

The University of Arizona College of Agriculture and
the Arizona Historical Society Oral History Programs

Narrator: Robert J. Moody

Interviewer: Ray K. Weick

Transcriber: Beth Thrall

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Cooperative Extension Service

Ray Weick speaking. We are in Tucson, Arizona, this morning at 2737 East 21st Street and this occasion is that we are going to be taping an interview with Robert J. Moody. Bob Moody, as many of us know him, was an early Extension worker here in the State of Arizona and he's going to share with us some of his recollections of what took place in agriculture, Extension, and even a little bit about how he came to be a student at the University of Arizona.

Weick: This morning, Bob, we are glad to have you aboard and Bob, am I correct in stating that it is your intention to give this taped interview and the typed transcript of the interview to the Arizona Historical Society?

Moody: I'd be glad to do it.

Weick: Great. We think this is a good project, Bob. I talked to you a little bit about it before we started taping and so our idea is to get some of the early things as people recall them that happened for the benefit of those who weren't around at that time. We don't have any specific agenda to take care of things, but I'd like to start off and find out - I know you're from Montana originally - how it is that you happened to get down and be a graduate of the University of Arizona and an early employee of Extension in this State?

Moody: I went three years to the University of Montana majoring in Forestry. I stayed out in order to raise some money back in 1935 so that I could go back to school. Once, when I was

in Tucson on business, I went to the University of Arizona College of Agriculture to find out about the College and the secretary there said, "Our Dean, Paul Burgess, is over Acting President, and you could go see him." So, this being a small country school I went over and saw the President.

Weick: This really happened at the University of Arizona?

Moody: It happened at the University of Arizona.

Weick: Prospective students could go see the President?

Moody: That was in the fall of 1937. Dean Burgess gave me a big sales talk about the University of Arizona College of Agriculture. He said, "You'd be making a mistake to go back to the University of Montana. We place all our graduates and we'd be glad to have you here as a student." I enrolled as a student in the beginning of the second semester in 1938.

Weick: What area was your work in, Bob?

Moody: I had to major in Botany because that was the closest thing to the Forestry major I had at Montana. Of course I had to take certain Ag courses and other required courses that students had to have. Going all through that, I met another student in the Botany Department named Elizabeth Marshall and we became very well acquainted and became engaged and were looking forward to the time when we would graduate and I'd have a job.

Weick: Where was Elizabeth from?

Moody: Elizabeth was from Miami, Arizona.

Weick: So you found yourself a native Arizonian?

Moody: However, both of us were transfer students. She had transferred from the American University in Washington, D. C. and, of course, I had transferred from the University of Montana in Missoula. I completed all my requirements at the end of the first semester in 1939-40 and graduated in 1940. Just prior to graduation Dr. George Barr, who was Head of the Ag Econ Department at the University of Arizona, contacted me and said, "Could you come to my office for an interview?" I told him I'd be glad to. He said, "There's going to be an opening in this Department and when do you graduate?" I said, "I graduate at the end of the first semester," which would have been January, 1940. He said, "This job doesn't pay very much but you can think it over." I asked, "What does it pay?" He said, "\$150 a month." I said, "I don't have to think it over, I'll take it." It sounded like a fortune.

Weick: It probably was by a lot of - we didn't even have any McDonald's to spend your money on at that time.

Moody: No. So I took the job, we got married in March, 1940 and I worked as an Assistant Agricultural Economist in what we called "Land Use Planning" which was partly federally funded until that program was about to run out in July, 1941.

Weick: What were they trying to do in land use planning?

Moody: We made surveys all over the State to find out what rural areas were doing. The University in their wisdom sent us to places like Coolidge and Casa Grande in the summer and sent us to places like Holbrook in the wintertime. In the year that we were at Holbrook, I had chains on my car for six weeks going up and down that rim from Show

Low to Heber. It was a very interesting experience.

Weick: I believe it could be - 1940's, yes. Things were different then.

Moody: I knew that this job was going to come to an end and an opening had come up in the Extension Service as Assistant County Agent in Pima County in Tucson.

