Voices from the Past

The Assessor of Madison County

By Kathleen Laverty

April 26, 1984

Tape # 68

Oral Interview conducted by Harold Forbush

Transcribed by Carol May October 2005

Brigham Young University- Idaho
HF: It’s a pleasure for the Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society of Rexburg, Idaho, to transfer onto a C-90 cassette this 26th day of April 1984 the interview that here and after follows which had been placed on reel to reel tape.

HF: [Indistinguishable]…It being the 6th of November 1971 to have come to my office here at Rexburg Kathleen Laverty. And, I have known this lady for quite a few years but we will find out from her today some interesting experiences that she has had in the area and perhaps some background of the Laverty as well as the Lavery names. Now, Kathleen, will you state to us your full name and how you spell the last name.

KL: Well my full name is Kathleen [indistinguishable] Laverty. L-A-V-E-R-T-Y.

HF: And when were you born and where?

KL: I was born October 19, 1901, in County Sudon Ireland.

HF: And will you give me the name, if you wish, you can give me the name of your father or if you prefer you can in addition give me the name of the old faded man who reared you in [indistinguishable] proper. However you wish to do. And you might tell me just how this was and if you wish.

KL: Well, my father’s name was Seelus Laverty. And my mother’s name was Mary Campbell before she was married.

HF: Now, did your parents bring you to America?

KL: No. My uncle and aunt, Will Lavery, and his wife went to – they were married in Ireland in 1899, and they came out here at that time. In 1906 they went back for a year. HF: To Ireland?

KL: To Ireland. And that’s when I came out, supposedly just for a visit of 5 years. But my aunt helped at that and, they were never able to make the trip back again and applied for Statehood.

HF: Were you adopted by them?

KL: No.

HF: You just were reared?

KL: And I’m not a foster child. I was just lived with them.

HF: You just lived with them. I see. Now, this was, in other words your aunt was the sister to your mother.
KL: To my mother.

HF: To your mother. And, how did they spell, in other words, how did William or Bill, how did he go? Did he go by the name of William or Bill or Will…?

KL: Everybody knew him as Bill.

HF: As Bill Lavery. How did he spell his name?

KL: The [indistinguishable] L-A-V-E-R-Y.

HF: In other words it doesn’t have the “t”?

KL: No “t”.

HF: No “t” and, in Ireland were your uncle, yes, were your uncle by marriage and your father in any way related?

KL: No way whatever.

HF: But there’s, uh, you know, it’s a coincidence…

KL: It’s just a coincidence.

HF: …of the similarity of the spelling of the name. Isn’t that interesting?

KL: Yeah.

HF: Now, can you tell me a little about your homeland in Ireland? I suppose from, as you remember it, or…can you remember anything about your homeland as a young…were you a young child before you left?

KL: Well, no. You see, I was only five when I left there. So I don’t remember too much about that. I went back in 1929.

HF: To your hometown?

KL: Yes. Yeah we lived on a farm. I had, um…

HF: Now what part of Ireland, would this be the southern Ireland or northern…

KL: No, this is under the English.

HF: This is northern…

KL: This is North Ireland.
HF: North Ireland.

KL: Yes.

HF: And, can you describe the countryside?

KL: Well, no. It’s hard. It’s too beautiful. You couldn’t. It’s the most beautiful country in the world, I think.

HF: So green.

KL: It’s so green and of course it has changed now, that’s quite a few years, since I was over. And most of the cottages were whitewashed cottages with thatched roofs at that time. And, I went by boat, when I went, and when we were, when the coast of Ireland came in sight it was just beautiful. The green, green, green and all those white thatched cottages. It was just…I don’t know what, it was just beautiful.

HF: And then as a child, in this hometown, you left when you were five and your folks were farmers.

KL: Yes, we lived on a farm. My brother’s still on the farm.

HF: You still have a living brother?

KL: I have two brothers in Ireland and I have two sisters and a brother in New York.

HF: Mm-hmm. And now, of course, both of your parents are deceased.

KL: They’re gone. Yes.

HF: Was they, did the town – did the farm where you lived, near the coast?

KL: It was, uh, no. It was approximately 25 miles from Belfast.

HF: Now, is that the capital of North Ireland?

KL: Yes. I think it is.

HF: Mm-hmm. What as you…?

KL: We were right on the banks of a loch. Loch Maide. And that’s a fishing loch.

HF: Loch, now that would be a lake?

KL: Yes. They call them lochs over there.
HF: There’s quite a closeness in the relationship with Ireland and Scotland, isn’t there?

KL: Yes.

HF: Now would this hometown where you were, you mentioned it was fairly close, near the coast…?

KL: Not too close.

HF: Not too close? I see. But…

KL: But I lived, we lived to, see Cookstown was our main town. And we lived about; I guess about 4-5 miles from Cookstown. And then Belfast was the largest city.

HF: Now you have, you mentioned you had a brother still living?

KL: On the farm.

HF: In Ireland.

KL: He’s still on the farm.

HF: How large a farm would that be?

KL: Well, I really, I never knew. Of course they’re not large like they are here. I would say it wouldn’t be over 60 acres.

HF: Mm-hmm.

