

**AN INTERVEIW WITH
EMMA RICHARD FORMASTER**

**An Oral History conducted and
edited by
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**LINCOLN COUNTY TOWN HISTORY PROJECT
LINCOLN COUNTY, NEVADA**

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PREFACE

The Lincoln County Town History Project (LCTHP) engages in interviewing people who can provide firsthand descriptions of the individuals, events and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interview are not history. However, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiography as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the LCTHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the LCTHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts, and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often largely unreadable and therefore a waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the LCTHP will, in preparing a text:

- a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often sprinkled;
- b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;
- c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context;
- d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered but have been added to render the text intelligible; and

- e. make every effort to correctly spell the names of all individuals and places, recognizing that an occasional word may be misspelled because no authoritative source on its correct spelling was found.

INTRODUCTION

Historians generally consider the year 1890 as the close of the American frontier. By then, most of the western United States had been settled, ranches and farms developed, communities established, and roads and railroads constructed. The mining boomtowns, based on the lure of overnight riches from newly developed lodes, and the settlement of most of the suitable farmland, were but a memory.

Although Nevada was granted statehood in 1864, examination of any map of the state from the late 1800s shows that most of it south of the 38th parallel remained largely unsettled, even unmapped. In 1890 most of southern Nevada - including Lincoln County - remained very much a frontier, and it continued to be so for at least another 20 years.

Even in the 1990s, the frontier can still be found in Lincoln County in the attitudes, values, lifestyles, and memories of area residents. The frontier-like character of the area is also visible in the relatively undisturbed quality of the natural environment, much of it essentially untouched by humans.

A survey of written sources on Lincoln County's history reveals variability from town to town: A fair amount of literature, for instance, can be found covering Pioche from its first newspaper, beginning in the fall of 1870, to the present. Newspapers from Delamar are available from 1892 to 1906 and Caliente from 1904 to 1868. In contrast, Panaca and Alamo never had newspapers of record. Throughout their histories, all Lincoln County communities received only spotty coverage in the newspapers of other communities. Most of the history of Lincoln County after 1920 is stored in the memories of individuals who are still living.

Aware of Lincoln County's close ties to our nation's frontier past and the scarcity of written sources on local history (especially after 1920), the Lincoln County Commissioners initiated the Lincoln County Town History Project (LCTHP). The LCTHP is an effort to systematically collect and preserve the history of Lincoln County Nevada. The centerpiece of the LCTHP is a set of interviews conducted with individuals who had knowledge of local history. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and then edited lightly to preserve the language and speech patterns of those interviewed. All oral history interviews have been printed on acid-free paper and bound and archived in Lincoln County libraries, Special Collections in the

James R. Dickinson Library at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, and at other archival sites located throughout Nevada.

The interviews vary in length and detail, but together they form a never-before-available composite of each community's life and development. The collection of interviews for each community can be compared to a bouquet: Each flower in the bouquet is unique--some are large, others are small--yet each adds to the total image. In sum, the interviews provide a view of community and county history that reveals the flow of life and events for a part of Nevada that has heretofore been largely neglected by historians.

Collection of the oral histories has been accompanied by the assembling of a set of photographs depicting each community's history. These pictures have been obtained from participants in the oral history interviews and other present and past Lincoln County residents. Complete sets of the photographs have been archived along with the oral histories. The oral interviews and written sources served as the basis for histories of the major communities in Lincoln County. These histories have also been archived.

The LCTHP is one component of the Lincoln County program to determine the socioeconomic impact of a federal proposal to build a high-level nuclear waste repository in southern Nye County, Nevada. The repository, which would be inside Yucca Mountain, would be the nation's first, and possibly only, permanent disposal site for high-level radioactive waste. The Lincoln County Board of County Commissioners initiated the LCTHP in 1990 in order to collect information on the origin, history, traditions and quality of life of Lincoln County communities that may be impacted by the repository. If the repository is constructed, it will remain a source of interest for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years to come, and future generations will likely want to know more about the people who once resided in the area. In the event that government policy changes and a high-level nuclear waste repository is not constructed in Nevada, material compiled by the LCTHP will remain for the use and enjoyment of all.

--RDM

This is Robert McCracken talking to Emma Richard Foremaster at the home of Alice and Allen Forsythe in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 19, 1991.

CHAPTER ONE

RM: Why don't you tell me your name as it reads on your birth certificate?

EF: The name as it reads on my birth certificate is Emma Alice Richard.

RM: And when and where were you born?

EF: I was born in the town of Pioche, Nevada, in 1899, on the 7th of September.

RM: And could you tell me your father's name?

EF: My father's name was John William Richard.

RM: And do you know when and where he was born?

EF: He was born in Minersville, Utah, on November 5, and I think it was in 1869.

RM: What was his occupation?

EF: He owned a farm and raised cattle.

RM: Were his family Mormons?

EF: Yes. His father came from France with his parents after he joined the LDS church in France through the aid of the missionaries. His mother did the same thing - she also came from France. I don't think it was the same town, but it was the same country at the same time. Her parents also were converted by the LDS missionaries.

RM: And when and where was your mother born?

EF: She was born in Panaca, Nevada, April 14, 1872.

RM: She must have been one of the first ones in there then, she and her family.

EF: She was English. Both her mother and father were English and they had come over as converts through the missionaries in England.

RM: What was your mother's maiden name?

EF: Sarah Alice Sharp.

RM: Then you're related to Henry Sharp?

EF: There were 2 Henry Sharps. My grandfather - my mother's father - was Henry Sharp who came from England, and after he came here he married my grandmother Morris and their first child was a boy and he was Henry Sharp. So there were 2 Henry Sharps. I think Henry William was the father and Henry was his son.

RM: Joe Higbee has given me some pictures to copy . . . Now, is this the Henry Sharp from England?

EF: That's right. And this was my mother's father, Henry Sharp.

RM: But the Henry Sharp in the first picture came here from England?

EF: He did. They lived someplace up around where they landed, probably in New England.

RM: Did your grandfather Henry Sharp come to Utah, too?

EF: Yes, he did. He was born in Northamptonshire, England, in 1833 and came to Panaca around 1868.

RM: And you were born in 1899?

EF: That's right.

