

Maureen and Mike

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This transcript represents the nearly verbatim record of an unrehearsed interview. Please bear in mind that you are reading the spoken word rather than the written word.

**Oral History Number: 149-004d**  
**Interviewee: Frank H. Rose and Clarence “Cy” Young**  
**Interviewer: Ernest Kraft**  
**Date of Interview: circa 1965**  
**Project: National Bison Range Oral History Project**

*Note: Two women, JoAnn Kraft, Ernest Kraft’s wife, and Louise Ewan Rose, Frank Rose’s wife, can be heard talking in the background, but their conversation isn’t included in this transcript because it is unrelated to the topic of the National Bison Range.*

Ernest Kraft: Roland, Roland.

Frank Rose: Noland.

EK: Roland.

FR: Roland, or whatever his name was, and I can't get him placed.

EK: He was the predator and road control agent.

Clarence “Cy” Young: No. He, Roland, he was a game warden.

FR: These things here are circulars that you pass out at the ranch.

EK: There, you can have them.

FR: Pass these out to Louise, she was wanting to—

EK: There’s very many more there if you'd like to—

FR: These are the ones that I read over, and this this letter that I'm talking about. I've got no recollection the first two paragraphs or the last two paragraphs, and the ones in between there were written from that from my notes.

CY: Guy by the name of Bateman (?), was the road and control man.

FR: What?

CY: We’re just talking about old Roland. He was just a game agent, game warden.

FR: Mushbach [George E. Mushbach] was a game warden.

CY: Yes, until Roland took Mushbach's place at Billings, and Mushbach went to Bear River and took over the Bear River Refuge.

FR: Roland come here instead of Mushbach?

CY: Well, no—

EK: Norton.

CY: Mushbach, after you left, then Mushbach went to Bear River, and old Roland stayed here then until Norton got here. See, Norton never got here until September, and you left early—first of January or somewhere along in there. Old Roland then, he was there until—

EK: See, this says, A memorandum for U.S. deputy game wardens. So whoever this was addressed to was a US deputy game warden—

FR: Sheldon.

EK: —and he signed it.

FR: Oh, it's signed by Sheldon.

EK: Yes, but it's addressed for U.S. deputy game wardens.

FR: Yes. I know that's a request for information that came out, and this is the answer to it—

EK: With your name on it.

FR: —which would be a report on the game conditions. It's got my name on it, and I've got no recollection of the request for funds—for travel funds and things of that sort, or using it for an alibi, or any of that stuff. Don't make any difference. I'm willing to stand for the whole letter, but—

EK: I don't do I even read this.

FR: —it wasn't my letter. How does the coffee? It's time for more coffee.

Louise Rose: I'll pour, she's busy.

FR: I got no objection to anything in the letter. In my opinion, written the way I would write it.

[long pause]

EK: Well, that's interesting, I guess.

LR: [unintelligible]

EK: No that's right, and it certainly wasn't...But I thought these were very good reports, these here reports, through the years. I just thought you might enjoy reading them, and I got to take them back.

FR: Well, I'd like to have the follow-up on them, and these two you brought down today probably gives that the reconnaissance ought to show—

EK: Well, you see, from 1928 to 1940, that's quite a spread to—

FR: Quite a spread.

EK: These two books—

FR: No, but the '30s. Wasn't the first reconnaissance made in '30? I thought they was ten years apart—one '30 and one '40.

EK: Well, the two that I brought you today was a '40...1930...June 30, 1928.

FR: I put a question mark off to these fiscal year on one of the letters you generally write after your fiscal year after year is completed and then when it starts.

EK: Here's one for '26 and '27 and '29 would have been the last one—'30.

FR: Haven't you got a '28 yet?

EK: '29—

CY: These must be some of your Colorado pictures here.

FR: Yes, most of them are. There's some from the Bison Range and some from Colorado.

CY: Looks like you had plenty of snow.

FR: Yes.

LR: [unintelligible] is at 9,500.

FR: 1927. You generally write your report after the year's over then before it begins. The fiscal year starts the 1st of July.

EK: Yeah, still does. They still run it that way.

[long pause]

CY: This little log house here, is that your station up at the high country?

FR: No, this one here is Dan Wilke's (?) cabin there, a miner. Fellow with money developed the mine, he got a mine up that gulch about six miles, and he put a cabin there. My cabins are littler ones.

CY: You're above timberline there in some places.

FR: Yes. I've spent a good deal of time above timberline or around timberline.

EK: [laughs] Did you make these notes?

FR: Yeah.

[long pause]

LR: Are these some I can see?

EK: Yes, all kinds of them. If you'd like more, why, we have them by the thousands, and they're in there—

Unidentified speaker: Just gathering dust?

EK: —for everybody to...No, no. No, we go through, I'd say, probably about 5,000 of those leaflets a year.

CY: See the man over there bending over, looking, holding his hat in his hand? I call Ernest's attention to it because that's taken up on the Bison Range.

EK: That would have been Hornaday.

LR: That's Hornaday? How did you know?

EK: Because he told me. [laughs]

FR: I'm sure that chief of the Biological Survey was Dr. Nelson.

CY: I've heard that name.

LR: That I wouldn't know, because I don't think I ever heard of Nelson.

CY: This must be your little cabin then...Here's a little cabin up on the hillside there.

FR: Yes. That was my guard station the first year I was in the Forest Service, first summer. That's up near Mount Evans. I spent one summer there, and then I went on as a ranger in 1915 on the route. I spent five years as a ranger, and then I went onto technical work. I spent two or three years on grazing reconnaissance.

LR: Was this grazing reconnaissance after you'd been on the route?

FR: Yes.

LR: Then, when was the Wichita? Was that before or after you'd been on the route?

FR: Yes, that was after I'd been on the route. It was some time, during that time, I was sent down to Wichita. I guess, that was after the grazing reconnaissance down in Southeast Colorado—

LR: You went to Wichita?

FR: —while they was waiting to make up their minds what to do with me, why, that was a way to get rid of me for a while. So they sent me down there. My final position was supposed to be up on the Hayden [National Forest] under [unintelligible], and I was up there just a little while. Then Riley [Smith Riley] got a hold of me, and—

CY: [unintelligible]

FR: What?

CY: Passing there; two teams are trying to pass on the—

FR: Trying to pass on the hill?

CY: —hillside there. Looks like they're way up high.

FR: We had to lift our spring-wagon off the road to let the other team get by.

CY: That's the way it looks here. That's a pretty thick display there.

FR: That was on that reconnaissance in Southwestern Colorado.

EK: You think that Brian Naland, or Noland was there when you came there.

FR: I'm sure he was on the Range there, when I was there. It seems like the name is familiar.

CY: Well, it pretty near had to be, Noland (?)—

EK: What about your trapper, and what about the coyote situation [unintelligible]?

FR: Van Dusen (?) was the predatory animal man, and he kept the fence lined with coyote skeletons. He like to hang them up where people could see them after he got them.

CY: Yeah, you wire them along the fence. [unintelligible]

EK: That's really interesting.

FR: I don't approve of the predatory animal business, the way it was carried on in that earlier days, because they put out poison that poisoned baits a good deal many places and killed too many other things besides coyotes. That's been the hardest thing on the eagles. That's what's practically exterminated them.

EK: There was a lot of coyotes inside?

FR: In and out. The coyote goes through the fence there, under it any time he wants to. Takes very little scratching to get under that fence.

EK: Well, he could go up four or five wires and go through too, couldn't he?

FR: He never does, I don't think. He could if he wanted to.

EK: If he was in a big hurry, would he?

FR: What?

EK: In that bison fence, would he if he was in a big hurry?

FR: Well, I don't know, I saw a deer jump through the top mesh of that buffalo fence one time, just running his front paws stuck out and went right through one of those holes and kept on running.

EK: Did you have any recollection of them using dogs in there on coyotes?

FR: Using dogs?

EK: Inside the park?

FR: Inside the park on coyotes? No.

EK: What about using them on buffalo?

FR: Never did.

EK: Never did.

FR: No.

EK: Well, you see, in Hodges' time they did. They brought in two—an Irish staghound, and a greyhound—and they run coyotes in there—

FR: Run coyotes in there.

EK: —inside the park with these dogs. I just wondered if they were still doing it, to your knowledge, when you were there.

FR: No. I don't have a particular objection to it, but we just never did.

EK: Well, I could see quite a fracas if you had several hounds coming down through a big herd of buffalo, trying to—

FR: I doubt if a buffalo'd pay any attention to them.

EK: Well, he might not.

CY: If he did, he'd come after him, instead of going from them. I know that.

EK: Do you remember the first time you tried to put the buffalo through the chutes?

FR: I don't remember the first time, I don't think, but I remember several times—several incidents.

EK: [laughs] Well, that's what I want to hear. [laughs] Why I ask you this, I sat and listened to Ike Melton [William J. B. "Ike Melton] the other night, and he tells that...They run the hotel in Ravalli—

FR: A buffalo has a habit of going through those chutes,. Those chutes, of course, are built to fit. They're just big enough for the biggest buffalo we had on the Range to get through there with his horns touching on either side. To keep them from crowding the turn in the chutes, you

make them to fit, just the same and you do the crates that you're shipping buffalo in. What takes the power away is getting them confined to close quarters. The buffalo, generally, when they went through those chutes...We used to have a chute...We started them first, I think, going through a chute from one corral to the other to train them on the chute. They go through there like shooting a bullet through a rifle. They go through there and pick up speed all the way through if they can. They go through on the run. I don't know why, but it seems to be a habit for the buffalo—if he gets in tight places—to get out as fast as he can.

CY: He wants to get out in the big open as quick as he can.

EK: Ike was telling about these three cornered...three posts. Do you remember in the—

FR: The three-post corners is to give a man a chance to go through without the buffalo going through.

EK: [laughs] Yes, let's hear the rest of it. [laughs]

FR: What?

EK: Let's do the rest of it.

FR: Well, we use them some of the time.

EK: When they got to running around in there, didn't some of them get wedged in them? Do you remember that?

FR: I don't remember any...I remember a calf getting out through those posts one time—getting out of the corral—but I don't remember any buffalo being wedged in one.

EK: Well, they were talking something that they'd jump through with their front end, and then they'd get hooked on their hips. Then they had to chop them out of there.

FR: Never did chop one out or anything. They always got out of there on their own. If they tried to go through there—some of the yearlings might try it sometimes— but they didn't go through. A calf will go through. I don't remember any man ever getting stuck going through, trying to get away from buffalo.

EK: [laughs] Well, later on, they took and put a double-hinged door on that, just like a barroom door, and a man could run at that and then it'd flop shut behind him.

FR: It would lock shut behind him?

EK: It wouldn't lock, but it would just flap shut behind him with the springs on it. Just like a barroom door when you pushed it open, it would flop back.

FR: I don't see where you'd gain anything, but throw the buffalo off, maybe.

EK: Yes, I think, more than anything.

FR: So he might not start through. I can't see why that [unintelligible] after you get past those posts you was all right, as far as the buffalo was concerned. I remember, on those gates between the two corrals, where you bring the herd in at that first hook there, you bring the herd in, and there's two corrals together with the double-gates between. I don't know whether they're still that way or not, and those gates swing in but they won't swing out.

CY: They're still that way.

FR: One of them hit on the post anyhow.

EK: Yeah, it's that way yet.

