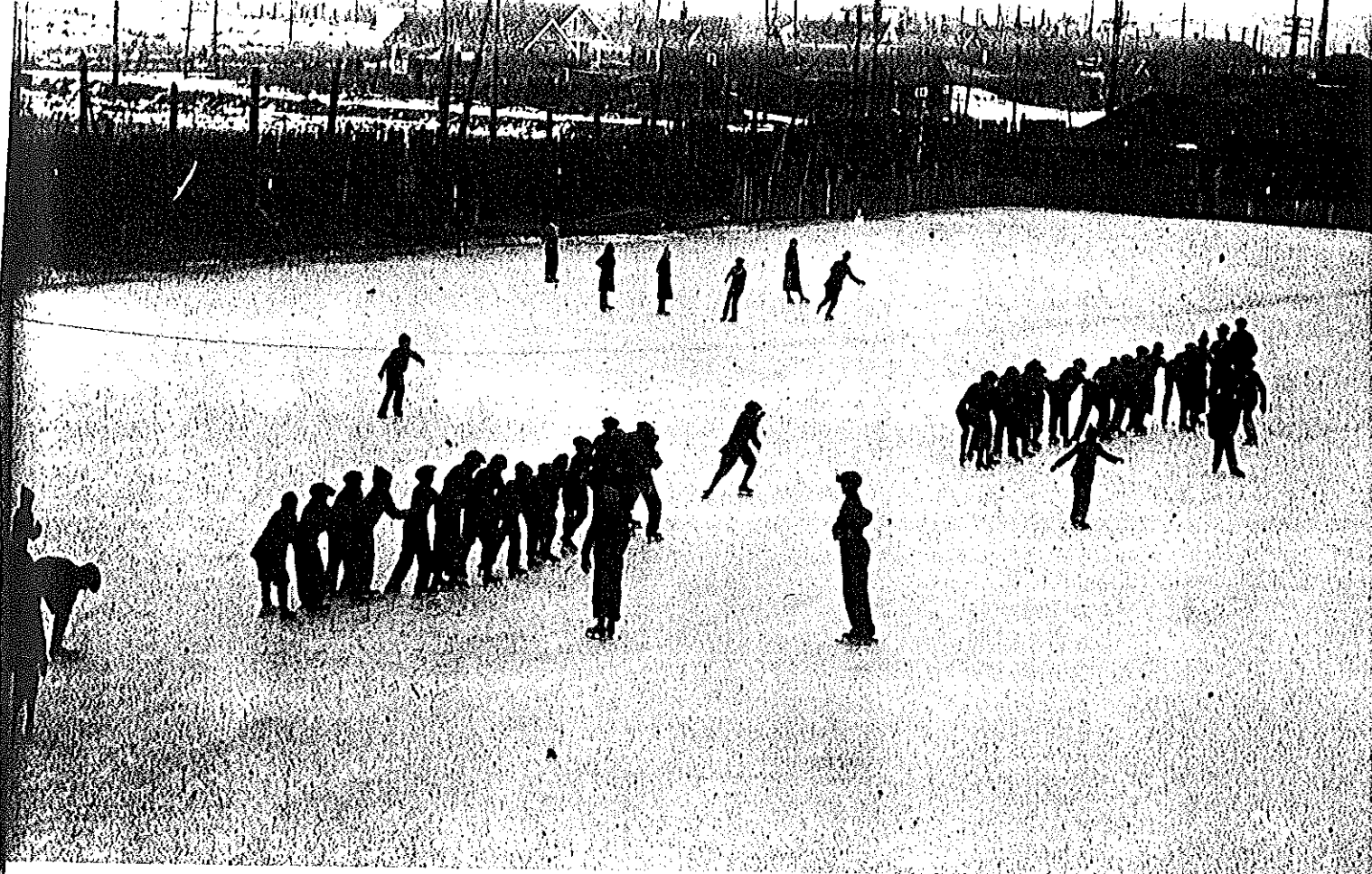
- 1) Summer Activities
- 2) Winter Activities

D. Holland Rink

- 1) Brothers that played
- 2) Where, what and when

# Oral History Interview





Kids ice skating at old Holland Rink



Grown-ups posing at old Holland Rink

Bob Chamberlin  
Oral History Interview  
Butte History Class

An Interview with Martha Evelyn (Telling, Nickolson) Martin – Age 99  
Currently living at the Meadowlark Manor, Whitehall, which is an assisted living complex. Martha has just returned from Arizona where she has gone during the winter for most of her adult life.

This interview is being done as part of my taking the Butte history course through Montana Tech. My name is Robert (Bob) Chamberlin and I live at 116115 South Buxton Road, which is twelve miles south of Butte, just west off the Dillon highway. This tape and transcript will be given to the Butte Archives as part of the history class requirements.

Martha was born on February 27, 1902 in Butte, Montana. She was the daughter of Sarah Ellen (Holmes) Telling and John Telling. Martha had 16 brothers and sisters. Her half brother, David, and her half-sister, Margaret, were born in Wales. Her last half-sister was born at Park City, Utah in 1885.

*(The tape recorder I used for this interview was "voice activated" and for the first part of the tape did not pickup Martha's voice, so when she went to talk the tape died. The first part of the actual tape keeps bleeping Martha out, so I've written in what Martha said some of which will be on the tape!)*

I asked her if she knew why her parents moved to Butte from Park City. She answered that her father died when she was just seven and that she could not recall why or how they found out about Butte. After her father died in 1909, Martha's mother, Sarah, remarried to a Mr. Frank James Bailey in 1914. Mr. Telling died before this last son, Archie, was born on May 9, 1910.

I asked Martha if she could remember anything about her father and she said she thought that he was a miner in Wales and had come to Park City, Utah, and then to Butte for the work in the mines at both places. (Martha did go with her daughter Luella (Nicholson) O'Keefe to Wales to see some cousins from her mother's side of the family when she was 85 years old!) She remembers that her Dad's brother was in Butte or came with her father when they came here from Park City. His name was Harold (Harry) Telling and they both were freight haulers between Utah and Montana before settling in Butte.

