

IN: 01:06:45;14 D

OUT: 01:07:30;25 D

DUR: 00:00:45;09 D

Comments:

I: Can you tell me a little bit about your background, Mr. Pierce and how you came to the Seattle area.

L: I came in 1926 after starting at Babson Institute a report that had been made there by a gentleman from the Pacific Coast. At that time I had completed all the work I wanted to do back East and decided I'd come out west. My mother lived in Portland Oregon in her younger days and I chose Seattle instead of Portland where my relatives were because of it's commercial importance. I enjoyed the flight out.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:07:38;06 D

OUT: 01:07:45;05 D

DUR: 00:00:06;29 D

Comments:

I: But you came from, you grew up in Boston area, originally, right?

L: I went to Middlebury College in Ver-, Vermont and then I went to Harvard University for two summers.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:07:45;25 D

OUT: 01:07:59;25 D

DUR: 00:00:14;00 D

Comments:

I: And so it's the commercial possibilities of Seattle are what brought you here.

L: Well that's what this report said, that Seattle was a commercial, possible, greatest possibility for the future.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:08:00;02 D

OUT: 01:08:23;14 D

DUR: 00:00:23;12 D

Comments:

I: And so you came out and where did you go, where did you live?

L: I lived out in the University District on 17th with a man named Ed Campbell who'd come out about the same time. And for about two years we stayed out there and I got acquainted. Worked for the power company in research.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:08:23;21 D

OUT: 01:08:43;14 D

DUR: 00:00:19;23 D

Comments:

I: And that was, what Puget Power and Light?

L: Uh-huh.

I: And how did you get originally involved with them?

L: Because I was from Boston and their origins were all in Boston and they grabbed me just like that. Because of my background.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:08:44;18 D

OUT: 01:09:24;27 D

DUR: 00:00:40;07 D

Comments:

I: And what were your first impressions of Seattle? Here you were a worldly Boston man, what was Seattle like then.

L: Seattle in '26 was up and coming, it just. Storm and Webster of Boston had a big office here and ran all the electrical services. Trolley cars and um, the, express lines to Tacoma and Everett in those days. It was a big outfit that ran the city practically. A Boston outfit.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:09:28;07 D

OUT: 01:10:14;16 D

DUR: 00:00:46;09 D

Comments:

I: Did it have a different feel from Boston then, did it feel like a young town, a cow town, was it sort of--

L: It was, uh, Boston was being beseiged then by Irish people coming from, just in droves into Boston. And the black people settled in Roxbury in Boston and it was loosing its old identity just because of those two migrations. So I decided I'd come West and Ed Campbell I met out here for two years we lived together in the summer. We went out to West Seattle on the beach, rented a cottage and stayed there. In the summer time.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:10:14;14 D

OUT: 01:10:35;24 D

DUR: 00:00:21;10 D

Comments:

I: Tell me about that, how did you first happen to decide to do that? Was that pretty common among young people at the time? To rent houses out here in West Seattle?

L: We lived near the University District and we'd go out in the summertime, rent a cottage, and stay on the beach for two months, then go back to the city, and.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:10:35;24 D

OUT: 01:11:03;26 D

DUR: 00:00:28;00 D

Comments:

I: And then did you just commute to work from there then?

L: Uh-huh.

I: Tell me a little bit about what it was like then, those summer cottages, what did they look like and--?

L: Well, uh, I thought they were quite rustic, the ones in Endoline, uh, Mrs. Goodman owned, they were just for that purpose, summer use. On the beach.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:11:04;29 D

OUT: 01:11:24;10 D

DUR: 00:00:19;11 D

Comments:

I: So how big, what did they look like? Were they just wooden cabins, how would you describe them?

L: One was a little cottage and the other was a cabin type, rustic and just summer use.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:14:18;24 D

OUT: 01:12:01;14 D

DUR: 23:57:42;16 D

Comments:

I: What kind of things did you do out here in the summer, when you were satying out here in the summer?

L: Oh, that's a good question.

I: Walk the beach or were there parties, were there a lot of younger people?

L: No there aren't (a lot of younger people). There was uh, we lived on, in Endoline(?) and in Endoline there's a beach colony and we had a beach cottage rented for two different summers.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:12:01;24 D

OUT: 01:13:18;23 D

DUR: 00:01:16;29 D

Comments:

I: How did you get out here? What kind of transportation did they have at that time.

L: Train.

I: Train?

L: 4 day trip. 5 day trip on the train.

I: To endo-, you mean back East?

L: From Boston.

I: From Boston to here.

L: It was a 5 day trip.

I: And then what about getting out from Seattle to Endoline?

L: We had an old Ford.

I: You'd bring your Ford out here every weekend, huh?

L: We'd bring it out.

I: And there was also a trolley service. Did you ever use that. Wasn't there a trolley that came out here to Endoline.