KL: Because you know they raised lots of potatoes there. And flax. And that is our main…and I remember, doing the flax tying, you know, and they soaked the flax, in those kind of a, oh, something like a [undecipherable] hearing you know, and oh, the cold was terrible! You know it’s, it’s a, you get used to, it’s like they do to the pulp you know, that comes to the sugar factory.

HF: It used to be terrible.


HF: Well that’s very interesting. Well now, when you were five then your aunt and uncle came back and you, they brought you to America to…

KL: Just for a visit.
HF: ...just for a visit. Now, under the visa laws you could remain here up to five years. Is this...?

KL: I think that wasn’t in because I didn’t take out…

HF: As a visitor? Just as a visitor?

KL: No, I didn’t take any papers out until I got alive and go around to visit.

HF: I see. Uh, then…

KL: Well in fact, I didn’t know, we lived in…I didn’t know I wasn’t a citizen until, until I wanted to make the trip back. So then that’s when I took out my papers.

HF: Then subsequently you’ve, taken your papers out as a citizen?

KL: Yes.

HF: I’d like to comment…have you comment about that later on, maybe, in the tape in the interview, about how you, what experiences you’ve had, you know, and becoming a citizen. But first of all, do you have any impressions, recollections of your immigration to America when you were a little girl of five?

KL: Well, I just remember the ship. I remember the boat that we come on.

HF: And, what was the name of the boat?

KL: Uh, the Lucita… oh, I should’ve brought that with me, I had it… but I didn’t know you were going to be interested in that.

HF: The Titanic?

KL: No, no, no.

HF: And it wasn’t the Lusitania?

KL: No!

HF: Of course.

KL: Oh, I’ve forgotten the name… I have the book and all the passengers listed on it and everything.

HF: Passenger list.

KL: Yeah.
HF: I see. That’d be interesting. It was, quite a large boat, I suppose. A ship.

KL: Yes, it is the weight of it and the knots it made every day and everything else. But you know I can’t remember that. If you hadn’t asked me now, see I’d have known!

HF: Okay, now, had your aunt and uncle moved out into Idaho previously?

KL: They came right to Salem.

HF: When they first came…

KL: You see, when my uncle first came here, well he came in a roundabout way too. His brother BJ or Barney and Luke and John were already out here. Well Barney Lavery took a trip home in 1893, I guess it was, and he bought a roundtrip ticket. Well, when he got home, he decided to get married. So he had to buy tickets see to bring he and his wife both out and my uncle came out on his return ticket. He had no intention of coming out here. And that’s how he had to come.

HF: Now, your Uncle Will?

KL: Mm-hmm.

HF: But Barney, acquired himself a bride, an Irish bride…

KL: Yeah.

HF: What do they call them over there in Scotland that’s, Scottish Lassie. Now what would it be in…?

KL: Colleen! A colleen! An Irish Colleen.

HF: An Irish Colleen. C-O-L-L-

KL: C-O-L-

HF: E-E-N?

KL: E-E-N I think it was…

HF: Colleen? And that’s, uh…

KL: That’s just, uh…

HF: Kind of way of saying an Irish bride or something?
KL: Yeah.

HF: I see. And they returned to Salem? Barney and his wife?

KL: Yes. We’re down to Hebert, he lived in Hebert all his life.

HF: Barney did?

KL: Mm-hmmm.

HF: But this was Will’s first trip, of course, when he came back…

KL: Yeah, it was in 1894.

HF: When he came back with Barney. Now how about Luke and John?

KL: They came earlier than that. They were here before Barney Lavery was, but I don’t know how many years before.

HF: What was the occasion for them being here?

KL: Well, I imagine just like any of those other, that emigrated from the foreign countries, I imagine their farms wasn’t big enough to note and…

HF: So did, did any one of these brothers have anything to do with the railroad?

KL: Well, yeah, they worked on the railroads when they first came out, that is, Luke and John did. I don’t think Barney worked too much.

HF: Now, do you know which railroad this would be?

KL: Well that would be on the Oregon short-line.

HF: Now would this be the one that went up to Mount, to Market Lake?

KL: That would be the one that went up to Montana because they were, I think a around, Monida and up that way, you know into Montana. It’s where they, uh…

HF: See first of all this was a narrow gauge.

KL: Yes.

HF: …road from, Corinne, Utah.
KL: Well that’s where they worked was on the railroad and I think Luke was a foreman of some kind and I know that’s how my uncle worked under him. But I think BJ stayed mostly down here, in Hibbard.

HF: Now when did the family acquire land in Salem? Was this before Will came over?

KL: Oh yeah, yes. See, they had an older brother, Hugh, that was out here years and years before them. He acquired the place that I’m on now from Wellington Smith and he had filed on it and I don’t know what year, but Hugh Lavery bought it from him and then my uncle acquired it.

HF: Your uncle Bill acquired it.

KL: Uh-huh. Acquired it, that’s true. He lived here.

HF: I see. And so when they brought you back in 19…

KL: In 1906.

HF: …in 1906, they brought you to this home.

KL: Right to Salem.

HF: This home where you still live.

KL: Yes. Yes.

HF: Kathleen, can you, and let’s see, do you spell that K-A-T-H…


HF: Kathleen. Okay, when, can you recall some impressions of that homestead when you first got here? Your very first impressions that you can remember about the homestead out there in Salem. Maybe it would be of the house or of the trees or of your uncle and aunt…just what are some early impressions?

