The following transcript is a scan of the original and has not been edited. For additional assistance, please contact Archives and Special Collections.
Suzanne Vernon: Harold and Doris Haasch. I want to make sure the tape is working. The Haasch’s live at Condon, Montana, and this is part of the Swan Valley Oral History Project.

[Break in audio]

Turn it on and it should be working, but I’ll be checking it once in a while, don’t let it bother you, if I’m leaning over. It’s not anything you said it’s just me looking at how much tape is left. They start at the beginning with the questions believe it or not [laughs]. They want to know where you were born, and I think I will start with Harold if that’s alright.

Harold Haasch: In east Helena.

SV: Ok. Were your folks working there?

HH: Yes, well they had a little farm there. They, well they sort of dried out.

SV: That happens sometimes.

HH: By the time they come here, why they’ve got through farming. Dad come down to the band over by the old Boyd Ranch, and worked there before they come up here.

SV: Why did they come up here then if they had-?

HH: He didn’t come right to here.

SV: He didn’t come right to here.

HH: He went to Oregon, that’s where he met my mother. My mother’s family name is Freewire (?). Oregon.

SV: Were they farming out there too?
HH: Fruit ranches. Everything was fruit ranches out there. Her dad and them didn’t do too much of the work around it. Mom’s folks were fruit farmers, until, well until everything went bad then on fruit. But they, a lot of the, a lot of the relatives are still around there. Some of them have fruit, some of them have dairies, some of them raise corn and wheat. But they are all little, pretty small places in that country. But they can raise more on a piece of ground like this, there you can take a hundred, it would take three hundred acres here to raise the same amount [laughs].

SV: Oh boy. More fertile ground?

HH: Yes, and climate. Warm summers. The winters are about, kind of the same. But that’s where he went before he come back to Montana. But they got this, I was trying to think of the year they, what was the year that showed on the water rights and stuff on this?

Doris Haasch: Nineteen..., or earlier than that?

HH: It was earlier than that, because we were here. I don’t know exactly the area. They homesteaded there.

SV: We can find that, 17 something.

HH: Mom had the, it was in mom’s name. All us others, in later years had taken place, it was one of the only original deeds. No other people on the deed or nothing. Originally signed by Wilson.

DH: Cleveland.

HH: Cleveland.

DH: Grover Cleveland.

HH: Grover Cleveland.

SV: That says a lot about all the changes that have taken place doesn’t it?

HH: Yes, we’ve done more changing on that. That is the last few years for quite a while before she passed away. Why she deeded it over to Russ and I. That’s when we found out that there was nobody else had ever been on that. We got the old original deed in the safety deposit box.

SV: All right. That’s a keeper?

HH: Yup.
SV: Frame it and put it on the wall. Do you remember why they decided to come to the homestead? Was it just because of the free land?

HH: Oh they wanted, dad, they were going like a pioneer. They wanted to see if they could make a life here.

SV: They liked the country?

HH: Oh yes. I suppose they liked it alright. I imagine they had different thoughts over quite a long time. Because it wasn’t very pleasant around here for anybody.

SV: Do you remember them talking about some of the hardships when they-?

HH: Oh I was old enough then, I was old enough that I could see some of the hardships too.

SV: What’s the first thing you remember about being here as a kid?

HH: When I went in to the place, with an old cart and horse. That down there was just like, solid lodgepole the whole thing was. This whole clearing was felled, stumped and burned. Done by hand.

SV: You guys did it.

HH: Us kids got older, we worked.

SV: How big was the lodgepole? Was it that dog-haired type?

HH: No it was kind of what you look at here across the road, you know a little bigger or smaller. But most of it was, some spruce in that. The bigger stuff was where the trouble come when they were clearing. Cause they had to get rid of those stumps. We had an old stump feller was a horse powered. This took years.

SV: It didn’t happen in one summer.

HH: It didn’t happen in one summer.

SV: How old were you when you first came in then?

HH: Four years.

SV: Four years old. You remember that.

HH: I remember cause that little old house right there. The one this side of her house.
DH: This side of the bigger house.

HH: Little wood shed, that’s the old house. There was five of us kids. Mom and dad lived in there besides. Eda Newman down there and her brother lived with us and went to school, couple of winters. It was a little bit crowded I imagine, but we didn’t notice it.

SV: What did the house look like on the inside that everyone fit in there? Do you remember?

HH: Well [laughs].

SV: Bunk beds, or what did you do?

HH: It had a upstairs loft, had a kind of palettes, mattresses. Somebody asked me one time about how we all slept there and I said, “well dad put us on the bed, we had one bed, and then when we went to sleep he’d stand us in the corner” [laughs]

SV: That’s a pretty good story [laughs]. That’s a log building isn’t it?

HH: Yes it was a log building. We tried to-

DH: It’s a Sixteen by sixteen.

HH: Yes sixteen by sixteen. When they got the better house, they kind of made a garage and woodshed out of it. It sat here for a long time. We tried to preserve it. I lifted it up got it up on some blocks. We put a new roof on the front. We went out and got some cedar, it was kind of like it always was.

SV: Good.

HH: Might do more to that but I don’t think so.

SV: Who built that then originally?

HH: The old fella, I say the old fella he was a young fellow then. He had that barn over there you see when you come in here. That was his homestead. And he’d come in here before the folks. Dad had him build that little house.

SV: No plumbing or electricity of course.

HH: No, no. toilets sitting right there, still sitting there [laughs]. Probably one of many.

SV: Right, right.
HH: But he took the logs right where the house was sitting. He had enough logs right there to build that house. Just around for the clearing, just about all the room there was when.

SV: So you can tell how big those logs were because the cabin’s still sitting there.

HH: That just about around what they were. About like that. Mom used to, when the wind blew the right direction, why she’d chop the trees and they’d fall away from the house. This was the truth too. I seen her do it. This went on, I mean for two, three years or something like that. Well he left here again, I don’t know how long we stayed the first time but we left and went to Oregon for oh I don’t know, probably over the winter, year or something. Then come back. We were gone part of this time. Had to get out and make a living somewhere. Get us to school.

SV: Where did you go to school when Eda and her brother were living there? You were here by then.

HH: Over in Rumble Creek. Pretty sure that’s where we, yes I’m sure that we went there. SV: You think. I won’t hold you to it.

HH: You can ask her [laughs].

SV: When you were here on the place, what were your chores when you were a kid? What were some of the things you just had to do every day?

HH: Had to help get wood and help, got a garden. One of the first things at the end of that cabin, and the gardens still there. I don’t know how come, but it’s the only real good soil down there. One little spot. We had a real good garden always. And then a cow, milk cow, and chickens. Pigs.

SV: Did you ever have problems with bears coming in after some of your chickens?

HH: We never did that I remember. They were wilder than we were.

SV: What about coyotes?

HH: Oh they were always around, the only reason we had them is a guy tracked them for their hide. Probably the same way with a bear too cause there was always a mark.

SV: Right. Did your dad?

HH: Trapped beavers, coyotes, martin, mink, anything he could like that in the wintertime. Dad used to go out in the winters and work at the ACM [Anaconda Mining Company] camps.

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
SV: Ah. Like at Woodworth?

HH: Down in Greenough.

SV: Greenough?

HH: That’s where the camp was about the time he was working. Working with them.

SV: When he was trapping, do you remember where, what drainages he trapped or if he was on a river?

HH: Down this crick here mostly. Just out in the, any place for coyotes, martin. Along the crick was the best place for martin and mink. Definitely for beaver, there was always a lot of beaver in here.

SV: Was there? Did they dam up the crick area here?

