

TAPE #25EVELYN GILLICK GARBARINI

Recorded: March 1979

Reference: Early days in Volcano

(What can you tell me about the Clute family in Volcano?)

Well, there was John and Peter and Cora that I know of. I don't remember them, however. But I have a picture that was taken when I was about two, and my mother said that Cora Clute took the picture. We lived across the street from them.

(Was the Clute store next to Grillos?)

No. The Grillos bought out the Clutes. The Grillo store had been the Clute store. And the Clutes owned the livery stable too. That must have been in the sale too, because the Grillos then owned it.

(Can you tell me how the Gillicks came to settle in Volcano?)

My grandmother said that her family first settled in Yreka. I have a feeling that they didn't stay there very long.

(Where did they come from?)

My grandmother was born in Illinois; her name was McGee. And my grandfather came from Ireland. But he had relatives in Boston, and probably was there first.

(And you were born in Volcano?)

Yes. Compared with now there were more people in Volcano when I was little. It was a dying town when I grew up. It's a nicer place to live now than it was then because there were no automobiles then, and no way to go anywhere. We were just stuck; we couldn't go anyplace.

Then, after the automobile came in everything was different. By the time I was in high school there were quite a few cars. I can remember someone saying, Oh, there's an automobile going to come through town! And we lived next door to where Rosie Gillick lives, and by the time I got down to Main Street the car was going around the corner. That was supposed to be the first car that came to Volcano, and it had come from Cook's Station. There was a man in Sutter Creek by the name of ~~XXXX~~<sup>oca</sup> Socal, and he was very active in the early automobile business here. I believe he was driving the car.

(What roads went in and out of Volcano then?)

All the roads that are there now; only they were dirt then.

(What was your dad's business?)

He was a miner. Every once in a while one of those mines would start up, and he would work there. Then they'd close down and he'd go prospecting. One place he went to a lot was the Cleveland Tunnel. You know where the water tank is? Well, the water comes into that tank from the Cleveland Tunnel. It's just over a little way. And the Grillos supposedly owned the mine. My father would go in with someone and they would work it on shares. Then there was a lawsuit started by the Garibaldis, and the Grillos lost the mine. But they were given water rights, and that is what Volcano uses now. But that's the good water. The other water is so full of lime you can't use it.

(What about homesteading? How did that work?)

I think the small areas down town were probably mining claims. Those claims were very small. My husband's mother homesteaded 60 acres. But I think that most town property was acquired as mining claims.

In Volcano the mining was so very close, you know; Soldiers' Gulch and what we called the Tunnel Hole, down below the hotel. There was a tunnel that went out of that. Driving by, however, I can't see any sign of it now. When I was a youngster growing up, it had boards across it. That tunnel was on an incline, and the area was all gravel mining. And there was so much water around that they dug this tunnel to drain the water out of the area. And it was supposed to come out in Sutter Creek. I don't know if they ever completed it or not. I remember reading articles in the Dispatch from time to time about how they had run into hard rock; I don't think they ever finished it. But I do know that it was a failure, that it didn't drain the water.

(Was the St George in operation when you were there?)

Yes. I don't think it was ever closed in my time.

(I heard that it was closed in the early 30's)

It may have been. But the Jonas place, the Union House, was just practically a saloon. They didn't use the hotel part of it, and the Jonas family lived in the house next door. Later, they did run it as a hotel. I left there about 1920, you see. After that they started serving meals and renting rooms.

(Who stayed in the hotels?)

Well, there weren't too many. They were on the order of boarding houses. The only out of town people they had were probably drummers, you know, salesmen. Or maybe someone interested in mining. <sup>very</sup> Every once in a while someone would open up one of the small mines in the area. My grandmother's family ran the St. George for a time. I remember my cousin was born there, and I was real small at the time. I was six years old. My grandmother and my aunt ran the hotel, and one of my aunts was married to the man who ran the saloon part.

This was on the Gillick side.

(Where was the saloon located at that time?)

It was on the ground floor in the room nearest the creek, the sitting room now.

(Do you have any vivid recollections of your days in Volcano?)

One thing has always stayed in my mind. A feeling of being shut in. On Sundays usually when we didn't know what to do, we'd go for a walk. And we would go either to the foot of Boardman hill, and that stopped us right there, or we'd go up to the big pine tree which is at the foot of Rams Horn Grade and down the road to the Barone ranch. And I remember feeling closed in because that was as far as we could go.

(What did you do for entertainment?)

Well, in the summer we played around the creek a lot. In the spring we went after wildflowers, and we wandered around a lot. But there were only about twelve of us and we were all ages. And what game could you play that everybody could play. I think there were about three boys and nine girls. Of course, the girls tried to follow the boys lead and we used to play deer and hound. The boys would be the deer and the girls would be the hounds. We'd chase all over the countryside. We had little entertainments sometimes. In the earlier times when there were more people around, I remember hearing the folks say that they used to gather in the front room of the Grillos, the old Clute place, and everyone would gather around the piano and Cora Clute would play. They did an awful lot of that. Now, in my father's family, when they were young people, they did a lot of that, and once in a while there would be a little travelling show come through, but not very often.