Weick: What did an Assistant County Agent in Pima County in Tucson do in 1940?

Moody: The County Agent, C. B. Brown, wanted to get a boys 4-H program going and the previous Assistant County Agents had worked on other types of projects but he told me that he wanted me to concentrate on getting 4-H going.

Weick: Would this be one of the first 4-H . . . ?

Moody: I was the first 4-H Agent in Pima County for boys. The Home Agent, Evelyn Bentley, handled all the home makers things as well as girls 4-H. I went on the job on July 1, 1941, and our office was on the third floor of the Court House, right under the big dome.

Weick: That was the Court House?

Moody: That's all there was. I remember walking up those stairs with C. B. Brown and Miss Bentley and he, as a gentleman, opened the door for her. She went in without saying "Thank you" or anything else and when I had moved into the little office that I had there, she came in and offered me her condolences.

Weick: Condolences! Was she a prophet at that time?

Moody: No, not really. I enjoyed it. We really developed a 4-H program. We worked through the rural schools a lot. We worked out into areas where there wasn't any rural schools where, I remember young Carl Ronstadt lived out on the site of the Santa Margarita Ranch

and I don't know where he went to school but I went out there and helped him with his 4-H program.

Weick: Where would that be from Tucson?

Moody: Southwest of Tucson, down towards Sasabe.

Weick: Santa Margarita Ranch - was there a school out in that area?

Moody: There was a school at Arivaca - there were several rural schools. The school people were very cooperative. If I came in working with a 4-H program, they gave me part of a day to work with the kids. We didn't have to wait until after school because many of those kids had to take buses back to their homes. We developed a good 4-H program.

Weick: What kind of projects did they have?

Moody: We had livestock, of course. We had gardening. We had a lot of handicraft work. The Stanley Company that makes tools provided us with a lot of literature that helped in the proper ways of using these tools. Anyway, that developed and I remember the first Achievement Day that we had was in the Spring, 1942. It was out at the Flowing Wells School. Emil Rovey, by that time, had become the State 4-H Leader and he was there, and Miss Bentley was presenting the awards for the girls. At the end of the presentations to the girls, Emil stepped forward and said, "Now we are going to have the boys' presentations." So I went up and we gave out the awards and this was, I think, the first Achievement Day that 4-H boys in Pima County ever had an opportunity to

_____.

Weick: We're talking about what, 1940 - 1941?

Moody: This would have been Spring, 1942. We continued on and went down to Ajo we got a club started down there - a real good club. There was a teacher there who grew up around Pumpkin Center up in Northern Arizona and had been raised on a ranch. His name was Kenneth McKee. I think the way we got in touch with him - he had been in Tucson going to summer school and he and his wife had a place right close to ours and we got acquainted. I said, "Wouldn't you like to start a 4-H program in Ajo?" He said, "I would." So we got it going and we had several fairs down there during the time that I was an Agent here. The whole Ajo community cooperated in this. Along in the Spring of 1943, I had other duties in addition to being a 4-H Agent because of the pressure of the war. We were working on farm labor programs - we were working on laying out farm plans for farmers - we were working on cotton - I had a column called the "Backyard Farmer" in the Tucson Daily Citizen and it ran once a week. People were growing Victory Gardens in their backyards. I'd get all kinds of calls about what to do about making my carrots grow better, some other thing, or how do you lay out a garden and how do you prepare it, and we had a lot of fun doing that. In December of 1943, I was out at the University getting some information on programs that we were doing in Pima County, and after work I was walking towards Speedway to catch the bus out to where we lived on Lee, and Director Pickerell, Charles U. Pickerell was the Director of Extension, and he said, "There's going to be a change in Yuma. Glen Blacklidge, who is the County Agent there, wants to move to a community where there is college availability for his two sons. Would you be interested in going to Yuma?" I said, "I can't think of any place that I'd

rather go." So we said very little about that, of course, because it wasn't supposed to be public information. In May, 1944, we moved to Yuma.

Weick: You were the County Agent?