L: There was (a streetcar). that's how it got its name, Endoline, end of the car, car line...

I: So was there a big exodus of Seattleites coming out here to Endoline on the weekends, then?

L: No, no, there were just summer renters. And Marcelaise (?) had 8 or 9 cottages along the beach they rented, and we rented Mrs. Goodman's cottages for two different summers.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:13:19;21 D

OUT: 01:14:19;21 D

DUR: 00:01:00;02 D

Comments:

I: Now, I know you met your wife at West Seattle, too, right. Is that where you first met her? Tell me a little bit about her and how you first got together.

L: Uh, when we were living in the summer of '26, to, uh, down there, I was introduced to Isobel at the Little Church in the Wild, what they called it. And, uh, she was a good soloist. And, uh, but I'd met her on a previous occasion when she was orating at the University. She, uh, was in graduate work in Chemistry. And she had a huge pot, standing on one big platform, and introducing, uh, peanut oil as a, for its commercial use. Here she stood with a big robe on her, you know, stirring this huge pot. And having her picture taken.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:14:19;23 D

OUT: 01:14:47;26 D

DUR: 00:00:28;03 D

Comments:

I: And so you happened to be at that demonstration and saw her then. So you got introduced to her. And tell me a little bit about her. She was Isobel Coleman. Tell me a little bit about her and her family.

L: Well they were old pioneers that lived at 4th and Columbia in the old house there. It was an old mansion built in 1883.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:15:06;02 D

OUT: 01:16:18;04 D

DUR: 00:01:12;02 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit about the Coleman family. Mr and Mrs. Coleman.

L: They occupied one of the old residences on 4th and Columbia.

I: What were the two, the names of Isobel's parents.

L: Lawrence and Ida Coleman and her uncle George was Gigi.

I: And tell me a little bit about the family.

L: The family pioneered, the grandfather pioneered Seattle in 1860 before anybody else was out here and he came out from Minnesota, I think it was, or Minneapolis, and stayed here 10 years away from his family. While he settled the city of Seattle and made it known.

I: And his name was James Coleman, is that right?

L: (nods)

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:16:23;03 D

OUT: 01:16:57;25 D

DUR: 00:00:34;22 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit about Lawrence Coleman then, and what his activities were.

L: There were two brothers in the family, Lawrence and George. George was very shy and Lawrence was the natural leader with the wonderful personality.

And Lawrence Coleman became very famous in the work in the Coleman Dock and the Coleman Building on First Avenue, all that development from the 1880s right on through.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:16:58;22 D

OUT: 01:18:36;15 D

DUR: 00:01:37;21 D

Comments:

I: And when you began to see Isobel Coleman tell me a little bit about what you two did, what your courtship was like in your early years.

L: I was told that I could not be very affectionate for two years. That they had to survey my past, uh, back in Boston. So for two years we were held in suspense, while they tried every nook and cranny back East to find something against me. But they didn't find anything. I was a, came from a good Baptist family there and I didn't worry about it. So for two years we went together and did things out at Fauntleroy at the little church there. Manual training, we supported, and the, uh, I was Superintendent of the Sunday school in those days. And it was just a pioneer effort. It later grew in 1940 when there were over 1,000 kids at Fauntleroy, at the Sunday School at one time. It was, but we, we started in 1929, 30, that period in there.

I: You started the Sunday school there?

L: We started the little Sunday School there.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:18:36;26 D

OUT: 01:19:09;03 D

DUR: 00:00:32;05 D

Comments:

I: Now you and Isobel finally married and tell me when that was and a little bit about your marriage.

L: We were supposedly engaged in '27 but didn't marry until '29. To satisfy the old folks all my credentials were real.

I: And were you married here in West Seattle?

L: We were married at the Little Church in Fauntleroy.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:19:09;01 D

OUT: 01:20:06;12 D

DUR: 00:00:57;09 D

Comments:

I: And then where did you two live after that? In Fauntleroy with her parents or nearby?

L: The Coleman House built in '22 for the daughter and the daughter died before she could occupy it. And it was vacant and the grandmother didn't want to live there alone. So she asked us to live there. So we lived in the big house on the Coleman property. And they built her a smaller house so she could live with her sister, in the, south of us.

I: Now when you say "her" are we--

L: Mrs. Taylor.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:20:07;03 D

OUT: 01:20:10;18 D

DUR: 00:00:03;15 D

Comments:

I: Let me go back for a minute. How did the Coleman's get involved in West Seattle. You mentioned that when you came out they lived in downtown but, tell me a little bit about how the Coleman's got interested in West Seattle and began to live here.

L: They (pause) developed a lot of real estate at, uh, the junction in West Seattle. They owned the building, the main building and the market buildings there and rented those for quite a few years. Then went they south to Morgan Street and developed an area there.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:21:03;20 D

OUT: 01:23:22;09 D

DUR: 00:02:18;19 D

Comments:

I: Tell me about the Coleman's coming, how they ended up coming out to West Seattle. Did they used to visit in the Summer.

