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**Oral History Number: 006-003**
**Interviewee: Glen A. Smith**
**Interviewer: N/A**
**Date of Interview: circa 1950s**
**Project: Glen A. Smith Reminiscences Oral History Project**

Glen Smith: When I was a supervisor on the Beartooth Forest I became acquainted with an old bachelor that did a little prospecting and mining—lived up on the west fork of Rock Creek. He was a peculiar old duck and he had an idea that he was a poet and every time he saw me go by his place, which was a few times a year, he would call me in and recite some of his poetry. He gave me some, but I don't remember what I have done with it. I recall one piece of poetry that he was very proud of and it was written about a little cayuse pony that he had. It was written about him. "The pony is a carnivorous bugger, that's what I say, why don't he live on vegetation? Why don't he eat hay?" Then he went on for several verses, but he wound up by saying that when the pony reached the pearly gates, he'd show those pinto fillies how to cut the figure eight.

On March the 17th, 1898, I left Rich Hill, Missouri, with Charles McPheron for Kalispell. At the present time I can't understand why they routed us from Kansas City to St. Paul. There we took the Great Northern to Kalispell. The trip took three days and three nights. The big shoebox full of chicken and other goodies my sister fixed for me didn't last the trip through. It was my first experience in having my meals in a dining car.

There were some funny things that happened on the way—at least to a boy of my age. One was there were four young Germans going to Seattle who drank great quantities of beer. Seemed like about every station we stopped at they got off and bought a basket full of beer bottles. They also ate great quantities of cheese. Someplace in Minnesota a big dark man got on who called himself "Black Dan, the bull of the jungles". He was pretty well teed up but he had a bottle in his hand and wanted everybody to drink with him. Apparently, he was drunk on beer because that was what he was drinking when he came on the train. And he fell in pretty well with the Germans and they all got pretty hilarious. This Black Dan tried various times to get me to drink with him and I would not drink with him. He got pretty sore at me and I finally asked the conductor to see if he couldn't keep him from bothering me and the other passengers. One passenger was a Chinese with a long queue, and he sat all by himself down on the front end of the day coach. Black Dan on a number of occasions tried to get the Chinaman to drink with him but the Chinaman refused. Finally, he grabbed the Chinaman by the queue, pulled him back over the seat, turned his face straight up in the air, and poured a whole bottle of beer right in his face. The conductor came in just in time to see this escapade and he gave warning if he didn't settle down and behave himself, he'd put him off the train. Well, after considerable argument, the old fellow did settle down and did not bother any of the rest of us.

I remember as we approached the Flathead Valley, I became very curious to know what kind of country we were getting into and I went out on the back platform just above Columbia Falls.

The main line of the Great Northern at that time was through Kalispell. I stood on the back platform all the way from Columbia Falls to Kalispell and it was almost solid woods or timber between Columbia Falls and Kalispell. I recall two or three little clearings of a few acres and a little old cabin set out in this clearing. The sight is still clear in my mind because it was early in the morning and pretty near every cabin had a little smoke coming out of it like people were getting up and starting the first fire. When we finally reached Kalispell and I got a look around, I found out that the valley wasn't all timber. But today if you' d ride up between Kalispell and Columbia Falls you would probably think that that country was always a prairie country. But there was hardly a break, as I say, in the timber between Columbia Falls and Kalispell. I've been informed by people who have lived in timbered areas where they have been brought under cultivation, that it takes about two generations to break down a timber stand and bring it into a state of cultivation. I suppose that depends a great deal upon the fertility of the soil but apparently the land between Kalispell and Columbia Falls is pretty fertile because they have raised good crops there for many years.

One of the things that was interesting to me, and probably had something to do with my decision to enter the Forest Service, was the summer of 1898 when fires raged along the mountains from Bigfork to Bad Rock Canyon and even further north than that. I recall how people used to go out on the hills east of Kalispell at night to view the wonderful sight of the fire running wild on the mountains east of Kalispell. While it was quite spectacular, I always had a feeling of distress when I thought of the timber burning up and baring the watersheds. I made inquiry as to why somebody didn't do something about it. I was told quite often that that was public domain and belonged to the government and the only government agency was the forest reserve people and that the supervisor for that territory was a fellow by the name of Brennan—I believe he was called "Tin Plate Brennan"—and that he lived at Bigfork. As far as I can determine there was no one that did anything about it.

I was told that the fire was started by lightning, but I always—at least at that time—figured that that wasn't true because I never saw any lightning all during the summer of 1898. It was quite a relief to me because the country from which I came was quite a lightning country and there we used to have some terrific lightning storms. As a matter of fact, as I recall it, for four or five years after I landed at Kalispell, we had very little lightning, and I used to write my sister about how free from lightning that country was. But later on, the lightning has played an important part in forest fires as I came to know. At the present time the Forest Service is putting on quite a steady program to determine whether or not there's anything that can be done to control lightning or prevent lightning. This sounds rather farfetched but there are a lot of things that men have done that were no further farfetched than this seems to be.

