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Oral History Number: 027-009, 010, 011

Interviewee: Grant Higgins

Interviewer: Lenora Koelbel

Date of Interview: circa 1972

Project: Lenora Koelbel Missoula History Oral History Project

Note: Much of the interview is unintelligible due to poor audio quality.

LK: There was a picture that I was trying to find in that old centennial edition of the newspaper. Do you remember the picture of Charlie Russell when he was here by any chance? I just wondered if you might know...It was Anderson, I guess, that he came to visit?

GH: Well, I knew Charlie Russell, of course. I was familiar with him from Great Falls and Judith Gap where he first worked, but I was away to school [unintelligible] to Wallace, Idaho, and Spokane. He was here in town, and often times I was in Wallace, Idaho. For a time, I was back East to [unintelligible]. So, I was in and out of school, so as far as some of these memories, why, I don't know. Oh, I worked on [unintelligible] stories of these things. Dean Stone used to supervise us, but we weren't very history minded. The general thing in town was the horse and buggy, and before World War I, why, as you grew up as a youngster, the southside wasn't developed. There weren't hardly any houses here. There were just horses and cattle, so we used to make money by rounding up horses and cows at night for ten cents a head. People had homes and they kept a cow and a horse. You had that kind of small-town background. Of course, the incident that happened—the people that were coming into town—we had a lot of gamblers who were very well-dressed people (very sophisticated) who, in that day, used to gamble. We had three theatres down there on that...was mostly vaudeville.

LK: Was the Harnois...is that how you pronounce it—Was that about the biggest and the best?

GH: The old Harnois Theatre was a rather ramshackled frame building, and then they built the new Liberty Theatre building later. It was, well, we used to have these 10, 20, or 30 traveling shows. We used to sit in the gallery and watch the melodramas [unintelligible].

LK: Would they throw eggs and stuff at the villains like you hear of them doing?

GH: Oh, yes, they for the hero train would Everybody was were very unrestricted. They always cheering when the heroine was tied to the rails and the come chugging out of the [unintelligible] stage [unintelligible]. more or less [unintelligible]. They had certain taboos in the town. The younger generation was mostly gangs. I mean, each would have a name: the Mix House Gang, the Westside Gang. If you got out of your territory as a youngster, why you would have quite the experiences with rocks.

LK: Now, were these gangs primarily measured from a certain area, but were they also of a certain minority group, like was there a group of Norwegians, let's say, that hung together in groups? Or Swedes, or something like that?

GH: Well, yes there were groups, particularly Scandinavian people there. They had their lodge and there were different groups—mostly native people—your small ranchers or prospectors or homesteaders, and they didn't have too much money. In fact, I saw some of them who would get a half a hog and a bag of flour and that was their winter supplies. The Main Street, when it rained, in bad weather, about two feet deep in the mud, we used to have what they called “muck boards” that they would put on there that you could walk on them. [unintelligible] small town [unintelligible] kept people coming and going. Then there were a lot of people who would travel quite a bit and then, they would gamble or spend their money and then, either get land or horses or stock traded. Anybody who had a sales personality could make a stake, and because when people went broke, they didn't figure that that was just temporarily.

LK: Your gamblers—when did they cease to exist? Was there a ruling that came in Montana against gambling? Was that what killed off the gambling? Or was there something else?

GH: No, it was just the economic situations and things like that. There used to be people that had the money. The prospectors and the others would come in and gamble. Most of the gamblers were very well-dressed in formal clothes. They didn't have calluses on their hands and that was part of the...Some of the people—the immigrants there—they didn't want their youngsters to grow up [that way] so they had to work at manual labor or something like that. The gamblers traveled from Butte, which is sort of a headquarters, and they drifted back and forth, and they played the races. That is, they had these stops. But the local people were just personalities. On the weekends the doctors would take their horses, surreys and things and would race from N.P. Depot down to the Florence Hotel. Whoever lost, well, they bought liquor and drinks for the rest of the hangers-on. There were quite a few characters who were really nice people Dr. Butler [?], Dr. Sipke [?], Dr. Parsons had traveled, and well, everybody knew everybody. It was customary of things that...Like people that couldn't hold their liquor—well, they just got thrown out of the saloon. Anybody who couldn't hold their liquor got thrown. They had a lot of taboos and things like that, but most of the younger generation, why, we ran around here and there.

LK: But you had to stay in your territory?

GH: Well, yes, to a certain extent, that was...it was customary for those two age groups to hike up to the top of Mt. Sentinel to play up there, up on the hill there. And the early University was down at the Willard School [unintelligible].

LK: Well, now, Christopher Higgins is your grandfather, right?

GH: Yes.

LK: Who was your father?

GH: Well, he was Frank, Francis G. Higgins. Frank Higgins.

LK: He was quite a race fan, wasn't he? They called him.

GH: Well, yes, they...All of my uncles were, in fact. They had too much money and too much time. Of course, my father died when he was quite young. He went to the Spanish-American war and contracted malaria, and so, from the time I was six or seven years old, I was on my own.

LK: Oh, I see. Did you live out in the south side of Missoula? Or were you across from there?

GH: Oh, we lived at various areas there—my mother and me—and now I live across from the courthouse in an apartment there, and there was a Mrs. Paine that used to run it. She was quite a dignified dowager-like elderly lady, but they had a whole lot of businesspeople and salesmen there at the hotel. It was quite a boarding house where you could work [u]. But then, there were times when I...My uncle had a business in Wallace, Idaho.

LK: Now, which uncle was this?

GH: Now, that's Jerry. He's—

LK: Oh, it wasn't on the Higgins' side?

GH: No, he's my mother's brother. Well, the Higgins family was...Christopher Higgins came out with the Stevens Expedition and so forth. Then he married a daughter of Grant, Richard Grant, and, [unintelligible] I've traced back some of my ancestry.

LK: Oh, you have a fantastic heritage! I was wondering if you could point out to me on this map where the Higgins homestead was? I understand it was up kind of by the roller-skating rink, wasn't it?

GH: [unintelligible] It was right at the base of the hill, [unintelligible] my grandmother's. Fairviews and all that—there was 60 acres there was N.P. land that was leased, but right out at the end of Higgins Avenue, where it turns, that was where my family home was. It was on 60 acres there, and that was the homestead you hear about at the base of the hill. They had all that land until the bank, Western Bank, went broke. The cash [u] to pay off the run on the bank [unintelligible] the title to a lot of these areas around here to settle claims to the bank, and that's why a lot of [unintelligible], but my grandmother's 60 acres was what we used to call "three miles from town."

LK: What kind of a house was it that they lived in? Was it similar to the house that Worden had that is still on Pine?

GH: Well, it was similar. Right there where the telephone company is there now is where they built the big frame house and that back lot was [unintelligible]. But it was right on Main Street there, it was a quarter block I suppose there was about eleven rooms in there. Most of my uncles went back east to school, and some of them that didn't, well, they got to bumming around town [unintelligible]. But of course, when I came back once in a while, I'd been there but I wasn't very close to the family. My aunt in Deer Lodge was Mrs. Conley, and I used to go over there and visit, sometimes when I'd come back to the school. Well, Gerald, the youngest, he actually stayed because his mother was out there, but I came home and one of the ranches [unintelligible] they had an orchard out there and stuff. For a couple of years, when I was in high- school, I used to operate the ranch, and any money that was made, he proceeded to spend it as fast as it [unintelligible] and the estate all went around and around.

LK: Was there much of a ranch house and farm out there?