FR: We put some buffalo in, I guess it was Clarence [Clarence "Cy" Young], I had somebody bring in some buffalo in there. They brought in too many, and they rushed through those metal gates. Well, I went in there to stop those metal gates, and they come back before I could get the one furthest over. I just got one gate pulled around. We had the gates tied back, and I had to untie them to shut them. I got one, but I didn't get to the other before they started back. This gate that I'd got shut, of course, they didn't come through there, because they hit the post and stopped. But something hit me. After a while I kind of felt something and looked up, and there was a buffalo cow sniffing at me, smelling at me, laying there on the ground. I got up and went the fence and part-way up it, and the herd come back, as I knew they would, to the other end of the corral. They'd mill from one end of the corral to the other. So that's once I come pretty near...I don't know what hit me, whether it was that gate that they—

CY: They had you between the gate and the wall there. You were trying to shut the gate, and they shoved that gate against you and you was against the side of the wall there. It's a damn wonder they didn't kill you.

FR: I wasn't between the gate and the wall. Where I was, was behind the gate that they couldn't open from that side. They was pushing against it where it was against the post, but the other half was open yet because the gate hadn't been—

EK: There was buffalo in there too.

FR: —tied down. So the buffalo all went through on that side of me. I was not in the position that Clarence was when the buffalo run over him.

EK: Well, Ike tells about this—what the heck is his name—they run the hotel at Ravalli. [pauses] Anyway, he and this boy and Ike and Neil were out setting in this hook, and they run a whole big slug of the buffalo into that hook and they just milled in there.

LR: [unintelligible]

EK: No.

CY: Tom Ethel (?), I think.

EK: Kenny Ethel?

CY: Tommy.

EK: Tommy Ethel. Do you remember Tommy Ethel? He was riding there at the same time Ike Melton was. You were trying to sort the butcher herd or something, and you were up the chute there, partway, where the gate—

FR: Up at the cut gate.

EK: —cut gate that you talked about before.

FR: I could cut them two ways out of the corral there and let them go on through.

EK: Well, you were up there, and Tommy and Ike and Neil were in that hook. This whole big bunch was in there, and then they were going right on through pretty much but they wouldn't feed into that section there at the end of the hook. They said that they set there on the horses two-and-a-half hours trying to hold that bunch, and they held most of them, that particular time. He thought that that was the first time that they had run them through the chutes to try to count them or something.

FR: We tried to sort them—

EK: [unintelligible] more than anything. To [unintelligible] the butcher or something at that time, no doubt.

FR: That was our way to get buffalo sorted out for any purpose—for butchering or for culling the herd or for separating for this or that. I remember one day that I got a telegram saying if there was no records of an analysis a buffalo milk, and they wanted to sample buffalo milk to send to Utah to be analyzed. I called in the cowboys and talked with them. They all told me that they'd grown up on beef ranches and used canned milk. [laughs] So I guess, it was Clarence and Ike, I took them out to the corral and looked them over. Had them bring a bunch through the

chute there. I tried to pick out gentle cows. I picked out a couple of cows and put them in one of those side pens separated from their calves and turned the rest of them go. We went home and waited until the next morning to go out and get a sample buffalo milk. Since the milking was left up to me, why, I didn't know how else to do.

So we run one of these cows up the next morning and put her in a crate. I went up to the right side and said, "So, boss," and put my hand through, and she kicked one of the boards off the side of the crate. We went to work and tied her foot. That give me a place to put my pan in. I borrowed an aluminum pan from my wife to milk in. When I started to milk, then, the buffalo reached up with a foot on the other side and mashed my pan and splattered my pocketbook. Then we tied all four feet, and I went ahead and milked my cow and got about a pint of milk from her and turned her loose. We didn't try to milk the other one then. We just had her as reserve. I sent it in and got it analyzed, and it came back with an analysis that it's about as twice as rich in cream as cow's milk, and the cream on it is pure white because there's no coloring it.

CY: I remembered it was snow-white.

FR: What?

CY: I remembered it being snow-white.

FR: Anyhow, it seemed to have a more powerful kick in it than the moonshine that you could buy in those days.

EK: [laughs] You tried that too? Was Prohibition still on in that time?

FR: I don't know whether it was at that time or not, but it was some of the time.

CY: Yeah, it was then. It never come back in until '32. From 1919 until '32.

FR: That cut gate in the corral was about as practical as anything we've put in up there. We could separate out any buffalo, or any type of buffalo we wanted to, anytime. They always was, more or less, crazy with their ideas of selling buffalo, because they'd sell buffalo equally divided between the sexes. They'd send you instructions to change your herd to all males from what you were growing, and you'd already been culling off the bulls. Then when they sell them equally divided between the sexes, why, if you'd go according to instructions, you'd have a herd out there with no bulls in it, a couple of years. But we had them in shape which we could handle him.

I remember one day that we were working buffalo out there very carefully and sorting out a bunch with something or other, and we had a lot of spectators. Somebody, after we'd separated practically all the herd, wanted to be helpful so they went to opened the gate, and

let them go through from one pen into another—let them go from that pen that we was cutting them into, back into the main pen we'd been bringing them through.

EK: What'd you say? [laughs]

FR: I don't remember who that was.

CY: Volunteer help gets you in a lot of trouble sometimes.

FR: I don't remember who that was that did it, but I made spectator out of him from then on, anyhow.

EK: You said, to your knowledge, there never was any buffalo grass on the Range?

FR: Any buffalo—

EK: Grass, or grama grass.

FR: No, there's no buffalo grass up there to my knowledge. In fact, I'm quite sure that had there been any there I would have known it.

EK: I'm sure you would have to, but I was supposed to ask you. That was one of the things they wanted to check with you and—

FR: That's buffalo grass that you had in the picture. If you got it on the Range, it's something that's come in there since I was there, so it has to be a result of your seeding.

CY: Do you know of any buffalo grass being on west side of the Continental Divide?

FR: Not any in this country at all.

EK: We got this from east of the Divide—the seed for this east of the Divide. I believe it was planted last summer in several...Well, you've mentioned these triangles. Some of those are still so that the buffalo can't get to them in a few places, and they've put some of that in those areas.

FR: Those restricted grazing places, those little places are fenced off from all grazing, will get concentration of rodents and things of that sort.

EK: That's what's happened Frank.

FR: What?

EK: That's what's happened.

FR: That's what's happened.

EK: I got to thinking about this after we'd talked about it. This one in the head of Elk Creek at the bottom of the sheep pasture, you remember that one?

FR: Head of Elk Creek, at the bottom of the—

EK: The bottom of the sheep pasture was right at the head of the Elk Creek when that lane...when you put that division fence that went right down Elk Creek?

CY: Yeah, that's right.

FR: I'd forgotten about having a separate pasture for the sheep.

CY: We made that after you left.

EK: They continued that on around there, over the hill, and into Trisky and up Trisky and back to High Point, and made what they call a sheep pasture out of that area.

CY: Where elk wing dead-ended down there on Elk Creek then the other fence went right down the Elk Creek to the Jocko. Tied onto the end of that wing, and went right straight over the ridge to Trisky Creek, then up Trisky—pretty near to the head of Trisky—and then up to High Point where the road used to dead-end there. Remember where the road used to dead-end there right on east of High Point, where we went through the timber there?

FR: Yeah.

EK: That's where hooks up again.

CY: That's where it hooks back onto the division fence.

FR: Oh, yeah.

CY: That's what we call the sheep pasture.

EK: They put the sheep in there later.

FR: The fence running up toward the High Point was originally a wing fence put there to corral elk. It worked for—

CY: It just went out there about a quarter of a mile down, to start with.

FR: Yeah, then. Then there was no fence from there on, as I recall, while I was there.

EK: They fenced that though—

CY: Yeah, we put that fence in while you was there [unintelligible]—

FR: [unintelligible]

CY: —went straight on over the High Point—

FR: Then down to the—

CY: —down to the other fence. We done that—

FR: Yes, we did too, because we put that triangle in the end of it.

CY: That's right. We done that in '28.

FR: 1928.

EK: I started to tell you that we put a bunch of skulls over there in one of those triangular enclosures—

FR: I see.

EK: —one summer and—

FR: —they all had mouse nests in them.

EK: —the mice, two, or three years ago were just terrible in there. They just took whole sections of the Range, maybe you've notice that in your gathering and collecting and stuff. In this section of the west, why, there was really a slug of them.

CY: We build the Elk Creek fence in '29. I started on it on the first day of August and finished up Christmas Eve about six o'clock in the evening.

FR: Elk Creek fence?

CY: In '29.

FR: That was in '29.

CY: Yes.

LR: When does your memory tell you that Frank left the Range?

CY: Well, it was the latter part of '30, right around—

LR: The latter part of '30?

CY: Yes. Right around December, January in '30...or December of '30 or January of '31.

LR: He was thinking it might have been around July 1st, since that letter that was dated July the 19th was one he doesn't remember ever writing.

CY: Well, he was there, I'm sure until December of—

EK: He was there after the...They did the movie in July or August, and you were there after that, weren't you?

CY: It was in the winter time, I know it.

EK: I think it was September. I'm almost certain it was September from what I've been able to collect. September of 1930.

LR: You mean that he left in September?

EK: Maybe I'm wrong.

FR: Anyhow, it's apparently definite that I came in '23 and left in '30.

EK: That's what I have in the book.

LR: You think it was wintertime?

CY: It was fall, getting into at least in October.

EK: I'll tell you, I think I'm wrong, I think he came there in September.

CY: That's right—

EK: You came there in September—

FR: That's what I got here. It seems like it was in the fall of 1923.

EK: Yes, that's right, and I'm pretty sure it was in September. Then, exactly when you're left, I couldn't—

CY: Well, it was December or January. That one, I'll just bet on that.

EK: in '30?

CY: It'd be either December of '30 or January of '31.

FR: We built the feeding corrals in the fall of '23 and corralled 400 buffalo in the spring of '24. We had hay delivered and stacked at the Bison Range the first year we fed, and the next year we had it delivered in the corral and fed out.

CY: There, in about '26, along in there, or seven, we did stack some, but mostly we had them bring it in as we used it. That was your idea of having the three pens is because we could keep a feed out ahead all the time.

FR: We made up a schedule for delivery, and every fellow that delivered his hay on a schedule that fit in in did the feeding, so we kept a little bit of a reserve on hand in case any of any bad weather stepping in or something of that sort.

CY: Sometime it would get to raining, and they couldn't haul it.

FR: The first year, I can remember worrying about the hay all stacked up, and we had stacks one right alongside the other—a whole pen-full of them there. A little bit of a fire out there could've left us without a hay.

CY: Well, it did one time.

FR: It did?

CY: We had 500 tons that they sent up here from Jackson Hole, and it got a fire. Luckily, only half of the hay had got here.

EK: In '33?

CY: Yeah. That stack caught a fire one night about three o'clock in the morning, and it burned all that up, most of it.

FR: When was that? They kept on this feeding ever since?

CY: Yes, we kept feeding up until the middle '30s.

EK: '38, or—

CY: '38, along in there, I think, was the last time we fed.

EK: See, they had a big fire in there in 1934, Frank, and—

CY: Burnt up all the south half of the Range.

FR: 1938 was the last year of feeding?

LR: Thereabouts.

EK: Close to that.

FR: This is your envelope. I'll take my notes on something else.

EK: Well, you're welcome to it. Is this your stuff?

FR: Those are your papers.

LR: No, those are the things you have to take back.

EK: Oh, I see, but you can have this envelope, you got your notes on that. I don't need it. In fact, I might have some other paper here.

Unidentified speaker: Is this your envelope over here?

EK: Yeah. I thought you might just like horses. [begins talking to unidentified speaker]

FR: You had a fire then, what year?

CY: August of '34. Burnt up all the east half of the Bison Range.

[conversations about movies and horses; continues in the background]

FR: Are they still plotting their check plots to show what the forage does every year?