HH: Oh, we had more trouble with that crick up there for, with the beaver for years. Lately we’ve been alright. They’ve trapped them pretty good. They’re there yet, there’s still beavers, isn’t like there used to be. You know there was so many. Just about the time in the fall when the water’s down, why then the beavers, they’re going to get a dam. It’s about irrigation time, and they’d plug up everything they could plug up. You know, to make it safe for winter.

SV: When he’d bring those hides, did he stretch them on a-?

HH: Yes the beaver. He’d stretch them on a pattern on the wall, tack em. in later years more that I paid attention, Russell was the one that dad liked, on the whole shop, he had all different sized circles that he put on there. he done the stretching and the fleshing for dad. And he pulled ‘em across, he had this circle that had so many inches, he had this circle that had more inches. He’d pull the like that to where they’d fit certain inches and he’d fasten them, and just the way he went around. He wouldn’t try to stretch any harder and then he left. He go on, say 30 inches or whatever. Figured he’d done a good job at it too. I wasn’t around here much then.

SV: How come?

HH: I was out trying to live! [laughs]

SV: Ok so you were older.

HH: This was later years. Oh yes I was, Russ come a long, long time, ten years later. Jack, I had another brother, he died, in fact I had four other brothers.
SV: What were their names?

HH: Well Carl, and Elvin, Orville.

SV: Which one was Russ?

HH: Rush. Rush was the later one.

SV: And you were in between them?

DH: Carl was older.

HH: I have trouble with those three. We were just kids and we vacillated.

SV: The older ones.

HH: Orville and Elvin. I’ll think of it maybe. Rush and Lucille come along quite a little later.

SV: Ok. I gotcha now. Got me up to speed. You said you helped the folks get in firewood and stuff. Did they just cut it right around the house?

HH: Oh yes, you know they would get stuff. When you’re clearing too, we felled a bunch of that stuff and we just let it die before you got it piled. Burned it.

SV: You cut it with a cross cut saw?

HH: Yes.

SV: You got pretty good at that didn’t you?

HH: Oh yes, I even went and worked, made a living at that for a while. But that was tough, that sawing.

SV: Where were you cutting at, felling?

HH: For ACM, about eighteen something like that. Donald Trum [?] and I went worked down at the ACM.

SV: How big were the trees that you had to cut?

HH: Oh they were big. Down there at Woodworth, they were at Woodworth then. They just took the big old pine, first time in there. They had all that big pine down there in that country.
SV: This is the stuff that went to Butte for the-?

HH: Well they cut, I shouldn’t have said it that way either. All they took they cut stoles and made ties out of the smaller stuff.

SV: What was the word you said?

HH: Stoles is what they used in the mines. That was reigning in the mines. Ties, they had their own railroad, the ACM did. And they had men, they called them tie hackers, they made them by hand, with a broadax.

SV: Wow. Did you ever have to do that?

HH: No I didn’t have to do that. I’d a probably chopped my feet off [laughs]. But boy they were something to watch. Those guys, you know with a broadax, they’re wide, they’d get up there and they’d just, well they marveled at how good they could make them do. Every one of them wanted to do a little better job.

SV: When you went to work down there, had you been living here pretty much all through your teens?

HH: Oh I went out to work about fifteen.

SV: Did you?

HH: I worked, well I worked in here. I milked cows in here for a little while.

SV: For your folks?

HH: No for Finlanders down there, Kollermagne [?].

SV: What was their name?

HH: Kollermagne. Best I can do for you [laughs].

SV: That’s alright.

HH: Down over there where that Super 8 is? And that other big, one of them big barns down at the other place was there too. Fellow got the other place, well he had both places, and he moved that one big log barn. It used to sit right by that one that’s still there. They milked a bunch of cows. They shipped cream.

SV: Do you remember what you got paid, or what-?
HH: Didn’t get paid.

SV: Didn’t get paid?

HH: Got board. Every time I got to milk for my board I got thinking about trying to finding a job I could get paid [laughs].

SV: How many cows did they have?

HH: Hmm they must have had thirty.

SV: Oh my lord. How long did it take you-?

HH: Twenty five or thirty. There was two of us milked, three of us, a girl, the old lady, the only reason I went down there is because a man had got killed. They needed help.

SV: How did the man get killed?

HH: He was skidding in some logs, horses run away or something I can’t remember. Got him under the logs.

SV: They knew you were available, asking for help?

HH: We were neighbors, had been neighbors for, we were practically raised together.

SV: Was that a log house in there too, a cabin? Where you were boarding?

HH: That one right there, the one that’s there, that’s still there.

SV: Was that whole area open like it is today or were there trees there?

HH: Fewer. Wasn’t really that much there either. Just a field. They hayed all over the, they used to hay all these wild meadows, cause they couldn’t clear enough ground, raise hay enough for, one of the only places that, about that time, that put up hay that put up on chairs or something like that was that Nesky [?] place up there, A little old Welshman had it. He cleaned it up but he didn’t have no stock. So he just wanted to put it up. I suppose they paid him so much for the hay.

SV: Did most people in here have some cows and livestock?

HH: Oh yes. They always had a few old cows. Well they had, they milked a few cows. We did too, later. Separated and shipped cream. You should talk about their cream check [laughs].
SV: Who picked up the cream? How did they-

HH: They had a stage in, twice a week. By that time, you know later, this is not early. For a number of years they didn’t do anything in here really. Didn’t have no way of make a, doing anything like shipping cream or anything. But it wasn’t to awful long before they started getting somebody to haul the mail. Twice a week or once a week or something, I think it started out once a week. Then got to twice a week.

SV: Do you remember getting mail when you were in school here when you were a kid?

HH: Oh yes.

SV: So they had it by then.

HH: They were getting mail pretty, that’s one thing they done real quick they got the mail in here.

DH: With horses.

HH: With horses. Oh yes, and they snow shoed when it got too bad coming from Swan Lake. They snow shoed back the first class. There wasn’t much of a road for years down north Swan Lake. But up this way they worked, well it got pretty well settled pretty quick.

SV: The whole area.

HH: There were quite a few people coming in here. They didn’t all stay. Over here, over where Kath and them are that was a real community.

SV: It was?

HH: Yes there must have been eight or nine families over there.

SV: Did they all have homesteads or were they just kind of-?

HH: They were all homesteads.

SV: All homesteads. So they should be in those homestead records somewhere?

HH: Yes I can give you the names to look up, if you want to look at the records. The place where Kath are is Harry Wissinger [?], the one, the other party is Weisser [?]. There’s a side place right next to him. McCarthy [?], Red Williams, Rudsons [?], Washins [?], Benson. That takes care of that right about there.
SV: That’s the neighborhood?

HH: They’re all right together too. There was quite, I think that was one of the places where they really, one of the first places where there was more people was there at that, over there.

SV: I wonder why? Why did they all-

HH: Well I suppose some of them got a hold of the same land. Some, maybe the land was, maybe they looked at it and seen it was all right there together. They might have had a plan too. This area here, was kind of that over there. I mean one of the closer places. Newman’s got a place, got to put down where Marner had. He had a, he was clear out by Elk Crick. But he wasn’t too far from any of these, you know, going that direction, but, he was way up there, and your place is way up there on Elk Creek. That’s the one reason why Jenson lived with us, or lived with different people to go to school. There was no way they could walk out of there to go to school, and that’s what it was. We would walk.

SV: Did you walk to school when you were here?

HH: Most. Yes. Carl and I for a while in the fall we went with a horse and sleigh from, we lived down there by Koffman, now. We went to Rumble Creek.

SV: You just rented a place there or leased it or something?

HH: It had hay on it. Dad worked, well in the summer, why he rented it mostly for the summer because he worked for the forest service there at eh old Condon station?

SV: He did?

HH: Yes. He used to pack for the forest service.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]
[Tape 1, Side B]

HH: Pretty early. Somewhere in the, some of these books or something the forestry service will tell when they first started here.