GH: Well, there was a big barn, and facilities, and things like that, but my grandmother's house was only four or five rooms and she used to have a Chinese cook that came in. But no, there wasn't any big ranch house. Some people around town—bankers and doctors—had more elaborate homes, but most of the homes around town were smaller and the barns were more for the taking care of the animals. The animals were pretty much always outdoors. The facilities there [unintelligible]. I remember the first inside bathtub in town was at the Ram's Head on Front Street there. So, they used to get a few drinks and they'd all go down there and take that Saturday night bath.

LK: Oh, my gosh! Was this a private home?

GH: Yes, it was a private home. Well, a private home—they'd get a gang and they'd call on people and then the Elks, because people were more or less informal.

LK: Yes, I guess so!

GH: It was all, well, everybody knew the status of everybody else, and they just accepted it. But [unintelligible] individual eccentricities of [unintelligible] like youngsters used to get horses and race them with the Indians in the Flathead and whoever won the race took the horses.

LK: Oh, beautiful. Did you ever lose a horse?

GH: Oh, yes, I've walked home and carried my saddle.

LK: Oh, you wouldn't lose your saddle, just your horse?

GH: No, your saddle and your bridle—that was personal. [unintelligible] Then, well, we had some horses that we used to frame a race like some of them there. With an outstanding horse, why they'd camouflage him and put him in a race with somebody else's. But that all used to seem fun. The gambling and things like that. Cheating was supposed to be taboo, but some of them did it. There were some very adept card players who [u] the deck good. Now these burlesque theatres down at the now at Front Street—

LK: Right, I was going to ask you where most of the saloons and those things were. Were they pretty much on Front Street?

GH: Well, concentrated most of the [unintelligible], and they had all these tables and a stage and everything. People would get up there and do dances and sing and put on melodramas.

LK: Sounds like such a good time.

GH: Well, we weren't supposed to be in there, but we'd sneak in and hide under the tables until we got kicked out. We weren't paid much attention to but then and again, most of the time these poor kids—they'd give them money. For a while it got to be [unintelligible] until somebody talked to you and straightened you out. But it was a regular small-town comedy. The Chinese had their group and the Filipinos and the Negroes.

LK: Oh, they did have Negroes?

GH: They had a Negro regiment here at Fort Missoula. The Lundy family and some of them were very outstanding people that stayed here after the war actually.

LK: Oh, I see. And they were right from that 25th Infantry?

GH: Yes. A lot of them stayed here, particularly the Lundy family. There was quite a few of them that were quite outstanding athletes. Lundy was a very fine gentleman, but some of them stayed.

LK: Well, did any of these races or did all of them take place on the area between the Depot and the Florence, or did some of them run differently? I read in the paper that some of them took place going the other way on Main Street.

GH: Well, it didn't matter if they could clear the place. Mostly, you see, the N.P. Depot burned down, it was just a pile of rubble in the basement, but that used to be the more or less accepted place to have these races. So, the Florence Hotel bar was at the corner, which was convenient, but also, the Front Street crowd was going to love it. But the racetrack was west of town out by the airport.

LK: Yes, about where the sugar beet factory was? Is that where it was?

GH: Oh, no, it was farther. But it was over toward or around the main highway, and that's where all the formal races were.

LK: Now, when would they have those? In the summer?

GH: Well, they had a dandy little affair. There were all these barns and people exercising their horses and training before the races. A lot of the local people owned racehorses—doctors and dentists and others—and a few businesspeople, but people used to go out on picnics there. They would drive [unintelligible] there (of course it was clear out in Frenchtown) with a horse and buggy and have a picnic. My grandmother had her carriage—a coach [unintelligible]. We used to drive for her all the time. You had the seats facing back [unintelligible]. We used to drive that thing [unintelligible] through the pines, but they'd drive for miles to a picnic and it was rather slow motion. We'd drive people up to Ovando for hunting. That took a three-day trip up there by horse and buggy.

LK: How old was your grandmother when she died?

GH: Well, my grandmother Higgins was in her late 60s when she died.

LK: Was that about the turn of the century when she died or was it later?

GH: Oh, no, it was much later than that.

LK: Yes, I was trying to think, because didn't they get married about in '62, sometime around there?

GH: Yes, it was around in 1862, I guess. Yes, her mother died in '63, I think. Yes, Christopher Higgins died in '89. They were just reorganizing the bank, and they weren't having any visitors in. My father became president, but he'd always been into politics—things like that. He was Lieutenant Governor when he died, but he'd been sick for quite a while. He'd go to Portland and see this famous doctor there. They tried to do something for him, but they spent thousands and thousands of dollars.

LK: Was this before he was in the Spanish American War, or after?

GH: No, that was after. He had been before, but then when he came back after, his health eventually deteriorated. Between the McCormick estate, the Higgins estate and the other estates that...Why, you had people who were very well-to-do who married people who were working for a dollar-and-a-half a day or something like that. But most of those people were people who adapt themselves and get along and managed to be courteous.

LK: Not like today.

GH: Well, no. They all want the money without doing the work. They don't want to spend any time to earn it.

LK: I understand that there was a cemetery on the old Higgins Ranch?

GH: Well, that was right out at the base of the hill.

LK: I wonder if you could show me on a map of the South Hills? Let's see, here's 39th Street and Southwest Higgins. And this would be that corner there that the ranch was about there, you said? The skating rink would be right over here.

GH: Well, let's see. Turning up to the [unintelligible] right up in here. [unintelligible] Russell, well, here is

LK: Oh, I see. So about right in here was the cemetery?

GH: Yes, that's where they excavated that place where the shopping center [is.]

LK: And the ranch house was then around the—

GH: Well, the ranch house was right back just about there. That's my grandmother's ranch house over here when it was at the base of the hill [unintelligible] there's still a ranch there.

LK: Yes. Now, who's place is this?

GH: Well, that was my father's. Francis T. Higgins was his real name.

LK: Was he named after Frank Worden? Do you know?

GH: No, I don't know. I don't think so. They just had a bunch of conventional names: John, George, Frank, Gerald.

LK: How many were there?

GH: Well, there were seven brothers.

LK: Oh, my word!

GH: Well, the streets over there from Gerald Avenue and all are named after them—to Maurice. Then they have a Francis Avenue as a street named for Father. But I was away quite a bit, on my own. I was pretty much on my own. I was sort of a solitary character, just a lot of unconventional li. vi.ng.

LK: Were they a fairly close family?

GH: No, they were not a very close family, because they were pretty much antagonistic and too individualistic.

LK: Were there any feuds? Being antagonistic like this, were there any feuds amongst themselves or with any other people?

GH: They feuded among themselves more than with other people. Of course, people around here had feuds. You have clashes of personalities and politics, like Dixon and Donlan and all the undercover names, different companies, more or less the stories of bribery and things like that. But in general, everybody was out working for themselves and they...most of them didn't ask any particular quarter there, unless they got sick and, well, the medical wasn't [good]. A lot of people died when they were just operating on tonsils. They didn't have a very lot of doctors that were skilled in surgeries. It was like having an appendectomy operation. They might control it and they might not. But until they diagnosed a lot of those things...Youngsters and others used to help [unintelligible] used to come to school and the lice were crawling. Things like that that were just accepted. Then, the schools had wood stoves and part of the job was, when school was out, to haul in the wood. That sometimes brought some practical jokes like loading some of the pieces of wood with powder, which filled the school and it stunk, really.

LK: You didn't do anything like that, did you?

GH: Oh, no! I guess I did my share. But, well, I'd get into something like that, and then I'd get sent back east to school.

LK: What kind of other pranks would kids play?