CY: I think so, yes. That right, Ernie?

EK: Yes. I'd like to show him some of that stuff, if he'd just let me take him out there.

FR: They ever practiced a definite plan to rotation and grazing in there, like, keep them out of a certain section of the Range for certain months?

CY: Yes, I think they do that to a certain extent, don't they, Ernie?

EK: Yes. Remember when I told you about that contour fence?

FR: Yeah.

EK: Well, that is one of the methods they use.

FR: They can rest any part of the Range that is needed. Is that their grazing plan?

EK: No. This is a map of the fencing, interior fencing. This is your headquarters and this is Mission Creek and this is the Jocko. Then, remember I told you about this wide-strand, barb-wire fence here. This is one pasture right now, this lower half of Alexander Basin. The new recommendation is for a fence to divide this in half, in the '64 report that I brought you today, which we cut this pasture in half. Then there's an upper half to this, that goes to High Point. I can't remember whether we push them up or down first, but we leave them up or down, whichever it is, about three months each spring. But we've had some trouble, Frank. Over here on the south side in these rocky areas...Remember all the talus, all this rock slide?

FR: Yeah, yeah.

EK: Well, we were unable to get our fences completely through that area, that would hold the buffalo

FR: Hold the buffalo but didn't hold the elk too well.

EK: Well, we don't care about the elk. We've only got about 60. But these areas here, the buffalo would graze around, like, they kind of made a circle. Remember how they used to kind of go in a circle, or maybe they didn't when you were there, but they do now. They kind of go clockwise around the Range. Then ever so many days, about, they'll come by the headquarters area, maybe in two or three bands, unless these pastures are closed. This is in the winter time I'm speaking of now. Then, in the spring, we run them up or down, depending on where they want them. It seemed like they were down in the early spring, when this area would be colder, would that be right? Would they run them in the low country first?

FR: You can have them down in until the end of March or 1st of April, and then take them off...Your grass does its growing in three months—April, May, and June. Ninety percent the forage on range is produced in April, May, and June.

EK: Well then, this year, if they were down in this section for three months last year, then they should be put up in the upper section for the first three months this year.

FR: This section over here, or this one over here. My idea of rotating grazing was to use the whole range, instead of rotating each pasture separately, but they can do it either way, I presume.

EK: Now, this here tells you how big the sheep pasture is, this area right here. This is High Point. There's a tower on it, and this is Elk Creek.

FR: See, the substation was about here.

EK: No, right here.

FR: What?

EK: Here's your substation. This is Ravalli right here. This is a highway junction right here.

FR: That's right. This is the highway junction over here, I see. Then your sheep pasture is—

EK: Is right around High Point. It's a little circle around High Point.

FR: They used to run mostly through these breaks in here and come down here to water.

EK: Well, you see now, that's no problem. We've got water all through these areas by these here...with these cement tanks that I mentioned. We have two sets of tanks right in Firehole [Canyon]. I don't know how come where...that may not have been Fire Hole, but it was that a real rocky corner over there above Dixon. Remember that?

FR: Yeah.

EK: All these areas here—where a fence doesn't come through—that is areas that we couldn't get our fence through the talus and them rock faces. Now, they're going to divide this pasture over here into one more pasture—the new recommendation is. I just wish you'd let me take you out there. I think you'd enjoy it, and you can drive over every bit of it. There's a road clear around it, there's a road up to High Point, and there's a road down Trisky, there's a road up Elk Creek, there's a road right out onto Wild Horse—that little Wild Horse Plateau. You could really see it, and I think you'd enjoy it. I'd be more than happy to do it.

FR: These [unintelligible] here, the elk have trails across them.

EK: Then the buffalo come along, and when you try to put them in these pastures, they follow the trails that the elk made and go back into our other areas that we don't want them in. Then we have to ride them back out of there again.

LR: How long have you been here?

JoAnn Kraft: We've been here 11 years, on the first of April. Then Ernie has worked eight years, permanently, on the Range. Then he worked two or three years temporary. Well, you rode for roundup three years before he went to working in [unintelligible] summers.

FR: They've got it in a lot better shape to handle them now, apparently, than it ever was before. When I went there, we had the outside fence.

EK: I know it, Frank. That's why I think you'd really enjoy seeing it again, and we'd just be more than tickled to have you look at it and get your opinions, because C.J. (?) told me, he said, "Just beg him to come. We'd just be tickled to death to have him come out." He's the manager out there, and he'd welcome you with open arms.

FR: That's—

EK: C.J. Henry.

FR: Henry.

EK: He's going to be retiring the 14th of next month.

FR: Fourteenth of next month?

CY: But he's close by though, he can come down and—

EK: Oh yes, he lives right there. He lives right there at Ninepipe. Between Ninepipe and Kicking Horse, he's got a little place there. He's going to retire in this country.

FR: Always lived there?

EK: No. He came from Michigan.

FR: Came from Michigan.

EK: He's been in the [Forest] Service 30 years, and he will retire the 14th of April. Then, who we have coming, I don't have any idea, and whether or not I'll be able to continue with this thing is another thing. Whether the next manager is going to have the historical interest that C.J. has, I have no idea. I might get cut off right like that. So that's why I've been maybe crowding you a little bit by coming by so often, but it's quite important to me.

FR: I'm not concerned of the history end of it, because I got along fairly well after an interval of a few years after I was off of there. I was kind of bitter for a while, because the reason I'm off, is on account of that motion-pictures we took up there. I handled the payoff, and I'd been told by

Redington [Paul G. Redington], he didn't want me handling money. He didn't want me handling money to do things on the Bison Range. I don't know whether Clarence remembers getting out a call for bids for capturing one male and two female mule deer? One fellow said, "I, or anybody else, would be a chump to bid on this." One fellow bid 150 dollars apiece or 250 dollars apiece or some other unreasonable price. One fellow said, "I'd be a chump to bid on this." That's all the returns I got, but I did them up, and sent them Washington and asked for instructions. Finally we went ahead and got them shipped, as we generally did, on our own.

My plan was—everybody that wanted an elk or a deer, why, it was available at so much per head, which was a guessed cost figure as far as that goes, because it's a little bit unhandy to say just what it's going to cost you to get an elk or a deer or anything else. We knew from experience that we could get them, sooner or later if we did it our way, but if we hired strangers to come in on the Range and start in capturing animals that looked like a poor deal to me than to capture with my own men right on the Range. Redington couldn't see it that way, he thought it ought to be properly and under bid, and so they instructed me to call for bids and I did. We never got the thing straightened out, because I got my head cut off. The charges that I left on had nothing to do with the fuss between me and Redington. That's what the game wardens dug up, because they had to have some charges to dismiss on. They didn't have to have them to dismiss, because any time you're a head of a department in the government and got a man you don't want, why, you can find a way to get rid of him.

EK: Well, I can believe that, but I'd just like you to remember that those people are all gone and we're not the same bunch of people. We would really appreciate—

FR: As far as I know, they's no connection with the same crew, all the way back.

EK: I think you'll find out that these people now are just very nice people, and they would really appreciate your comparison, because everybody knows you. Even all these here young fellows that come in or going to school, Well, all I got to do is mention his name. Well, they've read your things, and they know about you. That's why we'd really would value you to just come out and look, and let us show you whatever you'd like to see. It would be a real—

FR: Well, I don't think I would be very much help to you up there for two or three reasons. One is that I can't get around and can't see. Another is that I haven't kept up with the grazing since the time I was up there. You say these two reports are different. They're not making reports like I made then. I don't know whether people learn in time or not, but it's possible that grazing has advanced along with a whole lot of other things and that they know a lot more about ranges and grasses and one thing another, than they knew back there 35 years ago.

EK: I don't think it's any different, Frank, than the Bang's [Disease] situation. In your time, in the very beginning there, you had no way to combat Bang's.

FR: No, but I was planning to get rid of it.

EK: Well, I realize that. [laughs] Yeah that... [pauses]

CY: I think one book's on the table there, maybe that's what he's looking for.

LR: No, that's his [unintelligible].

FR: This has been my work. This is ten years old. [pauses] Take it home with you. You don't need to read it.

EK: I sure will.

CY: Still got your Jeep?

LR: No—

FR: [unintelligible]

LR: —not the little one anymore—

FR: [unintelligible] same one I got now.

LR: —one of these [unintelligible] trucks.

EK: That's something I was asked to get was a good picture of you for our historical file.

LR: I don't know where you'd get it.

EK: This is a pretty good picture.

LR: Yeah, but that doesn't look like him.

EK: No, I was going to say—

LR: Doesn't look like him as I knew him anyway.

EK: Looks like he was squinting into the sun right there, or something.

LR: He probably is. I was real put out when I saw that. I don't know how he got a hold of that picture.

EK: Can I borrow this?

FR: What?

EK: Can I borrow this?

FR: No, I want to keep the—

LR: Can he borrow it?

FR: He can read it if he wants to, but I want it back because—

EK: Oh yeah.

FR: You can get a copy of it, though, for 75 cents.

EK: Where?

FR: What?

EK: Where?

FR: They tell you in there where to write.

CY: This I can keep?

LR: Yes.

CY: Okay, thanks a million.

FR: That's ten years old.

CY: Well, I've never seen it.

LR: That's why he's sending out. [laughs]

CY: I've never seen it, so it don't matter. No matter how old it is, as long as you've never seen it.

LR: He sends that out and tells them that it's out of date, when people write in for a list and suggest that they tell him what they want and he'll get it if he can. There are just a lot of things we don't get anymore. All the high country stuff. He's not allowed to go out in the high country anymore, not in the real high country—on the Beartooth Plateau and the Bighorns and places like that.

CY: Pretty high up there.

LR: [unintelligible] on the Bighorns.

EK: Better write this down.

LR: [unintelligible] Beartooth plateau. I kind of think you must have left one of those pencils here the other day, at least I don't know where it came from.

EK: It's all right, I just want to write this.

LR: Is this one yours?

EK: Oh, it doesn't matter. You keep it.

LR: I don't know where it came from.

FR: Here's a pen if you want it.

CY: Drop the pencil out there—

JK: [laughs] [unintelligible]

CY: You can buy them by the 100-dozen or something.

LR: I picked that bright green one up out here in the yard, so, I supposed some young kids came running through.

JK: Teach him. [laughs]

Unidentified speaker: Nothing will teach him. [laughs]

JK: No, I guess not.

Unidentified speaker: We've been having a lot of trouble with youngsters lately. Well, I don't know why I say lately—always.

JK: Did you ever look at this Cy?

CY: Oh, kind of, yeah.

JK: Kind of interesting, isn't it? Clarence Woodcock, it says, Flathead Indian was born April, 1945, one of ten children in a family of a full-blooded father and three-quarter blood mother. I

wonder if that wasn't the one that was just killed on the highway there. It was a Woodcock, and he was just about Ernie's age.

CY: Could have very well been.

JK: This was published

LR: Last summer.

JK: Well, then he was killed early this fall. But that was probably the one.

[long pause]

FR: Do you ever drink anything besides coffee, Clarence?

CY: Oh, not very much.

FR: [laughs] I have enough trouble staying top-side-up without anything to drink. [laughs]

CY: Oh, around Christmas time, I sometimes sit down and indulge a little bit, but not very much.

JK: When you're going to have plenty of time to sit there until it wears off?

CY: Yes, I can sit until it wears off.

LR: Frank, it was up here in the Routt, where you had your pet bear wasn't it? Or was that on the Bison Range?

FR: That was Hahns Peak

Unidentified speaker: Hahns Peak. Well, that's what I mean, Hahns Peak.