They would usually have a movie machine of some sort, and it was always breaking down in the middle of the picture.

But you know one thing they had there that we looked forward to was a dance. Maybe they had three or four a year, I don't know. But there was always a Christmas dance. And they had the very best music. A couple of orchestras came from Stockton. One of the bands was called Patton and Springer as I recall. They'd come all the way up in the winter. They had this great big box stove in the corner, and the kids would all be huddling around the stove. I had my hair hanging down my back and it caught on fire. It was so cold that year that the orchestra got off the stage and played while sitting around the stove. I was standing there and the man playing the drums looked over and saw that my hair was on fire. We counted on these dances, and from the time we were little kids we danced. Usually the girls had to dance together; the boys wouldn't do it. And the mothers all thought they were too old to dance. So they would just go and watch. Then one youngster after another would conk out, and he'd end up on the bench with coats over em. We always liked it when the Native Daughters gave a dance, they were our mothers and they would let us dance. But if the Oddfellows gave a dance we had to wait until after midnight to dance. They said we were in the way if we danced before then. And we were always mad when they would have a square dance. We would have to sit on the bench because it was only for couples, the dancing that is.

(How many grades were in the Volcano school?)

Eight.

(Did you continue into high school?)

Yes. I went on to high school, but at that time there was no bus.

The school was in the Sutter Creek High School district. That's where I started. I stayed with my father's brother in Sutter Creek. That was in 1918 during the flu ~~was~~ epidemic, and I came home to Volcano because I had the flu, and I didn't go back. But they had a post-graduate course in the school, and the other kids who graduated with me took that class. So then I joined that. Then the next year--- the Jackson high gave us credit for the course---and so we went to Jackson High the next year. We started riding back and forth with the Grillos who had an old Ford that they kept in their livery stable. That's the way we went to school, until the bad weather would stop us. They we found a place to board in Jackson. The hill was steeper then; they've graded it down now. It was a dirt road, and there were places where we had to get out and push! So we'd get to school all full of dust and dirty as can be.

(Did you travel very much?)

No, we didn't. We didn't have a horse. Sometimes I wonder how we kept abreast of the times. But we did. Since then I have noticed that other people in the cities were doing and living pretty much as we were. The papers were mailed out, but they would be a day late. That helped keep us informed.

(Do you recall the first trip you made?)

I guess the first long trip I made was to Silver Lake. By that time my brother was able to drive a car, so we rented this Ford from Grillo, and my aunt and uncle, my mother and my brother and I went clear up to the spur. We broke a spring on the way, and we had to pay for that.

I was about fourteen then; that was my first trip. One summer I went to Stockton and stayed with an uncle, but that's about it.

(Did you get to San Francisco at all?)

I was about seventeen before I went to San Francisco. I was terribly dissatisfied; I looked for white buildings, and the buildings were all grey and dirty. And it was far too fast for me. I lived there for about seven months.

(Did you work there?)

No, I didn't. It wasn't a happy time. My husband was in the hospital there, the first year we were married. He was in a car accident, and he was in the hospital for four months. And we stayed three months after that for his therapy. But it was certainly strange when I first landed in San Francisco.

Oh, one thing I can add to this Volcano bit---my father and mother went to the school there, and also my mother taught there.

(How many kids were in the school?)

When my mother taught there were two rooms. She had the first four grades. There were a lot of kids; I've seen the school pictures.

I think there were about sixty kids in one of the rooms.

By the time I went to school there was only one room.

(How important were family ties?)

Very strong. But it was a clannish thing too, I'm afraid. And nationalities entered into it a lot too.

(Were there any Indians living there?)

There were quite a few earlier, but during my time there were not many.

(Were there any indians around that you can remember?)

There were quite a few earlier, but in my time there were very few. I remember one old Indian lady they called Broken-back Julia. And there was the Alec family, there were quite a few of those, father and mother and sons. They were in WW I, those Indian boys. That's about all I remember of the Indians.

(You were from a large family, I believe.)

I just had two brothers. But there were thirteen in my father's family. And in my Mother's there were twelve. But I think only eight grew up. Grandmother Gillick had thirteen, and they all grew to maturity. With all those diseases it was hard.

(When you were a child, did you have certain chores you had to perform?)

I didn't very much, because we were not a big family, but my brothers had to get in the wood and chop the kindling. I had to do the dishes. But in my father's family they were like men when they were ten or twelve years old. My father went to the fifth grade, and then he went to work.

(What was a usual meal like ~~considering~~ considering that you had no refrigeration or electricity?)