Moody: I was the County Agent. At that time Glen Blacklidge moved to Tucson. Prior to his moving here, he acquainted me with the general agriculture in the area and I had to come back and finish up things in Tucson because C. B. Brown had retired.

Weick: He was the Agent here?

Moody: Yes. Blacklidge was taking over for him. Before Blacklidge took over on July 1, 1944, I had to wind up the program that the Extension Office had in Tucson. So my wife and two small children were in Yuma without a car. In those days we didn't have a car for everybody and this was, of course, during the war too. But on July 1, 1944, I went to Yuma as the Extension Agent. In those days vegetables were important in Yuma. They raised a lot of lettuce - they raised a lot of carrots.

Weick: Who were some of the growers back then.

Moody: Well, there was the McLaren Company. L. M. McLaren was a very dynamic individual. He had put together a team of people who were specialists in the various phases of vegetable industry. Floyd Newcomer was the Head of that group. I think there were seven of them and they each had a share in the company. There were other companies there too. There was the McDaniel Company at Somerton. They were a family company that owned quite a lot of land and the McDaniels had come to Yuma back in the 1930's out of the Dust Bowl broke and they put together a good farming operation. Then there

was F. H. Hogue who was more of a _____ and there was a J. L. Thompson. The reason I knew all of these folks so well, we had a farm labor program and once a week we met to plan what the needs were going to be for the farm labor program. We had the program where we brought the Mexican Nationals in - we called them "Braceros."

Weick: Now these were kept in camps?

Moody: These were kept in camps that were run by these employers. One of the biggest farmers down in Southern part of Yuma Valley was L. P. Barkley. Les Barkley raised cattle, raised alfalfa, he had cattle on pasture and he raised grain. He didn't raise any vegetables in those days. I recall going down there soon after I reached Yuma and he was having trouble with yearling calves dying. They called it "red water disease." It was caused by a breakdown in the kidneys and, as a smart young County Agent, I had just had a course from Dr. W. J. Pistor before I come down there in Elementary Veterinary Medicine and it told in there that if this situation developed, you took the cattle off of the green feed they were on and put them in a dry lot, just dry feed. So I suggested they do that and they did it and the cattle stopped dying.

Weick: And you looked like a genius.

Moody: For a little while. Along about that time, Pistor and Bartley Cardon who was working with him, came to Yuma almost weekly working with Barkley to try to find the answer to this. They even brought calves here to Tucson and observed them trying to find out. I don't think that they ever did find the answer to it. I recall one time Les Barkley was building a

set of corrals. The cattle business wasn't very good and his cattle had been dying so the First National Bank said to him, "We want you to sell all those cattle, and do something else." Well, he wouldn't do that. He fed the cattle out, and in those days which was 1944, got paid for them. I was down there to see him and he said "Lookit here," and he pulled a check for \$50,000 out of his sweaty back pocket. I said, "If that was mine, I'd get it into a bank before it fell apart." But anyway, this was the result - he made money on the cattle because he held out. If you knew Les Barkley - he could get away with doing things like that. At any rate, agriculture in Yuma in those days . . .

Weick: I haven't heard you say a thing about cotton.

Moody: There wasn't any. The last cotton in Yuma was grown in 1939 because there were no insecticides to kill the lygus bugs and the stink bugs - we didn't have some of the more recent cotton pests. But they kept cotton from being a profitable crop. Our crops were flax - flax was the major crop. This was during wartime and linseed oil was in great demand. Yuma was producing world-record yields of flax. W. B. Allen produced 60 bushels of flax to the acre on 160 acres. Harrison Emerick was written up in the National Agricultural Yearbook for having produced a world-record yield of more than 60 bushels to the acre on a 40 acre block.

Weick: Was that another Yuma farmer?

Moody: A Yuma Valley farmer.

Weick: That Emerick - is he any relation to Elmer Emerick?

Moody: That's Elmer's father.

Weick: I knew Elmer myself but I didn't know his father.

