



ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

CONSULTANT: Andreas ("Red") Laumbach

DATE OF BIRTH: October 12, 1911 GENDER: Male

DATE OF INTERVIEW: April 6, 2000

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Mr. Laumbach's home in Albuquerque, New Mexico

INTERVIEWER: Marcie Palmer

SOURCE OF INTERVIEW: NMF&RHM X OTHER _____

TRANSCRIBED: Yes: September 18, 2000

NUMBER OF TAPES: Four

ABSTRACTORS: Marcie Palmer, Sheila Klug

DATE ABSTRACTED: April 29, 2002

QUALITY OF RECORDING (SPECIFY): Good

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Covers the arrival of his great-grandfather and grandfather in New Mexico in the 1850s and provides details about his relatives. He describes life on the ranch, his schooling at the Menaul School in Albuquerque, and the various jobs he held.

DATE RANGE: 1860-2000

ABSTRACT (IMPORTANT TOPICS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

TAPE ONE, SIDE A:

Mr. Laumbach's full name is Andreas Detleff or Detleff Laumbach. He spells it "DETLEFF," while his nephew, Karl Laumbach, states it is correctly spelled "DETLEF."

The consultant was born on October 12, 1911 in La Cinta Canyon in northeastern New Mexico, about twelve miles south of Roy, New Mexico. His great-grandfather, also named Andreas Detlef Laumbach, came to the Mora area in about 1860 and settled on land that was part of the Mora Grant. The consultant's grandfather, Andreas Detlef Laumbach, stayed on the property, where his father, Peter Joseph Laumbach, was born in 1867.

Mr. Laumbach's great-grandmother and great-grandfather were married in Germany in 1832 and came to America in the 1840s. They landed near Philadelphia and migrated west in stages, settling in New Mexico in the 1850s or 1860. The consultant's grandfather was in the military in Germany and could not come with his father and mother. He joined them before they arrived in New Mexico.

His paternal grandmother's family were Swiss; her father was Daniel Eberle (now spelled Ebell). His paternal grandparents were neighbors before they married.. His grandmother and grandfather had about twelve children born from the 1860s to the 1880s, but not all of the children lived to adulthood.

The consultant's great-grandfather was killed by the Indians one winter east of Springer. He was there searching for a more protected area for his cattle. He was alone in the camp, preparing the evening meal while his partner was moving the cattle toward the camp. Mr. Laumbach's great-grandfather was buried near the scene of the murder.

They had garden crops and orchards and sold much of the produce to Fort Union.

Mr. Laumbach's parents were married in 1898 and lived in La Cinta Canyon.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B:

The families all lived in northeastern New Mexico. The little towns were: Roy, Mora, Watrous, Armenta, Wagon Mound, Ratón, all along and in the area of the Canadian River. They grew wheat and corn as well as garden crops and fruit. They sold sheep in the Logan and Tucumcari area. The railroad came in the early 1880s, bringing lots of supplies.

The consultant's father worked for the Troy Ranch, east of Ratón while homesteading his own plot at Blosser Canyon.

Mr. Laumbach's mother was one of the Romeros. They were business people and started the village of Armenta. They had lived in the area since the 1850s or earlier and settled in the Las Vegas area. His mother's name was Fidelia Andrade. She was born in 1880 in Albert, New Mexico and raised in Armenta Plaza.

About the time of the Fort Union era a French family built a sawmill. Jean Penderais and a Mr. Tixier (pronounced "Tishay") were partners in the mid-1800s. Later they built a brick building for the machinery and built a gristmill as well. The gristmill made flour and cornmeal.

Later the Conchas Dam was built down on the Canadian River, providing for irrigation on down in the Tucumcari Area.

Fidelia's father was Casimiro Andrade, and her mother was Carmelita Romero. As a boy Casimiro Andrade is reported to have been stolen by Apaches in Sonora. No details are provided in the interview on his release. Casimiro and Carmelita had five girls and two boys, Fidelia being the second child.

Fidelia married Peter Joseph, and they had sixteen children. Their names and birth dates are listed in the interview. Eleven of them lived to be adults; Red was the ninth child. Four boys are still living. His brother "Ike" (Casimiro) was born in 1913 and, like Red, lives in Albuquerque. Pete (the second boy to be named Peter J., Jr.) was born in 1923 and lives in Roy. Al (the second son to be named Alfred) was born in 1920 and lives on the home ranch near Roy.

TAPE TWO, SIDE A:

The Laumbachs came from Pennsylvania, moving across the country to the West with wagons. Two of the boys, Red's great-grandfather's sons, stopped along the way. Henry stayed in Iowa; perhaps both sons stayed in Iowa. Some of the girls married and settled in other states before the family got to New Mexico. The great-grandmother did not get to New Mexico, apparently dying en route. The great-grandfather and grandfather got in the vicinity of Denver, Colorado, and stopped there for a while, then came south into New Mexico.