RM: Where did you live when you were a small child?

EF: I lived on a farm with my father and mother in Pahranaagat Valley.

RM: When did your parents go to the Pahranaagat Valley?

EF: Well, my mother was born in Panaca but her mother went there because there were not any doctors or anything in Pahranaagat Valley. So they brought the little newborn baby home to Pahranaagat Valley. I understand that they had nothing much but these covered buckboard wagons - they traveled back and forth in those wagons to get to Panaca from Pahranaagat Valley.

RM: Do you remember anything about Delamar when you were small?

EF: Yes, I do. To me it was a big city. [chuckles] Of course, that wasn't true, but it had everything nice in it. It had a drugstore and a store and restaurants and little hotel where you could go and stay - a very exciting place. [chuckles]

RM: Why was it exciting?

EF: Because I lived on a farm and those things were not familiar. We'd always go in and have a little room at the little hotel, which was very exciting, and eat in a restaurant - there were no restaurants or hotels in Pahranaagat Valley. Then the drugstore was the most amazing place I could think of. It was owned by John Shire. It was frightening. You wouldn't recognize it as a drugstore now. It had nothing in it but great, tall, white bottles - rows of them - all medicine. There was no pop machines, no candy - nothing to sell but drugs. And Mr. Shire knew just exactly how to measure out your smaller bottles. This was in Delamar, Nevada, where my son-in-law lived. I don't think he would know it because that's when I was a little girl. But it was a very spooky place. It was a little bit dark, and there were all those big bottles, and Mr. Shire was very busy and not too pleasant to be around. You'd get out of there as soon as your mother bought the medicine.

RM: Were there doctors in Delamar then?

EF: Yes. The doctor's name was Jenson.

RM: Do you remember the name of the hotel in Delamar where you stayed?

EF: No, but I think that the name of the people who ran it was Reed.

RM: Could you describe the room that you would stay in?

EF: They had a bed with a table beside it, and a chair.

RM: Did they have sheets in those days?

EF: Oh, definitely. They had beautiful sheets - the whiter and nicer the sheets were, the better your hotel or home was. If you saw a sheet on the line that wasn't snowy white, that lady was a poor housekeeper.

RM: I'll be darned. What were the tricks to getting a sheet white?

EF: Rubbing it hard on the washboard and soaking it in the hot suds with plenty of lye in the water.

RM: Did you use bluing?

EF: Definitely. That helps make it white.

RM: Did they have indoor plumbing in the hotel?

EF: No, they had outhouses.

RM: Could you take a bath?

EF: I can't remember. There were wash basins, and I guess the water was piped in, so you must have been able to have taken a bath. I don't remember. I probably wasn't too fond of getting in - it was scary in the tub.

RM: What was the restaurant at Delamar like?

EF: It was just a room full of tables - and I don't remember a counter.

RM: What was on the menu?

EF: Meat and potatoes and vegetables cooked on Monarch wood stoves or swinging pots.

RM: How often did you go to Delamar?

EF: Well, I really can't tell you. My father had a vegetable garden (he also raised cattle), and he took vegetables in possibly twice a week. But of course we didn't go each time - we just went when Mother needed to get something from the town - medicine or cloth for clothes or things of that sort. And maybe once in a while just for a pleasant visit.

RM: Did you get up to Pioche much?

EF: Very seldom. That's where I was born, but I never did get there often as a child.

RM: It was just too far away, wasn't it?

EF: It was too far away and there was nothing to go in except the team and wagon or buggy or something of that sort.

RM: Was Caliente there by then, or was that before the railroad?

EF: I remember going there when the railroad was in there because that was quite a thing for the folks, to see the trains come in.

RM: Joe [Higbee] was telling me a story about your grandfather.
He was a musician, wasn't he?

EF: Yes, George William Richard.

RM: Joe said that he was playing at a dance or something in Utah, and he saw a girl there that he liked and everything and he said to her, "I'd like to marry you." Do you know the story I'm talking about?

EF: Yes. I don't know how accurate it is, but I've heard it repeated many times.

RM: Why don't you tell it? (I don't want to put words in your mouth.)

EF: You finish it.

RM: The way Joe told it to me, your grandfather said, "Well, I'd like to marry you." And she said, "Well, you'd better do it tonight because tomorrow I'm marrying a polygamist." So he said, "OK."

EF: That's the story, And whether it's the truth or not, I don't know. But [they say] her girlfriend went home and packed her clothes and they left and went towards Cedar City and were married in some little town up by Cedar City.

RM: Is that right? That's a really charming story, I think. And that would be your grandmother?

EF: That was my grandmother.

RM: Did you know her?

EF: Oh yes, very well. She was a very nice, kind, little old lady and she loved her family very much, and her grandchildren. We were always glad to go to her house because she was so good to us. And she had come from a very nice family. I met some of her brothers (never saw a sister but I saw her brothers) and they were very nice.

RM: Could you tell me about George Richard? Did you know him?

EF: Oh, I certainly did. In my opinion he was a great man. He was short and very, very muscular. He had such wide shoulders that every time he got a new shirt my grandmother would put in a piece of extra cloth because when he rubbed those big shoulders he tore out the sleeves. He was smart, and he knew what to do. He was a good farmer. When he and Mary, my grandmother, were living in Minersville, Utah, he came into Pioche, and Pioche had some great big long potatoes and all of these nice, fresh vegetables, and he said, "Oh, this is great. I want to know where they came from."
They said, "They came from Pahrnagat Valley."
So he immediately went over, and he met my grandfather Sharp (my mother's father) and together they bought the valley. I guess each one owned half of the valley. Grandfather Sharp didn't live to be very old, so he lost

most of his, but my grandfather Richard lived to be 89 years old.

And during his lifetime he did many things. He was a farmer and he could build anything. He built a beautiful little house for his family when he moved on the new ranch he bought at Richardville. And he built a recreation hall just adjacent to the house that people were welcome to use for church, for weddings, for dances . . . it was a social gathering place. And he had his own orchestra. My son has a violin that he chose that's beautiful. He played the violin, his oldest son played second fiddle, my father played banjo and Mary, the mother, played the organ. The 2 girls accompanied on the organ, too. That was a little family orchestra.

RM: Is that right? Did he play in other towns as well?