Moody: Flax was our major crop and flax hadn't been grown long enough that we had any of the disease problems that develop with any crop. But after some five or six years of growing flax, these disease problems started showing up. We were growing a variety of flax that was not resistant to most of the diseases because it was a new crop down there. The variety was Punjab, just like the magician, and we made very high yields. Ernie Johannsen who was another farmer in the Yuma Valley told me that growing flax was just like picking dollars off a tree. There were very few problems that went with it so we could count on having an average yield of around 40 bushels to the acre and in those days flax was bringing about \$4.00 a bushel. Then as we started having problems with flax, the acreage and that went down.

Weick: Do you recall what the price of flax was at that time?

Moody: Most of the time when I first got there, it was somewhere around \$4.00 a bushel. There was a time in the late 1940's where flax got up to \$6 and \$7.00 a bushel, again because of the demand for linseed oil. Flax continued to be in demand until after the Korean War and then it dropped off. It not only dropped off but we started to develop the synthetic oils for paints and other things, so flax dropped to practically nothing.

Weick: What did they begin to grow after flax?

Moody: Well, we were always growing alfalfa for both hay and seed. We grew barley but we didn't grow much wheat.

Weick: What about grain sorghums?

Moody: There were some grain sorghums. Alfalfa was generally not a high paying crop. Usually they'd grow it in order to get their land in shape for vegetables or some other crop in rotation. Income from farming was not real good in those days. However, vegetables were not like they are now, but vegetables were an important crop among about five or six or seven vegetable growers. As I told you - I think I got off that subject - we used to meet once a week in the Valley Cafe in Yuma to plan for the use of labor for the following weeks ahead.

Weick: Now we're back during World War II.

Moody: Yes. We had thousands of these Mexican Braceros and they were very good help. We also had something else. We had, when I first went to Yuma, we had Italian prisoners of war that had been brought in and they were placed in a camp out at Roll - tent camps - and it was in summer, there was no air conditioning, and the water that they had there at times was well water which had a very high salt content. So it wasn't the most desirable place. The Italian prisoners were - some of them were pretty good - some of them were very emotional. I don't think the Italian prisoners lasted very long but they lasted through at least one seed crop for the Roll farmers where they raised alfalfa seed almost exclusively. Then we brought in German prisoners of war who worked in all phases of agriculture, principally in vegetables.

Weick: Where were they?

Moody: They were established in a camp South of Yuma, about four miles, and we moved into an old World War II barracks that were earlier _____

Weick: That the one up on the Mesa right across from the old Experiment Station?

Moody: _____ just South of the old Experiment Station. Those people were very good help and the farmers treated them well. I remember when the McDaniel Company found out that they were supposed to furnish the meals at noon in the field. Every day they would have a big beef stew - out there they had people cooking these things up in huge pots and the Germans really liked that - beef and potatoes and all that. Anyway, the Germans were there until - the war wasn't over yet but it was getting close, and the Germans just were moved out. We didn't even know they were going.

Weick: Suddenly you're without any labor.

Moody: We were out that source of labor and they moved the things out of the camp including some of the things that were owned by the Producer's Cooperative Association which was the agency _____

Weick: This was the War Labor Board?

Moody: This was a group of farmers that called themselves the Yuma Cooperative . . .

Weick: But who moved the prisoners out?

Moody: The military up at Papago Park. Took them where, I don't know. Anyway, that pretty well ended the war part of it. Then agriculture in Yuma - about that time the Yuma Mesa started developing. Yuma Mesa is an area of about 25,000 acres much of it was public land owned by the United States. The United States came in, established alfalfa on farms and then these farms were drawn by veterans of World War II.

Weick: You're talking about when, now - after World War II?

Moody: After World War II - we're talking about somewhere around 1947-48. Then we had a whole new bunch of farmers that came in and they had to have financial stability enough that they could weather becoming established on these farms, but all those farms were put into alfalfa. Those farms all had dirt ditches and when you put water down a dirt ditch on the Yuma Mesa, the ditch just melts because it's pure sand. So it took them a while before they got concrete ditches but a few of those people still survive now. There must've been, I'll say 60 or 70 of those homesteaders that came in. They not only homesteaded there, they homesteaded in the Yuma Valley on land that had been owned by the government, and over in the Bard Valley in California right across the river and that was a major change in our agriculture.

