

Tape 23: Interview with Fidel Jimenez, Sr.

Interviewer: Helen Krische

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Helen Krische (Interviewer): ...Introduce ourselves, just for the tape purposes. And I'm Helen Krische, and this is Heather Bollier, she's the technical assistant. And would you like to introduce yourself?

Fidel Jimenez (Interviewee): Uh, my name is Fidel Jimenez.

HK: Uh-huh. Okay.

FJ: Senior.

HK: Alrighty. And the – the first question I'm gonna ask you is about your parents. And, um, what their names were, and where they were from.

FJ: Well, both of 'em, they was from Mexico.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: And, uh, my dad's name, his name was Louis – Luis, another word – and my mother's name was Maria.

HK: Mm-hmm. And do you know what region of Mexico they were from, or what towns?

FJ: Well, my dad, he was from Guanahuato, and I never did know where my mother was from. She never did – and I never did hear her say, I mean...

HK: Do you know what time, um, what time period they came to the United States?

FJ: Gosh, no. I have no idea. [HK laughs]

HK: Do you know, um...what brought them to the United States?

FJ: Never did say, I mean, that I know of. Just come on across.

HK: Did he get a job with the railroad or anything, or...?

FJ: Yeah, he worked, started, he worked at the...for the railroad for a lot of years.

HK: Mm-hmm. And how did he end up in Lawrence?

FJ: Uh, well, he was working there in Billtown (nickname for Williamstown) and then there was an opening here, so they gave him a transfer to work here.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: But I guess, first time that he started working for the railroad was in McFarland, Kansas, for the Rock Island.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: And then he, I don't know, wound up there at Billtown on the Union Pacific, and – and that's where he retired, on the Union Pacific.

HK: Okay. Okay. And what, where did you, where did your family live during the time that he was working for the Union Pacific?

FJ: There at Billtown, and then we moved to Lawrence.

HK: Did the Union Pacific have any kind of special housing that they had for their employees?

FJ: Yeah, they used to.

HK: What – what type of housing was that?

FJ: It was uh, like, uh, these outfit cars that they have now.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: That, uh, they made into so many rooms and that's – that's what you lived in.

HK: Okay.

FJ: 'Cause like, you're Santa Fe, they got, of course they have apartments here, you know. They always had a better living arrangement for their workers and...No, and then we went and moved to Lawrence and, they passed away and I'm still here.

HK: And that's a good thing.

FJ: Wait for my turn. [HK laughs]

HK: Did your, did your parents speak any English when they came to the United States, or...?

FJ: No, I don't think so. And my dad, he talked pretty good English, you know, that I can remember, and then, uh, my mother, she never did learn too much of it.

HK: Did – did your dad have any other jobs other than working for the railroad, did he have any kind of side jobs that he did, or...?

FJ: No, no.

HK: No. Did he raise a vegetable garden?

FJ: Oh, we used to raise a big garden all the time.

HK: Did you?

FJ: Oh, yes.

HK: Yeah. Did, was that exclusively for the family, or – ?

FJ: Yeah.

HK: Or did they sell some of that produce to other people?

FJ: No, it was just for – for the family.

K: Did you have any, uh, livestock, that was, that your dad raised, too? Like chickens and things? Stuff like that?

FJ: Chickens. Chickens, turkeys and, uh, goats. [laughs]

HK: Oh. Goats. Did you have goat cheese?

FJ: No –

HK: Did you make any goat cheese? No?

FJ: But I sure loved that goat milk.

HK: Was it good?

FJ: Yeah. Oh, yeah. [HK laughs]

HK: Yeah. And, um, so your mom did all the cooking, right?

FJ: Mm-hmm.

HK: And how many kids were in your family? How many children?

FJ: One, two...three...let's see...four.

HK: There were four children altogether? Which, um, were you the youngest, or were you the oldest, or...?

FJ: No, I was, uh...well, the second one, I guess.

HK: Second.

FJ: Yeah.

HK: Did you grow up speaking Spanish, or...?

FJ: Both.

HK: Both.

FJ: Yeah.

HK: What schools did you attend?

FJ: Pardon?

HK: What schools did you attend?

FJ: Well, when I did, when I did go, I went to, uh, when I was in Billtown I worked, went there to their grade school, then when I come to Lawrence, I went to junior high.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Went in the front door, and walked out the back door. And that was it.

