Jim Scott: This is tape number seven. The date is February 6, 1990 and this is side A and Hazel is going to begin shortly after her graduation in 1932 and continue chronologically through the thirties.

Hazel Marsh: Well, one of the important things that was happening during the thirties was a decreased activity in Garnet. There was hardly any real mining, but they were hauling out dumps that had been mined when the big activity was there in the 1900's and before and after. But because of the rise in gold price, they were able to make a profit. This, of course, was during the Depression. They were able to make a living out of hauling out the material that was tossed aside in the dumps.

JS: Let me ask you this. Was there a time when Garnet really pretty much shut down from the boom days until now, the time you're talking about or was there always a little bit of activity?

HM: There was always just a little bit of activity there, not much. Davies' store was there until he died, and there were always people going in and out, somebody interested in prospecting. Mrs. Lannen's brother, John Stuart, was always around up there, Deep Gulch. He lived in the old Kelly Saloon for years. That's all he did during his whole lifetime was explore, take up new claims and dig. He must have gone miles in the hills up there, digging tunnels, wore himself all out. I think he must have had some kind of emphysema or something of the lungs. When I took care of him, it seemed apparent.
JS: Well, why don't you explain, before you turn directly to Bearmouth, exactly what was going on up at Garnet with this renewed interest, particularly compared to the primitive methods of mining at the turn of the century.

HM: Well, I think there were some just went up there and loaded up dump material without any leases or anything formal because nobody was paying much attention to it.

JS: What do you mean by dump material?

HM: Well, the material that was brought out of the old shafts and the old mines and it didn't seem like it was worth hauling out, because that was expensive business, of course. They now trucked it out, and some of it they trucked directly to the smelter. I guess the smelter was in Anaconda or Butte. I don't know just where it did go at that time.

JS: Trucking it that far, though.

HM: And sometimes it was loaded on the docks, the ore docks at Bearmouth, and then loaded onto flat cars here.

JS: Do you know where it would go, then?

HM: I don't know. I think it was the smelter at Butte—Rocker, isn't it?

JS: Yes, right, Rocker.

HM: I'm not so sure about that. It's kind of hazy. I never had any occasion to think about it. Of course, Anaconda was a big smelter. I don't know if it went there or not.

JS: So, was there a—sort of a second boom in Garnet?
HM: Yes, there was a second boom. People moved in there and they had a school and a couple of saloons. It was a revival of the whiskey business. About six miles up the gulch there was a little shack built up and that was also a tavern. It always goes with that activity it seems.

JS: Camp followers.

HM: And all these newcomers came into the post office, of course, at Bearmouth for their mail. That's why I knew what was going on.

JS: So these trucks that were taking out the old dumps, they were rumbling down that China Grade and that narrow road?

HM: That's right.

JS: Geez!

HM: I don't think there were any serious accidents.

JS: Were people actually doing real, I mean, new mining that was legitimate or was it just sort of scavenging entirely?

HM: No, there was mining activity. Of course, The Nancy Hanks, of which you've heard a lot, was a man from New York who was a typical promoter who set up business in the Florence Hotel with a secretary and all the finery. He sold stock on the Nancy Hanks. I was in Seattle during that time, when a friend of mine told me that she had bought stock for the mine in Garnet. Of course, it didn't amount to anything. It just took people's money.

JS: So, there were a lot of scams and..?

HM: Several different mining companies came into Bear Gulch and finally it was assembled into one large company. They brought in quite a bit of sluicing equipment.
JS: Do you remember what gold was selling for an ounce at the turn of the century and what it was selling for during the Depression, you know, during the thirties that you're talking about now?

HM: Well, as I remember—people dispute me — as I remember it went from eighteen dollars an ounce, which it had been during the earlier days, up to thirty-five. At thirty-five dollars they could still make a living hauling out the discarded material.

JS: It stayed at thirty-five or thirty-six for a long time didn't it?

HM: Yes, it did. Then went up to forty-five, I think. Then it just kept going up as the years went by.

JS: Well, what did all of this mean for Bearmouth? Let's go back to you. You got out of high school and you went back to Bearmouth in 1932. The depression was already going for three years about then. So, what did this mean to you?

