Jim Scott: This begins side one of tape two. It's November 1, 1989 and Hazel and I are continuing on with the narrative of the history of Bearmouth.

Hazel Marsh: 1908 was a busy year at Bearmouth. The mines were operating, Garnet ore was being brought out and ready for shipment to the smelters. The watered out Northern Pacific Railroad was being rebuilt and the Milwaukee Railroad was just building its first tracks through Bearmouth. The lannen ranch was again disturbed: all their buildings had to be moved back to allow for the Milwaukee Railroad. And different people who were prominent in the Garnet area, in Garnet mines, were coming in: like people from the East who built a beautiful old log home, in the Deep Greek area. And Mitchell and Mussigbrod, who operated the mine and smelter. What did they have? They crushed the ore and reduced it. I could mention many other things, but the Garnet story has already been written by those with far more knowledge than I have. What else happened? Different members of the Lannen family took up homesteads. Weavers came into that area at that time: they lived about three miles down the river where they took up land. Buchanans, who were also early pioneers, moved into the area southeast of the Lannen property and were our neighbors, the neighbors of the Lannens for many, many years.

JS: Hazel, are you saying that as late as 1908 there still was available land for homesteading?

HM: Oh, yes.

JS: Really!

HM: And of course every other section was owned by the Northern Pacific Railroad: given by the government in order to induce them to build the railroad. Then there was... I don't know just how it went... but there were a number of school sections also set aside for education. I know the Lannens purchased several school sections as part of the ranch. Now where do we go from here?

JS: Well, let me ask you some questions about these big events in 1908. Ok, once again to repeat, Ed moves to Hall and that leaves Chris and Kate running the operations at Bearmouth, right?

HM: Yes.

JS: Ok. Now, earlier when Bridgit was still alive and John, you said the big white house at Bearmouth functioned something as a hotel when the miners, or others, would come down from
Garnet with the ore on the wagons and the ore would be stockpiled and put into the ore cars and be taken off to Denver or other places. In 1908 was this still the case? In other words, was the hotel still — did it still have somewhat of that same function? It made money?

HM: It was just really at its height at that time, they had built on and made it twice as big. [There were] four new bedrooms upstairs and a dining room and a kitchen. Previous to this a lean-to served as a kitchen.

JS: Oh, really! Now, who was running these hotel operations, so to speak?

HM: Well, Bridgit to begin with, that's the original John Lannen's wife. And then all these people that were around, cousins of Kate Lannen, who had come in from Kansas many years before. And they always had a cook, mostly Chinese, and they had stories to tell of these Chinese cooks who didn't know much about cooking. I guess, until they taught them. They still had to have the little store at that time and Kate had told this Chinese cook to go over and pick up a package of bird seed. He came back and studied about it, and studied it and finally he said, "Missy Lannen how do you cook bird seed?" [laughter]

JS: So the hotel was, you say, at its height around 1908, as far as taking in overnight...?

HM: Yes, as activity was concerned.

JS: Now, what was the activity when the Milwaukee Road was going through? Was the place just swarming with railroad construction people?

HM: Yes, they had a big camp near the area just west of where the old swimming pool used to be — the warm springs, which is now on the frontage road. They'd come on horses and spend quite a bit of time at the saloon. And, of course, the temporary camp while the Northern Pacific was being rebuilt. There's a saw mill right down between where the Northern Pacific depot was on the river occupied by Ketchum, I believe was the man's name.

JS: Ok, then we've mentioned the flood here. Well, ok what we want to lead up to is you: your entrance is 1916. Is that what you said?

HM: By 1916 when I came on the scene, Garnet was still very active, but the saloon had closed.

JS: Now this is the saloon at Bearmouth? Yes, it had been closed for some time and in 1916 it burned.

HM: Mrs. Lannen's mother had come from Kansas to visit her. We called her Grandma, and when my mother died she persuaded the Lannens to take my brother and me, temporarily until our folks in the Midwest could come after us.

JS: Ok, actually this is a big and important part of the story, so let's just save this and take it in detail. But I guess what I'd like you to do is to concentrate on the years between 1908, that big year, and the year 1916 when you were there. And you've already said something like Garnet
was still going full tilt, but you said the saloon in Bearmouth closed up. What other things happened in Garnet or Bearmouth in those eight years before you entered the story?

HM: Coming with the Milwaukee Railroad there was more communication between Missoula and Bearmouth, and between Drummond and Bearmouth.

JS: What did that mean when you say more communication? What did that do for Bearmouth?