EF: Yes, he did. He went all over - Nevada was booming. All of the mining camps were booming. He raised all these vegetables on the farm and he and my father (he was the second oldest son) would take them to peddle the vegetables, and in the evening they'd put on a dance. He said they'd call for different tunes to be played and my grandfather could play anything if he'd ever heard it. They'd come on along dancing and say, "Well, will you play this?" And he'd start to play. And silver dollars . . . he said they usually had more silver dollars from the band than they and from the vegetables.

RM: Did they play for dances in the winter, too, when they weren't selling vegetables?

EF: No, they played in Pahranaagat Valley in his own dancehall.

RM: Where was it located - in Hiko?

EF: Where did you meet Joe Higbee?

RM: At his house.

EF: Did you meet Edwin Higbee?

RM: No - I talked to him on the phone.

EF: Well, Edwin Higbee is renting the place my grandfather bought and settled. It's known as the Burns ranch now. Somebody in California owns the ranch and Edwin rents it.

RM: Do you recall your grandfather Henry Sharp?

EF: I can't recall my Grandfather Henry. He died before I was born.

RM: Did his father die young, too?

EF: I don't know.

RM: Did you know the third Henry [Sharp], the son who spent a lot of time with the Indians?

EF: He had his own little cabin and he lived in it and was a bachelor. He raised horses. They were pretty horses, they were more like mustangs. But he had a whole field of mustangs and that was his pride and joy. He didn't ever

marry until he was an older man - maybe 10 years before his death.

RM: He didn't have any children then?

EF: No.

RM: Joe said that he spent time with the Indians and they told him where a lot of water seeps were out on Baldy [Bald] Mountain.

EF: He probably did, he was a prospector.

RM: Joe also told me about Henry's gold mine - Joe told me to ask you about that.

EF: Tell Joe I never found it, and Joe never did either.

RM: Do you believe the story about it?

EF: Yes, I do.

RM: Did you ever see any of the gold?

EF: Yes, I'd see little samples of it. But I wouldn't know if they came from that mine. They called him Uncle Henry. He liked to impress you with what he had, so he always had a little handful. But whether they were the same ones over and over, I wouldn't know.

RM: Did a lot of people look for his gold mine?

EF: Yes.

RM: Apparently he wasn't a materialistic man, was he? He didn't want a lot of material things, that is.

EF: No - that was definitely what he didn't want. He loved all his horses and he loved his ranch.

RM: Where was his ranch?

EF: It was just where you turn off to go up the west side of the valley by where Earl Wadsworth had his place. There's no cabin or anything there now. I'd say the Burns ranch is the ranch above where he lived, he lived on the east side. The Burns ranch is down in the valley.

RM: Had Hiko pretty well faded away when you were growing up?

EF: Yes. But the first county seat was Crystal Springs. Then it moved from Crystal Springs to Hiko, so it was the center of Lincoln County, for a while. And then it moved to Pioche.

RM: Was there a lot of activity, when you were growing up, out on Irish Mountain?

EF: Not too much when I was growing up. That was more or less when my mother was growing up.

RM: Do you remember her telling any stories about Irish Mountain that might be interesting to repeat?

Alice Foremaster Forsythe: Wasn't there a murder out there one time?

EF: Oh, yes.

CHAPTER TWO

- RM: Go ahead and tell about the murder.
- EF: When my grandfather Sharp came into Minersville, Utah, with his family he was on his way to the gold rush in California. They lived in a lot of little towns in Utah, because Grandfather Sharp was a blacksmith and he went from town to town where the little mines were and sharpened their equipment. They were living in Minersville when they came to Pahrnagat Valley, but they also lived in Milford, Utah, and some of the children were born in Milford. He camped at Crystal Springs. He tied up his horses and they all went to bed. The next morning they got up and there were no horses - they were stolen. So that's when he started working in the mountains. He moved his family up to Hiko and they built a home and stayed there. But there was one prominent citizen who must go down in here. He was an older man - he lived there alone and kept his own house - and his name was Louis Stern. He ran the post office and was also the judge. He held court for every misdemeanor there was. Did Joe [Higbee] tell you about the murder?
- RM: Well, he told me about one, but you tell it.
- EF: Well, as I understand it, some boys were traveling, and the Indians were very hostile at that time, I don't for know what reason. They didn't like people coming into the valley and so they murdered the boys. Whatever law force they had in Hiko went out and brought them in, and they tried them that morning and executed them right after the trial.
- RM: Is that right? Was that the trial where they were holding court and were building the coffins in the back?
- EF: Right. They were building them while they were holding court, in spite of whether they were guilty or not.
- RM: Where did you go to school when you were a child?
- EF: There were about 4 rural schools because of the long distances between places, and I went to what they called Richardville. My grandfather lived there and most of his family was around him and that's where I went to elementary school.
- RM: How many children would have been in your class in a typical year?
- EF: Probably 5. There had to be 5 or you couldn't keep a school.
- RM: Did they have only white children, or were there Indian children, too?
- EF: They were all white.
- RM: Where were the other schools located?

EF: One was at Hiko and one was at Crystal Springs and then there was the one in Richardville and one in Alamo.

RM: Was there a store at Hiko then?

EF: My aunt Mary Wright had a little store. About all it carried was cloth and needles and thread and some candy and a little canned stuff - any little things that could be [kept] because a few people traded there.

RM: And what was at Crystal Springs? Were there any businesses or anything besides the school there?

EF: Not that I ever knew of. But the children from above and below in the valley all went to that school.

RM: Now, what was in Richardville?

EF: Well, my grandfather and my grandmother and their married children settled around them in little ranches.

RM: Oh, I see - it was kind of a family community?

EF: That's right.

RM: Was there a store or anything there?

EF: Yes. My grandfather kept a little store.

RM: Did the store have a name?

EF: Richardville's all I've ever known.

RM: And what did he carry in his store?

EF: He carried a little bit more food than the Hiko store. It was at a later date - there was canned food - and he also carried cloth and things of that sort.

RM: When you say they carried canned food what kinds of foods did they can in those days?

EF: Deviled ham and salmon.

RM: What else did they can?

EF: I don't think there was much of anything. There weren't vegetables, for sure, you raised your own vegetables.