A while back I dictated some about getting married to Cressie Rowe at their home on the banks of the Missouri River ten miles down the road from Fort Benton, Montana. Since then I have thought of several things that seemed of interest to me and might be of interest to others. During the winter of 1904, as I reported, I stayed at their ranch all winter and fed cattle and cut wood and played cards and enjoyed ourselves quite thoroughly. I recall that the Missouri froze



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over that winter and she had a brother and his wife who lived about six miles down the river. On at least one occasion we took a team and sleigh and drove right down the middle of the Missouri River for six miles to visit her brother. I don't know whether that has ever happened before or since, but there didn't seem to be anything to worry about when we made the trip. I remember her brother coming in the evening and he had two eggs, and he told his wife that if it wasn't for Glen and Cressie that they'd each have an egg for breakfast. I suppose that at that time of year when it was so cold the hens weren't laying very regular, but it sounded funny to me.

Another instance happened later on in the year when I happened to be down at the Rowe ranch one spring when the water was pretty high. Mrs. Smith and I thought that we'd go across the river to see another brother who had a homestead on the other side of the river. We rode down to the river about three quarters of a mile from the house and throwed our saddles in a boat. We were going to lead our horses behind the boat. The river was pretty high at that time and these horses had swam the river a good many times. For some reason or another, one of them tried to get into the boat when we were about half way across and I thought for a while that he was going to swamp us: but we turned him loose and he drifted on down river and came out about a half of mile down the river on the right side of the river. So there was nothing lost in the deal, but he sure had us scared for a little bit.

Another instance that happened was Mrs. Smith's folks are English and her father came from England when he was seven or eight years old and she has a number of cousins in England. One young chap, about 18 or 20 years old came by the ranch on a visit. Well, the practice at that time was to turn the horses loose after haying was over and let them run on the range until next haying season. One morning I was going to go down in the rough breaks on the lower ranch seven or eight miles to bring up the hay horses because in a few days we expected to start haying. Her cousin thought he'd like to go along. Well, I wasn't very anxious to take him because these horses. When you run into them, you had to really ride to get them out of those breaks and if you didn't stay right on their tails you were liable to lose them anytime. I was afraid that if he was along that I would lose him, and I'd have to hunt him besides hunting the horses. So I made the excuse that I didn't have a gentle saddle horse for him to ride. So Cressie spoke up and said, "We'll let him ride Billy, my horse." Well, Billy was as gentle as western horses go but when things didn't suit him, why he could be about as ornery as any of them.

So I said, "All right, get on your outfit and come down to the barn. I'll go down and saddle Billy up for you." I saddled up Billy all right, but I put a couple of big old cockleburs under each side of his saddle. Her cousin came down with his English riding boots and a little pair of spurs about the size of a quarter but with a needle-sharp rowels in them.

He mounted Billy and Billy began to squirm around with all those cockleburs under the saddle. And he said, "I say, What's the matter with this horse?"

I said, "Oh, he's all right, just kick him a little with those spurs." So he did, and Billy immediately bowed his head, throwed him off in a big water tank that was brim full. It was a tank about ten feet across. I hadn't expected that, but I didn't cry or anything about it. He crawled out of the water trough and started for the house and I kept on my saddle horse and went down and rounded up Billy and led him back to the barn, pulled the saddle off, and beat it for down in the valley after the work horses. I got back about 2:00 in the afternoon and after throwing these horses in the corral, I went up to the house and Mrs. Smith met me at the door and she said, "What did you do to Billy this morning?"

I said, "I didn't do anything to him." "Oh, yes you did," she said.

Well, I said, "What did the chap say when he came up?"

Well, she began to laugh and said, "He came up here like a drowned rooster and wet from head to foot and I asked him what happened, and he said [in an English accent], 'Don't you know?' he said, 'That horse bounded and rebounded and it was impossible for me to remain seated.'" Well, we had a good laugh about it. But finally, I told her what I did, but I never let him know what happened to the horse.

Another little incident that happened while I was there—one day her brother and I were going downtown to Fort Benton to get some supplies and get some repairs for our mower. And he [the cousin] wanted to know what he could do to help us out while we were gone and her brother, Charlie, told him he could grease the mower if he wanted to. Well, when we came back, he had the wheels all greased and the tongue all greased, and the seats of the mower all greased but few of the bearings on the mower were greased.

I wish to record the taking of the ranger examination on May 4th, 5th, and 6th, 1906, at Kalispell. Mr. F.N. Haines, supervisor of the Blackfoot Forest at Kalispell conducted the ranger examination which consisted of two days of field test and one day written test. The first day of the examination was devoted to making some simple surveys with the compass and an inquiry into our knowledge of the use of the compass. Also, we were taken down to a 40-acre tract of timber along the Flathead River and we were to make a map of this 40-acre tract and an estimate by species of the soft timber on the 40 acres. We were required to fall a tree: we were to drive a stake out 50 or 60 feet from the tree and see how close we could go to fall the tree on that stake. It was rather interesting to watch some of the fellows who had never used an axe very much to see how they beavered off the tree. Fortunately, I had had sufficient experience in use of an axe, and the falling of a tree, that I was able to drive a stake with the falling of the tree.

Another deal was by the use of a compass to run a triangle of 500 paces on the three sides of the triangle. It was rather interesting to see how confuse d some of the boys got with reference to the direction they should go after the first side was run. Having, however, used the compass quite a little bit, I was able to close my triangle within about ten feet which, I assume from the

nod Mr. Haines gave me, that I had done a pretty good job. Some of the fellows didn't come out within 200 feet. Some of the men who are still about the country who took the examination the same time was Jack Clack, Roscoe Haines—son of supervisor Haines—and Ed Stahl. Ed and Roscoe are both gone. I can't think of anybody else.