GH: What?

LK: What other kind of pranks would kids play? You know, they're mischievous, but—

[Break in audio]

LK: —a cemetery up the Rattlesnake.

GH: Well, that's several miles up the Rattlesnake where the old poor farm used to be.

LK: Oh? There was a "poor farm?"

GH: Yes, there was a poor farm and they—

LK: Now, how was that worked? Was it just a matter of people that couldn't pay off debts or something?

GH: Well, people didn't go to a rest home or anything like that. They were poor people—older people—people who were sick or ailing when they went to this poor farm. They called it that by the county.

LK: Oh, it was a county deal?

GH: Yes, it was the county taxpayers. It's just the same as what they call "pestimony," when they vaccinated for smallpox. Anybody that had smallpox, they put them out there by East Missoula and the relatives would have to bring them food and everything. The doctors didn't want to go out there, so a person was just out there with smallpox. Sometimes you got over it and sometimes you didn't.

LK: Oh, my word! That was in East Missoula?

GH: Well, yes. It was just beyond the [u] on the East Missoula side where [unintelligible]. There was a [unintelligible] building for years, and [unintelligible] with smallpox. They used to fumigate it in the summer [u] with all sorts of stuff [u] but all communicable diseases like that were part of the [unintelligible] and nobody knew exactly [unintelligible].

LK: Well, then the only ones that they sent out to East Missoula was just the smallpox?

GH: Well, smallpox or sometimes they'd send them out there with the chicken pox and things, well, anything like that. It seemed like smallpox was the main thing. Diphtheria was very [unintelligible]. They didn't seem to know exactly what to do, and then they got this toxin which, at first, was [unintelligible]. But there was a lot of trial and error with things like that so some places were highly skilled in their techniques like [unintelligible] but the other doctors later [unintelligible]. They developed quite a few outstanding lawyers and doctors in the bigger cities. But the community here was sophisticated [unintelligible] the spring was there and [unintelligible] there [unintelligible] the ladies there wore all these long dresses [unintelligible]—very formal.

But all these [unintelligible], things like that. People were really trying to transmit all of this in school. They'd try to check up on questions like how it was communicated. Then, there were the various religious groups, which [u] cold war between the Protestants and the Catholics, but some people seemed to be able to circulate among the [unintelligible] groups. A regular small town economy, it was on the main street there, the Florence, the grocery stores, and places like that had packages—they had dried apples and smoked fish and everything—that was just propped up against the wall on the street. Everything was in barrels or boxes and you just scooped it out.

I remember when TB...they had a big campaign about expectorating in the streets [unintelligible]. They didn't want to see people out in the yards in their beds, close to the sunshine, in tents. They tried everything. Then they [unintelligible] the scientific study and the biology and that was supposed to [unintelligible] be the future salvation and so forth. Taking biology was [unintelligible] beyond redemption. I remember when Professor Elrod use to teach biology. He did his research at Flathead. [unintelligible] Of course, I went to a Catholic school in Georgetown in Washington, D.C. I didn't get along very well because [unintelligible] we're very highly educated people and they have very devious philosophy which [u] so that when you ask questions, why, you're an outcast.

LK: Once when I talked to you on the phone, you described the Chinese funerals, which I'm not sure that I remember everything that you said. Wouldn't the people, the Chinese, who rent horses and so forth for those purposes?

GH: Well, of course, the livery stables were quite a feature in earlier days. Sundays or Easter or times like that, people rode in the carriages and brought out the horses all dressed up in the Easter Parades. Some of the ladies that worked on Front Street, well, they'd hire the most expensive carriage and dress up in ostrich plume hats—

LK: And have Easter parades?

GH: Oh, yes, they'd have parades. They'd drive up and down Main Street. That was after church.

LK: Was it organized?

GH: Well, a little organized and some of the more respectable people had a [unintelligible] as these ladies from Front Street (the red light district and so forth) would hire all these carriages and dress up in all this very formal clothing with big hats with ostrich plumes. They'd have a coachman and they'd drive down the streets.

LK: Oh, so it wasn't your church ladies that were in this parade?

GH: No, they'd have their carriages and they would enjoy the parade. Well, it was quite ridiculous in some cases. Of course, my mother was quite liberal and [unintelligible]. She had a very difficult time because her [u] expected her to [u] she hadn't been in the visiting room [unintelligible]. But I was more or less turned loose [unintelligible] the doctor there, a retired Navy doctor saw a lot of [u] there you got up at 5:30 in the morning [unintelligible] you fixed up your room and you figured it out for yourself. Nobody was going to help you except yourself.

LK: It was "sink or swim?"

GH: Yes. Well, I don't know. We used to run around and hit all [unintelligible]. If we had a snowstorm, we'd go and ski down the [unintelligible].

LK: Ski down? Yes. You're still skiing and swimming, right?

GH: Oh, yes.

LK: I mentioned to a few people that I was going to talk to you. Kitty Euhouse [?] was one of them. She said, "Oh, yes! He taught me how to swim!" I think you've taught half the kids in Missoula how to swim! Oh, yes. I understand.

GH: Oh, yes. Well, we used to get a 1,000 or 1,500 a year that would go through the swimming course. There wasn't any facilities. Of course, now there [unintelligible]. Oh, yes, your friend [unintelligible] these tiny youngsters that used to swim around [unintelligible] and they'd get kicked out of the pool for coming up [unintelligible]. Yes, she learned to ski, and she was always kind of [unintelligible]. She tries to ski with her feet too close together. But she's got excellent balance [unintelligible].

LK: She sure likes it. either. She's not afraid to try anything

GH: Oh, no! She [unintelligible] downhill this year an [u].

LK: Yes, you better watch it. She and my husband get along great. She's on our Brain Bowl team, you know, that goes to Spokane? She can ski with you to a certain point, and then, all of a sudden, she's had it—she's had enough.

GH: [unintelligible] but I used to have those [unintelligible] pass their tests [unintelligible] This year I—

LK: I think is finally your last year?

GH: This is [unintelligible]. Well, I'm getting kind of a reputation [unintelligible], but things are changing, and then the youngsters are [unintelligible] at passing tests. They don't want to put in the work in anything if they can get a badge [u] but some of my [u] just acquire skill [unintelligible] really get your idea of balance in skiing, but, so [unintelligible].

LK: Good grief, no! Well, as long as you're able, I can't see quitting at all.

GH: You've got to do something. Oh, I've had my share of bumps, but then we used to, later, run around with the youngsters racing—ski racing—and they [unintelligible]. Eric had [unintelligible] he was just back from Vietnam after getting hepatitis. That's why he was [u].

LK: I don't think you should ever quit until you know you can't do it.

GH: Well, you restrict your activities—your limits— [unintelligible] once you get some of your speed and reflexes [unintelligible]. But all these towns, like the houses around here, the small towns, everybody knew [unintelligible].

LK: Well, I was curious about the Chinese funeral thing. Did they organize it? Were there laundries along Front Street too? Was that what their main occupation was—the laundries?

GH: No, they had stores and merchandise. I think merchandise that they sold was Chinese foods and Chinese clothes.

LK: Was there a certain area of town?

GH: Well, yes, the town was down Front Street and Main and up toward the Courthouse. And then the Chinese gardens that were west of town [u] the sugar beet factory and places out there, that...Then, the Chinese, they were [unintelligible] but, the Chinese were so much better business people and [unintelligible] they lived better. That irritated the other residents that they gradually [u]. Most of the Chinese [u] they'd go back to China and marry, then start a family. The family stays there in China. Then they brought back money that they earned in China during the course of the year, when they got enough money. Then, when they died, they could have [unintelligible] back to China.

