The following index lists the major topics in the audio recording and the approximate point when they occur in the recording according to an analog cassette recorder’s tape counter. This tape counter index (TCI) has not been edited for accuracy by Archives and Special Collections.
Ina Tasher (IT) asks J.B. Armstrong (JBA) to describe the era of sheep ranching and farming which closed the cattle ranching era. He says that most of the sheep ranchers in the Little Missouri River and Powder River area came from California, Oregon and Nevada. They caused the small cattle rancher problems. Mentions the Johnson County War fighting over range. Open range until 1908. Sheep man would try to move too close to the cow man range. Many men were killed. He talks about the old-time freighter which a team of horses would haul wool in from the shearing pens and haul supplies back out to the sheep men. He did that for a number of seasons. Freighting went between the railroad and the ranches. He mentions the names of some of the main sheep men in the area.

Continues listing names of sheep men. IT asks why the cattlemen resented and resisted the sheep men so much. JBA says the land was opened up by the government in 1906. Before that, ranchers fenced in large tracks of range for winter pasture. Government forced them to tear down those fences. Then the sheep came in and grazed the grass down in the winter pastures. This caused hard feelings and bitter fights between the two groups. He mentions Roosevelt and the Taylor Grazing Act which calmed things down. No longer any free range.

JBA begins talking about the freighting business. He mentions some names of the freighters. He was working for a store in Camp Crook. This was in 1908. He talks about a freight trip to Bowman from Camp Crook. Talks about crossing rivers with the freight wagons.

Need to camp every night to give the horses plenty of time to graze and make repairs on the equipment. He mentions the problem of people fencing off waterholes and driving the long line freighters out of business. He describes how the team worked and how important the lead horse was. He used his trail cooking experience when he freighted. Talks about the food they ate. "Beans in the hole".

It took a couple of hours to get out of camp in the morning and they drove about ten miles a day. IT asks him some more about the food, especially pie. JBA says the pie went with the cow wagons, but not with the freighters. He talks more about the food. He says the
freighters did their own cooking. Antelope for meat. Talks about the problem of getting good water. "Water dogs."

250-299
Talks about carrying whiskey for a saloon in Camp Crook. Carried steel for a bridge at Capitol(sp) in 1912. IT asks about the routes the freighters followed. He says that oxen weren't used hardly at all. Talks about one freighter who used oxen. Ox teams were also used to haul saw logs in the hills. Lots of oxen in the Black Hills around the mines.

300-349
IT asks if there were buffalo on the range when JBA arrived in Montana. He says the last buffalo was killed in the area in 1882. The last inkling of any buffalo that he knew about was in 1906. He adds to the information about wheat hauling. Talks about working with his brother and brother-in-law.

350-399
JBA talks about shearing sheep. Talks about hitting a "soap hole" in the Table Mountain area.

400-449
Continues with the story. "Nigger wool sod."

450-499
Talks about the summer of 1907 when he was working for the Mill Iron Ranch. Went to Rapid City to receive some Texas cattle. He was a new hand with the outfit. Talks about the horse he had to ride.

500-549
Continues with the story about the horse. He tells about a rider's contest in Camp Crook in 1906. Another story about a particular horse. Pruny Bill rides him.

550-599
Continues the story of Pruny Bill and the horse. More stories about the rider's contest.

600-649
Talks about "thumbing" the horse. IT asks if there was special bronc busters for the horses or did each man break his own horse. JBA said there were bronc busters. He talks about one particular one from Canada. Describes the work of a bronc buster.

650-699
Continues talking about breaking the horses. The bronc buster would name the horse. He talks about Tipperary and Tip-Top(sp), two world famous bucking horses.

700-731
Continues talking about the bucking horses. A bucking horse contest in Camp Crook.

732
END OF SIDE A

SIDE B
000-049
Continues talking about the bronc busting contest in Camp Crook. Describes the physical features of
Tipperary and how he bucked. No one ever successfully rode the horse.

050-099 Talks about Tip-top. JBA now begins talking about the making of a cowboy in the early days. First record of cowboys was in Texas, driving wild cattle out of the brush in Texas. Describes the life of the early cowboy. Cowboy stood on his own two feet and it was a hard life.

100-149 Always carried a gun for his protection. In JBA's time in the 1890's and 1900's, the cowboy had a better life. He describes that life. Describes the clothes they wore. Pants. Boots. Gloves. Hats. Spurs.

150-199 Continues talking about spurs. Blacksmiths would make spurs and bridle-bits. Company furnished the cowboys with their ropes. Cowboys' things rode on a rack on the back of the bed wagon. Very few cowboys wore pistols after 1900. Chaps. IT asks about the "red light districts." JBA said the cowboys were mostly gentlemen, especially around the ladies. No higher lady in the world than a good ranch wife and the daughters. The cowboys were always well behaved around these women. But when they got to town and drinking, they would go to the red light districts.

