

VOICES FROM THE PAST

JOHN SCHWENDIMAN
SWITZERLAND TO UPPER
SNAKE RIVER VALLEY

By John Schwendiman

February 23, 1970

Tape #174

Oral Interview conducted by Harold Forbush

Transcribed by Louis Clements April 2003

Brigham Young University- Idaho

Through the facilities of the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society located on North Center, Rexburg, Idaho 83440 the taped interview that follows first placed on a reel-to-reel tape has now been copied onto a C-60 cassette this 19th day of October, 1984.

(The transcriber apologizes beforehand at the spelling of the names in Switzerland and did the best possible phonetically from the pronunciation.)

Forbush: Today it is my privilege to be in the home of Brother John Schwendiman, S C H W E N D I M A N, at 578 E. Street in Idaho Falls for the purpose of interviewing him pertaining to the Schwendiman family who originated many years ago in Switzerland and a family that has been so active and made such a tremendous contribution in the Upper Snake River Valley in settlement, in growth and development, and also who has contributed so much to the Mormon Church in the Upper Snake River Valley. It is the 23rd day of February, 1970. Present with us for this interview is his present wife, who is a convert to the Church and formerly of Switzerland, and a son, Mark, and his wife, Louise, and their daughter, Ellen, and myself, Harold Forbush, as the one making the interview.

Before we get into the history of the family, I should like to learn a little something about yourself. So will you state your full name and the date of your birth and where you were born?

Schwendiman: My name is John Schewendiman. I was born in the little town of Neiderstoken, near Tome, Campton Berne, Switzerland. I was born on the 7th Day of April, 1877.

Forbush: Now, we understand that you are a convert to the Church and could you tell us when the missionaries first came, who came, and the size of your family there? That is your mother and father and the brothers and sisters there in Switzerland when the Gospel was first introduced to the Schwendiman family.

Schwendiman: The first missionaries that came to the little town of Neiderstoken was in 1883, as I remember. There was an announcement made in the public school that these Mormon missionaries were coming to hold a cottage meeting in a private home. The name was Rosen. There was quite a bit of talk about these Mormons having horns and I don't know what all. During this period our family had moved to Oglestoken, about four or five miles north. My older brothers, Fred and Sam, were going to school in Neiderstoken so they were still going to school there. They wanted to go and see these strange people. I was kind of interested too. I wasn't of school age yet but I went along with them. We attended that cottage meeting.

So we heard the Gospel before our parents. I don't remember much about what was said, but we were not surprised because these people looked like any other people. They were clothed a little different, maybe. But after the meeting they inquired about these three boys, where they lived. They wanted to know about them.

So, I think it was the next day that the missionaries came to our home in Oglestoken and introduced themselves as Mormon missionaries. I think the first question mother asked them was how many wives they had. But they left some tracts and Father

was quite a Bible student. He read the tracts and looked up the references and was very much interested. After a while they came with some more tracts. The more he read the more interested he was. Finally they arranged to hold cottage meetings in our home.

Different missionaries came. I remember the names of several. One of them was Staley and Fauderlaugh. They were from Bear Lake. And this John Kunz.

Forbush: How large was your family at this time? That is, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

Schwendiman: At this time, there were, I think two of the family were born after we moved to Oglestoken. So there were six altogether when we left.

Forbush: What type of employment was your father engaged in?

Schwendiman: My father was a wheelwright. He made wheels and buggies and wagons.

Forbush: Was this on his own or was his working kind off for a factory?

Schwendiman: No, he had his own little shop next to our living room. I remember going into his shop and making some things and using his tools and misplacing them. Which he didn't like.

Forbush: This is quite typical of carpenters. Their children carry off their tools and they can't find them and this makes them rather unhappy. I know about this myself. Well, then, in the due course of time, the missionaries brought your family into the Church?

Schwendiman: Yes, they were converted. They were baptized on the 23rd of December, 1886.