KL: It’s kind of hard because I don’t know. I just seemed like I didn’t know why I was, I wasn’t always there, you know? I didn’t, I was homesick, I know. That people use to tell that I used to, kind of, well, it’s kind of silly to tell you. They said I used to go out in the yard sometimes and I’d be tipping with a little stick, you know, and I’d say, “Ireland, Ireland, send Patrick and the Shamrock.” And I’d say, “When are we going to Cookstown?” That was our town, you know, at home. But I don’t know. I just, to tell you the truth I don’t…

HF: Did you, is it, how large a homestead was this?
KL: 160 acres.

HF: 160. And so…

KL: I don’t know it at the top, but that’s what it was.

HF: That’s what it was.

KL: Originally.

HF: Was there, when you first went there with Bill and his wife, your aunt and uncle, there was a home on the place.


HF: In ’99?

KL: The house that’s still there.

HF: I see. Could you describe that home as it, uh, as you originally saw it, as you remember from earlier days? I’m assuming that it’s been altered somewhat.

KL: Yeah. Well, it, yes, it was just the, big part of it then. The tall part. The slant, the kitchen part was built on later.

HF: And describe what it was then, as you remember.

KL: Well, it was just as I just remembered…it wasn’t painted. It was just, you know…

HF: Was it made out of logs?

K: Uh, no. It was, what do you call it?

HF: Frame?

KL: Frame home. Uh-huh.

HF: Frame home.

KL: Yes.

HF: And the home itself, was it situated – it is now, situated quite near the, near the road there, isn’t it?

KL: Well, it’s quite a ways, it’s not to far off.
HF: In other words there’s the road…

KL: Of course we had the lane at that time came in on the north and south roads, you know.

HF: Now there, there right, you live right adjacent to the intersection? It isn’t too far from the intersection.

KL: Yeah, right on the county line.

HF: Uh-huh, right on the county line. And so your home was actually in Fremont County.

KL: Yes. Uh-huh.

HF: And there’s a road running east and west and then there’s a road running north and south and you live right in between…

KL: Right on the corner.

HF: Right on the corner on the…

KL: On the Fremont County side.

HF: On the Fremont County side.

KL: Yes.

HF: And the home faces, uh…

KL: It faces the south.

HF: It faces the south.

KL: Uh-huh.

HF: I see. Now, at an early date did your people plant an apple orchard?

KL: Yes. We had a great big apple orchard.

HF: With various varieties of apples.

KL: Mm-hmm. And plums…

HF: And plums.
KL: …and cherries.

HF: I see. Were these planted pretty much when you arrived?

KL: I think that, no, I think that might’ve been done after. I don’t remember that too much.

HF: I see. Ah, and now, your uncle wouldn’t be your uncle, but Barney—BJ—continued to live down in Hibbard?

KL: Yes, he lived in Hibbard.

HF: And, how about Luke and John?

KL: They did too.

HF: In other words Bill and your aunt, what was her name?

KL: Mary.

HF: Bill and Mary continued to live there on…

KL: In Salem.

HF: In Salem. And, you…did they have children?

KL: No, that’s…they didn’t.

HF: They had no children?

KL: No.

HF: I see. And, so they reared you – where did you go to school?

KL: North Salem.

HF: And the school house, when you attended, was quite near your home, wasn’t it?

KL: Yeah, it’s under the hill there.

HF: Just under the hill.

KL: Between our place and where LeMar Mortensen lives.

HF: Just to the north.
KL: The old school is still there. It’s just the two rooms there.

HF: A two room school?

KL: A two room school, yeah.

HF: Was it a brick building?

KL: Yeah.

HF: Do you recall your first school teacher?

KL: Yes, Meg Cameron.

HF: Meg Cameron?

KL: Uh-huh. And she married, one of the Fullmers.

HF: Mm-hmm.

KL: She married, a cousin to Charlie and Monson.

HF: I see.

KL: She was my first teacher.

HF: And, this was, of course, in the first grade.

KL: Yes. The primary we called it. Primary grade.

HF: Uh-huh, and this must have been, what about 1907 or ’08 along in there?

KL: Uh, I think 19…It would be I think.

HF: Can you recall, just off hand, any of the playmate students of the time?

KL: Oh yes. Quite a few of them still here.

FH: Who were they?

KL: Well, the [indistinguishable], well, I shouldn’t say this “quite here and still here” cause there isn’t any. But they’re, the oldest, Ella Olsen at that time and Olga Morgansen and the McMinn girls and the, Earl Anderson. His brother was in my class with Alice. Charles Ward, just all those kids around there.
HF: I see, do you recall any later teachers that come to your mind that taught there at North Salem?

KL: Well, there was a Ms. McDonald that scared us all to death.

HF: Quite strict?

KL: Quite strict, I’ll say!

HF: Or was it the manner of her dress?

KL: No, it was just, she was just strict. Oh, we had Ms. McMurtchy and Mrs. Cassen, and, uh…

HF: Any man teacher?

KL: Well, I never had a man teacher, but they generally had a principal that was a Mr. Johnson, I believe from Wilford was the principal. And, but I never had a man teacher. And there was a Mr. Purr also, and he was from Nebraska. But, I guess I was lucky, I never got a man. [Laughing]

HF: Now, can you remember, Kathleen, some of the very early neighbors to you out in the, in that area?

