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HENRY LAVOIE  Born May 30, 1896  
Father's name Firmin Lavoie  
Mother's name Ida Cyr

Henry's father came to Ftown from Grand Island Maine in 1888. (He was French Canadian) He had heard that wages were higher out here. When he first arrived he went to the home of Frank Therriault. (Friend or relative?) They gave him some coffee to drink - he thought it was terrible stuff. For dessert they gave him ice cream. He had never tasted ice cream before so he thought in Montana they had the coldest damn pudding. Henry and his brother (Alex) came out here together on a train. They couldn't talk English. They didn't know there was a rest room on the train so they had to make their rest room stops whenever the train stopped at a depot etc.

Henry's father worked at the Bonner Mill for one winter (1888) Then he went working in the woods - first as a ratchet setter, then a sawyer. He worked sawing for about 23 years. He had no formal education.

Henry's grandfather was Eloi Cyr. They arrived here abt 1876. Henry's parents lived with Henry's grandparents for a while on the present Cyr ranch.

Henry's parents went to Granite, Idaho in 1899 (Henry was three yrs. old) Pete Longpre owned the place where Henry now lives. Henry's parents came back from Idaho & bought the ranch at Huson in 1905. Henry started first grade then at Huson. He was abt 8 yrs old. His first grade teacher's name was Jim Miller. 2nd grade was Wm. Touchette, then a Mrs. Burr. He went to school at Huson till he was 16 yrs. old. He can remember at one time that one teacher had 68 students. Henry went to school with Henry Clemens. In 8th grade, Henry Clemens was Henry's last teacher.

Went to school with Boyers, Scheffers, Beaugarde, Longpres, Cadieux, Clemens are some of names he remembers. Says Huson school was located approximately where the slough & field make a point in Scheffer's field - near where Archie Beaugarde's little house was. It was boarded with uioright boards. Main building was log - and they had to put an addition on it because they had so many kids.

Man that owned sawmill at Huson was named Huson.

When they were logging up Houle Creek, hauled the logs down to the railroad spur
that was near where the present Lavoie Underpass is now. The name of RR Spur was Tindle.

Years later Henry & George Boyer requested the spur back again so they could have their grain hauled from there. They sacked the grain and loaded it on railroad cars. Had to make arrangements for the RR car with the RR agent at the Depot ahead of time.

The Cheff's proved on the Thompson place. (Got water right on the 6-mile and build ditch that came out of Gleason place. They raised potatoes there.

Henry remembers that Louis Brown lived in a place in the upper orchard above Boyer home.

1864 - water rights were obtained for the Thompson place.

Neejay (sp) & Prezneau first owned present Lavoie ranch. Then Pete Longpre - Then Lavoie.

Lavoie bought pasture from Cheff's (behind where Dan Rose lives) in 1906.

Henry played on the Huson baseball team.

Lavoie's had their own sawmill - ran on steam. Had 15 horsepower. Henry ran the mill, his Dad was sawyer and his brother Joe was ratchet setter.

Henry tells of making hinges for gates etc. from sled runners salvaged from logging operations behind the Remount.

Remembers the big forest fire of (?) 1910. Said it was all cloudy & smoky in the valley.

Henry & Roy Beauregarde decided to skip school. They went down in the bottom land behind the school and hid in a hay stack. They could see the school from where they were hiding. Some of the cattle were mean and wouldn't let the kids get down from the hay stack so they had to wait till Deschamps came to feed the cattle and rode out with them. A couple of kids told on them (was Dan & Bill Longpre - probably best not to print who) so teacher made Henry & Roy get a switch and he paddled them with it. Needless to say Henry & Roy got even with the tattletales.

Henry remembers when the Milwaukee RR went through the valley - (1908). He has a picture of same. Later Henry worked on the electrification of Milwaukee RR for about 6 months as they went through the valley. He quit when they got to Alberton. Went back to farming.
Henry went to the 8th grade but didn't finish the grade. Went farming. Then he went to the service (WWI) in 1918 - he landed in Liverpool, England. He went to military police school in France. Then was stationed in Germany for about 7 months. Saw many sites such as St. Peter's Basilica - went to Mass there. Also St. Marys. Saw Christopher Columbus' home in Genoa. He was discharged from service in 1919 (**) so was in the service abt. 22 months? While in the service he started out on OE - then was a baker. After he got out of the service he thought of maybe starting a bakery of his own but he came home to visit his father and ended up farming again. He batched & lived on the Thompson place till it burned. He tells of working long, long hours; up at 4 a.m. and work till dark. Tells of bachelor fare - diet of salt pork.