It was rather interesting, the day that we were riding horses and packing them, we also had to do some rifle shooting. One lumberjack, I don't think had ever seen a horse or had been able to ride one before, was a regular clown. When it came his turn to saddle up and ride this horse, he put the saddle on and cinched it up, and when he got the horse cinched up he had about four or five feet of cinch left so he wrapped it around the saddle horn. When he got ready to mount the horse, he didn't put his feet in the stirrups, he just grabbed the saddle horn and jumped on and he rode the horse down about 100 yards to a stake which was set up for us, turned him around and came back and didn't use the stirrups at all. When he got back, he jumped off the horse without using the stirrups. Then when he packed the horse, he got the sawbuck pack saddle on and he had no more idea than the man in the moon how to put the stuff on: so he began to use the rope that was given him for tying a diamond to tie various articles on the horse and when he got through there were pots and pans and this and that tied all over the saddle with his main rope and when he put the bed on he didn't have anything to tie it with. So he made the statement that he'd walk alongside of the horse and keep the beds from falling off.

We took turns demonstrating packing. Mr. Haines put the 24 of us in the barn and he let us out alphabetically. Well, my name being Smith, I got out pretty late in the deal, but there were some pretty large cracks in the barn a we used to watch the other guys pack and got quite a kick out of it and in the meantime I proceeded to give lessons in throwing a diamond to about a half a dozen of the fellows in there who had never had any experience. I had a nail keg in there and I put it on a pole and used that as a saddle and with the use of some heavy twine I showed the boys how to throw a diamond. Some of them got the idea pretty well, but others were utterly confused when they got out to do anything with the actual packing of the horse.

I suspect that right now a good many of the fellows that are coming into the service would have a pretty tough time throwing diamonds and being put through the paces of the use of the compass that we were. At any rate, today there's only a written examination and no field experience is required. I still think the old examination was a pretty good gauge as to a man's knowledge of certain requirements that were imposed upon the forest officers at that time.

It was interesting to note that we didn't really hear anything about the rate in the examination until late in October, and when I got my notice of examination, I had a rating of 86 and two-tenths. I told Mrs. Smith that I was disappointed, and I thought I ought to pass the examination with a better score than that. But since I hadn't done so well, I thought we would just keep it quiet—not say anything about it. [We should] probably give up the idea of going into the Forest Service, not realizing that it wasn't so much how well you passed the examination but how well

you performed after you were given a job. Well, at any rate, along in November I met Supervisor Haines on the street one day and he said, "Why haven't you been up to see me?"

And I said, "Why?"

"Well, I thought you might be up looking for a job, "he said, "You passed that range examination."

"Well, Mr. Haines," I said, "I did so poorly with it that I was ashamed to come up."

He said, "You were the second highest man in the state of Montana."

I said, "Quit kidding me."

He said, "Well hold on a minute there, son, I'll show." I went up there and he had a list of about 70 people who had passed the examination and George Slack was the head of the list and I was next with only a tenth of a point difference between George and I. I was plumb surprised at this because there were a number of fellows that took the examination who had been working for the Forest Service as forest guards and I assumed that these boys had picked up enough knowledge to pass the examination with pretty high marks. Well, this encouraged me some and a few days later he called me or wrote me a letter, I believe, and offered me a job as assistant ranger in the Kootenai Forest, which was to be put under administration on January 1, 1907. Roscoe Haines and Ed Stahl both passed the examination, so the three of us were singled out to report to Libby, Montana, on January 1, 1907.

For three or four days prior to January 1, it snowed constantly and the trains of the Great Northern were nullified for three consecutive days. At least twice during that time the railroad reported that the train would be through at a certain time and since the train—the main line at that time went by way of Whitefish—we were taken up to Columbia Falls and there piddled around for four or five hours. Then the train would be canceled again, and we'd be brought back to Kalispell. But finally, I think it was on the fourth day of January about 2:00 in the afternoon we arrived in Libby. And it had been snowing there equally as bad, if not worse, and there was about 48 inches of snow on the level. I recall walking up the street that day to a little old hotel. They had barely shoveled out a path and looking across the street at anybody on the other side, you could just see his head and shoulders. There hadn't been a lane of any kind down the main street. I do not believe there has been that much snow in that country since. There has been times when the water in the river was a little high when the snow went off, but I don't think that they had that much snow around Libby since that time. At any rate, there didn't seem to be much we could do.

We did find that the post office was holding a lot of supplies—several mail bags full of supplies. Mr. Haines had made arrangements for an office in what has been called the old town site building which was between the railroad track and the Kootenai River about where the present

bridge is across the river. We also had some furniture to unpack and started to set up and we unpacked the stationary and other forms that were few at that time compared with the thousands of forms that are used today. I recall that we had several books called the Green Book and the Red Book. The Green Book was with reference to forestry followed by Giff or d Pinchot and had a few regulations, about seven as I recall. The Red Book was fiscal regulations and there were about 10 or 12 of them. I think at that time I knew all of those regulations by heart which would be an impossibility to recall all the regulations and instructions that are available at the present time for forest officers.

One of those things that seemed to be the uppermost in Mr. Haines[1] mind was the location and withdrawal of ranger station sites, I believe that they were called administrative sites, even though they were on national forest lands or forest reserve lands as they were known in those days. They were to be given special status as administrative land and not subject to any other use except administrative use, or subject to any of the various land laws that might apply such as the act of June, 1906, and the mineral laws which were applicable on the forest reserves.