SV: Yes. I could find that.

HH: They just had a little old, down there at first they just had a little old shack. With a ranger and I’m not going to mention, to say who was the ranger, I think I know who it was but I’m not going to say.

SV: We can find it. They probably got it listed.

HH: But then it got pretty, about that time, we were talking about it. It got pretty big. Because they were going to, well in 1910 and that, they had the big fire all over, what they were going to do then was fight every fire there was, you know. They had a big crew in the summer time. They had number of lookouts, and they had trail crews. They just built, they had a regular trail crew that built all these trails. They, I think they had what they called the eight man trail crew. Then if they needed them on the fires they had em. I think that was probably around, starting of the ‘20s when they first really got started serious about it.

SV: Is that when your dad was packing then?

HH: Yes right in there in the later part of the ‘20s.

SV: Did you ever get to go with him?

HH: Oh I didn’t, finish the story, they had a team and wagon they used to haul where they could use them on the roads. They hauled all these crews around. When dad, he drove that, done that, because I went with him then. Pretty much all over the district. Which was really nice, and I went, Rory Fox he had the freight wagons. They freighted freight from Swan Lake to Condon here. I went with him, we’d go down, took a Sunday, two days down and two days back.

SV: What was the road like?

HH: It wasn’t like. I remember him chopping out, it was one of them big high wheeled army wagons. I remember him crawling under there and chopping up a stump that he hung up on. There was no bridges. The crick we went down there when one of them was, when they built the first bridge down on Lodger [?]. They were building it when we went down, and I remember he said something about were going to finally have a bridge. It was, I had a lot of fun too when that was going on. They’d take me, different ones, he’d take me with him, I’d get to go with dad, I’d stay sometimes with somebody on the lookout or something overnight. Them lookouts were really interesting, till I’d find we had to go on one.

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
SV: That was different then?

HH: Got kind of homesick. I was on a tent lookout up on Cedar Ridge. Emergency, had a real dry year. That was, I don’t remember what year it was, it was later years when I was a little older

SV: How did you get in there, where was the trail?

HH: Oh they had trails all over. Yes they packed me in and packed the tent. Food. Around the telephone line you could talk in the evening they’d open up the switch in Condon and you could talk to the other lookouts that would be on top. Visit.

SV: What did they pack in there for you for food?

HH: They had good food. They had rations, they’d call em, for years. And I would imagine they’d get like on fires but they had a ration they started years ago with so much on the lookout. You had so much flour and sugar, and so much canned stuff and so much fresh stuff. It was supposed to last you during, outside of maybe some fresh, was supposed to last you hundred days, or ninety days, or whatever they figured you were going to be on the lookout. But they always fed good, they had their ham and bacon and eggs. Fresh stuff. Not so much fresh stuff because it was hard to get. But they had good canned food which was quite a deal for somebody like me, to have all that canned food.

SV: I would imagine.

HH: It probably what sort of made you feel like you wanted to do it. Same way with the fires. Once they got a camp established why you had food that you never got at home.

SV: Where’d you go for water, when you were in the tent up on Cedar Ridge?

HH: About a half a mile down was Cedar Crick. They give you certain times of day when, you could go in the morning when it was cool. I usually go down there in the morning because it was cool. You just tell them on the phone you were going for water and might go pick a few huckleberries [laughs].

SV: Where there quite a bit of huckleberries up there?

HH: Oh there was up there. I got a whole bunch of them and dried them. Run ‘em home for mom [laughs].

SV: How’d you dry them?

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
HH: Laid ‘em out on a canvas. The sun. Yes had a few huckleberries when you dry em. I could just pick them right along the trail.

SV: She’d just put ‘em in pancakes and stuff, how’d she-?

HH: Just like you did with prunes. Put ‘em in the water and they’d soak them. Near fresh again.

SV: Were there bears up there if there was huckleberries?

HH: Oh yes there were bears. I was talking to John Mullan [?] he was over on, was laying over on my bed there by the telephone. I looked out there and there was a bear, standing by the tent. But I don’t know, all you got to do is holler at them and they leave. Probably little old brown bear but we never worried about the bear. There were more afraid of us then we were of them I think.

SV: No grizzlies?

HH: No, there didn’t used to be no grizzlies around here, out here in a way but there if you wanted to see a grizzly then, you had to go hunting. They were there. They were caught, and collared, and turned loose, and caught, and collared.

SV: Was it pretty open on Cedar Ridge?

HH: No it was in a burn.

SV: It was in a burn.

HH: The little jack pines. It’s like it used to be up there, when the jack pines first come up there.

SV: So you could see it was open?

HH: You had to crawl up in the little tower. They had a little tower built above the jack pine. I was there just, when the fire danger got so bad it gets hazy and the high lookouts can’t see very good. Then they put in the low lookouts. Down below this haze, where you don’t have to look so far either. They had quite a number of them around. Elbow, Lindbergh was a low lookout, real good lookout. Jim Creek, Jim lookout was low. The one like Cedar and Holland, boy they were high. They could see a lot of country when it was clearer.

SV: Not Cedar Ridge, different Cedar.

HH: Yes up above right at the top of the mountain. Above where I was.

SV: Ok.
HH: Yes they, then when it got hazier why those high lookouts couldn’t see that good.

SV: How old were you when you on that Cedar Ridge one in the tent? Remember?

HH: I’d have to think about that.

SV: High school age?

HH: I don’t know when, I must have been about sixteen, cause when I was seventeen I went out, I worked for the forest service that summer in 1934. We were down in Idaho. That’s the first good job I had. We got eighty dollars a month, and room and board. We went down there in the 23 of June and didn’t come out until the 23 of October. On the road job, that’s when they built the road from ranger station to Pierce. Doris and I went back over there, took her over there and I was telling her all the time about, we had one camp sitting up in this burn and all they hauled water to us you know. Six years later I took her over and showed her, couldn’t find where we camped, there’s trees in there like that in that burn.

SV: What a difference!

HH: That’s where we finished the road and had a get together with the other crew, they’d come in from the other way. We hadn’t a been assigned there I wouldn’t of found it. There was a great big meadow in there when I was there. And here was all spruce trees and a little camp ground, they’d put a little camp ground in there.

SV: Wow. That’s way different then what you remembered.

HH: Oh I guess way different. The timber over there, you couldn’t believe we had then. When we went back. That was three years ago I took you over there? We took a, I’ll tell you that old timber will grow. All this timber here you’re looking at, except some of the lodgepole, is all second growth.

SV: In this valley, or just right around the house here?

HH: Right here in this place. This was logged once. For big timber.

SV: How big were the trees that they took out when they logged here, the stumps?

HH: Stumps.

SV: Two three feet across.

HH: Big old arch, made ties out of them.
SV: Where did they haul those logs then from here?

HH: We had a saw mill, a little saw mill, skidded eight foot lengths, rolled and skidded. Get some of that big stuff into the mill with horses. And Carl Strum, he hauled the ties out to Bonner, and we’d get a couple car load out there. We’d all go out and load the boxcars with it. ACM, not ACM, NP [Northern Pacific], NP railroad. We made kind of a living at it.

SV: When was, how old were you then, this was later?

HH: Oh this was later.

SV: Go ahead. After you guys were married, is that when you had? Sometime in between?

HH: ’37 or ’38, no about ’36.

SV: Where was the saw mill then?

HH: We had a couple places set out there so we didn’t, we set up pretty portables so you didn’t have to skid too far with a horse, you generally set up on a hillside so you could dump stuff over the hill and you didn’t have to handle it too much.

SV: You mean the slab or the logs?

HH: Slabs and the ties.

SV: Slabs and the ties.