HK: You didn't like it, huh?

FJ: Well, I, had my mind on working, I mean...

HK: Oh. So you started at a young age, working?

FJ: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I was, had little odd jobs and, then uh, I started on the railroad I think when I was about fourteen.

HK: Hmm. And was that the Union Pacific also?

FJ: Yes.

HK: What – what kind of jobs did you do on the Un – when you worked there?

FJ: Well, I done regular section work, and I...went into, uh, they had a foreman job for eight years, and then track patrolman. And truck driver, and...and I worked at that crossing in North Lawrence watching the kids there for ten years, and...oh, just about everything, I mean...

HK: Mm-hmm. What were some of your job duties as a section worker?

FJ: Oh, laborer?

HK: Uh-huh. When you worked on the tracks?

FJ: Oh, putting in ties, and – and, uh...raising, uh, raising track and stuff like that, you know, whatever was low, you'd jack it up, push a little rock under it, and...

HK: How many men usually worked on the tracks?

FJ: On the section?

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Well, it used to be sometimes that, uh, there'd be as many as ten or twelve. That was back in the good days.

HK: Hmm.

FJ: And then, one time I had that, uh, Billtown section of road, the roadmaster come by and he says: "Hire some guys," and we – I think we had eight then.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: And hired eight more, we had sixteen, you know.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: They used to have big gangs then...each gang had so many miles to take care of, double track. And, uh...I, we double work it up there pretty good, too. I mean...check – you had to check every day. No, that was the good days.

HK: How many, how many hours a day did you work?

FJ: When I first started, I was, uh, I was working, uh, ten hours a day, seven days a week.

HK: Wow. And that's hard labor, too.

FJ: Yeah. I [seen?] many a day, I could just, I could have walked off, you know. And I'd say, 'cause if I walk off, these old fellas, they're gonna say: "He couldn't take it." So I'd stay right there. [Both laugh] But you know, 70 hours a week, that's a lot of hours.

HK: That is, yeah, especially with that type of work. Yeah. How much – was the pay very good?

FJ: Uh, we was getting a great big old...73 cents an hour.

HK: So, let's see, for 10 hours of work, that was what...seven dollars and thirty cents a day.

FJ: It wasn't very much.

HK: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah. That'd be pretty hard to raise a family on that kind of wages.

FJ: Oh, yeah.

HK: And, uh, let's see, you said you were a foreman?

FJ: Foreman, yeah.

HK: And what were your job duties then?

FJ: Just, like, uh, watching the guys, you know, telling 'em what to do and where to put in ties and mark the ties for 'em, and...and, uh, put 'em to gauge track, or, you know. Just made sure you didn't pull too much track loose, ahead of, in case of a train come up, and you know you had to spike it back down.

HK: Mm-hmm. How much warning did you have ahead of time that a train was coming?

FJ: Well, that all depends on where you was at, yeah, how many miles you could see in one direction.

HK: Oh. 'Course they didn't have any walkie-talkies or anything like that.

FJ: Oh, no, no. No, ma'am.

HK: So it was just what you could see.

FJ: You just, you just had to, uh, listen for a whistle, you know.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: 'Course then they went, uh, they – and they put these, uh, indicators up. [Coughs] Excuse me. They'd go back so many miles, and if you was doing something that you need to, needed to, some time to, you know, to repair the track before a train showed up, you could put a man on the indicator and whenever that thing would mark some – something was coming, well, he'd wave at you or holler at you if you was close enough, and then just straighten things up till it went by, and then watch it again.

HK: Yeah. Did you see any train wrecks during your time, working?

FJ: Did I what?

HK: Did you see any train wrecks?

FJ: I seen a lot of 'em.

HK: Yeah. What were those like?

FJ: [Coughs] Well, it was terrible. Well, the worst one, well, I don't know. I seen one...it was, uh, what was it, this side of Manhattan somewhere. I don't remember what town it was, but, whether it was, between towns, I mean, uh...a freight train hit a passenger train and –

HK: Oooh.

FJ: Head-on.

HK: Oh, my gosh.

FJ: And, uh...then, I seen a lot of 'em, but another bad one was up here this side of Lawrence. This side of Edwardsville, when a train hit that, uh...they had a dump truck, loaded with sand.

HK: Hmm.