[Break in audio]

Another job was to build up a book of status of the patented land within the forest reserves in or near the forest reserves, or land that had been filed upon for mineral, [unintelligible] or other purposes. So I was taken back to Kalispell on a number of occasions to search the land office records the land offices being located in the Kalispell for that territory. Another job was to built a map of the Kootenai Forest Reserve and that also fell to me to work on. Outside of a limited amount of land surveys, there was little available to use as the basis for a map. So it occurred to me that the Great Northern survey for the right-of-way should give a pretty good line to tie to because it ran practically through the center of the area of forest reserve lands and I, therefore, was able to see the superintendent at Whitefish to secure a travers e of the survey of the Great Northern Railroad to which I tied practically all the map to.

Since we had not been allowed any expense money while we were in Libby, it became quite evident to Haines, Stahl and myself that we had to get some place where we could batch. So, upon inquiring around, I found out that there was a cabin across the Kootenai River and about a half a mile down the river that had been used by the county as a pesthouse. On inquiry as to who owned the cabin, we were told that a man by the name of Postmaker owned it, but he had left for parts unknown. We therefore decided to use the cabin and went over and spent a couple of days cleaning it up and getting some supplies so we could batch there. We built a couple of bunks out of some old lumber we found in a barn at the place and bought some ticking and made ourselves some bedticks and and filled it with old hay that we found in the barn for mattresses. With the use of the blankets that we had brought, we were fairly comfortable as far as beds were concerned. There was an old table in the cabin and by the purchase of a cheap sheet-iron stove, we were able to set up housekeeping. Shortly after we had pretty well settled down we found that pack rats claimed part of the cabin and caused considerable ruckus. One day I spent the whole day going around and nailing pieces of tin all



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over places that pack rats could get in. However, I left one big knothole right underneath my bed where I could shove a suitcase on top of the hole. If anything got in there I'd thereby have a chance to get the rascals. So one night when Mr. Haines came over to see how we were getting along he had dinner with us and stayed and we played solo until about 10:00 at night. He started to go home, and I went with him down to the ferry but no one would come after him at that time of the night so we came back and he stayed all night with us. We had not been in bed more than about 15 or 20 minutes when I heard a pack rat out in the kitchen. He knocked over some pans. I shoved the suitcase over the knothole that he came in. I went out and lit a lamp on the table. I should explain that there were two rooms in this cabin with a board partition about eight feet high which divided the cabin into two rooms. I lit this light and the pack rat ran up into the end gable. I took a 45 Colt that was hanging on the wall—I think it belonged to Ed Stahl—and blazed away at the rat. The concussion knocked the light out and in a closed cabin, that old six shooter about knocked your eardrums out, too. I remember Mr. Haines jumped out in the middle of the floor and hollered, "My God, what was that?" It was perfectly dark, but I couldn't help but laugh and he wondered what was going on. I told him that I shot a pack rat. He told me afterwards that what flashed through his mind was that the natives had decided, "Well, we got those four forest officers over there and it's a hell of a good time to blow them up." So he was sure that that was what had happened—they'd put a dynamite blast under our cabin. When I showed him I only killed a pack rat, he said he felt quite a relief.

As I recall it, we stayed in this cabin for about two months. Later on, Ed Stahl and I went out to Pipe Creek and stopped at the Doak Ranch, which was the only cabin out in that territory, having secured Mr. Doak's permission. The day we packed out it was about ten below zero and we carried our bedding and enough grub to last us four or five days on our backs and snowshoed out to this cabin nine miles. There was no trail broke out and it was quite a job to—an undertaking really—to make that nine miles, and when we got into the cabin we were pretty well tired out. I had, however, bought two great big round steaks—beef steaks—and we thought they would last us a couple of days. I had them in a flour sack and that night I hung them out on the end of the roof logs that extended over for a porch thinking that nothing could get at them. But in the morning, they were gone and there was a big old black cat around there that swelled up like a balloon. This cat had gotten up there and gotten those steaks down and what she didn't eat she pulled under the cabin. So, there we were without a speck of meat except a little bacon. Stahl used to just set and looked at that cat and said, "If you ask me, I have a notion to cut you open and get those steaks yet." The next day after landing at the Doak cabin, we looked around for an old cabin that Doak had told us about that was an old trapper's cabin that we could use. This old trapper's cabin was about a 14-by-16 feet cabin, but it was only about four foot and a half at the eaves, and it had a dirt roof and not a window or a door. We got some gunny sacks from Doak's place and fixed up some temporary protection over the windows and doors. Over in one corner was a fireplace. This fireplace had been used that fall by some hunters and the ashes were pretty well piled up in it. I should explain that there was no floor in this cabin and the dirt was pretty dry and had a lot of pea gravel in it. I recall that night that we had a big log in the front of the fireplace to keep the fire from rolling out because the ashes had gotten wet and had frozen and any fire we built in there would roll out into the



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cabin. So we had a log about ten inches in diameter in front of it to keep the fire in. We went to bed that night with an army blanket apiece—there was an old bunk roll in the corner. We had to sleep with our clothes on in order to keep warm. Along in the middle of night, this log in front of the fireplace burned in two and some of it rolled down into the room and I woke up almost suffocated by the smoke. I was on the back side of the bed and I nudged Stahl and he come up coughing and started to run for the door.