Forbush: All of the family?

Schwendiman: No, just the parents, father and mother. It was a cold night in the middle of the winter with maybe a foot of snow. They had to walk probably a quarter of a mile to the creek where they were baptized. There was ice on the water, of course. They had to break the ice and make a pool.

Forbush: Then the older brothers, Fred and Sam, were baptized later?

Schwendiman: Fred and Sam were baptized the same year in April.

Forbush: What induced your family to come to America? I can appreciate that during the 18-1900's, that is to say in the later part of the Nineteenth Century the "call to Zion" was rather prominent. Was it this same spirit, would you say, that induced your father and mother to decide to come to Zion?

Schwendiman: One of the main things was, after they joined the Church, they were ostracized. People didn't patronize them any more. They were just looked down upon as outcasts. So that is one of the things that discouraged them.

Forbush: Because business has been somewhat flourishing before?

Schwendiman: Yes, and it fell off. Course they wanted to go o Zion. One of the things was that were converted to temple work, sealing for time and eternity.

Forbush: Were there neighbors, friends that you had who also joined the Church at this time?

Schwendiman: No, there were no others who joined. None of the Schwendiman family has joined the Church except one, who we learned of just three of four years ago.

Forbush: Now would this be a brother of your father?

Schwendiman: No, he's a distant relative.

Forbush: So the Schwendiman name in the Church has it's found through your father? As far as the Schwendiman's know.

Schwendiman: Yes, there are other Schwendiman's in the country. There are some back in North Dakota that we are in contact with from almost the same area in the country but we can't find any connection.

Forbush: Are they members of the Church?

Schwendiman: No, they are not members of the Church. I am sure they are related but they are not members.

Forbush: Well that's interesting. Well now, what year did your parents bring you to America?

Schwendiman: We left in May, 1886, and arrived in Montpelier along in June. We were about a month on the trip. John Kunz came and got us with a team and wagon. It was high water. The water was so high that it came in the wagon box in one place up the side of the horses. But we got through and they let us have one of their cabins, dirt roofed cabins to live in while we found a place to move.

Forbush: Now was this after you got to America?

Schwendiman: Yes, that was in Montpelier, where the Kunz's lived.

Forbush: Let's see now, you came to America by way of ship. Which port did you leave, since Switzerland is a county without a port, where did you leave from?

Schwendiman: We left from Holland, Amsterdam, I think.

Forbush: On the North Sea?

Schwendiman: Yes. We traveled through Germany.

Forbush: Then you landed in New York, possibly, or was it on the Mississippi River?

Schwendiman: No, it was in New York.

Forbush: There you got on a train and came across by railroad?

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: To Salt Lake?

Schwendiman: No, we came straight to Montpelier.

Forbush: And that's where this John Kunz met you?

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: With a wagon. And he had known you there as a missionary?

Schwendiman: Yes, he was the last missionary.

Forbush: It was to him that you give much of the credit for bringing you and your family into the Church.

Mrs. Schwendiman: Brother Forbush, have him tell you about the return trip in the ship. That was interesting. The ship you came over on, what happened to it?

Schwendiman: Well, we came third class. I think the name of the ship was Nethaga. It was an old ship. We heard later that it sank on the way back. We were on the last trip across for that ship. I remember we were down in steerage. It was a long, just an open place down there in the steerage. We had a long table and all sat at that table and were served. I remember the first meal we had was potatoes and corned beef and some hot biscuits. We enjoyed it. We were hungry after riding on the train and waiting to get on the boat. It tasted so good that we took some of these biscuits in our pockets. But we didn't eat them all across the ocean. I remember that some people had oranges on the boat. I smelt those oranges and every time after that I smelled oranges it almost made me sea sick. It was a long time before I could eat an orange.

Forbush: But this ship that you came over on, on its' way back to home port in Holland, it sank?

Schwendiman: Yes, it sank. It made its' last trip.