L: That's a long story. That's the history of Seattle!

I: I meant coming deciding to spend summers here.

L: they come out from Chic-, from Minneapolis, wasn't it?

Son: (off camera) Milwaukee, I think.

L: Milwaukee. And stayed 10 years developing the waterfront and buying property.

I: In the summers, the Coleman's started coming out to West Seattle as well? When they lived downtown.

L: They owned property at what we call the Junction. And they rented that and developed that into quite a business section.

I: And then they would live here in the summers too, in a house that they built?

L: They lived in the old house from '87 to '37. 1937 when it was torn down.

I: This is the house in Seattle?

L: Pardon?

I: This is the house in Seattle?

L: That's the house at 4th and Columbia. Great big Mansion, very interesting, it had a great patio up top, you know. Watch the ships coming and going.

I: And then they would spend summers here at West Seattle, at Fauntleroy?

L: They came out, they had a summer place down in Fauntleroy.

I: Tell me a little bit about the first cottage that we looked at, the picture.

L: When was that built, Larry? 19-2?

Son: (off camera) 1909.

I: 1909.

L: 1909. the first cottage there, that was on the beach and that remained there until 1940 when it was moved by barge down to Horsehead Bay. And it's still there.

01:23:05:28 1909, the first cottage there. That was on the beach and that remained there until 1940 when it was moved by Bart's, down to Horse Head Bay. And its still there.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:23:22;10 D

OUT: 01:24:15;04 D

DUR: 00:00:52;22 D

Comments:

I: And then , when did they decide to build their bigger house, tell me a little bit about their decision to live here more permanently.

L: They lived at 4th and Columbia and then they had this daughter who'd had an injured back. I think she'd slipped on the ice on the hillside at 4th and Columbia. And this home was built in 1922 for her. And after it was built she didn't want to live there she had to stay close to home she was, her back was so poor. So it was vacant when I came along and, uh, with Isobel, we moved in in 1927.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:24:15;22 D

OUT: 01:24:59;09 D

DUR: 00:00:43;17 D

Comments:

I: And tell me a little bit a, describe the house to me a little bit and what it was like--

L: Whoo!

I: -- to live in Fauntleroy then.

L: 6,000 square feet. 6 big bedrooms. It was a huge home with everything imaginable in it.

I: A great place to raise a family?

L: Oh, perfect! How I happened to walk into it, just because their daughter died, it was meant for her. Isobel and I moved in and raised our family there and lived 44 years in that house.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:25:22;25 D

OUT: 01:27:16;23 D

DUR: 00:01:53;26 D

Comments:

I: Talk about Fauntleroy....(gives him some instructions)

L: Fauntleroy was outside of Seattle, south of Lincoln Park, and, uh, a lot of people lived at Fauntleroy who were pioneers you might say. One of the men, pioneered Seattle, rode to Seattle once a week to get his groceries and back again. From Fauntleroy, that was a five mile, jaunt, more.

I: And who was that?

L: Dr. Kilbourne.

I: Dr. Kilbourne.

L: And people were on 25 and 30 acres out there which was just raw land.

They'd put up a little cabin and have a boat on the shore and row to Seattle and get their goods and come back and that was the early way that 3 or 4 pioneers developed. John Adams was one and Dr. Kilbourne was another. And Lawrence Coleman developed our place where we lived for.

I: And tell me a little bit about how he chose that place.

L: I don't know how he chose it.

I: And when you were raising your kids there what else was in the community of Fauntleroy?

L: The little bit of a church sitting on the hillside there. That and a school was developed.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:27:27;13 D

OUT: 01:30:29;21 D

DUR: 00:03:02;08 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit more about what Fauntleroy was like at that time. What other things were going on there in that community.

L: (long pause) I would say it was a group of people who lived outside of the city developing land, and uh, they formed this little community church in 19-8 it grew and grew and grew. In 1940 we had almost 1,000 children living in in the area.

I: What was the name of the church and tell me a little bit more about the activities.

L: Fauntleroy Church was developed by the Congregation Society of Plymouth. And the Plymouth people had their summer homes out there at Fauntleroy so they naturally developed this little community church. But it was just a lot more than that. Because it became a big gymnasium through the donations that Lawrence Coleman made. Uh, big gymnasium, and a big,, uh, uh, manual training department, and beside the gymnasium and the church. And so it, it, the school across the street, it became the center of a lot of activity for kids.

I: And tell me a little bit more about...about a program where kids would have the manual training and things. Could you tell us a little bit more about that program?

L: My father-in-law was instrumental in paying for all of that. Furnishing the tools and the lumber and everything else. And he'd come out twice a week, to Fauntleroy, with, and Dr. Kilbourne joined with him a little later in, in doing that. But it was a very successful manual training. Then it developed into a gymnasium program, all part of the Fauntleroy Church.