We established that the "Telling Family" was in Butte when her first full brother, Charles, was born on August 8, 1889. Although her sister, Maud, was born back in Utah in 1891, the rest of the eleven children were born in Butte. Martha could only remember one of the mines her father worked at and that was the "Speculator Mine". She also remembers there being a mine accident during the time he worked there. There was a fire that started in the Speculator but spread to the Granite Mine.

I then went through with her the birth dates of her siblings and they are:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>DOB</b>	<b>Born</b>
½ brother	David	4/30/1878	Wales
½ sister	Margaret	1882	Wales
½ sister	Florence	1885	Park City, Utah
	Charles	8/8/1889	Butte
	Maud	1891	Utah
	Raymond	1893	Butte
	Frank	1896	Butte
	Grace	1898	Butte
	Dorothy	1900	Butte
	Martha	2/27/1902	Butte
	William	6/12/1903	Butte
	Stella	9/24/1904	Butte
	Ann Elizabeth	12/9/1905	Butte
	John	8/20/1907	Butte
	Harold	10/16/1908	Butte
	Archie	5/9/1910	Butte

I asked her is she knew what her father died of? She thought that he had cirrhosis of the lung, similar to Black lung that miners get in the coalmines. Her father died in October or November of 1909. He was born in 1856. She thought he had been sick to the point of not being able to work for the last year of his life. I asked if he was in the hospital. She thought he stayed at home so I can't imagine there was much money for this large family to live on. They lived in a three-bedroom house on Porphyry Street, where it intersects with Washington Street. She could not remember who or how many of the kids were at home when her father passed away. Martha's dad worked in the mines all his life.

After your dad died in 1909 and your mother remarried in 1914. So the times must have been tough between 1909 and 1914, when she remarried. I asked Martha if she remembered how they lived and she said that they got help from Salvation Army, and at Christmas time you would tell the Salvation Army what you wanted and then at Christmas you would go up there and you got everything you asked for. The Salvation Army helped with food also. The three years your mom was not married what did she do? She did house work. She said that her brother Charles helped out.

Your mom remarried Mr. Frank James Bailey and he worked at the Montana Power Company. Martha thinks it was the natural gas department at Broadway and Park, down by the Finlen hotel.

Bob: Did he move into the Porphyry house?  
Martha: He did move into the Porphyry house when my mother and him got married. Then the coming spring they moved to a house on the flat.  
Bob: Do you remember the address?  
Martha: 3011 Hannibal Street.  
Bob: Did he buy the property then?  
Martha: He bought the property and we lived in tents.  
Bob: More than one tent then?  
Martha: Yes.  
Bob: So you were 12 years old  
Martha: I know I was 12 years old; I was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.  
Bob: You got there in the spring and you then started school. What school were you in?  
Martha: I went to a country school way up. Do you know where Dr. Peter Potter's farm is?  
Bob: I do not.  
Martha: Right straight down there was a little country school. And I walked from Hannibal Street clean up there.  
Bob: And how far was that?  
Martha: Oh I say about a mile and a half.  
Bob: A mile and a half, and where is this Mr. Potter's house? What's there today that would be familiar to us, for the people who are listening to this tape? Was it north or was it toward Harrison Ave?  
Martha: It was north. No it wasn't by Harrison Ave.  
Bob: So which way did you go when you went to school?  
Martha: Went towards Lake Avoca.  
Bob: Did you go around it?  
Martha: Went up the old 5 mile road, it is now Continental.  
Bob: Oh, okay you went out Continental  
Martha: Right, Continental  
Bob: And was it by where your daughter lives now?  
Martha: Just before you come to Lue's place.  
Bob: Right along Continental  
Martha: Yes, there were two houses out there and we walked.  
Bob: So was this not funded by Butte?  
Martha: What  
Bob: Do you think this was a Butte school?  
Martha: Yes  
Bob: You got money from Butte to go to school  
Martha: Yes  
Bob: About how many kids were there?  
Martha: Well we had from the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 5<sup>th</sup> and then they built the Hawthorne school  
Bob: That was built after. How many years did you go to this country school?  
Martha: I went right up from the 6<sup>th</sup> through the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and they did away with the school. Then they built the Hawthorne school that only went through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Then we went over to the Whittier school which part was an industrial school.



Bob: So this was after...

Martha: So they put 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade there.

Bob: So for about a year or two you went to this country school and then they built Hawthorne, so a year or two at Hawthorne?

Martha: I didn't go to Hawthorne at all.

Bob: You didn't go to Hawthorne at all

Martha: I went over to Whittier.

Bob: Went over to Whittier in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Martha: Right

Bob: So about 2 years because you said they started 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Martha: And then they did away with the Industrial school and built a new one and then it went from the 1<sup>st</sup> up to the 8<sup>th</sup> and it turned out to be the Whittier school

Bob: And that's where the Whittier school is today?

Martha: Yes and the rest of us went to Whittier

Bob: That's a pretty good walk

Martha: 13 blocks, back over in the morning, then at noon and back. I counted and there were 13 blocks.

Bob: So Lake Avoca, we are going to talk about that a little bit. So when you went to the country school you kinda went around the edge of the lake or you walked around the lake?

Martha: There were no homes there so we just cut across the field

Bob: And

Martha: In the winter, we walked right out there

Bob: In the wintertime, you just walked right across it. And how do you say it, Avoca, how do you enunciate it.

Martha: A Vo CA

Bob: Lake A vo ca.

Martha: Nobody knows there was a lake out there.

Bob: Ya. But right now you're in the fifth grade or about to start the fifth grade and your stepfather moved you to a tent.

Martha: Right.

Bob: And did he have plans, he was going to build a house and just live in the tent temporarily.

Martha: We started to build a house and then the war broke out and we filled our basement up and planted a garden.

Bob: Oh, okay.

Martha: And then we built at the far end of the lot.

Bob: Instead of this of hole you had dug for the basement

Martha: Yes

Bob: So this is World War I, Right?

Martha: One, right

Bob: And it broke out, I guess, about 1914. It had to be because that is when you were down there.

Martha: We filled up the hole we had dug for the basement and planted a garden and built at the far end, back end of the lot.