FR: Yes, on the Routt. I was, I think, about five years on the Routt. Then, I went into technical work, passed civil service examinations and then went on to grazing assistant. I went down South, Southwestern Montana two or three years—

LR: Colorado.

FR: —or Colorado, Southwestern Colorado two or three years on grazing reconnaissance. Then I was assigned to the Hayden Forest in Wyoming under old Jim Blackhaw (?). I'd been up there about two days when he told me that they were having a lot of complaints of sheep losses over on the, I think, it was the [unintelligible] range, and he wished I'd go over and take a look at it. Well, there wasn't anything else I could do but go look at it since he was a supervisor. So I put

my outfit together and I went over there, and I got the herder and I walked around over the range with him, oh, before noon. There'd been some fellows coming out from the university to look the range over to see what the trouble was. They were hunting a new poisonous plant on there. The herder showed me everything he could remember that the fellow from the college had looked at and didn't any of them looked good to me, because I'd seen all of them growing other places where they wouldn't have them losses. Then, in the afternoon, I just went out wandering around by myself, and didn't see anything, until I run across a little quail and looking at the big sage that they'd been grazing on there, and it looked as though there was a difference in this big sage. It didn't quite all look alike, so I got suspicious then. I got the pocket knife out, and dug down on one sage and got a bulb on the root, and then I hunted around—dig me a few other roots and hunted around—found one flower of the thing and took it back to the sheep herder. Told him to give a flower to his man from the university when he come out there and ask him if he thought that had anything to do with it. I went back to the headquarters and wrote my report that they had death camas out there that they'd been feeding right off down close to the ground—so close that it looked same as this big sage. You couldn't see it. Both of them look pretty near alike until you got looking for it. So I made quite a reputation for myself as an expert on poison plants, which is just a piece of luck that I just happen to see it.

EK: I've got a run downtown and pick up some Cat [Caterpillar] parts, if you want to stay here, I'll just run down and get them. They're supposed to be ready. [speaking to Cy Young]

CY: Go ahead.

FR: We'll have try and entertain him.

EK: Okay, you just keep him entertained, and I'll be back. I got a generator for a Cat down there I've got to pick up.

If you'd just keep talking, I'd like to get whatever part of his story if he...because I'd like to write a—

[talks with JoAnn Kraft about shopping]

FR: I wouldn't do this fellow Henry any good, if I come out there, because he's leaving.

EK: No, but you don't have to talk to just him.

FR: [unintelligible] you know he knows who it's going to be.

EK: No, but—

LR: Well, I don't believe we can get there before April the 14th.

CY: Well, you wouldn't want to come out there anyway—

EK: I couldn't do anything for—

FR: I can tell you now, that your Range don't look very good today, to me.

EK: No, it doesn't to me either.

FR: If you get some new plants, including buffalo grass coming in, I don't think much buffalo grass for up there, because it won't stay with you. I don't think much of your seeding mixtures that you're re-seeding with, except in parts. You got better grasses on that range than you'll ever get by buying seed. You can go out there and collect your own seed and re-seed your own ranges, and get better results than you ever will by any of your starvation wheatgrass that you're putting in there.

LR: What's starvation wheatgrass?

EK: Crested wheat.

FR: Yeah. They'll eat that, but they'll eat it just like the buffalo eat that giant rye grass. It stands there until everything else is gone, then they'll eat it.

JK: They'll eat it just before they starve.

FR: Cattle do the same thing with that crested wheat. They'll eat it if they're starved to it, but anytime you run your range on a starve-to basis, you've lost your best forages.

EK: That'll go right to them, and they can hear it from you. [laughs] They don't have to...You just keep talking while I'm gone.

FR: I didn't know it was running. You better shut it off and save your battery.

EK: Why don't you two talk buffalo and stuff, and just leave it running. It won't cost me a thing.

CY: It will probably over-wind itself before you come back.

EK: No, it will run for three hours just like that. It'll shut off when it's done. When it runs out of tape. You just visit and tell dirty stories, I don't care. [laughs]

Unidentified speaker: If it's not fit for public consumption, he can wipe it off. Can't you?

EK: I won't say anything to embarrass you in the least.

*Note: Ernest Kraft and JoAnn Kraft leave the interview.*

CY: Getting back to the poison plant, it was something happened out there, oh, it wasn't too long after you was gone, maybe two or three years. All of the sudden we just started finding dead deer everyplace, even right there in the exhibition pasture. We had to call in some of those would-be doctors, and they kept posting it and posting it until finally they said it was some poisonous plant that they couldn't put their finger on which one. They decided, finally, that it was goldenrod. Is that poisonous at any time of the year?

FR: Not any goldenrod or any time of the year, so far as I know offhand.

CY: Well, that's what they finally laid it to. There, in the exhibition pasture, there was quite a little goldenrod, and they—

FR: That Rosie (?) had considerable loss of hogs over there in his hog pen, one year. I decided it was from rooting out the camas bulbs and eating them.

CY: Well, I don't know if there was ever any camas above there in that exhibition pasture—

FR: I don't know that there's any camas in there.

CY: There is up in the high-country, I think, but—

FR: Not high country, but out on the—

CY: Yeah, out on the Range.

FR: —Range.

CY: They couldn't seem to find out what was the matter, and that one summer, when we had the big loss, that was the only particular year that there was a higher loss than usual. Good fat deer, right along in the middle of the, well, the late summer I'll say, along towards the end of summer—maybe August, September, along in there.

FR: Well, that's characteristic with losses, because if your population goes up and your forage goes down, the thing that poisons most of them are not really palatable. As long as they got plenty of other food to eat, they don't enough of the poison to kill many of them. But when the good feeds are gone, they eat the poor ones on *ad infinitum* until there's nothing left. You might have a heavy loss on a range where your poison plant had been there all the time, but they hadn't been eaten enough of it to hurt them.

CY: Well, that's probably what happened. We must have found, I don't know, 75 deer there one fall. The deer were all in good shape and stuff, but you didn't find them quick enough to post it

so they could determine for sure what happened. Several different times we'd found maybe a half-a-dozen buffalo dead.

FR: Had you been spraying for weeds up there with poison sprays pretty heavy?

CY: Well, not at that time, no. We never did no spraying until we sprayed the goat weed and some Canadian thistles.

FR: Before you had this loss?

CY: No, it was after the loss. It was after the loss, because this loss happened during the '30s, and I don't think we're done any spraying at all until after 1940. Well, maybe a little hand-spraying. We used to take those little hand sprays and try to catch those scattered patches of goat weed, but we never did do any big-scale spraying.

FR: I don't have much experience with the poisons on weeds—spraying and things of that sort—but I would guess that you could do a lot of harm with your game animals to spray the weeds. The deer and elk will both eat weeds in preference to grasses anyway, and if you spray the weeds that's desired by them, why, you might give them enough poison.

CY: This exhibition pasture, where we lost about eight or ten head, they's no spraying done in that and there was no weeds to amount to anything. This goldenrod was about the only weed in there—that amount to anything.

FR: What you're calling goldenrod might not be...There are several poison plants that there are fairly close to goldenrod. Your goat weed, for example, I think what you call goat weed is a spurge, isn't it?

CY: Well, it's that little stuff it that used to be over in the southeast corner, south of Ravalli hill.

FR: Yes, I guess that was...I guess that was—

CY: St. John's wort.

FR: —St. John's wort, I call it. It's not the one I have in mind for goat weed.

CY: Well, that's St. John's wort, that's what we commonly call goat weed.

FR: I don't know goat weed. I've never come in contact with it, but I had in mind, it belonged to the composites. That it had a blossom on it like your, oh, your arnica. I had in mind a shrub for goat weed. Goat weed is a St. John's wort. If that's goat weed, it's a herbaceous plant, isn't it? Is it a woody one?

CY: It's a woody, yeah. Awful woody, hard, real hard stuff.

FR: Hard. Puts out new leaves on last year's stems.

CY: Yeah. [pauses] No, I don't know. I don't think it does. Seems like the last year's stems die, and then the—

FR: Send up new stems every spring.

CY: —send up new stems every year. I believe that's the way it does.

FR: That'd be a woody base. That's what I'd call a perennial then, instead of a woody plant.

CY: But I know you can whittle on it just like a stick of wood, you know. It's hard, but I can't remember if leaves come out on last year's plans or not, but I don't think so. I'll make a note of that and check this year and see.

FR: You've got dwarf larkspur up there that's a poisonous plant but doesn't do any harm in this country, because it isn't concentrated enough and they don't eat enough of it. But I knew of three cows to be killed out of one carload of pure-bred cattle one noon that they unloaded at Steamboat Springs in Colorado. Start driving them out. Soon as they get out from town enough to turn them off of the road and let him rest for a while, they did and let them graze there on a little knoll that was in the open—covered with larkspur—and killed three of them there in the noon hour. I know a bunch of sheep that they was driving in over the high mountain trail, turned them down into the head of a gulch on some giant larkspur that was coming up there, and killed 400 of them over in that.

CY: [whistles] Quite a lot of sheep.

FR: That takes the profit off of sheep raising pretty quick.

CY: Take the profit damn quick.

I see a big spot of...I don't know how far east it is, but this was supposed to be about as far east as that St. John's wort had got east. You see, it's working east all the time. I saw a big patch of it over here around Ringling, south of White Sulphur Springs there, here a year or two ago. Quite a big patch of it. So if it's got that far, why, it'll probably eventually keep on a-going.

LR: It seems to me I've seen it over in Eastern Montana.

FR: Well, that's one of the beauties of over-grazing is an increase in your obnoxious weeds.

CY: Yeah. I've never seen any of it over in that Jordan...I go over in that Jordan country where I used to be before I come to the Bison Range, and I've never seen any of it over in that country. In fact, now that's all going back to grazing. Those homesteaders all starved out, and all there is over there now is just a few stock ranches and—

FR: Loose barbed wire.

CY: —and yeah, loose barbed wire. It's pretty much going back to the old grasses again, so the Taylor Grazing [Act of 1934] and the BLM, they've kind of got control of a lot of it too.

FR: This thing of putting the Range back has clear gone, like those areas that have been plowed up, why, that's quite a problem.

CY: It is a big problem.

FR: Even your soil type has probably changed. In fact, all of that Eastern Montana did change into the advent of the settling, because I was over there in '34, spent a lot of time over those ranges and a good deal of it looking at the different ranges. I found patches of little forests of your blue grama grass roots, standing up an inch high—little black roots standing an inch out of the ground that you could run your hand over and break off. Anybody knows that the roots didn't grow out of the ground in the first place. They covered the ground when they grew there, and had a knob on the top at the ground line. So there's that much of your soil that had blown or washed out since the time that that grass was alive, before it had stood there long enough to drop off and fall over. You only had six inches of soil to start on over there in Eastern Montana.

CY: That's right. That's right. During those drought years, it just kept blowing away, blowing away all the time. That was the big thing.

FR: You had two sets of drought years—two years at a time up here at the Bison Range—since they started your reduction on the game animals.

CY: The year after you left there, that summer of '31, the grass never even got green that year. Just dry. Just pure luck that there was quite a little old grass left, enough to carry the herd until fall, but they wasn't a spear of green grass grewed that summer, not a bit. Even in the first of May, it was just as dry as it was in December.

FR: They had their buffalo in the feeding corral in then, that spring?

CY: Yeah, I think we did, yeah. [pauses] No, we didn't either, not '31.

FR: That so? You can't kill off a grass from one year's grazing, because the grass in good shape, you can take all of that above ground off and roots will still be there with enough strength in them to start growth the next spring. But if you come on the next year and take the top growth

off, too, without giving it a chance to rebuild the roots, then you only have a root to compare with what top growth you had left. If you only had a little bit of top growth that year, you only had a little bit food stored in the root for it to start growth on the next spring.