At one time Grillo also had a butcher shop. But we didn't eat much meat in our family. Now, the Grillos did; they never had a meal without meat. But their shop closed down, as there were not enough people to support it. Then you had to get your meat from Jackson, and it came up on the stage. So, we had meat about once a week.

(Was it expensive?)

No. It was just hard to get.

You know, I don't know whether the Grillos started the butcher business at that time, but the time they were building the PG&E canals on the river



they had the contract to supply the boarding houses with meat. I'm sorry my cousin isn't here, because he could really tell you a lot. That's my cousin, James Grillo. He will be up here for the summer. His mother will be up, but her mind isn't good any more. Fortunately, he got a lot down from her. She was ninety four last November.

(What would you have for breakfast, lunch and dinner?)

We had mush, toast and coffee. My father always took a lunch, and we would come home from school at noon, and sometimes we'd have scrambled eggs or macaroni. I'll tell you, there were an awful lot of beans eaten in Volcano. Our family not so much, because my dad didn't care for them, but grandmother was never without beans. Of course, there were an awful lot of Italian people in Volcano and they were great for vegetables. They all had gardens, and so we were usually able to get a lot of vegetables. We had a garden in the back, too. And in the early days my mother said people ate an awful lot of bacon. They could keep it, and it wouldn't go bad.

(Where did you get your dairy products?)

From people who lived around there. They would make butter, and the stores carried butter in brine. There would be a barrel of brine, and these pats of butter would be in the brine. That would keep it fresh.

(How did you keep things from spoiling at home?)

We just had a cellar. There was usually what we called a safe. This was built with screen all around it, and you put your things in that to keep the mice away. But things did keep very well. But nobody ever thought of buying meat ahead.

(What about doctors?)

Well, that was bad. When my brother was born, my father rode horseback to Sutter Creek to get the doctor. When I was born,

and that was four years later, there was a doctor who lived right next door. I was born in the house where Rosie lives, and the doctor lived right next to us. My mother said she felt so good while that doctor lived there, and about two months after I was born he left. I don't think they had a doctor for a long time after that. When I was growing up, there was a Dr. ~~XXXXX~~ Smith, but no one had much confidence in him. I don't know what he lived on; he certainly didn't make enough doctoring. Almost everyone went to Dr. Goodman in Sutter Creek. I remember my mother saying that my uncle had a carbuncle on his neck, and they couldn't break it. So, she rented a car and took him to Sutter Creek. He had a place there where you could stay if you needed to.

(What about religion?)

I think people went to church when there was a church to go to. In my time I don't remember a resident priest. A Catholic priest would come from time to time. Now they go every week up there, but then they came about three or four times a year. Then there was the Methodist Church; I can barely remember going to Sunday school, and I can barely remember the old gentleman who was the minister. Yes, as long as there was a church there I think people were pretty good about going to it.

(Did you and your husband come back from San Francisco and settle in Jackson?)

Yes. We've lived here almost all the time. There was one time when my husband worked in a lumber mill near Dunsmuir; we were up there a couple of years. And another time, he was a carpenter and there wasn't much business, we went to Oakland, and he worked there. But he didn't like to be away from Jackson at all.

(What was it like in Jackson? During the gambling era could you go downtown without getting into trouble?)

Oh, yes. The thing I disliked about it most, was that out of every crop of boys who came along there were one or two who went off into that kind of life. They didn't live their lives out, and they got to drinking. It was an easy life, you know. And the gamblers would be on the street, and they would always be dressed better than everyone else. This would be a very tempting life to the young high school boys. One or two out of every bunch would turn out that way, and that's no life.

Now, we haven't talked about my mother's family, the Murphy family. My grandfather was a Captain in the Volcano Blues.

(When did they arrive?)

They came in the early 50's. I think it was about 54. My grandmother said she was two years old. I think the Gillicks came here in 52.

We have cousins by the dozens around.

(How did he get into the Volcano Blues?)

The regiment was formed during the Civil War. It was formed in order to protect the gold from <sup>theft</sup> ~~theft~~ by the Confederates.

I think that was really a secondary reason. They drilled themselves, and they were ready for battle. They had even offered their services to the Union Army. There was a man there named Adams; Captain Adams was a military man, and he drilled them. Then it passed to Mr. Ross and then at the last it was my grandfathers. He was such a strong Union supporter. But they were never called.

(Was there conflict between the different sides in Volcano?)

Yes, I think there was trouble. I really never heard my folks say much, but there is that one story that they were going to fire the cannon; they told all the Republicans so they could close their windows, but they didn't tell the Democrats. But my grandfather was such a black Republican. My mother said that her mother's people came from one of the southern states, and one of their friends was a southern sympathizer. Well, they lived in the house with the Murphy family one winter, and my grandfather and this fellow argued north and south for the entire winter!