End of 1st side of tape 1

Weick: This is Side 2 of Tape 1 and we're talking with Bob about homesteading and the growth of agriculture acreage in Yuma County and that was an era that was pretty significant and full of a lot of things that were different, I know that. We're talking about the Yuma Mesa 60 or so homesteaders there and some in the Yuma Valley and some in the Bard area and then following that - you may want to talk about that some more - we have the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation Project that came along about then. So, pick up where we were at, on the Yuma Mesa.

Moody: On the Yuma Mesa at that time the only citrus was in an established area called Unit B which was probably 2,000 acres which was mostly older citrus - grapefruit, oranges and lemons.

Weick: That had been there for quite some time.

Moody: Some of it was 40 years old when we went to Yuma, so early 1900's.

Weick: In fact the University still has an Experiment Station up in some of that area?

Moody: Up on the Yuma Mesa. When I first went to Yuma - I think we skipped over this - the major agricultural area was the Yuma Valley which had 50,000 acres and was one of the first irrigation projects established by the Bureau of Reclamation in the early 1900's. Water was delivered from the Colorado River. Out East of Yuma, we had the North Gila Valley which was an area of about 6,000 acres and also took water from the Colorado River. Then we had the South Yuma Valley which didn't have the availability of water from the Colorado River and they used wells and they raised very good crops and mostly that's very good land, but the water was saltier than the Colorado River water.

Weick: Bob, when did they get into the bermuda grass business because that's what I remember about the South Yuma Valley _____.

Moody: South Yuma Valley and the Wellton-Mohawk area grew bermuda grass for seed partly because of the salty water bermuda grass would grow under those conditions. The Wellton-Mohawk, prior to the time that the project was approved, it got down to where there was only 5 or 6,000 acres of land remaining under cultivation because of the high salinity of the wells. The crops that they grew were alfalfa and bermuda grass. Bermuda grass made the soil, we call it "sweeten up the surface soil" to where alfalfa would germinate. When the alfalfa would germinate, they planted alfalfa and it grew there for about three years and then it gradually died out and the bermuda grass took over because

the bermuda grass was there all the time. The practice was to raise one crop of alfalfa hay then turn the crop for seed and they didn't have insecticides to control lygus bugs and stink bugs, so they had a program of everybody cut their hay as close to the same time as they could, then they cleaned up all the fence rows. Research had been done on that at the University of Arizona and also at Utah State so that it pretty well got these insects under control and they were able to make their first crop of alfalfa seed without a whole lot of problems from that. So that was the major crop - either bermuda grass seed which had no problems at all and alfalfa seed. Bermuda would make as much as 1,000 pounds to the acre _____.

Weick: As I recall, somebody was telling me that Yuma County was the principal bermuda grass production area in the world.

Moody: I think probably more than 90% of all the bermuda grass seed in the world was grown in Yuma County at that time. They grew some in the South Gila Valley, too. Bill Whitman was a major seed producer and also a marketer.

Weick: Whitman Seed.

Moody: He marketed bermuda seed and alfalfa seed all over the world. Out in the Roll area . . .

Weick: Now we're talking about before the Wellton-Mohawk Project

Moody: This is before there was any irrigation project on the Colorado River. Out in the Roll area we had farmers like Wayne Wright, Harold Woodhouse, Charlie Buckeye,

Weick: There was Rohrbaugh (sp?) out there?

Moody: The Rohrbaugh's were down at Wellton.

Weick: Oh, that's right.

Moody: Frank Batley (sp?) was one of the major seed growers and there were others that were leaders out there but those people were really the pioneers in the seed business and also were mainly the leaders that helped to get this project established - the Wellton-Mohawk Project when it finally was approved. They worked for years getting that done. The South Gila Valley, I said the Yuma Valley had about 50,000 acres, the South Gila Valley had about 11,000 acres, the North Gila Valley had 6,000 and then the Wellton-Mohawk was down to about 5,000 acres. That was Yuma County's agriculture.