[Break in audio]

He didn't realize that through the middle of the cabin was a log about four and a half feet high which was used to brace the roof. He hit his head on this log; knocked himself down. The fire had thawed out a lot of ice and snow in the old fireplace and chimney and it had run down in the middle of the floor right underneath this log so here was Stahl, down in the middle of this little puddle of water very badly dazed. I got up and grabbed him and helped him along to get outside. But it was ten below, so we didn't stay out any longer than we had to. We ripped the gunny sack off of the window and the door and the smoke was soon cleared out enough that we could get back in the cabin and restore our log in front of the fireplace and rebuild it. I remember Stahl's remark after we got things pretty well straightened out and we started back to bed. He said, "Solid grub and solid comfort." We certainly had solid comfort because our little bunks were just about as solid as you could make them. The grub that night had consisted of bacon, some hot cakes that we had made or bannocks. I don't know that many people today know what a bannock is, but we made this dough like you would bread, except we used baking powder and we mixed it very thick—thick enough that we could put it into a frying pan and after it was cooked slightly on either side, you could take it up and we had to set them up on edge in front of the fire and bake them that way. It was not bad bread, as a matter of fact, especially if you were really hungry.

I often think of the initiation that us boys had going into the forest service at that time compared with the stations of today—modern in practically every respect. But at any rate we didn't have a thousand and one regulations to tell us what to do. We decided in our own mind what was to be done and went ahead and did it.

The next two or three days was spent in locating the vacant 40 acres of land on what was known as the "Pipe Creek Bench" and running it out and marking the corners; also in shoveling out a place for a cabin. We borrowed one scoop shovel and an ordinary shovel from Mr. Doak's place and started in to shovel out a place about 40 feet square upon which to establish a cabin. And if you think it's an easy job to shovel out a place 40-foot square with snow that is 48 inches on the level, you're badly mistaken. I think it took Stahl and me five days to get this thing shoveled out so that we could establish a cabin. We had no cement and no rocks and therefore the cabin bottom logs were laid right on the ground, which in later years I was criticized about. But if you think you can go out and find rocks to put a foundation under a cabin with four feet of snow on the level, you've got another guess coming.

According to the arrangement, Roscoe Haines was to hire a team and bring some supplies and a stove—our stove that we had in the other cabin—and other equipment that we had got together. On the fourth day he came out to this cabin. Well, since the road was not broke, it was way after dark when I went down the snowshoe trail that we had made to see if they were coming. About a mile and a half from the cabin, I ran into Roscoe Haines with a team and sleigh and a man who was working for Mr. Ramp who ran the livery barn at Libby at that time. The team was pretty well played out, but by following the old snowshoe trail we had built, Stahl and I tramped out a trail ahead of the team. We were able to make it back to the cabin about 12:00 that night. We were very happy to have a cook stove and some kitchen equipment. He had also brought some material so that we could make a door and also a window, which was not quite the right size, but we made it do. When we met the sleigh, both the teamster—I think he was one of the Reed boys—and Roscoe were pretty well lit up. As a matter of fact, I think if they hadn't been partially drunk they would have made it in a whole lot sooner than they did. But at any rate, the supplies, food, kitchen equipment and stove etcetera were very welcome.

The first few days that we were at the old trapper's cabin, we only had a very limited supply of baking powder and the day that the team was to bring the supplies, we were entirely out. So I said to Stahl, "How are we going to make any bread without any baking powder?" At that time, it was snowing in great big flakes. And he said, "Well, the thing to do is to catch some of that fresh snow, mix it up with flour and salt and whip this fresh snow into a stiff batter and cook it in a frying pan the same as we did with the bannock." Well, I did that, and I was surprised how this bread raised and was flaky and it really seemed to me like it was better than any baking powder bread I ever ate. Several times after that I tried the same deal and had the same success.

In the cabin across the river from Libby and having made our bed ticks from oat hay that we found in the old barn, I remember the old deer hides laying on top of the hay. In putting the hay into the bed ticks, I got some of the hair off of those deer hides onto my coat. A day or so later I was over in Plummer's Store in Libby with Roscoe Haines and was ordering the food while Haines was looking around the store to buy some other things for the cabin. I did not notice that Haines had not gone out so after ordering my supplies I went out. Roscoe told me later that four or five fellows who were sitting around the big pot-bellied stove warming their shins, had got to talking about us fellows living on game over there across the river. One fellow got up and went over where I had been standing and where I'd brushed some of the chaff off of my mackinaw coat and picked up a couple of deer hairs, brought it back, and shook it in front of the boys and said, "Tell me those boys are not living on game over there and look at this, deer hair all over the man's coat." They were very certain that that's what we were living on. As a matter of fact, we didn't have as much deer in our locker as a good many of those fellows had. We were very careful not to violate the game laws because we had been told by Mr. Haines that violation of the game laws would mean certain dismissal.