Forbush: Now, what were some of the activities in which your parents engaged? Your father, particularly, when he arrived.

Schwendiman: He was glad to get anything that he possibly could. It was pretty hard for him. He couldn't use his trade. All that was done at the blacksmith. He, I remember, one summer, he worked in a hay field for, I think, Rich's. They had a big hay field and put up a lot of hay. He helped stack hay.

Forbush: Now this would be the family of Ben E. Rich. Would this be right or would it be some of the relatives?

Schwendiman: It would be some of his brothers. One of them was a doctor. I don't remember all of their names. But anyway, he helped to hay for a dollar a day. He took his lunch and boarded at home. He worked more than ten hours a day. They worked at the shingle mill for seventy-five cents a day. I gardened for a man who owned the shingle mill for twenty-five cents a day.

I herded sheep for Mark Sutton one summer. I remember a circumstance. He had built a pole corral up in Paris canyon to put them in at night. Then in the morning we'd turn them out. One morning when I went there, the coyotes had got into the corral. It just had poles. They killed about three or four sheep. Others were sore and crippled. The rest of them were gone. I went, I was barefooted. All boys went barefooted all summer except on Sunday. I walked about three miles before I found those sheep way up on the hill. I brought them back and then reported what had happened.

Forbush: Now this episode that you relate occurred just out of Montpelier?

Schwendiman: No, it was in Paris, Paris Canyon, on the west side of the valley, the Montpelier Valley when you first...?

Schwendiman: Bear Lake Valley. It lies north and south, the lake. Bear Lake is in the southern part of the valley. Part of the lake is in Utah. The northern part is bottom land and it flooded every spring. Today it is drained since they built a canal and drained water from the lake. Much of it is farmed, good farming land. But at that time, a lot of it was willa and brush that wasn't good for anything. Some of it was hay but the hay wasn't any...

Forbush: Are the mountains mainly on the north and east and the west?

Schwendiman: Most of the mountains are on the west. They form a ridge between Bear Lake Valley and Cache Valley. To get from Bear Lake Valley to Cache Valley, you have to go over the mountains. Which is quite a high trip. At that time it was pretty hard road to travel.

Forbush: Did the mountains at all remind you of the mountains in Switzerland? Was there any resemblance?

Schwendiman: Not much. There not so high. These mountains here, well, east of Teton are mountains like the mountains of Switzerland.

Forbush: The Grand Teton Peaks, those mountains are comparable to Switzerland. This is what I have heard that the Teton Range are quite comparable to the Alps of Switzerland.

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: Now, as I understand, you had the principal town of Bear Lake was Montpelier. IT could have been Paris. Then there was another little community called Bern. Maybe you could comment about how Bern got its name, who settled there, and why it was named Bern?

Schwendiman: Well this place was settled by a family with the name of Kunz, a father and, I think there were three or four sons who settled there. They came from Berne and they named this place Bern. At the time we were there they were running a number of cows. I think they were milking about twenty cows. It was the custom there for people who had milk cows, more than they needed, they would send them there. They would get part of the proceeds of their cattle in cheese or butter or whatever they needed. So that's how these people settled there and made their living.

Forbush: The dairy industry including the manufacture of cheese was rather important in the Bear Lake County, wasn't it, in the early days?

Schwendiman: Yes, it was.

Forbush: And it was these Kunz's, I assume, that started this manufacture of cheese?

Schwendiman: As far as we know, they were probably the first ones to manufacture cheese there.

Forbush: Now, when did you first learn, you and your family, learn of the existence of this Upper Snake River Valley?

Schwendiman: This was in 1892, I think. My brother, Sam, was working for the Blackfoot Livestock Company. This company had bought some horses from Hyrum J. Clark in Teton, Teton City. This man, one of the men of the stock company, wanted my brother, Sam, to go with him to get these horses. So that's how he came up here. They had to go and find the horses on the range east of Teton. When they rode over that country there was grass that looked like it could be cut for hay all over those hills. It sure looked good to him. So when he came home he told us of this wonderful country up here.