Bob: So you did start building that summer.

Martha: Yes

Bob: So did some of you stay in that part of it or did you get it up enough so that you could get out of the tents and live in part of the house.

Martha: We lived in the house

Bob: In the house

Martha: We had two bedrooms, front room and big porch on it. The front room had a davenport and so we opened it up for a bed at night.

Bob: Okay

Martha: Toots and I slept there and we were stuck out there

Bob: But some people are still in the tents that winter

Martha: No the tents are all gone

Bob: So you did not ever spend the winter in the tent.

Martha: No

Bob: Just when you moved out in the spring, you had the tent and then he started building

Martha: Yes we started building

Bob: Great

Martha: My sister-in-law, he built a little house for her. She had a kitchen and a bedroom

Bob: So she was married

Martha: Right, well she lost her husband and had two kids

Bob: Do you remember how the husband died? What happened to him?

Martha: Chick had lung disease

Bob: Was that from the mines, you think?

Martha: No, it was from coal dust.

Bob: From coal dust. So Chick is your brother. He's Charles.

Martha: Right

Bob: Where did he get the coal dust? Did he work for the mines in Butte?

Martha: Worked for a coal company and delivered coal

Bob: In Butte

Martha: Yes

Bob: So it was dirty enough

Martha:

Bob: He probably had to shovel it

Martha: He had to shovel it out of the truck and when the coal came in on the boxcars he had to shovel it into the bins where they kept the coal

Bob: All right

Martha: I would go down and steal coal

Bob: okay

Martha: Buzz and I

Bob: Buzz is your brother William

Martha: Yes. We would go down there and get all the coal for our house

Bob: For your house. That was one of the questions I had. In this tent

Martha: That was up on Porphyry Street

Bob: Up on Porphyry too

Martha: Buzz and I would go down to the Milwaukee tracks and get the coal

Bob: How did you haul the coal? Did you have a wagon or something?  
Martha: We had a two-wheel cart.  
Bob: A two wheel cart and this was before you moved down to Hannibal Street  
Martha: Yes we were just kids  
Bob: So this tent, you probably got the house somewhat put together and lived in it before the winter came  
Martha: Yes  
Bob: And then you were walking to school, that country school  
Martha: Yes, Brook Side, that's the name of the school  
Bob: Brook side  
Martha: Mrs. Mahoney was the schoolteacher  
Bob: Mahoney was your teacher  
Martha: And that was when the streetcars went clear out to the country club and that's where the end of the car line was. And she had to get off there and walk up to the school  
Bob: And that probably still was a mile or two  
Martha: Right  
Bob: Maybe someday you can show me where that school was  
Martha: Well it was right down from Peter Potter's home  
Bob: Well, I don't know where Peter Potter's home is. Is Peter Potter still there?  
Martha: Well I don't know. I just always called it Peter Potter's home because that's where Peter Potter built it  
Bob: Right  
Martha: Right straight down from there. There's a bunch of trees. I think Booth has a tree farm there  
Bob: Okay, it's near where Booth's Landscape  
Martha: Right, that's where it was  
Bob: I was thinking a little farther out  
Martha: No, that's where it was  
Bob: So you're before the interchange where you get on the interstate  
Martha: Right  
Bob: And Brook Side School  
Martha: Brook Side School  
Bob: How many kids? You said there was 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade but there was like 50 kids do you think?  
Martha: Ya, we had  
Bob: And one teacher or more?  
Martha: Yes one Teacher  
Bob: It would be hard to have one teacher with 50 kids. But there was quite a few of you Telling's there.  
Martha: Well, Buzz started down at Hawthorne School. There was Jack, Toots and I that all walked up to the Brook Side School  
Bob: Wow!  
Martha: We had gunnysacks on our feet  
Bob: You told me once before that you had to haul water when you lived in the tent.  
Martha: We hauled water from a neighbor's up above, now it's called Richardson Street. It was a good block. We would go up there and haul a washtub down. Our water tank

was a barrel, a wooden barrel. We had to keep it full of water so it wouldn't leak. And that was our hot water tank

Bob: Hot water tank too.

Martha: Our hot water tank was an old barrel too. One of those great big barrels

Bob: But didn't you heat the water up on the stove to take a bath or something

Martha: No because we got that barrel full of water and it was hooked up to the heat on the stove. And that barrel was our hot water tank

Bob: So you had a wood/coal stove and you had something running through the water to get it warm. Did you have any other barrels for cold water?

Martha: No, we just hauled the water down.

Bob: Then you just kept some in the buckets you brought down for cold water.

Martha: Right

Bob: And this neighbor, do you remember the neighbors name?

Martha: Peterson

Bob: They had the well? Was it a well or was it city water?

Martha: Polly's had the well

Bob: Polly's had the well

Martha: They had it at what would now be Gladstone Street. It wasn't Gladstone then it was just the rear of Richardson back then.

Bob: Do you remember if that was a hand dug well probably?

Martha: It was a hand dug well and you would lower a bucket down and bring it back up.

Bob: So when you moved into your house did you get water then, in the house?

Martha: Yes, at that time it was city water.

Bob: The city water came by then. And how long was that after?

Martha: Well it must have been a good year

Bob: Another year

Martha: Maybe it took so long we heated the water outdoors.

Bob: Which was probably most the summer

Martha: Washboard was what we used

Bob: Did you live in the tents for part of the school year or did you get the house build?

Martha: We lived in the tents when we went to school. But I think that one-year would have been the start of the year.

Bob: You think you went the whole winter in the tent

Martha: No, we were in the house

Bob: So you had some coal stoves or something in here.

Martha: Some coal and wood stoves

Bob: In the tent

Martha: Yes

Bob: But I bet it got pretty chilly in the tent.

Martha: It got cold. We had a lot of hot water bottles in the bed

Bob: Okay, now your stepfather was working for the Montana Power Company, he kept a pretty steady job

Martha: Yes

Bob: That was a good job then too, like it would be now

Martha: Yes, he was working all his life

Bob: He did good

Martha: Yes he worked with a Nickels or a Campbell

Bob: Campbell

Martha: I know there was an alley because when I would get off of work at 3:00 in the afternoon, I would go and eat with him and then we would go home. I was working. Some place there, we went down some stairs and we walked from there clean over to where Symon's Department Store was. All underneath Butte was a tunnel under the boardwalk with lights and he had to go all through town and check the gas lines

Bob: You were with him and you were uptown, so you went from about where?