After we got pretty well settled in this cabin there was things to do or things we had to think up to do. One morning I decided to go up to the top of Sheldon Mountain to see if that could be

used as a fire lookout. I hadn't been able to get either Stahl or Haines to go with me, so one day I started out on skis and it was quite a climb to the top of Sheldon Mountain with a pair of skis, but it paid off in coming down. I know that I came off of Sheldon Mountain in about 20 minutes. When I struck the flat down along the base of Sheldon Mountain, I noticed off to my left a pretty nice looking cabin that I thought would be better than the one we were using, so I swung around that way and it looked like there was no one occupying it. I thought I'd make a grand circle abound the cabin so I got up quite a little speed to make this grand flourish around the cabin. I didn't notice that there was a fence around the cabin and the top wire was about four inches under fresh snow. Well, the skis cut through and sprayed snow on both sides which was quite delightful skiing, I made this grand flourish abound the cabin but hooked my feet under that top wire and went flat down face in the snow. It knocked the breath out of me and stretched me out so tight that I thought I never would get up again, I finally was able to wiggle my foot out of one ski and got myself up so that I could get a hold of the other ski and get it off. If there had been anything there that I could have slammed my face into I would have just about knocked myself out, I scouted around and it was a very nice cabin, but it belonged to some fellow in Libby and he would not lease it to us. As a matter of fact, he told me later that he was afraid to lease it to us because there was such a feeling against the Forest Service that he thought he would be ostracized socially if he had anything to do with a forest officer.

I remember Roscoe Haines and I was walking down the street there in Libby one day and [met] Mr. John Geiger who at that time was an ex-state representative from Flathead County, and who had pulled all the wires that he could to be made superintendent of the Kootenai Forest but failed. He remarked to some of the fellows standing by, "There goes a couple of those damn forest officers. Neither one of them's got sense enough to pound sand in a rat hole." This was said loud enough intentionally for us to overhear it. Neither one of us paid any attention to it but I had the pleasure, about ten years later, of telling old Mr, Geiger that I heard his remark and I always had it in my craw to nail it to him down and speak to him that the forest service wasn't such a bad group of fellows after all. He, of course, pled not guilty of making the statement, but it didn't make any difference and he apologized if he did make it and I guess everything was all right.

As a matter of fact, between he and our ex-senator Kennedy and Leo Faust who ran the local Libby paper, *Western News,* kept things pretty well sewed up around that part of the country concerning the withdrawal of public lands for national forest purposes and stalemating the development of the country, Practically every issue of the *Western News* carried some derogatory statement concerning us boys as individuals or condemning the policy of Gifford Pinchot and Teddy Roosevelt for the establishment of the national forest. I recall that Mr. Leo Faust and I had quite an argument about the area across the river from Libby known as the Pipe Creek Flats in which there was about a township and half of the land that was in this more or less level country. Faust maintained that that big flat should be logged off and put into agriculture. I took issue with regards to that, and furthermore that the land was in private ownership: that it had been selected by the state of Montana in lieu of section 16 and 36 that they had relinquished the right to and other parts of the national forest, and that it was

supposed to have been sold to individuals in tracts not more than 160 acres to each individual. And that the records showed that it was advertised for sale by the state and was sold at 2:00 a.m. on the steps of the capital building in Helena to a number of individuals. Taking the list of the names of the individuals that acquired the land, Mr. Faust could not identify one solitary person that had ever been in that country. It was only a short time until the land was transferred to the then Libby Lumber Company from these individuals. What they paid for it, I do not know, but it was sold rather cheaply to these individuals who were really a bogus transaction. When Mr. Faust found that out, he was docile for some time regarding criticism concerning the government and its employees.

One of the first jobs of the Forest Service was the selection of administrative or ranger station sites. I recall one of the first surveys that I made was on Swamp Creek about 20 miles south of Libby. At that time Mr. Simon Snyder was the main rancher on the Swamp Creek meadows. I got a tip from someone that he had some land fenced that was outside his patented land; so one day I went up there and I checked in on the section corner and run the section line down and landed in the middle of one of his meadows. It was getting quite late when I got down into the meadow, so I drove a stake there and figured on picking up there the next day and checking in further on the corner further on. In the morning I went out to where I had driven the stake and here came Mr. Snyder with a double-bitted axe and ordered me off of his place. I pointed out to him that I had run this section line down and that the land on the side of the line which I was standing was national forest or government land. He threatened me with the axe and tried to drive me out. I told him he could probably trim me up pretty well with that double-bitted axe but I'd take him on if he wanted to lay the axe down, and that even though he might run me off with that double-bitted axe or lay me out, that it would only be a short time before he would be in the clutches of the law. At any rate, I went on without any further difficulty at that time and found that he had about 25 acres of land that he had cleared the willows and logged off that was national forest land. I tried to convince him that he could modify his homestead on application to take in this particular piece of land if he so desired, but since he could not take the piece of land over a mile in length it meant that he would have to shift his land laws down the valley and that would leave a piece of land above his ranch that might become the property of Henry [unintelligible].

In the spring of 1907, Roscoe Haines, who worked with us that winter in building a cabin, was transferred to Kalispell and was given a job of checking up on the ties that were cut and piled along the side of the Great Northern Railroad. The idea being that a great many of these ties were cut in trespass and not on land owned by the tie cutter. Roscoe proceeded from Rexford to Libby by gasoline speeder and placed a government property notice on every pile of ties along the railroad track regardless of where they had been cut. It stirred up quite a turmoil, and Haines was a little leery of going back up the Kootenai on his gasoline speeder, so he had it shipped back to Fortine and picked it up there.