HM: Well, there was more wagon travel. A wagon road was built along the river. It abandoned the old Mullan Trail and was built along the river paralleling the Northern Pacific Railroad. There was more communication between Bearmouth and Drummond. I should get some Drummond history and tie it in. I don't know exactly the dates of Drummond's becoming important.

JS: Now, did the Milwaukee Road have a depot in Bearmouth?

HM: Yes. That depot was built previous to my coming on the scene, so it must have been around that time.

JS: Ok. But does this mean that there was passenger service at Bearmouth?

HM: Oh yes, I should say.

JS: On both railroads or just one?

HM: Both railroads had a lot of passenger service. A lot of the people who were active in Garnet lived in Butte and Anaconda. The miners who went out to have a gala time went to Butte to spend their gold.

JS: And they actually took the train?

HM: Yes, they took the trains.

JS: Something that interests me here, but I don't know if this was anything that seemed particularly important to you: I may have the date wrong here but I thought it was 1913--so that would be five years after the Milwaukee road went through—they changed to electric motors partially.

HM: I'm not sure of that date, but it was electrified previous to my coming here.

JS: Ok, so it couldn't be off by more than a year or two. Are you aware that that brought about any big changes? Certainly there must have been an awful lot of activity then.

HM: I wasn't on the scene at that time and I haven't heard very much about it, but along in that time — I'm not sure of the dates I would have to go back — there were two major holdups on the Milwaukee or on NP Railroad.
JS: Is this before you came?

HM: Yes.

JS: Ok, well tell us about it.

HM: There's a place about two miles east of what was then the Bearmouth station, which at that
time consisted of a coal dock and a pumping station and a water tank. It was always known as
Hold Up Cut. These bandits stopped the train and there was a shipment of diamonds with it.

JS: Really! Where were these diamonds coming from?

HM: I don't know where they were coming from. There was supposed to have been one of the
bandits killed in the mountains, and he was supposed to have buried his loot someplace and
people were looking for diamonds for many years after that. Also during that time previous to
1916, I don't know exactly the date, there was a really bad railroad wreck. I have pictures of that.
It was after 1908 and before 1916. Two locomotives hit head-on, right up at the curve, right
about where the old red bridge was.

JS: Was this Milwaukee Road or NP?

HM: NP. Then after that they put in another westbound track so there were two-way tracks.

JS: Now you mentioned two holdups. So far you've just mentioned about the diamonds on the
NP: what about the second one?

HM: The second was also in the same place, which is now known as "Hold-up Cut." I don't
know the particulars of that one. I think I have some clippings someplace about that.

JS: Once again we're working up to 1916. So why don't you tell us, as far as you know, what
really was the state of affairs with the operations with Chris and Kate, say up to 1916. Had their
ranch expanded? What else were they doing for money?

HM: It expanded. Each one of the family who was eligible took up land, took up homesteads:
later the Lannens bought it out. Other people who were not related came in and took up
homesteads: Crane, (Kate's brother-inlaw,) and Smith, and Woodlock, (Woodlock was one, I
believe, who came at the time of the Lannens.) Eventually all of this land became Lannen
property.

JS: So what all were the Lannens doing for a living? What did this operation consist of?

HM: Mostly they had started a store and the post office that they had moved from its site on the
old Mullan Trail to Bearmouth, and the Lannen store. And people from all over the country came
to get their mail. There was a mail route into Garnet, and the mail was put on the train of course.
JS: What kind of store was this?

HM: Grocery store. It had everything, everything in the line of groceries, bulk dried fruit, prunes and all kinds of patent medicine, liniments and men's shoes and blue denim overalls and pants which sold for $2.50 to $4 or $5.

JS: And did you say the post office was in the store?

HM: Yes.

JS: Now who ran that? Was it any of the Lannens who ran it?

HM: Yes, the Lannens ran it, Kate was Postmistress.

JS: Was she really! So she must have spent a good deal of her day in the store?

HM: Yes, between the store and the house. And of course there was a cook in the house.

JS: Still a Chinese cook?

HM: I think so, but later on they had a Norwegian lady. Then later on I took over.

JS: Ok, so it sounds like Kate's day was pretty busy. What would Chris be doing during the day? And what about the rest of the operation. What about all the land, the cattle?

HM: They had hired help, cowboys and the children. They had cattle, horses, they had to raise hay to feed the cattle. The field where they used to raise a major part of their hay is now old tailings where the dredge cut through in the 1930's.

JS: Did they have angus in those days?

HM: No, I think the angus came in later. They had whiteface - herefords.

JS: Was Chris much of a cowboy?

HM: Not particularly. When I came on the scene they were getting up in years. I think they must have been in their mid-forties, probably.