HH: Bogged down on to the mill, the mill was set so it would gradually, a lot of logs gradually go to the mill and you could go down with the ties and the slabs and, pretty wasteful too. Just slab it off to wherever it would make a, we saved some of it. You know to build, we didn’t have no edger or nothing. If you had, you had to put it back on the mill, and saw off that. But then they just burned it.

SV: Piled it and burned it.

HH: Put it in the pile.

SV: You were skidding with horses. What length did you cut the logs?

HH: Eight foot.

SV: Eight foot lengths.
HH: Yes sometimes, and that was tough cause them was big timber, for you know, even eight foot for a team. But after he got his skid road in the winter time, it was winter. After he got his skid road why it worked pretty good.

SV: Donald must have had a truck.

HH: Yes he had a truck. About that time his mother, just about that time his mother started that store over there, and he hauled lumber and brought in you know, stuff for them. I don’t know exactly if that’s the right year. In that time frame.

SV: How’d you get across the river?

HH: We had a bridge we built ourselves, there was two bridges down through here, but there were on the other, this hill place as you come by when you make the turn coming up right behind us, that’s all hills. He didn’t want us to cross his place.

DH: Had a bridge across Swan River though.

HH: The town had a bridge across Swan River but these bridges here that we built out of this made it better out of this timber we were cutting. Well then Steel bought this place here. The people before like there always was, Prestons their name was, just like everybody else said, “oh that’s fine you can come across here and do this do that”. Well then when he sold it, the people who bought it said, “no you’re not going to cross my place”. He said, “you’re going to cross it, one day a year I’m going to close it on you” because then that makes it legal, see he still owns it. If he didn’t why you’d call it established.

SV: Right, I remember that somewhere.

HH: About that time county engineers said if you want a bridge and a road you better do it now because the county will do it now, we don’t know what they’ll do later. So we got out, used their Cat, furnished the timber and stuff for these two bridges and they just went right out around this place, cause he went right up here to that road. And they just stayed, the fellow that owned that on the other side he needed them, just took it off his place he didn’t care, he needed the town either. He’s a fellow that built the cabin, but he’s the fellow that bought the ground where the store was. Oscar his name was, He built that place down there, started that place down there by the bridge, that nice log house, it’s for sale. That was where he had his, he had a nice little house there.

SV: Were there a lot of people coming in here in the ‘30s too then? What was it like for-?

HH: Well there weren’t a lot of people coming in here but they were stirring around more. They’d fixed up the road some you know, and people who was here settling down and well,
they either had to make a living or quit, one or the other, that’s the way I figured it. See before that they, all these people back here pulled out. There wasn’t anybody back here at all.

SV: They all pulled out.

HH: They pulled out. Same way up at Kraft. All the old homesteads they just said that’s enough. Now I’m not going to say when that was either but it sat for, it sat for quite a few years and nothing was done. Then all at once they started you know, coming to life again.

SV: Most of those homestead people had to clear a little bit of land though, I mean—

HH: A lot of these places you can’t see no clearings cause these place where you come and make the turn up the hill? That was a hay field.

SV: Didn’t know that.

HH: Yes and it was cleared just, oh recently you know I mean in years and years, well up close to the ‘50s. That’s all grew back since then.

SV: Grew back pretty well too didn’t it.

HH: Yes it did left alone it, well here around the place if you didn’t around the house and the lawn with these trees, you didn’t pull them little trees, why they take over. You stir the grounds just a tiny bit and you don’t even have to really but you stir it a little bit and boy those trees will really grow. I can show you out here where they logged you can’t tell we logged there but the little trees are just coming up by the thousands.

SV: Cause the ground was just enough for—

HH: Stirred it just enough stuff off of there so little trees could do something.

SV: What kind of trees did you log the large that you took here—

HH: Fir, yes, that’s all we took out. They mined that because they were big and smooth, that’s what they were making, what they made ties out of. Fir too, but there wasn’t that much fir there then. We have some big fir trees but I don’t think they cut any for ties.

SV: I don’t remember anyone talking about it.

HH: No but they did make fir ties too. But there wasn’t that kind of, there wasn’t that big fir tie timber, it took, you know, you wanted something make at least three ties, four ties out of.

SV: How big was a tie then?
HH: Seven by eight, and seven by nine. Or eight by nine.

SV: Pretty good sized stump.

HH: So you had to have a pretty good, I seen them have the tie mills in here. Boy they just slabbed those, a slab would be that thick.

SV: Wow.

HH: You know just to get a face, is what they called it, to start making a tie. But then later on you come up with this stud mill business. And he went in there and sat down and they give him all that slabs and he sit in there and brought these mills in, and boy he really made the money just making two by fours, and they were good too. They were all eight and a half foot long. That’s when they started the stud mills.

SV: Now did you continue to work in some of those stud mills? Or did you just do-

HH: Oh I worked around them, different times when I would come in for the winter or something and I was trucked in or something, why I’d skid, or drive Cat or something. When Uno had his stud mill I worked for him. He had one over our place over there.

SV: Over where?

HH: He owned all that over by that barn. Hundred and sixty acres. We was one of the first ones that screwed stuff up and decided to subdivide [laughs].

SV: Oh now come on.

HH: [laughs] Yes we, well Doris’s sister had the bar first, and her brother-in-law was on this side of the road. Had a little cabin up there at the, where you turn into creek used to be, was our house. Then we put it in a bar. Built the one where Bill lived, and they, we sold it to this young fellow and he moved it up there on the hill. It was hooked on to a restaurant. They had a bar and a restaurant.

SV: I remember, I guess Evelyn talked a little about the restaurant part.

HH: Yes.

SV: Well then you guys were some of the founding fathers of Condon then. Business district.

HH: We worked quite a few different projects, a bar, roads, telephone. That when the roads come that’s when it started to open up.
SV: The ’50s I suppose.

HH: The last of the ’40s. When they started logging in here then things started

SV: You mean the corporate logging.

HH: We didn’t have any, well I suppose that helped get the road too. I’m pretty sure it did. They wanted the Burlington Northern and them, they were about that time change the name. They wanted to do something with this, all this land. I’m sure they had a lot to do with getting this road in there. Cause they just started the roads, they got ‘em through, weren’t just trails, and here they come. In fact, they built that big mills just for this timber down there. They said they had to have so many million feet. And then they come in there and they got probably half more then what they asked, and when they got their quota, they just tore the mill down and left. Cause they knew just how much they had to have to pay, make some money and pay the bills to tear them down again.

SV: Isn’t that something. It’s beyond me.

HH: They took about, I think they took about five hundred million out of here. They wanted four hundred or three hundred eighty million. They had to have that much before they would build a mill.

SV: Well that’s a lot of timber isn’t it?

HH: Boy. I worked then, I had about that time, when they were really going. That’s when I went to work for the state highway. Then we had at one time a hundred individual trucks between, coming out of the Blackfoot and out of here. And some of those trucks was making well, two thirds of those trucks was making two or three trips a day. So you know there was some timber.

SV: Boy I guess.

HH: Talking to Jack Long one time just before they quit, they were really going. Somebody, while I was there, somebody asked him, he was a logger, asked him how many logs he was getting out. And then he was logging in Idaho too, but he said six hundred million. I mean six hundred thousand feet a day.

SV: Boy that’s a lot.

HH: Isn’t it though. Only...

[End of Tape 1, Side B]
HH: Been pretty much protected in any big fires. Fire that burned up there, Craft Creek, that was homegrown, the homesteaders started that.

SV: That’s what I’ve heard. Different stories of course.

HH: That was the biggest fire, as far as I know. There was a big fire, some other fires here in the earlier days but, some of them was before they ever thought of protecting the, 1910 was a bad year all over I guess, from what you look at.