Weick: That was all there was?

Moody: There was no more until after the Wellton-Mohawk Project was approved.

Weick: And the Yuma Mesa?

Moody: The Yuma Mesa was another 25,000 acres. In the South Gila Valley, they changed the way of delivering water from the Colorado River. Imperial Valley wanted to generate some power in the All-American Canal, so instead of letting the water come down the river, it was run down the All-American Canal through several small power plants where part of it was diverted into the Yuma area, into the Bard Valley and into the Yuma Valley and the rest went over to Imperial Valley. When that happened, the Colorado River was no longer recharging the South Gila Valley with better quality ground water, so the South Gila Valley wells became very salty and the Bureau of Reclamation came in in the early 1960's and put in an irrigation project there. It's a good project.

Weick: When was this?

Moody: I'd say, 1964 or 1965. Prior to that time the Wellton-Mohawk Valley Project was approved. It was approved

Weick: Didn't they run water through there, though, to get it up to the Yuma Mesa?

Moody: Yes, they did. They had what they called the Gila Gravity Canal which took off from the Wellton-Mohawk Main Canal, and this canal took water to the Yuma Mesa. The Wellton-Mohawk Main Canal took water to the Wellton-Mohawk.

Weick: That would have been late 1940's and early 1950's.

Moody: I think it was about 1950 that the first water was delivered to the Wellton-Mohawk. That project was approved, I'll say about 1948, and it was authorized but they had no financing for it. So, in 1949 farmers from the Wellton-Mohawk had been going back to Washington for years trying to get this project approved - they finally got it approved through the efforts of people like Senator Carl Hayden. We had no problems in getting Senate financing because Hayden was the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. But in the House, it was a different story. So in 1949 a group of Wellton-Mohawk farmers, Harold Woodhouse, R. H. McElhaney and Charlie Buckeye made arrangements to go back to Washington to try to get the House Appropriations Committee to approve the financing of the project. I was asked to go with them. I had just resigned as County Agent and was working with a farm machinery company in Yuma, Hartnet and Braden (sp?)

Weick: The John Deere dealer?

Moody: The John Deere and Caterpillar. So I went back and spent a week in Washington and finally got into this hearing and the hearing was a committee on financing and I've forgotten

the names of the people on the committee. The Chairman of it was a fellow named Ben Jensen who was a farmer from Iowa. So when we walked into the committee room after waiting around for almost a week to get our turn, he said to the group as a whole, "You know, we've been listening to people like you for over six weeks and we're getting damn tired of it."

Weick: This was the U. S. House of Representatives?

Moody: Yes. I can't remember the name of the Congressman from Arizona who formerly had been a History professor at Arizona State. I'll think of it after a bit.

Weick: We'll fill it in when we come back. I remember these kinds of things, but I don't remember it either,
Bob.

Moody: At any rate, he smoothed things over and he said, "These people have come a long way and I hope that you'll listen to them. They have a story to tell you." The Chairman said, "All right, we'll give you 45 minutes." I had worked for two months putting the report that I had together, prepared with all kinds of maps and pictures and potential for production and things like that. We sat down, I think McElhaney made the initial remarks then I was put on to tell about potential for farming in the Wellton-Mohawk, and Jensen said, "That's a long report you have here, could you just narrate from it without reading all of it?" I said, "I certainly could." He of course had a copy of the report and we had these pictures - I started in and told him about seed increases, raising alfalfa and raising grain that would come off with time enough in the Spring that we could send them up North and they would get a double yield. Actually, more than a double yield because we always raised higher

