

TAPE 95.01.18

MICKY CLARK
Interview No. 6

DECEMBER 4, 1995

Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve
Oral History Project

INDEX

TAPE 95. 1. 18

SUBJECT: Driving Tour through Local History: Coupeville, Snakelum Pt. Smith Prairie, Keystone Spit, Ft. Casey, Prairie Center

INTERVIEWEE: Mickey Clark

Interview No. 6

Number of Tapes: 3

Date of Interview: 12-04-95

Location: Clark Home, 105 NE 3rd, Coupeville, WA
Rob Harbour's Car

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY:

Theresa Trebon, Rob Harbour

TAPE INDEXED BY:

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Tape indexed on: Marantz Recorder, PMD 220

Note: Tape 95. 1. 18 was recorded on a hand held, battery operated tape recorder. In order to conserve batteries, the tape recorder was turned off when no conversation was occurring. Consequently, there are many starts and stops on these tapes.

Tape 95. 1. 18 begins as we are entering the upper Ft. Casey compound.

Direct quotes from Mickey Clark are italicized and bold.

95. 1. 18: SIDE A

INDEX# SUMMARY

000-051 Mickey recalls when he and other children would gather to watch the guns being fired. The soldiers would chase them home and then about 20 minutes later they'd sneak back down, hide in the bushes and watch again. We drive down hill from

Fort toward the campground. We pass the **powerhouse** where Mickey's Uncle *George Clark* and *Jimmy Chapman* worked. The building was all boarded up.

We drive through campground loop. Mickey said the jetty at the end of the campground was man made. He points out the remains of the **Engineer's Dock**. Mickey said the "*mules could do anything*" and there were about 100 or so at Ft. Casey. Mickey said the mules would have been instrumental in moving supplies from the Engineer's Dock to the upper Fort when they were building it.

Mickey points out *Doc Sargent's* farm straight east from the ferry dock area on the ridge just above the Admiral's Cove development. We look at the Lk. Hancock area where the Fort obtained water in the early years. Mickey points out Ledge-wood. Mickey reiterates how his *Aunt Emma Rosenfield Clark* and her sister *Margaret* walked to the Smith Prairie School from the Lake Hancock area. They walked on a rough road through the woods which passed through *Doc Sargent's*, Ledge-wood, and on top of the ridge to Smith Prairie.

052-074 We drive back towards the Fort from the campground. Mickey points out where the Officer's Duplex once stood on a flat hilltop that overlooks the north end of the campground. We pass the powerhouse again and Rob speculates on who would want to live next door to that because of the noise. Mickey stated that the powerhouse was shut down around 10:00 p.m. unless someone was sick in which case they kept it running all night.

We drive back up the hill to the upper Fort grounds. At the top of the hill, almost directly across from the road which goes downhill east to the campground, is a utility pole covered with ivy. That is where the **Fort Casey Post Office** once stood. We continue on the road which takes a righthand turn into the upper Fort grounds and we pass the old **Ordinance building** and the Caretakers residence. Mickey said the field in front, between the road and the actual gun emplacements was the original parade ground, ball diamond, "*the whole business.*"

075-090 As we continue on the road as it curves around and heads toward the lighthouse, Mickey points out where his childhood home was situated. The **Clark Home** was to the left of the Caretaker's residence and is no longer there. Next comes a building labeled 201 which was the **Engineer's Department** and this building exists from the start of the fort. This is where *Thomas Clark* worked along with *Frank Morrill* and others. Mickey points out the route he used to take as a child when he and other children were sent home as they attempted to watch the guns being fired. After returning home they would sneak back to the guns by going around the back of the Engineer's Department, and through the bushes to the lighthouse from where they would watch. Mickey used to have to take the dog

“Old Jim” home. When their home on the farm burned down, after the *Clarks* had left the fort, Old Jim was killed in the house fire. Mickey was about in the 5th grade and the time and did not know how the fire started. His recollection of the fire was hopping over the fence and getting out of the way.