The next year, 1893, he got my brother, Fred, and I think tow other boys to come up here and work for Hyrum Clark. He was a contractor and he was building a canal down what was called, I can't remember. Anyway it was down the country, down the valley. So they came up to work for him. This canal was being built with horses and scrapers. These boys worked for Hyrum Clark. My brother, Fred, was his bookkeeper. He kept the books and the time. He had to do some buying and looked after the business.

So in the fall, when they came back, they told father what a nice country this was. They figured this was the place they would like to locate. So it was decided and father sold out the place, the home and the little farm we had and the acreage we had in the bottom and made ready to move up here.

We three, Fred, Sam, and I came up in the spring.

Forbush: This was in May of 1884?

Schwendiman: 1894. We went up and worked on the Canyon Creek Canal. It was not finished at that time. We worked for stock in the canal. We knew we wanted some of that land under it. We worked there for a month and then we went to the timber for a couple of weeks and cut out some house logs. We knew we would have to build some homes. Then, this was about the 1st of July.

Forbush: Where did you get your house logs from? Would this be on the west or southwest?

Schwendiman: It was on Canyon Creek up on the hill between Teton Valley and Canyon Creek.

Forbush: Oh, I see, east and to the south.

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: Was there quite a lot of pine as well as quaking aspen?

Schwendiman: Yes. Well, we were up in the pines. So after we quit the logging we came and helped Johnny Pincock put up hay. It was haying time then and we helped him hay. Well, before this I should say that Sam, shortly after we quit timbering, Sam went home to help fathe3r put up the hay on his ground. Fred and I stayed and helped first Johnny Pincock put up his hay and then we went and worked with his brother, George. This was north of the Teton River. We worked there.

But Fred was doing some plowing. We got work that father had been sick. He'd had a sick spell but he was better again. Then on the 31st of July we got a telegram. I was working in the garden doing some weeding when I saw a man come up the road on a horseback. His horse was all wet with sweat. He had been riding a long ways. He came in and saw me there and asked me if Fred Schwendiman was working there. I told him yes, he was down to the field plowing. So he went down and handed him an envelope, a paper. I new there was something strange had happened.

So my brother unhitched his horses and showed me the telegram. It said, come home, father died. So we told the people there, Brother Pincock was there. I don't remember what he had been doing. Sister Pincock fixed some lunch for us. George hitched up his team and his white top and he took us to Market Lake, that's what it was called then. It's Roberts now. It was the nearest train station. It was about thirty miles, I suppose, from Sugar City to Market Lake. We got there in time to take the evening train and arrived in Montpelier the next morning.

Forbush: Rail service goes right through Montpelier, doesn't it?

Schwendiman: Yes. Sam was there to meet us with a team and wagon. It was the only conveyance we had. So we arrived there.

Forbush: This would have been a real tragedy in you boys life and your mothers to lose your father. How old a man was he at the time of his passing?

Schwendiman: He was not old. I think he was fifty-four years old. He died with appendicitis. They called it inflammation to the bowels. They didn't know what to do. They could have operated and he could have lived a long life.

Forbush: Were the Schwendiman family, as a family, large in stature or medium? How would you characterize their stature with you father and maybe grandfather?

Schwendiman: They were medium. Average family size. They were all long lived. My grandfather lived to be ninety-four, I think. My uncles, most of them lived to be eighty or ninety years old.

Forbush: This would be your father's brothers?

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: And on your mother's side, I imagine they were long lived?

Schwendiman: They were sturdy people, yes. So everything was sold and we then got ready to move.

Forbush: You brought your mother, of course, to, was it Newdale where you settled or Teton?

Schwendiman: No, Teton. There was no Newdale at that time.

Forbush: No Newdale at that time?