SV: But like if you were on Cedar Ridge in the tent lookout and that was an old burn area there must have been several little old burns-

HH: Yes it wasn’t I don’t think very big, you know. And these other fires, lately you know, I mean recent years let’s say they don’t get very big, you know fifteen hundred acres or something. It isn’t that much. Lot of them I don’t think get that big.

SV: Did you ever have to go fight fires?

HH: I did in ’31, ah ’34, down in Idaho. Spent thirty one days out there running and working.

SV: Oh boy.

HH: We spent most of the time running. Make, put in a fire line one day and lose it the next day. That was tough country. Boy that’s rough country down-

SV: Pretty much in the Lochsa.

HH: Down in the yes, in the, Swift Creek country, that comes in there, is a log creek. You know we were in there, in there fire in there no roads or nothing in that country. They chased us into the, you know where the Lochsa ranger station is now? We, about five hundred of us in there dug in, and the fire went on past us, over us. That’s where we were, come down, then we went back again up, oh it’s hard to tell for me to tell you exactly where it was then, smoky and everything. Anyway we went back up again and tried it again. Doing no good holding it but, we finally, got more men and let us go back to, we were from Montana see, and we were on that road job. They let us go back on to the road job. But they didn’t put no fire out then, the snow put it out. I remember seeing it smoking yet when there was snow, over there on another piece of the mountains.

SV: Well you must have come home then after the job, you were with your dad right?
HH: Yes we come home in October. I remember we come down out of there and they plowed the road and stuff, had a big snow storm. They had to plow the roads so they could move the camp out. [Laughs] The boss of our outfit, his name was Cox, you know he said it was Cox’s retreat [laughs].

SV: It’s like fighting a war or something.

HH: [laughs] Yes Cox’s retreat.

SV: Well do you spend the winter in here then?

HH: Oh yes.

SV: You got back here?

HH: Oh yes. We spent quite a few winters here I did.

SV: Did you get to go trapping or anything with your dad?

HH: Oh no not too much. I remember some winters I hauled hay for dad. They had hayed all over you know I did it kind of for fun too. Didn’t have nothing to do, most of the time in the wintertime nothing much to do, I bring up a big four horse sleigh outfit, there was a young fella here, schoolteacher here, he and I spent a lot of time together. He had time on his hands. He helped me pitch hay and we hauled hay from up there, that place up across the bridge there. The corner lumbers?

SV: Oh yes right.

HH: He was, this end of the place belonged to, another fellow then. Warner’s dad got it later on, but yes we hauled hay from there, we hayed there.

SV: That’s a long way.

HH: In fact we hayed all over the country. In later years, we hayed down there, clear down to the Simon’s. they dragged [laughs]. We’d come home from work Saturdays and Sundays, haul hay, at least we were bailing it them it wasn’t loose [laughs]. Most of the time up till then we were hauling that old loose hay. Always said you couldn’t haul enough hay to feed the horses, the time you got it home you fed it all up already.

SV: Well how many horses, how much hay did it take to feed a horse? Let’s put it that way.

HH: Two and a half, three ton in the winter?
SV: Did you ever have to feed them through the summer too?

HH: Well no, you had to feed ‘em when you worked ‘em some, but well if you worked ‘em, but I don’t know, we never worked the horses very much in the summertime.

SV: Didn’t take them on pack trips or anything?

HH: No not then yet. We never had that many horses anyway.

SV: Cows though, you had.

HH: We had a few old cows to milk. They just run, there was no fences.

SV: How did-?

HH: Mom would go hunt them cows, wandering around out there. Later, before when we finally got this, scared me to death out there, wandering around.

SV: She fall or get hurt somehow?

HH: She just wouldn’t pay attention. It was pretty thick back here.

SV: Was it?

HH: Wasn’t nobody around, that’s the thing. This whole country no one back there. She couldn’t walk out to somebody’s place. Wander around out there and you know, but then a little later we got rid of the cows, the cows you had kind of went to beef cows, and then Doris and I took them over there to our place for her.

SV: What do you mean by our place?

HH: By the barn. There was logs and stuff and a hay field.

SV: Now somebody had to have cleared that though too or was that-?

HH: I cleared that. But I had a better going, I had a Cat [laughs].

SV: Didn’t have to do it all by hand, like this one?

HH: No. I thought of it every time I push a tree out too.

SV: I guess. Did you-?
HH: Did use a Cat a little on that far end over there and that was a big joy just to push.

SV: How did you get it all level, did you have to level that with teams?

HH: That’s about the way it was.

SV: Isn’t very level.

HH: Isn’t very level.

DH: Just like it is now. It’s all white, not black.

HH: The hay field is pretty good, that’s that, on upper part. That’s all hay up there. This is pasture.

SV: Is it just wild hay or did you plant some?

HH: Oh no we had good tame hay. We had a lot of nice tame pasture in the woods too.

SV: You had to seed that some time or other didn’t you?

HH: Whenever we dragged along on the ground or logged a little bit we seeded.

SV: What did you seed it with?

HH: Oh, a little seed.

SV: What kind for seed?

HH: Orchard grass. Clover.

DH: Clover, Orchard grass.

SV: What did you find grew the best, did it all-?

HH: I think the Orchard grass grows the best. That’s what our hayfield is mostly, we got some Timothy coming back again, seems like the Orchard grass is better than, cause I think that the other two we fertilize, do some area on the hay. We sort of built the place back up. It sat here quite a while, didn’t do much.

SV: Well when your mom was chasing around these cows out, was it brush? You said it was thick was it brush?
HH: Windfalls and timber, well just like going out through there.

DH: His aunt died in the area, she was 58?

HH: She stayed out here on the place.

DH: She stayed here by herself.

HH: Chasing those cows. Well she was, that kind of worried me about her too. Dad died and she wasn’t always thinking that she should have been.

SV: Did she still have chickens and all that too?

HH: She quit the chickens and that after a while. She still had some. She mostly just had the garden and somebody would say wonder if she’s working too hard in the garden and I said the best thing in the world for her, and as for anybody, if she was just lying there in the garden. That’s the way she wanted to go anyway. Other then she finally ended up in the rest home for seven years. Gone over there and she worked herself to death, would of been much better for her.

SV: I hear what you’re saying. So when you guys came back to this place then is when you started kind of, the maintenance.

HH: We started some of it when we were still over there but planned on coming back here. I built, we built the fence, I think all of us, and we got a real good fence around the whole thing. We built that, took vacation and on my vacation from the highway, Doris and mom and I built most of it. She was, just loved to go out there. We’d have lunch under, sitting out there under a tree. All her memories, she loved going out there in the woods. Yes we built a lot of fence. But I was a lot younger then too. I drilled all of them by hand, the post.

SV: Didn’t take the tractor out?

HH: Oh I had a little tractor with a little bucket on it, but it wasn’t much that’d stand in the bucket. It was in the spring. The ground was soft. Had a good big hammer, and I was healthy.

SV: So you’re talking about wooden posts?

HH: Yes treated too. Treated both.

SV: The snow doesn’t, how does that do with the wire-?

HH: Oh it’ll, like that bad year, we had a lot of-
DH: Two years ago.

HH: It broke a lot of wire.

SV: I bet.

HH: But ordinarily it isn’t bad. But that year it was bad. Broke it off right at the post, you know.

SV: I saw break the staples right off of it.

HH: Yes I was. Boy, should have had one of those—they call a letdown fence. Lay it down come fall. (laughs)

SV: A nice idea, but would it really work?

HH: They do that a lot where they get a lot of drifts. Especially in Idaho where it’s really bad over these ridges and stuff. They build those letdown fences. In the fall they go up and they just pull these pins out. They get two sets of posts.

SV: Nobody ever used them around here though?