I: When you say a gymnasium program could you say a bit more about what that means?

L: It had basketball for the high school boys and it had gymnastic classes for everybody, old people and, huh. Yes, it was, the West Seattle YMCA had a directory that had an office down there. Had a full YMCA program.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:30:29;20 D

OUT: 01:31:25;15 D

DUR: 00:00:55;23 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit more about other people in the Fauntleroy community. Where did they come from, who were they?

L: John Adams was a pioneer and he had about 35 acres around there and Dr. Kilbourne was another pioneer and he had acres up in the hillside. Lawrence Soleman, my father-in-law, had a lot of property on the beach front. And just over the years it was gradually developed and people bought their home sites. I sold about 30 or 40 home sites there when I first came there that Lawrence, the Lawrence Coleman property.

I: Now tell me about—

L: And we kept three acres for ourselves and lived in the big house.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:31:25;12 D

OUT: 01:32:08;13 D

DUR: 00:00:42;29 D

Comments:

I: What about shopping and those kinds of everyday activities. Where did you do that when you were living in Fauntleroy?

L: (long pause) Shopping? I don't think we thought of it in the same way as we do today. No, it was just, we raised a lot of things on our own farm as far as food was concerned. And then other necessities were purchased from Fauntleroy at the, uh, Junction at West Seattle.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 1

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:32:53;09 D

OUT: 01:33:20;10 D

DUR: 00:00:26;29 D

Comments:

L: (in response to a conversation with his son) There was the drug store was there first in 1927 as far back as I can go. The other came later when John Adams built the building the grocery store's in now.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:33:21;03 D

OUT: 01:33:47;19 D

DUR: 00:00:26;16 D

Comments:

I: And tell me about schooling for your children. Where would they have gone to school?

L: Our children all went to Fauntleroy grade school. It had been built, before that time.

I: and then to High School in West Seattle as well?

L: Mmm-hmmm. That's old.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:33:49;09 D

OUT: 01:35:29;26 D

DUR: 00:01:40;15 D

Comments:

I: Tell me, I know that you and your wife were married...very near the beginning of the Depression. Tell me a little bit about how the Depression affected you and then affected the community.

L: I hadn't thought much about that. The Depression didn't affect us very much, I'll say that. We had a caretaker on our place and plenty of garden space. And we had animals. I think we raised a great deal of what we needed on our own place.

I: Did a lot of other people in the area do the same thing?

L: No. I sold off 40 lots as I remember, of our property and we kept the 3 acres above and we had, my brother in law had all beach front, out to the Point. So there's quite a little land there there was available for food raising. We had a swimming pool.

I: What kinds of foods did you raise?

L: We had a good caretaker. And he put in the regular vegetables. We had lots of peas and potatoes.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:35:30;00 D

OUT: 01:38:31;00 D

DUR: 00:03:01;00 D

Comments:

I: You told me about one of the problems that you had during the Depression years was some fear of kidnapping. Could you talk a little bit more about that? The Weyerhauser kidnapping and how that affected you?

L: Well it came home pretty close. We had a man come into our Coleman Building office and threaten our children and so forth, it makes, so the grandparents, got, uh, very, worried about it and asked us to move. We were in the big house at that time and had our two kids.

I: Tell me a little bit about why people were worried about it. Do you remember, tell me a little bit about the Weyerhauser kidnapping and how that affected people.

L: That was in 1932, in 1934 it had reached out here and there were several threatened kidnappings out here. The Weyerhauser boy had been kidnapped and he escaped in Spokane and that was the beginning of about 4 or 5 kidnappings in the area. And uh, the Coleman Company suffered one of those threats and we were asked to move out of our Coleman home and we went to Olympia. Where I enjoyed myself very much for 6 years.

I: Tell me about that. What were you doing down there?

L: I was, uh, distributing Federal and State monies to schools all over the state during the Depression.

I: Tell me a little bit about who you were working with or the agency.

L: They are, uh, let's see, what was that Federal agency.

I: Was it the WPA or one of those?

L: No that came later.

L: It, it was a Federal Agency and I did that for 5 years down there.

I: What—

Son: (off camera) When did the Social Security come in? You were working with the Social Security System.

L: Uh, when that came in, and I was the first Social Security Director in the State of Washington.

I: And what were some of your duties with Social Security?

L: Set up the system for state distribution of national and state funds.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:38:32;24 D

OUT: 01:39:03;26 D

DUR: 00:00:31;00 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit about what brought you back to West Seattle, you were in Olympia for 5 years and how did you end up coming back. What brought you back?

L: I guess the threat of kidnapping was gone. That was the main reason we moved. So we came back to the big house and everything went well.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:39:04;01 D

OUT: 01:39:31;06 D

DUR: 00:00:27;05 D

Comments:

I: Did you start working with the Coleman Company around that time?