CY: It's a good thing you cut those buffalo down there in the fall of '30.

FR: If you hadn't of cut them in '30, why, they'd have cut themselves.

CY: They'd cut themselves.

FR: —in '34. [pauses] If you ever go on a feeding program up there, then you've got to continue it for life. What's important is the Range saving the better forage species. It don't make any difference what happens to any of the game animals up there, as long as you've got a bull and two cows left, you can build them all back.

CY: If that St. John's wort can't be controlled a little better, it's just going be a matter of time until it's going take the whole—

FR: Take most of the Range. Well, that's all due to...It comes in on various patches, and then it spreads on over various ranges. The area happens to be suitable to that particular noxious weed, and it's like a lot of other weeds, it's just pretty hard to get rid if you get it once.

CY: It seems to thrive on any kind of soil, whether it's up in the rocks or down in a little basin. It just grows—

FR: When you come to getting rid of it and digging it out, there isn't any very good way to do it. I've got that yellow butter-and-eggs that grows here. It's got a fine underground root that it runs from one plant to another, and so I suppose—

Unidentified speaker: [unintelligible]

FR: —every plant in this yard...What?

LR: I said, we also have leafy spurge.

FR: Also have leafy spurge, and undoubtedly, every plant on the whole quarter acre here is connected one with another underground. You pull any one of them, why, you get it from the root up. You pull up that stem, but it breaks off where it's attached to the root. Doesn't hurt your plant at all. You can pull all of them, and as long as you leave one anyplace, it'll keep the whole root system alive.

CY: Just like quackgrass.

FR: What?

CY: Just like quack grass. You can take a root and chop into 100 pieces, and pretty near every one of them will come up.

FR: Your Canadian thistle, if you plow through it and take your plow and use it somewhere else, why, you leave a piece of the root in the ground and start you a new patch someplace else.

CT: How well I know.

FR: Of course, your Canadian thistle won't spread on your range up there, because it's too dry for it. Likes a wetter place.

CY: Yes, it's near Mission Creek. Since we cleaned that brush out of Mission Creek, it's solid from one end to the other.

FR: It will spread down next to the creek but not up over the Range.

CY: The old bull thistles, though, they take hold up there good.

FR: Yes, Bull thistles are bad, but they're not a bad thistle like a Canadian thistle. Canadian thistle is all tied together by root underground. Your bull thistle grows as individual plants, and you can poison bull thistle and kill it.

LR: A bull thistle is a biennial, isn't it?

FR: What?

Unidentified speaker: Bull thistle's a biennial, that you can [unintelligible].

FR: I think it's...I wouldn't know.

CY: It's a two-year plant.

FR: I think it's a biennial.

CY: It's a two-year plant.

LR: I know Dad, on the farm, used to go out through the pasture with his spade and get the first-year plants.

CY: That's right. Between the St. John's wort and the Canadian thistle, taking the bottoms, why, it's a serious problem out there, because the buffalo lay down and roll in it and it's sticky—that stuff, you know, is sticky.

FR: Yeah. Carry them everywhere.

CY: They'll get it in their wool, and then next spring, when they shed off, they just take it every place. I'll bet you there isn't a ten-acre spot in there, that whole range that there isn't at least half-a-dozen patches of goat weed.

FR: That's the reason I turned down the Gallatin Valley hay when they under bid Moiese Valley on the hay there. I thought bringing in new hay in from the Gallatin Valley would bring in the Gallatin Valley weeds and give them a start on the Bison Range, and we'd better stick to the weeds we had from a—

CY: Yeah, that's right.

They're going to start a bison range over at Fort Peck now, up on the west end of the range there. They've got about 35,000 acres that they figure is good buffalo range, and they're going to start a herd over there now.

FR: I don't know that area. I've been off of the brakes on some of that area over there, but don't know just where it lays.

CY: It lays west of the Musselshell River, where the Musselshell—

FR: West of the Musselshell and between the Musselshell and—

CY: There's a road goes across through there now from Malta to Lewistown.

FR: What's the name of that town there right north from Miles City? Jordan.

CY: Jordan.

FR: Jordan. Between Jordan and the Musselshell?

CY: No, it would be west of the Musselshell.

FR: West of Musselshell? And north of the highway?

CY: South of the highway. No, yeah, north, that's right.

FR: North of the highway, between the highway and the Missouri and west of the Musselshell.

CY: Yeah.

LR: In the angle that the Musselshell and the Missouri make? The Musselshell goes into the Missouri?

CY: Yeah. It'd be where the Musselshell goes into the Missouri. That'd be—

LR: To the west and south. In that order?

CY: To the west and a little bit north, from the mouth of the Musselshell. I think it's on the north side of the river.

FR: On the north side of the river.

CY: Then west of the mouth of the Musselshell, between there and this new highway that they put in going from Lewistown across to Malta.

FR: That's getting into an area that I don't know much about.

LR: We don't go over there to collect, so I'm all in a—

FR: I know that Big Dry [Creek] over there, I used to go over there to collect [unintelligible].

CY: They used to be located up the Little Dry [Creek], eight miles from where it goes into the Big Dry.

FR: Eight miles up from where it goes into the Big Dry. What is the name of that town where the highway crosses?

CY: Where do you mean?

FR: Where the Highway 2 crosses Big Dry, a city there just where you come down across the creek. I think the population totals three.

CY: Van Norman?

FR: What? Maybe Van Norman.

CY: The post office right at the mouth of the Little Dry, is Van Norman.

FR: Van Norman. Then, there's a road goes up the other side of the creek a ways to...I don't know where.

CY: It goes all the way through now. Clear from the mouth of the Little Dry, it goes clear to Fort Peck going north. Then from Van Norman going south, goes down to Rock Springs, where Cohagen is. A little town—

FR: Cohagen. I went in there to make a talk one night, somewhere at that Big Dry from Van Norman. I don't remember where it was or went to now. I was given a job in WPA [Wildlife Protection Agency] as...well, I didn't have any title, I guess, the first whole summer over there. I was over there with...I don't know what it was called, but anyhow, I was promoted to supervisor of grazing districts, when Nelson, professor from here from the University left to go to someplace else where we went to, why, he gave me a promotion to the job he'd been holding. I'd been working under him over there. I was given a title and an expense account, and sent over to the headquarters at Miles City to supervise the new grazing districts that they were going to create and have them up-to-date.

Everybody was as interested as could be, and I have no trouble getting audiences spread all over the country. They'd want me to come out there and tell them these grazing districts, so I put in a good deal of my time just going around and speaking at these Stockman Association meetings, and without anything to really to say at all, because the grazing districts hadn't been created. There was a good deal of confusion about what they was going to be if there were. It was for me to tell how they were going to be administered and what to do about them. Why, I was kind of out on a limb, but I could tell them what had to be done about their range and why they wasn't doing as well on the grass over there as they used to before the settlers settled up the country. But I'd get along all right. They'd listen to me up to the point I told them that we've got to cut down the number of our stock on the range. There's too many cattle, that the feed wasn't carrying them and it would all be gone if they tried to carry that many cattle continued on the range.

No, we can't do that, we aren't making any money now.

CY: Not those sheep men. You couldn't convince them to cut down.

FR: You couldn't tell the sheep men, you couldn't tell it to cattle men. I don't know about these wild horse men, whether you could've got them to cut down their herds or not. [laughs]

CY: [laughs] We usually just took a grass where we could find it. We were like a lot of those old-country Scotchmen that had the sheep in there. Hell, they'd just move the herd around any place they could find a section of land open that you didn't have fenced up, why, they'd take it.

FR: Yes, the sheep man down there in Ekalaka County that used to drive a spring wagon, and he had his windshield tinted green, so he could look through that and the range would look pretty good. He used to watch the weather, and whenever he'd see a shower, he'd noticed where they was having a pretty good shower. He'd wait after a certain number of days after that

shower, and he'd move a bunch of sheep from somewhere in that area where they'd the shower, because there would be some grass coming there.

CY: Yeah, a little water, not rained enough to fill up the water holes. There's none of those creeks over there that runs steady. They just...when a big shower fills all the holes along the stream—

FR: Well, your subsoil in that Ekalaka country...your subsoil is on top there or a whole lot of it there. You can find little islands standing up there, eight or ten inches above the level of the rest of the land with a grama grass top on them, but in between, there's a clay soil with weeds and odd-and-ends of various kinds and other grasses. But your grama grass is confined to these little flat tops on these little plateaus that set up on the range. That's your original surface there, and the grass is still holding there but it's been broke up until, practically...there's whole or several sections in there, practically, the whole thing is subsoil on top.

CY: Well, tell me this. You get up on a high spot over there, and you look across country and just as far as the eye could see, all those plateaus are on a level. What's with all these billions of yards of earth that's going out of these swales?

FR: Down the creek.

CY: Down in the Mississippi Valley, or somewhere down in there?

FR: Yes, that's what made the Mississippi Delta.

LR: [laughs] It's what made the Missouri muddy.

FR: I was talking to an old-timer down there one time. I stopped at his ranch, just come over the ridge, he said he come into that country first on a buffalo hunt with old linchpin axles. He come through this saddle, and they drove down, and across that flat there. They just drove in a straight line, and he said they went out after the horses, why, there was enough dead grass down at the bottom of the grass so their feet was always wet walking across there. The grass had dragged on his stirrups as he rode through it. Driving, they'd drive right straight across the creek where he come to it. At the time I was down there, it was all cut up into little gullies and knolls. To drive anywhere, you'd work and up around these gullies to get a place where you can get across, you didn't go in the straight line anywhere and couldn't hardly get to anywhere.

One day, we had a heavy shower and I was out there, I'd come up the creek fast to a hole of water that was as big as this room about and deep enough so a person could've taken a bath in it. On this hillside, when the rain rained hard enough, it started run down the hillside, and it was just a mud bank tumbling over and over that'd come down there and into the creek. It filled the upper half of this hole of water, just up to the surface with mud, and it didn't rain enough to

bring in enough to fill the whole pool. So that that ground just moves that easy down there when it's wet.

CY: I know it moves pretty easy all right.

What's that gumbo ground made out of that you can step in it, and you'll pull up a shovel-full of mud with your feet, and you can't kick it off, and [unintelligible]? What is that stuff?

FR: It's pavement for Lawton, Oklahoma. When I was down there, that's what they had on their streets down there. You rolled up a street, every time it dries up. I've seen them stop a team of a spring wagon and get out with a stick or shovel or something, and dig the mud out of their wheels enough so they could go on further.

CY: Well, I've been driving a car, and that would wind up around your wheel until it would hit the fender and lock your wheels. Then you'd have to get out, and dig it out.

FR: That's a gumbo clay. I know it in a number of places. And that's what your subsoil is down there in that Ekalaka country. When your topsoil's gone in your Eastern Montana, you get that a number of places there.

CY: What I was curious to know is what it's made out of to start with.

FR: Well, it's made out of granite rock originally, I think. It's the part that soaks out, or washes out, in the water to leave the sand and gravel behind.

CY: You'll find those badlands spots where it's a lot of gumbo in them but not even sagebrush will grow on it. Other spots, why, it grows good grass and sagebrush will grow on it, but still it's so sticky you can't get loose from it. Just winds up around your wheels or anything.