HH: No I haven’t seen it but that’s quite an idea. You have two sets of posts and they, one post is just, don’t go in the ground but they stand it up, fasten it onto the other with loops, like a gate loop. Come fall they go up there and, this is in the mountain mostly, they lay that fence all down. Cause it drifts and stuff like that. I hadn’t see it, I never see it until a few years ago, not too, friend of ours was down there, worked for a big ranch, showed us some of it. Pretty nice.

SV: You still got cows back here then?

HH: No I got some cows, we got some cows up at Mike’s now. But we generally just have steers, pasture them for the summer. That’s what we do. Just put up enough hay so we can buy ‘em when they still go feed hay.

SV: We talked a little bit about what you did for chores and work when you were in grade school and high school age, but what’d you do for fun? You kept saying going and getting hay was fun, and going with dad was fun.

HH: Oh I don’t know go visit.

SV: Go visit?

HH: Friends. Go fishing.
SV: Where’d you go fishing, I want to hear about the fishing.

HH: Oh the places we would go. We used to hike in the mountains, boy I’ll tell you we’d hike out there and there was so much snow and ice couldn’t even find the lake.

SV: Oh geez.

HH: So you’d hike out again. (laughs)

SV: You’re taking about spring fall, or winter?

HH: Winter. Went up there one time with, Edith’s brother was with us. He had these studs to you know.

SV: Right. Break a hole in the ice.

HH: We’d go up there and dig, kick snow, and finally get down to the ice, and chop and boy there was really a lot of ice. Pretty quick we hear, “Whoops!” There goes the stud, slipped out of his hand. Camped overnight and walked home. No hole, no spud. (laughs)

SV: Couldn’t get it back up at all, that snow?

HH: It just went back into the lake. The hole wasn’t big enough to fish through. It just slipped through the sides of the—

DH: You used to go up to a lot of these lakes.

HH: We used to hike, go all the time fishing. That was fun.

SV: Talk about summer time now?

HH: Wintertime. Summertime we didn’t have the chance to fish that much in the summer, but the winter time we had nothing to do. So we, you know you’d play yourself out, lay around, get right back up and be ready to go again if somebody wanted to go fishing.

SV: How would you get in through the trails though up there in the winter time?

HH: What?

SV: How did you get through the trails?

HH: You don’t need no trails snowshoeing.
SV: Just go?

HH: Kind of knew where you wanted to go. We knew the ground before, during the summer. Her brother and Russ and I went up to Cold Lake one winter, and we left here it was February and boy it was nice and clear and crusted snow, and that’s when you’d try to travel. The farther we got, the deeper we, the less crust we had and pretty quick we got to deep snow, and it got cold, and we got up just above the falls there below the lake. Decided it was getting dark, it was then. Decided we were going to stop, and we’ll build a little fire and well eat something, and go on to the lake. So we build a little fire. Got out a can of pork and beans, open them up a little and set them on the fire, and we was standing there talking about, it was cold, it was cold. About that time our fire fell down through by tree and about ten feet down we saw it, eight or ten feet. We packed up our stuff and got out of there. Very slowly, too, because we were afraid, then you start worrying about somebody getting hurt.

SV: There was no base under it, it was just all?

HH: Yes. It was just right along that tree, that hole, that’s how deep that snow was.

SV: Were you scared?

DH: I wasn’t.

SV: You didn’t go it was the brothers that went.

DH: My brother.

SV: Ok.

HH: We come down to this old red, William’s old house there, been there for years. And somebody had cut a hole in this old cabin. There was a hole in the corner. So we build a fire, and this was probably about three o’clock in the morning. We made it there and didn’t have any trouble. We build a fire and got us something to eat. We had good sleeping bags and everything. There was an old bunk there and we laid down on it. We stayed in bed till it was as clear as a bell, but cold. We got up, got something to eat, come home. It was thirty six below here. People lived near our cabin out there. She was going to have a baby. Doris took her to town.

DH: I took her to town that night.

SV: Well when, did you get to Cold Lakes on a different trip to go fishing?

HH: I was up one time earlier. It was good, wasn’t that much ice and snow. That was your big trouble, the ice and snow was so deep, you know. What we’d do if we could, if we were really
prepared. We’d take a good ax and maybe one of these little saws, and we’d build a big old fire and then it’d melt down in the snow. And then we’d go fishing and come back and we’d have a place to put our fire in, and put some bows, nice place to stay. But that was what got us, is that snow.

SV: Just too deep?

H: But we never gave up we tried all the time. (laughs) We’d pack, we went into Crystal [Lake] one time, and took a toboggan and took a tepee. Pretty good size tepee, big tepee in fact. I was thinking it, caretaker of Lindbergh Lake, they had a tepee there and Carl and I guess Roxy. We went up there and it was nice that time too. We got up there and by god if it didn’t start raining. We set the tepee up right on the ice. We planned on doing it. Cut a hole, put a flashlight in a crude jar and hung it down there and boy we were really catching these fish, see, cooking them right away. By golly, it was raining, really raining. It was just unbearable. Donald and I, we come out that night. Russ and Carl, they stayed there. Boy they had a tough time. I remember we went back up half way because they had that darn toboggan and tepee to pull. From Lindbergh, you could see clear up there where they made that bend. We went back up there and helped then. But we, we was all over this country.

SV: What kind of fish were you catching?

HH: Well little navies up there in Crystal. Most a lot of little navies then, until they started planting.

SV: Were there any of those, what do they call them, golden—

HH: That was later. Russ and Chuck Wall went up to, I think it was the lake above Crystal. SV: The one, Heart, or—

HH: No not above—

SV: Not that way the other way?

HH: Above, Glacier.

SV: There was some of those up there?

HH: The lake, boy. They brought some dandies. They were as golden as they said they are. Yup. SV: When you were fishing at Crystal what kind of bait were you using?

HH: Oh you generally use a little meat, chunk of meat. I think you could have caught them, caught them on anything really.
SV: Venison I imagine.

HH: Yes venison. Boy it wasn’t beef.

SV: When you were growing up though did you guys eat a lot of venison?

HH: Yes we did, we ate lots of venison, old Da don’t like it anymore neither. She loves that with her hotcakes, boy see he day we have hotcakes and venison she really lives it up [laughs]. Her brother go out and got a buck, little buck last couple of years, we’ve been cutting it up, helping him come up with a bunch little steaks.

DH: Would you rather get deer than me.

HH: We have ’em year round. The deer were better in the summer time. That was a way of life. We never wasted any of it either.

SV: I don’t imagine.

HH: Because if you were there, you wanted it. That’s the reason you was out there. Mom used to can it, pack it down with lard, or tallow.

SV: Seal it that way.

HH: It kept good too. You know in the summertime they were nice and fat, lot of good tallow. You could put that meat out in a crock.

SV: Salt it probably when you put it in?

HH: Oh a little bit. I don’t remember us ever getting excited about salting it because you didn’t have to.

SV: How?

HH: Oh we smoked some, salted some, and stuff like that. If you wanted it fresh that would be, most of the time we’d make hamburger or something then put it down in the...It was good to have it keep it, because you couldn’t eat, it all wasn’t going to waste it.

SV: Did you have kind of a root cellar or cold—

HH: We had a down, right there by the gate where the ditch goes in a big cold box, oh I suppose it was a packing box of some kind. When they first moved around. We ran the water in it, and that’s where mom used to cool the milk when they quit separating, you know the cans with the glass. They’d draw the milk out till they come to the cream, then they take the cream.

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
SV: That’s pretty handy then?

HH: That was a nice place to cool them.

DH: Vegetables.

HH: Oh, they had own in the cellar mostly.

DH: Cellar.

HH: Well, I don’t know what they did. Suppose they had some kind of a root cellar but after they built the big house they had out in the basement always.

SV: Was there elk around?