FJ: The couple had just...just hadn't been married very long, each one of 'em I think had, I forgot, five or...six kids. And, uh, that was their first trip across the tracks with a load of sand. And they pulled out right in front of a train. And it was, it was bad, I mean...It, uh, and they couldn't find them.

HK: Hmm.

FJ: But the first unit, when – when they jumped the track, the first unit went in the ground, it was about...half, half-buried. Then the second unit. Uh, the...unit number two was about, oh, third, I guess. And then the third unit wasn't buried quite as much, uh, you know. Then, uh, when they started clearing up all of the cars and everything...they finally found the – the couple that was underneath one of them cars and...it was, it was bad. I think that's about the worst one that I was ever around, you know, people, where they got...well, got killed.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: But no, I seen a lot of 'em. Yeah, I seen a lot of 'em.

HK: Did you ever, um, was there any time when there was, like, a flood or something like that, that happened, and...?

FJ: Oh, yeah, in '51.

HK: Yeah. You were, you were working on the railroad when the '51 flood hit?

FJ: Oh, yeah.

HK: What happened to the – the railroad, I mean, the tracks then? What kind of a mess was that?

FJ: We...it was me and four other guys, we was going out to Lawrence working, and we was working the Billtown. And, uh...the, uh...water was real high. We was going to, about, Tee Pee Junction and...water was pretty near, coming – pretty near ready to come in the automobile 'cause it was my turn to, you know, my turn to drive.

HK: Uh-huh.

FJ: So...and it was really high. I mean, we got through there, and we got up to Billtown and it was, it had been raining real hard and the highway was flooded this side of Billtown between Billtown and [Bow?] Creek.

HK: Uh-huh.

FJ: And we finally got into Billtown, and, uh...they, uh, when we got up by the tracks, they said that the levee had busted the [road?] over here at Tee Pee Junction.

HK: Oh.

FJ: And, it, the way I kinda figured out, it must have been just – just shortly after we went through there, I mean. And then we couldn't get home. We was up – we had to stay up there and, and the last, that last day that we was up there, I think I made their day with a can of pineapple, 'cause the farmers all come in there and had that one little old grocery store, and they just stocked up on canned goods and whatever was in the store, you know, and the old man, they sent us into Oskaloosa, and there's some nice folks up there in Oskaloosa, they gave us all a place to live.

HK: Uh-huh.

FJ: Next morning, when we got up...uh, we were, all five of us got back together, uh, till we figured out we was gonna have to try to get back to Lawrence. So we left, uh, we come back into Billtown and told that foreman we was working for, I said: "Well, we're gonna try to get home." He said: "Okay." So, we went, we went to, uh, Oskaloosa again. And then we went to McClellan, we hit Tonganoxie, and then turned into Kansas City. And, uh, it took us, uh, well, it took us all day to get to Lawrence. 'Cause then when we hit Kansas City we got caught on that Interstate, inner city Viaduct, that's about the time the, all the high water was just barely getting into Kansas City. And there was, we stood on that [bypass?], we look down and all them boxcars just, all the things, see 'em just come up, turn over and all that water was gettin' in there, and...And, no, finally we got through Kansas City and we come in, wound up at Baldwin

Junction. And then from Baldwin Junction we had to go on, I, what...56, I think, end at Topeka and then come in on Highway 40 and we finally made it home that evening. Took us all day to get home.

HK: Geez.

FJ: Yeah, that was a pretty good flood. But after that, we could, uh, walk...in, uh, down the railroad tracks and, and uh, well, we could...lot of the, some of the fellas would just straddle the rails, you know, kind of pulling themselves across the deep holes and I'd – we'd all – a couple of us, we'd walk down to the bottom, you know. And meet the rest of the guys over there and work. And then the same thing we do in the evening, come back through there, you know. Walk back into town. And they fixed it so we could just work out of Lawrence here, you know.

HK: Uh-huh.

FJ: Yeah, they cleared the roads up. So we just stayed in Lawrence for, I don't know, a couple of weeks before they cleared the roads and worked on one of these gangs here in Lawrence.

HK: How long did it take the railroad to fix the tracks?

FJ: Oh, gosh.

HK: From that?

FJ: It – well, to me it didn't – didn't seem like it took too long, 'cause they, uh, they had, oh, they had gangs, oh, my. They had men working. Yeah, and they had a lot of men working up here too. Just, uh, east of Lawrence the place we call the Shoo-Fly that, where the river washed out that great big hole underneath the tracks.

