Tell ‘Em Right to Their Faces and Make ‘Em Like It

Interviewer: Do you remember when the war broke out, any anti-German feelings around this area?

King: Yeah, [illegible] you see them Waltermans, they’re Germans. And I was booin’ about Germany, I says, “Damn, why the Hell don’t you go back there and stay. We don’t need you here.” That’s what I’d tell ‘em right to their faces, and make ‘em like it. [laughs] Yeah, they don’t bother me much.

Pneumonia Outbreak at Flu Hospitals

Interviewer: Do you remember the flu epidemic?

King: Yes I do, and I’ll tell you that sure killed ‘em all too. I don’t think the flu killed ‘em, I think it was pneumonia that killed ‘em. ‘Cuz they’d get scared and start the hospitals with them in Red Lodge and down here in Columbus they all head towards the mountains down here [?] to the hospitals, but I think it’s pneumonia that killed ‘em, ‘stead of the flu. If they’d of stayed home and ate a bunch of quinine, I think they’d of been alright.

When the Grasshoppers Got Here

Interviewer: Do you remember the drought? 1917-1919, did that hurt—

King: Oh yes I do. The grasshoppers followed, come due. Tell you, them grasshoppers, when they get here, they’re what raises the dickens, and when there’s a drought it always happens. Well, we had the mornin’ [?] crickets one year, do you remember them? Them’s the darnedest thing I’d ever seen. The chickens just loved ‘em, and they’re the nastiest-lookin’ things I’d ever seen. Heck, they was as big as my finger in the whole of their bodies and then they had a darn tail that kinda curled up over their backs. The darn chickens just loved ‘em, and they’re nasty.

Tough Luck Will Break You

Interviewer: Do you remember if a lot of homesteaders had to leave during that drought?

King: Well, they did. They went and moved ‘cuz they bought high-priced machinery and they mortgaged their land—and then they took ‘em. See, the banks had to take ‘em and they sold ‘em to larger stockholders, don’t ya see? I know they’re payin’ taxes on it now, when they busted over the banks [?] and they go broke. Shows you how [illegible] you can only earn so much money, and that tough luck will break you, especially sickness.