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Oral History Number: 066-001, 002

Interviewee: Lyle Slade

Interviewer: Julie Kenfield

Date of Interview: December 3, 1979

Julie Kenfield: Okay.

Lyle Slade: What all do you want to find out? What do you want to know?

JK: I guess what I'm interested in—

LS: You just ask me questions. I'd rather because I can answer your questions.

JK: Okay. And anything that you want to add is great. I'm most interested in what things were like out there for the Italians.

LS: Well, it was pretty orderly camp. We had mostly Italians. We had about 200 Japanese at one time, and they were...See, all the Japanese were put in prison campus during the war [World War II]. Didn't matter if they were good, bad, or indifferent. They...You knew that.

JK: Yes.

LS: I think our top capacity on the Japanese was about 200. But we had them all (unintelligible).

JK: Were they kept separately?

LS: Because we would just transfer them around. We had a big camp in Tule Lake, California. That was the big Japanese camp. We had 20,000 there. Then we had some in Crystal City, Texas. Then our Italian population was around 1,800 to 2,000. We had a little (unintelligible) of German prisoners. Maybe sometimes we would only have five, and then again we would have 15. Not many Germans. We had a big camp back in North Carolina. We did a lot of transporting back-and-forth, and...We had a special train that had a diner on it and Pullman for the guards. Then we had, of course, a lot of people getting shuttled back and forth from Ellis Island. It was our big problem. Mostly, it's Ellis Island and Tule Lake, California. Those are most of our transfers. We had a pretty good sized camp in Santa Fe. That was just strictly Italians.

JK: It was.

LS: Then we had a German camp in Bismarck, North Dakota. So, give you an idea where the camps were. This particular camp in Missoula, they was a ship—Italian merchant vessel—called the (unintelligible). The captain of the ship was named Sagletto (?), and he had a brother. They were both sea captains. His brother was a captain on...he was younger than the older brother.

He was on a merchant Italian ship of some kind. Down in Florida, they scuttled (unintelligible). They cut the dry shafts into (unintelligible).

JK: Do you know why they did that?

LS: That was a big deal. Well, it only took us about two days to weld the thing together, see.

JK: (laughs) Didn't do much good.

LS: So they finally made that into either a Peace Corps ship or an hospital ship for the remainder of the war. Consequently, those fellows just took everything off that ship and come to Fort Missoula. Now these weren't war prisoners—prisoners of war—or what I mean active army. They were marine, merchant marines. They had all classes...They had their own doctor. Doctor Cuomo (?) was their doctor. He was the ship's doctor. They had machinists and tailors and everything you could think of. Musicians and the whole works.

JK: Kind of like their own community.

LS: Yes. Engineers. So they all landed up at Fort Missoula. I don't know why they landed up in Fort Missoula. Why they didn't take them back to New Jersey. It was closer. But the immigration services never did anything right for the rest of us, you know.

JK: (laughs) Bureaucracy.

LS: Yes. So the Italians were...These boys we had were real good prisoners. They had an officer in charge on the inside of the compound, and if they had any grievances of any kind, why, they'd go to him. Which, incidentally, was Captain Saggleto, the older brother. The whole time I was there, I never saw them fight.

They was awful guys to sleep. They slept a lot. They weren't the cleanest people in the world, but they kept themselves pretty well. Of course, the government finally let them get at on their possessions, they brought everything off of that ship. Coffee, clothing, various canned foodstuffs. I don't know what else. Then the government supplied them with anything they needed. They could of came there stark naked and had all they wanted because it was a commissary that had clothes for them and blankets and everything they needed. Even toothbrushes. And shoes. So they didn't want for a thing. They was eating a lot better than I was at the time I was working there because we was on meat rationing and sugar rationing. These guys eating big ground steaks, and I couldn't even get a hamburger at home.

JK: Yes, it seems like most of the stuff (unintelligible) they talk about food a lot.

LS: Well, they couldn't complain about the food because they had all the food they wanted. They was pretty good about entertaining themselves. They had a, I think they call, it soccer ball,

at that time they played instead of football. They played baseball, and they put on stage shows. We had a big...What the heck did they call it? Burned down, but it was a big long building the one down at the (unintelligible). Log building and it burned down, I don't know when. I don't remember when. I think it burned down in about 1950. But they'd put on stage plays, and some of them dressed up like women. You couldn't tell them from women either. They'd make all their own costumes. They had a lot of good musicians in the bands. There's some good piano players and good violin players. They had all, they played all the instruments. They had them there they took off the ship. It was quite a chore, moving all this stuff and that ship clear here to Fort Missoula.

JK: I bet. You went by train, then?

LS: Yes, must have. Taking a trainload of this stuff that they brought in to Fort Missoula. But they were rather orderly people. The Japanese were a little bit different. Of course, they were domiciled...most we had here in Missoula were domiciled Japanese. Some of them were wealthy Japanese truck farmers from over in Washington and Oregon. We had one fellow there that had 60, 000 dollars in a safe there, and he (unintelligible) the safe there in Fort Missoula. I think he was from (unintelligible). An older fellow.

We'd take them on tours into Missoula to shop. We'd take five or six of them and a guard and take them into town. All of them end up in the Missoula Mercantile. You know, it was easier to shop and you could get anything you wanted there at that time. They'd go in and they'd buy...They was great on using pen and ink. Ballpoint pens wasn't too popular then, just started to come in. They'd buy a whole case of ink, instead of a bottle. They'd buy it like it was the last they was ever going to get. They'd buy pencils by the gross. Then they'd go in their barracks, and each man had a cot or bed and then a space, oh, this wide. Then another cot or bed in the space, and we'd build a shelf up that...Now, the shelves looked like stores. They had stuff stored in there that they couldn't get any more in it.

Now, they didn't cause any trouble. They had a mayor, the Japanese. What they called the mayor. I didn't remember any grievances amount to a hoot the time they was there.

JK: What were they mostly?

LS: Pardon?

JK: What were the grievances mostly?

LS: Oh, just over some little thing that they thought they wanted more of. Oh, I remember one time—soy sauce. By golly, , it was just the next day they come in a whole truckload of soy sauce from Spokane. It was in these great big wooden buckets about this big around, about that tall. That's a lot of soy sauce—a truckload. They use it like we use milk. But anyway, they got their soy sauce. They had all kinds of food. They didn't have to worry about food, but they thought

they did. They thought we were going to cut them off any time and starve them to death. The Germans, they kept kind of to themselves because they wasn't too many of them. They had one little lousy barracks down there for the Germans.

JK: Did they keep them separate, like the Italian and the Japanese and—

LS: Yes, they would...No, they were all in the same compound. They could go out and walk around, and that compound was locked. Oh, you know what, are you well acquainted with Fort Missoula?

JK: A little bit, yes.

LS: The compound was right behind the big...well, it fenced in the big buildings there, the big barracks. Big huge buildings.