Schwendiman: No, it was all open country from Teton all east between Teton and Tetonia. There was a little settlement at Canyon Creek. They had a store there.

Forbush: Now, when Sam came across those mountains to Teton City the first trip over...

Schwendiman: There are no mountains to come over.

Forbush: How did he, which route did he follow?

Schwendiman: He came up through, well, most of it was valley. From Soda Springs over to Iona, he came over the, there's a highway through there now.

Forbush: Oh, I see. In other words Grays Lake, Bone, Idaho, down through that way to Iona and then right up the Valley. I was thinking in terms of maybe going up around through Freedom, Wyoming, you know, and Palisades and coming off the mountains.

Schwendiman: Oh, no. We came from Paris on the west side of the river through Nounan and crossed the river at Soda Springs, the Bear River. We camped there the first night, at Soda Springs. Then from Soda Springs we went straight north up through Grays Lake.

Forbush: Now this was when you moved into the Valley with your equipment?

Schwendiman: We had two teams, two wagons, loaded with our furniture and what we took and about forty head of cattle.

Forbush: Then you arrived with your mother and the entire family of boys, and let's see, were there any girls?

Schwendiman: No girls, just the six boys.

Forbush: In the Upper Snake River Valley in 1894 in the late summer...

Schwendiman: In August.

Forbush: In August of '94, where did you settle as far as you land was concerned? Who owns the property now?

Schwendiman: I really don't know. We bought eighty acres north of the Teton River at Wilford, just south of the town site of Wilford between Teton and Wilford. I think we paid \$550 for eighty acres at that time. We didn't have much cash. I know we traded, I think, four or five cows to make the deal. It was still during the Grover Cleveland Depression. I know we sold our best cow to a butcher for fifteen dollars.

Forbush: Isn't that tragic?

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: Now you mentioned Teton City in 1894 was just a small settlement.

Schwendiman: I think there were only three shingle roofed houses in Teton when we came there. We moved into a dirt covered house that we lived in at first, two winters.

Forbush: And this was in the settlement?

Schwendiman: Yes, this was in the settlement of Teton. Most of the houses were still dirt roofed; the log houses.

Forbush: Do you remember the names of some of your neighbors, those you were acquainted with that first winter?

Schwendiman: Yes. The home we lived in belonged to James Siddoway. He's the father of Clarence Siddoway. Sheepman. And Jacob Johnson, Johnny Pincock was the Bishop. I think Jacob Johnson was a councilor. James Siddoway was a councilor. The Thompson's.

Forbush: Any of the Clark's there?

Schwendiman: Yes. Hyrum Clark, the one who had the horses. He was a cattleman. And Eli Clark. Eli Clark was the grandfather of ...

Forbush: Had they commenced a road between Sugar City up to Teton and on up toward Canyon Creek? The present road of Highway 33?

Schwendiman: Oh, yes. Well, it went up through the same country but not the same road. Part of that road is still on my farm. It is still used.

Forbush: Now is that where your son, Mark, now lives?

Schwendiman: Yes. It went just across the place south of the house, where the house stands now. And up over the mountains back where it struck the creek, where the creek now is. There was no creek at that time, of course. But there used to be snow all around the gully and there was a bridge across the gully. It went on up through the canyon and up along there.

Forbush: Now, when you first started farming, you people in the area, it was watered. That is irrigated farming.

Schwendiman: No dry farming. I think we were some of the first that started dry farming and we didn't know much about it. We plowed up sod in the spring and tried to grow a crop on it.

Forbush: As I recall, and I am not positive, I'd like to have you confirm this. As you go further east along Highway 33 now there was someone, and I don't recall his name, who was purportedly the one to raise the first dry farm wheat in the area. This was about 1904. Now does this sound right or wrong? See, this would be about ten years after you

people arrived that the first dry farm wheat was produced in the Newdale area. This would be east of Newdale.