L: (long pause) I didn't work for the Coleman Company very long. I had other duties, that uh, the State and Federal distribution of funds.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:39:33;24 D

OUT: 01:40:12;02 D

DUR: 00:00:38;06 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit about some of the summer activities you were mentioning the camp. Why don't we talk a little bit more about the YMCA camp and Horsehead Bay. Can you tell me a little bit about how that got started.

L: Well when my father died, my father-in-law died, uh it fell to Kenneth, my brother-in-law and their sister to support the program, which they gladly did and it was a very fine program for boys and girls, Fauntleroy.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:40:12;25 D

OUT: 01:44:41;12 D

DUR: 00:04:28;17 D

Comments:

I: Can you tell me a little bit about Coleman Family philanthropy? How did they get involved in that and what kind of activities did the Coleman's encourage?

L: Well they were one of the first developers of First Avenue, in Seattle after the fire. They acquired property at Fourth and Columbia right down straight to the waterfront. Coleman Dock. And it was in, developing those properties during those years that Seattle grew and grew and grew.

I: And the Coleman's were very active with their money and helping various causes in Seattle.

L: Lawrence Coleman was probably the most uh, noted, financier and philanthropist of his day. His brother was just the opposite. He didn't want to be in the public eye.

I: And tell me about some of the causes Lawrence Coleman was interested in supporting.

L: Of course in the beginning it was the development of First Avenue and that area around the Coleman Building, that had been devastated by fire. The Seattle fire. And just the redevelopment of that area was their work for many years. And they got into the YMCA and developed a lot of boys and girls summer camps. And manual training in the Fauntleroy area and at Plymouth Church in Seattle. They had large manual training classes for boys.

I: And what about the--

L: George Coleman had several hundred boys at Plymouth Church in the Sunday program. Take them off the streets. They were loose boys and everything else and then they got into manual training and that developed and then they got into summer camps, and their attendance depended upon whether they went to the camp or not.

I: So you mean their attendance at the trainings?

L: At the church and manual training.

I: Can you tell me a little bit how the summer camp developed. Where it was and a little bit about how it evolved?

L: Well, it was Lawrence Coleman's property, uh, I remember selling off about half of my waterfront and keeping the 40 acres we had left for our summer camps.

I: Can you tell me a little bit about where it was?

L: Horse Head Bay.

I: Which is near?

L: Pierce County.

Son: (off camera) What about camp Orkila (?)

L: Pardon?

Son: (off camera) On Orcas Island. Camp Orkila.

L: Was on Orcas Island. But that was developed by the YMCA, we really didn't, it was given to them, the property, by the Coleman Company, but we didn't run it.

I: But you ran the camp at--

L: -- Horsehead Bay.

I: -- at Horsehead Bay, we did.

I: Tell me a little bit about how the Coleman's ran that, how they interacted with the kids in the summer.

L: So many of the parents participated as leaders and helped with cooks and everything else. It was kind of a community effort. Everybody enjoyed it. And we were all out in the country, out of Seattle, you know, away from the center. I think everybody enjoyed meeting together, doing these things.

IN: 01:45:08;02 D

OUT: 01:45:17;11 D

DUR: 00:00:09;09 D

Comments:

L: Camp Coleman was located on Horse Head Bay in Pierce County. It was...(he drifts off)

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:45:24;21 D

OUT: 01:47:09;14 D

DUR: 00:01:44;21 D

Comments:

I: How did they get down to the camp at Horsehead Bay.

L: The original group were taken by the Osprey, a yacht owned by the Coleman Company. And it carried 70 or 80 kids at a time. They all enjoyed that boat trip down there, and a couple of hours on the water.

I: And then when they got down there what kinds of things did they do? What kinds of activities.

L: It was all organized by the YMCA on a daily basis, from breakfast right through, everything was organized.

I: And water sports? Tell me about some of the kinds of things they had down there for them.

L: Oh swimming of course, was the most interesting, and swimming across the bay was the ultimate. If they could do that they'd get honors. Oh there were so many activities of all kinds, badminton to horse, horse shoes and then the hikes up through the woods were always by groups, you know. 8 year old boys and 10 year old kids and 12 year old boys and so on. It was well organized and the boys had a week's vacation down there. Parents came down and did the cooking. The Coleman Company furnished everything else.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:47:15;23 D

OUT: 01:48:15;22 D

DUR: 00:00:59;27 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit about, the Colemans operated ferries and you told me some wonderful stories about....Lawrence Coleman coming over to West Seattle on the ferry and maybe holding it for him sometimes. Could you tell me that story?