Shortly after that this particular strip of territory, which was then considered a part of the Blackfoot Forest, was transferred to the Kootenai; and it fell to me to make a careful check of

all the various ties that had been labeled property of the United States by Mr. Haines. I started out with a hand speeder from Libby and investigated about 50 or 60 piles of ties. I remember one old fellow, who I went to see about a pile of ties that was piled out from his place, was digging a drainage ditch from the meadow. I sat on the bank of this ditch while he was working away, and he didn't want to talk to me at all when he found out that I was a forest officer. I finally got out of him where the ties had been cut and found out that they were cut off from his land, but a few had been cut on national forest land. Figuring out the exact number, I decided he owed the government about $1.80. He told me that he didn't have a $1.80 and he was practically out of grub also. So, I told him that if he'd sign a letter of transmittal, I'd pay the bill and we'd call it square. He was a little hesitant in doing that but finally he did sign the letter of transmittal. So I got a post office money order when I got back to Libby and sent the money in. He eventually got a receipt and I released his ties.

This turned out to be a very good public relation deal because he never missed the opportunity to give the Forest Service a good send-off. He was in the community where 90 percent of the people were opposed to the Forest Service system. When I told him I was going on up the river, he told me about a Swede—I recall his name was Ole Swanson—had quite a number of ties cut and piled up along the right-of-way. He told me that this Swede was a bad actor and had sworn that the first forest officer that showed up he was gonna shoot him. I said, "Oh, I don't think he would shoot me. I think I'll go and see him."

He said, "Well, I warn you not to because he's really a bad actor."

At any rate, I went on up the track about a mile where he had a cabin about 200 yards from the railroad track. I went over and knocked at the door and got no response so I stood around there for a while and finally decided there was nobody in the cabin and I went out and sat on the woodpile and wrote up my diary for a day or so. I was just sitting there looking around and here he came down off the hill. He brought an axe and he saw me sitting there and I had a Forest Service uniform on, and he recognized me as a forest officer. I said, "Hello." He paid no attention to me and went right on by me into the house. I had visions of his getting a rifle and taking a shot at me right there on the block of wood. It didn't happen, so after a bit I went over and tapped on the door and he came to the door. I told him who I was and I was going through the country checking up on these ties, and seeing where they were cut from, and if they were cut on the land that they claimed as a homestead or any other land law, that I would release the ties, but otherwise I would have to collect stumpage. I said, "It's getting rather late and I'd like to stay all night with you."

He just turned around and walked off. He left the door open and I walked in and sat down in a chair. He started getting supper and I asked him if there was anything I could do and he said, "You might get me a bucket of water. There's a spring down below here about 50 yards." I took the bucket and went down, but I had a feeling that he was liable to shoot me in the back as I walked away from the cabin, but I didn't feel any bullets so I went on and got the bucket of water and came back up. By that time, he had the table set and I noticed he had two plates set

there so I thought I'd speared a meal. So as we sat down to eat he began to loosen up and before we went to bed that night he was rather friendly. The next morning, I went out and checked over his land and found that all of the ties were cut on land that he claimed as a homestead, so I went down and took the sign off the pile of ties that he had cut and gave him a letter releasing his ties—longhand written—and from that time on we met a good many times and he was always friendly. At least he hasn't shot a forest officer when last I knew about him.

This job took me about ten days. I went as far as Rexford, and there were only two or three cases of actual trespass. I was successful in having these cleared up by their paying for the stumpage for the ties they had cut. So that one hornet's nest was cleaned up.

There has been considerable discussion as to whether the mountain lion screams or makes any guttural noise whatever. In the summer of 1908 as a forest ranger, I was assigned to the job of surveying some isolated mountain meadows in the upper Priest River territory in northern Idaho. This was an uninhabited country largely covered with a dense stand of white pine, spruce, hemlock and fir in the upper reaches of the Priest River watershed. One day when it was necessary to move our camp—only one horse was needed to transport it—I sent my assistant around a meadow which was too wet to take a horse across and I hiked around across the meadow picking my way. When I got on the other side of the meadow, I took an old game trail that led along the edge of the meadow. There was timber extending out into the meadow occasionally and tongues of the meadow extending back into the timber land. I walked rather slowly hoping that the pack horse and my assistant would catch up to me. As I crossed into a patch of timber something attracted my attention to a large boulder about ten feet above the trail and on it was a big, male mountain lion. I had no weapons; I only carried a Jacob staff and a hand compass. I thought to keep the attention of this mountain lion until my assistant came and I therefore very slowly walked towards this mountain lion and kept thinking that the assistant would be there any minute. But finally, when I got up within about 40 feet of this mountain lion, he began to wave his tail and settle his hind legs like a cat ready to jump onto something. I became a little alarmed and wondered what the next move would be. I finally decided to make a mad rush at him and try to bluff him out, so I ran at him, yanked off my hat and threw it so it hit just a few inches of his nose. He boxed it off of the rock but turned and ran away with great leaps. I was greatly relieved seeing him go because I'm quite sure if he hadn't, he might've been jumping onto me.

Then only a few days later in another territory about six miles away I had to examine a section of land that was supposed to be agricultural land in a natural meadow some mile and a half or two miles off of the main trail. When I detected markings—blazes on trees that indicated that a section line crossed there—I immediately checked and found that by following this section line about a mile and a half we would be right at the place where we should begin our survey. So I told my assistant to follow the section line with a compass and I would pick my way around through the dense timber and underbrush and would not be far away at any time. We had not gone more than about a quarter of a mile when I heard the most ungodly yell that I ever experienced in the woods or any other place. It sounded very much like a woman screaming at



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the top of her voice. It seemed to me that the leaves on the underbrush actually quivered. At any rate, it sent a chill through my body and I hollered at my assistant, who was not far away, and said, "For God's sake, what was that racket?”

He said, "I've been in the woods for many years and I've never heard anything like that before.”