The consultant went to school in Roy through the eighth grade. This schooling was held on the ranch because his dad donated a house so the public school could get a paid teacher. Then in the fall of 1926 Red and three of his brothers went to a boys' boarding school in Albuquerque, Menaul School. Albert #1 (there were two boys with this name) had attended the Menaul School in 1912 and 1913. He had pneumonia at age fourteen and went home. He never went back to school and was struck and killed by lightning at the ranch when he was about eighteen.

Red's grandmother and grandfather had nine children live to be adults. Red's father, Peter Joseph, was their second child.

Red's father and uncle built their house of rock. They heated it with wood and had a creek near the house plus a windmill to supply water.

TAPE TWO, SIDE B:

On the farm they grew corn, sorghum, maize for the horses, cattle, and chickens. They raised hogs for butchering and kept milk cows in order to have milk both for household use and to feed the hogs. They had a separator for milk.

They had vegetables and orchards with apples, peaches, cherries, plums, mulberries, etc. The consultant reports his mother was always canning and baking bread. They cured the meat. Mr. Laumbach also describes making preserves out of "pie melons," or citron.

His father built the house of rock, finishing it in 1908. It was added on to later with adobe and is still on the ranch, although no one lives in it now. His father planted corn with a Lister. He also used a horse-drawn “go-devil” to keep the roots covered. They did not irrigate. The consultant talked about harvesting and building techniques using rocks. He also talked about raising pigs and turning them loose to forage in scrub oak to fatten up on acorns.

TAPE THREE, SIDE A:

The family had several horses to work the cattle for branding, etc. They also had mule teams to pull the plows. The consultant describes his father’s trading a mule with a neighbor so each would end up with a matched pair. They also broke the young horses and would shoe their horses. They would earmark the young calves then later brand them. Mr. Laumbach’s father’s brand was PFL, for which they used three separate branding irons. Often the children’s animals would be branded with a variation of this brand.

They did not have electricity at the ranch until after Red left home. Still later they got a telephone. Everyone in the family spoke English and Spanish.

The consultant’s mother would mix up healing poultices for cuts and burns from a small green leaf from a sunflower-type plant which had been dried and then was mixed with fat and phenol disinfectant. She also made lye soap for doing the laundry, a process Mr. Laumbach describes.

Red’s mother died in August of 1928 and is buried, along with many other family members, in a cemetery right there on the ranch. The boys did not go back to school in Albuquerque that year but stayed home to help their dad. They went back the following year, and Red graduated in 1931. The school had a farm, and all the boys did the work, including plowing, planting, harvesting, caring for the cattle, as well as maintenance, janitor, and kitchen work.

TAPE THREE, SIDE B:

Red spoke of raising and selling sheep, calves, and cattle. He describes the various methods they used to get their animals to market. During the Depression they occasionally obtained items they could not produce themselves by borrowing money, but mainly they bartered with crops, garden items, eggs, etc. His mother made most of their clothes, often from the same bolt of cloth. The family had a shoebox, where shoes that no longer fit would wait for the next child to use them. The consultant has quite a few papers about these times for 1902 on.

Coyotes were bad, as were wolves at one time. Mountain lions have become a problem.

They had country-dances and community picnics. The schools would have gatherings at Christmas and other times.

TAPE FOUR, SIDE A:

The consultant met his wife at one of the dances and drove ninety miles from Roy to Clayton while courting her. She was from the French family that had the sawmill. Her name was Sulema (or Zulema) Tixier, and they married in 1940. They first lived on a ranch. Red worked in road construction for two years, then in a plant that made CO² liquid for four years. He then worked for Rio Grand Steel for thirty years.

They had two children, a son, Andrew Detlef born in 1941 in Springer, and a daughter, Mary Ann (now Hess), who was born in 1943 in Clayton. Both children went to school in Albuquerque. They started in public school, but the consultant was dissatisfied with the quality of their education and moved them to a parochial school. Andrew has a PhD and is working for the US Department of Agriculture (Food and Drug Administration), and Mary Ann is a retired registered nurse and nurse practitioner.

Sulema died in 1980, and Red still lives in the home they moved into in 1971.

The consultant related the history of the odd jobs (less than six months) he had in Albuquerque before going to work for Rio Grande Steel.

TAPE FOUR, SIDE B:

In this final partial tape the consultant talks about the methods he used to get raises and promotions at Rio Grande Steel. He also talks about his grandchildren.