Schwendiman: I think that's probably correct. Now, my brother, Fred and some others grew flax seed for a year or two. That was before they tried wheat. He shipped a carload of flax seed once that was grown on those hills up there. But the freight on that shipping was too expensive. It didn't pay. So they quit the flax seed business and went to grain.

Forbush: So the first farming was right in the vicinity of Teton City and you diverted the waters from the Teton River?

Schwendiman: Yes, the first water was taken out of the Teton River, the first canal. There are two canals now out of the Teton.

Forbush: What are the names of those canals?

Schwendiman: One is the East Teton and then there is the Siddoway Canal. The East Teton comes from Fall River, siphoned across the Teton River.

Forbush: I see. Now let's see, these diversions were made above where the Teton River forks?

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: Quite a little ways above?

Schwendiman: Well, couldn't be very far above.

Forbush: Be on the south side, the diversion was made on the south side of the river, of course.

Schwendiman: Yes. There are canals taken out on the north side too to irrigate the Wilford flat. About the same place.

Forbush: What were some of your early crops there?

Schwendiman: Mostly wheat and oats. Some barley.

Forbush: Did you have any problem with frost?

Schwendiman: Yes. I remember one year it froze in August. We had some wheat but it wasn't good for flour. But the mill took it in and gave us some flour for it anyway at a big discount, of course. They were feeding hogs and could use it for feed.

Forbush: Where did you have to take your grain at that time to have it milled?

Schwendiman: At the Teton Mill.

Forbush: There was a mill? Who owned that at that time?

Schwendiman: I think it was a Siddoway, James Siddoway and his brother and maybe others interested. But I know James Siddoway was one of the main owners.

Forbush: Was this James Siddoway, did he have quite an interest in sheep? His son later became a big sheep man.

Schwendiman: No, not at that time. He was mostly, his was farming.

Forbush: In those days to go out and turn the soil and get the seed bed ready for the planting of wheat was quite a task. We look at the situation today with this huge equipment where they are able maybe to plow thirty or forty acres a day, what were some of your experiences back in 1894 to 1900 in turning the soil?

Schwendiman: Well, during that time we didn't do any dry farm. We had our eighty acres of irrigated land. We plowed that with a hand plow, two horses on a hand plow. We harrowed it the same way. The first grain we threw, we broadcast the seed and then harrowed it in. But later my neighbor had a drill and we hired him to plant our grain. It was harvested. We had to hire a man to bind it with a binder and chock it and we stacked it. We had it threshed with a horse powered thrashing machine that had to be fed by hand. The straw had to be stacked behind the machine. That was a big event when we had the thrashers. They had twelve head of horses to run the machine. There are six or eight men with the outfit. They had to be fed and the horses fed. So it was quite a time when we had the thrashers to thrash maybe five hundred bushel a day. So that's the way we started our farming but as soon as we got old enough and took up some land and went out and tried to do some dry farming. That was after 1900 along in 1902.

Forbush: And you would try to do as many acres of plowing per day as possible? You'd use a number of animals?

Schwendiman: To break up the soil we had four horses on a twelve inch plow to turn it over. It was pretty tough. Then we would harrow it and disc it and get it ready. We have quite a lot of experience about dry farming. You didn't do much the first year. You didn't run it but let it summer fallow. So it got too dry for growing a crop. The first crop we raised was an early grain. We raised a little but it was hardly worth thrashing. So we had to learn by experience which, of course, developed. We had to summer fallow and store moisture before we could grow a crop.

Forbush: Had quite a lot of the land east of Teton been taken up by ranchers, by we'll say 1902 or '03?

Schwendiman: Yes, quite a lot of it. A lot of it had been filed on but nothing had been done with it. The land we filed on then had been relinquished. It had been filed on

before and they hadn't done anything with it so we got their relinquish to file on it. Now the land that my brother bought had been filed on and had been homesteaded and proofed on but nothing had been done with the land. They just got a title to it. I think the hundred; no it was just eighty acres that this man owned where the town of Newdale stands. I think this was offered for seventeen hundred dollars, these eighty acres.