HM: It didn't really mean too much except for the people coming in to get their mail at the post office because it wasn't a situation where they were coming in and out on trains. They had their trucks and their cars, and the only reason that they came to Bearmouth was, of course, shipping out the ore. Then they'd get their mail at the post office which the Lannens were in at that time and which I did quite a bit of work there.

JS: Was there an increased business just in merchandise that moved in the general store? I mean, if they came to get their mail, would they be buying some of—

HM: Yes, groceries. Mostly canned goods and salt and that sort of things.

JS: So, Lannens must have benefited then by this renaissance in gold mining.
HM: Yes, I imagine they did to a certain extent. Not a great deal though.

JS: Were people boarding at the hotel as a result of coming down to dump this ore into the railroad.

HM: No, they could always go into Drummond or someplace that had much more to offer.

JS: I suppose since there was then truck or automobile, they could just turn right around and go right back home.

HM: Go where they came from.

JS: Yes. Well, let's see, you must have been seventeen or eighteen in 1932, when you graduated from high school.

HM: I was about eighteen.

JS: So, now that we have kind of a backdrop for at least the early to mid-thirties why don't you tell me some more about yourself? What were you doing? You're still a fairly young girl.

HM: Well, I just stayed there and helped with the ranch, helped and worked in the post office, and helped get meals for the people who worked on the ranch. My brother was there at that time.

JS: Still there.

HM: That was before he left. The biggest event right at that time, as far as the ranch is concerned, was the purchase of the Cottonwood stock farm which is the ranch at Harvey Creek.

JS: Well, you mean up to this point the Lannens did not own that far west?
HM: Years back when I was a youngster before the things that I remember, I heard people tell about people who operated mining in Bear Gulch. I can't remember the names right now, but one of the men who was kind of the manager was killed in some operation in Bear Gulch. The company for whom he worked built a beautiful home on Harvey Creek for his wife as recompense for the situation. Then there was a man by the name of George Forsyth who operated the Gregson Hot Springs, which was the only resort of that time, and he used it as kind of summer place or fun place—retreat. And at different times he'd get--his car would get mired down and he would have to stay with the Lannens for a while until they got straightened out. And this beautiful tea set, hand painted tea set that I have, was a present from him to Mrs. Lannen for helping him in these difficulties.

JS: Oh, really. Now, where exactly was his place.

HM: Remember there was a small farm house right out before you went into the road that turned off to the barns?

JS: Yes.

HM: That was his house. That was before my time.

JS: What was his name?

HM: George Forsyth, a very well-known person in the Butte area.

JS: What did you call it, the Cottonwood Ranch?

HM: Then later on a man by the name of Henry Thayer came in and borrowed a lot of money from the Vermont Loan Company in Spokane and he built up very imposing sheep sheds and cattle sheds and spent a lot of money and finally went broke. [He] really didn't develop it. It was more of a facade than anything. The Vermont Loan Company finally foreclosed on him. Between the time of the foreclosure and the time that Lannens bought it, of course, the
Depression was deepening. Several different people rented it and lived there and contributed to its crumbling down: they didn't do much repair work and didn't put up much hay. Morris Weaver was one of the people who rented it. Finally, it diminished gradually through the years—I guess that's the word you would use. The Vermont Loan was worried about their money and wanted to get out of it. They put it up for sale. Lannens bought it for just a fraction of what it was [worth] I think, like $10,000.

JS: Do you remember the date on that?

HM: Oh, it must have been about 1933.

JS: And would you say $10,000?

HM: Yes.

JS: About how much ground did that cover?

HM: I don't know exactly but I have the old abstract here. I could figure it out.

JS: And, once again, was that called the Cottonwood Ranch or what was it?

HM: Thayer named it the Cottonwood Stock Farm.

JS: Oh, Cottonwood Stock Farm, okay.

HM: It was beautiful. All these big cottonwoods lined all the irrigation ditches.

JS: What does that mean? In 1933, when the rest of the country was plunged into depression, why is it that Lannens could make a $10,000 purchase? What was going on that made them so prosperous?
HM: That just about cleaned them out. It was their lifetime savings.

JS: But this means that even since October, 1929, they were still making money.

HM: Well, we had a little put away, but they had put a lot of money in land and then in Hall Ed Lannen had mortgaged his land heavily and Mrs. Lannen, Kate Lannen, kept picking up his debts. Finally, when they all died they didn't see any chance of ever paying her back, so Lannens heiress deeded the property over to Chris and Mrs. [Kate] Lannen.