Martha: From about Broadway Street between the corners of Park Street to the Dakota Streets

Bob: All underground

Martha: All underground and he was checking the gas lines

Bob: And he was looking at his gas lines

Martha: Yes

Bob: So what year was that about?

Martha: I don't know. I was working uptown then

Bob: You were probably 14 or 15 or older

Martha: Older

Bob: 17 or 18

Martha: 18

Bob: What work were you doing?

Martha: I was cleaning for a motel, cleaning rooms and making beds

Bob: Which motel?

Martha: A great big boarding house back where the post office use to be on North Main Street. It was the Gagnon Boarding house.

Bob: Gagnon

Martha: All the miners lived there, over a hundred and some miners

Bob: You're kidding, just in this one place. The Gagnon Boarding House

Martha: The Gagnon Boarding house back of the post office on North Main

Bob: On which street

Martha: Copper Street

Bob: So how did you get back to your house then? Or were you still living with your parents.

Martha: Yes, on the streetcar

Bob: Where did you get off the streetcar? At the country club or did you get off before then

Martha: No. Shall I go uptown?

Bob: No to get to your house

Martha: At Hannibal street

Bob: Oh, it stopped at Hannibal Street

Martha: Yes it stopped at Hannibal

Bob: And that's about the 3000 block on Hannibal that it stopped

Martha: Yes I use to get off at Broadway Street and walk up to Quartz Street

Bob: Oh okay

Bob: Where they open air or could you close them – the streetcars?

Martha: In the wintertime they were closed and they put a door in the center and then the summertime it was open

Martha: We would go out to the Columbia Gardens every Thursday free

Bob: When you were kids

Martha: When we were kids

Bob: You would get on the streetcar to do that

Martha: And it would not cost us anything

Bob: When you would get on the streetcar at Hannibal did you have to make a connection change?

Martha: yes

Bob: Go up town

Martha: Other wise we use to walk from Columbia Gardens to home

Bob: That would be a pretty good walk

Martha: We used to stop at the Chinamen's Gardens and get some carrots and eat them all the way home

Bob: Did you use to buy them or sneak them?

Martha: No, No we use to buy them

Bob: Bought them

Martha: No we would only help ourselves to the gardens. We asked for a carrot and got a raw potato so we ate raw potatoes

Bob: So the Chinamen's gardens do you know where the Hillcrest school is?

Martha: The Chinamen's gardens was up where the community hospital is now, up there towards the railroad tracks

Bob: Yep, I heard about that

Martha:

Bob: They did a nice job of growing vegetables up there

Martha: Oh they had wonderful ones

Bob: Do you remember any of the Chinamen's names?

Martha: No

Bob: None of the last names like Wong or Wang?

Martha: No

Bob: Wow – And so probably you bought a lot of the vegetables from them?

Martha: They would go around with two baskets on a long bamboo stick over their shoulders and go from house to house and sell their vegetables.

Bob: They would actually come to your house and sell them to your mom

Martha: They would go house to house, walking miles and miles with those big heavy baskets and sell them.

Bob: Your mom Sarah at this time when she is married to your stepfather is she working? She is cleaning houses still too. So she would take the streetcar or walk too.

Martha: No she would take the streetcar that would bring her all over. She was cleaning some up on the West Side.

Bob: Do you remember any other their names?

Martha: No, Isaacson's was some

Bob: Isaacson's

Martha: There were a bunch of them on the West Side

Bob: So did your step dad build the house his self or did he have a contractor?

Martha: Skinny  
Bob: Oh some of your brothers helped him  
Martha: Skinny  
Bob: Was Skinny working at other things?  
Martha: No, he lived up at Norris with my brother Swede. Hung around Norris.  
Bob: Oh Okay  
Martha: And when Swede would get tired of him and would kick him out, he would come home and my mother would always have things for him to do, keep him busy  
Bob: So building the house was one  
Martha: Yes building the house was one  
Bob: Your brother at Norris was he mining there?  
Martha: Skinny never did anything up there  
Bob: No the other brother that he stayed with  
Martha: Swede worked in the mines at Norris  
Bob: Swede was working at the mines in Norris, at the Mayflower  
Martha: Out of Norris and he bootlegged too.  
Bob: And he bootlegged. And what year is this about? 1920's  
Martha: Yes around there  
Bob: Because you said the house was built in 14  
Martha: Oh right  
Bob: We went through the water well a little bit, but you got city water, you think  
Martha: Yes they put city water. I think about a year.  
Bob: Oh  
Martha: Maxi White owed all the property there and was called the Atherton addition  
Bob: Atherton Addition  
Martha: Yes, Maxi White owed it all  
Bob: Was that a he or a she  
Martha: He. They have a big home over there where you go to Knoffell  
Bob: Evil Knievel  
Martha: Yes Evil Knievel. Maxi White was a big brown house just as you turn to go there  
Bob: Right there, probably on Elizabeth Warren  
Martha: Yes that's where is was, on Elizabeth Warren  
Bob: That was a nice house  
Bob: And Lake Avoca  
Martha: It was a big deal. They had a playground there and all kind of concessions, and a big dance hall, ice cream parlor, and place where you could rent canoes and paddle boats for the lake. And there was German village where the beer was.  
Bob: I bet that was good  
Martha: Yes. And that was all sawdust in that.  
Bob: In that village  
Martha: Yes in the German Village and that was where you got to wait for your beer. The ice cream parlor was down stairs and Sheppard's candy  
Bob: Was this being built or was that there when you moved to the neighborhood.  
Martha: It was all there  
Bob: Do you remember?