L: When I first came out here that was a story that Lawrence Coleman, came out of his house waving his hand to get the Ferry to wait for him. Having owned the Coleman Dock, he, he could do that. And he did it once. (pause) Yes, I can, I can see him now, coming down the incline, running, running as a man of 70 years of age. To get the ferry's wait for him.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:48:15;26 D

OUT: 01:49:03;12 D

DUR: 00:00:47;14 D

Comments:

I: When you lived in Fauntleroy, tell me a little bit about activity in other parts of West Seattle. Do people in Fauntleroy go to West Seattle, Alki area much? Can you talk a little bit about that? Did you ever spend any time in the other parts of West Seattle?

L: Really we were so concentrated. We were out of the city originally, south of Lincoln Park. Then, when they took us in we, we retained our identity and really didn't have much to do with the other areas of West Seattle, unfortunately. Each one developed their own little conclave.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:49:04;03 D

OUT: 01:52:32;23 D

DUR: 00:03:28;20 D

Comments:

I: You told me a wonderful story about, in your younger days, of a ceremony about planting some trees with Edmund Meany and I think it was at Lincoln Park. Could you tell that story?

L: That's a long story. Fauntleroy was named for a family in Indiana who, uh, one member of whom, came out and at a point in Lincoln Park designated the mountains, gave the names to the Olympic Mountains from members of the Col-, of the old family. And I was there with Edmund Meany at the time we had received a gift from the Fauntleroy family in Indiana of a tree. And he and I planted that tree in Lincoln Park. As a gift from the family. But, uh, the Olympic Mountains were named for members of the Fauntleroy family who lived in Indiana.

I: Can you tell a little bit about Edmund Meany, so we have--

L: Edmund Meany was a tall, uh, fine looking man of very austere presence who was the head professor at the University of Washington for many years, by reputation. Uh, I, I considered it a great honor to stand up with him and plant this tree that was sent by the family of the Fauntleroy people in Indiana. And we planted the tree in Lincoln Park..

I: Um-

L: I was president of the Men's club at Fauntleroy at the time. That's how I happened to get in on it.

I: Tell me about the Men's Club and the kinds of activities that they did.

L: In, we, were outside of the city and uh, we had a log cabin church built in 19-8 out there and it was repaired and enlarged and in 1940 we had a rather large number of people living in, on the hillside in back of the church. And they had, uh, quite a gathering in 1940 there. People were interested in the future development of the area.

I: And when you say gathering are you talking about a specific meeting or just generally that there were a lot of people--

L: Oh, generally, there, pictures show it, there was quite a large gathering. I was president of the men's club at the time, we, was just a nice organization.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:52:50;22 D

OUT: 01:53:48;28 D

DUR: 00:00:58;04 D

Comments:

I: I was asking about Mrs. Pierce and some of her volunteer activities. She was noted for her charity work.

L: Well she was interested in so many things. I'll never name them all. The church was one of her main activities. And then downtown she was in the Women's University Club. She was president of that. And president of the, and Budget Chairman of the United Good Neighbors and she was very active in a lot of other group things.

I: When you two were living with your family--

L: Fortunately we were able to have Joesephine our housekeeper stay with us for over 16 years. That allowed us the freedom. She was a wonderful person. We were lucky.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:53:49;27 D

OUT: 01:54:46;02 D

DUR: 00:00:56;03 D

Comments:

I: When you two were raising your family in West Seattle, what kinds of activities, were there any other kinds of community activities or celebrations or get togethers that you would normally have?

L: No think it was pretty well concentrated around Fauntleroy. We had everything we needed, thanks to Lawrence Coleman and his starting, Dr. Kilbourne and a few others. We had everything we needed right there for all the kids at Fauntleroy. So we never did partake of other things outside

I: Were there--

L: That's probably because it was outside of Seattle, for my growing up period.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:54:56;26 D

OUT: 01:56:11;23 D

DUR: 00:01:14;25 D

Comments: I: What kinds of things would you do with, say, your firends, say on a weekedn you might do activities, get togethers, beach fires, what kinds of things did you do for fun with other families in the area?

L: I remember during the Depression years we opened up our house and had all the kids in for movies every Friday night. That went on for a while.

I: Tell me a little about that. How did that get started and what was that like?

L: Well were were outside of the city you might say and we had the church and the school and the YMCA were all there and we didn't need anything anywhere else so we had lots of nice programs for our kids During the Depression years when we couldn't get around very much we opened up our homes and had, brought in kids, or movies and things like that.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:56:14;21 D

OUT: 01:59:55;02 D

DUR: 00:03:40;11 D

Comments:

I: I think I had read that your interest in rhododendrons had perhaps started during the Depression years. Could you tell us how your interest in involvement in raising rhododendrons got started?

L: Well I built a green house first and that led me for a period of about 7 or 8 years to develop thousands of sports(?), little, I cultivated the little rhododendrons and I amassed quite a few. And when they all got up to a certain size, it was a, it became a showplace. That was in 1975, that's when the national association came out and surveyed my work and gave me the gold medal.

I: tell me a little bit more about that. The Associations for Rhododendrons. How does that work?