JS: Now does this mean, Hazel, that the saw mill is out of their hands or closed or something?

HM: The saw mill was all previous to the time I came in: the saw mill was all ancient history.

JS: Obviously that ferry service wasn't needed once they put in bridges?

HM: Oh, no. They put in the bridge. I don't know when they did that either, but as far as I can remember it was... well the camp where the construction of the railroad was on the north side of...
the river: I imagine they probably put in a very substantial bridge to get back and forth from their operations. That probably was the first real, you know, workable bridge.

JS: What about WWI. It almost seems like people out there might not even be aware that a war was going on. (Of course I'm saying this facetiously.) But good night, this was the real frontier! Was there a sense of a war effort?

HM: Oh, yes very much so. Bonds were being sold and all the young fellows around here went to the war; the Weavers and the...

JS: Really? Was the gold and the ore... ?

HM: Still coming out of Garnet at that time. About that time Davy came on the scene, started the store at Garnet.

JS: Is this a last name, Davy?

HM: F.A. Davy, Old Frank Davy. Frank Davy was an Englishman who had come to Montana via India, and worked at the old original Missoula Mercantile, he and his girlfriend, who was killed in the elevator in the store. So he left Missoula and went up and bought this property at Garnet, bought out an old store in Drummond that had burned. He brought out all the fire stuff. He had that at the time of his death. Later on, in the 40's, 1940's he still had some of this old shoes and old trimmings and buttons and lace from the old fire sale of Drummond which took place 50 years before probably--25 years anyway.

JS: It sounds like we're really at the point where we should start talking about you then. Is that ok?

HM: I guess so.

JS: We may be getting close to the end of side one but we'll start and of course flip it over. Here, I think we really need to be leisurely and detailed, so don't assume that your listener here knows anything about where you were even born, let alone how you came out to Montana. So why don't you just start from the very beginning.

HM: I was born in Missoula.

JS: You were born in Missoula!

HM: My father came from the Midwest and my mother is from Dakota, I think. Not having ever known her, I don't know the details. My father always had a lot of horses, he loved horses. He worked for the mines in Butte, giving out braces for the stopes they called them, ties or whatever they were. And we were living at (?). There were nine of us.

JS: What year are we talking about?
HM: 1913.

JS: That's when you were born?

HM: Yes.

JS: Now you say there were nine of you? What do you mean nine?

HM: Nine children, I was the ninth.

JS: You're from a family that large?

HM: Yes.

JS: I thought you just had one brother?

HM: I just had one brother that was raised with me.

JS: Ok, well. Ok. go ahead.

HM: These other people are all over. We lived there for a couple years, I guess.

JS: At Bearmouth?

HM: Yes. Then my mother died and...

JS: How old were you when she died?

HM: Two.

JS: What did she die of?

HM: Childbirth, I guess. I don't know really, I don't know what she died of. And Mrs. Lannen at that time already had married Chris, and her mother was with her from Kansas.

JS: So this is Mrs. Stuart?

HM: Yes. She wanted the Lannens to take the two youngest children. We were left there by my father, who was supposed to make arrangements. His mother from back East was coming to get us to take us back to his people and she died in the meantime.

JS: Ok, now let me get some of the details here. So there are nine children in your family, you and -- what's the name of your brother?

HM: Ralph.
JS: Ralph. Ok, you were the two...Kate Lannen's mother, Katherine suggestion that Kate and Chris youngest?

HM: That's right.

JS: Meanwhile your paternal grandmother was going to come out from the East and get you?

HM: That's right.

JS: And what do you mean by East?

HM: When I mean East, I really mean the Midwest. It was Iowa.

JS: And you say in the meantime this grandmother died, before she came out. Ok, well go on with the story.

HM: By that time the Lannens weren't sure that they wanted to take two youngsters. They were in their 40s. And I guess the suggestion was made that they call back my dad and have him take us away and find another place for us. In the meantime also there was somebody who wanted to adopt us, take us and adopt us.

JS: By us you mean just you and Ralph?

HM: My brother and I, yes Ralph and I, and they hadn't realized that they had become very attached to us.

JS: Chris and Kate?

HM: The whole household--there was Chris's nephew there and Kate's brother, two brothers, and all these people who made up the household decided that we should stay on there, so we did.

JS: Ok, now how much time had elapsed from the time your mom died and you were two years old and the decision was made that you would stay on?

HM: Oh, probably a matter of months.

JS: Oh. So in other words, you are still practically a baby?