JS: Ed Lannens property was deeded over to Kate and Chris?

HM: Yes.

JS: Well, buying that Cottonwood Stock Farm, it sounds to me like either Kate or Chris must have been pretty assertive and pretty high powered business people. Who took the risks and who had the brains behind these transactions?

HM: Well, it was mostly Mrs. Lannen and, of course, Ralph was all for it. He could see a future there. They really didn't do anything much with it. They were too old and too retired—too old in their thinking. Ralph wanted to develop it and they wouldn't let him do anything. That's one of the reasons he left finally.

JS: But if they were starting to slow down a little bit and they were probably looking toward retirement, why in the world would they be in an expansionist mood?

HM: That was a big question. I don't know. It was an investment which proved to be a good one.

JS: Did they buy more cattle, then, to put on that extra land?

HM: Yes. Expanded their herd. Instead of taking their cattle over to winter at Hall (the Ed Lannen place) they were able to winter them themselves.
JS: Is this the largest expansion of the Lannen holding at this point or was more picked up?

HM: No, I don't think there was any picked up after that.

JS: So, we can say that around 1933 when the Cottonwood Stock Farm was picked up and then also.

HM: I know that John Lannen, their nephew, had borrowed quite a bit of money from them, and I think they took over his little homestead in payment.

JS: I don't want to get ahead of the story here, but as long as you brought it up... whatever became of Ed Lannen’s land that was deeded over to Chris and Kate?

HM: Oh, it finally came to me, and I sold a lot of it in order to pay some inheritance tax on the Bearmouth place. When Lannens passed away there were ten years of hospital expense—doctors and nurses. When they passed away there was no cash: there was lots of unencumbered land but no cash, so I was hit with about a $40,000 inheritance tax. I sold some land and I borrowed from the same Vermont Loan Company. I borrowed money to pay off those taxes.

JS: Well, can we go back to your own life now that we have a little overview of what's going on?

HM: The other thing of great importance that happened during that time, probably in 1935, they finally, after years of refusing to let any dredging company go on the land, this representative of the Star Pointer (they called themselves the Star Pointer Exploration Company from California,) and this Mr. Laylander, (I never did quite know what he had that all the others didn't have) he was able to talk Mrs. Lannen into giving him a...Well, now, let me go back. Just a few years before that they had given the Eban Company that had a dredge operation in California permission to test it and it didn't test out to their satisfaction. The company itself was in trouble. It was partially dissolving or something like that. That had a lot of influence on their not picking up the contract. Later this Laylander from the Star Pointer Company came in and Mrs. Lannen
signed up with them, and they tested and decided that it was worthy of putting a dredge on, so they went ahead.

JS: Is this for gold?

HM: Yes. And that's all that deep tailings pile that mars the beauty of the country.

JS: But where?

HM: Right at the mouth of Bear Gulch.

JS: Oh, okay, you mean on the other side of the river [and] on the other side of the road?

HM: On the other side of the river, yes, on the way to Garnet.

JS: Oh, really, so that has been done fairly recently then?

HM: Yes, I think it started about 1938 and operated until it closed down during the war. They wouldn't allow operations like that to go on during World War II. Besides that they were to the point in the Gulch that they had dredged out all the mouth of the gulch and they had come to the point where it had been worked out pretty much underground by the Chinese. It was all drifted underneath. There was all these old stakes from the old underground mining operations. So, I guess it was closing down and the cessation of any values came almost simultaneously.

JS: So, Star Pointer didn't make anything on this?

HM: I don't know whether they made anything or not. We got ten percent royalty. The whole total amounted to about $65,000 and that was the money that took care of the Lannens during their last illness. It took all of it.
JS: So, the tailings that we can see now, the dredging at the bottom of the gulch, you say even underneath that there are drifts?

HM: I would say maybe a half mile before they stopped they ran into this condition where it'd been worked.

JS: By the way, why was this brought to a stop during the war? I would think that the war effort would need all the precious metals it could get.

HM: No. The fuel and all the materials that it took were needed in the war effort.

JS: I suppose the mining that was really going on would be more like iron and lead and more manufacturing.