JK: Where the Forest Service is?

LS: South, and then east for about a quarter of a mile. That was all fenced, and then outside, they had another big fence around the whole deal, see. Well, when I was there, I was in the surveillance. We didn't go inside the fence.

JK: You stayed in—

LS: Yes, there was a gate up there. I could go in there any time I wanted to, but if you wanted to go in and you had to go up and the guard let you through the gate. You'd have to sign the book. Then if any of them wanted to come out, why, they'd have to come through the gate and sign up to come out. They had all the conveniences in the world. Did that old forest station and the jail, is it still there? Or did it burn down or something?

JK: I think there's only one building left that was there originally.

LS: Somebody told me at one time, that that old forest station burned down, but I couldn't imagine it because we had two big...It was a big building. We had two big fire trucks in there. Then the quarters for the fireman upstairs, and then in the back was a big jail part. It must have had about 20 cells in it.

JK: I don't remember that being there.

LS: Somebody said it burned up, but I couldn't see how it could because the floors were cement, the ceilings were cement. Then you go upstairs and walk on cement floors. The walls were cement. The roof was...had steel girders, and it had those fireproof shingles on. I don't see anything could burn up in there. The doors were even steel.

JK: That's strange.

LS: I just can't figure it out. Next time I go into town I'm going to drive out there.

JK: Yes. I know the big officers' club burned down.

LS: Yes, yes. That was the old one. That was the guards...turned over to the guards and the border patrol men for their entertainment. We'd have dances in there, (unintelligible) Saturday nights we had dances.

JK: Well, did you live out there, too? Or did you live in town?

LS: No, I lived in Missoula. I drove out to work every day. At that time, the main entrance went in there, go on on an angle. You'd have to go down there and turn and then go across by Community Hospital.

JK: What did the people in Missoula think of all that?

LS: Oh, they had different opinions of them. Of course, we was at war with Italy, and (unintelligible). Then a lot of people, you'd would go out there, and they'd recommend a certain Italian to you. If you want to take him, come out and get him every morning, and take him into Missoula, and let him work on your yard, or paint your house, or...Of course, they got a little reaction from that in Missoula because they didn't want them in there.

I was on the main gate there a long time, and that was on the main entrance to Fort Missoula. You'd stop every car that would come in and see what their business was, and nobody went out unless you knew who they were. Some of them guys—younger parolees—it was kind of trust. They would get the idea that...They got acquainted with some girls there in Missoula, and they're supposed to be in at ten o'clock and sometimes they'd come in two and three and four. So I used to go in and I'd take them right into main office, and—

JK: What would happen to them then?

LS: —whether it was two or three o'clock or not. They still turned them loose in their barracks. Let them count for themselves. Then, when people...I know some people personally that (unintelligible) at one end of Missoula there that had a big home up there by the University [University of Montana] on McLeod Avenue. I don't even know if you know where Bob Ogden lived?

JK: No.

LS: It's the last house on McLeod going in towards the University. The big house that's on the southwest corner. And those people hired one of the Italians.

JK: Are they still living there now?

LS: No, no. They're both dead now. Anyway, they hired an Italian, and he worked there for two or three months for them, and then the neighbors around there got to making nasty remarks to them about why didn't they hire American. Who wants them Italians in our neighborhood. Of course, these guys weren't causing any trouble. Then we had the same...oh, we had a prince out there. His name was Rostegglosi—an Italian prince. Of course, he had a little extra privileges, you see, being he was a prince. He lived in the hospital. You know where the old hospital? He lived in there. In that hospital, we had our own immigration doctor. Then if anybody get real sick, serious, why, they'd take them into Missoula to the hospital. So they never suffered any, at any time, for medical attention.

Then they had their ship...the Italians had their own doctor, Dr. Cuomo (?)—the ship's doctor. This Rostegglosi, he got (unintelligible) with some nurses. Some nurses had a little house out in the corner there from the hospital. Do you know...If you're acquainted, you know where it's at.

I had to go out there, two or three o'clock in the morning, and tell him to come on. I go on back and wouldn't be (unintelligible) call me and tell me that he wasn't in yet. I had to go up there and kick him out pretty near every night. (Unintelligible) and he'd go back over to the hospital. He had quarters upstairs in the hospital.

We had a lot of fun. It was an enjoyable job. And everybody, I enjoyed it. We had about 70 guards. Then they was the patrol inspectors from the border patrol. They were kind of like captains. They was the head moguls. Those immigration guards were kind of under them, see. But incidentally, one that quit, they transferred all the...See, I transferred to the border patrol from there. Before I transferred I was in charge of surveillance. That's the outside of this compound.

JK: The second fence that was out there?

LS: Yes, I was in charge of all the guards—about 60 at that time. I'd make out the schedule for their work schedules, which would change and...Let's see, we had more than that. We had about, altogether, 75 guards, because I didn't count the horsemen. We had three horsemen on shift, three 8s is 24—take 24 (unintelligible). They'd come up, and they'd say they're going to work at 10 o'clock at night, why, they'd come out about 9:30 and get their horse all ready. By the time the other guard was getting off duty, why, he'd come in there and get on the horse. They'd patrol that whole area. There pretty near the old Maclay bridge over there on [Highway] 93 coming down, see, they'd patrol.

JK: Wow, that is a big area!

LS: Yes, they patrolled that whole area and way out to South Avenue, you know, over there where the Fort property was. Then down in the back there, they had army barracks. You ever been back in there?

JK: No, I haven't.

LS: A lot of little barracks back in there. They patrolled all that area.

JK: That wasn't all fenced in, was it?

LS: Well, the...no. The main thing for that was, there wasn't of any of the Italians getting away, it was somebody else slipping in there, see. So we patrolled that all pretty...Good, secure place. Then a lot, they had work details. Maybe they'd be 15, 20, 25. They'd come down the Bitterroot here, and they'd work in the beet fields, or the fields. They'd all come back in every night and back out the next day.

JK: Would somebody take them out there?

LS: Yes, they'd be a couple guards with them. There'd be a truck driver and a guard. Just well not have been a guard because there wasn't (unintelligible).

JK: Did most of them work, or, how did most of them—

LS: That was about the outside work, was what I told you about. The details that came down here, and the fellows that go to Missoula get a job. I never heard any of them ever complain about what they was getting and what they wasn't. They seemed to be pretty well pleased with the way things were going. Of course, at that time we had prison camps for Italians too that could have...Commit a crime there, why, they'd have went into a prison camp. I can't think of much of anything else.

JK: How did most of them spend the day, then?

LS: Oh, they did an awful lot of walking. They'd walk around that compound. They had a walkway all the way around, and then, oh, if they'd get outside of the compound, why. They'd walk over to the hospital. That was one of the major complaints that they had, was somebody always hauling in sick. Had to go to the hospital. Some of them really were sick. Most of them, instead of going down and seeing Dr. Cuomo, why, they'd want to go and see the immigration doctor at the hospital. Well, about half of them was fake, just something to do.