HM: That's right. I don't remember. I have a faint remembrance of being left there. And my sister, my older sister, was also there temporarily and the Weavers took her for a little while but she left. She wanted to go to school, and she made her own way from the time she was twelve or thirteen. youngest, and you're saying that Stuart from Kansas, it was her take in you and Ralph, the two

JS: What was the range of children? If you were the youngest at two, then what about the first child--your oldest sibling?
HM: He was about fourteen, I guess, fourteen or fifteen. He was with my dad. They didn't stay very long with him. The others just scattered and went all ways: I had very little contact with them.

JS: How much older is Ralph than you?

HM: Two years.

JS: So he was four and you were two when your mom died. You say a few months passed and then the decision was that you would stay there?

HM: Yes.

JS: And we're talking now about the year 1916 or 15?

HM: 1916 is when we came there.

JS: Oh.

HM: I would have been three that fall.

JS: Ok. Do you know anything about the house that you were born in Bearmouth? If we can just back-up two or three years.

HM: No, I wasn't born in Bearmouth, I was right here in Missoula.

JS: Ok, you said Missoula.

HM: What's now known as the Big Flat. I don't know, I think the old home up there that I saw a few years later is gone now, because that's all built up, but that was where I was born.

JS: Well, let's go back up to 1916 then. You and Ralph are sort of officially taken on in the Lannen household. Obviously at two and four you're too young to be doing much work there, in fact had to be looked after rather than contributing to the effort.

HM: That's right. The lady who did the cooking mostly looked after us. Two Lannens, there's a Lannen girl there, who's the daughter of Ed Lannen, who had gone to Hall and his wife had died and she was there for a couple years before she went away and got married, when we were little. We were looked after by many people.

JS: Ok. What are your earliest recollections at Bearmouth? I mean did you play in the store, did you run around in that big house, where you out in the barns, what do you remember?

HM: We slept in one of the big rooms up way, way, away from everybody and we were scared to death. They were Irish and superstitious and they told us about the goblins and the little people and all those sort of things, and the man who operated the coal dock and serviced the engines, he
said he had a bear in there and if we didn't behave he'd let the bear out. I remember these people going in to Garnet, how glamorous they seemed to me then. One of them, Mitchell, was from the East and he drove, what was then a big white sports car which was never heard of in that time—that was the first one ever heard of. I remember he bought my brother and me a little red wagon. And then the, Doctor Mussigbrod used to go in and out. I remember he wore a big black cape. Between the two of them they operated this mining concern as an avocation or a hobby I suppose.

JS: Was it at this time that mass was still being said in the big white house?

HM: Yes. Mass had been said in the cabin before they moved. They continued it, but instead of the priest coming from the west they came from Deer Lodge, and then eventually from Drummond. Father DeRyckere from Deer Lodge was the primary priest and Ravalli, of course, from the west.

JS: At this point why don't you say something more about your other siblings and your father. I mean was there ever any question. . .

HM: Well, I rather not talk too much about them.

JS: Ok.

HM: My father just kind of went away. He said to other people that he thought it would be better if he wouldn't interfere, so he just kind of forgot about us, I guess.

JS: Did you have any contact with the other seven siblings?

HM: After they grew up. I had one sister who lived with a lady in Hamilton, and she died when she was twelve. And I saw very little of my other older sister. She went out to an uncle who lived in Wenatchee, Washington. And the brothers when they through their own efforts drove cars and they'd come in and see us. It was always kind of disturbing to me because I remember nothing of that. These big boys come in who are supposed to be my brothers. It meant a lot to my brother [Ralph], but very little to me.

End side one

JS: This is side two of tape two. In any case the question I really wanted to ask you here—because it seems that it's important to bring this history right up to date inasmuch as you were the last owner of the original Lannen estate—and that is in 1916 when you and Ralph were taken in by the Lannens and your siblings went elsewhere (and I guess this is what your father wanted and other people did too) was there any kind of formality or legality to this? In those days did the state look after foster parents? What exactly was this relationship?

HM: There was no... my father just left us there that's all and even though there were people who would like to have adopted us, the Lannens by that time wanted us to stay and would have
adopted us except that my brother wanted to keep his own name and his own identity. He was that much older than me and he remembered his mom and dad.

JS: You mean Ralph now?

HM: Yes.

JS: Ok. But you mean even at four years old or was this something a few years later?

HM: Oh, a few years later when they thought they should legalize the situation. So it never was. I never had any legal status there.

JS: Was there any state agency that sort of looked after you or the Lannens to make sure these kids were being cared for?

HM: No. In their way, they didn't have any children of their own, and in their way they were kind to us.