200-249 He tells the story about the ranch wife picking out a quarter of beef. Speaking ill of a lady was not allowed. There were laws around the camp and the cook was the judge, the jury, the doctor and the nurse. There was no rough stuff in the cook tent. A cow camp was a clean place and it was moved often.

250-289 Chaps were used to punish cowboys when they broke the rules of the camp. He tells a story about this. He tells a story about a cowboy bringing another's girlfriend out to the camp and her getting bucked off the horse into some cactus. Begins a story about Pruny Bill.

290 END OF SIDE B
Continues to tell the story about Pruny Bill getting drunk. He talks about the cowboy's equipment. Saddles. Swell-fork versus straight-fork saddles. Bridles. "Coffee coolers." Secret of a good cowpuncher was the first cowboy on his horse ready to leave camp. Cowboy kept his spurs on his boots at all times. Cross-L spurs. Quirts.

Talks about the cowboys standing guard at night. Two hour guards. Steers escaping from the herds. Tells about one of the steers.

JBA talks about one particular night of riding guard and encountering a rattlesnake. He says the rattlesnakes never got into their beds like the stories tell, but they did have problems with lizards getting into their beds in Texas. Talks about some of the animals and birds encountered on the prairies. IT asks about the ranging of the cattle. He says the range cattle never had any shelter or feed. They were rounded up in the spring to brand the calves and then again in the fall to ship the beef.

The cattle could range where they pleased. He talks about the size of some of the big outfits. Cattle took care of themselves. When the little ranches started fencing in land, they began to put up hay in order to winter feed the cattle. Talks about the hard winters of 1912-13, 1917-18, 1919-20.

Continues talking about the winter of 1919-20. Had to deal with a herd of sheep during a blizzard. Had to keep walking through the herd of sheep so they didn't get snowed under. Snow drifts were fifteen feet deep in Ekalaka.

JBA begins to describe the Table Mountain country where the JH horses ran. Table Mountain country was about 40 miles away from Joe Herman's ranch. They went to the country to round up the wild horses. He talks about one trip to round up the horses. Had to cross the Little Missouri River with the herd of wild horses.

Continues with the story about rounding up the wild horses. When they got back to the ranch with the herd, they'd be corralled overnight. The next day the herd would be separated. Branding. And then they were let go. They'd head back to their country. He talks about
the fall of 1906 when he was working for the JH outfit. JBA's job was trail cook, driving the mess wagon and standing guard. Talks about a trip to Belle Fouche driving a herd of cattle.

Continues telling the story about the cattle drive to Belle Fouche. Market prices were down by the time they reached Belle Fouche and Joe Herman rented a pasture there to hold them over for ten days. After the ten days, the market prices rose and the cattle were sold for five cents a pound. Sometimes the cattle were taken to be shipped but the price was bad and they were driven back to the ranch.

Continues the story about being in Belle Fouche on this particular cattle drive. JBA says he and his family established a ranch in the Long Pine Hills in 1908.

Bought the Bob Ridgeway ranch. JBA later built a home on the Plum Creek. He filed a claim on the land in 1909. The land was about seven miles from Camp Crook. That winter he met his future wife in the Long Pine Hills. Talks about the dances they attended and other home entertainments. In order to build a house, he had to get the materials from the hills. He built a log house.

Talks about the specifics of the house. He had new buggy, a good team and a set of harness; considered to be a ladies' man. Talks about setting a date for his marriage and getting the wedding license. Tells about the wedding.

Talks about moving into the new house with his wife. Lived in the house for seven years. His two oldest children were born in that house; Ina May in 1911 and Jimmy in 1915. He changes the subject to talking about hauling grain from Ekalaka to Baker, Montana. Talks about the condition of the roads they drove the trucks on.

Continues with the story about the condition of the roads. JBA talks about the barber in Ekalaka. Tells a story about the barber.

Continues the story about a man he met who was a wolfer. JBA talks about having a Model T Ford when he was ranching on Box Elder Creek.

Talks about driving the Model T to Camp Crook and having an accident along the way. Making repairs on the car.

END OF SIDE A
Continues to tell the story about repairing the Model T. He mentions that Camp Crook is now a ghost town. He tells a story about a search party for a little girl lost in the area.

The girl was lost in the badlands area. The girl was dead when they found her. He tells a story about a man who worked with JBA on the truck line. The man had been a truck driver in New York City. He liked to play poker.

Continues talking about the poker player/truck driver. While he was riding the freights, he shot a man who tried to rob him. Ended up spending four years in jail. JBA talks about using the truck for snowplowing in 1923 or 1924.

Continues talking about the snowplow. He and the blacksmith built one. Opened the road between Baker and Ekalaka. First snowplow to hit Carter County. JBA talks about the time he had three trucks he took to the Black Hills to work on a gravel job.

On the way out of Carter County, he took loads of wool to Belle Fouche. Talks about the trip to the Black Hills. He took his family with him. He tells about going down a steep hill in the Black Hills and losing control of the truck.

Continues with the out of control truck story.

END OF SIDE B