091-139 Lighthouse. Mickey used to play all through the lighthouse as a child. They weren’t allowed to play up at the actual light which Mickey said was electrified. *Doc and Della Kistermacher* [SP?] used to run the lighthouse. The small building out behind the lighthouse was most likely its powerhouse. We drive around the lighthouse and curve up into the woods. We see an old concrete structure off to the right of the road but Mickey does not know what it was. We squeeze through the trees into the backside of the picnic area we passed at **95. 1. 17B, stop 490**, which once had barracks and housing for married soldiers. The barracks on the north side of the picnic area was torn down before WWII. The lumber is in local chicken houses, garages, etc.

140-186 We drive [squeeze] back through the trees toward the lighthouse. Mickey thought there weren’t many trees in the area back when he lived there or if there were they were quite small. Mickey comments on the Port Townsend Mill across Admiralty Inlet. He said they are shutting it down part time now. When Mickey was little he used to know a man who was in charge there for a long time named *Leo Zeal*. *Leo* used to punt for the University of Washington and could “*kick that football a mile*.”

The first lighthouse was situated where the gun emplacements now are. It’s exact spot was on the far right hand side of the main battery of guns as you face the fort. There are two 10” guns there and the lighthouse was where the first 10” gun is. When they put the guns in they moved the lighthouse back and eventually replaced it with the one currently standing.

Theresa asks Mickey about a photo we discussed on tape **95. 1. 2B, stop 336**. This photo is of *Gussie Reubel*, *Clarissa Wiggington*, *Ruth Hull* by the first lighthouse. Mickey said that his mother *Annie Clark* took care of *Clarissa*’s mother when *Clarissa* was born. The *Wiggingtons* lived in “*non-com Row*” down at the lower parade ground. *Gussie Reubel* lived by *Wilbur Sherman*’s farm near the main fort gate, *Ruth Hull* lived in the non-com houses near the Park Caretaker’s residence

187-216 We head back down the hill on the main road through the Fort which was always there as far as Mickey knew. We pass the mortar pits, now on our right. There is another road which passes in front of the mortar pits on their front side and a small communications shack still standing there. Mickey had a photo of this. **[See also: 95. 1. 4B, stop 037, slide 28.]**

We pass through the gate and stop at the intersection where the road from the upper fort blends into the main road through the fort. The **Post Exchange** was located on the gore point between two roads: the road from the ferry going into the fort and the road coming down from the top of the hill. This is where the sign stating Ft. Casey State Park now is. The **Bakery** was to the right of that and the stairs from this building still stand. As you face the Quartermaster's Building there were several structures to the right of it on the north side of the road: the **Blacksmith shop**, where *Gussie Reubel's* father, *Gus Reubel* worked, and then there was the **Showhouse**.

217-251 We drive behind **Quartermasters Building** where Mickey's grandfather, *Thomas Clark*, worked as Quartermaster Sergeant. Mickey said there were once a lot of **coal sheds** behind the Quartermaster Building which were used to store coal. One of these sheds still stands. They would store coal there until needed and there are small doors on the inside walls of this building which were probably where the coal was chuted inside.

The **Guardhouse** once stood on the foundation area to the left side of the Quartermaster Building as you face it from the main road. Mickey comments on the foundation of the Guardhouse and how it has no rocks: the cement that formed it was made from was mixed with sand which came from Holland.

[See also: 95. 1. 1A, stop 066.]

As we pass between the coal sheds and the Guardhouse foundation Mickey points out a small building on the left beyond the foundation where the gas tanks once were. He said the coal sheds used to have doors on the front of them; these are no longer there and the sheds stand open. As we come back onto the main road, the building to our left, just after the coal sheds, was the old **Firehall** with a slate roof. Mickey said someone lives in this now during the year. Past the Firehall was where the **Bandstand** once stood. Mickey points out the **barracks** that are to the south of the **Parade Grounds**. He said those are "*cheap barracks*" compared to what they had before when the barracks had slate roofs and were solidly built: those were torn down.