JS: At this point should we just keep moving forward now and you can sort of go on from age two and just move ahead?

HM: Mostly what would be interesting here is the different characters that came in from time to time.

JS: Fine.

HM: Christmas time was the time of having all the old fellows -- gold miners from up the gulch who had no place to go—they came to us for Christmas dinner. Including Davy, who always brought a plum pudding that his sister sent from England. And there's Billy Miller, who was quite deaf and always had to put his hand around his ear so that he could hear. He always came up and went into town and brought back a bottle, and Casey would get sick, but he would always get sick right away as soon as he got home. The bottle didn't last very long. He was mining up in Deep Gulch.

JS: Some of these miners and characters that you're talking about, did they ever accumulate any wealth?

HM: Not that I know of.

JS: Meaning that they didn't find it or they spent it right away?

HM: I think they made a living, that's about all. The more they made the higher they lived.

JS: Did you have much contact with these characters or were they considered to be unsavory types that Kate kept you...?
HM: Oh no, they were very dear friends of the family.

JS: Oh, really.

HM: Most of them. Any help that they needed the Lannens would extend to them. I think that they were... I think they subsisted from the store, the Lannen potato ranch, and all that. The lot of them if they needed help they got it. But there was nothing ever said about it, no sense of being charitable. It was just something you did at that time.

JS: Was Chris Lannen looked upon as... well how was he looked upon? After all, he must have been one of the most important people of Bearmouth and Bearmouth was this center for people coming down from the gold camps. So what was his reputation and Kate's too for that matter?

HM: Well, he was a nice little man, liked to drink and loved to gamble, and there was usually a card game on every night.

JS: Where?

HM: At the dining room, at what they called the hotel.

JS: Real gambling, I mean for money?

HM: Oh, yes, I should say. Chris loved to gamble and he was good at it too. There was a man who used to come in and buy timber for the mines in Butte who was Jewish, Jake Shiffman, and he would always get into a gambling game. And my brother was just a little fellow and he would go from one to the other and look at the hand and learned to be kind of a card shark. And Shiffman finally got mad because he thought he was helping Chris.

JS: What would Kate be doing while these card games were going on?

HM: Probably working over in the post office or making mince meat... we were always busy in the kitchen while these men were gambling. We were always busy cleaning up the kitchen or cooking.

JS: At what age did you start contributing to the operations of the hotel, which sounds like it was a pretty busy place?

HM: Well, I had to stand on my tiptoes to wash clothes on the wash board and turn the cream separator. When it got to the highest turn, I had to stand on my tiptoes to get it all the way over.

JS: Your talking about a little girl of five or six?

HM: Yes. You're always eager to... I always had the sense that I had to justify my existence. My brother milked cows when he was just a little fellow, rode horses.
JS: Now was this just something that was in your head that you had to justify your existence or was there still some sense you...

HM: Yes, It was always plain to me that I didn't really belong to the family, that I was taken in, somebody who needed to be taken in. And I had to justify my being there.

JS: Did Chris and Kate make you feel that way?

HM: Not so much as the members of the families, especially those Lannens who had gotten married and came back. I felt very much out of things until the Lannens got so old they needed me. I gradually had to take over whether I wanted to or not.

JS: Well, why don't you elaborate more on what you did around the hotel and with Kate and with Chris up to the time that well... when did you go to school? Maybe that would be a good point to work toward.

HM: Well, there was a little school there, years before that the Lannens had brought in a teacher for the Lannen children from Butte. They had a little private school of their own. Then when the county took over and established a little school there that's where I started. By the Lannen children I am referring to the four children of Edward Lannen who had taken his ranch operation to Willow Creek, near Hall. He and his wife had four children: Edward, Katherine, Nellie and John. Their mother died before Bridget died; the children were brought to Bearmouth. Later they were sent to Missoula and Spokane to school.

JS: How old were you when you started school?

HM: I was six, I think.

JS: And that was a regular state supported school?

HM: Yes. I think I made it six or seven years, and I had to take state examinations to get out of that school.

JS: Tell me again, what you remember about your life at Bearmouth before you started school? That sounds like a good juncture.

HM: Well I gradually graduated from the person who made beds and emptied chambers and filled the lamp and brought the kindling in and that sort of thing. I graduated to cooking, which was my ambition, and finally they let the cook go and I did the cooking.

JS: Oh, really. Was this the Norwegian cook or were there other cooks since then?

HM: The only cook I remember is the Norwegian lady. This Norwegian cook, whose name was Lena Moe, always insisted that Ralph and I call Mrs. Lannen "Mrs. Nevermom" or Kate. So all my life even while caring for her for the last years of her life, she was always addressed by me as Mrs. Lannen.
JS: Did you ever do any work in the general store or the Post office?