HK: Hmm.

FJ: And they had to, uh, drill the railroad around the, the, the farmers' fields, uh, you know, to – once it started trains running. And they had, uh, work train there that, uh...they uh, had, uh, well I don't know how many cars it was, quite a few cars, of ballast and big rock riff raff they call it, and great big boulders and...and they had an en – they got an engine in there and they went out so far, and then, and, uh...took the rails apart and headed right into that hole. And the engine got wound up and took and pushed all them cars, and then cut loose, and all them cars, they're – they're probably still down there in that big hole there, you know. [HK laughs] Then they had a big, uh, sand pump that they'd pump sand out of the river and fill the rest of it up with sand. Yeah, it's, uh, it was quite a deal.

HK: Did they start using any kind of, um, other machinery to lay tracks while you were still working for the railroad, or was it just basically manual labor?

FJ: Oh, yeah, they had a lot of machines, yeah. Yeah, they, uh...it used to be that we – we'd have gangs, but, uh, they do every – all the surfaces by hand. And then they got, well, they got

machinery and they had these, uh, trackers. They worked pretty good, but they'd only raise the track where, you know, high enough. [Blasters? Glasses?] they'd call 'em, they do the tamping and...one of 'em's got, they use – they used one as a jack and he's the one that, he'd lead the pack and all the rest of 'em followed behind and pick up the track a little more and they'd tamp it, and, you know, and they got machines to do the lining anymore.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Oh, yeah, it's...it's really, it's...they've come a long way out there, them guys. 'Course they don't hardly have nobody working, but...

HK: Yeah. So...what was, um, going back to – I'm gonna shut this door. Lot of noise, traffic noise coming in. [Door shuts] Um...what was it like for you growing up, um...did you...I don't know, did you...did you feel any prejudice growing up? From other people?

FJ: Well, not really. I mean, there was only one place in North Lawrence that, uh, that, uh, I'd drive over there in my car and they wouldn't sell me no root beer.

HK: Oh. [Both laugh] That would have been a tragedy.

FJ: Yeah. Well, they – they, they wouldn't serve a Mexican over there.

HK: Huh.

FJ: No way. And I don't know why, I mean...

HK: Huh.

FJ: That's what I tell everybody, you know, now they're eating our tortillas and tostadas, enchiladas, and...

HK: Yeah.

FJ: That's what's funny, I think, you know. Back in them years you couldn't even get a root beer over there and now they're eating all the tacos and...

HK: Yeah.

FJ: Tortillas and...refried beans.

HK: Yeah. What kind of meals did your mother used to fix for the family?

FJ: Food?

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Oh.

HK: What would be a typical meal?

FJ: Every day?

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Oh, you could have, uh, fried potatoes with eggs and, uh, and then, uh, you have, uh, refried beans and, uh...and other times if you wanted some, you could just eat the beans right out of the, the skillet.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: And, uh, then you chop up onion, chop up a hot pepper. And then go out and pick a bunch of that, uh, cilantro.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Put it in there, oh, get a couple hot tortillas, just roll them like that, like a cigar, you know, and eat away. Oh yeah.

HK: That sounds good. Yeah.

FJ: Chicken. Fried chicken.

HK: Yeah.

FJ: It's – it's pretty good.

HK: Did you have meat every single day?

FJ: Pardon?

HK: Did you have meat every day, you know...

FJ: Oh no, uh-uh. No.

HK: About how many times a week did you have meat?

FJ: Oh, couple of times.

HK: Couple of times. Yeah.

FJ: Sunday was always for sure.

HK: Mm-hmm. Was that chicken day?

FJ: Mm-hmm.

HK: Fried chicken?

FJ: Oh. [HK laughs] I like the chicken breast, chicken legs, chicken thighs. Uh...nibble on a wing or so...I'd rather have the ones that got more meat on them. [Both laugh]

HK: Good stuff. Yeah. Did she make any kind of special desserts?

FJ: No, just always had pies, cakes, all the time. No, that was the good old days.

HK: Yeah. Yeah. What kind of, uh, did you have any healthcare growing up?

FJ: Any what?

HK: Healthcare? The doctors? Did you –

FJ: Doctors?

HK: Did you go see the doctors regularly, or – ?

FJ: Oh, not very often.

HK: Like today, they have health checkups for kids and stuff like that.