yields than they did from the States that they came from. So Jensen got real interested. He said, "You doing anything with wheat?" and I said, "Yes, we are," and I told him about a project we had raising wheat for Montana. He said, "You know, when I was a kid, we'd go down to Kansas with the threshing crews - I came from North Dakota - and by the time we had gotten back to North Dakota when our crop was ripe up there, the rust had taken all of it and there wasn't anything left. Are you doing anything on rust?" I said, "We got a rust resistant variety growing right now." Jensen asked me so many questions and we were supposed to fly out of there that afternoon and I saw McElhaney leaving and I knew he was going out to cancel our airplane reservations. Instead of being there for 45 minutes, we were there for about three hours with him asking questions about the _____. The cap to the whole thing was when Charlie Buckeye got up and said, "You know, I worked real hard to save this farm. By God, I don't want to lose it now." Jensen was across the table from me and he had tears in his eyes. He said, "By God, you're not going to lose it."

Weick: This is Charlie Buckeye?

Moody: He told Charlie, and the project was passed.

Weick: Is that right. That's an interesting story right there.

Moody: Anyway, the Wellton-Mohawk started. Of course, once they got their ditches in and they started raising crops, they thought that the natural flow back to the river would take the drainage out. Well, this didn't happen and they got some water-logged areas and they had to put in drainage wells and drainage channels. Now, the Wellton-Mohawk and the South

Gila Valley are two of the finest areas for growing all kinds of crops as there are anywhere in the world. Fine irrigation projects, high yields and land that's pretty much in demand. That sort of gives you . . .

Weick: That is very - you know I worked in that area, Bob, and I never heard that story as well told as I heard it here this morning as we make this tape. I think this is a real good example of why we're doing this Oral History Project. We've now put down some things for posterity that I didn't think an awful lot of people ever knew.

Moody: I think there's a lot of people that still don't know.

Weick: Well, there weren't but a handful of people there at that hearing that you're talking about. You're probably one of the few that are still left. This is fantastic. We could talk a lot, but one of the other things I'm interested in, Bob, is that you landed down there in Yuma as an Extension Agent in the early 1940's there, is that right, and who were some of the staff people you worked with there?

Moody: I had a Home Agent named Mariel Hopkins. Her office was not in mine. She worked out of her home. Director Charles Pickerell did not approve of that but she had a lot of friends and he wasn't able to change it, at least at that moment he wasn't. When I was there we shared an office with the people we called the AAA.

Weick: Where was your office located?

Moody: In the Court House, second floor, and there were two of us there, George Pickering was the AAA . . .

Weick: That was the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

Moody: We worked very closely together.

Weick: You gave me a name there and I interrupted you.

Moody: George Pickering.

Weick: That's different than George Pickerell.

Moody: Charlie Pickerell. George Pickering was a farmer from the lower Yuma Valley at Gadsden. He was also the . .

Weick: How many Extension - you and . . .

Moody: That was it.

Weick: You and Hoppy were the Extension staff at that time.

Moody: We were it.

Weick: I used the name Hoppy because I also worked with Mariel Hopkins and she was known as Hoppy.

Moody: That's right. She was a very capable lady. She sent, probably, more kids to Chicago on 4-H awards than anybody I ever knew. She'd go out and work with them individually after they had gotten to the stage where they were able to show that they had done some achievement.

Weick: You were the - when did your staff begin to grow, then? Did you ever get more people?

Moody: In, I think about 1948, after the war things like the Farm-Labor program and other things were pretty well over with and we needed to have a 4-H program developed. So Director Pickerell called me and said, "We have a young man that we would like to have you look over as a possible 4-H Agent." This was Albert R. Face from South Dakota.

Weick: He's on my list to do an interview with, too, Bob.

Moody: Al had been in the service and because of asthma was discharged early because wherever they put him wasn't good for his asthma and Al came there and he also went over to Imperial Valley because they wanted a 4-H Agent. They offered him more money over there but I persuaded him that there was more challenge in the Yuma area and he took the job in Yuma. Well, I was certainly happy about that and Al did a great job as a 4-H Agent. Then in 1949, I resigned as County Extension Agent and Roy R. Young came in as the County Agent.

Weick: Roy Young - a lot of people knew Roy Young as a banker more than . . .