HM: Yes, I got so that I knew where the mail should go and I would get it ready to be put on the trains and I would go over and fastened it onto the apparatus on which we hooked the mail sack so the trains would pick up as they passed through nonstop.

JS: So the trains wouldn't have to stop?

HM: And some of the ones that stopped I'd give it to the baggage man. I was known all the way up and down the railroad as the gal at Bearmouth with all the black curls.[laughter]

JS: Is that the only way that mail came and went, was by rail?

HM: Yes. That's the only way.

JS: Who had the contract for it, the NP or the Milwaukee?

HM: The Northern Pacific.

JS: They did.

HM: And on Sundays everyone came in for their mail of course, and would wait until the trains came in and then we would sort it out and everybody would get their mail on Sunday and then we'd close up.

JS: You mean it only came in once a week?

HM: No, it came in every day, but on Sundays most people got it—their mail—even the people from up and down the gulch and Garnet.

JS: Does this mean that Kate was being paid by the federal government, as postmistress?

HM: No, she wasn't paid. She got an allowance from the cancellation... stamp cancellation... which didn't amount to very much. A third class postmistress was not paid very much, given the percentage on the amount of mail that went in and out.

JS: So you worked your way up to cook and you're also helping with the mail.

HM: And went to school at the same time.

JS: Tell me about Ralph, what was he doing during these years before you went to school?

HM: Well, he was a little fellow before he went to school. He wasn't doing very much, I guess, hauling in the wood. The wood usually would be a half a city block, I guess, from the house and
Ralph at first had a little red wagon that was given to him by Harold Mitchell and then he built more wagons and got bigger and built more wagons and sleds. He had a regular wood train that he dragged the wood from the store to the house, and mostly his work was to get in the wood.

JS: Now this was wood for the heat stove and the cook stove?

HM: Right, for the cooking.

JS: And then also there must have been, of course, a big heat stove in the store as well.

HM: Yes.

JS: So people heated with wood rather than with coal?

HM: Yes, we never used coal. Mostly the wood that I remember was all rail fences that were built when the place was first taken up. And those beautiful old rail fences were all used up for wood.

JS: Who cut all this wood up into stove lengths?

HM: As I remember the hired man use to cut it up and then my brother became quite ingenious and took apart an automobile, it was an old Chalmers, I don't know what date it was, but he took the engine out and made a wood saw connected to the engine, so the wood was sawed that way afterwards.

JS: When you started school at about six, had Ralph already been in school?

HM: Yes, he went in a year before I did, because he was older.

JS: Well why don't you tell me as much as you want to about that school. Where was it? What about the teachers?

HM: It was on the hill right up above... right south of where the old bridge used to be.

JS: Ok.

HM: You could look up at the old tailings where the Chinese did the mining. We had various and sundry teachers. Some of them were good and some of them were not so good.

JS: Was it one or two room or many rooms?

HM: It was a one room with a great big potbellied stove that we all sat around on cold days, because the place was so cold that snow drifted in. I liked school; it wasn't hard for me. I know I skipped a grade or two.

JS: When you went in at six years old, first grade I guess, how many kids were in the school?
HM: Oh, depending on the railroads, sometimes there would be more people working on the railroad and more crews. And people were moving in and out of the gulch. Sometimes there would be three or four and it got up as high as twenty or thirty at times.

JS: Now was this all the way through high school or just through eighth grade?

HM: No, just through eighth grade.

JS: Where would high school kids go, if they went anywhere?

HM: Well there was a two year high school in Drummond, but we never... There was never any question of us going there. My brother didn't get to go to high school at all and I put up such a fuss, I guess, and people were making remarks about my not going to school and working there, I guess. And after I was out of school for about a year and a half, they sent me in to Sacred Heart Academy here in Missoula.

JS: Well, back to Bearmouth. What was the name of that school? What did they call it?

HM: Bearmouth School.

JS: What would be a typical day? Would you have chores to do before you went to school?

HM: Oh, yes, I should say. Come home and help at noon and help wait on the tables.

JS: How about in the morning? Start in the morning, you get up.

HM: At breakfast, usually, when I was old enough to...

JS: You mean you ate breakfast with the house guests?

HM: I would get breakfast for the hired man and crew. That's when I was older, old enough to do that. Come home in the afternoons and do the chores around the house, like make the beds and all that sort of thing.

JS: What about in the evening? What about...