HM: Gold mining was not a priority at that time.

JS: So, Star Pointer finally prevailed on the Lannens. Well let's go back to the early thirties: I'm still curious about life in Bearmouth. Could you give me a typical day of what you did when you were a nineteen year old kid? You were a year out of high school.

HM: Just about I worked.

JS: But, you were obviously still staying in the hotel in your same bedroom that you had when you were a little girl?

HM: Yes, that's right, where the snow drifted in the window and the frost gathered on the bed!

JS: This was the northeast corner.

HM: The little thing [chamber pot] under the bed froze!
JS: Oh, really! Well, you'd get up in the morning. What was your first task?

HM: Well, build the fire and get breakfast. My brother was up and he got the cows and...

JS: So, breakfast for Chris and Kate, your brother, yourself, and other people there?

HM: No, usually she got her own breakfast if she got up later, and got his.

JS: Were you heating with oil at this point?

HM: No, no! We had wood which my brother would gather up—mostly old fence posts—beautiful old rail fences, the zig-zag fences, what did they call those fences?

JS: Was that rail and rider?

HS: Yes, there was a whole country full of those and it made wood for years and years. It would have been so beautiful if they had left it there.

JS: So, after breakfast, when what would you do?

HM: I'd clean up the dishes and the house. If it needed, I'd go out horseback riding, weather permitting, to check on cattle and one thing and another or I would go maybe work in the store/post office.

JS: What sort of things would you do in the post office?

HM: Oh, I would keep up the money order records and one thing and another. We had chickens. We had to feed the chickens.

JS: Sounds like a lot of work.
HM: Well, it was a lot of work. I worked all the time.

JS: I want to get through the day here. You went back to the hotel to eat, of course. Were there guests to make lunch for?

HM: Well, sometimes, yes. Mostly the people going into Garnet would take a potluck. The man who drove, mostly old Mr. Davies who had the store, we'd fix him lunch before he took back to the hills again.

JS: And, meanwhile Ralph was pretty much outside working on the ranch and managing the operation to the extent that he was allowed.

HM: Oh, yes, so much activity in raising the cattle and in the summertime putting up the hay.

JS: Okay, dinner is over. Do you go into Drummond to dance?

HM: No. Once in a great while we went to Goff's Corner which was the big place at that time. It was the dance place. It was up at Gold creek just as you turn to your right as you turn up from the old highway it turned into Gold Creek. A man by the name of Goff built a big dance pavilion there and he had some bands come in and Goff's Corner was the place to go for fun.

JS: Gee, that's a long ways away to Gold Creek.

HM: Yes, it was.

JS: Did you drive?

HM: Well, my brother did. I usually went with him or other people that were going from Drummond. But I didn't frequent the place very much. I never had very many boyfriends.

JS: Sounds like a fairly solitary life, then.
HM: Yes, it was pretty solitary. Pretty much work and no play. Another place that provided a little bit of activity... the fun place... was the old swimming pool, warm water pool that was located underneath the rock cliffs and taken out by the new highway.

JS: Yes, right.

HM: And that's the water that was used to operate the dredge because it was warm. And they operated the dredge all winter with this warm water. Steam used to come up. If you look along the highway now, highway 1-90, in the wintertime, you can see the steam coming out from underneath the rocks from that big frontage road that goes by. Way down, twenty-five feet, down where the river went along, you can see this little bit of watercress growing and steam coming up from the hot water.

JS: Actually I saw that sometime this winter taking the frontage road. Maybe I should ask you this... When you were nineteen and twenty years old working pretty much from early morning to late in the evening, did this seem like a dead end situation?

HM: Yes, it worried me. Not that I had too much work but that I had other aspirations. Every fall I would like to have continued my education and gone into nurses training or something. I just didn't feel like I wanted to spend the rest of my time just working there. But, I never was able to do that. All my requests landed on deaf ears. Nobody was interested in my going any place.

JS: Well, I suppose at this point, then, they came to depend and need you...

HM: Oh, yes, they were getting to the age where I not only took over most of the work around the house and the post office, but I also did a lot of their business. There was telephone and lines going through...every utility that went through from east to west had to buy a right-of-way from the Lannens. You ask where the money came from, that was the source of quite a bit of revenue. First the railroads, then the Bell telephone and then the postal telegraph and Bonneville Power all those people had to buy rights-of-way.
JS: Let's see, your brother left first, did he?