KL: Oh, the Lovelands. You know, that lived, and, that lived up east of where Frank is, where Frank Dillan lives. And of course the Mortensens. You know, JP Mortensen and, Mrs. Lina Anderson, Hans P. Jensen, Willard Washton, all those people.

HF: The last two or three you named would be west of you, wouldn’t they?

KL: Yes, uh-huh. And JP Jenson was down low. And the Callaways, you know, Clyde’s dad, he was…

HF: Now they would be up further north?

KL: Uh, yeah…when I first knew them, he lived up east. East of us, Mr. Callaway, when he first come.

HF: Now Wilford Price lived up in there too, didn’t he?

KL: Mm-hmm. But I didn’t, visit, they, none of their kids come to school. I believe he moved to Sugar City early.

HF: I see.
KL: I don’t remember any of the, the, the Fullmers, you know, Moss and Charlie’s dad lived up in there too.

HF: What was his name?

KL: I believe it was Charlie. His brother was Sam, I know, that lived over here, in Salem.

HF: Now, in the rather early days of a, they had a, kind of a branch Sunday School and Primary of the LDS church over there in North Salem.

KL: They had Primary every week I think.

HF: Mm-hmmm. Did, how were the Lavery’s with you the day, were you able in those formative years of your life to go to a Catholic school or Catholic attendance or did you, did they allow you to go to this Primary, or what experience did you have?

KL: No, I never went to Primary, but our church was built in 1901 in Rexburg. Then when I graduated from the 8th grade, I went to the St. Mary’s of the Wasatch in Salt Lake.

HF: And this would be in Salt Lake?

KL: Uh-huh.

HF: I see. Now with your church having been constructed over here in Rexburg in 1901, then as a practice, did your aunt and uncle take you to church with them?

KL: No, we didn’t have church only once a month.

HF: Oh.

KL: And then sometimes, we didn’t have it that often and they’d have it sometimes they’d take turns and have it in one of the homes. Because we didn’t, they couldn’t, it was, in those early days it was, difficult to get a resident pastor, see.

HF: Mm-hmm.

KL: And they would have to come from Idaho Falls, to services.

HF: But there was this church was dedicated. There at least opened up in 1901.

KL: In 1901, yes.

HF: Where was that located in Rexburg?

KL: Well, it’s where it’s located now.
HF: West main?

KL: No down on…what is it? Yes. Right across from the depot in there.

HF: Mm-hmm.

KL: [Indistinguishable].

HF: And it, the one presently is a new one, isn’t it?

KL: Yes.

HF: And was it just, it replaced the former one?

KL: Yes.

HF: In the same, did they tear the old one down?

KL: The old one down and it, the new one is in a different, is built just a little closer to the street.

HF: I see. Kathleen, can you describe that first one that was built in 1901? Of course you wouldn’t remember then, but I mean, later on you attended it.

KL: Oh yes, it wasn’t…

HF: Tell me about it. How was it built? Was it made of…

KL: It was made of lumber. And it was just a plain, you know, it wasn’t very big. And it just had a steeple and a cross on it. It was painted white and it had, colored windows, you know, not, just painted you know, windows on it.

HF: The glass was colored, stained?

KL: The glass was, uh-huh, stained glass in, white and green and red, I think.

HF: Is that, typical of most Catholic chapels, churches? The stained glass?

KL: Oh, well, in that…

HF: Is it a kind of necessary thing?

KL: No, uh-uh, no. No, it just was a more or less to keep out sun, I guess, to make it, instead of having thick curtains on it, I’d imagine.
HF: Now inside of course would be…

KL: Just the pews and the altar.

HF: The pews and the altar. About how many people would it accommodate? Did that first one accommodate?

KL: Oh, well, it wasn’t very large. It would accommodate about, there were about twelve pews, I’d imagine, six on each side. Maybe seven people in each pew. But they didn’t need it very large. There were never that many Catholics.

HF: I see. And they wouldn’t hold church every week then, because of…

KL: Not in the early days because it just didn’t have the pastors to do it. But later on then, we had it.

HF: Do you recall, can you, who was the first pastor or father that you can remember?

KL: Oh, the first one that I can remember came from Idaho Falls and his name was Father Fox.

HF: Father Fox.

KL: Mm-hmm.

HF: You referred to them as Father, don’t you?

KL: Yes, uh-huh.

HF: And also as commonly as a pastor?


HF: Mm-hmm. When approximately did he serve this area? Father Fox?

KL: Oh, that must have, that was a way-way back.

HF: So you were a teenager?

KL: When I was little. No, I’m talking about when I was maybe 6 or 7 years old.

HF: Is that right? This, that’s when you got over here then.

KL: Oh yeah. That’s years and years. They had, they had, I think before him, they had a priest that used to come up from Pocatello. Father [indistinguishable]. That used to
come. That was, you know, before the church was built and you’d have services in the home.

HF: I see.

KL: But that was before my, before my time.

HF: Before your time, uh-huh. Now, how about in St. Anthony? Did they have, uh…

KL: No.

HF: A chapel over there?

KL: The same man, no it was filled, I think it was, oh, it might have been built around 19…I’m just guessing now, 1914 or ’15.

HF: The chapel over in St. Anthony?

KL: Mm-hmm.