FJ: Oh, no, not very often. Back in them days, you ate pretty healthy. Ate good and stayed healthy.

HK: Well, what would happen if someone became ill?

FJ: Oh, you'd take 'em to the doctor.

HK: Okay.

FJ: But, uh...I never remember being sick.

HK: Yeah? Did your mom have any special home remedies, like if you had an earache or something like that?

FJ: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Mm-hmm. The older people had all these, they had some kind of stuff that'd cure you.

HK: Uh-huh. Do you remember any, any that she did for you, or any of your brothers or sisters when you were growing up?

FJ: Uh-uh.

HK: Like if you had an earache, what would she do for that?

FJ: Well...I don't think I ever had an earache. [HK laughs]

HK: You were just too healthy.

FJ: No, I don't believe I ever had an earache.

HK: What about a cold? If somebody had a cold, was there anything special that she gave you for that?

FJ: Well, I think that...if I remember right, all that we used to take was the 4-way cold tablets.

HK: Oh, okay.

FJ: Either that or it just wore off, you know...

HK: Um –

FJ: People didn't get sick back in them days like they do anymore, you know.

HK: Yeah. Yeah. What year were you born?

FJ: Pardon?

HK: What year were you born?

FJ: Well, let's see, I could tell you, say, like, what, uh, '57? [HK laughs] Oh, no, '29.

HK: 1929.

FJ: Yeah.

HK: Okay. When did you, uh, get married?

FJ: When?

HK: Uh-huh.

FJ: Forty-sev...let's see...forty-eight.

HK: '48?

FJ: Yeah, I think it was in '48.

HK: Where did you meet your wife?

FJ: Where?

HK: Uh-huh.

FJ: Uh, here in Lawrence.

HK: In Lawrence?

FJ: Yeah.

HK: Yeah. So you didn't have to go outside of Lawrence to find –

FJ: No, no.

HK: To find a wife.

FJ: No.

HK: I know there were a – a lot of people that I talked to, that they had to go to Topeka or Kansas City because they were re – they were related to all of the other [HK laughs] people.

FJ: Well, maybe that's the reason I was lucky, 'cause I didn't have no relations.

HK: Yeah. Since you were from Billtown, you were... [Laughs] Did you serve in the, in the, uh, were you – did you enlist in the service? At any time, did you serve in the Army, or...?

FJ: No, 'cause second war I'd been married too long, so...

HK: Oh, okay.

FJ: But I was what you call right at the mouth of the gun and all that. Kept being called but, uh, never did, so...

HK: Did any of your relatives serve in the armed forces?

FJ: Well, wife's brothers, they did, yeah.

HK: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Well, you, um, I guess you were a child during the Depression, right?

FJ: Yeah.

HK: You were a child. Did your family have, um, did they have it any harder during the Depression than at other times?

FJ: Well...I don't really remember. I mean, I know that [clears throat] I can remember that, uh, there used to be a lot of people walking, you know, down the track and stuff. And a lot of 'em would ride the, uh, boxcars on the railroad, you know.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: Lot of 'em would stop by and they, uh, always want, you know, ask for a handout.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: 'Course, my mother, she'd always fix 'em up a plate of whatever she had. Stack of tortillas, and...and, they were just tickled to death, you know. She'd feed 'em till they got full. And then, most of them fellas, they, you know, they showed their appreciation. They'd get out there and chop up big old piles of wood, you know, and...

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: And sometimes she'd tell me to go out there and tell 'em, you know: "That's enough!" So, you know, they'd...some of 'em would quit and then some of 'em would just chop some more, you know?

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: So I mean, they just picked up their little jacket or whatever they had and little towel or just whatever and take off up the track. So no, I don't – I don't know, we didn't have a lot of, lot of different things either, but we did have enough to eat, you know. Always, uh, had plenty, I mean, and like I say, you know, they used to share quite a bit with the people that used to come by.

HK: Mm-hmm. Well, after you – after you married your wife, where did you live here in Lawrence?

FJ: Uh...on New Jersey Street.

HK: New Jersey?

FJ: Yeah.

HK: Have you – do you still live there or do you live somewhere else?

FJ: No, I, uh...when we went there we went on, uh...what's the name, Garfield Street and then...and then over, sold that house, and she wanted to move across the street to the little house that was there. Boy, I told her, you know, those houses, you had to put a lot of money in it, and a

lot of work, which we did, and she wanted that darn little house, you know? We finally got it all fixed up and moved in, and...