HM: Yes, I was trying to think the year he left.

JS: Do we jump way ahead in the story?

HM: Must have been around 1938.

JS: Oh, really. You were still there.

HM: Yes, I was there. We had an old hired man, I can't remember his name [Felix] he met with a sad, tragic end. We found him. He had gone to Drummond the night before and they found his body thrown off one of the old ore docks and he had been beaten.

End side one

Side two

JS: This murder that you're talking about—was this really upsetting to Bearmouth?

HM: Very upsetting! I was away at that time. I had been married during this time. I had married a man who was engineer on the dredge.

JS: Can we back up and get a date on this?

HM: I was married in 1941. My brother had left about four years previous to that, three or four years.

JS: Before we get to 1941, could you sort of tell us about your brother's departure and where he went and then we'll just move up to 1941?
HM: Well, he left. He and Mrs. Lannen had a — it was just something that he realized there was no future there for him, so he left and went to his other brother, who was working in Oregon, and he got a job working in the woods.

JS: Did the Lannens resent this?

HM: Yes, they did.

JS: Did they feel he was ungrateful or..?

HM: No, I don't know. I think they must have realized that they were asking the impossible of a young person like that with all the opportunity on the ranch and they wouldn't let him do anything. They wouldn't let him develop the place. He got a very small wage. I don't know exactly how they managed it, but he felt that he hadn't gotten any wages from the time he came of age and so they gave him enough to buy a car, which he used on the ranch. [He] bought his own gas. So, he finally decided that he had to better himself. He was interested in this girl in Drummond and he finally came back and they were married.

JS: Oh, really?

HM: Father Casey was in the hospital in Anaconda, and my brother came back, picked up his girlfriend, they went to Anaconda and were married in the chapel of the hospital.

JS: Is that his present wife?

HM: No, she died during the fall, but they had seven youngsters.

JS: Well, did you feel even all the more solitary when your brother left in 1938?
HM: Yes, it bothered me a lot. I really missed him [and] tried to get him to come back: but I knew he never could under those circumstances. There was no future for him at all. We weren't heirs. We weren't adopted.

JS: You still felt pretty much like waifs taken in?

HM: Yes. She never made any--I just stayed there and I needed money real bad. She doled it out to me like maybe twenty dollars at a time. I had money enough to go into town and buy a suit, but not enough to buy any (I always wanted nice things.) I never had enough to buy the shoes or the hat or anything that went with it.

JS: When you say "go into town", was that Missoula?

HM: Missoula, yes.

JS: Before we get to 1941 let's just take care of the thirties. Tell me, by the time the thirties were over what did Bearmouth look like? We've been describing it pretty much decade by decade. Had more significant buildings been added or, on the contrary, disappeared? What happened?

HM: No, they were disappearing and as they (I think I mentioned this) as things became more mechanized they, if they laid off like a section foreman or a signal maintainer, they would tear those houses down and get rid of them because they didn't want to pay taxes on them. So Bearmouth gradually diminished in size.

JS: When would you say that Bearmouth was at its largest?

HM: Well, I don't know, probably in those thirties.

JS: What about the buildings and the businesses that Lannens owned? What at the end of the thirties, tell me again, what was there?
HM: At the end of the thirties Mrs. Lannen still ran the post office, and still there was these few dribbles from Garnet and the gulch and they were all people coming in for their mail. In 1942 she gave up the post office. She had been postmistress for almost fifty years, I think. And Mrs. McGregor, a signal maintainer's wife, took it over.

JS: But they still kept the store?

HM: That was in 1942, when she gave up the post office. Then they just closed up the store.

JS: Oh, they did?

HM: Yes. Chris would go there and sit and look out the window, but they didn't—well, I wasn't there at that time. See, I left in 1941. Maybe a few people came in for tobacco, cigarettes, or candy, I don't know. But it was pretty well phased out by that time.

JS: So when the signal maintainer's wife took over the post office, this was then in a different building?

HM: Oh, yes. They moved it to her home, which was located in that area between the Milwaukee Railroad and the NP Railroad. All these buildings were built down around that land between the two railroads west of Lannens' store,

JS: Well, can we move into the story about your husband—who he is and how he came to Bearmouth?