L: Well it was just a keen interest I had for 7 or 8 years with a new greenhouse and developed many new plants and as they came into blooming period in 5 years, then I, in 1975 I had a beautiful garden. And it, sorry it hadn't been kept up that way but it's, it's beautiful at that time

I: I read somewhere a story about the fact that maybe the Coleman's got involved with the rhododendrons originally during the Depression and that they, uh, they--

L: the Coleman's were not interested in rhododendrons.

I: Oh, cause I had read a little story about--

L: I married a Coleman and I developed the rhododendrons.

I: Oh, I see, I had read somewhere I thought that maybe she had paid people during the Depression and they would dig rhododendrons out say, in the Olympic Peninsula wild and bring them in as a way to earn money.

L: Of course, where did we get our first rhododendrons?

I: I don't know you've got to tell us, I don't know.

L: They found them in Russia and they found them up in Alaska and they found them on our coast. And they were all, not the cultivated rhododendrons that we know. We took the natives and improved the natives and gradually through intercourse we developed all these different beautiful rhododendrons.

I: So rhododendrons there were actually wild rhododendrons?

L: They were wild, yeah.

I: And did you bring some wild ones in?

L: Yeah, actually did.

I: And where would you get them?

L: On the west coast of Alaska, and on the, coming down this way, British Columbia. They were found in different places.

I: So you had a real showplace of rhododendrons, though, I know you had lots of people come--

L: In '75 it was a showplace. Took about 7 years for me to grow enough in the greenhouse for me to spread out. And it was a pretty sight

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 01:59:55;03 D

OUT: 02:02:18;19 D

DUR: 00:02:23;14 D

Comments:

I: Let me go back for a minute to talk about your career. After you were in Olympia and you came back and worked in some land development. And a steel company. Do you want to talk a little bit about that? Some of your other business interests?

L: Mr. Campbell and I started out and uh, well we did,. we formed the glass company first and when that, Prohibition changed, my father-in-law didn't want me making beer bottles and whiskey flasks. So I got out of the glass business and went into the other.

I: And you got involved in the Seattle Bronze Company and Seattle Steel? You want to talk about that?

L: Those are just investments that I made and helped develop. And when the Seattle SteelProducts developed, finally and got my money out and developed the Seattle Bronze Company, and, and, others. Those were just business opportunities at the time.

L: One time you were quoted as saying that 1958 was a turning point for you in your life, because you went back into education which you've always liked. Can you talk a little bit about your later career and, with the King County Schools?

L: '58 for a 15 year period, I enjoyed myself in the State Department of Education as the assistant to Mr. Dimitt (?), whom I had known for a long time. And he, I did a lot of things there, in developing the county schools, I was very proud of that period of time, that...

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 2

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 02:02:55;09 D

OUT: 02:03:40;15 D

DUR: 00:00:45;04 D

Comments:

I: Tell me a little bit about teaching in your career. You had been a teacher, in education, early before you came? Could you tell us a little bit about that?

L: When I got out of college I had a job, uh, outside of Boston about 17 miles and I taught there for 2 years. it was close to home and I was glad to have it. And after that I went to Yale spent a year in graduate work at Yale. Uh, then I uh, lets see what did I do after that.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 3

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 02:03:42;01 D

OUT: 02:04:48;05 D

DUR: 00:01:06;04 D

Comments:

I: then you got back into education during the Depression then you went back to King County in '58 is that right? (problem with the microphong) After 1958 you went back to education again, then. When you worked for King County.

L: Set up the, uh, head start program for all of King County and operated thatfor 15 years at the county schools office.

I: That's great. And that was something you really enjoyed, working in education?

L: Well it was something I could do and did do and really came out well.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 3

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 02:04:49;09 D

OUT: 02:05:47;29 D

DUR: 00:00:58;18 D

Comments:

I: Now I know that you and your wife were uiltimately instrumental in getting Horizon House started. Do you want to talk about that at all?

L: She was on the original committee that uh, purchased the Horizon House. That was, she lived only three years with me in the Horizon House after we moved in in 1979. And I've been there 20 years. She passed away in 1982.

I: Um-

L: Here I'm 99 now, and no end in sight

I: I hope not, no way!

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 3

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 02:05:50;10 D

OUT: 02:07:18;04 D

DUR: 00:01:27;22 D

Comments:

I: One of the things that's a landmark in the West Seattle area is the Coleman Pool, still with the name, Coleman. Could you tell me a little bit about how that came about?

L: Yes, I, the family donated the money for the pool, I had some money in that too. That was 50 years ago. Survived very nicely, one of the nice things the Coleman Family did for West Seattle.

I: What was it called again and can you tell me a little bit more about how the idea of the pool came about. Was the official name?

L: How it came about? Well I suppose my brother-in-law had the idea, Kenneth Coleman, first. And I know I was an original contributor, 50 years ago, to it. But then after he died I got all the credit and, I'm the sole survivor.