They'd practice band, and they'd play ping...They could do anything there—bowling alley. They could play ping-pong and baseball. In the wintertime they was mostly...like I say, most of them would rather stay in the barracks and sleep. At night, we'd make a count. At night at midnight, was the count. Oh, 20 guards would go into that compound, and they'd go into each one of

them barracks, see. They'd go up to them and count the guys that was in bed. Well, there it would be in the middle of summer, all their windows would be down, they'd be covered up with blankets over their heads. Like they was freezing to death. Stale air in there, and we'd have to sometimes go pull a blanket back to see if they was really there. Then, the count wouldn't...then every man would come out and report his count to the guy at the main gate. He'd be there tabulating the count, and they had that was Barrack A, B, C, D, I think, was the four big barracks. Then they was scattered all around. You had no where to go to count, because you couldn't have found them if you didn't know where to go. Maybe one guy would come out of Barracks B, and he'd have a count of 200. Maybe, they was supposed to be 201. Well, everybody else's count would come all right. But then everybody else would have to go back in and recount again, see. I've spent until two or three o'clock in the morning counting, making counts come out right.

JK: You're kidding.

LS: Yes.

JK: Did anybody ever turn out missing? No?

LS: Not that I ever knew of. But they was just guys that missed counts. You go in the barracks to count, and you'd have a pad and pencil. There's so many rooms up in them big barracks. Go in each one. Some of them had, was out in the big rooms there, and you'd count all of them and go in and count all the other rooms and come back out and turn it in at the main gate. If it didn't tabulate, why, you had a different total, you had to go back—everybody had to go back and count all them barracks. Not just that one, see. But everybody. Well, we'd work it up to about so long. You know, maybe three counts. If we didn't come out right then, we'd start doubling up the guards. Two of them together to make the count. Sometimes it would take two or three o'clock in the morning, from 12 o'clock until two or three, to get counts come out right. Course, there'd be a guy over counting the hospital, there'd be the fellows that was down in the kitchen working at night, getting ready for breakfast. You count them, and then go around all them little barracks counting everybody. It was quite a chore. But we worked it pretty smooth because if a new man came on, why, they'd always send him in with another fellow on two or three counts, so he'd know what he was doing by the time you turn him loose on his own. Show him where he had to go to count.

JK: Did you guys do much with the men in there?

LS: Pardon?

JK: Did you guys do much with the men?

LS: Associate with them?

JK: Yes.

LS: Not very much. When I first went there, I was a guard over at the hospital. That had a wire fence around it, too, you know, a steel fence. I think it's out now.

JK: Yes, I don't remember seeing it.

LS: There was a gate out there, and I stayed inside the hospital by a big window that was there and I could look out and see the gate. Well, anybody come to the gate, they'd push a button and ring the bells. Then I'd go out and let them in (unintelligible). I had to write all that down in the log, and I got acquainted with a guy there by the name of Mioni (?). He came from down in the lower part of Sicily. At that time I was a young fellow, and Mioni was about 60 years old. He was an old merchant marine. One night he said the way they made their coffee. When it come off the ships, it was in pound cans, and you open it up and the coffee beans were green. They weren't baked—just green. Don't know if you've ever seen them—

JK: I haven't, but I—

LS: Pretty near as green as green peas. They'd take and take these five-gallon cans—you've seen them—and then take a gallon bucket and they'd put a rod through it and put that on top that can with the a crank on it. They'd put them beans in that that gallon bucket and slide the lid shut and build a little fire in there, and they'd turn them until it roasted those coffee beans. Then they didn't have any coffee grinders, so they'd just lay them out on a board and take a rolling pin and roll them and it would crush them just like powder. Well he said—one night I never will forget it—, he said, "Mr. Slade," he said, "Would you like to have a cup of coffee?" Two or three o'clock in the morning, and he stayed up all night running around the hospital. He had a little room down in the basement. They all had those little percolators that they made out of tin. I think they made most them out of tin cans. But this one had a spout on, had a little handle. Looked like a little percolator. He said, "Would you like to have a cup of coffee?"

I said, "Yes, I wouldn't mind having a cup of coffee." Had those big old hospital cups, great big heavy mugs. So he's gone a little while, and he come back up and they's about that much coffee in the cup. I looked up, I said, "How come..." Now, he couldn't speak English, and I couldn't speak Italian.

JK: (laughs) So just kind of back and forth?

LS: Well, we got so...In two or three years that I could converse with him almost as good as I can with you.

He said, "Would you like a cup..." After he'd got the coffee up here, anyway, I said, "How come you didn't fill it up?"

He said, "If I fill that up," he says, "and you'd drink it, you couldn't sleep for a week."

Then I tasted it, and I could see why. Just like ink. Black as you could get...possibly get coffee. they'd bake those coffee beans until...they weren't baked, they were charcoaled. Just black and charcoaled. Like you'd make a roast and burn it.

JK: Right (laughs). Not intentionally, of course.

LS: No. That's the way they liked it. And then I got to drinking that Italian coffee that way, and I kind of liked it. Tastes good to you after so long. I'd go home every time and tell my wife she's making the coffee too sweet. Wasn't strong enough. (laughs)

JK: You like it where you can stand your spoon up in it. (laughs)

LS: Oh, it could almost eat the spoon up—that Italian coffee. They had some pretty clever men out there in a different arch. Some of them would work (unintelligible). One of guy was a tailor, and he was really a crackerjack. Mainly there was a lot of artists and a lot of—

JK: Did they sell their stuff in town there?

LS: Oh, a little. But see, after they got out of here, the government paid them all the wages for all the time they was there at Fort Missoula.

JK: You're kidding. Well, how long were most of them there?

LS: Oh, three, four years, some of them.

JK: It started in, like, '41.

LS: They were away from home for a long time. Be kind of bad course. Mioni, he had two kids. They was pretty big kids, but he was always talking about his kids and he showed me some pictures of them. Wanted to get home, and...Then those guys made boats, too. They had a mechanic shop down there, and if anybody around town there wanted any mechanic work down, they'd bring their car out there. They was pretty good mechanics. Those Italians were good mechanics. Get your car fixed for a little bit of nothing.

JK: Really? Most of them missed their families and stuff?

LS: Yes, they were just like normal people. Miss them. Missoula was a pleasant camp. Very pleasant.

JK: I heard the name Bella Vista in some of the things that I read over.

LS: Say what?

JK: I heard that they called it Bella Vista.

LS: What is that?

JK: What did they translate it as? Like a good place to be or a beautiful country—that kind of thing.