HM: My husband came in with the dredge. He was an employee of Star Pointer. His job was mostly testing at first. He came in with the crew who did the testing and then, after they decided to put the dredge in, of course, he had some planning...

[TELEPHONE RINGS—STOPPED TAPE]
JS: Can I ask you first of all how did this testing take place? Were they drilling, or what did they do?

HM: They drilled and my husband panned, you know, he worked it — the material that came up with the drilling operation and they panned it out to see if there were gold in it.

JS: So, he must have been from California where Star Pointer came from?

HM: He was came from California with them. He lived close to San Francisco. His folks lived at Camp Meeker which was a kind of an artists' colony north of San Francisco. Originally, he was from New Jersey. His mother taught school in New York City for years and years, I guess.

JS: Now, you said that Star Pointer came in 1935. Was he there that early?

HM: Yes. I couldn't say exactly. I'd have to look it up. Maybe it was later than that—maybe 1937 or 1939. The dredge was in operation in 1939.

JS: Was he staying at the hotel?

HM: No. They had gotten land from the Lannens and they had built a dredge camp. They had a. what they called a hotel, I guess. It was, oh, probably a twenty bedroom place, and then there were several dwelling houses around it where the families lived. There was a manager's house which was kind of an imposing place that's still there...that big, white house that's still up on the bench there where they had the dredge cut.

JS: Yes.

HM: That was the manager's house and then they had about three family homes, and then this big building which was their cook house and where the men stayed and where they got their meals.
JS: Is this sort of in the same area where you said the Milwaukee road had a big construction camp there long ago?

HM: That was, of course, long ago.

JS: Yes, but I mean we're talking about...

HM: No, that construction would be east of that just before you went around the bend and where the big rock was taken out and all that.

JS: Yes. Well, let's see, you were married in 1941?

HM: Yes.

JS: What's your husband's name?

HM: Marsh—George Marsh.

JS: George Marsh. What do you want to tell me about the years from the time that he came with Star Pointer until 1941? How did you meet him and did you go to Goff's Corner's?

HM: Of course it was very easy to meet him because he had to come into the post office for their mail. He brought me into Missoula to dinner and to shows and one thing and another. We went to very few dances: he wasn't much of a dancer. But we would explore the country, go to Garnet and different places that were very interesting that I had never even seen because there was no way of going any place.

JS: Where were you married?

HM: California.
JS: You were married in California!

HM: His folks lived, as I said before, north of San Francisco and we went there and were married in San Raphael—an old mission. The mission that's across the bay from San Francisco.

JS: Well, tell me how all of this sat with the Lannens.

HM: Well, I was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old at that time. She realized that she couldn't keep me forever, I guess. She kind of liked George and [there] was no difficulty at all.

JS: How did you and George get back to San Francisco?

HM: We drove.

JS: Drove. I didn't know whether it was that or train.

HM: No, we drove.

JS: So, one day you left.

HM: That's right.

JS: Was that a sad day?

HM: I was going to live right over there in one of those dwelling houses and I spent an awful lot of time going back and forth, helping at the ranch like I always did, which didn't make my husband very happy. During that time, I think there was some anniversary that they were celebrating; I think it must have been the sixtieth year of having mass in the house. But, anyway, that took place during that time, just before we were married or, in fact, right after we were married.
JS: Then you came back, you mean.

HM: Yes. I came back and helped and put on that.

JS: Okay, I guess I don't have this clear. You went down to San Raphael to get married, but then - did you turn around and come right back to Bearmouth?

HM: Yes, we went down to Santa Cruz and Monterey for a trip and then we came back and he had to go to work, of course. He had his job on the dredge, and I moved over into this little dwelling house. It was our first home.

JS: And it, you say, was at that point when you were still going back and forth to help the Lannens.

HM: Yes.

JS: Now, at that point, I assume, that they must have known that your time in the Bearmouth area was limited since that dredge couldn't last forever.