LK: All of the bodies were shipped back to China, weren't they?

GH: Well, practically all the [unintelligible] Then, of course, Chinese, they all had "pigtailed," and, once in a while, of these hoodlums would catch someone and cut off his pigtail, steal his money, and things like that. But then the Chinese had restaurants there. They used restaurants along Front Street and Main Street. [unintelligible] Filipinos.

LK: How did they get here? I know the Chinese got here pretty much because of the mining and the railroad, didn't they?

GH: The Filipinos came over along with the military [u] and things like that. Yes, there was [unintelligible] the different groups. Well, we had the gangs, too. Young, Mix-house gangs and all that.

LK: Now, what was the Mix-House gang?

GH: Well, it's right...The old Mix House Hotel used to be right there on Spruce Street there [unintelligible]. Now, that was an irrigation ditch right at the corner of Spruce Street there used to be [unintelligible] mosquitoes.

LK: Yes, breeding.

GH: At [unintelligible] the mosquitoes in the summertime, and then people would have smudges going all around their houses and then the whole town would be covered with smoke.

LK: So, we had pollution then?

GH: Oh, yes. Well, they believed then that when you dumped things in the water that [unintelligible] clear, and you couldn't tell people about environment [?], stuff like that. But after I was down in Mexico City [unintelligible] garbage out in the middle of the street using the drinking water that flows out of the river, why, I decided—

LK: Yes, that it wasn't so bad. What kind of kites and stuff would they fly at these Chinese funerals? What did they look like?

GH: Oh, they were like dragons and—

LK: Were they big?

GH: Oh, yes. Some of them were long, great big [kites.]

LK: Now, how did they hold them up? With sticks, or would they just rely on the wind?

GH: No, they had regular lines. They made these sticks into the framework—out of bamboo sticks—and, yes, there was quite a bit of engineering.

LK: Did they just do these for funerals?

GH: Well, Chinese days of celebration—their Chinese New Year.

LK: So, they had a parade then too

GH: Well, they had gatherings and kind of parades. In earlier days, why, they [unintelligible] the Chinese. Some of them are lawyers, like old Jack[?], [unintelligible] and they were threatened because folks couldn't compete. They were jealous of the Chinese because they had these [businesses?]. I used to watch them [unintelligible] and stuff like that there. But they handled themselves [unintelligible] cocaine and stuff like that [unintelligible] all up and down Main Street.

LK: So, there were drug addicts 'way back when?

GH: Oh yes. Yes, and the doctors [unintelligible] were pushing it pretty hard. They used to start taking it in shots and things like that. Yes, I know old Doc Parsons, he used to [unintelligible], but they went along for years. When they'd get tired, they'd take shots. They didn't [unintelligible] thought it was temporary, but there was [unintelligible] of drug addiction

[unintelligible]. Oh, these "demi-Wings" [?] or half-world people there, they experimented [unintelligible]. But you had a very, very varied type of people here that you have had come from all over the world. You had people who had trouble with the law, a lot of people who were pretty well-educated, some of them turning into prospectors or small ranchers, and they didn't look like [unintelligible] people, like you expected them to. On the other hand, you have oh, like Q [?]. He was a corporate lawyer [and] he established a realty company and [unintelligible] land development company. They sold all my property up there for excessive amounts [unintelligible]. But he used to wear white spats, and striped clothes—very much the...always a gentleman, and he had a very beautiful wife. Then [?] is his father-in-law. He lived with him down on East Front Street there. They had one of the first bathtubs in town. [unintelligible] boys, marching up to tell them [u] take the bath. But he was pretty much in control [unintelligible], but he was since in the penitentiary for [unintelligible] and he had a heart attack and died.

LK: Oh, he couldn't take the stress of...

GH: Well, he was [unintelligible], but he was in his 60s then [unintelligible].

LK: Another thing. Were you familiar with that Indian cemetery on top of Waterworks Hill? I haven't heard that much about it, and I just wondered if you remember or recall anything about it or how long it was in use?

GH: Oh, there were several Indian cemeteries in places where the...I don't know exactly. There were several places that have been mentioned [unintelligible] of course, they used to have battles and sometimes they buried these people in the nearest convenient place because all of Hellgate Canyon used to be trees and brush and everything. It was just a trail there and everybody would follow those roads—the trail roads—and the [unintelligible] up above would [unintelligible] was a spot for an ambush. And Blackfeet and Flathead used to [u] steal one another's horses. The Flathead [u] that old trail that goes up above Bonner there, there's a ridge [unintelligible] upper ridge going back. They didn't follow up the river because that's too dangerous, but they followed the ridges. The same trails here, we used to ride [unintelligible] up the Cabinet and the Sawtooth [?].

LK: So they followed the route almost all the way?

GH: Yes, people used to turn their cattle loose, you see, and you'd check on them, where they were, and how they were doing and calving and all of that. And riders—one of them would have a section there [u] and these calves these people were selling [u] in the summer and the fall. In order to see the country, you just exchanged areas with the next rider.

LK: But you notice that most of these Indian trails were up on the mountain tops or the hills.

GH: Oh, yes. You wouldn't stay down here because the higher elevations when you see [unintelligible] they seem to, and all the trails practically [unintelligible]. [mentions skiing]

LK: Oh, really, were you up at Snowbowl?

GH: No, I was up at Marshall. One of the short cuts [unintelligible] and one of the short cuts coming down there, and so when the Indians come down rather straight [u] there it intersects the Foresters Trail 513, and there's a logging road—a fire road—that comes down. When you hit the fire road, why you have a better chance of skiing faster unless somebody gets out on the road [unintelligible].

LK: Good grief! That sounds awfully dangerous!

GH: Well, it's not very wide. You've got to be prepared—

LK: To stop!

GH: Oh, well, you've got to know how to handle your skis.

LK: Yes. Well, let's see. This tape is almost up. I was curious to know, too, Mrs. Browman's a great historian on Missoula history. I don't know if you're familiar with her or not?

GH: I know Browman, but I don't know his wife.

LK: Anyway, one thing that we were both questioning: where is the Stephens...Not the Stephens, the Bickford house? Judge Bickford. Do you remember where Joe's house was?

GH: Oh, that's up on the end of Bickford Street. Bickford Street. He and [unintelligible] daughter, Mrs. W. Worth [unintelligible]. It's right there.

LK: You don't know...It's not on Stephens, though?

GH: No, it's like a block or so off of Stephens there. Well, the intersection of Edith and Bickford—

LK: Yes, it would be right here.

GH: It's about right there, the first or second house in down in [unintelligible].

[Break in audio]

GH: —[unintelligible] talking of gossip.

LK: It proves that teachers' kids are usually the worst.

GH: Well, yes. Doctors and [unintelligible]—

LK: Maybe you'd better not go into those!

GH: Well, it was excess of cruelty, [it was] torture [unintelligible].

LK: Oh, really? It wasn't good, honest pranks, like tipping over outhouses?

GH: Well, one of them was...like catching cats and tying their tails together and putting them on a pole. That was a while back. But people [were] like that. Then, they used to have the badger fights out at the old ball field there at the University, just outside this field house. They'd get some real [unintelligible] badgers in a box, and they'd have [unintelligible], but they'd get this referee out there, and as soon as the badger was out of the box, well, it would go right for his ankles rather than the dog.

LK: Oh, good grief!

GH: Well, then, when they did have a badger-dog fight, well, it was pretty much of a mess because they didn't give the badger a fair chance.