RM: What was deviled ham?

EF: It's ham ground up in little small tins about 1-1/2 inches high.

RM: Did they have sardines?

EF: Yes.

RM: How about canned milk?

EF: I was quite a good-sized girl before I ever saw a can of milk or a carton of milk. [chuckles] And you'd have to go to Caliente to get a loaf of baker's bread or a can of milk.

RM: You had to get it in Caliente?

EF: That's the only time I ever saw it. It wasn't over in the Pahrnagat Valley.

RM: What else was there at Richardville besides the store and the dancehall?

Allen Forsythe: When did he start the cemetery up on the hill, Gram?

AFF: (Richardville Cemetery)

EF: Oh, he started it soon after he moved there.

EF: Now, I'd like to read you some of my own thoughts - this is what I remember of my grandfather Richard. He had 7 children and they all called him Pa. They never called him father or papa or anything. So I called him Pa. And Pa was a businessman. He owned and operated freight lines from Utah to California when he was about 14 years old. And then he began delivering things in the Nevada mining camps. He owned a livery stable in Delamar, a boardinghouse in Delamar, a hotel in Caliente, and a meat market in Delamar and a large farm. He was also a realtor, since at one time when I was over in the Lincoln County Courthouse I found that he had owned at least half of Pahrnagat Valley. And he sold those for farms and homes, and sometimes he gave [land] to his sons and daughters just so they'd be close by him. And he was a friend to everybody. He helped those not so fortunate as he. It didn't matter whether [the person was] an old-timer or a young man beginning in life's hardships. That was our dear Pa. We are very proud of him. As I said in the church sketch, Pa was a musician, an educator, a dreamer, a businessman, a friend to everybody. But his greatest love was his violin.

RM: Is that right? It sounds like he was a very enterprising young man.

EF: [chuckles] I seldom saw him sitting down.

RM: And he lived to be a very old man, didn't he?

EF: He lived to be 89.

RM: And he had 7 children, you said?

EF: Yes.

RM: Could you mention their names in order of the oldest down?

EF: The oldest was George, named after him, the second was John, the third one was Lawrence, and the fourth was Mamie, then another daughter by the name of Emma, and then Andrew, and then there was . . . the baby daughter was Ella.

RM: Did they all stay in the area?

EF: They all did until he moved to Caliente when he was an old man and built a hotel there.

RM: Why did he do that?

EF: Because he just had to have something to do. He never was content unless he was doing something.

RM: And about what year did he move to Caliente?

AF: I'm not sure when they built it, but it was there all the time I was growing up. It was built around '23, I think.

EF: Yes, it was after I was married so it was sometime in the '20s.

RM: What was the name of the hotel?

AF: It was the Richard Hotel.

RM: Is the building still there?
AF: I don't know whether it is or not. It was falling down when I left about 40 years ago.
EF: I haven't been to Caliente for some time so I really don't know.
RM: Tell me what the school was like in those days when you went to the little Richardville school.
EF: Well, as I said, there had to be 5 children or you couldn't keep a school district so there were always 5, or maybe 6 or 7 students. And they had just one room for all the classes. And they used a blackboard - paper was scarce and books were scarce, so most of the stuff that you saw and learned from was written on a big blackboard hanging on the wall. And you didn't use paper, you used slates. They were pieces of slate bound in either kind of a fiber or some sort of wood. And you wrote your answer - the teacher put [a question] up on from the board, and you wrote [your answer] on there. You passed it to the [teacher] and she'd correct the questions you'd answered, right or wrong, and then you erased your slate and it was ready for another [lesson].
RM: Oh. And that was because you didn't have paper.
EF: That's because we didn't have paper.
RM: That's interesting. Do you remember some of the subjects that you studied?
EF: There was reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic.
RM: Did you use the McGuffey Reader?
EF: I don't think I did. That was my mother's day.
RM: Where did you get your teachers? Were they from the area or did they come from somewhere else?
EF: Well, it all depended. My first teacher was my aunt, Ella Schofield. And my father was usually a school trustee - they had to elect their school trustees who would run the district, see that there were teachers and that everything was right - and they would receive copies of letters applying for school jobs. And he and the other trustees (there were 3 trustees) would decide which sounded the best and which they thought would be [the best], and that's who they hired.
RM: And each school had its own trustees?
EF: That's right.
RM: How did they pay the teacher? That is, where did they get the money?
EF: Well, I imagine they got tax money. My grandfather built the first schoolhouse because he said children needed to go to school. So he built a schoolhouse and hired a teacher and gave her room and board and paid her salary for that

one year. Then the next year enough taxes came in to provide a salary for her.

RM: You said that your grandfather's dancehall served as more than a dancehall, didn't it?

EF: Yes - it was open for anyone who needed it and it became the center of the valley.

EF: Because it could be used for a church - in fact, when the Mormon people moved into Alamo, they held their church meetings in my grandfather's hall.

RM: About how big was it?

EF: I was small and it was a big room. [chuckles] I don't think it was too big. [chuckles] It's a long room, like this one.

RM: Like your living room here?

EF: Yes.

RM: Do you know approximately when he built it?

EF: I think he built it about the time that he probably moved into the valley, which was in the 1800s.

RM: You mean in like 1890, or earlier?

EF: Earlier.

RM: Whatever became of the building - is it still there?

EF: I don't know. The house that he built burned down just in recent years. And the hall may have burned down with the house.

RM: Was it close to his house?

EF: Yes. Probably not just next door, but . . .

RM: Would you describe Richardville as a real town with streets an all?

EF: Oh no, it didn't have streets - it was my grandfather's house and the dancehall and his yard.

RM: Was there anything else there besides his hall and his store?

EF: He had a beautiful fruit orchard and a great huge grape patch. And I'll tell you another thing that probably nobody would understand in these days
My grandfather and all the sons that lived around him raised sugar cane. They all planted sugar cane on their farms.

RM: I'll be darned.

EF: In the fall when it was all matured (the leaves on the sugar cane were like corn leaves and they would die off) each one cut the sugar cane down and loaded it in their wagons. It was in the long strips. They brought it up to Richardville, and he had a huge, big vat that he built a fire under. Each boy took his own sugar cane and ground it in a big grinder he had and put it in the vat and cooked it until it turned into a beautiful, golden-colored syrup.