HM: Yes. That's right. Finally he got a job on a dredge at Harvard, Idaho, up near Saint Mary's. We moved there and then had to get into the service and he joined the navy. I came home to the Lannens again and stayed there. He was stationed in the Naval Training Station in the engineering office in San Diego. He went, oh, probably in February and during that summer I stayed at home and then, at the end of the summer, I drove down and joined him there. We were there about nine months, I guess. He was shipped out to Australia and I continued to work. I had a job at the port of embarkation and then I was at the Naval Training Station in San Diego, the headquarters. I did clerical work. Then my sister lived in Long Beach and so I got a job at the port of embarkation in Wilmington. I worked in the payroll division there. And then Mrs. Lannen had a nervous breakdown. I came home and stayed during the duration of the war at home, at Bearmouth, and took care of the folks.
JS: Was George still overseas?

HM: Yes, he was in Australia all this time.

JS: What was he doing in the navy?

HM: Well, he was always in the engineering department. He was there when this big munitions depot in Brisbane, I think it was, Australia—out of Brisbane. He was chief petty officer. He was there when it was decommissioned when the war was over. That was probably three and a half or four years.

JS: Do you remember what year it was when you returned to look after Mrs. Lannen?

HM: About 1942—about 1943, I guess. 1942 or 1943. Why are you getting so much about me? It's a history of Bearmouth, and I'm just...

JS: But you are Bearmouth!

HM: I suppose but just a small part of it.

JS: Without you, it's just a bunch of old buildings that can't speak. Could you stay in contact with George during the war years? Were there letters sent?

HM: I always had an FPO number. The only way I knew he was in Australia was, let's see, how did I know that? I think a fellow that he worked with called me, he came to San Francisco and called me and told me where George was and what he was doing.

JS: Before we get back to Bearmouth and Mrs. Lannen, why don't you tell me something about George? Did he also make jewelry or [was he] an inventor? It seemed that he was fairly handy.
HM: Yes, I don't know what he did really before he came to California, but he wasn't a graduate engineer, he just picked it up himself. He was very, very bright. This testing he did. After the war he came home from the war and I was staying with the folks and they certainly were not able to stay alone, but there was nothing I could do but go on with him...he was my husband. We went to Oregon—Baker, Oregon, where he worked on a dredge. Then we moved to Seattle where he worked for Boeing. At that time Chris got sick. He had a stroke and they had me come home and George stayed a little while in Seattle. He sublet our apartment and then eventually he had a moving company come in and pack my things and send them over to me. He stayed in Alaska.

JS: Well, let me back up to Mrs. Lannen's illness during the war years. You said in about 1943 you went back to Bearmouth.

HM: Yes, she had had a nervous breakdown.

JS: What exactly does that mean? What's the cause of this?

HM: Well, her sister was with her and she seemed to just rub her the wrong way. At that time they decided to get rid of their cattle. They sold them all and this sister just kept telling her that she was getting beat on the deal and that they had taken advantage of her and she had worked her up until she was just, well, she broke that's all. When I got home I had the doctor come several times and he advised me to take her to Spokane to the psychiatric [hospital] I guess and then, she was only there a few days and she snapped right out of it. But, I stayed with her and kept her there about two weeks, I guess.

JS: And then did you go back to the west coast?

HM: No, I never went back. George went to Alaska.

JS: Well, wait, though, I'm talking about...

HM: He spent his summers in Alaska.
JS: Yes, but wait. I'm still talking about Kate in 1943. So George was still in Australia at this time, wasn't he?

HM: Oh, yes.

JS: Okay, now, once Mrs. Lannen recovered, did you..?

HM: Well, that wasn't the time. That was — yes, that was. Yes, I brought her home and stayed with her during the duration. The sister wanted me to go back to my job and, of course, I had no job at that time. You don't leave a job and just go back to it. So, I had my things sent and I stayed during the duration of the war. That was about three years—two or three years. I was really needed there at that time.

JS: So, when was it that met you your husband again and got back on the . . .?

HM: At Bearmouth. He came home from Australia to Bearmouth.

JS: So, was that 1944—1945?

HM: It must have been 1945.

JS: Is that when you went to Idaho?

HM: That's when we went to Baker, Oregon, but I never was away more than a month when it was necessary to return to the folks at Bearmouth for various reasons. Then to Seattle and then he went to Alaska and I came home again. I moved them—the Lannens—into Missoula at that time. Chris had to be hospitalized.