LK: Oh, because I would imagine that a badger could take care of a dog without too much trouble.

GH: Well, not if the dog is an experienced fighter. But once a badger gets hold of his leg or [unintelligible]. But they used to have cock fights and dog fights.

LK: This appeared about in the teens—the 1900s? The early part of the century?

GH: Well, yes, up to and before the first World War. In 1914, things changed. Before that, we didn't see drinking and smoking in public [unintelligible] public drinking [unintelligible]. After that, why, [unintelligible] I imagine that it had to have changed. People had been doing it before, but not in public. Then, after World War II, most people [unintelligible] back beyond that, well, that's as far as the history [unintelligible].

LK: That's too bad, because I think there's just such a wealth of history in Missoula, really—the things that have happened.

GH: Well, the people that came there with their background and experience. A lot of them had rural families and there was a lot of people from Spokane, A lot of them had homes and places that they built there. They talked about mansions and buildings they had there in Spokane [unintelligible] a mansion there because he got rich in mining.

LK: Since you are connected with swimming, maybe you'd know about the pools. When did they first have a pool that the kids could go and swim in rather than in a ditch or a river or something like that? And where was it?

GH: Well, that was the City Pool. It was built by the WPA. They had pools back then here and there around town. There was one across from the Florence Hotel [on the southeast corner of Pattee and Bank Streets]. It was just a basement. It belonged to the Missoula Mercantile, and after one youngster was drown in there. It was very unsanitary. But the Wilma Pool in the Wilma Building was one of the first pools here. [unintelligible] But they gave lessons there until the pool started to leak because of the condition of it. Then, the next was the gymnasium pool over at the University, over in the gymnasium there.

LK: Now, is this before or after the McCormick Pool?

GH: Well, that was before the McCormick pool was there. You see, during the Depression, the public pool was built after 1929. We were into the Depression, barely, and they had this WPA program or work program through the government where they were employed. They had \$45,000 or so in WPA funds, and Colonel Weisel was project engineer [unintelligible] they had the plan and, well, we were fortunate to have the WPA. So, they sent to Chicago to get the plans to the pools that were being set up in Chicago. They submitted it in a week's time, and that's the way the pool got built down there. After they spent the money, [unintelligible] simply dumped everything down in the basement and didn't finish it, so they had to raise about \$14,000 to \$15,000 to rewire it and give it lights. They built the forum there, and oh, they held the circus there. The city commissioners [unintelligible] temporarily [unintelligible] with the Red Cross there in water safety, and they hired instructors to try to help the kids learn [unintelligible] the first year that the pool wasn't heated [unintelligible]. We had a campaign to heat it [unintelligible] still back in there.

LK: No kidding?

GH: Yes.

LK: Is it still running?

GH: It's been patched up with...gas put in and everything else, [unintelligible]. They only paid \$1,000 for that [unintelligible]. But it went on. One of the fellows there was one of the first teachers, Wally [unintelligible], he'd been at the University and he came back from the service and began teaching. He was something of a reserved person [unintelligible] about six feet tall [unintelligible] but, before that, they had...Oh, take the University kids who wanted a pool, they [unintelligible] and forget about it and the next season, why, [unintelligible].

LK: Yes. Another question that I have is do you remember seeing Mr. Paxson around? The artist?

GH: Oh, yes, definitely.

LK: Did you? Because I've got a picture in this book that we're using. Is that him?

GH: Yes.

LK: Then, of course, Judge Woody, right? Because there was a question as to whether that was him or not, and it looked like his style and everything.

GH: Yes, well, yes. He used to run around that way all the time.

LK: How did people take him? Did they kind of feel him an eccentric?

GH: Oh, they made fun of him. It was kind of tragic in a way. Some of them didn't realize that he had a certain amount of ability. Of course, he was somewhat bemused that he was someone important. And that kind of made people grow a little impatient with him. Yes, he [unintelligible] because in his pictures and everything, he wanted that [unintelligible] praise and things like that. The wealth would come later, but they started in...and a lot of these critics, the critical people thought that he was [unintelligible]. They didn't take the productions at their value as you might. But they compared him with other classical people that had more [unintelligible] formal education which was [unintelligible]. Anyone who didn't have an education. Yes, old Judge Woody—

LK: You remember him, too?

GH: Oh, yes. His son married my older sister. Oh, I used to be a family...a cousin [unintelligible].

LK: He did everything. In studying Missoula history, it seemed like his name crops up all over. First mayor—

GH: Oh, yes, well, he started the *Missoulian* down there and [unintelligible] in different ways, and of course, he wasn't formally trained in the law. He studied...And then opposed certain groups—he and the Higgins family were on the outs.

LK: Oh, were they?

GH: Oh, yes, because he opposed some of the political things. Yes, that's one of the family skeletons there! But all those "inter-families," there were some feuds within the families and all that.

LK: How did the people of Missoula take to Jeanette Rankin and her [unintelligible] and so forth? I know the *Missoulian* printed that she had lost—

GH: Well, she lost the support in the community.

LK: Oh, is that what it was?

GH: Well, she was approved by all the women's clubs. They all got together as a group in Missoula [unintelligible]. I don't know why she got plurality this last time she ran [unintelligible] Congress, she—

LK: Was it just because she was a woman and the men thought she didn't have a place there, or did they have something against her?

GH: No, it was just her attitude. I mean, she'd talk down to people. She was a very good speaker, but the Rankin's were... most like her brother Wellington Rankin, who was quite burdened in a way. Oh, the Rankin's were very fine people [unintelligible] there were certain distinctions. Of course, [unintelligible]. In Washington, D.C., back there when she was there, they marched there, and [unintelligible] she was quite active there and [unintelligible] and stuff like that. But she was voted in and [unintelligible]. But here, the people were [unintelligible].

LK: Yes, because, you know, I've read several articles about her and they always paint her as such a wonderful person, you know, and I've talked to a couple people that had known the family and I've gotten the same thing from all of them, that, particularly her brother, Wellington, that he wasn't quite as gentlemanly as what most of Montanans—

GH: He was very arrogant and could be very rude. But, Miss Rankin, she was quite [unintelligible]. She rode the trails for women's rights and also against the war, and she appealed to a certain fanatical type of people who didn't want [unintelligible] who were more idealistic; and, theoretically, they were correct, but this "justice for all," now, that requires a quorum [unintelligible].

LK: Another question. the Brooks Street. That was named after a family that lived here. Did they have any kind of problems at all? Or were they just—

GH: Well, George Brooks was [unintelligible] person and a real estate operator, and he was not very well-to-do. Brooks, he developed that area over there. Oh, he was sitting okay; he was able to sell to about 3,000 or 4,000 people, and he and Judge [unintelligible] and others that were [unintelligible] were business partners. But he was an outstanding real estate person for years. Oh, he had a lot of transactions with the Hammonds, and the [unintelligible] others that used to advertise [unintelligible].

LK: When did they stop burying the people—the Chinese—up in this Chinese cemetery and start burying them over at the cemetery—the city cemetery?

GH: Well, this happened possibly against the Chinese, the time that a mass of people went out on the edge of town and tortured the Chinese. They tried to get them to reveal where they had cached their money so they—

LK: When did that happen? What year would that be? Again before World War I?

GH: Well, that started before World War I there, down around 1906, 1908, and then, gradually, it worked up into where mainland China made arrangements and they dispersed gradually and there was just a few of them left. Then, when the old-timers [unintelligible], poor farm out there [unintelligible] disappear. These ceremonial things, particularly with the horses, the livery stables and all that...They used to hire all these fancy carriages and things, and that's where they decorated everything and cooked up real meals—

LK: That the hoboes ended up eating?