LS: Yes, I know that in the mornings...I don't know but a speck of Italian, only what I picked up. I did take Spanish after I got in border patrol, why, I went to school in El Paso and you've got to take a college course of Spanish. I took Spanish down there. [sound of hammering] While I was working at Fort Missoula, I never knew any Spaniards. The similarity of the two languages is pretty near the same. You could pick it up...but they'd come out in the morning, they'd always say *buono* (?). That must mean "good morning" or "good evening." You'd leave at night, and they'd say *buono*, the same thing. (laughs) I think it means "good morning" any time. Like we say "Hi," or...I don't know.

JK: Well, how long were you there?

LS: About four years. And then I got transferred—

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

JK: —still be held in camps afterwards.

LS: Sending them back, kind of breaking up the camps here.

JK: How did that happen with the end of the war and stuff?

LS: Yes, they knew that they had things pretty well wrapped up, so they was beginning to let some of them go.

JK: They'd just like train them off to the coast, or—

LS: Yes. Now, they held the Japanese a long time. They was really...some of them were American citizens, I think. You see, the reason they compounded the Japanese, you'd wonder why they'd walk down to get an old truck farmer out of Washington that'd been there all his life and raised his family and owned a great big, massive farm that was worth a half-a-million dollars. Why, they'd drag him out and throw him in a prison camp. Well, they all belonged to that organization if you was Japanese. Still today exists, I guess. If you belong to that "tong," they call it, that's the Japanese organization. Was then. I don't know if that broke up or not. If you belonged to that family, you were automatically into a camps. So you didn't have very, very few Japanese. We did have a few, but they all were under surveillance at all times.

JK: Did being a member of that organization mean they had an alliance with Japan?

LS: Well, yes, that they...that they was kind of (unintelligible) to Japan too. (Unintelligible).

JK: So they were out there longer than the Italians, then, at the end?

LS: Yes, if I remember right. See, Fort Missoula hadn't...it was just starting to break up. They hadn't broke up yet, completely when I transferred to the border patrol.

JK: When was that, do you remember?

LS: '42. Of course, the war lasted up until '46, I think, wasn't it?

JK: I think so, yes.

LS: I stayed in the border patrol after that. It was interesting work. They was five Christmases that I missed, altogether that I was gone. On trains and we'd go through towns, and you could see Christmas decorations and that's about all the Christmas I saw for five years. I remember one time I got home, I was just a week before Christmas, and I thought, (unintelligible) we're

going to be home for Christmas. Bang, got a call, "Go down to Seattle." Got another prison train going.

JK: And Most of those were Italians that you were shipping around?

LS: Yes, yes. Italians and Japanese. We got some, long before the last of the war. We'd already won the war. We already bombed Hiroshima. We got a bunch of young Japanese in—great big husky Japanese. They were still pretty arrogant. We had a whole train load of them. We had to watch them pretty close.

JK: Yes, I bet.

LS: Not like the old men. The old men ride for miles and wouldn't say anything at all, just talk to each other, talk to us—laugh and have a good time. Didn't have to worry about them. This younger bunch came along, and they was arrogant and they say, "You watch, Japanese win this war. We will win." Well, they did win, really, you know.

JK: With Pearl Harbor?

LS: Yes...No, what I mean, they won, because we went in there and reconstructed their whole country and made a country out of it. We lost, because we didn't get a thing out of it.

JK: That's true.

LS: So, if you're going to win a war, you got to...It's just like with this...Well, I shouldn't say this to you.

Anyway, the United States has consistently did that. In the First World War, we should have had Germany. We should have had them Germans working for us until now pretty near to pay off that debt. But we lost all that. We lost what the war cost, and still they kept their country and they wasn't hurt. But we was the one that was hurt.

JK: Had to pay for it eventually.

LS: So we had to rebuild them and help them. That's what's the matter with the United States today, is these wars. They never benefit. The other countries benefit from these.

But at the time, I was out there, there's a lot of things you couldn't get. Tires and batteries for your car, gasoline rationing. Food rationing.

JK: How come the prisoners, or, not the prisoners, but the Italians got meat and you guys didn't?

LS: Well, they had a big locker, and the government just brought it in there. Go in there and it looked like a farmer's warehouse—that meat they had hanging in there. They'd just take it over to the kitchen—over to the kitchen in the hospital—and get whatever they wanted to.

JK: So the rations didn't apply to them?

LS: Didn't apply to them a nickel's worth. They got all they wanted. All they wanted. They (unintelligible) and get it. Of course, we had supply people down there in the warehouses, and it was pretty easy.

Now, another thing. We had a lot of each one of us fellows out there in the west part of Fort Missoula, they got some real fertile garden that's out there. They allotted each one of us a garden section. It was a pretty good section of land. You'd hire those Japanese for...I paid that one guy three dollars a week to plant my garden. He went out there...Well, the government cultivated it all up. He'd plant it, and then he'd keep it watered and when it come time to pick, why, he'd do it. He had just (unintelligible). Just off of that garden. Everything you could think of. Corn, peas, pickles, beans. What else was there? There were onions, lettuce, and that kind of stuff. They knew how to raise it.

Now, on the inside of that compound, the Japanese was down at the east end of it. They was an old road that went down through there. At one time it had been there for the Fort Missoula. It really led to the old barn, you know, where they're at. These barracks was all down there, and they'd go right out and you'd see them stoop down off the (unintelligible) sifting dirt. They made gardens right out of where that old road was. Just like we'd go out here and tear up this road and make a garden out of it (unintelligible). But they raised a lot of stuff right there. They were good gardeners. That was their trade. That was them. But they was pretty clever. Now, they had a tailor in there, too. He made a suit for a guy—a suit of clothes. The most beautiful suit I ever saw. Where they got that...whether that was Missoula Merc sent off and got that goods, I don't remember. It was almost like silk. Beautiful.

JK: For somebody in town here?

LS: Yes. For one of the guys that worked out there at the Fort.

JK: Do you still keep in touch with anybody that worked out there?

LS: Oh, not up there. I do in the Border Patrol a lot. I just had a fellow that lives in San Diego visit me a couple weeks ago. Every once in a while one of them will drop by, or I'll go down there and go down to the Mexican border and visit with them—some of them that's down there. I used to know some boys from up around Havre worked on the border—Havre and Browning. I don't know whatever happened to them. We got two or three fellows that I can tell you that lives in Missoula yet today that worked out there. Now you—

JK: I should get their names from you. Do you remember their names?

LS: Yes.

JK: Do you care if I write them down?

LS: No. Now, I don't really...you know Bud Murdo (?) or not? He's in the insurance business.

JK: No, I don't.

LS: He was in the border patrol. He started out as an immigration guard. There's Jim Evans (?) that owned the Estes Maytag Company. I don't remember he still owns it or not. I don't know if you know Jim or not.

JK: No.

LS: There's a fellow that lives up on the...North Van Buren, and his name is Maywall Kirkwood (?). I'll have to see who else (unintelligible)

JK: These guys were all like on the border patrol?