HK: Yeah. That was in North Lawrence?

FJ: No, on Garfield. It's over here, East Lawrence.

HK: Hmm.

FJ: It's off of 13th Street.

HK: Okay. So did you live around that area during, um, during all of the – the stuff going on, during the early '70s? When they had all those, those, um, problems with shootings and stuff?

FJ: Yeah.

HK: Did you live over in that area?

FJ: Yeah.

HK: What was it like at that time?

FJ: I don't...I didn't see nothing ever going on around there.

HK: Nothing going on.

FJ: [If there was?] something going on, I never did see nothin'. [HK laughs]

HK: Yeah, there were some – some people that I talked to who lived around, uh, New Jersey and Pennsylvania Streets, said that they, you know, there were people who were shooting guns and stuff like that. And, uh, I just didn't know if you had experienced anything like that. 'Course, maybe you were a little bit further, um, south of where that was going on.

FJ: No...

HK: How many children did you and your wife have?

FJ: One. One son.

HK: One? Okay. Does he still live here in Lawrence?

FJ: Yeah, he lives, uh, well, you can say he lives out in the country, but the city's pretty right across the street from him now.

HK: Ah.

FJ: He lives just that side of the bypass, and most of the town is right next to the bypass over there. Right off Highway 40.

HK: Uh-huh. Yeah. Does he speak Spanish? At all?

FJ: Well...he was learning pretty good when, uh, he was home, but then he forgot everything he – he knew. Well, he can...you can kind of understand what he says sometimes, you know, and, but he can speak a little bit, but not – not like he used to when he was younger.

HK: Does he understand it, though, when somebody else speaks it?

FJ: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

HK: He can understand it really good? Okay. How do you think that, um, times have changed from when you were a kid to today? Do you think that there, there's a lot more opportunities for kids today, or...?

FJ: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Nowadays there is, uh-huh...

HK: What do you think about the, uh, immigration thing going on right now? All of the controversy?

FJ: Well, I just think about what – what, uh, if we send all them people back, in two or three weeks we wouldn't have any strawberries, we wouldn't have no onions and...wouldn't have none of them vegetables to eat.

HK: Mm-hmm.

FJ: 'Cause people, I don't know. In this country I don't think they go for that kind of work, you know? 'Cause I used to see that on the railroad, that, uh, we'd always send our truck driver into Kansas City when they was short on help on them gangs. They'd come back with a bunch of guys, they'd unload 'em. By next morning, half of 'em would be gone back to Kansas City. They didn't wanna work. Lot of 'em would work one day, and then draw their pay and gone. They didn't care about working on the railroad.

HK: So you're talking about the Anglo workers?

FJ: Yeah. So I don't, I don't know, it's...them people, all they're doing is coming over here wanting to work, you know, make – trying to make a living, and...what I can't understand is that they bring these people from other countries over here and set 'em up homes and jobs and...I mean divorce, you get in-laws and outlaws and everybody you know, whatever.

HK: Yeah.

FJ: And...but uh, no, I don't know. I – I don't think them people doing any harm. Just trying to make a living.

HK: Mm-hmm. Going back to when your dad worked on the railroad, did he, um, did your parents help, um, any of the new people that were coming up from Mexico to get established here in the United States?

FJ: Did they what?

HK: If there were, um, new people coming in from Mexico to work for the railroads or whatever, did, did your parents help them get established here?

FJ: Oh, there never was nobody would – stop there in Billtown, it was – it was just this little bitty town, I mean. But most of them people that come over, they'd go to, like, Topeka or Kansas City, some bigger towns, you know. No, this was just what you call a wide gap in the road.

HK: Okay.

FJ: There wasn't really much there that would interest anybody.

HK: Mm-hmm. Okay. Well, can you think of anything else that you want to talk about, or...?

FJ: No.

HK: No? Okay. Well, I guess, I can't think of anything else either. So, um, hopefully you'll be able to come when everybody else gets together and...because they're, they're gonna kind of talk about, um, earlier days and...

FJ: The good old days.

HK: The good old days, yeah. [FJ laughs] Yeah. Well, okay. Well, thank you very much for –

FJ: Oh, you're welcome.

HK: And, let me stop – [tape cuts off at 35:33]

END OF TAPE 23