HF: And it’s, it served the people in St. Anthony and Ashton and places like this?

KL: It does now, yes. Now, before that church was built we used to, they used to have services in the Episcopal Church.

HF: In St. Anthony?

KL: Uh-huh, yes.

HF: At, about, was there ever a time when they had a father to take care of the parishioners, the members, in Rexburg and also those in St. Anthony?

KL: Yeah, we have now. Father…

HF: I mean separately?

KL: Oh, no. Uh-uh.

HF: One father takes care of the two communities?

KL: Yes. St. Anthony now is called the Parish Church. Rexburg and Ashton and Roberts are called Mission Churches. Because the priest resides at St. Anthony.

HF: I see, I see, and that’s why they call it the…
KL: And he has church there every Sunday. You know, no matter what. Then the other churches are called Mission Churches.

HF: And that, they would hold forth only occasionally then?

KL: Well, we have it on Saturdays in Rexburg.

HF: On Saturdays?

KL: Mm-hmm, every Saturday.

HF: Is this a new innovation? Or has this been…

KL: It’s just new so that Father Steinhoff can get to more places. He has, he can go to Ashton, he can go to Roberts and he can go to Terreton by having our service at 7:30 on Saturday evenings.

HF: On Saturday evening?

KL: Uh-huh.

HF: I see. And now…

KL: He couldn’t have it on Friday evenings, that wouldn’t, that wouldn’t serve, it wouldn’t do us, it wouldn’t count for Sunday, but we can go on Saturday instead and still count for Church on Sunday.

HF: But you don’t recognize Saturday as your Sabbath Day, though, do you?

KL: No, it’s Sunday. But we can go on Saturday and it’ll count as going on Sunday, but we can’t go on Friday.

HF: And you have it in the evenings, on Saturday evening?

KL: Yes, on Saturday evening at 7:30.

HF: Now, while you were growing up, well, put it this way, after you graduated from eighth grade in Salem, you were sent to a Catholic School, a Wasatch [indistinguishable]. St. Mary’s of the Wasatch. And, how many years were you down there?

KL: Just for the high school, just for four years.

HF: For four years.

KL: Yes, I never went to college.
HF: I see. And this provides a comparable education of course to what the public schools offered in the same area.

KL: Yes, yes, only it’s, you had your religion, you see it’s a catholic school run by the sisters and we had to, now it was, we had a lot of, quite a few non-Catholics you know. It was a boarding school.

HF: I see.

KL: And we had, girls from, oh, from Montana and Nevada and California, you know, come to school there and, a lot of those were not Catholics but the Catholics had their own religion but the other ones weren’t required to take any, any, we had our religion classes separate from them.

HF: Now, would these classes all be taught by the sisters?

KL: Yes, uh-huh. They were all sisters.

HF: A priest, or a father wasn’t there to administer or anything?

KL: No, he would come and say mass, one of the priests from the cathedral would come in the morning, we didn’t have a chapel, as they’re called. He’d come, they had, but the non-Catholic girls were not required to take any religion.

HF: What sisterhood operated?

KL: The Holy Cross.

HF: The Holy Cross. And, has there been any change in that program since, down through the years? Is the Holy Cross Sisterhood still do this?

KL: We don’t have, the St. Mary’s of the Wasatch is not in operation now.

HF: Oh. How long did it continue to be in operation?

KL: Oh, I think it’s only been out about 10, no, I don’t know that there’s 30 years yet, might be. If they left, they closed the school and sold it.

HF: Now, didn’t they subsequently establish kind of a college down there, though, in Salt Lake?

KL: Well, yeah, but I wasn’t, no, not when I was going to school.

HF: Maybe it’s another…
KL: It was later, they had some, used to call it St. Mary’s, the Wasatch, and they had some college.

HF: But you don’t remember?

KL: No, I, that was after I left. So I couldn’t give you…

HF: There is some college down there, but I don’t…

KL: There used to be a college, a Hallow’s College. That was years ago.

HF: And was it operated by the Catholic people?

KL: It was operated by the, I believe that they called them the Maris Province…but that’s quite a…

HF: Have they ever, have they ever had a Catholic sponsored and operated school in eastern Idaho?

KL: Well, they just got a grade school in Idaho Falls.

HF: And what is it called?

KL: Holy Rosary.

HF: Holy Rosary Grade School?

KL: And then up north we’ve got quite a few schools.

HF: Yes, I’m sure there’s…

KL: They’ve got one in, Rupert, too.

HF: But the nearest one in this area, it’s in Idaho Falls.

KL: Yes.

HF: And does it take youngsters through the eight grade, or?

KL: Yes, I think it’s just the 8th grade.

HF: And they go into upper high school.

KL: Mm-hmm. But they, I believe that they, wanted a priest that has a class in the public high school for the Catholic students to teach his class.
HF: Kathleen, did you ever have a, growing up, an opportunity to associate with any other Catholic boys and girls in the Salem area? Were there any?

KL: There weren’t any!

HF: I wondered about this.

KL: No, it’s just…

HF: Now, as you would attend Church, on these occasions here in Rexburg or St. Anthony, when you were growing up, would you, did you have an opportunity, were there other boys and girls?

KL: Oh, yeah. There were a few, coming and going. That’s the worst of it. Families move in and then they move on.