HM: Help with dinner, wash the dishes, feed the dogs, take care of the milk. They always had five or six cows and a great big bucket of milk would have to be strained and put out so the cream would rise on it and then later put it through the cream separator. Then gather the cream together and make butter.

JS: Do you remember doing homework in the big white house?

HM: It doesn't seem like I ever did very much homework. I guess I did, I did an awful lot of reading. I liked to read. I suppose my history and geography I must have done homework.
JS: Now, I suppose we're talking somewhere around the year 1920 or so, does that sound about right?

HM: Yes.

JS: I mean I realize we're talking about many years, but what I wanted to ask is, was that white house the same shape, (by shape I mean number of rooms, configuration and all that) as say it was in the 60's [1960s] that I knew it with the six rooms downstairs and the eight smaller bedrooms upstairs, four on one side?

HM: Well, it was built originally with just the two bedrooms downstairs and four bedrooms upstairs, in kind of a square, with a colonial front and the double doors and then the veranda that came out, the upstairs door leading out to a veranda. Then when people started coming in to Garnet they realized that there had to be more space for them. They built on four small bedrooms upstairs (and the kitchen up to that time was just a lean-to) and they built a dining room, followed by a regular kitchen, under these four bedrooms.

JS: So around the time you were in grade school had this expansion already taken place?

HM: Oh, yes. Before I came there.

JS: Ok, where did you sleep?

HM: I slept in the northeast bedroom, the furthest from the stove.

JS: Upstairs?

HM: Yes.

JS: Ok. That means you would have been by the railroad tracks?

HM: Yes. Milwaukee Railroad couldn't have been more than fifty feet from the door. I don't know if they ever moved the house back or not. The house must have been there permanently but all the other buildings were out in front. There were barns and the corrals and all that that had to be moved, and that's why they were put up on the hill.

JS: Right. To get out of the way of the Milwaukee Road?

HM: Yes.

JS: So what was it like in the winter time? Did you have just that one stove down in the parlor?

HM: Just that one stove.

JS: And then the cook stove.
HM: The only time that they built a fire in that stove in the parlor was when somebody got sick, or when mass was celebrated once a month which was on the Saturday before the first Sunday. Oh, there's a chimney in that bedroom downstairs too. We had a little stove that we would put in there, keep the fire going when a person fighting pneumonia or whatever it was.

JS: So how did you stay warm upstairs?

HM: Didn't stay warm. There's no such thing as staying warm except being piled under all the things you could get like your feather bed and the old buffalo skin robe. I remember times there would be weeks when I never did get warm, my feet, my hands never did get warm. Wake up in the morning with frost along the quilts, and frost or snow on the window sill during spells of severe cold.

JS: And you would race downstairs to get by the wood cook stove?

HM: We'd dress, we would dress there, we never went out of the room or downstairs without being fully dressed.

JS: Why, was that protocol in the house?

HM: That was the rules. And as I was a child, the person who did the cooking, I suppose some of the men built the fires, they [the fires] were allowed to go out at night and in the morning the tea kettles and everything would be frozen. Later on, once I got older, I remember I had to go down and build the fire. And I used to sneak the dogs in because they would be so cold. This was during the frequent blizzards and cold spells.

JS: Did Ralph sleep upstairs too?

HM: Yes. I think he used to build the fire before I had to. He finally got beyond that, so it was my job.

JS: Well let's see. Do you remember the year that you graduated from the Bearmouth School? You said you skipped a year or so.

HM: Let's see it was about 1927, I guess.

JS: Ok, 1927, you graduated. Does that mean that Ralph graduated a year before you?

HM: Yes.

JS: Why don't we talk about him. What did he do when he graduated from Bearmouth School?

HM: He just was real tickled to death to do the work on a ranch. He loved taking care of the cattle, and he was kind of a person who kept the place going.
JS: Was he much more of a ranch person than Chris at this point?

HM: Oh yes, I should say. Chris never bothered with things like that.

JS: So your brother took care of the cattle and the horses?

HM: Yes, I should say, managed the branding and... There was a John Lannen there, the son of this aunt, but he was never very well. He did all he could but he wasn't a strong person.

JS: So in 1927, you graduated. Why don't you tell me about the state of affairs with the Lannens? I mean, was this place prospering?

HM: Well, they weren't people who took advantage of the potentials of the place. They never developed any of the land that could have been developed. They raised some wheat. They used to raise winter wheat which they had quite a few good crops of that. They raised hay for the cattle, but they never developed much. They never would let Ralph do anything like that. He could see the potentials, but they never would let him do anything other than their own way.