252-289 Mickey points out where a **well** used to be on the **Parade Grounds**, just about opposite of the firehall. He said that when he used to play first base during baseball games other team members would warn him not to fall in the well.

We turn left and head up towards **Officer's Row**. The building to our right was not there when Mickey was young: there was a "*good Headquarter's Building, and no swimming pool.*" The pool was put in by Seattle Pacific College. The

road in front of Officer's Row used to continue northeast, around the curve and on in front of the Hospital and Surgeon's House. The stairs in front of us went up to Officer's Row and houses that were taken out. *Captain Vane's* home was probably one of these; Mickey couldn't recall exactly as so many different people lived there. Mickey points out the **Colonel's House** at the far end of the row near the water.

Mickey states that swimming lessons for children were once held at the Fort Casey Pool when SPC ran it. They stopped having lessons there when SPC put up a wire fence around it and put a padlock on it. Swimming lessons were then moved to Admiral's Cove and after a time, SPC tried to get them to come back and offered them the first year free but the Lions Club said no and *"didn't even consider it."*

290-326 We go back to main road and drive north towards the intersection of Ft. Casey Rd. and Engle Rd. Mickey points out the field to the right which was full of mules and horses. We turn left and go up the hill toward the four houses which were once part of Officer's Row but is now a bed and breakfast operation. At the top of the drive we turn left onto the road which once continued around the whole of Officer's Row but is now barricaded off. The small house standing at the south end of the four houses was the **Surgeon's House**. The small shed which is barely visible back in the trees to the left of the Surgeon's House was once the **Morgue**. Mickey said the **Hospital** once stood in front of the Morgue and to the left of the Surgeon's House where there is now a stand of trees. Mickey relates how he came down here once with a cutter and made his way through the brush and found the front stairs to the Hospital where he was born.

Mickey didn't know whether or not *Doc Sargent* ever lived in the Surgeon's House. Mickey said he liked to deliver groceries out to *Doc Sargent's* farm where Doc and *Mrs. Sargent* lived for a long time. He said *Mrs. Sargent* would *"call me in and she'd just be baking bread or something and put a big bunch of honey on it and give me a big slab of bread. I thought that was great. Kids like that you know."*

327-348 Mickey said that after someone had been to the morgue they would ship them over to the Fort Worden burial grounds. Rob wondered why there was only one cemetery. Mickey said he didn't know but Headquarters was at Worden and they *"used to do things like that."*

We leave this area and drive across to Fort Casey Rd. and head northeast on it. The **Mule Barn** was to the left. Mickey points out the sheds where the **amphibious tanks** were quartered. Under the road they had cement for these tanks. Theresa asks Mickey about a big water tank which we had discussed at any earlier interview. According to Mickey that tank was an earlier water supply for

the fort and located behind the Officers's Row homes that we had just left which are now a bed and breakfast. **[See also: 95. 1. 5A, stop 200, Slide 48.]** Later the water supply was moved east of the fort to the spot discussed at **95. 1. 17B, stop 092.**

349-387 The Balloon Hanger was near a little house by some woods, behind and off to the left of the amphibious tank sheds. Mickey thought the concrete pad from the balloon hanger might still be up there. *Edwin Sherman* used to put his squash in the tank sheds. *Sherman* did not own the farm off to the right of the sheds, he simply rented the fields.

We pass through what was once one of the Fort's two **main gates**. There used to be a stone gate on either side of the road. Mickey said someone told him that ***"they thought they knocked it [the gate] down and pushed it into the blackberry bushes down under about 5 or 6' and I decided they could stay there."*** This gate was the one where Mickey was stopped when he was delivering the mail.

Mickey recalls a kid he went to school with named *Howard English* who recently died. *Howard's* father was killed in France. He was a tank driver and his father's tank stalled. When he got out to do something he was shot.

