My oral history was with Sandra Jo Dunlap Rasmussen. She was born on January 21, 1948, in Gillette, Wyoming. Her parents are Helen and Richard Dunlap, who still reside in Gillette. She lived on a ranch sixteen miles south of Gillette. Her father was born on this ranch on July 16 1920.Richard's father, William "Oscar" Dunlap homesteaded this land. Oscar moved with his family in March 1914 from Giltner, Nebraska. He was the middle of three children and was twenty-one years old at this time. The family traveled to Gillette in an emigrate railroad car. This was a box car used to haul cattle. They brought all their possessions with them ; including some farm equipment to start farming. Oscar homesteaded his own land, which was next to his parent's land. The land beame theirs after three years of working it.

Opal Riddle homesteaded her own land of 320 acres, approximately five miles south of the Dunlap ranch. She taught school in a one-room school house one mile from the Dunlap ranch. She walked six miles to school every day. This is how her and Oscar meet. They were married July 2, 1918. On July 5, 1918 , Oscar went into the Army. World War I was winding down by this time . He served as a horse-keeper and was stationed in France.for two years. This was the only time in sixty-four years he ever left the ranch. Oscar had some kind of trouble with his teeth , and this affected his eyesight. Slowly he lost his eyesight and was legally blind with only five percent of his vision.Upon returning home from the war he continued to ranch. Sandy recalls helping her grandfather herd the milk cows in at sunset. She said,"I was his eyes alot when I helped him with the chores."

They all lived on the ranch together. Oscar and Opal lived in the original homestead shack, making it larger as it needed. Sandy's parents were married on February 10, 1945. They bought a one bedroom house then from Midwest, Wyoming for $200.00, delivered. Midwest was an oil boom-town in the 40's. After the war was over , the area slowed down. There

was an excess of houses. The city sold them very cheap to get rid of them. Later this house was replaced for a larger one. The houses eventfully had all the modern conveniences. Sandy remembers before they had rural electricity, they had an underground light plant. Which was a 12 volt system. It powered electricity to the houses. She also recalls her mother carrying buckets of water from the well to the house. They also had an outhouse, she said, " You even had to use it in the cold." Her father went down to the creek to cut ice blocks for the ice box. They stored several blocks at a time underground compartment.

Sandy told of the rifle pits on their ranch. They were from an Indian battle called, "Sawyer Road Party." The Calvary dug these pits around the circle of wagons. The rifle pits protected them in the battle. The Calvary was on an exposition to find a different route to Oregon. They had a scout on the buttes north of the camp. The scout was killed trying to warn the soldiers of the Indian's attack. He and two other soldiers that died are buried in one of the east rifle pits. This location was chosen because the Caballo Creek ran past the camp. The Calvary was traveling with cattle and horses that needed water. The year this took place was 1865.

Sandy attented a one-room school house for the first seven years. It was warmed by a coal, wood stove. It did not have electricity until she was in the fourth grade. Everyone brought their own lunch and water from home. There was a small house near the school. The teacher stayed there in the winter , when the roads were too bad for traveling. There was never more than ten students attending school here. For several days, once, Sandy was the only pupil at school. All the other children had the chicken-pox. Some games the children played were "kick the can," "hide and seek," and " steal sticks." In the winter they would bring sleds to play with. Some of the children rode horses to school.

The community hall, G bar N, was the social hub of the community. An annual school Christmas program was held here. It included the three area schools. Other community functions, activities, and meetings were conducted here. A traveling minister held church every Sunday.

Her father raised both cattle and crops, of corn, wheat and hay. Sandy has a younger brother, George and a younger sister, Judy. They all shared in the work at the ranch. In the late 50's the government paid the ranchers not to raise crops.There was a surplus food supply. So instead of planting a food crop her father planted hay. Sandy spent many hours in the fields cutting that hay.Deciding not to do much more ranching her father bought a gas station in Gillette. Since he drove the children to school everyday, working at the station gave him something,to do while the kids were at school. After two years they had a house built in town. From then on they lived at the ranch in the summer only. Moving to town was quite a change from the ranch. Sandy felt the ranch communities were much closer than the city community. On the ranch you might not see your neighbors for weeks. In the city your neighbors you could see all the time. She became very active in Four 'H'. Some of her projects were raising a calf into a cow. Also the were projects of cooking and sewing. She once won a trip to Chicago with one of her projects.

In 1977 their ranch was sold to the Amax Coal Company for future expansion. Sandy's father, Richard, sold his land for cash. Her grandfather, Oscar, traded his twenty-two hundred acres for a ranch in South Dakota that was twenty-two thousand acres. This ranch is still in the family. The family's general feeling about their land being taken away, Sandy said," The fact that this land belonged to my grandfather for sixty-four years and the fact that it was no longer his,was the biggest hurt or what

ever you want to call it." Oscar had no desire to even live on the ranch in South Dakota. He only went there once to see it. He knew this ranch was not really his like the one he homesteaded. He bought a small house in Gillette and lived there till his death in 1981.They had the option to lease the ranch from the coal company. Sandy's father said, "Its easier to get clear out of it and off of it than staying here." Amax is keeping up with relocating the land around Gillette. It ships three to five coal cars of coal a day to the states south and east of there. Her father just recieved a notice that their ranch will be mined in 1983. Sandy feels that once they start to mind their land , it will never be the same. She said , "It's like a piece of your life was not there anymore."

"ORAL HISTORY"

JANET JOHNSON

I interviewed Sandra Jo Dunlap Rasmussen who is currently living at 1365 Moran in Rock Springs, Wyoming. I conducted the interview on November 23, 1982. She was married on August 11, 1968 to Robert Lee Rasmussen. She has lived in Rock Springs since 1971. She has three children Robyn, Rodney and Ryan. She attented college in Casper for two years, then for some time at the University of South Dakota. Her husband is an engineer for "Wexpro" here in Rock Springs.