Martha: A year or so after working I got a job over there  
Bob: Oh you did work over there  
Martha: I worked over there  
Bob: And what did you do over there  
Martha: Worked at the ice cream parlor.  
Bob: Selling ice cream  
Martha: Selling ice cream cones and ice cream sundae's and everything  
Bob: So how old were you then, 14 or 15  
Martha: Yes all my summer  
Bob: All summer. And what year do you think that all stopped. How old were you?  
Martha: I know it was when I was gone  
Bob: When did you leave Butte?  
Martha: I went to Norris and I was in high school  
Bob: The concessions and the German thing and ice cream were all gone  
Martha: Oh ya that was all gone when I left  
Bob: It was only there probably – well we can look that up. But that's cool that you worked there. So why did you have to leave Butte to go to Norris? Just to get away.  
Martha: Got there in a car  
Bob: Ya but you just want to leave, got wonder lust?  
Martha: I just wanted to get out of Butte, get away from home  
Bob: Get out of Butte, to get away from your parents?  
Martha: Well I stuck around until I was thirty years olds with mom, because my step dad died and mom was kinda alone and she belonged to the Moose lodge, I belonged to the Moose Lodge and they had card parties, Wisk card parties.  
Bob: Wisk  
Martha: So then I stayed with mom and I worked with her (helped her buy the prizes) until I was thirty  
Bob: So you didn't leave Butte then. Did you go to Norris for a while and then come back  
Martha: I would take mom up to my brother's house and pick chokecherries. And I hung around with mom until I was about 30 years old and she past away.  
Bob: So you were working at Lake Avoca selling the ice cream. So it wasn't until much later that you went to Norris  
Martha: Ya that Lake Avoca was all torn down. We never knew where Swede was, then all of a sudden he started coming home.  
Bob: okay  
Martha: He always came into Butte about his bootleggers.  
Bob: Okay, he was hiding out because he was selling that (booze). Now Swede was about 10 years older than you, so he left home. It says here that he was born in 93, 1893, and you were in 1902. So he's about 11 years older or 9 I guess.  
Martha: Right  
Bob: You stayed with your mom until she was about 30 before you had a family.  
Martha: Well I never had a family until I was 30.  
Bob: Well that's all right. That was smart then. You knew what you wanted, right.  
Martha: Ya  
Bob: So all that time you worked in uptown Butte mostly cleaning.



Martha: Housework

Bob: Housework. You told me once you went to Missoula. You were 16 or so.

Martha: Dixon, Montana

Bob: Dixon

Martha: Margaret Sullivan and I

Bob: Now tell me was that in the summer.

Martha: This was in the summertime and I wanted to get out of Butte. So I went to the unemployment office and they called Dixon to see if the work was still there. So we went as far as Missoula to meet the guy and then I looked at him and I wouldn't go to Dixon. So I stayed in Missoula until my money runs out and I said to Margaret that we have to go to Dixon to work. So we called him up and told him we changed our mind and went to Dixon and worked. So Margaret Sullivan and I went up and worked. Margaret married a guy by the name of Holstein and they left and went to Sandpoint, Idaho and got married.

Bob: So she married him while you were up in Dixon.

Martha: Yes

Bob: Like how long were you at Dixon all together

Martha: For about 2 years

Bob: Oh you stayed up there for 2 years

Martha: Oh ya, we worked up there. So this guy kept coming to Dixon and he was all dressed up and I was cooking there and I asked the owner one day what the heck that guy was doing in here. He said do you want me to tell you a story. He has a warrant for your arrest.

Bob: Woops

Martha: What did I do? You kidnapped Margaret Sullivan. When he saw the size of her and the size of me he went back to Missoula.

Bob: He figured out you could not of kidnapped her.

Martha: Right

Bob: Well when you decided to go to Missoula, you were about 17 and just kind of as another lark thing, so you must of ended up back in Butte

Martha: Ya I came back to Butte

Bob: After that about 2 years you said

Martha: Annabelle and Margaret. We took the boxcar over

Bob: You took the boxcar over

Martha: Dodes first husband worked for the railroad

Bob: Ya

Martha: We dressed in the striped overalls and cap

Bob: You dressed up like a railroad person to get on

Martha: Yes and we went to Missoula. We had money for a room in a hotel and things like that

Bob: So that was about 2 years you stayed up there. You were 17 to 19. So then did you come back to Butte?

Martha: We were at Missoula and worked at hotel there making beds at the end of town called the Sweetheart. I worked about a year and then came back home.

Bob: So you were gone about 3 years so then you are about 20 years old.

Martha: I was working at the Gagnon Boarding House and also cleaning, janitor, for the Moose Lodge

Bob: Is the Moose Lodge still where it always was, where it is now?

Martha: I won't even know if they have a Moose Lodge there any more but it was up on Quartz Street by the pay office.

Bob: Oh it was

Martha: I worked up there cleaning, setting up Leopard card parties and turning the tables down for lodge meetings, and all that for \$50 a month.

Bob: And when you did all that you were living with your mom again.

Martha: Ya

Bob: Did your stepfather die or was he still around then?

Martha: He was still around. I worked for my mom at the Moose Lodge and she charged me \$30.00 per month to live with her.

Bob: She charged you

Martha: I was only getting \$50 a month after work at the Moose Lodge

Bob: So she took most of that

Martha: So she took \$30. So one Easter I wanted to buy a dress and I bought a dress and couldn't pay her so the next time I went to get my check, and my mom cashed it

Bob: So she took your check

Martha: For \$30.00 so then I had to walk clean from Hannibal Street to uptown to work and walk back

Bob: Because you did not have enough money for the street car

Martha: I had nothing for the car

Bob: You had nothing for transportation. So how do you think she got your check? Did she go up to the pay office and they gave it to her?

Martha: No right at the Moose Lodge

Bob: Oh she went to get it at the Moose Lodge

Martha: Lucille who worked there, I asked her once why she ever did that to me?

Bob: What did you buy the dress for? To go to a dance

Martha: Some dance or something

Bob: I'm going to get back a little bit to Lake Avoca. When you were around it in the winter when it froze did you ice skate on it?

Martha: Ice-skating and hockey games and toboggan sledding, and everything

Bob: You told me once before about the Holland rink?

Martha: The Holland rink was down on south Montana Street

Bob: Oh that was south Montana not in your neighborhood. I was thinking that that was in your neighborhood.