HF: I suppose this is so. Can you call to mind some of the Catholic families that have lived and maybe still continue to live in the Upper Snake River Valley that you knew when you were a young girl?

KL: Well, I don’t know. They’re pretty scarce now. There’s the Ives’s in St. Anthony. And of course, Dr. Truxoll’s mother, you know, his family, but she’s gone now. And the, uh…

HF: Now, on that family, would that be the Carter family?

KL: Uh-huh, Carter’s and Clark Peter’s.

HF: A. M. Carter, was it?

KL: Uh-huh, mm-hmm.

HF: Was it? Do you remember him?

KL: Oh yes. He died here when I was over in Ireland.

HF: Oh, is that right?

KL: And I was over there in ’29 and ’30. He died while I was over there.

HF: Now, his daughter, he had a daughter, Marietta.

KL: Yeah, that’s Dr. Truxoll’s mother.

HF: Dr. Truxoll’s mother?
KL: Mm-hmmm.

HF: Was she quite an active lady in…

KL: Oh yes.

HF: …in the Catholic Church?

KL: Yes.

HF: And also in the Community?

KL: Yes. Well, yeah, she was quite active, I think.

HF: Was Mr. and Mrs. Carter quite active in the Catholic Church?

KL: Oh, Mr. Carter was and Mrs. Carter died years and years ago.

HF: Oh, so he…

KL: He was, I think she was died when Marietta was just about 9 years old or so. But he never remarried.

HF: Oh, I see. He had a ranch west of Rexburg.

KL: Uh-huh. Doctor Rigby bought it, you know, after he, uh…

HF: Dr. Hardle Rigby?

KL: Mm-hmm. He bought that after, Truxoll sold it to him. It’s quite a few years ago now.

HF: I see.

KL: Time goes so fast.

HF: Now, let’s see, Mrs. Marietta Carter, who did she marry?

KL: She married, a Truxoll. I think his name was Albert.

HF: Albert Truxoll.

KL: Albert Truxoll, now what he did, I do not know. Because he died, I think, about 1919.

HF: Oh, I see. And the doctor is the son of this marriage.
KL: Yes, uh-huh.

HF: Were there others in the family besides Dr. Truxoll, the boy?

KL: No, just the one.

HF: Just the one son?

KL: Because, they weren’t, Dr. Truxoll was just a baby when his dad died. He died of the flu, you know that, they had that epidemic.

HF: Oh, in ’19, ’18 and ’19.

KL: That’s what took my aunt, was in 1918 and I think Albert’s dad died about 1919. Albert was just a baby.

HF: Was the doctor quite active in these years, obviously, in the Catholic Church?

KL: Yes.

HF: He was surely a fine doctor, too, here in Rexburg.

KL: Yeah, I think he was a good doctor.

HF: He was very, very much respected, I’m sure. Well, now you, you comment that your aunt passed away in that flu.

KL: Yes, she died in 1918.

HF: In 1918. And that left Bill alone.

KL: Yes. I guess that’s why I stayed.

HF: And that’s why you stayed.

KL: And they stayed and kept house, you know, and I stayed home.

HF: And you never married, did you?

KL: Nope.

HF: Was your uncle Bill inclined to attend Catholic services?

KL: Oh, I’d say.
HF: He was quite staunch about it?

KL: Oh, I should say, all the Lavery men were. Yeah.

HF: Is that right? Well, now, Kathleen, have you had any experiences, now if it’s unpleasant I don’t suppose that it would be proper to mention them, but have you had any, oh, uninteresting experiences as a Catholic faith living in a Mormon community that would be kind of interesting to relate?

KL: Well, I don’t think so, I’ve, we’ve always got along so well, you know with, uh…

HF: With your neighbors.

KL: …with our neighbors. I mean, you never even think of religion. Never even…

HF: In other words, little incidents or quarrels or episodes just never arisen?

KL: Oh, nothing like that! Uh-uh. No, we had, we used to have the preachers, you know, or the what do you call them…?

HF: Ward teachers?

KL: The ward…Not…no.

HF: Well, they’re home teachers now.

KL: Well, no, they’d be from stake or something you know.

HF: Oh, the missionaries.

KL: I guess that would be. And but there was never, my uncle always just told them that he had his own faith and he respected everybody else’s and he wanted to live his as he wanted to and they would just visit awhile and everything. Never any, any arguments. Never was any arguments that ever took place. He always treated them with respect and in their turn…

HF: Now, did the Relief Society sisters ever come and pay a social call to your home?

KL: Well, no they never have until uh…

HF: [Turn to side two to continue]

HF: [Side two continuing the interview with Kathleen Laverty. And the same will be completed.]

KL: I always remember [Indistinguishable].
HF: I see. How about ward teachers?

KL: No, no.

HF: They haven’t, I see. Well, I wondered about a little item like this. I guess, just how, uh, I suppose you’ve been invited to, um, maybe attend the meetings?

KL: Oh, I’ve gone to Relief Society and I’ve gone to…

HF: You’ve been to those?

KL: Yes.

HF: And you’ve always been…

KL: And I’ve been to all the ward reunions [indistinguishable] take place in the church over there, I go…

HF: It’s been a happy relationship.