LS: No, these were all guards. Yes, those boys were guards. They used to be a fellow by the name of Oestrich. James Oestrich.

JK: Do you know how to spell that?

LS: O-e-s-t-r-i-e-c-h. Oestrich. We used to call him "ostrich." But it's Oestrich. I don't know if he's still living, or living there in Missoula or where. So many people are moving around. We're talking about 30 years ago. Then on border patrol. I don't know of any border patrolmen that lived in Missoula. Well, whatyoucallit there, what was the second guy I gave you?

JK: Evans?

LS: No, not Evans.

JK: Maywalt?

LS: No, not Maywalt. Kirkwood.

JK: Kirkwood?

LS: Bud Evans. But Evans was in the border patrol. He got in like I did after Fort Missoula.

JK: You mean, Bud Murdock?

LS: Oh, no, not Evans. Don't get me confused.

JK: Okay. (laughs). I know names.

LS: Bud Murdock.

JK: Murdock, okay.

LS: Yes, he was in the border patrol, but he didn't stay in very long. Bud transferred to border patrol, and I don't think he was in there...I doubt if he was in there a year.

JK: Did you get to know any of the Italians out there at all? Do you know if there's any in town?

LS: One time I was known for it because I was on the main gate for a long time, and I had to know about everybody's name. I knew just about every Italian that was in there.

JK: That's a lot of people.

LS: You can't believe it. What I first went there, there was nothing but confusion to me, because of their names. They was all Italian names. I should have remembered over all these years, that Prince Rostggelosi. I should have remembered his name. But I do, and Captain Saggleto.

JK: How did a prince end up there? Was he just on one of the ships?

LS: He was on that ship. I don't know what he was doing. He probably had a job on that ship of some type. I don't know.

JK: Yes. How do you spell his name, just so I can get these—

LS: I would say, now, R-o-s-t-e-g-g-l-o-s-i. I remember there was two "g"s in his name.

JK: And the Italian officer that you mentioned?

LS: Saggleto?

JK: Yes.

LS: He wass Captain Saggleto. S-a-g-g-l-e-t-o. His brother was also a sea captain, but he was off of a smaller merchant ship than the captain was. Most of these guys on that ship come from down around Milan or...What's that other town down there in Southern Italy?

JK: I don't know any of them, so—

LS: Milan was where most, a lot of them came from. I don't remember any Romans coming in there at all. I'll think of it pretty quickly.

[Sound of hammering]

LS: But see, they could correspond with their folks at home. They'd get letters once in a while.

JK: Was there any differentiation between the guys that had been picked up before the war, than those...I heard that there were some that were sent there as enemy aliens after the war had started.

LS: They had a few of them, but they didn't keep the them at Fort Missoula very long. Sent them out to Fort Lewis. In this article that I happened...that Joe wrote about in the paper. Did you read that article?

JK: Yes, I did.

LS: Well, I wrote about taking this, Wolfgang Thomas was his name, from Bismarck, North Dakota, to Fort Lewis. They was three of us guarding. Now, he was one of Hitler's A-plus men.

LS: He wasn't a big man, a little guy. But he was a ruffian. He escaped two or three times, and they got him again—the FBI got him. So they gave us the job of getting him from Bismarck to Fort Lewis. So we got a telegram, I think down around Butte someplace, and it said for Casebolt Williams (?) to get off at Fort Missoula when he was going through. Well, geez, we thought that was odd as could be. Because that's just left me there to guard old Wolfgang Thomas until we got to Fort Lewis. So we was going along there pretty good, and I had him in a seat down about halfway in the coach, and I was back at the back of the coach, watching all the time.

JK: Could he see you at all?

LS: No, he never did. Well, I guess we got way out on the other side of Spokane. He never turned his head except just like this, all the time. Wouldn't even look up. I told him when I first put him down. I said, "Now, this is going to be a repetition of (unintelligible). If I see you as much as make a move, I'll chain you to a seat so that you can't move. Can't (unintelligible)." So, the next day, I think I got (unintelligible). So, I went down and said, "You have to go to the bathroom?"

He said, "I got to go so bad that I can't hardly stand." He couldn't hardly talk. So, I took him back up to the end of the toilet. I didn't...The conductor and brakeman knew about him. So I always had one of them stay out in the hall, and I'd go into the toilet because he broke out of a train toilet window.

JK: Just like in one of the movies.

LS: Yes. So I went in there, and (unintelligible), come back out, so he didn't have no chance to get away. I didn't want him to get away. But he was pretty good. He never caused me no trouble. Not a bit. We'd feed him right there in his seat where he sit. (Unintelligible) diner.

JK: Did those trains have special provisions on them? You know, like bars on the windows, or anything?

LS: No, those didn't. No, and even our patrol transport trains did not. We had one whole train that, it was stationed in Seattle. When we'd go on a trip, it had a diner and two Pullmans and about eight coaches. That and the engine. That was the immigration train. I rode that train to New York and back several times and a half-dozen times in Tule Lake, and I don't know how many times in Santa Fe. Three or four times in Crystal City, Texas, and two times back in New Jersey. But, we had a bunch of them there...Let's see, we picked them up in Seattle. We had them in a hotel. I think there was about 80 of them.

JK: Who's this that you're talking about?

LS: Japanese. We dropped them off in fishing boats off on the coast, down along Oregon. We had them in this hotel, and we had the two floors, I remember, of Japanese prisoners. They were...I shouldn't say, prisoners. They were just Japanese. So I thought, I've always wanted to know how to spell "Slade" in Japanese. So I (unintelligible) and I said—I had a pen and a pencil—I said, Would you write 'Slade' on this thing here?"

He wrote it down—it's this thing like this, not this way—and it looks like an "f" almost with a couple little dings in the middle. So I thought, well, I'm going to outsmart that guy. So I went down the next floor, and the first Jap I saw, I said, "What's that say?"

He looked at me, and he said, "It says 'Slade'." So I knew it was right. I kept that paper for a long time. I finally learned how to make "Slade."

JK: That's kind of neat to know.

LS: What?

JK: That's kind of neat to know.

LS: Yes. I got a lot of nice Japanese stuff there at Fort Missoula. I got some of those rice paddy hats and some of those tie-platform shoes, kind of like sandals. I had some good Japanese books for a long time. I don't know where they ever went. We've moved several times since.

JK: Do you have pictures at all of what's out there?

LS: Just only what I had in *The Missoulian*. Otherwise, in personal pictures, it was taken out around the different people (unintelligible),

JK: Right. I read in one of the...I've read through some of the newspaper articles, and one of them said that they didn't allow individual pictures to be taken of the prisoners. They had to be group pictures.

LS: I've never heard that. I never saw them taking individual pictures, but I could have got a log of them if I'd wanted them. I could've got pictures all I wanted..