Forbush: That was owned by your brother, Sam?

Schwendiman: He bought it. I had the opportunity to buy it but I didn't have the money and no way to get the money.

Forbush: Now that is the present site of the community of Newdale?

Schwendiman: Yes.

Forbush: Did he farm it a few years before the foundations of the town were laid?

Schwendiman: I think he farmed part of it. Part of it was broken up. But the town site was laid out. He had the town site laid out and started selling lots. Some buildings were built before the railroad actually came through. The rail had been surveyed and decided and part of it was being built from Idaho Falls out on each way. But I remember I was the last team that crossed the highway before the track was laid. I came from the farm to go to Teton and I crossed and I saw them laying the track up from the north. I just stopped and saw them laying the tracks across the highway.

Forbush: Did they come from north and also from the south?

Schwendiman: I think so.

Forbush: They were working from both sides, I guess?

Schwendiman: From the north it came from St. Anthony as it was nearer than Idaho Falls.

Forbush: Do you recall, possibly, what year this might be?

Schwendiman: This was in 1916.

Forbush: And about this time the town of Newdale was organized and laid out?

Schwendiman: Yes. There were several buildings already built when the railroad was put through.

Forbush: Why was the railroad so determined to put a railroad into this area that is so that it would go up to Newdale, up to this little town?

Schwendiman: It was because of the wheat, the produce.

Forbush: Was there quite a bit of wheat available to be shipped at this time, by 1916?

Schwendiman: It was reported to be the second or third largest shipping point in the United States. All the elevators that had been built at that time, that is after this, along in the 16, 17, and 18, there were stacks of wheat stacked up in sacks as big as hay stacks, big as buildings. Thousands of sacks of wheat were stacked outside. So they needed the railroad to move this wheat.

Forbush: From what area would they bring the wheat into Newdale? How large an area?

Schwendiman: All the way from across Canyon Creek, which is a little settlement up there, Clementsville? The line between Madison County, or then it was Fremont County, and Teton County was the dividing line. East of there it went to Tetonia when the railroad was built there. The other all came to Newdale.

Forbush: So a good portion, at least the eastern portion, of the Rexburg Bench came to Newdale.

Schwendiman: Not the Rexburg Bench. The Rexburg Bench is south of Moody Creek. That went to Rexburg. But all this side of Moody Creek and east of Canyon Creek came to Newdale. And north of the Teton River.

Forbush: A lot of that is now Fremont County.

Schwendiman: Yes, part of Fremont County and part of Madison County.

Forbush: That's really impressive to know that Newdale was the second or third largest grain shipping area in the United States. That's really remarkable. Well, now, you six brothers moved into the area. Did you all engage in farming?

Schwendiman: No. We had to one time, all had land. But not very successful. Fred got married and started the hardware business. That was his main business.

Forbush: And where was that located?

Schwendiman: That was in Teton where he started. Then when Sugar City was built he moved to Sugar City. The company was organized and he was the manager of the hardware company in Sugar City.

Forbush: And the name of the company was...?

Schwendiman: I don't recall the name. There was the Austin brothers...

Forbush: From that store he would sell wagons and farm equipment, I suppose?

Schwendiman: No, no. No farm implements. He handled some furniture. He later organized a furniture store to and brother, Kris, was manager of that store for a while. Sam was in the cattle business more than farming.

Forbush: Where did he locate?

Schwendiman: He located in Teton.

Forbush: And all of the brothers did pretty much?

Schwendiman: Until Fred moved to Sugar City, we all lived in Newdale.

Forbush: Now for yourself, when were you married and to whom?

Schwendiman: I was married on the 8th of October, 1908, to Emma Lawrence in the Salt Lake Temple.

Forbush: Was she a young lady who had moved into the Teton area?