HH: Nope when we first around here for years there was no elk. Then there’s a little bunch showed up here, a little bunch showed up there, there was a little bunch of elk here in creek the first one I know of. That you know that wasn’t very early either. It hadn’t been that many years that there was elk in this country.

SV: What about other, well you said there was bears, coyotes. Did you ever see mountain lions?

HH: Oh yes, chased them too.

SV: Chased em.

HH: Dog old john he had one hound and one cocker.

SV: Works.

HH: Little cocker all the time and the hound he wouldn’t say a word.

SV: They’re the ones.

HH: Make a saddle and let that little guy ride him. He never put the howls n them. yacking, they wouldn’t come down till you got there neither.

SV: The cocker.

HH: The little cocker all the yacking. The hound every once in a while say oooh. And that was something you talked about.
SV: Sure. Lot of work though.

HH: Yes to burn. Throw away. Run for thirty miles if you wanted to. Old tom he’s just like a coyote tom is. God that guy can hike.

SV: You guys enjoyed it though running up through the brush.

HH: Oh yes. You didn’t get anything what the heck. The same way was hunting, didn’t get anything well that’s the way it was.

SV: Enjoy doing it.

HH: Yup.

SV: Did you ever hunt for big bucks or hunt.

HH: For a big buck in my life till we hunted for wasn’t so much bunch then elf, for trophies. With the guys, I guided for a number of years.

SV: Did you go in the south working?

HH: (unintelligible)

SV: Did you remember one of your first trips in there at that time?

HH: Well I wasn’t hunting but I went in there oh I guess probably ’29 or ’30. Waited help cook and—

[End of Tape 2, Side A]
SV: I think, so you went in with the Kiwanis when they took the Kiwanis girls in there? Did they go in to Holland? Over at Townville, Kelley outfit had a ranch over there and they had the boys. In the meantime when we were going through that way the boys was coming through to come to Holland. And they spend two weeks I don’t remember but they’d spend say two weeks at Holland then the girls would stay two weeks at that ranch. It was all the same outfit.

SV: Do you remember what it felt like going in there that first time, country look any different to you?

HH: Oh yes it was quite a deal that was, it’s quite different than this.

SV: Is it.

HH: The rivers, cricks, mountains, no it was quite a trip as far as I was concerned.

SV: Yes.

HH: I wasn’t very old, I was old enough to help, help cook get wood, do the chores. Yes I think there was about, I went in a year or two probably before they quit. But I wasn’t oh, thirteen years old then.

SV: Is that what kind of got you started on thinking oh maybe?

HH: Oh I don’t know, oh yes I about that time I went to work for Cap Laird couple years, then I went we packed in the hills then.

SV: Where? Which side?

HH: We packed both sides. Not as much packing there on this side, he did have a camp up on red Butte, hunting camp. But he went in on over on Lena Lake with his hunting camp.

SV: Now was there elk at Lena, at that area, lake?

HH: Oh yes there’s elk all over around there. That used to be some of the best hunting. Feline—

SV: When was the last time you were in to some of those areas?

HH: We went to work one fall I packed.

SV: Did you notice anything had changed?
HH: Yes you bet.

SV: What kinds of things?

HH: More people.

SV: Trails show more use, that kind of stuff.

HH: They showed more use and more neglect. You know I mean we used to go in there and there was trail crews all over, and you’d, you know those trails are good going. I guess they’re getting them fixed up now again. The main trails.

DH: That’s about ’65 I think.

SV: When you went in when the Kiwanis were doing that when you were a kid, do you remember any Indians.

HH: No I wouldn’t pay any attention to it anyway.

SV: How about on this side when you were growing up?

HH: Well not really. We used to have an Indian camp right here

SV: Did you?

HH: Here before we paid any attention when I was a kid. Right over there in one of them parks there’s supposedly some graves there. they and a big old shoot ‘em up they cleaned after they had the big shoot out at Holland before they went over the hill and outta here before they went outta here they buried some of there, for a while, not for long, down here in, we called it dryans clearing. But that’s before I know anything for sure about that. so that’s one of those times I’m not going to say its—

SV: Don’t know for sure?

HH: Yes we spent quite a little time over there south fork. Speaking if, you say in the south fork I kind of like that because everyone says it’s the Bob [Marshall Wilderness], it’s the old south fork as far as I’m concerned.

SV: Well that’s the drainage that it is.

HH: Same as changing Lindbergh Lake, from Elbow to Lindbergh.

SV: Well it was the Elbow when Cap. Laird was there.
HH: Yes you bet. Then just about, still there yet, that’s when ’27, something like that, ’28 that’s when they changed it. Anaconda Company said that’s what we want to do to honor him, see they’re the ones that put up the big camp in the ’40s.

SV: He was just in there that one time wasn’t he?

HH: I think just had a camp in there for about two weeks. I called it elbow for a long time.

SV: Well the lookout everyone called it the lookout too.

HH: Yes that’s some of the things we lose.

SV: I think so too.

HH: You know we give it a different name. The little guys are pretty good.

SV: How long did you do some guiding?

HH: Oh off and on for ’66.

SV: That’s some of the stuff that Ed was writing about.

HH: I packed with the forest service quite a while. Not here. Seeley Lake.

SV: I didn’t know that. Did you go in over pyramid over that way? Was it just on the district?

HH: Just on the district north fork and that’s all on the district. Wed run our animals out on back.

SV: You did? That’s a little different.

HH: Said you want to take her with ya and I said sure, and he said I’ll tell ya what I’ll do she can help a little bit around the, and if you want to get some, then well board her.

SV: Did you have fun doing that?

HH: Horses you know I packed her two years then I got tasked to be assistant ranger, only reason I got to be a citizen ranger was cause they were running out of help. They told me that that’s a good time for advancement. If I’d a stayed packing I’d a been happier.

SV: You liked that.
HH: One year of that I had enough.

SV: You liked being out in the woods.

HH: Yes and it wasn’t so, when you got to be a citizen ranger you see all the stuff that goes on. You aren’t so happy about. We had a supervisor who wasn’t the best supervisor, he might have been a good supervisor but he didn’t satisfy everybody that worked for him. So they told me that beneath the ranger station told me bring Doris over stay here at the station when the ranger goes to the supervisors office. I was older. And they said well I guess you won’t be staying here. So I moved. I was down cruising timber. Even though he was directly under the supervisor. I couldn’t get by.

SV: That’s to—

HH: I was getting it was seventeen hundred twenty five dollars a year. That’s about what they were paying. They were going to give me a raise and they didn’t give me a raise so I just figured I could do better than that. Soon as they start coming back from the service I figured I better start looking for something.

SV: So then did you go packing and guide them on your own?

HH: Own I logged them and axed them.

SV: Did you have to advertise for your guide service or did people—

HH: I worked for, I spent two years at the Gordon ranch. But I spent off and on with buck for two years. And in the fall at that time in the fall we’d go guide and probably be working construction or logging or something. When fall come. Which is a good job to go guiding. Packing. So that’s how come we do it more times. Wed done pretty good to. Get tips they pay pretty good wages.

SV: Well and you were able to stay here.

HH: Yes. that’s what when I worked construction in the wintertime worked all winter but generally they don’t move, move, move.

SV: So you’re talking about highway construction.

HH: In ’61 I had a chance that’s when the state built this road. Brother and probably in the room over there probably told me they were going to take this over if I wanted to id have a good chance to get it, or get to work here. Send someone in and a boss and I did. They took it over in ’61 I was over in Livingston then then I come home why first November in ’61 we had thirty one inches of snow. Broke us in. fellow I arrived come here from Clearwater he’s the foreman or

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
whatever you might call him, he left and I got the job. And I had it there till I left and then lemons who was working for me. He got the job.

SV: So that was kind of the end of your outfitting, guiding?

HH: One fall I took—

DH: Highway ’61.