JK: So you don't know what that might have been in reference to, or—

LS: No, I don't. Probably they didn't want to identify any individuals. But this Dr. Cuomo, the ship doctor, I think Dr. Cuomo was a nice enough little fellow. Well, I think he was kind of like these...A ship doctor a whole lot of money in those days. I think probably like some of these horse doctors that we...in this country. I never...The Italians didn't depend on him too much either. They'd go over to...I was trying to think of that doctor's name.

JK: They'd go right to the other doctor?

LS: I don't know, but I think of it every once in a while. Yes, they'd go to him—our doctor. Course, us guards could go to him too. Anything wrong with us. I can't think of his name (unintelligible).

JK: Start talking about something else for a while and you'll think of it.

LS: You do that?

JK: All the time.

LS: Did you ever try to...is this tape yet still taping?

JK: Yes. Do you want me to turn it off?

LS: Yes, turn it off now.

[Break in audio]

JK: Yes.

LS: We had these four lookouts at each corner of the compound, and the boys up there had telephones and radios so if the telephone went out, you could still communicate with the main office with telephones. Because we'd lose electricity sometimes, and then maybe a telephone would quite. Each man was armed, of course, and then we had a riot gun. I don't know if you know what they are.

JK: No, I don't.

LS: We had a riot gun at each lookout.

JK: What are they?

LS: Shotguns. Sawed-off shotgun. Never had to use a gun. They just as well put Boy Scouts out there in our place instead of us, because it would have served the purpose. All we did was keep track.

JK: Lot of counting.

LS: Yes. Whenever we'd go inside the compound, we'd have to leave our guns at the main gate.. They had a place there to rack our guns, and we'd go in there, stick them in there. When we'd come back out, we'd pick it up. There were no guns in the compound.

JK: Even for the immigration officers?

LS: Well, I was an immigration officer.

JK: Oh, then, okay.

LS: Yes. Everybody was armed up there. Burt Fraser (?) was the officer in charge up there at Fort Missoula at that time.

JK: I wonder if he's related to...No, I'm thinking of somebody else.

LS: He had a brother that was worked in the (unintelligible). He was a manager, but I think he retired.

They'd dig a lot of potatoes down here in the Bitterroot, and I suppose the government paid these farmers for them (unintelligible). Well, I'm talking about lots of potatoes—truckloads of them. Then they went up there where the big water tank is. You know where that is?

JK: Yes.

LS: Right down underneath that big water tank, they'd went up there and pulled over, dug a great big long trench, and they duck the potatoes in there and cover it all with dirt. Well, when they wanted potatoes, they'd go out there and open one of them and get all the potatoes and fill it back up again. Because it wouldn't freeze in there. Potatoes would keep just as nice all winter long as anything. Then they'd have potatoes to eat. They eat a lot of potatoes. Of course, they eat a lot of spaghetti, too. But they didn't seem to like chili..

JK: Really? Did they do their own cooking?

LS: Oh, yes. Some of them were good cooks, too. See, over in the hospital, they had their cook. I'll tell you another little thing. They had their own cook, a kitchen, and dining room, and then everybody come in and they'd be served there. The boys that lived in the hospital compound. They had orderlies there that would help with the operation room and keep the place clean, and janitors and everything that they needed. They was about, oh, I guess 20, 20 that lived in the hospital. One time the cook come out, and it was early in the morning. He says, "We're going to have chicken soup." I used to like chicken soup. I don't anymore. I won't eat chicken soup (unintelligible). In the kitchen they had this great big kettle—this big around, this tall—sitting on one of those big kitchen stoves. These are the big old...great big kitchen ranges. To cook for 20 men, it takes quite a bit. I looked in there, and there was chickens, and their heads and all was just floating around. I would never eat chicken soup after that, and I won't eat it today.

JK: I don't blame you. They just didn't know how to fix them?

LS: The heads with the eyeballs and beaks still on.

JK: Did you tell anybody else, or did they just eat the soup?

LS: Oh, the Italians?

JK: Yes.

LS: Oh they knew it. They'd eat the heads.

JK: Oh boy. I can see why you don't eat chicken anymore.

LS: Now, the Japanese, we had to keep them pretty well supplied with fish. They liked fish. They were pretty crazy about fish. Fish and soy sauce. You give them fish and soy sauce, well, they're just happy as a clam.

JK: How did those two groups get along with each other?

LS: They never mixed much. You'd see two Italians walking down around the compound, and back (unintelligible) two Italians or three. You'd never see them mingle together. In the first place, we had a boy that worked in the hospital by the name of Joe. A real nice fellow. Italian. He could speak English. But outside of that, (unintelligible) Italian (unintelligible) the Japanese couldn't talk to them.

JK: I suppose, yes.

LS: Then that fence was...that fence was wired with an audio system. Sometimes you could look down and see two Italians coming, and you could hear them talking. You'd hear the radio up in the towers. You'd hear them talking.

JK: What was the purpose of that?

LS: Well, it's a sensitized fence, and if anybody tried to go over the fence, why, those the four units in those lookout towers would all really bounce. Let out a great big squawk. If they let out a squawk, why, everybody started looking what was doing it. It was a protective fence.

JK: Was Fort Lewis more secure than Fort Missoula?

LS: Fort Lewis was a mean place. It was the Army. Those boys was given order to shoot. We was instructed, when we'd go to work at Fort Missoula, that you didn't nobody unless, to preserve somebody's life. Of course, they couldn't get no place. In Missoula, we'd had them before the sun come up. See an Italian walking down the street, well (unintelligible).

JK: Yes (laughs). Kind of to stand out. Is that where they would send, to Fort Lewis then, the people, like the officers that were tried for espionage.

LS: Yes, like that Wolfgang Thomas that I was telling you about. They wanted him in Fort Lewis under Army supervision. (Unintelligible).

JK: The hard-core place.

LS: Now these Italians, like I say, that we had at Fort Missoula, they wasn't really what you could really class as a war prisoner. They were just detainees, you know.

JK: Were the people that were the prisoners like, some of the captains that went to trial and stuff, were they just put in regular prisons?

LS: Well, not in prisons. They were in army compounds. See, Fort Lewis had a huge jail there. Then along with that, we had our boys that were (unintelligible) and some of the conscientious objectors. We had some conscientious objectors in Fort Missoula. They were placed there

because they objected to be drafted. See, they'd get drafted, and they'd object to it. So they just kept them incarcerated during the war, too.

JK: Along with the others?

LS: Yes.

JK: How many of those were there?

LS: Five or six. But they were trustees. They could go around any place they wanted. Stay up to as late as they wanted to at night. There wasn't any of that kind of restriction on them boys.

JK: Right. How come they were put in the camps? Was that just not acceptable at the time?

LS: Well, that's kind of the punishment that they got for not going into the Army.

JK: Did they just stay there for the duration of the war, then, too?