Schwendiman: No. She moved to Salt Lake. I remember meeting her twice when I was on my mission. Once before she was a member and then I remember she came to a conference that we had with a friend of hers that was a member. She was baptized then. But I never heard of her anymore until I went to conference in the spring of 1908. I had decided to quit the business in Sugar City.

After I came home from my mission in 1906 in February, I built a home in Sugar City. Before leaving for my mission I didn't do much farming. I started building. I built several homes in Teton and surroundings that are still standing. They are still in good condition. When I came home Kris was called on a mission so Fred asked me to take over the furniture business in Sugar City. I was in that business; I ran that furniture store for two years. But it wasn't what I liked. I could see it wasn't a paying business. There was too much credit. Too many people asked for credit. I could see the longer we were in business the deeper we got in. It was hard to collect and I figured we better get out before we got any farther. So we decided to sell out. We sold out during the summer of 1908 and finally got where we could close up. What was left, he took them to another store.

So I started farming. I got my plowing with a team and a twelve inch bottom plow in the fall of 1908. I did some fall plowing with this hand plow and one team. In the spring of 1909 I got some more horses and I got a two bottom disc plow with which I plowed up some 3 more sod. That's the way I started in farming on my hundred and sixty acres east of Teton.

Forbush: Now in the interest of time, with the tape time becoming less, I would just like to ask you, in the balance of your years in making a livelihood while you were actually engaged in making a livelihood for your family, was this done pretty much through farming and also building?

Schwendiman: Most of it was through farming. I finally got most of my land broke up and with the machinery and improvements I was able to make enough money to raise my family, educate them, send them on a mission, and come out on top.

Forbush: Now would you give the names of your children, of your own children, starting with the oldest and coming down to the youngest?

Schwendiman: John Leo was born on the 29th of September, 1909. Alvin was born on the 28th of August, 1911. Glen was born on the 3rd of December, 1913. Milda was born on the 7th of April, 1916. Ardel was born on the 3rd of May, 1918. Mark was born on the 8th of September, 1921.

Forbush: Mark is your youngest of the family. I know your son, John. Would you just comment what he is doing and what he has been doing fro the last few years?

Schwendiman: Well, he got his education in Sugar City, grade school and high school. Then he went to Moscow. There his main interest was in agriculture. He studied and graduated. He got a position with the Agricultural College at Pullman, Washington. He is still up there with a business in agriculture. His title is Plants and Material Specialist. He has supervision over the State of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and lately has been given Alaska as part of his field.

Forbush: Isn't that marvelous. When I was in Moscow in the late 40's, I think he was made a Bishop. Has he been a Stake President likewise?

Schwendiman: He's been on the High Council in Spokane, Washington, and has been a councilor in the Stake Presidency of the Lewiston Stake.

Forbush: Well, that's really remarkable. Because of the time it would be real fine to go into each one of your sons and daughters. We won't be able to do that. But I am sure that the have all excelled in their respective fields. Now, it's been my understanding that you and Sam and Kris, and which other one, worked together and sang together quite a little.

Schwendiman: All of us. All six of us.

Forbush: I suppose you've entertained many in the wards up and down the Upper Snake River Valley?

Schwendiman: Oh, I wouldn't say up and down. Probably Rexburg and I know we were in St. Anthony a time or two.

Mrs. Schwendiman: You entertained when they opened the telephone there for the first time up there. They were playing and the people could listen on the telephone.

Schwendiman: Oh, that was so long ago. But I remember when the first telephone came into Teton. They had it in the post office. They had us play the harmonica. We had a harmonica band. They had us play so they could listen to it in St. Anthony. The telephone poles were up Main Street, in the center of Main Street, from St. Anthony to Teton for the telephone line.

Forbush: In the years that passed, of course, you did lose your wife. She passed away. They you moved to Idaho Falls. You are now doing a lot of work and have been for quite a few years at the temple.