JS: I still want to dwell on this year, 1927, 'cause I'm looking for years that we could sort of use as mileposts to write things around, so let's stick with 1927. Okay, you've sort of explained the financial or the business end of it. You graduated and Ralph was still doing the ranch work. Who made up the Lannen household at this point when you graduated? Obviously you were there, Ralph was there, Chris, and Kate — now were there still a lot of other...

HM: There was John Stuart, who was Mrs. Lannen's brother.

JS: Okay, by Mrs. Lannen, you mean...

HM: Kate.

JS: Okay, Kate.

HM: Kate Stuart.

JS: Her brother?

HM: Yes. There were two brothers there. Both of them had taken up homesteads. But they stayed there. While their homesteads were proven up on, they stayed within the house at Bearmouth. And then John Lannen, who was the nephew, was staying there at times. But they did build their own cabins on their homesteads.

JS: How does John Lannen—how does he figure here?

HM: He was the oldest son of Ed Lannen. Ed and his father moved to their ranch on Willow Creek near Hall and John stayed with Chris and Kate at Bearmouth.
JS: Now, were all of these people then in the house?

HM: Uh, huh.

JS: So, it's Chris and Kate, you and Ralph, the two Stuart brothers.

HM: And John Lannen.

JS: And John. Well, did this leave any room to take in people?

HM: Yes. Usually there was a signal maintainer and a telegrapher. Usually there were two or three people going in and out who needed a place to stay. Crews used to come out from Missoula to repair the coal dock or the water tank or something like that. They'd come in and want meals for five or six people and we would have to prepare that.

JS: So, even without the guests, you had a lot to do in the kitchen.

HM: I had always a lot of cooking to do, regardless of the guests. A lot of dishes to wash, and a lot of water to carry.

JS: How old were you in 1927, when you graduated from Bearmouth School?

HM: I was about thirteen, I guess, twelve or thirteen.

JS: And was that the equivalent education of an eighth grade?

HM: Yes.

JS: Well, go on from there. Did you think that that was going to be the end of your education or who encouraged you to.. ?

HM: Well, I worried about it all the time. And John, who had gone to Gonzaga and had some education...

JS: This is John the nephew?

HM: ...he encouraged me to go on. He taught me how to read before I ever went to school, got me interested in books, and that sort of thing. I was very unhappy because I wasn't going to school. Ralph seemed to accept it. He would rather do the ranching than be tied down in school, and later on regretted it because he would have been a very excellent athlete, I think.

JS: Now, actually—something I wanted to ask you--while you were still in school, did Kate and Chris resent your going to school?
HM: They saw no need of it. I was needed there. That's the purpose for which I existed was to help them, you see. That was just kind of a ridiculous idea that they should send me away to school. They needed me there.

JS: At the moment I'm talking about the Bearmouth School. Was there ever any question about your not going?

HM: No.

JS: Because it was the law?

HM: We were successful in school. It was just understood that we should go to school. We were bright students.

JS: I mean, that was okay with Chris and Kate that you go to the grade school?

HM: Yes, but they'd take Ralph out if they had to go do something on the ranch. They'd take him out of school.

JS: Well, okay, let's go back to 1927, and then forward. How was the decision made that you were going to go on to high school? How did all of this come to be?

HM: Well, I don't know, really, except that there was a little buzzing around that I should be in school. But I had to wait until they had a wheat harvest that year. I had to wait until it was about the first of October, almost the end of the first quarter of school, before I got to go when I did go that first year. And that was quite an adjustment to make, being out of school for a year, and then starting late. I took French and algebra and all of those things [in which a] foundation is important.

JS: So you stayed out one full year?

HM: Yes.

JS: And did what?

HM: Raised chickens (laughter).

JS: Raised chickens? Was this something new at the...?

HM: No, no, we had always had chickens, but I had a whole lot of old hens that I had put eggs under them and hatched out all these little chickens. I had so many of them, and then some kind of a disease got into them and they started dying. I was afraid they'd blame me for it, so I'd take the little carcasses and bury them. Finally I had to own up to the fact that my chickens were all dying. They understood, though.

JS: Who influenced the Lannens to send you to high school?
HM: Well, I think there was a man there who worked on a highway and he roomed and boarded there. I think he told her that the feeling in the area was that I was being kept home to work, and I should be in school. And I think maybe that she realized that she had. But I don't know why Ralph—the priest wanted her to send Ralph to Carroll College [at that time Mount St. Charles College] — or Carroll [Mount St. Charles] High School.

JS: In Helena?

HM: In Helena, and Mrs. Lannen wouldn’t do it.

End of tape