This gate was where Mickey was stopped while delivering mail during WWII by an overzealous soldier who, when he checked with headquarters, wished he hadn't.

388-443 Crockett Blockhouse. Built 1855. The **Armstrong Farm and Barn**. The north side of the pilings of the Crockett Lake Bridge. Mickey said there used to be a big orchard on the right side down toward the water but now there are houses there. People used to come over from Pt. Townsend, walk across the bridge and up to the orchard where they'd have picnics. Mickey said that when the barn opened a big dance was held in the barn. Before it was the Armstrong Barn, it was the **McClellan Barn**. *McClellan* had ***"pure bred stock in there."***

We continue on the Ft. Casey Rd. heading north toward Prairie Center. We pass _____ barn on left. This is near on the left side of the road near the address 711 Ft. Casey Rd. The road used to run back up through there prior to it being straightened to ***"take out the crook."*** There used to be a **saloon** up there in the building by the clearing. There was another saloon on Keystone Spit by *Wilbur Shermans*. These saloons closed down long before Mickey's time he said.

444-461 Patmore Rd. *Patmore* worked at the Prairie Center Store. We pass the *Reubel's* farm on the left at about 556 Ft. Casey Rd. *Mr. Reubel* came to the area about 1904 or thereabouts from Germany and he was a blacksmith at Ft. Casey

where he lived. When he retired he moved onto this farm, where he started a dairy and farmed. Some of the *Reubels* still own part of that. *Kenny Pickard's* house is up on the hill at left.

462-491 Thomas and Annie Clark Farm. We approach Mickey's childhood home and farm, the white buildings, on the right side of Ft. Casey Rd. We pass *Gussie Reubel's* home on the left. *Thomas* and *Annie Clark* owned the land from the brush on the right at about 435 Ft. Casey Rd., across the fields and back up to the woods. *Cees Sturman* [Sp?] lives up on the hill now. The land was sold to the *Moons* who built "a bunch of houses in different places." We pass *Keiths* on the left. Mickey recalls the 1916 Big Snow. So much snow fell they thought their barn was going to cave in and "*all the farmers were working on it.*"

The **Clark House** was about where the brown one is at 315 Ft. Casey Rd. The house burned down when Mickey was in the 5th grade.

END OF SIDE A, TAPE 95.1.18

Note: Side B of tape 95. 1. 18 is after our return to the Clark House where the remainder of interview 6 is conducted.

SIDE B: TAPE 95.1.18

Index# Summary

000-070 Mickey tells how Front St. in Coupeville was paved, or "oiled" because of *Thomas Clark* [See this same story at: 95. 1. 10A-stop 149.]

"Right away, Oak Harbor didn't have any oil in their town, and they hollered their heads off. And along with that, either that summer or the next Coupeville put oil from Captain Whidbey out to the airstrip, ten miles of it. Boy, Oak Harbor just raised heck and they got ten miles of it, then Langley started raising heck and they got ten miles, then Dines Pt. raised heck and they got ten miles and pretty soon we had the whole island all done and its like it is now and whether its good or bad its a lot better than dusty old roads, to eat all the dust."

Mickey talks about what we need to cover. Early threshing and his photos of this which feature such people as *Edwin Sherman's* dad, *Stoddards*, *Ben Rowner* [SP?], *Jess Boyer*, *Billy Sherman*.

Mickey also mentions needing to cover Lovejoy's boats, the Camano, Whidbey, Calista, Wilbur Crimmons, and also the houses they built.

We talk about what we'll cover the next time we meet.