FR: All of your plants have their own sites that they grow in. There's no place so far as I know that won't any plant grow, and there's no one plant that'll grow everywhere. That's where they're missing it in their roadside seeding is that they want to mix up a mixture, and seed their roadside with that mixture all the way through. Just strip the seeded through here, they put four wheat grasses in the mixture, but they didn't put the one that grew here naturally. Their best reseeding they got out of the old hay that they used for a mulch on the Range. There's enough seed left in that to start some things, but they got relatively little of the four to five grasses they planted in their seed mixture. Up on top of the Beartooth Mountains in Wyoming, there's a stretch of road that's seeded through there that is seeded to commercial grasses, and they got a good stand. They had just a new plowed area that they put them on, and they had moisture to take care of them and got a stand. But on this through here they didn't get a stand, because they wasn't using the type of grasses that'd grow or plants that would grow in the area that they were seeding.

CY: It stands to reason that the native grasses—

FR: What?

CY: It stands to reason that the native grasses would—

FR: Is your best bet.

CY: —is your best bet. That's the way it would seem to me.

FR: Or, if you have changed the condition of your soil, like you have in that Southeast Montana area where it's been over grazed, and your range is broke up or over-grazed or plowed. Your range it broke up, and then it's washed or blown away, until it isn't there anymore, and you get down on a subsoil. You can do it on the gravel too, where you scoop out a basin along the road. You've got an altogether new type of soil there, and you've got to start in with the things that'll grow on that type. We've got things that'll grow in these gravel pits, some of them good flowers that make a beautiful patch out of a gravel pit, if they'd seed them to those particular things. Same things is true with the road banks, a steep road bank you can seed certain things on there, and they like it the road bank-type site—do all right. Been there long enough, new dirt will catch and form there, and you'll begin to bring in the things that are natural to that type of range. But you'll never go in on that hill going up to the High Point with your commercial seeded material, and seed in there, and get a better stand of plants than you got growing all around it. You'd better just go out there and collect on some spot on your range—one of your pastures that you've held over or something of that sort. Collect your own the seed and spread them yourself without buying a mixture and bringing them in there. That would be my opinion.

CY: Well, I agree with you there. It stands to reason that that native stuff right there would be better than anything you could import.

FR: Your best grass you got out there is your scabrella fescue. I used to have a bulletin that was written by one of the early surveyors through this country south of us here, and he told about the scabrella fescue that grew in there—red fescue or whatever you want to call it. Rough fescue—it's called by a number of names. They used to keep their animals fat all winter on it. They'd turn out on the range in the wintertime and stayed fat all winter. They did on the Bison Range as long as you got it there. When you get rid of that, then your spiked wheat grass, and your *Poa sandbergii*, or Sandberg's Bluegrass, and maybe your Junegrass, *Koeleria*, one or two others, they make up a big enough bulk of the plants on your Range up there, so they're the ones that you need to save over in that area.

CY: That's for damn sure.

FR: If you don't save them, if you kill them out and reseed, when you kill those out, you'll have lost enough of your soil moisture and soil fertility so that you'll have to have something that's

adapted to a lower standard of site and they'll take hold. Your goat weed is one of them. It'll take hold and do well, then, on the poorer site. About the only way to get rid of it is to bring it back in fertility until you get it above the type that it likes and get something else to grow. I don't know, you could put a cover on it, maybe, a tar-paper cover and hold it down for long enough to smother it out for light—some of that sort. But you couldn't very well do it with the buffalo around it, because they'd be liable to punch holes in the tar paper.

LR: And you ain't got that much tar paper. [laughs]

CY: Another thing; that goat weed has got so much seed in it. I don't know, hell, it was half-a-million seeds to one—

FR: So many good ways to spread it—

CY: —bunch, and then—

FR: —and germination is pretty high.

CY: They found out now that that seed will lay there for as high as 12 to 15 years without germinating. You think you got it killed, and all of the sudden, a favorable year will come along and up comes the new seedlings and away it goes again.

FR: Your bitterroot's the same way. Those seeds keep for a long time.

CY: But you'd think on a favorable year, when it's moisture and everything, that all the seed that will germinate would all come up at the same time, but it don't. Don't do it that way.

FR: They won't crowd themselves in to a range that is fully occupied by better plants. They's a cemetery up here at Phillipsburg. You ought to take a look at it sometime. They got a cemetery up there that's been there since gold-rush days in Montana. There's about an acre of it, down in one corner, that they never got anybody planted on. It's still standing there, but they've kept the thing fenced from the beginning of time until now. So that acre is one of these sample plots that I wanted to put in up here. It shows your typical range...It's a bunch wheatgrass range on there. They got a barbed-wire fence around it, and the over-grazed range runs right up to that barbed wire fence with cheatgrass, mostly, on it, and some other weeds, and it stops at the barbed wire fence. It didn't stop there because the barbed wire fence was there. It stopped there because that acre was occupied by the original grasses that was there when that range was fenced. If we had held our Range out here so that it didn't get over-grazed at any time, why, then your other weeds wouldn't have come in, but that's too late now.

CY: Yeah, I'm afraid it is. [pauses] Yeah, they's millions of weeds of every description out there now.

FR: What?

CY: They's millions of weeds of every description along with the goat weed. When the whole thing goes to weeds, why, that—

FR: Well, that cheatgrass is a pretty good indicator of over-use, especially of trampling and things of that sort. A barren range that's been trampled is pretty apt to come up with that cheatgrass, and it can mature seed with one good shower in a season. It can come up and a mature seed and dry up from one good rain, and it takes more time than that to mature a seed on your better-grazing plants. Your scabrella fescue won't stand heavy grazing. If you graze it more than about 50 percent of its total forage and do it regularly, you'll kill it out. It's got to have an accumulation, late during the season, to give it a chance to rebuild the first of the strength in the grass that's drawn off to produce the forage and the seed stocks and the seed. Then it replenishes this strength in the root for the next year after the grass matures—or before matures even—it builds up its root systems for next year. It builds a root system to take care of a plant the size of the of the plant this year, not what it was a year ago or what you hope it to be some other, is what it is. So the root system will go down the same as the plant go down above ground. If you over graze scabrella fescue for a period of years, you eliminate it. So you need to save enough of your forage until after the growing season.

CY: Yeah, that's right. I know that.

FR: But it don't hurt to take it off then and leave your stump there to start growth next spring, if you've got the stuff stored in the root to start it with next spring. What they need is some range-management, and I don't know anything about your man Henry or one or two that's preceded him, but I know they had some out there after I left that wasn't grazing men.

CY: Well, nobody since you left to do anything, except this man Schwartz [John Schwartz] that was there during the '50s. From '50 to '57, he was a—

FR: '50 to '50...?

CY: Seven. He was a pretty good grazing man, supposedly.

FR: What was his name?

CY: Schwartz. John Schwartz.

FR: I don't know anything about him.

CY: He was with the Forest Service over here in Washington for a long time, and then he transferred to the Fish and Wildlife [Service]. But so far as Mushbach and Norton, they didn't know a bunch of goatweed from the Russian thistle, so far as grazing goes.

FR: I've met Mushbach. I met him a number of times. I never had much—

CY: I just can't understand why they—

FR: —respect for him.

CY: —put these kind of guys in charge of—.

FR: Well, Mushbach was a kind of a man that Redington needed at the time he wanted to get rid of me. He sent Mushbach out there to prepare charges against me when he found out that he had to do it—that I wouldn't resign on my own accord. So he had to go out there, his orders were to bring charges against me. Since wasn't anything to bring charges on, he had to make them out of whole cloth, and he was a type of man that could do that without hurting his conscience. I worked with him on a game case or two out there—

CY: Wasn't he...didn't he—

FR: What?

CY: He was up there one time when we had the big disposal, wasn't he? Helping you in the office, or supposed to do the office work or something when—

FR: No.

CY: He was out there—

FR: He was out there a good many times—

CY: I remember him being there.

FR: —and I worked with him on the game case or two.

CY: That's when he was a game warden.

FR: Yeah, he was a game warden. He come over there now and then. I remember we were down below the Bison Range on the creek down there, looking at a deer-killing case of some kind, one time. I saw him throw a shell—an empty shell—out of his pocket down, and then find it and pick it up and ask the fellow we was questioning if that wasn't where he stood when he shot or something of that sort.

CY: I remember him being out there a time or two, but I'd forgot what he was out there for. That was it?

FR: He was a state game warden in this state with headquarters at Billings.

LR: He planted the evidence, you mean?

FR: He planted the evidence and picked it up and tried to get a confession out of this fellow.

CY: I can picture that Roland doing that, but it seemed like old George, I don't know, he don't seem like the type of guy that would do that.

FR: I was at a game meeting down in the Florence Hotel one night, all up in room something or other...<sup>37</sup> call it...I don't remember what the room number was. But I met Glen Smith [Glen A. Smith, forest ranger] coming down the stairs as I started up, and he said the bunch is all in room so and so, so I went in there to see what was going on. One of the prominent doctors in Missoula was laying on the bed asleep, and the other fellows around there holding their glasses were pretty well done. They poured one for me, and it got down to the point where they was George Mushbach and old Tom Marlow (?) was still on their feet, standing there at the table and pouring the liquor and calling each other a son of a bitch and laughing about it. [laughs] I looked on for a few minutes, and went on back downstairs.

CY: I remember old Tom.

FR: What?

CY: I remember old Tom Marlow.

FR: He and Mushbach got along pretty well.

CY: Whatever become of Lommasson [Tom Lommasson]?

FR: Lommasson?

CY: Is he still around in Missoula?

FR: I don't know. He was with the Forest Service here, but—

CY: He used to come out with Glen once in a while.

FR: Yeah, I never hear anything of him anymore. Seems to me he died.

LR: His wife is still out there.

FR: Wasn't is Lommasson's wife that was a stenographer for Lennes [N.J. Lennes, Professor Math at the University of Montana], wasn't it?

LR: She's still in one of the offices out here at the University, I think, but I don't think he's still—

FR: I guess Tom died. I don't know. I used to go in the office and talk to him every once in a while—

LR: I think Mushbach is still here in town.

FR: —when I was in town.

CY: No, he's dead, Mushbach.

FR: Mushbach dead?

CY: Yeah, he's been dead...well, not too long, about a year. Just about a year now.

FR: Lommasson's pretty good grazing man, and Lommasson was working, at one time, on palpability tables for game animals. Wanted me to help him, but I didn't care anything about working on it. Turned him down.

LR: I think he's dead. Now, I don't know. It seems to me he is, and I'm sure that I've heard them speak of his widow and she's still out here at the University in some of the offices, isn't she?

CY: Have something to do with registration.

LR: I think so. I think she's a registrar or something.

CY: Yeah, that's what she is, because I know one of our students—summer students—knew her and I think that's what he told me, that she was a registrar.

LR: I don't think Lommasson himself is still alive, but I may be wrong.

CY: Glen died about the time I got hurt. I was up here in the hospital when he died, and I was just getting out of the hospital for the first time when she died—Mrs. Glen.

FR: I haven't seen anything of any of those folks since I was—

CY: Lenny (?), she still lives in the old house out there.

FR: Is that so? In the old house on Brooks [Street]?

CY: Yes...Blaine.

FR: Blaine, yes.

CY: The other one, she married one of them Spaulding (?) boys. She's over here in Eugene, Oregon, now. Old Dean Spaulding's boy.

[long pause]

Did you ever hear anything about Dean Stone [Dean Arthur Stone, Professor of Journalism at the University of Montana] having anything to do with the location of the Bison Range?

FR: I never heard about him having anything to do with the location. He was up there one day, with a with a summer-school bunch, and we went on a tour over the Bison Range.

CY: Well I got it—I don't know where I got it—but I got it that he...somebody asked him to look out a suitable location, so he come up, and got old Duncan—you remember old Duncan McDonald?