RM: Is that right?

EF: That was it. Allison remembers it. She said they called it sorghum, but that's dark, and my grandfather's sorghum was more of a golden yellow. So each family had a supply of sweet syrup for the winter.

RM: About how much sugar cane would a family raise?

EF: Well, that I couldn't tell you. Just what they thought would make a nice [supply]. They only kept it one year and then they'd make fresh syrup.

RM: You also raised hops, didn't you?

EF: Yes.

RM: That's how you made your yeast, wasn't it?

EF: Yes. I remember my mother using them, but I never used hops. We had a cellar and the hops grew up the sides of the rock cellar. She picked the hops off and I don't know if she'd soak them or just how she did it. I've never made hops into yeast.

RM: Did they make their own flour?

EF: No, we bought our flour and sugar once a year and stored it. We were a long way away - we decided how much was needed each year, bought it, shipped it into Caliente by the train and went with the horses and wagons and hauled it over and stored it in the cellar.

RM: How did you keep the varmints out of it - you know, the mice and whatnot?

EF: It was a good cellar.

RM: Did you raise bees for honey?

EF: No. Nobody in the valley that I know of ever had bees.

RM: I was talking to Dan Stewart and he told me that when he was young the sky was almost black with water fowl - ducks and so on. Do you recall that?

EF: Yes.

RM: Did you use the feathers?

EF: We had lovely feather pillows, and also down quilts and feather mattresses. We'd use all the feathers.

RM: Did you hunt the ducks a lot for food?

EF: Oh yes, in the winter. They weren't there all year - they just came in the fall and stayed a certain period of time, then they were gone.

RM: I see. What was in Alamo during this time period?

EF: Well, Alamo was not anything until the people who belonged to the LDS church moved in and started the little town.

RM: Your family were LDS, weren't they?

EF: My grandparents were - that's how they came over here. But when my mother and father were growing up there were no churches there, only their own parents, and they were not members of the church until later on.

RM: So the LDS church was not that important in the valley until they got going at Alamo?

EF: That's right.
RM: When you were a small child what was at Alamo?
EF: Probably a bachelor or two, I don't know.
RM: Was there a school there?
EF: No, there was Hiko and Crystal Spring and Richardville -
then Alamo was later on.
RM: Do you know about when the school would have started at
Alamo?
EF: I would think about 1910, if I were guessing.

CHAPTER THREE

EF: I'm 91 years old.
RM: You've lived in every decade of this century, haven't you?
EF: I've seen 5 wars now.
RM: Five too many, isn't it?
EF: Five too many, definitely.
RM: You were going to tell us about the little Indian girl that you played with.
EF: In the summer on the farms everybody had hired help and they were mostly Indians. The Indians needed to work - they looked forward to that for their money. And there was one who lived on my father's ranch and worked for my father, and I played with the little girl. I never did learn to speak the language, though. I think that family finally ended up over at Caliente - the father was Keno and the mother Elizabeth, and the little girl.
RM: What kind of activities did the children engage in when they weren't in school?
EF: Well, they worked quite a little bit. And then they played with their little neighbors and they had horses to ride. There wasn't much entertainment - only what you made yourself.
RM: Did you make any of your own toys?
EF: No, I never did, my mother made dolls and things for me, but I never liked to do it.
RM: How did she make dolls?
EF: Out of rags. [chuckles] It was a rag doll.
RM: What kinds of activities did the little girls do as opposed to the little boys?
EF: If you were a little girl you made a playhouse and put everything you could find in it. You had a stove and a cupboard and your dishes and everything. The little boys played with stick horses and ran cattle, and they did all sorts of things. [chuckles]
RM: [chuckles] Did you play games like kick-the-can?
EF: What do you think we did at school? There was nothing at school to play with.
RM: There was no playground?
EF: There was a playground, but nothing on it. So you picked up your rag ball and took it with you - or you found an old can and played kick-the-can, or you could play hide-and-seek.
RM: So you made your own ball out of rags?
EF: Oh definitely. You could make a real nice rag ball.
RM: And what would you do with it?

EF: Just throw it to each other. If you were playing hide-and-seek you'd throw this soft rag ball at the one that you caught -then they were out of the game.

RM: Oh. And if you didn't hit them they weren't out?

EF: That's right.

RM: Were there any other kinds of games that you played that you recall?

EF: Not while I went to school in the little district schools.

RM: Did they whip children in the schools when they misbehaved?

EF: Oh goodness no.

RM: How did families in those days discipline children when they misbehaved?

EF: I suppose that they kept them from playing or something like that. I can't remember.

RM: Did they spank them?

EF: I don't know. I never was spanked, so I can't . . .

RM: How did people spend their evenings when there were no electric lights, or TV or anything like that?

EF: No. Well, they had decks of cards and the older people had card games. They played what they called high 5 and 500 and cribbage - all those sorts of things. That's the way they entertained themselves. Or had a nice, big fire in the fireplace - that was real pleasant.

RM: Did people read much?

EF: Yes, definitely. In the days of Pahrnagat, the mail came into Pioche - there was no mail route into Alamo. Well, there was this way - some men went once a week and picked up the mail at Pioche. It took 2 days to get over there, 2 days to drive that little distance. So we received mail once a week. When we got the mail it was a great deal. We'd get the letters and the newspaper came once a week out of Salt Lake City. My father would sit down and Mother would mend and he'd read the paper from top to bottom to the end.

RM: Did they subscribe to any magazines?

EF: We always had one magazine - Ladies' Home Journal. When I was a little girl learning to read we had a little, little magazine, but I've forgotten the name of it.

RM: At that time there was a wagon road going from Pioche over to Milford. Do you know anything about that?

EF: That's where the mail came down from.

RM: What holidays were important in terms of family celebrations and that sort of thing then?

EF: Well, we had New Years and Christmas and the Fourth of July, and after the people came into Alamo we always had the 24th of July, which is a Mormon holiday. On those days everybody put on their best clothes and met wherever they were going to hold the celebration (it was Alamo, later on)

and there'd be a nice program. They'd give speeches and sing patriotic songs and then, if it wasn't held in Alamo and it was held up at what we call Ash Spring where there's a big pond, people went there and we had a picnic. And everybody took their picnics, they were so friendly. It all went out on one big canvas sheet with tablecloths over it. And everybody ate anything they wanted, whether it was yours or your neighbors'. So we ate everything that was there that we wanted. People were so friendly.