KL: I don’t know, it just…

HF: Well, I want to bring up one item. Years ago when I interviewed Alma B. Larson, he commented that during the days that the polygamy issue was pretty vital in Salem and this would have been about 1885, ’86, ’87, and uh, probably this was quite a long time, of course, before you came to America…

KL: Before I was born!

HF: And before you were born?

KL: Yeah.

HF: And, uh, and there occasion arose wherein the first bishop of that ward was involved and he was taken to Blackfoot and there jailed on the polygamy question. It was one of your relatives, in other words…

KL: That was BJ.

HF: It was BJ Lavery.

KL: Uh-huh. That was BJ. But I don’t know the details of it. But I know he is the one that went down to Blackfoot…

HF: And paid the…
KL: And got him out of jail somewhere…

HF: And brought him back…

KL: Yes, yes…

HF: To his community.

KL: Yes.

HF: And, uh…

KL: But then, uh, they always called BJ the lawyer of the family, anyway.

HF: Oh, is that right?

KL: Yeah. He had the Gift of the Gab, as they say in Ireland.

HF: The Gift of the Gab?

KL: Yes.

HF: Tell me a little about the man. Was he a big man or small man?

KL: No, he was small man. Now, Luke Lavery was a big man. And, uh, John was tall but thin I think. I never saw John he was dead before I…but I remember Luke Lavery. But BJ was slight.

HF: Not to tall either.

KL: No, he wasn’t too tall, but slight build.

HF: He lived, uh, you mentioned that he…

KL: He lived in Hibbard all his life. As a farmer.

HF: As a farmer.

KL: And he used to build bridges too.

HF: For, for…

KL: For the county. Uh-huh. But, uh, I think he got in the early days as I have been told quite a few of the young fellows out of trouble, you know, they’d maybe celebrate a little too much at the dances and get a little rowdy and get, uh, booked up for it and BJ, they
always called him their lawyer he was always the one that went and got them out of their predicament.

HF: For, because of his talking skill?
KL: Just his ability…yes his talking skill.

HF: And, uh, then maybe he had a little money too, to bail them out?
KL: Well, no, I don’t know that.

HF: You don’t think it’s so much that?
KL: No, I think it’s just more that he could get them off with his talking.

HF: Isn’t that interesting. Now, did he have a family?
KL: Oh yes.

HF: Of children?
KL: Uh-huh.

HF: How many children did he have?
KL: Um, seven.

HF: Seven children. Now, are any of those still living in the Upper Snake River Valley?
KL: He’s got two boys living in Rexburg here. Bill and Tony.

HF: Bill and Tony?
KL: Mm-hmm.

HF: I see. Now, uh…

KL: And his daughter lives in Helen. Two boys are dead and his other daughter.

HF: Did John have any children?
KL: He had two boys and they’re both dead, now.

HF: And how about Luke?
KL: Luke, uh, and his first wife had 4 children, but they all died early and his wife died and then Luke remarried again and they had no children with the second marriage.

HF: And of course your Uncle Bill had no family.

KL: Uh-huh.

HF: So it would be BJ’s family that represent the Lavery family in the area.

KL: Yes but neither one of the boys married and there’s no Lavery’s…there’s no young Lavery’s now.

HF: That’s rather unfortunate, isn’t it in a sense to look at it that way.

KL: Course there are the brothers that lived in Ireland, they had boys in their family but there isn’t any out here, out in the west here.

HF: And now, um, this little experience that you had to go back to your homeland in 1928, uh, you found out as you prepared to get your papers that you weren’t a citizen and so you had to go through some procedures.

KL: Yeah, when I went to get a passport to go. And that’s when I started to file a intention, you know, to become a citizen. But then I had to file a reentry permit. I had to get a reentry permit because I didn’t get my papers through till I came back. Oh, I had to go to Salt Lake to the immigration office and runaround here, and there, and everywhere. But it’s all so long ago now that I’ve forgotten…

HF: On your trip did you just stay a month or so?

KL: No, I stayed a year.

HF: Oh, did you?

KL: Yeah.

HF: And then after you got back, of course, you followed the procedure to, to, of paying your citizenship. Who granted you that citizenship?

KL: Oh, it was…

HF: Which judge?

KL: Oh, it was Judge…he’s dead now, oh it was, I was thinking of…I had to get it in Idaho Falls, I got it at the, uh…

HF: CJ Taylor?
KL: No, it was…it was Taylor, I believe. CJ Taylor. It was Burwink…Burwink was the uh, the Idaho Falls, it had to be the clerks, don’t you? Yeah, it was Burwink. He’s dead now and I think it was Taylor.

HF: That granted you the papers.

KL: Yes, uh-huh.

HF: You had to study a little about the US Government, Civics…

KL: Yes, and then we were interviewed, questioned, you know.

HF: Were there several with you?

KL: I think there were about five that day. I was the only one from Ireland as I recall.

HF: As I, in chatting with you, the thought just went through my mind of, uh, some of the wonderful Irish songs. Have you had a chance to retain and get some of these and play them and use them in your life to keep the…

KL: Well, I don’t, uh…

HF: A recollection of Ireland?

KL: Well I don’t either sing or play, but I have an Irish songbook right from Ireland.

HF: I bet it’s quite a cherished item to you, isn’t it.

KL: Uh-huh. Well it was given in 1906 when we came out here my mother’s uncle gave my aunt this songbook. He wrote in it before his departure. And then he also gave me a book, and it’s all pictures of the giant causeway in Ireland.