GH: Yes, and the hoboes would trail along [unintelligible], and the train used to be full because there was quite a hobo population. But then, since it [unintelligible]. They didn't have this [unintelligible] problem [unintelligible] people. Because the sheriff's office more or less [unintelligible], it was very, very...Well, they [unintelligible] at people a long way but this gruesome thing that happened [unintelligible] give them a hot-foot and [unintelligible] in their feet, he was...he had [unintelligible].

LK: So you feel when he was ousted, it was pretty justified?

GH: Well, yes, it was justified that he misused his authority [unintelligible], but he really believed he was doing right. It wasn't only him that [unintelligible]. But he had been used to doing things on his own [unintelligible], so that by the last time was in office, things had changed. So, he had to change. [unintelligible] But, oh, personally, he was [unintelligible] and his idea of hanging four Indians was, well, he just disregarded the Indian. And then he was...took [unintelligible] I know that there was [unintelligible].

LK: How do you think he handled your uncle Maurice's killing?

GH: Well, that was pretty much an emotional affair, and they wanted to hang somebody so they [unintelligible] want to hang the proper man or not.

LK: Well, that's what I wondered. Now, did they feel that they...were there witnesses there that saw this shooting?

GH: Well, yes, there were. It was at night, and this—

LK: It was in a saloon, wasn't it, or something like that?

GH: Well, it was right where...that drug store that was on the corner—near [unintelligible]'s Drug Store and the jewelry store was right next door. This individual apparently came out of there [unintelligible] robbing the place or getting jewels. They were fighting this fire and water [unintelligible] he'd just come back from college—

LK: He was pretty young then?

GH: Well, he was about 20 [unintelligible] he was in the volunteer Fire Department and all that, and so they stopped this fellow, or somebody stopped him [unintelligible]. And they just grabbed this...They weren't sure, exactly, whether this was the man, and the y were going to lynch him [unintelligible] didn't [unintelligible] stood up. Well, he was for law enforcement [unintelligible] it just didn't go that way. You've got to use some common sense [unintelligible].

LK: I think people are much better at that nowadays.

GH: Well, we're getting better, but [unintelligible] unless you do something really ugly.

LK: There really weren't too many Chinese buried out at the cemetery—

GH: Well, there never was too many buried, because...oh, there may have been a couple hundred Chinese here, but some of them, I think, got sick [unintelligible] went back to China, and the ones that did get buried here, why, were quite [unintelligible]. Then some of them worked for families around here for years. [unintelligible] like the cook that worked for my grandmother [unintelligible] the family cook. But he just left, that was a couple years [unintelligible] died.

LK: Was DeSmet ever a very booming place? You know, between here and Frenchtown [unintelligible]? Was it ever any kind of town or anything—the DeSmet school? Kind of like Target Range—just another area that they named DeSmet?

GH: DeSmet? Oh! DeSmet. Well, no, it was only...been a small village there. Oh, they had a store and a saloon [unintelligible]...and then it was a cattle range out there, and the people that lived up in there...Originally [unintelligible] my great-grandfather Richard Grant established a headquarters—a ranch up there—and he was [unintelligible] citizen that [unintelligible] take up land up there. Because at that time, why, well, I guess he couldn't have made [unintelligible] but Father DeSmet's there, that was kind of a weigh station on the way up to the Flathead. He was a Jesuit missionary. No, it was just a small place for stopping—for horse coaches and things like that. They used to have these weigh stations every so far. Lolo Springs there, as you come down from where Delaney's are [unintelligible], and at about 8 o'clock in the morning a coach and six horses would [unintelligible] springs [unintelligible] to

make it up to Woodman. [unintelligible] stayed all night and to change horses, [unintelligible] but they'd make a two or sometimes a three-day trip out there.

LK: Wow! Well, where was this [unintelligible]? Was it out on the old Highway 10? Or was it along, somewhere along the Mullan Road? I know there is a stage station along the Mullan Road, too, but when they count those little farms—

GH: Well, there was various stage stations that were something of...ranch houses that were more or less convenient, and it depended on the state of the roads because the [unintelligible] blacktop and had big holes and mud would be two or three feet deep, [unintelligible] but I remember [unintelligible] it took us five days to go to [unintelligible]. But it [un] more spots. Between here and Drummond, there's five or six miles of gumbo.

LK: Oh, what would you do?

GH: Well, you'd have...we took off the [unintelligible]. Yes. That building that stands is the school there (DeSmet.)

LK: Do you know about when store and the saloon would have been established?

GH: Well, no, not...It was kind of an intermittent affair. The store was—oh, that must have been about 1900—right in there, because all those old places there [unintelligible], and then too, in 1909, they had a boom, a real estate boom. Lots were auctioned on Spruce Street there at about \$5,000 a lot.

LK: Whoa! How big would the lots be?

GH: Sixty by 120 feet, because they thought that [unintelligible] there was gossip [unintelligible] that the Northern Pacific was going through the Clearwater down at Lewiston. The boom collapsed, and there were no jobs. The survey came through—the Northern Pacific men [unintelligible] the engineer there, and there was about 4,000 people down at the depot trying to get jobs. Most of the people on the survey crew were relatives of politicians [unintelligible], but they took him up to Clearwater and they showed him where they had [?] tunneled through an old pass [unintelligible]. Well, they made the survey down [unintelligible] Lolo and Clearwater, and it was just too much cost. Well, I carried messages back and forth for the camps—grocery orders and things.

LK: On horseback?

GH: [unintelligible] Yes, I used to have [unintelligible] horses would haul you up, and we went back down the hill after. We didn't have sense enough, but they got to be...they'd [unintelligible] sometimes they'd have their skis on—

LK: Good grief! How long have you been skiing?

GH: Oh, well, I was a lot younger than those kids out there.

LK: My gosh, because when I think of skiing, I think of it as being a fairly new sport.

GH: Oh, no. The Scandinavians and others have always [unintelligible]. The Laps [Laplanders] used to have 18-foot skis over there and they'd try to ski in that [unintelligible] mountain [unintelligible] they'd turn them up-side-down and hang head-down. No, skiing is thousands of years old [unintelligible]. Of course, modern skiing, that's a situation like Sun Valley [unintelligible] some of us tried to learn modern skiing [unintelligible]. In fact, [unintelligible] over the last five years or so, modern skiing has changed considerably. They [unintelligible] and then they use more sensible skis—shorter skis.

LK: John keeps on wanting us to take up skiing, but you just have to have the money, too. That's not a cheap sport!

GH: Well, it costs quite a bit of money, but for the time...your equipment and things like that—even with shorter skis—will cost several hundred dollars. And your lift tickets...So the old skis the [unintelligible] used to have [unintelligible] the old racing skis. I don't dare give them to people. They're too big and long. I went to Sun Valley here a while back and [unintelligible] the first of the year...the first of last year [unintelligible] and operated here and it didn't quite recover, so they decided to give me antibiotics. I didn't think much about it [unintelligible] up there in Sun Valley and started to ski [unintelligible] and I'd gotten over that [unintelligible] range, why, [unintelligible] I decided to give up this sport!

LK: That was just the medicine, right?

GH: Well, I think that was a combination there—that and my skis. [unintelligible] but I had another pair of skis [unintelligible] so it took about three or four days before I got back on the skis.

LK: Oh, that's too bad, though, because that's expensive doing something like that—going over and staying in motels so forth.