Martha: No it was on South Montana Street and they always had music. And we always use to go up there and skate to the music.

Bob: And is that where they had hockey?

Martha: Yes played hockey

Bob: Some of your brothers played hockey?

Martha: My brother Dutch played hockey and my brother Buzz played hockey

Bob: Was it like a pro league hockey?

Martha: Right and then at later years when they started playing hockey up at the School of Mines, Dutchie was a coach for them

Bob: Oh he was a coach for them  
Martha: Yep he was a coach, goal tender or what ever you want to call them  
Bob: So that Holland rink was that most of your life. Was that there?  
Martha: It was there but you had to pay to get in.  
Bob: Right  
Martha: At Lake Avoca we got passes  
Bob: You could go skating and all that  
Martha: When you lived at the Atherton addition, you didn't have to pay  
Bob: Because you lived there you didn't have to pay  
Martha: Yes because Maxi White owned it  
Bob: So your brothers learn to play hockey probably on Lake Avoca  
Martha: Ya  
Bob: Did you use to skate with them then?  
Martha: Oh we would have big skating races.  
Bob: Did you use figure skates or racing?  
Martha: No just plain skating, great big long skates.  
Bob: Your brother Harold, which you call Dutchie, he worked for Western Iron all his life?  
Martha: For 45 years  
Bob: What did he do up there?  
Martha: He was in the furnace room. He made molds and he would pour the hot stuff in the molds.  
Bob: Were the molds first made out of what do you remember? Wood first maybe  
Martha: No your rod iron stuff and he melded it down and they poured into the molds  
Bob: And he built the mold itself  
Martha: Yea. Over at Missoula, that Grizzly Bear  
Bob: Yea that's on campus  
Martha: Ya my brother poured that and took it over there and that's one of his works  
Bob: Wow. So he had to know quite a bit about  
Martha: Western Iron works  
Bob: The brass and how to pour it  
Martha: Ya  
Bob: So how many years did he work for Western?  
Martha: 45 years for Western Iron works. He worked for Tim Sullivan  
Bob: Tim Sullivan. He was the owner.  
Martha: Yes he was the owner. At one time he was the mayor for Butte  
Bob: Oh he was. Do you remember what year that was?  
Martha: No his family moved out on the flats and his brothers and sisters.  
Bob: How about any other brother and sisters? Where they working in Butte?  
There was Jack who you called John.  
Martha: He went to California  
Bob: He went to California  
Martha: Ya he went to California with my sister Grace. Dutchie went into iron works but Jack never worked around Butte  
Bob: What did your sister Dode, what did her husband do?  
Martha: He worked for the Montana Power

Bob: He was a Montana Power guy  
Martha: In the gas department  
Bob: In the gas also  
Martha: Just like my step dad did  
Bob: In the same place  
Martha: Same place ya, Hooper  
Bob: Did she work, Dode? Did she work around town with you?  
Martha: Dode worked for the Butte Floral Company for years  
Bob: Butte Floral and where was that? South Montana  
Martha: It's a big apartment house or something on the flat down in Floral park. She worked there for about 50 years. That's where all the gypsies come and stay back of that hill back of the place.  
Bob: Down in along the creek there?  
Martha: Ya along the creek  
Bob: About where Paisley Motors used to be?  
Martha: Ya along the creek runs through  
Bob: How often did the gypsies come?  
Martha: Every spring  
Bob: Where did they come from, do you know?  
Martha: I don't know but they would come and make camp. One time one of them come to my door and mom was gone and she wanted to know if we had a sewing machine and I said yes. She had material and she wanted to make herself a new skirt and I said well come on in and use the sewing machine. It was right there on the porch. Mom came home and she was sewing away. Of course you know how big those skirts and all the yards and yards of material were in those skirts. Well Mom said what the hell is she doing. She's making herself a new skirt and maybe she'll make me one when she gets done with it.  
Bob: But she never did huh!  
Martha: No she didn't  
Bob: How about Grace? You said she left too.  
Martha: Yes Grace left years ago and my mom raised her two kids.  
Bob: Your mom raised her two kids  
Martha: Tom and Jane  
Bob: So after raising all you kids, she had two more kids to raise  
Martha: Finally Grace came up from California and took them when they got old enough, 14, 15 years old  
Bob: Do you remember, your mom was Welsh mostly?  
Martha: Welsh  
Bob: Was there like a Welsh association, a club or something that you guys went to?  
Martha: Oh she went to the Moose Lodge and the Pioneer's  
Bob: But I know that sometimes the different nationalities took care of each other?  
Martha: Ya  
Bob: Did the Welsh seem to do that; you know the neighborhood or the neighbors?  
Martha: You know years ago in Butte, starts at Broadway, goes from East Broadway, that was the bohunks, and then you go down to East Park Street and that was Fin Town And then we had the Irish was down on Galen and the Syrians was down on Ohio Street

Bob: Oh on Ohio  
Martha: Around in that part. But every part of Butte had different nationalities and they were like there own little towns. Had there own crowd and there own businesses.  
Bob: Did you ever go to those?  
Martha: Oh Ya, a lot of my friends would go down there.  
Bob: You would go hang out when they had a function down there  
Martha: There was one place down on corner of Park and there was a bar and cafe and everything and we would go down there.  
Bob: But you guys in your family, your neighborhood didn't have that. There were all kinds of people  
Martha: Ya there were all kinds of nationalities.  
Bob: On Hannibal  
Martha: The only thing out on the flat was a little grocery store and you had to go uptown for everything.  
Bob: To get what else?  
Martha: There was one tiny grocery store  
Bob: Ya  
Martha: You had to go up town  
Bob: Lake Street Market  
Martha: No, Lake Street Market was there but my mom used to go to Brophy's right off of Park Street on Main Street  
Bob: It was pretty close to the M & M  
Martha: And that's where Mom would do all her grocery shopping  
Bob: And she would get a whole month's worth probably  
Martha: That's where she would get all her big groceries but bread and water and milk and stuff we would get at the little market. I know she was buying pickled herring, chunks of pickled herring, in wooden buckets. Wooden bucket with pickled herring in them.  
Bob: Did you like that?  
Martha: Boy they were good.  
Bob: And herring is a fish of some kind?  
Martha: A fish, looked like white fish. Now it's the white fish you see but at that time you didn't know what kind of fish it was.  
Bob: You don't ever hear of that now  
Martha: No you don't hear of it now  
Bob: Was it fresh do you think.  
Martha: Yea fresh  
Bob: It was pretty fresh, but if it was pickled it could be pretty old.  
Martha: It was good and every payday mom had a grocery list  
Bob: What did you have with that? Potatoes  
Martha: Potatoes  
Bob: Make it for a meal or just snack on?  
Martha: That was snack food. Three o'clock everyday was teatime.  
Bob: You had teatime.  
Martha: Teatime 3:00. If you were uptown shopping with her at 3:00 we went in and had tea and cookies