Henry remembers Napoleon Claude and son George called Jr. Henry played fiddle at some of the dances at the Claude dance hall in Huson. His brother Joe Lavoie played the accordion. Emma (Foster)Lauzier played the piano. They also played at house parties and at Cyr for Daigle cousins. Henry learned to play the violin just by listening - ear in other words. His violin had been made in Italy - it burned in the fire on the Thompson place. They played for free at these dances. When the bow of his fiddle needed replenishing, Henry used horse hair from the tail of his horse, "Bill".

Henry remembers Bill Royer & JR Claude running a butcher shop in Huson.

Abt. 1924-25 Henry contacted Meningitis & Polio. Was very ill but seemingly came through the ordeal without any after effects. Was in the _______ hospital in Missoula.

McCoy was name of agent he remembers at Huson Depot. Remembers the name Sarafino. Says they lived across from Jim Richardson's at NOXAX 6-mile. They had gardens there & sold vegetables.

NP railroad came through first. When Milwaukee came through it crossed the NP trac at Huson (still does) so it was necessary to have a control tower with levers to operate the signals. Had to be manned at all times. Remembers names of men that worked there as: Atkinson, Hughes & Al Hansen. Men were later replaced by electrical switches etc.

Henry remembers the (first) St. John's Day Celebration as being in 1908 with Father
Legris being pastor then. Remembers they had trotting horse races. Also remembers
of having a gas balloon as a big attraction. They launched it from the ground - cut
it loose. Then when the balloon got too high, the men parachuted out. Henry remembers
that one landed in the slough behind the school. Pulled him out of the mud and he was 0

Says high school was built with debentures and donations from the parish. (Ftown)

Says Phillip Deschamps built & owned the Millcreek Pavilion. It was a bootlegging
haven during prohibition days. Says pavilion was a roof and floor with open sides. Man
memorable dances held there.

Tells how Napoleon Claude moved boiler that had been used for steam power at lumber
mill up Millcreek (loaded it on wagons etc. with horses) and brought it down to Huson
as he planned to use it to heat the hotel etc. But after he went to all that work when
the boiler was inspected it was found to have bullet hole(or holes) in it and not fit
for use as he had planned.

Henry tells that Napoleon Glade was a very generous person. — would loan you
anything you wanted but wouldn't sell anything because he might need it. Henry tells
how he wanted to buy a buzz saw and he really needed it
badly but Glade wouldn't sell it to him. Archie Beauregarde told Henry "borrow it
from him" which he did and he still has it to this day.

Henry bought his first tractor in 1936 — also threshing machine. Found that
it was cheaper to run tractor than horses, as fuel was cheaper than hay & grain. — It
took 14 horses to run 2 gang plows — 1 tractor to do same. Tractor plowed abt 40 acres
a day (10 hr. day) while each gang of horses plowed 4 acres each (2 gangs did 8 acres a
day). It took 13 teams to do the threshing. The horses were always kept in the barn
so must have a large barn and always had a barn to clean with that many horses. Figures
it took abt 600 bushels of grain to feed horses during threshing.

During the depression grain prices fell down to 50-60¢ a bushel. So he didn't sell
his grain. He stored it for two years when prices went up to $1.25 a bushel and then
sold it. Of course he had to sell some of it to operate during the two years but he
had pigs and cattle to fall back on and his living expenses as a bachelor were nil. He
lived on salt pork and worked long, hard hours thus surviving the depression years quite well. When he had stored his grain yield that year had been terrific - abt. 50 bushels to the acre.

Henry suffered a tragedy in 1955 losing his right hand in a hay baler incident, but this hasn't slowed him down. He is a very active community sports booster.

Income tax didn't have to be filed until in the 1940's.
Henry Lavoie

Henry's grandparent's came out here in covered wagon (his mother's parents) (Eloi Cyr).

Henry's mother was born in wagon on way out here. They kept her in a basket in the back of the wagon. One day they found her gone out of the basket so they retraced their tracks and found that she had fallen out of the basket and wagon somewhere along the way (fortunately it wasn't too long until they noticed she was missing) because they found her aways back where they had come from. She was all covered with dust.

She was only a few days old when this incident happened. Needless to say they moved her and the basket to the front of the wagon.

Indians never bothered them on the way out here.
Henry recalls his Dad working in sawmills located in several locations for a man named Jack Honraty. All these mills were powered by steam except one located on six mile creek which was water powered through an "under-shot" water wheel. Through the use of ditches with gates and a large reservoir which would fill overnight, there was more power available than the steam engine would produce. Henry's Dad, the sawyer, with all this extra power would crowd the mill over its normal capacity much to the dismay of his fellow workers who of course had to feed this hungry machine the logs and take away the lumber all by hand.