HF: Isn’t that wonderful?

KL: And I rode both ferries.

HF: Well now Kathleen when did your Uncle Bill pass away?

KL: In 1959.

HF: And so you have lived alone then for some 20 years?

KL: Yes.

HF: Did he pass away at the home?
KL: Yes.

HF: And, uh…

KL: Quite sudden, he was only a week ill.

HF: I see. You have had an opportunity for employment here in town during that time.

KL: I worked for Kings for quite a few years. I don’t work now.

HF: How did that come to be? I mean, uh, did you, uh…?

KL: Oh, I just got a, I never really thought I’d get a job and I just thought, well it’d be kind of nice, you know, to work. So, I didn’t apply till ’52, 1952 and I forgot all about it and they called me up to take somebody’s place.

HF: Who was managing the store at that time?

KL: Oh, Mr. Holbrook. And…

HF: The King’s store had been in existence for quite awhile in here in Rexburg, hasn’t it?

KL: Yes, uh-huh. Mr. Hassley’s and [indistinguishable] father was one of the managers.

HF: For several years?

KL: Yes, and then, uh, I think there’s a couple of managers besides him. That was years before, before Mr. Holbrook. But I went to take his place, I was an “A” girl and I was supposed to work until school let out, you know the latter part of May. So, I worked for 17 years. I never…I just went to work for the two or three weeks and I was there for 17 years.

HF: Following Mr. Holbrook who managed the store?

KL: There was Mr. Holbrook and Mr. Johnson. Jean, and Greg Field and now Mr. Monson.

HF: Mm-hmm. Very interesting. Oh, this was a happy relationship, a happy experience, I think, for you. Was it not?

KL: I enjoyed it.

HF: You got to keep a little busy and get a little money into the family.
KL: Yeah.

HF: Now, since your uncle, since his passing, have you had people leasing your property out there?

KL: Yes. Matt Mortensen…

HF: Takes care of it.

KL: Yes. Well, I sold him a hundred acres.

HF: Oh. I see.

KL: [Indistinguishable].

HF: Do you occasionally get a visit from your relatives in New York? Do they come out occasionally?

KL: No, my sister hasn’t been out in quite a few years.

HF: Now this would be the older…?

KL: No, they go the other way. I’ve got my, the oldest wanted a family, my sister Mary, is in New York, her family is all married and then I have another sister there also, but when they go they just hop on the plane and go to Ireland. They don’t come this way.

HF: Well isn’t that interesting?

KL: They go over there quite often.

HF: Now as we close, Kathleen, I’m wondering if you could give me a list, enumerate those who have served, those Catholic fathers who have served this area of Rexburg and St. Anthony as you remember, starting with Father Fox, I guess.

KL: Well Father Fox. And there’s a Father Williams, Father Davis, Father Kriegen, Father King, Father Hallacy, Father Sullivan, Father O’Connor, Father Carroll, Father Dufont, Father Shermanson, Father Steinhoff…

HF: That’s remarkable. That’s remarkable in being able to call those…

KL: And that’s not all of them that, uh…

HF: That you can recall.

KL: I know all those years.
HF: Some of them would serve longer periods than others, I suppose.

KL: Well after we started getting a resident priest in St. Anthony they served about four years and then they, changed…

HF: Then they replaced.

KL: Replaced, uh-huh.

HF: I see. Can you recall the circumstances how they decided to put another church up here in Rexburg, I imagine there was a lot of preliminary talk about what size it was going to be and it’s need for another church and do you recall some of these meetings?

KL: You mean the Rexburg Church?

HF: Uh-huh, the Rexburg Church.

KL: All the families that lived here then just wanted the church and they went ahead and build it. That was Mr. Carter and the Lavery brothers and the John Sibly family…

HF: Now was this the second Church?

KL: No, this one here, the first Church. You mean the second church?

HF: Well, no, we’ll just go on there with what you’re saying there. In other words…

KL: That’s the ones that built first Church.

HF: In other words what they decided as a people…

KL: Well, they wanted a Church and so they...because there wasn’t any in St. Anthony at that time.

HF: Uh-huh…

KL: Idaho Falls was the area.

HF: And so they…

KL: But then this new Church, I guess the old one just wasn’t up to…they wanted something more modern…

HF: Mm-hmm…

KL: I guess.
HF: I imagine that there are some statistics that the Father Steinhoff would have.

KL: I think he could find those for you, but he’d have to find them in Boise. But I think there’s records there.

HF: Now Boise is the Arch Dieses…

KL: The Dieses. And I’m sure that there’s records there. It’d be more correct than anything I can give you.

HF: Kathleen, I can remember as a little boy coming out to Bill Lavery’s and it seems to me as though I recall that when we would get apples out there, but I’m not real positive, out at the Lavery’s, Bill Lavery’s, and this would have been in the early ’30’s, and a lot of time has passed, but I remember you, you know, in that time how kindly and gracious you were all the time…

KL: Thank you…maybe sometimes I wasn’t…not always gracious and kindly, I’ve got an Irish temper too!

HF: Well, as far as I’m concerned, you never displayed it in my presence. And I want to thank you this afternoon for this visit.

KL: Well, I have enjoyed it very much.