FR: Yes, I know Duncan. He used to come out and see me about once a week.

CY: Well, he got Duncan as his guide and they was supposed to look this place over, and they went all over the whole reservation looking—

FR: Dr. Elrod, I think, was in on that. It might be...You may be thinking of Elrod instead of Dean Stone.

CY: I don't know. It's always been in my bonnet that it was Stone, but anyway—

FR: Elrod is more likely. I know Elrod was in on it, and Elrod is the head of the Biology Department out here [Morton J. Elrod]—or was—and Stone was in journalism.

CY: Well, it must have been Elrod.

FR: It could have been Elrod. Could have been either one of them, though.

CY: Anyway, they went all over the reservation, and they didn't find any spot that they could both agree on that would make a good range, so they were in Kalispell at the hotel one night...That's where they ended up, I mean, they were still out looking. Finally Elrod says to Duncan, he says, "Where are we going to locate this bison range?"

Duncan says, "You want me to tell you?"

He said, "Yes."

Duncan says, "Ravalli." So back they come then. They looked over the bison range a second or third time, and finally decided that's where they'd put it.

FR: It's a lucky choice. It's a good location.

CY: Yes. I just don't know where I got that story. Seems like I got it from Glen Smith.

FR: Could have got it from Glen. You could've got it from Duncan.

CY: Maybe old Duncan, I knew him real well. He used to come out there quite often.

LR: Is he the...Duncan McDonald, you mean?

FR: Yes.

[long pause]

CY: Looks like it's trying to start snowing again. Spitting snow, or maybe it's just the wind.

LR: It's just getting kind of foggy, and dingy looking. I see my [unintelligible] out there in the Hawthorn tree. He doesn't look as if he's very comfortable.

FR: I think we butchered buffalo that first or second year without having them sold, because I know we had a lot of meat that we hung up in a freezer up at Ronan. Held it there for a whole year, and it finally went into hamburger or something else, most of it. It didn't—

CY: That that must have at the Beach Market (?). Remember the big fat guy?

FR: Beach, yes. Charlie Beach (?).

CY: Charlie Beach that had the butcher shop there.

FR: We had his freezer room hanging full.

CY: Yes. I remember something about that, but I just don't know if you told me or whether I was there at the time.

FR: You, undoubtedly, was there, more than one time.

CY: I can remember something about meat at Ronan.

FR: You was generally told to do, either the things I didn't want to, or things I thought you handle, just as well or better, or so on and so forth. But I kept you away from where I was a good deal, because I thought things would run all right where you was, and I could watch from where I was better than I could from where I wasn't.

[long pause]

CY: The second spring was when we raised the...Those sheep got to getting out, and we raised that fence from the top of the Ravalli Hill clear round the Elk Creek, along the Jocko there. We nailed brackets on the posts and raised the fence about three feet. That was a hell of a job there, because there was no place you could get anywhere near the fence with a truck or a wagon, so we skidded it, made a little stone boat, and we'd take one horse and hook onto the stone boat, and took it down...You remember that little trail on the inside of the fence there? We'd unload at the substation and go down this trail [laughs] with the horse and stone boat, with a big roll of 400-pound wire laying on the stone boat, and every once in a while—

LR: You must have been younger then, I take it?

CY: What?

LR: I say, you fellows must have been younger then?

CY: Didn't know any better. [laughs] Every once in a while, we'd go around a sharp corner and the stone boat would turn over, and then we'd have one heck of a time. Lots of times, you'd have to throw a chain around it and hook your horse to it and make him get up on the bank and pull it back up on the trail. We had quite a time. We got it all in there though. We had to have it done by the first of July for some reason or other.

FR: Money run out.

CY: Money run out, I guess. I had four or five guys down there, but we got it done all right.

LR: [laughs] It's amazing what can be done if it really has to be done.

CY: Yes. I figured if they could get that material in there in the first place, [laughs] that I could it there too.

LR: I've been reading this book we got Christmas, *Westward Vision*, and the things that they did—those old mountain men in the earliest of the wagon trains and what not. It's just unbelievable.

CY: Yeah. I know a lot of these trails, like the Oregon Trail...I've been over a lot of it...well, like from the Salt Lake City, east between there in Denver. You see some of those places today, and you wonder how they ever could get through them on foot, much less a [laughs] wagon.

LR: It's just amazing.

CY: You just can't vision how anybody could get through there even with the pack-string.

LR: I don't see how anybody had the courage to just strike out across the country without any provisions.

CY: That's right.

FR: I drove a car down off of this mount Sentinel one day. There's a road goes up the back of that clear up to the place where they got that lookout up there. I drove a car down off of that from that lookout up there without any road, just drove down the hillside. I got off the road trying to turn around up there when the car wouldn't go up the hill any further, and then I couldn't get back on the road. It run away with me, and down the hill we come. [laughs]

LR: You didn't have any tires left did you?

FR: Didn't have any tires left when I got to the bottom. Finally got down on the flat down at the bottom there, and I'd missed any solid big trees or rock piles that was too high to jump over. I got down on the flat, and I stopped there and I went and monkeying around down there digging a few plants or something. All of a sudden, I got a pain in his arm. My arm just hurt so I couldn't imagine what brought on that pain in my arm, until I finally remembered that I was gripping the clutch with it...or gripping the brake with it as that car come down the hill. [laughs] May have been the right arm that I was holding.

LR: No. [pauses] It was the left, wasn't it? Those old brakes used to be on the left there.

FR: You can go with a team and wagon, or a car or some other place...a lot of places where you don't think you could go if you—

CY: I can see it with just an ordinary, fairly light, wagon, but then big old schooners that they had to have four to—

FR: They had to have them stout, or they wouldn't get there.

CY: They wouldn't get there. Then those big wheels, I guess, they wouldn't drop in every little hole. I mean, you could cross a wider place with them.

LR: One of their main problems with the first wagons, apparently, was the areas that they had to cross where there was no water. The wagons all dried up, and the wheels fell apart.

CY: Yes, that happened too.

LR: They had an awful time.

CY: Then they could cross a deeper stream, too with those high wheels, without getting their goods all wet. They deserved a lot of credit they never got—those old pioneers.

LR: I haven't got to the wagon trains yet. They've just taken the first two or three wheeled vehicles over the trail. There have been some wagons over South Pass, but I haven't gotten into the real Oregon Trail yet. But these fellows that scouted the country first, I just don't see how they ever maintained themselves—

CY: I don't either.

FR: When I was a kid, the Army was using those lynchpin wagons and mules. They had a fire down there in Oklahoma in the Wichita Mountains one time, and they come out there with a company of soldiers to put out the fire. That was a nice vacation for them. They was enjoying it. They'd go out there and beat out fire for a ways and skip it ways and beat out some more and let it grow back together behind them, making the job last as long as they could. They brought out a camp outfit—cooks and bedding and so forth—and these big lynchpin wagons with wagon box three boards high.

CY: Getting back to Wichita, what kind of grasses do they have down there on that range compared to the Bison Range?

FR: Well, they have two types of soil there. They've got a rocky ridge that's full of boulders, and that's naturally a bunch-grass type. Then they got the flats which are mesquite flats, and that is a buffalo grass, blue grama type. At the time I was down there had been grazed heavy for so long that there was a whole bunch of little short, compact grasses growing in there. I don't remember them.

CY: Is that what they call a bluestem?

FR: What?

CY: Is that what they call bluestem or blue joint?

FR: The bluestem would be one of the looser-soil, rocky ridge-type grasses. On the other would be like [unintelligible] and...I can't remember now. They're southern grasses, most of them that don't grow in here at all. I only saw three or four plants down there that you'd find out here on

the Bison Range. The whole thing was different. But I collected plants all the time I was down there when I was making my examination, and then sent the collection to the Bureau of Plant Industry and they identified it for me. So, when I got around to write my report, after I got up here to Bison Range...So when it come to writing the report, I knew all the grasses I was talking about. I just called them anything I wanted to when I was down there, so I knew which was different from the other, and then got the names on them before I wrote my report. There's a whole bunch—I think it must been 15 or 20—of those grasses just as short as this curly buffalo grass. The buffalo grass was still the dominant one. There was a lot of it there, but it didn't make up 20 percent of the total cover. It had made up 90 percent of it to start with, but they were killing the buffalo grass out, because that one they'd hunt up every spear of it they could get. As long as they're over-grazing, your best grass is the one that's going to take the brunt of the over-grazing, because your animal is going to eat the thing they liked best first. As long as it's there, they're going to eat it and let the other ones alone—the weeds and one thing another alone. That's all right on your range as long as you don't graze it's so heavy that you over-graze your better forage plants. When you do that they're going to start going away one at a time on down the hill.

CY: I noticed some grass...oh it's up about timberline. Those little parks. It's a short grass, looks a lot like grama grass, except it isn't quite as curly. What kind of grass would that be?

FR: Well, it could be a bluegrass.

CY: It's up high. You see it way up high.

LR: It seems to me it would be likely to be a bluegrass.

FR: What?

LR: I think it'd be a bluegrass, if it's a real high, high one.

CY: It's real short on the ground, and it looks a lot...Just to walk through it and look at it, it looks a lot like a buffalo grass.

LR: There are some little sedges in high country too.

CY: Yes. It's thick on the ground, just like the buffalo grass, but I never did know what it was. I was often going to get a little chunk of it and bring it in and identify it, but I never did.

LR: Look at the seed head sometime. See if it doesn't look like a miniature bluegrass.

FR: You replaced the herbarium, haven't you?

CY: I don't think so.

FR: You don't know.

CY: I don't know.

FR: There's 42 different grasses on that Range when I was there. There was 40 in this bunch that's named here, but I found two, apparently, after that was—

CY: I haven't been out on the Range much since I got buggered up.

FR: You left there about the time I did, actually, as far as operations is concerned.

LR: How long ago was it that you had your accident? It wasn't very long ago, was it?

CY: It was '57.

LR: '57. That's longer ago than I thought it was.

CY: Come the eighth of May, it'll be—

LR: Eight years.

CY: —eight years.

LR: I remember Bob told us about it. Heiney [Heiney Helgerson] told me about it one time. I took a deer down to the locker to have it cut up, and he was down there and recognized the name. Of course, then, he had to see me, and then he told me about you and that he had butchered for Frank. Of course, I knew who he was as soon as he told me his name, because I heard Frank talk about him.

CY: I started work there in the spring, and Heiney butchered that fall. We worked together every year then on the butchering deal up until I got hurt. That was just 30 straight years. [pauses] It would be 31 years, actually.

LR: That's quite a long spell.

CY: Yeah, that's quite a long time. He would butcher there a couple years after I got hurt—maybe three.

LR: He's not doing it now.

CY: No, he—

FR: He started butchering before '31, I think.

CY: He started in fall of '26.

FR: Fall of '26.

LR: That's 31 years.

FR: Yes, 31 years. He was one of our first butchers. He butchered back in the old days when we butchered with a team and a rack and—

LR: And the blood ran—[laughs]

FR: —turned out pretty clean meat that was shipped out deep in mud.

CY: This Charlie McLaughlin, I think, was there on your first two—

FR: First two years.

CY: Yeah, first two years you killed there.

FR: I think we had more than one butcher there for two years.

CY: Yeah, there was three or four different guys that claimed that they butchered there. I wasn't there, but I've had them—

FR: We butchered over 200 head there a year, and that's in a month or two's time, and that's—

LR: More than one man can do, I reckon.

FR: —quite a bit of work for one—

CY: The way we were doing it.

FR: —one butcher, the way we were doing it.

CY: It was.. Old McLaughlin, he said some days do you're lucky if you got two buffalo. By the time you got them killed and stone boated in and dressed out, why, two was a big day's work.