- RM: People helped each other then, didn't they?
- EF: Oh yes. That's about the way they had to do. There were no doctors or anything like that in there then.
- RM: What did you do when somebody got sick or hurt?
- EF: Well, there were some good midwives and nurses - they took care of them.
- RM: What would they do if somebody broke their arm or something?
- EF: There was always some man that knew how to set it. It might come out a little crooked, but [chuckles] that didn't matter.
- RM: [chuckles] What would they do for really serious injuries? Did they take them to Delamar?
- EF: Yes. After Delamar closed they took them to Caliente.
- RM: And that was by wagon, wasn't it?
- EF: Well, I guess so. Mostly by that time we had Model-Ts.
- RM: But the roads were dirt, weren't they?
- EF: Just dirt - sand. You could dig yourself out of the sand 4 or 5 times, getting to Caliente. Isn't that right Allen?
- AF: That's right.
- RM: Did you get a lot of flat tires?
- EF: Oh yes. You always carried tires, because one tire would never take you there.
- RM: How did you celebrate Christmas in the valley?
- EF: Well sir, we had a great time at Christmas. We ordered all our gifts from the catalogs. Mr. Sears got most of our orders. [chuckles] Christmas Eve, we children would hang up our stockings and have to wait until morning till the stockings were full and the gifts were all over. And then we had a big Christmas dinner.
- RM: What would be in your stocking?
- EF: Whatever, mostly, you asked for.
- RM: What would you ask for?
- EF: Toys. I can't tell you how many dolls I owned - for as many Christmases as I went through.
- RM: And what kind of gifts did people exchange then?
- EF: Mostly nice clothes.
- RM: And they would be bought from Sears, huh?
- EF: Yes.

RM: Did you have a tree?
EF: Sometimes we'd just have stockings and not a tree, and sometimes we had trees.
RM: What did you decorate the tree with?
EF: Oh, tinsel that we could buy and little bows of ribbon, and we'd save balls that looked pretty, and little lights - little candles.
RM: Was Thanksgiving an important day?
EF: Mostly it was for families. It was just a dinner.
RM: How about New Years Eve?
EF: That was a big day. There was a big dance for all the people in the valley.
RM: Did people drink a lot on New Years?
EF: Not like they do now. My father was a lawman, and if he caught a man around the dancehall with a bottle he was sent out pretty fast.
RM: Is that right? And your father was a lawman?
EF: Yes, for 52 years.
RM: Where did he work?
EF: In Caliente.
EF: He moved there after I grew up. My husband was also a lawman and lived in Caliente when Allison was a little girl. That's where she met her husband.
AFF: And Granddad (John Richard) was a lawman in Alamo.
EF: In the museum in Pioche there's a medal that he got.
RM: Did you know Jake Johnson?
EF: I didn't know him, but my dad and he were friends and pals. I can tell a story - I'll forget the names, so you'll have to bear with me.
RM: OK.
EF: There were some boys who killed their father for his money. It was in Delamar - he had this money and his sons killed him and took the money. And my father and Jake Johnson tracked those boys clear back into the Middle West.
AF: I vaguely remember hearing about that.
EF: What was the name, Allen?
AF: I'll bet I'd know it if I could hear it. I can remember hearing about that when I was a kid. My dad and Jake Johnson tracked them.
RM: That was a long way to track somebody in those days.
EF: They were gone a long time.
RM: What happened to law and order while they were gone?
EF: Oh, they always had a deputy. You couldn't run a town without a deputy.
RM: How did the valley change after the LDS people came into Alamo?
EF: I thought it was much better.
RM: In what sense?

EF: Well, I like people. I didn't like just having a few people, I like [a lot of] people. And those people were lovely, good, nice people.

RM: So it meant more social activity.

EF: That's right.

RM: Did it become a more religious place? That is, more upstanding morally, or anything like that?

EF: I thought we were pretty good before they came. They were very good people, but we didn't do any fighting or quarreling or anything like that before they came. We were always a friendly valley.

RM: Did people ever go to Tonopah?

EF: Oh yes. In fact, that's where my father used to take a lot of his vegetables. My grandfather did, too.

RM: Now, what years would this have been?

EF: I'd think that it would be in the early 1900s.

RM: That was a long trip. Did you know Mammy and Pappy Gear?

EF: Yes, I did. They were very nice people. I think they were possibly the most educated people in the valley. She was educated in Ann Arbor, Michigan. And he always felt a little inferior to her. They came out and took up that big ranch that's still up there. (It's closed up - nobody's using the thing, and I don't know why. It made me feel bad.) They were kind people. They had one fault - they loved money, and they always wanted to make money. But if you were their friend you could have their money for a loan. You didn't sign a note or anything, you shook their hands and you paid the money. And they were just as kind to you as they could be. She got so old that she couldn't care for her house very well. But every time you went there you had to eat with them - you just had to. And my mother and dad really loved those people very much, so we used to visit them. When they got too old and they couldn't come to visit us, my parents would go up and visit them. She said to my mother she'd cook a dinner. And she said, "I don't know what to cook. Everybody that comes here wants to eat hardboiled eggs." Mother said that's all they could eat because they were afraid of the other food. It wasn't clean enough, you see. So Mother and everybody did the same thing. You could take off the shells and eat with them and that was it. They were beautiful people. They were kind-hearted and good and I loved them both very much.

RM: Who were the first people to come into the valley?

EF: I think my Grandfather Sharp was about the first. And there was another family by the name of Fergusons, and then came the Castles.

RM: Tell me about the Castles.

EF: They were a nice family. They had girls and boys and they lived right on the corner of the road, the road run north and south and then to my Aunt Mary's store, and they lived on the corner in a nice house. They were just nice people.

RM: Do you remember the children?

EF: They had Charles and Jim and Ada - that's all I can remember.

RM: Tell me about the Fergusons.

EF: They were just a nice family. They had more children than the Castles. My mother, as a child, lived next door to the Fergusons, so I knew them a little better than I did the Castles.