GH: Oh, yes. It cost me \$9 a day for a ticket to go up and down the hill and another \$5 [unintelligible]—

LK: I'm sure it's a rich man's sport.

GH: I don't know where all these people get the money, but they aren't all dressed in jeans and old clothes.

LK: Yes, well, I'll tell you, when I start skiing, I'm going to be dressed in jeans and old clothes because I have to afford the boots and the lessons, that's going to be enough!

GH: Well, the main thing is to get clothing that keeps you warm. Many people [unintelligible] get cramps either in a swimming pool or when they're skiing and their circulation's cut off. [unintelligible] and sometimes they're extremely painful.

LK: Well, another thing that I was curious about. I saw a reference to a "Hellgate Road." Could that have been the Mullan Road? Because it seemed like, when they were talking about it, it was about in the same area as the Mullan Road.

GH: Well, the Hellgate Road—just like the stream here is called the Hellgate River or the Missoula River [unintelligible].

LK: [unintelligible], yes.

GH: The Hellgate Road came down through the trails along the river, but of course, the very early trappers [unintelligible] because with the wind and the snow and also the attacks of the Indians—ambushing—

LK: So, the Mullan Road pretty much followed the Hellgate Road?

GH: Well, yes. The Mullan Road practically followed the old trail through there, and of course, there's the Hellgate [unintelligible] which is down [unintelligible]. But of a local means, I think [unintelligible].

LK: Yes, this is true.

GH: They give you the basic description [unintelligible] the weather—

LK: Mr. [unintelligible], this is Grant Higgins. Grant Higgins, this is our custodian. He has been really helping me an awful lot with Missoula history. [unintelligible]. You can't get any more established than when your grandfather settles the place!

GH: [unintelligible] grandfather [unintelligible].

LK: That's true...Grant Creek? Are you aware of Grant Creek? That was his great-grandfather.

[The two gentlemen begin conversing.]

LK: Of course, you have been east and you have been west, and you know that it sure beats anything that's in either of those places. I think that's why people like it so much here.

[Unintelligible conversation between two gentlemen.]

LK: [Microphone adjustment] See, I don't know these things about these badger fights and these women going around in the Easter parade, and that kind of stuff. What newspaper would print that?

GH: Oh, yes. [unintelligible] Line [unintelligible] Fox—

LK: How long were they around here?

GH: Oh, Mrs. Line [?], she was here a number of years. She was standing in the [unintelligible] and started a lot of the bankers and lawyers and made loans to them and enabled them to finish their education.

LK: She was a pretty good-hearted woman then?

GH: Oh, yes! She was quite a character [unintelligible] outstanding individuals—lawyers and [unintelligible]—and she [unintelligible] if they wanted to get out and get an education [unintelligible]. We used to have big skating rinks around here [unintelligible] and things like that. But it was all, practically, all hand [unintelligible] and the difference the change [unintelligible].

LK: Getting back to these madams, just a little bit, was it all above ground? I mean, now, any of your red-light districts are supposed to be not known to the police and underground—that sort of stuff.

GH: No, it was pay-offs and things like that.

LK: So, it was pretty open?

GH: Oh, it was open [unintelligible]. But, Mrs. Line, why, she was more or less retired and [unintelligible].

LK: Was she always married when she was doing this little occupation of hers?

GH: Well, I don't know if she was married or what, but she [unintelligible] she would invest her money and old Jack Keith, he was advisor [unintelligible], but she would help a lot of people. And Bertie Coggs was one of those [unintelligible].

LK: Was she in Missoula for a number of years too?

GH: Oh, yes, she was there. She would show up in the Easter parades in a carriage with all of her girls and that, and the Methodists and Baptists would [unintelligible] theatres and

[unintelligible] sanctimonious people [unintelligible] most of the people [unintelligible] on the south side they tried to [unintelligible].

LK: What other parades were there in those days besides your Easter parade, your 4th of July parade and your Chinese New Year parade?

GH: Oh, well, there was, of course, all the Shriner's parades [unintelligible] organization of the Eagles [unintelligible] religious parades that...the end of the world—

LK: Oh, really?

GH: Civil right [unintelligible] up on Waterworks Hill [unintelligible] and went up on the hill there waiting for the end of the world. While they were up there waiting, the preacher was just here in the [unintelligible].

LK: Oh, my word! Was he one of those traveling preachers?

GH: Oh, he'd been around [unintelligible].

LK: Well, under what pretext did this preacher [unintelligible] the money?

GH: Well, he said they wouldn't need it anymore [unintelligible] to the church and he cashed it [unintelligible]. Yes, he left a lot of people destitute.

LK: Did they ever catch up with him?

GH: [unintelligible] he probably took off [unintelligible]—

LK: About what year was that? Do you remember?

GH: Let's see...I think that was about 1912. Then there was some [unintelligible] in 1918, about the time of the war, they got patriotic and put the flag up on Mt. Jumbo [unintelligible] spy stories [unintelligible] a pretty big flag up on [unintelligible]. After all their labor, it [unintelligible].

[Another person begins speaking.]

GH: Then they had this [unintelligible] which [unintelligible] draft-dodgers and things like that. They had [unintelligible] draft dodgers.

LK: Really? Even back in those days?

GH: Oh, yes. Yellowstone Park is [unintelligible] because most of the people sent their children out into the woods and Canada - there are a few outstanding cases [unintelligible]. Yes, there were a few [unintelligible] but we got an engineering [unintelligible] sent to Yellowstone Park because [unintelligible] During the war, [unintelligible] St. Patrick's Day or [unintelligible] and some of the Protestants and the Catholics [unintelligible]

LK: Were there many Irish here? Would they have—

GH: Oh, yes, there was quite an Irish contingency here. St. Patrick's Day was [unintelligible] didn't have a shamrock. Of course, the orange [unintelligible].

LK: Would there be a lot of fights and stuff?

GH: Oh, yes! There was fights. Oh, most of them [unintelligible]. Of course, one custom that they used to have was that they get some outstanding back-alley fighter, and they'd challenge [unintelligible] bets on fights. [unintelligible]

LK: Would there be a St. Patrick's Day parade, or was it just pretty much fighting?

GH: No, they had a semi-religious St. Patrick's Day parade. No the fighting when they had the parades was mostly late at night. But these individuals so-called "free-for-all" fights and things like that, some of these people—

[Break in audio]

LK: Now, when you mention the Elks and these other groups that would have these parades, did they have them every year at a certain time of the year? Or was it just kind of for an election or something?

GH: Well, yes, the Elks, of course, had the convention, but they usually had one or two parades each year. At a certain time, they gathered their lodge and a few of the other lodges and they decorated floats and horses and stuff like that, and they'd get groups of horses [unintelligible]. There was a lot of that that oh, similar to a sheriff's posse or something along that line.

LK: Your grandfather's sister, Katherine Higgins, came to Missoula. Do you know what prompted her to come? She married a McCormick.

GH: Well, she came over here because he was here and Ireland was pretty much a bad place to live, and she and her sister, Maria (her half-sister) they all came here because [unintelligible] and, well, she married Washington J. McCormick. He was a lawyer, and [unintelligible] Colorado and Salt Lake [unintelligible] been run out of here for some reason. But he had a certain sense—a business head—[unintelligible] but she [unintelligible] younger Higgins [unintelligible] because there was a band of controversy about the property and she would get

someone to sign the papers for this. After my grandfather died, why, there was some business infraction and they didn't pay the taxes and things went from bad to worse. [unintelligible] very convoluted [unintelligible]. He was a pretty good businessman [unintelligible]. He would kind of reorganize things and paid the taxes and things like that, but in the meantime, he took care of his own [unintelligible] and the Seattle property that was homesteaded [unintelligible] Seattle. The acreage out there [unintelligible] taxes. [unintelligible], but it might have been for taxes.