Moody: Roy Young later on became a banker and he was only a County Agent for about a year. Following Roy Young, Al Face became the County Agent and you'll have to go down the list from there on, Ray. I might miss a few.

Weick: Well - I can begin to pick some of that up from my personal experience not too far down the line with that in Yuma County. Bob, this has been a great session here that we've had and we've covered a lot of ground and I know that having known you for a long time, we didn't talk about all the things that you've had for experience and things. One that I'd like to go back before we close out on this thing, I made a note as you were talking. I think it was a very significant program and a lot of people didn't realize it and that's this over-winter seed increase thing that you mentioned that you sold the Wellton-Mohawk project to the Congressman from Iowa on that basis. That was a program that really had a high impact on the grain business throughout the Midwest of this country at least.

Moody: Not only grain, but alfalfa seed.

Weick: Alfalfa seed as well.

Moody: Wayne Wright, who I mentioned before, grew the first _____ alfalfa for the State of Montana and he produced seed far superior in quality to the seed that they sent down to him for the increase.

Weick: Correct me if I'm a little - I want you to get the story out. People who would get a new variety up in the North and they would send it to Yuma and grow another crop of seed over the winter and it would go back with more seed to go into the ground in the Spring back in Montana or elsewhere.

Moody: One of the first grain crops that we grew was soon after I went to Yuma. People in Montana and Alberta and the Northern States were having trouble with what we called the saw fly. The saw fly was an insect that got into the wheat stem and when the eggs from the larvae hatched it would just cut off the wheat and the crop would be lost. So they were suffering very severe losses. In Alberta, they developed a new variety called "Rescue" and they sent one bushel to Mesa one year to see whether it would grow in Arizona and it grew satisfactorily. Then the next year, I had a call from Dr. R. L. Matlock who was the Extension Agronomist in Tucson saying _____ counties to see whether or not you were able to produce a hundred bushels of Rescue wheat for a seed increase for Montana. He sent a telegram to I'm sure Pinal County, Maricopa County and Yuma County and I didn't answer his telegram - I called him. I said, "I think we can grow that better than anybody in the State." He said, "Well, fine. You get in contact directly with the Extension Agronomist in Montana," and I did that. He sent down those hundred bushels of wheat and we placed it with a farmer named John Bretz in the

South Gila Valley. John was an excellent farmer whether it was flax or whatever he grew, he was very precise. He planted this Rescue wheat and I think it was about the middle of May the following year, probably 1946, that the crop ripened, he harvested it, I got in contact with Ralph Mercer who was the Extension Agronomist at Montana, and said, "We got our crop ready for you." Right at that time all the railroads in the country threw a freight strike and we had no way of making sure that wheat was going to get to Montana in time.

Weick: In time to get it in the ground.

Moody: He got in contact with the Great Northern Railway and they pulled some strings and they made sure that that train came from Arizona and it was delivered up along what was called the "high line" in Montana where they were growing these dry-line crops and that grain was unloaded into the farmers' trucks right off the railroad cars and probably put in the ground within a day or two after it got there. That was a very written up increase - the Rotarian magazine, _____ wrote that story on the Rescue wheat. Anyway, that was one of the _____. I told Jensen in our legislative conference in Washington about the Rescue wheat too.

Weick: I think it's a great - it really had much more impact on _____

Moody: Then there were others that came in and grew barley and wheat and oats and peas . . .

Weick: I can recall a fellow that showed up in the office when I was in Yuma one time was stuffing a little paper envelope into his shirt pocket - that's how much seed he had at that time.

Moody: Back when I was no longer a County Agent I grew some of those

Weick: Garden plot size thing. I didn't want to miss that part of the story because I know from my own experience how important it was and it's one that an awful lot of people don't know that ever took place. So, Bob, this has been a very delightful period of time and we're going to let you off the hook. It's possible, we could come back and do this some more sometime. Right now, I want to thank you very much and this has been a pleassant occasion. This is Homecoming - tonight we've got to go win that football game, right?

Moody: Exactly.

Weick: Okay. Thank you very much, Bob.