LS: I don't know when they let those conscientious objectors out. They might have given them a year or two after the war was over.

JK: Really?

LS: Yes, they'd get more than what our prisoners would get.

JK: Geez. You said when they let the Italians out, they paid them for the whole time they'd been there.

LS: Yes, when they got back to Italy, they got a salary for every day they was in prison.

JK: Wow! Most of them went back to Italy then?

LS: Yes. Oh sure, they was...it was a woman. See, I lived in Seeley Lake before I came down here. They was a woman I found, and her name was...What was it? Jesse. J-e-s-s-e. She lives at Seeley Lake today. She made the remarks that her father was in Fort Missoula—Italian. So one day I was in the store there, and I met her. I knew who she was, but I wasn't a friend. I said, "Somebody was telling me your father was out at Fort Missoula when it was there."

She says, "Yes, yes."

I said, "You know, I didn't exactly remember him, but I was out there at that time."

So her and I started an acquaintance there, but her father had been dead for several years. In fact, he went back to Italy.

JK: Do you know how many of them stuck around, and how many of them went back there?

LS: Well, they was—

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

LS: —that was the oldest brother.

JK: Then they eventually (unintelligible) back there.

LS: I don't know if they ever went back to Italy or not.

JK: Really?

LS: But he was a rather influential man in Italy. He was pretty well-off.

JK: Was he the spokesman for the Italians out there?

LS: Yes, yes.

JK: You know, I heard he's living in New York now.

LS: I don't doubt it. I don't doubt it at all. Because he married that...I did know at one time what her name was. I can't recall now. She worked in the office there, in the immigration office. She was an American girl. Pretty good-looking girl, too. So he started up an acquaintance with her in Fort Missoula, and they got married. But she was only about...I think she was in her late 20s at that time, and Captain was about 50 then. So he was quite a lot older than her.

JK: Yes, I'm not sure if that's...My notebook's out in the car, but the man at the Fort, who's in charge of all of the historical stuff out there, gave me the name of somebody living in New York who was the spokesman for the Italians at the time.

LS: That would be Captain Sagletto.

JK: Yes. I guess he was back here a few years ago and just looked at the Fort.

LS: I imagine he probably come by to visit the old stomping ground. I don't remember what he, or his brother's, names were. All I ever heard him called was Captain Sagletto. The guys respected him pretty much, I remember. They all listened to him. He wasn't an Italian to look at him. He looked more like an Irishman. Was red-faced. He was a nice-looking man, but he didn't look like an Italian. You know, those Italians mostly had dark skin, but he had a tendency to be more like a Norwegian or a Swede.

JK: Right (laughs). Scandinavian.

LS: I don't remember those guys having any pets at all, like dogs or cats. I don't remember any in that whole group. When they put on those shows over there, there's several of the boys that'd be women. (Unintelligible) an outsider (unintelligible).

JK: You would know? Did you remember what any of the shows were?

LS: (Unintelligible). I couldn't remember them, they were just...good plays to go see.

JK: Really? Could the public in Missoula come to them?

LS: Yes, anybody could go see them. Us guards if we was off-duty, we'd all go to them. (Unintelligible). I don't know if I left out anything that would of interest.

JK: I can't think of anything else right now.

LS: I can't either. The only thing is that I can say, as a past immigration officer, is there wasn't a bunch of prisoners that ever had it any better than they did at Fort Missoula. I think that you'd pick up any of those guys today and ask them, they'd say it was one of the most pleasant places they'd ever been in their life.

JK: Like if they hadn't been apart from their families, they would—

LS: Yes. There wasn't any of them had to work, see. Well, they did. I take that back because some of them had to keep the barracks...They had a lot of time, their turn to keep up the barracks and little things like sweep the sidewalks and that kind of stuff. They kept things pretty clean around there. Like that hospital compound, why, they kept the grass mowed and the trees all trimmed.

JK: Did they work to help build those later barracks and stuff?

LS: No, they never know they never built...Those that had been in barracks the government would have sent (unintelligible) to put up the barracks. At the time that I was there, they did put up a barracks or two, but that was a temporary barracks. That was all done by the (unintelligible).

JK: Really? They didn't use any of the men out there.

LS: No, none of those Italians, no. Be kind of hard, even back in those days, but hard (unintelligible). They wouldn't haul a (unintelligible) or a saw or a hammer or nothing. You'd have to start from scratch.

JK: Did they pick up more English, or did you guys pick up more Italian?

LS: Yes, I told Miomi out there at the hospital. He was 50 years old...he was 60 years old. He and I could talk, just talk like a couple of natives. I mean, I didn't know any Italian, and he didn't know any English. Of course, took a little time. I remember I used to always go to work in the morning, and he'd always be out taking...He always wore a cap. He'd take his cap off and bow to me. "Buono."

JK: (laughs) They'd say "Buono," yes, right.

LS: Then when I'd leave in the evenings, same thing. They wasn't any of them that got terribly sick the whole time that they was there. There wasn't any of them that ever got hurt in the time they was there.

JK: Pretty calm the whole time, then.

LS: Yes, there wasn't much excitement going on. But here two of them going along talking, you know, they'd sound like a couple of Jews jabbering. Talking in Italian, you couldn't get heads or tails.

JK: Really. I bet it was hard for a while, before they picked up—

LS: Well, I can see, I took Spanish, that I could of understood those Italians pretty good. I don't know, on their composition....conjugations of verbs, I don't know whether they do them the same as they do in Spanish or not.

JK: I don't know. I don't know any foreign languages.

LS: You never had Spanish?

JK: No.

LS: You don't want to go into border patrol school? Haber, haber—H-a-b-e-r—is to "I speaks." So the instructor...I'd been in Spanish for a couple or three weeks, and he said, "Slade, conjugate the verb 'haber.'" So I said, "It's h-a-o-n, and h-a-i." That's I speak, you speak, we speak, and they speak, see. So I got up and I said, "He, ha, hemos, and han."

He said, "Jesus Christ, you sound like a jackass." The "h" is silent, see. It's "ee," "aa," "emos," and "an." So I was pronouncing that "h." I sounded like a mule braying. The class down there in El Paso, it still is a really tough course to take.

JK: You had to learn a lot, fast, I bet.

LS: You had to learn a lot in a hurry. Well, you take a Spanish college course in Spanish in 16 weeks, and that's cramming it down pretty hard.

JK: Yes, sure. Normally they use at least a year or so.

LS: Yes. We went down...we'd by those verb wheels. All the bookstores in El Paso, and we'd get them over in Juarez, too. You know what a verb wheel is?

JK: When you—

LS: Yes. That's a great advantage. But they tell me the best way to speak, learn Spanish, is to get in a family who's got two or three little kids. You learn more from the kids than you will from the grown people.

JK: Probably go a little slower and don't use as many words and stuff.