I: Well it's a wonderful addition to the community.

L: Well that was his project, not mine, to begin with. But after he passed away it came to me.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 3

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 02:07:18;20 D

OUT: 02:09:03;14 D

DUR: 00:01:44;22 D

Comments:

I: In looking back you have a wonderful opportunity to look back over nearly a century. What things sort of stand out to you as being particularly important?

L: (long pause) Well, I think of the fact that I went to graduate school and some of my teachers were Catherine Lee Bates, who wrote, America the Beautiful, and Edward Makham, who wrote, what was it Larry?

Son: (off camera) The History of the United States. Long history.

L: In getting to know them, as teachers in 1922, I think was the highlight of my educational career. That summer I spent with those two people

I: And did it influence the way you thought, the--

L: You have no idea, uh, how important they have been in the history of the United States. Catherine Lee Bates died in '29, 6, 7, years after I had her in school. She wouldn't eat a drop of food unless I approved it first. I was waiting on her table that summer. '22. She wouldn't eat a thing unless I'd eaten it first and had approved it. She became very famous.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 3

Audio Tracks: A1A2

IN: 02:09:03;27 D

OUT: 02:15:46;23 D

DUR: 00:06:42;28 D

Comments: I: And what about the changes you've seen around here? Lets take West Seattle and Fauntleroy first. What do you think about how things have changed?

L: I think they've changed for the better. They can't stand still. And, uh, I'm very pleased, really at the development that's gone on.

I: What about the Fauntleroy community, when you think back about your favorite memories of being there and raising a family there?

L: People didn't want to live any other place in Seattle than Fauntleroy. they had everything they wanted. From they were so, they had everything they wanted, from the school, to the gymnasium, to the manual training and everything. They were very happy and satisfied with it. So we were just like a little enclave outside of the city. Totally independent of everything in the city.

I: When I said my question, let me ask the first part again. What your fondest memories, when you look back at your life in Fauntleroy, what do you remember most about it?

L: I think 1940, the exhilaration of all the accomplishments at Fauntleroy and the coming together of over 1,000 people at one time there, in appreciation of what we'd done in Fauntleroy was the highlight.

I: Tell me a little more about that in 1940. Was that to honor the church being built?

L: During the Depression, holding everybody there and, and providing services that ordinarily wouldn't have been provided unless we'd chipped in. And the community sustained itself beautifully and they showed their appreciation.

I: When I had asked you earlier, you had mentioned about feeling so strongly about Fauntleroy as a community and the people really loved it as a community. Can you mention that again and tell me a little bit about how you felt about it as a community. Why people liked it.

L: Well, having owned so much land in Fauntleroy ourself and having sold off so much of it. I remember doing that during the Depression years. I don't know, we developed an individual relationship one to another there that you don't get in cities elsewhere. And we were a real good community in the real sense of the word.

I: Why do you suppose that is? What about that place?

L: Uh, worked together for the good of everybody in the area, during periods of Depression. I remember having kids in my house every Friday watching the movies when we couldn't go to the movies anywhere else. And uh, we furnished opportunities for kids at the Sunday school it in manual training opportunities for both boys and girls. While they were in school. there was a loyalty developed through all those years of Depression out at Fauntleroy that many areas in the city weren't able to provide.

I: So when people look back, what do they think most about when they think about Fauntleroy.

L: Oh they think of Dr. Kilbourne and Lawrence Coleman and all the good times that they had together there.

I: And how do they look back at it as a community?

L: Well it's grown into a very strong community right now. I would say they were very happy with the results.

I: You had said a wonderful sentence, people didn't want to live anywhere else, could you say that again? What was so special and not want to go anywhere else?

L: Well, Fauntleroy furnished for the children of the area everything they needed, like schools, gymnasium, church, food and everything else. We didn't suffer the Depression of, like they did in a lot of areas where they were unorganized. Everything was well organized and the people were taken care of

IN: 02:15:59;01 D

OUT: 02:17:21;21 D

DUR: 00:01:22;18 D

Comments:

I: If you could say, I married Isobel Coleman and maybe in what year. (Interviewer gives some instructions on she would like him to say)

L: Yes, I met her at the Little Church at Fauntleroy. Introduced by Mrs. Goodman in whose cottage I was living in that sumer period. And then, having met her there then I we were just the right age group you might say. And for two years we participated in everything at the Fauntleroy and took part in everything waited while my credentials back east were thoroughly examined before any, uh, entanglement could follow.

I: Can you say, I married Isobel Coleman in May of 1929?

L: She was a graduate student--

Son: Dad, they want to get somet hings on tape, all they want you to say is, "I married Isobel Coleman in whatever date in 1929."

L: I married Isobel Coleman in on May 29, 1929.

Tape: Lawrence Pierce 3

Audio Tracks: A1A2

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT 1998-99

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Interview Research Material

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