LK: I hadn't read that about your grandfather, that he'd had acreage in Seattle.

GH: Well, he had interests all over the Northwest and places like that, but the one in Seattle I hadn't [unintelligible]. And then, there were interests up on the Flathead Reservation, but well, after the war, the search for [unintelligible] restrict my instruction in engineering [unintelligible].

LK: You're kidding!

GH: Oh yes, [unintelligible] about six months.

LK: I'll bet you he's long gone and you're still here.

GH: So I [unintelligible].

LK: What year was that?

GH: Oh, 1924. Well, I'd follow the Salmon River and make certain that [unintelligible] and make sure that the [unintelligible] surveys that were made of this area [unintelligible]. So, he went up to a place that was about eight miles [unintelligible] and he broke his legs and he had a bunch of mining claims there, and this poor fellow, he was from Virginia, I guess. he came from a prominent family back there and had gotten into a scrape [unintelligible]. He tried to take over these camps and raise horses up there. He had some very good horses The Forest Service—why, when he had the winter feed for his horses, the Forest Service came [unintelligible]. They went up there and camped there, and he said they had [unintelligible] get through the job faster [unintelligible]. So, [unintelligible] blizzard and he got a little exposure [unintelligible] at least that's what the doctor that had examined him [unintelligible] that's why I went through those last years [unintelligible]. But that's when I went again, [unintelligible]. It was about six years when I [unintelligible].

LK: But I bet you've dealt with that doctor, haven't you?

GH: Oh, no, I [unintelligible]. Oh, the doctors do the best they can with diagnosis and [unintelligible] and they didn't know a lot of things that they do now [unintelligible]. So, to a certain extent, you've got to [unintelligible]. So I [unintelligible] motivation [unintelligible]. But,

this would go on from time to time and they restrict you so much, [unintelligible] a lot of the engineers were over-worked and [unintelligible] a nervous breakdown [unintelligible] job, and after about half an hour, why, [unintelligible] you get a lot of book-work [unintelligible]. But, it's [unintelligible] now—they recognize that—but when you have to work it out for yourself, why, it's a [unintelligible]. As a matter of fact, until recently, I [unintelligible] so dependent on someone else [unintelligible] if you can't take care of yourself. Well, like the youngsters that I've been around [unintelligible]. Of course, you work with all the youngsters and quit trying to work with the old folks. It takes too much time to break all the bad habits, but you work with youngsters and start them out [unintelligible] but they still [unintelligible] so they keep after me skiing [unintelligible] someplace—

LK: Well, as long as you can do it, you know.

GH: Well, [unintelligible] but going down to these senior citizen places—all that and the rest homes—as long as I can get around, well...

LK: I don't blame you. I don't blame you a bit. Are you the only Higgins that's related to C. P. that's still here?

GH: Yes, I'm the last of the tribe, although I have a cousin, Camila McCormick, living . She's [unintelligible]. [unintelligible] power of attorney to control my interest [unintelligible].

LK: Well, that's too bad. Did Christopher Higgins ever keep a diary?

GH: They never kept much letters. Everything in the old house there was shoved into sacks like sacks of junk, and there was very little business records from that...I wasn't in contact [unintelligible]. I was pretty close to my grandmother when I was a youngster, I guess, [unintelligible] and as a youngster, she used to ride horseback and she [unintelligible]. She never said very much [unintelligible] she had quite a sense of humor. She never expressed it very much. Oh, we got along fine, better than with the rest of them.

LK: Do you have many pictures, like of the whole thing?

GH: Well, I don't know if my housekeeping is [unintelligible]. I don't know what I've got. I've been trying for years to [unintelligible] live with all the things and to take care of my affairs. Oh, I have pictures that I [unintelligible]. No, I don't have...very few family pictures like that. In fact, well, Dean Stone [unintelligible] he used to be [unintelligible] history [unintelligible].

LK: Oh, I know. I've read his books, *Following Old Trails*. Why was the Higgin's, that big house down on Main, torn down? Was it just because they wanted to have that place for another building?

GH: Well, it became involved in the estate when old F. S. [Lusk] became president of First National Bank. He was a contractor who knew banking and so [unintelligible] board of directors forced him to pay off the [unintelligible] ranches up and down the Bitterroot there, and, at that time, why they weren't bringing in any money. They were [unintelligible] a fortune [unintelligible], and Mrs. Lusk, she was quite a businesswoman. She was very large [unintelligible] and she used to go up the Bitterroot and check all these markets and places and try to [unintelligible] that was after Mr. Lusk died. But he had...I don't know just how he got the mortgage [unintelligible] through Western Bank. First National [unintelligible] like I was back in school [unintelligible] old house [unintelligible] through them well [unintelligible] and throw it out and take it to the dump, he says. [unintelligible] take that stuff someplace, so I [unintelligible] so I just went down and hired a transfer van to take everything that was loose there [unintelligible] either do something or [unintelligible] but I just had it all moved over there and went over there three years later and picked out what I could, but I never had the time. Besides, I wasn't too well at that time.

LK: Was about in the 1920s?

GH: Well, that was later in the 1920s. Well, it was before 1924.

LK: Was the house then torn down after you—

GH: Well, it stayed there. The lot was vacant in back and the house was being torn down, and this was at the [unintelligible] Lusk had the mortgage on it [unintelligible]. That was in the 1930s [unintelligible]. In the 1920s there, why, there was about 1,000 people standing out [unintelligible].

LK: By any chance, do you know how Missoula got the name of "The Garden City?"

GH: Well, everybody used to have cows, horses, corrals for their animals, everybody had gardens. People put up their...see, they didn't have oranges or bananas except at Christmas. We just had local fruit [unintelligible] apples and a lot of big [unintelligible] but you can't dry that. They put that down, like eggs, they'd get eggs and some of them would [unintelligible].

LK: And they'd stay? Those eggs would stay?

GH: Well, they'd take that solution [unintelligible] water glass [unintelligible], a dozen eggs down there, and of course, that [unintelligible] the eggs [unintelligible] during the summer when the [unintelligible] fruits and vegetables and tings like that grew in the yard and practically everybody had a yard. And then the best were [unintelligible] out in Orchard Homes. [unintelligible] and the poor families would get a deer and [unintelligible] they'd hang it in the woodshed [unintelligible].

LK: Do you know how Rattlesnake Creek got its name?

GH: Well, it's [unintelligible] there were Rattlesnakes on the prairie [unintelligible] and the whole Rattlesnake [unintelligible] and once they were killed, rattlesnakes [unintelligible] up the Blackfoot [unintelligible]. But that's it was a combination [unintelligible].

LK: You wouldn't, by any chance, know who named it that?

GH: Well, it was the Frenchmen or the Indians. It was more or less the Indian's name [unintelligible] a descriptive term. The Indians [unintelligible] somebody with a little imagination [unintelligible] casual conversation [unintelligible] twisted stream, or [unintelligible]. All the youngsters use to call it Rattle [unintelligible]. But there were rattlesnakes all over near the hill there [unintelligible]. I think the last one was [unintelligible] got bit by a rattlesnake, and his arm welled up. He showed symptoms, but he never died. [unintelligible] a snake over there, why, that was [unintelligible].

LK: Well, I really appreciate you coming in here.

GH: I'm not sure I—

LK: Oh! You have helped!

[End of Interview]