LS: Yes. So if you learn Spanish as a kid growing up, you'll learn it (unintelligible) without even trying. You don't have to sit down and study it.

JK: I thought that was funny in that article that Joe did on you, that as soon as you'd learn the language and stuff, they'd transfer you up to the—

LS: Northern border, yes. No, that wasn't really that. It was the boys that were raised down in Texas on the border.

JK: Okay, that makes sense.

LS: They'd send them to New York and up in Northern Washington where I was stationed, out of Vancouver. Then they'd send all these boys down to the Southern border. I got a transfer to Nogales Texas [Arizona], and I got a transfer to (unintelligible). They can have them both.

JK: (laughs) Didn't like it down there?

LS: No. The reason I didn't at that time, one of my daughters was about 12, and my youngest daughter was about eight. They said if they did find a house, it'd probably have a dirt floor. Two or three of the boys had been through the mill before me, and you could get a transfer down there. I just wouldn't take it. They'd move all your furniture, pay all your expenses, all your family's expenses. Then when you get down there and decide you want to quit, there you are, see, with all your furniture and refrigerators and stoves and radios and all that stuff.

JK: Then they wouldn't pay to get you out of there?

LS: No. Not a penny. They should almost pay a man's expenses back to his original enlistment (unintelligible).

JK: You'd think so.

LS: Think so. But they paid good for back in those days. When I got a transfer, when I got transferred up to Washington, there's a big moving van came right in, packed all our stuff, and we didn't even have to open the dresser doors. They packed all them. Drove right up in the yard there in Washington, and unloaded every bit of it, put it right in the rooms. At that time, it was pretty good money. I got 15 dollars a day, and freight individual got...your train for under five dollars. That'll pay for you eats on the train (unintelligible).

JK: Yes, that's not bad at all.

LS: No, it wasn't bad. But the Canadian border was real good. You don't want to hear anything about the Canadian border. It was a real good place to work. The Mexican border, you had to be alert all the time.

JK: Yes. More activity and stuff down there.

LS: You could get shot down there (unintelligible). So you had to be on your toes all the time.

JK: Doesn't sound too good.

LS: I was saying about the Immigration Service, it seems like that, our government needs somebody with the right capacity to take control of that system. You work in it, and you can see their faults. The customs...We'd be sitting up there on the Canadian border at night. Down a half-mile from us would be sitting a customs. You had two guys in that patrol car, and two in our patrol car. When they could have united customs and patrol and made it all one. Because we was going to stop any customs stuff, and they was going to stop alien stuff anyway. We was serving the same purpose exactly.

JK: Duplication.

LS: Duplication. That's all it was.

JK: It sounds like you've traveled around and stuff a lot.

LS: I don't know how many thousands of miles I've travelled.

JK: Too many to count.

LS: For two years I wasn't home at all. I was gone all the time. Over to Seattle. Then when I went back, actually that was a transportation thing pretty well settled. I went back to patrolling. I was acting immigration officer at the...blame Washington. All of use patrolmen were at the capacity of an immigration officer. Acting immigrant inspector. That's a pretty good...We called

ourselves, “frontline diplomats,” because we could tell somebody to go on or bring them in, either one. We had the authority to do it. Let them in or kick them back out.

JK: Yes, that's a big job.

LS: Well, it's one of the responsibilities. I had some real interesting cases up in Washington, but nothing like down in southern border. You're out on the border patrol, and I can tell you (unintelligible).

JK: Really. I bet there is lots of stuff that goes on down there.

LS: Yes. This border patrolman—he's retired now—that was just here to visit me tells me that as time goes by, it's getting worse and worse down there. They have more trouble controlling (unintelligible).

JK: He stayed down there working then?

LS: Yes, he bought a home in San Diego. Lives out on the beach there. But he's got an aunt that lives in Great Falls, and he comes up two or three times a year and he always comes to see me.

JK: That's kind of nice for you.

LS: I was thinking about going down if it got cold.

JK: If it gets cold (laughs).

LS: I've got all my stuff ready, and if it gets cold, I'm going to go down to Mexico and spend the winter.

JK: Sounds like a good idea.

LS: I know where to go. I can take my Social Security check and live cheaper down there than I can here.

JK: Do you have friends and stuff to stay with down there?

LS: I know different places to go, (unintelligible). Of course, if a person didn't have, they'd better stay away. Shouldn't go down there (unintelligible).

JK: Well, it got cold enough here last winter. Were you around for that at all?

LS: Yes, I've been here three winters. But this winter here is starting off pretty good, too.

JK: Yes, it is.

LS: I don't think last winter down right here in this particular (unintelligible), I don't think we ever had much below zero. See, we had zero...below zero several times.

JK: Well, because up in Missoula it was below zero three weeks or so.

LS: I don't know...I don't try to prophesize the weather at all.

JK: Really? That's asking for doom (laughs).

LS: It doesn't do any good.

JK: Well, I can't think of anything else right now.

LS: No, I think that covers about Fort Missoula.

JK: Yes. Thanks a lot for letting me take your time.

LS: You're welcome. Glad to help.

JK: I'll be sure to get you a copy of these tapes then. Let me write down your address, because I'll probably just mail them down to you.

LS: Yes, it's Box 144 A.

JK: In Stevensville?

LS: Route 2. Stevensville.

JK: I thought it might be kind of fun for you have.

LS: Yes, I never regretted the experience that I got there. Always pleasant thoughts off and on about where a lot of the guys are today.

JK: Yes, I bet. Just wondering what they're doing and stuff.

LS: There's several of the fellows that worked out there that I know is dead. Some of the guys was 50 years old then. I wasn't even 50 at that time.

JK: How old were you when you were out there?

LS: Let's see, I was just 33 when I went to Fort Missoula. See, you take a guy who was 50 years old, he'd be 80 years old by now.

JK: Yes, for sure. It's good to get this down. It's nice to get stories and stuff.

LS: Yes, it's part of my history of what went on in Fort Missoula.

JK: Yes. There'll be a copy of these tapes at the archives at the University, too.

LS: Okay.

JK: So if anyone ever gets ahold of you again you can let them know about that.

LS: There was a fellow that was...How long you been in Missoula?

JK: Five years.

LS: Well, he was here five years ago. He was a guard there at the Western Montana Bank. Remember they used to have a little booth out there? That booth on the parking lot?

JK: I don't...Oh, yes, yes, okay.

LS: Well, he was a border patrolman.

JK: Really, that's not the same guy that's there now though?

LS: No, he's dead. Jensen (?) was his name. He lived up Miller Creek or some place. (Unintelligible) was an old retired highway patrolman fellow. (Unintelligible).

JK: How's your famous cat doing? (laughs)

LS: She's all right. She's around here someplace. Do you want to see her?

JK: Yes, I would, after I—

LS: She's a funny cat.

JK: Let me just turn this off.

[End of Interview]