I said, "Where did it come from?"

He said, "Right straight out in front of me."

I said, "You stay put and I'll come over to you." So I made my way over to him through a lot of understory of young timber and when I reached him I said, "Now where is that critter or what is it?"

He said, "I don't know what it is but it's right out there in front of us not very far away." Well, because of the young timber I was unable to detect anything, but pretty soon it screamed again so I got down on my hands and knees to look under the brush and not more than 50 feet away was a mountain lioness and her two cubs. She had just killed a deer and these cubs were apparently lying along the neck of the deer sucking the blood from its jugular vein—at least that's the way it looked to me from where I stood.

While I was on my knees, this mountain lion gave me one of the dirtiest looks that an animal could and screamed right in my face. I said, "Bill”—Bill Dodge was my assistant—"can you kill her with that .38 automatic of yours?"

He said, "Glen, I've only got one shell and if I should only cripple her, we would be in for some real trouble."

"Well," I said, "don't take a shot at it then."

He said, "What will we do?"

I said, "Well I think we'd better go out around her and let her and her babies have the deer." This we did. So, no one can tell me that a mountain lion doesn't scream on certain occasions.

Later on, I had an opportunity to discuss the matter of whether a mountain lion screams with Mr. Bob Backer of Libby, Montana, who has probably captured more mountain lions alive than any other man in the United States. He said he was perfectly satisfied that they did scream. I had another experience with a gray wolf that was rather interesting. Colonel Greely, the regional forester at Missoula at that time, was on an inspection trip on Custer Forest where I was forest supervisor. Custer Forest lies about 70 miles south of Miles City. It is an open yellow pine stand of timber with grassy ridges and valleys. We had had a young cyclone that had gone through the country and on one little watershed it had blown down practically every tree and

twisted them in many shapes. I was anxious to salvage what we could, and I had contacted a sawmill operator who said he would try to see what he could salvage. I thought I'd like to show Colonel Greely what the situation was, so we hired a couple of saddle horses at a ranch not far from this area and started out for the inspection. We had not gone very far until we were in the midst of the heaviest part of the blow down and we were picking our way around among the down trees with some difficulty. I was attracted, however, to some animal off to the left and at the bottom a steep little rise. On close examination it appeared that a gray wolf had run this animal downhill and ended in between the crotches of two large fallen yellow pine trees. There it had proceeded to eat that animal alive. It had torn great chunks out of the ham and disemboweled the animal, had eaten considerable of the entrails, and later on it was determined that it had even eaten the lungs and liver. The animal was still barely alive and when the wolf heard us it started to climb up the hill about 150 to 200 feet to an open grassy divide. I had no firearms, but the thought struck me that maybe I could rope that rascal. So I urged my horse up the slope around among some fallen timber and we landed on the little open divide about 100 feet apart. I had my lariat rope down and I took after him. He was so gorged with meat that he wasn't able to run very fast and I soon caught up with him and laid the rope over him. I began to jerk him around up there on the open country. He kept trying to bite the rope off. I kept him pretty much off balance and finally Colonel Greely came up and by the use of rocks, he was able to knock him out and we cut his throat. When I got back to the ranch where we had got the horses we told the stockman that we had killed this gray wolf and that he had one front foot about half off and one hind foot two-thirds of the way off, which had apparently been caused by being in a trap. The rancher, Mr. Ed Yeager told me that they had been after this wolf for the past seven or eight years and that he was satisfied that he had killed more than $75,000 worth of livestock. It was a rather exciting experience in a way and I got my reputation as a rope man.

When I was a ranger on the Kootenai Forest in 1907, I was sitting in the office one day when Mr. Simon Snyder, a rancher who lived on Swamp Creek and who had some government land fenced—since he refused to amend his filings and it was the type of land we needed for a ranger station. We had it withdrawn and Mr. Charley Marshall, then a forest ranger, was assigned the job of completing the fence and construction of a cabin. When he started to work on rebuilding the fence, Mr. Snyder tried to run him off but was unsuccessful. He then came to the supervisor's office and told Supervisor Kinney that he had a complaint to make about Charley Marshall. The supervisor said, "Well, what is your complaint?"

"Well," he said, "He was trying to fence up some of my land and I tried to get him to go away and he would not go and he told me to kiss his ass. You know one Dutchman don't like to kiss another man's ass." This was told to the supervisor in front of his secretary, who immediately got up and came in the back room where I was listening to the conversation. She was very badly flushed by the speech that this gentleman had made.

We continued to have trouble with Mr. Snyder from 1907 up to 1915. He was always after a telephone in his house. The Forest Service had a telephone line that ran by his house, but it was



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a tree line and could only carry a certain number of phones. In the summertime when all our lookouts and fire stations were connected up we couldn't have any more phones on it, but in the winter time we did permit him to have a phone—furnished the phone ourselves—the Forest Service phone, rather. When the spring came and we needed it for our fire organization, we were forced to take it out. He became very angry and wrote a lot of letters about it to the president of the United States, and in one letter he said that I had called him a cabbage head. The letter that he wrote came back through the regional office to me as supervisor, and in answer to it I made the statement that I had never called him a cabbage head but, if I was called upon to classify him, I might be persuaded to give him that sort of a label. But even after we had given him—free of charge—the use of the telephone all winter, he took the occasion to go and buy a Montgomery Ward telephone which did not fit with our telephones and was a nuisance on the line.

[End of Interview]