END OF SIDE B, TAPE 95.1.18

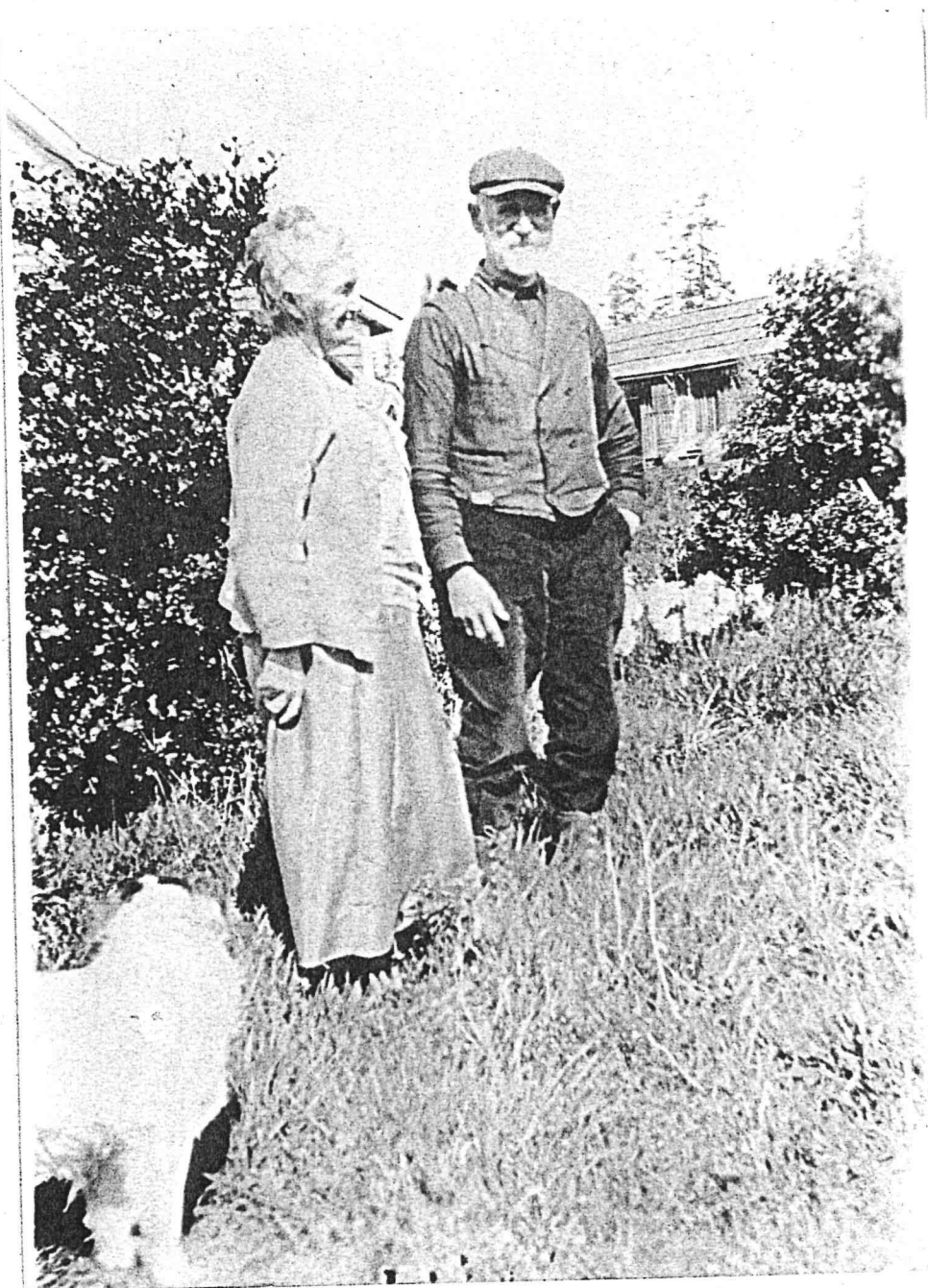
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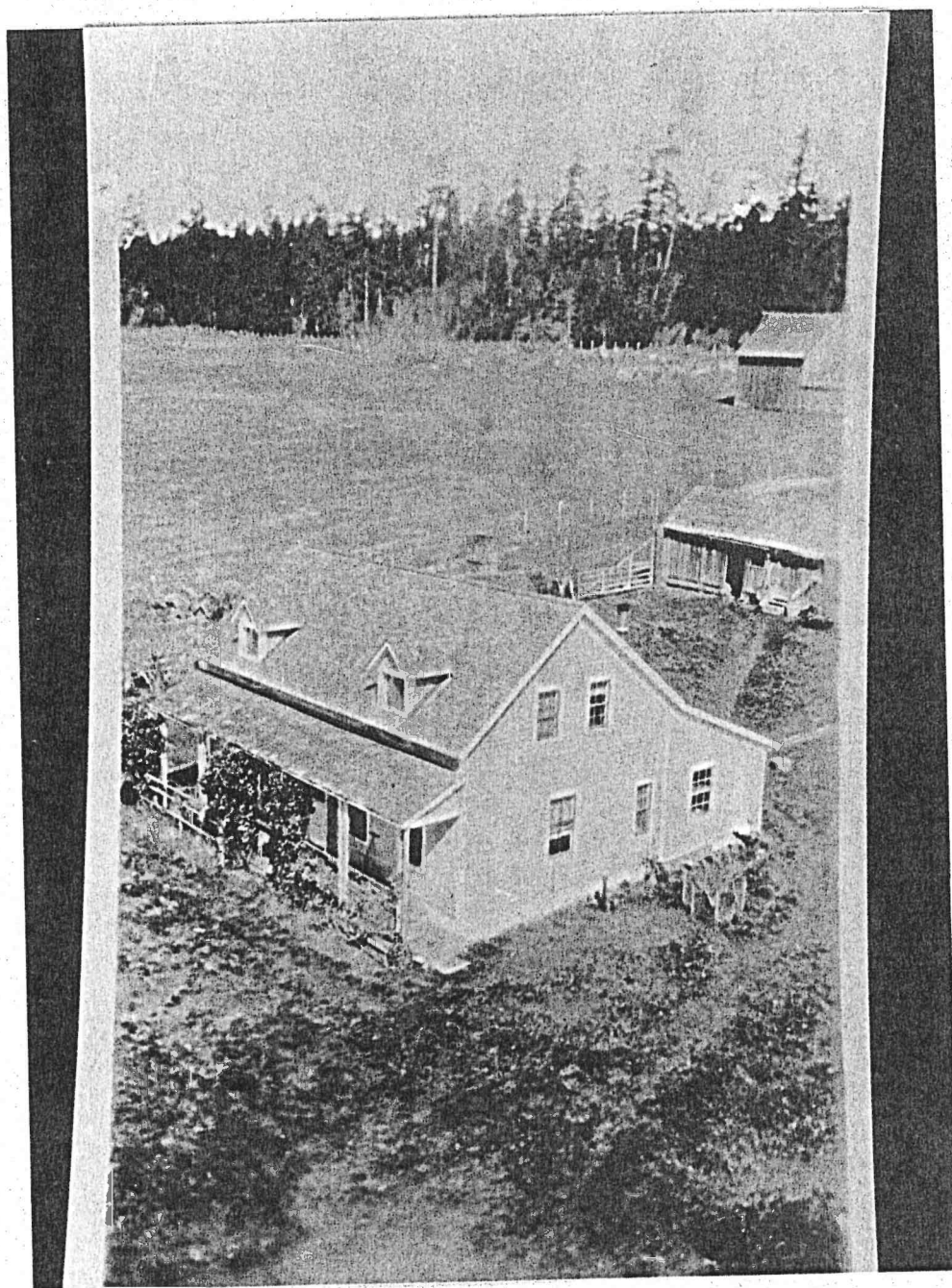
Appendix

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Bess & Doc Sargent
Dog - Prince

95.1.18A-200



Home of Doc & Bess Sargent