RM: What about the Lambs - when did they come in, do you know?

EF: I remember that they came later than the first LDS people, but I couldn't tell you when.

RM: How many years did you go to school in Richardville?

EF: Until I graduated from the eighth grade.

AFF: You graduated from Lincoln High School

EF: Oh yes. I went to Lincoln High School in Panaca. Then I went into Berkeley, California, for a year. Then I went a year up in Reno, and that was it.

RM: Did you board with somebody in Panaca?

EF: No, my mother went with me. She moved there and took a bunch of children to go to school. She was like my grandfather - she thought everybody ought to go to school. So she took them and paid their board and sent them to school.

RM: Did you know the Indian boy that your grandfather Sharp adopted - Chiney, I believe?

EF: I didn't know him - my mother did.

RM: Did you know John Murphy, another person he adopted.

EF: I did. He married my aunt.

RM: They were a generation ahead of you, weren't they?

EF: Oh, they were older than my mother. My grandfather took in quite a few boys to raise because he couldn't bear to see them without parents. He took in the little Indian boy, and then he took in one or 2 little Indian boys (he never took any little Indian girls, he took in the boys). One day when he had already had about 11 kids, including all the ones he had taken in, he was sitting there reading, my mother said, and her brother Joe (that's Joe Higbee's grandfather), came in and said, "Oh Dad, this little boy out here hasn't got a place to go. His folks just died and he's up there alone and he's hungry." And Grandpa just kept reading the paper. He said, "I can't help it. I've fed all I can feed. I've got all I can feed. I can't take care of any more. You'll have to tell him to go to somebody else."

And Joe said, "Well look. Look over your paper." He looked over his paper and he said he saw a little freckle-faced boy with big blue eyes and white hair. He said, "Well, bring him in. I've got something for him." So he got another kid. [And that was John Murphy.]

RM: While I'm thinking about it, tell me about the Indian silver mine. Joe said they lowered somebody down a rope onto it.

EF: It was his mother - Aunt Mamie.

RM: And it was in the Sheep Mountains, wasn't it?

EF: That's right.

RM: Was it a high-grade silver mine?

EF: I have no idea. If it was I don't see why somebody hasn't done something about it.

AF: They never could locate it. And it never was a mine, it was just that different people had seen it, but could never go back to it. They could never find it.

AFF: Didn't something happen to everybody who tried?

AF: There are still people looking for it.

RM: Is that right? The Indians supposedly made silver bullets out of it.

AF: Well, it was a led silver deposit. They didn't know that it was silver and they thought it was lead. There was evidently high-grade silver in it.

AFF: Didn't weird things happen to people who . . .

AF: Oh yes, there are a lot of weird tales about it - that it was cursed and things like that.

AF: People have gone in there here in the later days and come out . . .

AF: Several families have gone in and their brothers have come out and . . .

RM: Is that right?

RM: Has it been written up?

AF: I've never seen anything written on it. In recent times people who had been in there say there's nothing alive in there - no birds, no crickets, nothing - just a dead area.

RM: And it's up there on Sheep Mountain somewhere?

AF: Sheep Mountain somewhere. It's in the gunnery range, so you can't get in there.

RM: Do you know of a name that it's called, like the lost Silver Bullet Mine or something?

AF: I used to talk to Emma's husband a lot and he knew a lot about it. And he said that Henry Sharp knew where it was.

RM: That'd be the Henry Sharp who married late in life.

AF: Yes. He said that the Indians took him and showed him it.

RM: That's what Joe said, too.

AF: He never would show anybody else. People tried to follow him and he'd just wander on for days till they'd give up. And all of a sudden he'd show up with some nuggets.

ALAMO STYLE

Now way up yonder is a little town.
You ought to stop in as you're coming down.
A good visit is worth your while,
'Cause folks up there live ALAMO STYLE.
The climate is right good, not too hot or too cold--
There are lakes and springs and meadows of gold--
Where cattle graze and get plump and fat,
You can't beat hunting there I can tell you that--
Them old gray geese just honk and say,
"The game warden will get you so stay away."
The ducks swim by with a healthy quack--
Makes you lonely, just want to go back.
A good place to live, just mile after mile,
Of people up there living ALAMO STYLE.
Now ALAMO STYLE is a great way to live,
Just plugging along learning to love and forgive.
You love your neighbor, might quarrel with him too--
But what the heck--don't get in a stew.
If his best cow dies or he breaks a leg--
Go over and help him, don't let him beg.
Take over some grub and a dollar or two,
You can't imagine what that will do.
If his house burns down, or on the job he's canned,
Don't sit there and watch him go--lend him a hand
Or if you're thanked or praised for awhile--
Say, "Don't mention it neighbors - THAT'S ALAMO STYLE."

CELEBRATIONS

And let me tell you, them folks know how to have fun--
I'll just try to tell you the things they have done.
Why up there at Christmas they would dance a whole week--
Till New Year's came, the end of the treat--THAT'S ALAMO STYLE!
Now Fourth of July, that was a thrill,
With dynamite exploding at the top of the hill--
Just to wake up the sleepers, and get them in gear
For the best celebration of the whole darn year.
There was a program and sports for old and young--
Pink popcorn and prizes, no matter who won--
A dance for the children--good, clean fun--
Just to show the kids how it is done. THAT'S ALAMO STYLE.
And horse races, when every nag in that old town,
Was brought from the pasture--couldn't keep 'em down.
Will Stewart, John Richard, Dan Potter, Viv Frehner,
Their horses were ready--each man was a trainer.
And right at the last--Billie Lamb's dog--missing a paw
Fought with a badger right down to a draw.
Carty Lamb brought the badger tied to a rope,
So fierce and vicious, for the dog there's no hope.
But when he arrived, I've heard it said,
He brought a badger from under his Mother's bed.
And that was fun ALAMO STYLE.
With summer came melons--juicy and sweet,
We would invite all Lincoln County to come for a treat.
A dance in the evening made a great day,
They ate and enjoyed them and carried them away.
But after the Melon Day, just watch your patch,
'Cause them hungry kids will just try to snatch
The biggest melons on them there vines
'Cause they know now it's melon time
You can shoot in the air and scare 'em to death--
But they are bound to be back to get the rest.
I've heard of chicken suppers in the same way--
"My chickens are gone," I heard someone say.
But kids will be kids, don't lose your smiles--
Remember, we're living ALAMO STYLE.
This story must tell of the old swimming pool--
Ash Springs where we went on the last day of school.
The water so warm, so clear, so refreshing,
The Lord must have given it as an extra great Blessing.