JS: Well, tell me, then, when you were in Seattle, what—what happened to Chris? You say he had a stroke. Did you say that?
HM: Yes. He had hardening of the arteries of the brain, whatever that is, cerebral sclerosis. I remember the doctor calling me (we were in a hotel, we'd taken him into the hospital,) and the doctor called me and told me he had cerebral sclerosis and his prognosis was very poor.

JS: But it sounded convincing?

HM: I said explain that a little bit. So, he was in the hospital month in and month out and then finally the hospital said, we can't take these old people. He was eighty-six and she was pretty close to that. I talked it over with the chaplain, Father Brett, and we decided the best thing to do was rent a place and take them into it and get a nurse. There was no place for rent; it was too soon after the war, so we bought this little house and I was there for ten years.

JS: On Sussex?

HM: Yes.

JS: Now, did you take Kate in because she just couldn't stay by herself?

HM: Oh, no, she would never let him go without her anywhere.

JS: But the real reason for moving to Missoula was for him at this point.

HM: Yes. We had to get him into the hospital. He was incontinent and just lying there. We couldn't take care of him in the middle of winter in that cold, cold house, so we had an ambulance come and bring him into the hospital.

JS: Do you know the date that you moved into Missoula? What— where are we?

HM: That was March; of what year I couldn't tell you. Oh, yes, I do know, 1948, March of 1948.
JS: Then let's backtrack to Bearmouth. What, then, was taking place at Bearmouth? In 1948 that meant that Ralph had been gone for ten years, you and George are gone and the Lannens. So, what happened then?

HM: Well, her brother moved in from his little cabin. You know, he lived in that little house. He wasn't able to be there alone either. He was scared and...

JS: This is Stuart.

HM: No, John Stuart. When people would come he'd go to the door with a gun in his hand to protect himself. He wasn't...he was an old, eighty-six years old. He finally got sick, got the flu. I went out and got him. He was another one that I took care of, that's all.

JS: Did he move into Missoula, also?

HM: Who?

JS: Stuart.

HM: That's what I'm saying. I moved him into this house that I had bought.

JS: Well, then, let me repeat the question. What became then of Bearmouth?

HM: There were some people who lived in the depot. They said that they'd take care of the house and the dog. The poor, old dog. I used to go out to take food for him, and he'd see my car coming and as I came across the crossings there and he would know it was me. They took care of him. Then somebody came and shot the dog and ransacked the house. They took everything, a lot of valuable things that I--she wouldn't let me bring them in there, because she was going back all the time, and I had nothing to do but just leave them there and trust these people to take care of it. So, my little rocking chair and a lot of pictures with beautiful frames—oh, a lot of things were
stolen. I couldn't take care of that place and them in town at the same time, so I just had to figure out my priorities, but I did often get a nurse and I'd go out there and see how things were going.

JS: What about all the stock? What happened to the animals?

HM: They had sold them, you see.

JS: During what years?

HM: They sold them before—when she had her breakdown. That was—you're getting me all mixed up. I can't think any more. I think I'm just about to the end of my...

JS: I just have a couple of minutes left here.

HM: They had sold the stock and there were a few horses there. We had a blacksmith shop full of all kinds of equipment. Everything that you have in a blacksmith. It was just like somebody had taken a broom and moved everything out and the same way with the barn. We had harness for probably a dozen horses and that was all stolen. Five saddles went and all the wiring—even the electric wiring in the barn was stolen. So, you see, I wasn't in a very good situation then. There was no one to help me. All that the Lannens—there was a nephew was still living, and all he could think about was putting them in a nursing home in Warm Springs or someplace and taking over the land, of course. I wouldn't let them do that.

JS: At this point, what sort of a legal authority did you have over their land, the money, and the people themselves?

HM: None except that's what she wanted. She wanted me to do it. I did. Later on, there was an agreement made, but there was about five years that L stayed there with them, five years of that ten years, that I just took care of them. I had no security at all. If they had died, I would have just been the hired help or something.
JS: This is probably a good place to stop, 'cause now we're at Sussex in Missoula with John Stuart, Chris and Kate and the hotel is just sort of...

HM: You're getting me so much in there that I — I would rather have it more on the history of the place.

JS: Well, you can edit out whatever you want when the time comes, but I wouldn't be too extravagant about this because, once again, I can't imagine what you could say about that place if you really didn't include your own comings and goings.

HM: That's right. I know what you mean.

End side two