Bob: Tea and cookies  
Martha: Tea and crumpets  
Bob: You remember what restaurant?  
Martha: 15 cents store  
Bob: The 5 and 10  
Martha: They had a lunch counter way at the back end and we would go back there and sit at the counter and have tea and crumpets.  
Bob: But not any in the morning  
Martha: No not in the morning  
Bob: Just at three everyday  
Martha: If I go uptown shopping, why 3:00 would come and I having tea  
Bob: Did people come to your house to have tea?  
Martha: Of Ya  
Bob: In the afternoon  
Martha: Oh yes. My sister-in-laws sister would tell fortunes, read your fortune from the tealeaves  
Bob: Read the tealeaves  
Martha: My god how much tea we drunk and the cups of tea leaves and throw them around, turn your cup upside down on your saucer and turn around and make a wish and then let her read them  
Bob: You got to make a wish first  
Martha: Yes  
Bob: My mother had a friend who read tealeaves but I don't remember them making a wish part?  
Martha: I don't know how good this woman was but she sure could read the tealeaves  
Bob: So your sister Ann Elizabeth, Toots, she went to Salt Lake pretty soon in her life?  
Martha: Yes she was married when she was 16  
Bob: 16 and went off  
Martha: Married to John Austin  
Bob: And when to Salt Lake right then  
Martha: I went with John Austin for almost 2 years and I quit and went to Missoula on the job and her and John started going together  
Bob: That's when you went to Missoula that time  
Martha: Yes and then John married her  
Bob: Your brother Frank, who you call Swede, he disappeared when he went bootlegging  
Martha: Yes  
Bob: Was he having, was there no work at the mine?  
Martha: No he never worked at the mines. He worked for farmers, did some ranch work and anything that pertain to horses there. And he worked with Dr. Bergman the horse veterinarian and he worked with him. And he went in the service; he was still with the horses.  
Bob: He loved the horses  
Martha: Right, he was in the infantry. And Skinny did to  
Bob: And were they old enough to be in World War I?

Martha: Swede was in World War I. He was over in France. Skinny was in Fort Lewis and just got out at Fort Lewis when the war got over.

Bob: So he went to basic training and the war was over. Was he going to be in the infantry to? Was he a horse person?

Martha: No

Bob: Where do you think the horse part came from? Because you really weren't around a ranch.

Martha: I think from my mommy's brother, Bill, Will Holmes was a jockey.

Bob: Oh he was a jockey

Martha: I think it was mommy's side of the family, horses

Bob: Was he a jockey in Butte?

Martha: I really don't remember. I know he rode in Seattle. I remember mommy used to get letter from him. Sally if I do good at this, you'll have some money. And he always sent mom some money. And he past away in Seattle.

Bob: And your brothers, the boys, where did they get their horse riding ability from? Were there stables and such around your house there?

Martha: Swede through Dr. Bergman and he took horses to break horses

Bob: Dr. Bergman lived by you there?

Martha: No lived more towards town

BOB: Oh, towards town. Did the boys work for him?

Martha: He had a horse stable and they took care of horse. Swede got in with him.

Bob: He would go over there and ride

Martha: He could do anything with the horses. He took care of them

Bob: And how about Grace? Your sister Grace.

Martha: My sister Grace didn't do any more than she had to. She married early and left two kids for mom to raise. And when right down to California and cooked in big restaurants in California, on Market Street

Bob: And the two kids then is that whom you just told me about.

Martha: Mommy raised Tom and Jane until they were about 14, 15 years olds and then Grace came and got them.

Bob: That's would we just talked about

Martha: Yes, Grace took them to California and they are all gone now.

Bob: And how about Maude?

Martha: Maude married in California and never had any children

Bob: Never had any children. Do you ever know what happened to your half-sisters and brothers? David, Margaret and Florence

Martha: Margaret married an Olson who lived on South Montana Street here in Butte.

Bob: And what did Mr. Olson do?

Martha: I don't know what he did. He might have worked in the mines.

Bob: He was a miner too.

Martha: Ya and she is buried in Butte and her husband

Bob: Who's buried in Butte? Oh her husband.

Martha: And they had a little ranch up at Radersburg, where ever that is. It's like going toward Helena some place. It's before you come in to Helena and you come to a little town.

Bob: Like Clancy or somewhere in there

Martha: Not that far over  
Bob: Montana City country  
Martha: Oh maybe, somewhere in there, Radersburg  
Bob: Oh okay that way  
Martha:  
Bob: Well I think we covered most of those people. Do you remember the trains? Did you ever get to go on train rides?  
Martha: Yes from the Northern  
Bob: Northern Pacific  
Martha: The Moose use to give a picnic out at Durant.  
Bob: Oh okay  
Martha: You know where Durant is?  
Bob: I do  
Martha: We rode the train out  
Bob: Do you remember which train? That could have been the B.A.P.  
Martha: The N.P. wasn't it  
Bob: It was the N.P. wasn't it? Well they both went that way. Well the Milwaukee would have gone that way too.  
Martha: No this was the N.P.  
Bob: The N.P. you would ride out to Durant. Did you go to Fairmont or Gregson Hot Springs?  
Martha: Gregson Hot springs many a time.  
Bob: Was that on the train to? Or was that later when you had a car?  
Martha: On the train but we would have walk home.  
Bob: From Fairmont?  
Martha: McFadden's found out that they had an uncle living right back of Fairmont. So we would go over there and stay at his place over night.  
Bob: And then he would bring you to town.  
Martha: And he would bring us home. Otherwise we would walk home, walk to Butte.  
Bob: Wasn't there a train that would come back and stop there?  
Martha: I can't remember. I know we would get a ride over and have to walk back.  
Bob: And how about Pipestone?  
Martha: I never went to Pipestone. My mom did.  
Bob: She used to come. Maybe they never ran the train then.  
Bob: Well I think I've covered everything I wanted to talk to you and maybe I'll be back again to talk some more.