LAWMEN

The town was made safe by a good Sheriff's Force,
The head of the group was Dave Stewart, of course.
Bad boys kept him busy--speeders and such
As small Curtis Frehner in Grandpa Frehner's truck.
The houses were safe, no one had to fear
That robbers would loot, or dangers were near.
The old Rock Jail held all the unlawful,
To go to that jail was scary and awful.
Bad boys and some bums were there for awhile,
Till Dave let them out with a "wink and a smile" ALAMO STYLE.
Our schools were great, our teachers smart.
And don't ever think we forgot the fine arts.
Horace Reid gave us Drama and a really fine Band--
The Band became famous all over the land - playing ALAMO STYLE.
Now Carl and his boys had the Foremaster Band--
Zada, Jeraldine, Mary Lou always gave them a hand.
For wedding dances they always played free,
For weddings down there were ALAMO STYLE, don't you see.
No wedding was complete without a dance and dinner,
And all who attended pronounced them a winner.
Everyone was invited, as a big family should,
For the whole darn town was a family we understood--
Gifts and good wishes were heaped in a pile,
That's the way we had weddings ALAMO STYLE.
And after the wedding the big Shiverree
With the kids stealing the bride, then setting her free.
Asking for treats, the groom had it made--
Giving treats for the bride, it was a fair trade.

WAR

Our town was deserted in World War Two,
Our young men enlisted leaving only a few.
Each family sent one, sometimes three or four.
The battles kept raging, they always needed more,
Dee Stewart, Elmer Davis and Glendon Tait--
Were all lost in the war, I guess it was fate.
We grieved and mourned for those poor boys--
And prayed it would end before more were destroyed.
We gathered aluminum and lived on foods rationed,
We did all that was asked in a very good fashion.
We all went to church--our numbers were few,
And we told the Lord that was all we could do--ALAMO STYLE.

OUR MAIL ROUTE

Mel Foremaster drove the mail to Caliente every day--
You could ride over with him, and shop there that way.
He came back in the evening with groceries and things
Filling the orders folks asked him to bring--
Now these little orders handed to Mel
Were treasures to read, about them I'll tell.
"My man needs a shovel, and I need some thread.
Put it in with the groceries where I ordered bread.
My daughter needs shoes for the dance here tonight--
Her old shoes were brown, so get these shoes white.
And shoes for the baby, she isn't walking yet,
And the pills from the Drug Store, don't you forget."
Mel got these things and delivered them with a smile.
I'll tell you that man sure lived ALAMO STYLE

OUR KIDS

Now, the kids learned that walking saved time and care,
As that was the best way to get from here to there.
So in the evenings when all work was done
They would go up the Highway just to have fun.
They knew where they were going--it wasn't far--
But first they had to pass the Pahrnagat Bar.
Just a little farther was Kirk Buffham's place.
Old Kirk welcomed them, but he never moved in haste.
They had pop and candy till it was time to go
and they headed north to the Old Alko.
They had hamburgers and visited there for quite awhile
Before going back home--just in ALAMO STYLE.
Now the kids grew up and jobs were so few
They couldn't stay home with nothing to do.
So they came down here a living to make.
We thank you, Las Vegas, for giving them a break.
But deep in their hearts, just once in awhile,
They must think of their childhood LIVING ALAMO STYLE.

Emma Richard Foremaster
1984

MY WINTER GARDEN

The Winter Garden is a loving garden, a memory garden. There are memories of the Spring Garden with all its bright promises, the Summer Garden with those promises fulfilled - and the Autumn Garden, full of contentment, but blossoms fading, leaves falling.

Now, the Winter Garden is a garden of change, and old people really don't like change. It

means, usually, being worse off: a small apartment instead of a house, less money, less friends, and less bodily strength. But we have always thought new things were fun, so, born before television, to us it is a miracle. Computers dazzle us. Light reflecting from tall glass buildings makes us catch our breath, and if we are lucky we have a friend by our sides, somewhere near our own age, and we turn and say, "Can you beat that?" And sure enough, somebody does - the very next day.

Now, the Winter Garden is a loving garden, a memory garden. We don't hear as well as we did, so sometimes we have to ask people to repeat what they say, and sometimes what they say isn't worth repeating. And the world is so noisy! So we learn to listen with our hearts

I can still hear my small children say, "I love you, Mama," and my kind friend as she says, "This is the true church - you must accept it," and I did. I hear the voice of my first Bishop as he says, "You are now a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." I hear President Snow at the temple as my husband and I kneel at the alter as he says, "You are now sealed for time and all Eternity." I hear the voice of the midwife at the birth of my first child as she says joyfully, "It's a little boy."

I hear my dear, sweet daughter as she repeats her marriage vows at the temple. I hear the sad, anxious voices of my sons as I send them off to war as they say, "Don't worry, Mother. We will be back, the Lord will protect us." And he did. I hear the voices of my grandchildren as they gather around our Christmas tree with their happy, laughing voices.

The voices of the Elders, kind and strong, as they place their hands upon my head and promise me all will be well. I hear my dear Relief Society sisters as they come to my door bringing comfort and love in both sorrow and joy.

I hear the voice of my dear husband as he bids me good night, little knowing that will be the last time I shall hear his earthly voice. And I hear the still, small voice of my heart saying, "You must carry on. The Lord will comfort, the Lord will provide." And he has. I hear the voice of the bishop as he says, "You have lost your son, but you will be reunited in Eternity."

There are so many voices in the Winter Garden:old voices, young voices, sad and happy voices. But always there is the voice of my heart which says, "God lives. Jesus is the Christ. The Church is true and Spencer W. Kimball is a true Prophet of God. Always you must give thanks for your wonderful family, your kind, thoughtful neighbors, your membership in the Church, and this wonderful free country we live in." I say these things humbly in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Emma Richard Foremaster
1991