HH: I took a month of leave they give us a day and a half a month leave, paid leave, and they give us a day and a quarter sick leave, paid sick leave. And that was, accumulated mine. I never did touch my sick leave, till I needed it.

SV: When you were packing, did you work for the Gordon ranch for buck, or did—

HH: Yes.

SV: How were things at the Gordon Ranch then?

HH: Well it was strictly a real nice dude ranch. I mean the people come there to just relax be taken care of. And that’s the way they were taken. They had all them nice cabins. Horses. And they got trips. They didn’t take a lot of trips but there was always somebody there that wanted to take a trip.

SV: Hunting.

HH: Oh yes.

SV: You took ‘em hunting?

DH: Fishing.

HH: Oh yes that was another summertime fishing—

SV: Where’d you go to?

HH: South Fork. I went down mostly down on White Lake on White River. And different places for fishing. Salmon Lake, and South Fork. Station was the White River.

SV: Did they catch fish to bring them out or catch ‘em to just—

HH: Catch ‘em and turn ‘em loose when they wanted something to eat. We did smoke some. Nine out of ten of ‘em burn the smokehouse down they wouldn’t take care of it.

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
DH: (unintelligible)

HH: Fish all the time cause that’s was getting fish. You’d take, six or eight people could eat a lot of fish. It was us too you’d go in there, and you don’t get ‘em when they’re here. You just save the real nice ones.

SV: Were you fly fishing then back there?

HH: Oh yes.

SV: What kind of flies do you remember?

HH: Oh I don’t know just a run of black fly or something like that. I want to tell her the story about the drive by fisherman we had. You better not have a lure in your outfit. He come in here he and his wife and dog they could take him and they said he won’t bother. That’s when he worked with buck. The dog won’t bother you. We don’t, round the stock nobody wanted to take a strange dog. He wasn’t no problem but we go in there and sheep follows him around and he casts. If they don’t bite he takes fifteen minutes. Takes another dive cash, going on all day long. Getting tired. He says to me, he says will you take her fishing? And I said ill take her fishing. I wanted to go up the river the prairie there there’s a big hole where crick come in and I wanted to catch me a big bull trout. So he gives her one of those, oh I don’t know pole, drive by pole. Probably was the best. We go up there and I didn’t know what to do. She couldn’t drive fly so I put a little spinner oh about that big on it. Something weighed enough so it would go out there. and I was going down the bottom of the hole there flows out and I heard her scream and I looked around and she had that pole and the tip was past the and I hollered at her to run up there and. Well she had an old bull trout on there and I’ll tell you he was a dandy. And I had, every once in a while she start hauling I knew she was going to break that pole. Anyway I controlled her and she gets the fish down there where you can see good. And then the dog jumped in and here we go again she that pole. I’m a talking telling let it go let it go. I’ll be dog gone if we didn’t land him. And he was about 32 inches long. We take him in the can. I take off of that outfit now and we get in here and didn’t mind them scales she didn’t then she laid it on a piece of cardboard and drew around him so she could get the length. Come in and his eyes stuck out about that far and he says what kind of lure, what kind of fly was we using. She said it was a royal coachman. I’ll never forget that. that was one of my favorite little going on. I was a royal coachman.

SV: [laughs] That’s a good story. They get pretty set in their ways these dry fly fisherman.

HH: We had them, most of the time that’s what they were. Boy I tell you them people, they don’t like it. You, old Joe and I we caught us a big bull trout lure on and he wouldn’t even weigh it. He just walked off, and we turned him loose. They get pretty sent in their ways like you say.

Harold Haasch and Doris Haasch Interview, OH 422-001, 002, Archives and Special Collections, Mansfield Library, University of Montana-Missoula.
But by the same token we have those trophy hunters. You have ‘em in there, and by golly you don’t have to worry about ‘em, I mean if they didn’t get something they’s just say that’s fine.

SV: They’re there for the experience.

HH: And for the trophy. We had a fellow in there had grizzly and we had a chance to get and I tell you he was a big one. And he said ah if I killed him I wouldn’t be able to come back. And he was on the grizzly hunt which was costing him a big chunk of money. I want to come back he said. Oh these guys you get that trophies aren’t, most of them guys that’s all they’re going to do nothing with them except the trophy. Meat they just want the head. Give the meat away. I’ve had ‘em pass up some real good bulls. My mouth was watering and everything else but—

SV: Didn’t take it huh?

HH: There must be a better one than that. I had ‘em so close that they could count their points and everything. When they’re where they used to be I hadn’t tried ‘em for years but when bugling you could get ‘em right up to you. Them old boys would sit there and look over.

SV: Boy that’s something though. Then they’d come back the next year.

HH: Oh sure or go somewhere else trophy hunting. Probably once come back he passed an elk the same way. He’d come back, so he could come back.

SV: The bear was one that you were hunting, that you were actually hunting.

HH: Yes he wanted a grizzly.

SV: So you got him to where he could see one—

HH: Jesus.

SV: How did you get to hunt that grizzly?

HH: Well we seen him before down on Lena Lake. On horseback. He’s a big old fellow. I was with them then when they passed him up. They had him dead right just a little bit bellow him and close. Chance of being under him or anything on the hills. Those people were nice people. They were good to hunt for. We had some, in the later years we had some North Dakota meat hunters and I’ll tell you they were miserable. If they didn’t have an elk by noon the first day things started to get tough. We were on to them fellows.

SV: Wish you hadn’t been there with them.
HH: That, just like the last time Russ and I was in there. Lied to those guys about the weather was tough you know, that’s when it was getting tough hunting. Dry we told em, it was really dry. Then it snowed about a foot it wasn’t a track did get ‘em and elk. We got ‘em a little bear. Ol buff, we came out and told ol buff lying to anybody. I never went back again neither.

SV: Population of elk did drop in there sometime.

HH: Well it was tougher hunting. Went down and made it tough hunting for quite a while. Cataract and oh a lot of them big salmon and in fact you couldn’t get in autumn. You couldn’t get through them hillsides.

DH: When you first went in there, there was more elks wasn’t there.

HH: They had a, population—

DH: You always got elk.

HH: Go in there trophy hunting and to you, it’s not too hard. And I’ve seen, there and in the north country, we went in there when I was packing for the forest service. Was moved out to lookout and all that and then we found little, I saw forty head of elk in one place.

DH: been to that part of Idaho.

SV: I haven’t talked to nobody.

HH: Great many bulls come out of there I’ll tell you. And the little horns. We was in there, the last time we was in there they had three bulls and there, the ones set was hardly any bigger to the dear set, was just a little bit bigger, fit right in there. The other set was just a little bit bigger, and they all fit together. And they were, they were six pointers and stuff like that but they were little.

SV: Not heavy and all.

HH: No. I think, I don’t know, I’m no authority on it but I don’t know if it has anything to do with that or not but used to have those natural salt licks in there. I think that, I don’t think getting the right kind of, the lack something, let’s put it that way. For food, minerals. See there used to be big salt licks all over that country.

SV: They’re not there anymore.

HH: They’re dead. I don’t know, elk got too scarce so they didn’t use em, big old salt licks. There’s one down on the river I think it might be the river back it’s a clay bank and I think there’s something in the clay. The goats used to come clear from country come clear down to
the river and eat there. about any time you’d go down there looked down and see a goat in there or something. Through the brush its just like having a flag and bear hanging on there, you could just—

SV: Follow it right in.

HH: Hike ‘em down at one time walking, they were up above and we hunted back and come down that way, down the ridge and seen this, seen the trail too, white going down through there. They were nice, those goats was nice. That was fun hunting them, couldn’t get a trophy goat hunter get some exercise.

SV: More than hunting mountain lions huh.

HH: I don’t know about that.

[End of Interview]