This concluded my oral interview with Martha. We had this conversation on March 27, 2001.



# Oral History Outline of the Interview

Bob Chamberlin  
Oral History Assignment  
Outline of Interview  
Butte History Class 323-01

- I. Introduction
  - A. Interview with Martha Martin (Telling, Nickolson)
  - B. Interviewee – Robert Chamberlin
  
- II. Review of tape problem
  
- III. Background
  - A. How Martha's family got to Butte
  - B. Go through list of siblings
  - C. Mother remarried – Martha's stepfather
  - D. Schooling
  
- IV. Lake Avoca
  
- V. Living in a tent while building a house
  - A. House
  - B. Other Relatives
    - 1) Stealing coal
    - 2) Brook Side School
  - C. Water and Well
  - D. Butte Water
  - E. Tunnels in uptown Butte
  - F. Gagnon Boarding House – working there
  - G. Street Cars
  - H. Chinese Gardens
  - I. Butte's West Side
  - J. Atherton Addition
  
- VI. Lake Avoca II
  
- VII. Working in Missoula and Dixon, MT
  
- VIII. Holland Rink
  - A. Skating
  - B. Skating by brother Dutch and his job at Western Iron
  
- IX. Gypsies and Butte neighborhoods
  
- X. Brophey's Grocery
  - A. Pickled Herring
  - B. Three o'clock tea & crumpets

- XI. More about brothers and a vet named Dr. Bergman
- XII. Radersburg and train ride to Durant Canyon
  - A. Fairmont/Gregson
  - B. Pipestone
- XIII. Closing with date of tape

# Release Form

Name: Martin, Martha Evelyn NICHOLSON, Telling Sex: F Race: WT  
 Last First Middle Maiden  
 Current Address: MEADOWLARK MAWR WHITEHALL JEFFERSON MT 59759  
 Street Town County State Zip Code  
 Telephone: (406) Birthplace: Butte DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of School: 8 Church Membership: PRESBYTERIAN

Grandparents:	DOB	Birthplace	Yrs of School	Occupation(s)	DOM	DOD
FaFa: <u>William Telling</u>	<u>Abt 1831</u>	<u>Purton, Eng.</u>		<u>Mason</u>	<u>4/14/52</u>	<u>-</u>
FaMo: <u>Ann Stillwell Hicks</u>	<u>1826</u>	<u>Purton, Eng.</u>		<u>glove maker</u>		

MoFa: Thomas Jenkins Holmes - B. Naidloes, Wales - Storekeeper - 1883  
 MoMo: Ann Mills Wangwrig, " 1886

Parents:	DOB	Birthplace	Yrs of School	Occupation(s)	DOM	DOD
<u>Sarah Ellen Telling</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>Llanthomas, Wales</u>		<u>housekeeper</u>		<u>1938</u>
<u>John Telling</u>	<u>1856</u>	<u>Purton, Wales</u>		<u>MASON-MINER</u>		<u>1909</u>

Siblings (in order of birth): Stepfather Frank James Bailley - married Sarah in 1914

Name	Sex	DOB	Birthplace	Yrs of School	Occupation(s)	DOM	DOD
<u>bro. DAVE</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>4/30/78</u>	<u>wales</u>			<u>1898</u>	
<u>sis. MARGARET</u>						<u>7/5/1933</u>	
<u>sis. FLORENCE</u>		<u>1885</u>	<u>Park City, Utah</u>			<u>10/1/1908</u>	<u>Jan. 17/88</u>
<u>Charles (Chick)</u>		<u>8/8/1889</u>	<u>Butte, mt</u>			<u>1915</u>	<u>1929</u>
<u>Maud (MARTY)</u>		<u>1901</u>	<u>Utah</u>			<u>1930</u>	<u>1936</u>
<u>Raymond (SKINNY)</u>		<u>1893</u>	<u>Butte</u>				<u>1952</u>
<u>FRANK (SWEDE)</u>		<u>1896</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>195</u>
<u>GRACE</u>		<u>1898</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>1966</u>
<u>Dorothy (DODD)</u>		<u>1900</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>1886</u>
<u>MARTHA (MAR)</u>		<u>Feb. 27, 1902</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>8</u>			
<u>William (BUZZ)</u>		<u>June 12, 1903</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>1996</u>
<u>STELLA</u>		<u>Sept 24, 1904</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>1906</u>
<u>Ann Elizabeth (FOOT)</u>		<u>Dec. 9, 1905</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>1998</u>
<u>John (JACK)</u>		<u>Aug 20, 1907</u>	<u>"</u>				<u>1984</u>

Occupational History (List jobs in order): \_\_\_\_\_ Date of First Employment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Position Company Dates

Spouse:	DOB	Birthplace	Yrs of School	Occupation(s)	DOM	DOD
<u>1. Laurence Nicholson</u>	<u>Apr. 13, 1901</u>	<u>Rocky Bar, Idaho</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>Miner</u>	<u>Aug 13, 1931 - Aug 7, 19</u>	
<u>2. Lester Martin</u>	<u>1895</u>	<u>Harrison, MT</u>		<u>Rancher</u>	<u>June 1971 - 1978</u>	

Children (in order of birth):	Name	Sex	DOB	Birthplace	Yrs of School	Occupation(s)	DOM	DOD
<u>Luella OKeefe</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Nov. 27, 1933</u>	<u>Harrison, MT</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Contractor</u>	<u>June, 1951</u>		
<u>James Thomas Nicholson</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>MAY 7, 1936</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>Truck Driver</u>			