FR: Sometimes you're lucky and had them right handy, and other days they wasn't handy at all.

CY: Yes, if you had to go over on Pauline [Creek], or east side of the—

FR: I remember they got an elk one time that was down the hill toward the substation—over on the other side of the hill anyway—and after they'd gone in there and got it out with the stone boat, and over the hill and down to the butchering racks, that settled the elk killing anywhere over the divide from the place where we wanted them, because moving them uphill over that rocky ground wasn't anything like moving them downhill.

CY: That's for sure. [pauses] Wasn't too bad and getting them off of the hill if you had about a foot of snow, but trying to drag them on the ground and Custer didn't want them skinned up any. I mean, he didn't want no hair knocked off of them. That was pretty hard to do where there was bare ground and a lot of rocks.

LR: I'd think so. What'd Custer do with them?

CY: He'd peddle them over the country.

LR: Oh he did?

FR: He bought most of our game.

CY: Yes, he bought most of the game there for a while.

FR: Quite a while.

FR: I know in 1925 or '26, he got about a 150, [1]75 buffalo that year. Fall of '26 and '27 too, he got a lot of them.

*Note: Ernest Kraft returns to the interview.*

CY: Sure have a lot of—

FR: Made it did you?

CY:—b.s. on that thing now. We've been talking steady here since you left.

EK: [laughs] I knew you would. [laughs]

FR: '26. He got what?

CY: Oh, at least 150 or more in '26, we figured that Custer got that year?

FR: That went to Custer?

CY: Yeah. No, not '27. '27 is when Custer got the big herd. '26, he just butchered...we butchered a small bunch that year for some reason or other. Heiney says he only butchered 23 in '26. So it would be '27 that he got...when we cut the herd down, way down to 300.

FR: I see. I noticed that in '26 that we shipped the elk.

CY: Yeah, that's right.

FR: But I didn't have any report on the butchering for the fall of '26.

CY: Well, Heiney says he butchered 23 head.

FR: Twenty-three head?

CY: Yeah. In the fall of '27, about 150, [1]75.

FR: I don't know whether that's right or not, but I don't know what we did do. But I got no recollections for the last half of '26. This 425 elk moved in the first half of '26, last half fiscal year '26. That's when the [unintelligible] cut the [unintelligible] on those reports.

CY: Of course, we probably butchered a lot of strays along that Heiney didn't butcher. We didn't have him out there every time that we butchered one or two.

FR: No, we could have.

CY: Usually, I done it, and maybe—

FR: He said he butchered only 23 in '26?

EK: I thought it was 38, Cy?

CY: Well, maybe. Somewhere along there.

EK: Yeah, it wasn't a big number.

CY: It wasn't a very big number under 50 head anyway.

FR: Big number in '27. Then they've been butchering every year since then, haven't they, more or less.

CY: Yeah, every year, some.

FR: And fed every year up until '58?

EK: '38.

FR: '38. [pauses]

I don't like the invasion of so many weeds out there. I don't know much about putting ranges back after they once get out of condition, because, theoretically, it'll do less than so. But I remember looking at a range over in the Miles City area in '34, I was over there. I looked over a pasture in there that hadn't had no grazing, they told me, in seven years I think it was something like that. There'd been no stock in that pasture, and it didn't show any recovery on the range that you could notice. Some recovery in the plants that were there, but no new plants coming in on the range. So, this seeding in a range depends on favorable seasons coming when there's seed on the range to come up, because if the seed isn't there, why, it can't grow, and if it is there and the season isn't right, it won't grow. To get the two together, you'll notice that pretty near all of the areas where you see a thicket of young plants coming in, they're even-aged stand that's there. Like your lodgepole pine that comes in after a fire for example, they're all the same age. There are a whole lot of things, they seem to be, all of approximately the same age. That means that they came on a year that was favorable for reproduction.

CY: Yes, you can see that up here—

FR: What?

CY: You can see that up here just at Columbia Falls, I mean, right there at the edge of Glacier Park. Remember the big fire they had there in '29?

FR: Yes, I remember an awful lot of mushrooms the first year after the fire.

CY: Yeah. And the next year, lodgepoles come up just thicker than hair on a dog's back. [pauses] They're about 50 feet high now, those lodgpoles.

FR: Fifty feet high. Well, I planted all the trees on the this place.

CY: Did you?

FR: Wasn't anything on it but one maple standing over here in the far corner. That's all there was here when I came. It's gone now, so everything here is things that I've put in.

CY: Did you move here when you left over there on Second Street, or First Street, where you lived over there? The big house with pastures—

FR: That big house of Custer's that I stayed in for a while, I walked back and forth to work on that. I bought these three lots as tax title from the city. They was selling off a lot of land at that

time to get back on the payroll. They wasn't collecting anything that belonged to the city. They had a whole lot of it on the maps. I went down there and took a map and copied it all off and started walking up and down one street and then the other to look for a place for me to put a house on, because I wanted a place to live. This is what I picked out of my traveling. I stayed in that house of Custer's, and he was going to sell or tear down eventually. Walked back and forth, because I couldn't afford the money to buy gasoline to drive.

CY: That where he was living there for a while. I remember, I was out at your house there two or three times. I was up here once or twice, and so was—

EK: What did you want to know now?

CY: We was just talking about how many buffalo we killed in '26.

EK: Butchered 62.

CY: Sixty-two. I guess I was wrong.

FR: I couldn't carry [unintelligible] from member. I couldn't get numbers at all. Butchered how many in...That's 62?

EK: Sixty-two. This is the one—

FR: [unintelligible]

EK: 1926.

FR: '26. Yeah.

EK: Butchered 62 head.

FR: I got 425 elk out of one of those reports. You got 62 against this 23, Heiney said.

EK: This is the report that your bookkeeper made up—Mrs. Kinney.

FR: Yes. That Mrs. Kinney made this up?

EK: Yes. Here's her initials right on it—one of these. In 1926, they list 388 elk sold alive and 29 from natural causes dead and 20 from accidents.

FR: That total this...This must be the total, then, that was moved from the Range—427.

EK: Probably pretty close. It was supposed to have left 257—it left on the Range. That was the year you had the albino, or the pinto, whatever you want to call it. Any record like this—

FR: Albino elk or deer or buffalo?

EK: Elk.

FR: Albino elk.

EK: He was a pinto, actually.

FR: Yeah.

EK: But if you want a record of this for your own—

FR: No, I don't know what good it will ever do me.

EK: I can just sit it under the machine and just snap one and bring you one, if you would like it just for...This covers from 1923 to 1930, which is the period that you were there.

FR: Yes. She'd [Mrs. Kinney] been asked to make this up.

EK: I think so. Here's your mountain sheep story. But in another report some place, I found in there were there was 300 elk added at one time, because they figured they missed the number counting them [pauses] during that time.

FR: It would be easy to do.

EK: It would! That's what Cy and I have talked about, that it would be very easy to do. I suppose to somebody back in Washington D.C., that sounded like something very terrible, but we discussed it.

[long pause]

FR: We had no very good count on the elk at any time, but if you took off around 400 each of the...There was around 400 taken in '26. Somebody said, in '27, and '28, you made equal shipments to—express shipment—to Massachusetts.

EK: Well, they list about, let's see, 170—

FR: You might run me off copies of those if it's no trouble.

EK: It's no trouble whatsoever. It'd just take five minutes.

CY: You got there the Durand (?) elk, how many he got?

EK: What year?

CY: Well, that must have been—

FR: Must have been '27.

EK: Here, in 1925, it lists 218 head of elk to Jackson, Michigan, and to Massachusetts. That's what it says. I'm just telling you what it says. I don't know. It says, "218 head butchered, Jackson, Michigan, and Massachusetts."

CY: That's in '20 what?

EK: That's in '25.

CY: That's before my time.

EK: That was before Cy came there, you see, and that was one of the things that I wondered about in buffalo.

FR: Well, that's buffalo.

EK: Yeah. You want elk?

FR: No, I was just trying to connect that with...the Massachusetts shipment was elk instead of buffalo.

EK: No, this says buffalo.

CY: Massachusetts shipment is elk. There was no buffalo went back there. That I'm sure.

EK: All right, let's see what they said on the elk.

CY: Jones, he never got no buffalo, did he?

FR: Not to my knowledge.

EK: '26 or '27?

CY: Durand got 25, but—

FR: Durand got some, I think. I can't remember offhand what Durand got.

CY: He got 25...He got 23 heifers and three bulls.

EK: Here it says, "1926, 388 elk shipped alive Middleborough, Massachusetts." That's what you just took down. Besides the 30 that got killed and 30 died of natural causes, it says.

CY: Now, in '28, have you got anything there for Durand?

EK: '28? For elk?

CY: Yes. He must have got at least 200 to 300 then.

EK: '28, it lists: live 174 to the Jones brothers, and 38 butchered, and 40 as gifts, 23 killed, and five by accident.

CY: Well, let's see now—

EK: Then it adds another 125 after...They said there was 190 left, and it left 125 added later.

CY: Is there anything in '29 for elk?

EK: Sure, 339.

CY: That's what I'm getting at. That went to Durand.

EK: But it don't say who they went to.

CY: That's Durand.

EK: In '29, it says, 339 for gifts, 60 for sales, 28 for live, 51 for natural causes from death, and four by accident.

CY: That big shipment went to Durand. That I don't know.

EK: At the end of that time, it said, 60 elk left. All right then. On a footnote, right here, it said, "Added: 342 elk counted." [laughs]

CY: Do you remember exactly what spring that we give so many to the state when old Bill Hill (?) was over there, you remember? He was kind of supervising the getting them loaded out and stuff. We must have got rid of quite a bunch of elk that year. What hell year would that have been? After that would have been after the Jones shipment, probably was after the Durand shipment. We still had a gob left there.

FR: If it's after '30, I wasn't there.

CY: It was '28 or nine. The fall of '27 and the spring of '28 is when Durand got his.

EK: Well, they got 40 head listed as gifts and 38 for sales, and 174 for sales in '28. Thirty-eight butchered and 40 for gifts.

FR: I can't supply the figures. It's been so long there I can't even remember—

EK: This is our only record—

FR: '27, '28, and 29, I don't seem to recall much about what we did. I can tell you some things that's been done that I haven't included somewhere else, and it's quite possible it was done during that time and I can't remember anything.

CY: Where's your little boy's room?

FR: Right here, straight ahead, through that door to—

EK: To your right.

FR: Off the kitchen.

CY: [unintelligible] or run to the fence?

LR: [laughs] [unintelligible]

CY: I'm looking for the boys room.

LR: Your looking in the right direction.

CY: I'm heading in the right direction.

EK: The thing of it is, I would say this is probably our best record.

FR: Well, it's the best that Mrs. Kinney could remember, but she had nothing to make it out of, as far as I know.

EK That's what I was wondering; how it was compiled.

FR: It's been compiled since I left, apparently, as far as I know. At least, her record, I have no recollection of it. It may have been her notes that she was getting together for a record that I sent to Washington.

EK: It says, "November 11, 1930."

FR: What?

EK: November 11, 1930.

FR: See, that's made, undoubtedly, after I was gone.

EK: Could be. I don't know.

FR: So she's made it from whatever information she could get a hold of.

EK: What time of the year did the fire—

FR: What?

EK: What time of the year was the fire? In 1930? The office burned in 1930.

FR: Oh, the office burned in '30, and that burned in the late summer. She may have made this up after the office burned then. I was up on the High Point that night with a fellow that had handled the express shipment. Route agent for the express company come out, we went up there.

[End of Interview]