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OREGON

William F. Schroeder, 83

Called to the West.

"We had Sunday supper at Grandpa Carl and Grandma Sophie's following German Lutheran church services," Bill Schroeder says. "Some Sundays, the local Indians arrived before we did, letting themselves into the house to wait for supper. The local tribe living near what is now O'Hare Airport as well as a large number of other Americans went hungry in the early 1930s."

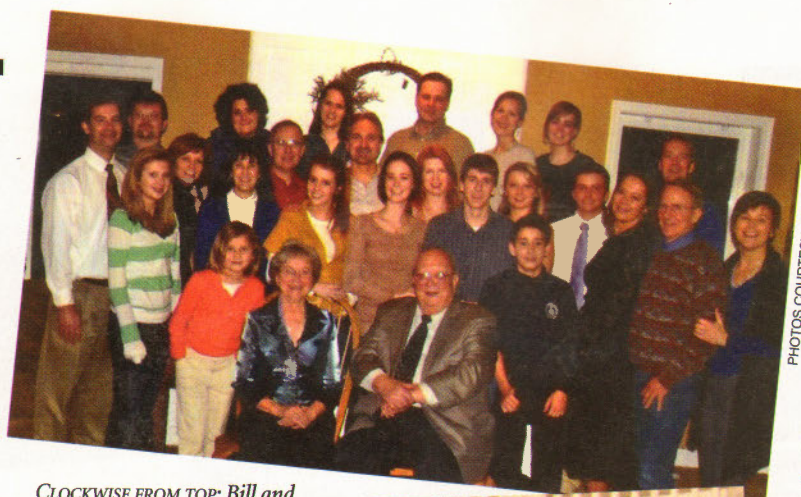
Grandpa and Grandma Schroeder immigrated to America in 1859 and found farm ground "almost free." Bill's dad was not so fortunate. "He started

as a runner for First National Bank, moving up to teller and then to trust officer." The agrarian life was over for the Schroeders and most Americans by 1928 when Bill was born. Bill's early years contain vivid memories of the Great Depression and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's unprecedented expansion of the federal government. These events shaped Bill's legal perspective and career. "I saw practicing law as a calling," he says, "and a way to make a difference for those challenged by government regulation."

As an only child born when his mother was 40, Bill admits to a bit of spoiling. "I didn't have a lot of friends at the German Lutheran schools. My parents were older and not inclined to much playing. Education was important, so I read."

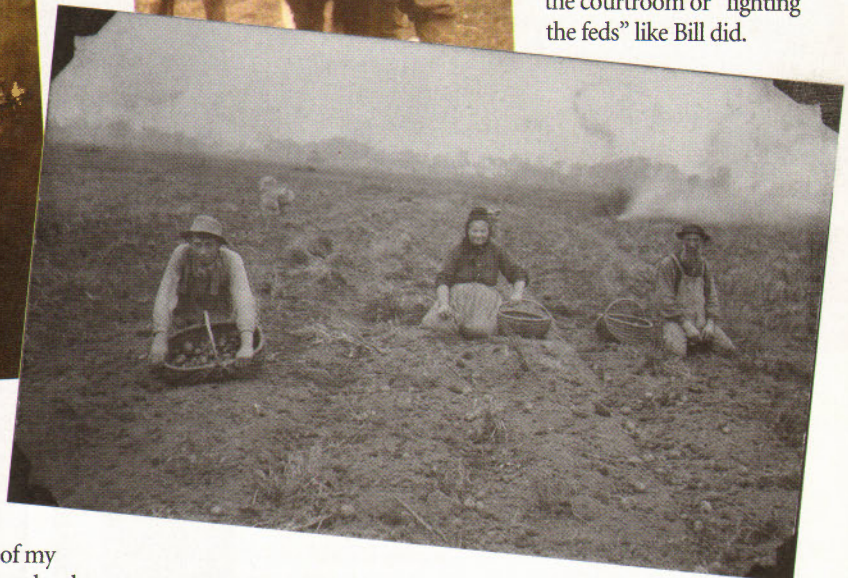
When he was 15, one of his buddies wanted to sign up for the war. "You could do that in those days if you passed the high-school graduation exam. I told him I would take it with him and then passed without really meaning to!"

With that diploma in hand,



PHOTOS COURTESY SCHROEDER FAMILY

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Bill and Alberta on their 60th wedding anniversary, with kids and grandkids. ► Bill and Santa in Chicago in 1932. ► Grandpa and Grandma Schroeder immigrated to America in 1859 and found farm ground "almost free." They are planting spuds with brother Albert in Niles, Ill. ► Bill in 1937 with his violin, which he continued to play throughout his life.



Bill went to the University of Chicago, graduating by 17. All that reading paid off.

"After college, some of my friends were going to law school, so I went with them. At Valparaiso University Law School, I remember playing a lot of bridge, doing a little acting, and meeting Alberta Wienhorst. I married Alberta in Chicago on Jan. 7, 1930, and headed to Vale. I had an offer with attorney Bob Lytle at \$100 a month. Not much, but all I could expect since I hadn't passed the Oregon bar yet. Alberta worked for the local justice of the peace, Mary Graham."

Lytle was already an established resource attorney in water. So advising ranchers came naturally to the practice when the BLM set up shop in Vale to manage over five million acres of public land for grazing. That was shortly after passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934 and the merger of the Grazing Service and Lands Department formed the Bureau of Land Management in 1946.

"Vale was a natural hot spot in

the 1950s when the BLM started carving up the range," Bill says. "Representing southern Malheur County ranchers on Cow Creek was one of my more memorable and satisfying cases."

Bill and Alberta's three oldest children, Laura, Paul and John, were part of those early case preparations. "Those three kids spent a lot of time in the car with me, staying in the bunkhouses, eating with the other ranchers' kids, and riding the range." He reports that the three younger children, Katherine, Alan, and Sara, unfortunately didn't see him much in Vale since by then he "ran the trapline," litigating cases all over Oregon, Idaho and Nevada for other attorneys who didn't relish the courtroom or "fighting the feds" like Bill did.

Bill says his six kids turned out okay—four are attorneys, one is a doctor, and one is an accountant—although he can't take too much credit or blame and is quick to compliment Alberta for "raising them." He also doesn't like being called grandpa, even though he has 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. As he says, "I'm not old enough!"

—Laura Schroeder