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Oral History Number: 149-005b
Interviewee: Clarence "Cy" Young
Interviewer: Ernest Kraft
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Project: National Bison Range Oral History Project

Cy Young: Him and Dean Stone [Dean Arthur Stone, Professor Journalism at the University of Montana] they went all over Western Montana looking for a location for the Bison Range. They were getting pretty discouraged, and they ended up in Kalispell one night and they'd already looked this bison range over. Old Dean, he says to Duncan [Duncan McDonald], he says, "Duncan, where in the hell are we going to locate this bison range?"

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

"Yes, that's what I asked you. Where are we going to locate the bison range?"

Duncan says, "Ravalli."

Back they come. Dean Stone says, "That's good enough for me," and back they come. They look the place over a second time and decided that where she'll be.

Ernest Kraft: That was Duncan?

CY: Duncan McDonald and Dean Stone.

EK: This Kramer, now. Who was Kramer?

CY: He was the engineer that surveyed the fence line. They borrowed him from the Forest Service. He was a Forest Service surveyor, and they borrowed him from the Forest Service. He come out and located the corners and stuff and surveyed the line.

EK: Who's Walt Sloane (?)? Do you know the name?

CY: Yes. He's the—

EK: Is he the guy that had the store?

CY: No. I don't know. He must be a boy or a grandson of the old man. They used to live up here where Ny (?) lives now, where Ny's ranch is. He lived along there just above that for quite a while. Now, I think Walt, probably, is over around Hot Springs. There's two or three of them—

EK: Is that Sloane's Crossing? Is that name [unintelligible]?

CY: Yes, they used to live right above the—

EK: Sloane's Crossing?

CY: Sloane's Crossing. I think some of the old buildings are still there yet.

EK: That's where that came from. I heard that name the other night, and I thought it was a store down here.

CY: Sloane's Crossing. Then they had an old ferry there, I think. Then finally they built a bridge. This Walt, I think he's over around Hot Springs so far as I know. There's two or three of them Sloane boys. One of them packed for the Forest Service a lot.

EK: Do you know anything about Annie Cope (?).

CY: Who?

EK: Annie Cope.

CY: Anne Cope?

EK: Yes.

CY: Yes, she's over in—

EK: In Mission.

CY: She's over in...I don't know that one, but there's one Anne Cope that used to live over where Ny lived, just south of Ny's old place. She's over in Reading now...or Kent. She's in Kent.

EK: This Annie Cope was supposed to be over here at the mission.

CY: There is a couple of Copes over there all right, but I never heard of them over there until just lately I see—

EK: Walt McDonald...well, not Walt—

CY: Charlie?

EK: Charlie McDonald is going to try to talk her into letting me interview here.

CY: Is she a Indian?

EK: Yes.

CY: Well, these are little Indians...kind of breeds—Oklahoma breeds that's over in Kent. They used to live in Dixon for a long time, and then they moved. They lived in Dixon for a while, and the old man had a store right there in the middle of Dixon. They moved out after the...and homesteaded. They moved out and had a homestead up there around...close to Ny's. One of the boys, he comes out...Is this on? He comes up to the hospital all the time to see me when I'm over there.

EK: That's a Cope that's over there? Have you ever heard the name Tet Brown (??)?

CY: Yes. He's up around Polson. I think he's a breed.

EK: Tet was supposed to have the series of slides that was taken by some big New York outfit. These here are stereoscopic viewer-slides. Do you know Tet?

CY: No, I don't know him. I've heard of him, oh, ever since I've been here, but I don't think ever met him.

EK: What about Billy Irving (??)?

CY: He's dead, but he's an old-timer here, too. He was here long before the homestead days.

EK: There a picture him in *The Fabulous Flathead* [could be a reference to *The Fabulous Flathead* (1962), authored by J.F. McAlear and Sharon Bergman].

CY: There's Billy Irving and old Johnny, Johnny...Oh hell! [long pause] I can't think of that name. I know it as good as I know my own.

EK: Was Irving a rancher?

CY: Yes, big cow rancher.

EK: Did he have some of the buffalo, or—

CY: Herman. Johnny Herman (??). There was two of them. They were up in the Niarada country, there. Two of the biggest cattle outfits that was ever on the [Flathead] Reservation.

EK: Was they connected with the buffalo in some way?

CY: Not that I know of. They might have helped old Pablo [unintelligible] rode a little now and then, but I never ever knew of them having any buffalo of their own or having anything to do with it.

EK: What's your earliest recollection of bear in here?

CY: Bear?

EK: Of any bear?

CY: Well, when I first come here, I never did see them, but Rose told me they was two up in the head of Trisky that he had seen up there several different times.

EK: Are they like they are now? They just go through?

CY: Yeah, I think [unintelligible], because I never did see them, and I was up in there a lot.

EK: You never seen them tangle with the buffalo?

CY: No. The other thing that I ever saw tangling with a buffalo was in that...I think it's the *American Bison* book, there, shows a bull trying to run a grizzly away from a rock or something. Grizzly running [unintelligible] I guess that's just a painting.

EK: Yeah. I was looking in the old files in there, Cy, and in 1926, it said there were 388 elk and that they sold 388 in 1926, and there were still 255 left. Is that 388 the ones that went down there to the old boy back East, and he tried to break?

CY: Yeah, yeah.

EK: We got that story. Okay. In 1928, it said 275 sold, gifts, or for restocking.

CY: That was a bunch that Durand (?) over in Martinsdale got.

EK: What did he do with that bunch?

CY: He took them over there to Martinsdale. See, he formed a big hunting club. He got a bunch of...That's the same outfit I was telling you about that they formed—

EK: Oh okay, we got that one then. Then, in 1929, it said 421 sold.

CY: Were they sold or were given to the—

EK: It says, "restocking, sold, or as gifts."

CY: Oh yeah, that's right. They went to different gun clubs all over Idaho and Montana and Washington.

EK: How were they taken out?

CY: Car-load shipments.

EK: Did you guys do the work here or the state or what?

CY: Yes, we done all the work.

EK: They were de-horned?

CY: Oh yes. Then again, when old Yellow Tail down at the...Yellow Tail, now, it seems that he got some elk. No, I'm not sure about that. I know he got buffalo.

EK: There is no records of anybody who got them, where got them, or what got them, in these records, because all it says, "421 - restocking, sold, or a gift." They're all throwed together in a big heap so there is no record of where they went or who got them or anything.

CY: Well, the state got most of them—states of Montana, Idaho, and Washington. I know there was at least two carloads went to out around Rainier [National] Park, and that was about '32 or '33, along in there. The state took a lot of them, and then they was a big surplus of bulls. So we give the Indians here at the agency...Oh, I don't know how many bull. Hell, they killed bulls here all summer...or all spring. They brought up the crews. We corralled them and put them in the corral, and they come up here and butchered them themselves.

EK: Those records down there don't mention a thing about that, so far that I've been able to find.

CY: Same with their buffalo. Seem like they butchered their own buffalo over there, too, once or twice.

EK: According to the record up there, there were seven elk brought up here from Jackson Hole in 1911. Is that what you—

CY: Seven?

EK: Seven, from Jackson Hole in 1911, and in 1912, there was six brought in from Idaho. In 1916, there was 26 brought in from Yellowstone Park.

CY: Twenty-six and the rest of them adds up to 40 head, don't they? Close by?

EK: Forty-three, yes.

CY: I just was told once by somebody—I don't know, Duncan I think—that there was 40 of the elk started...they brought in 40 head along about 1916, '17 from Yellowstone, presumably.

EK: In 1926, the herd reach 700 head. That's what it said. Do you remember anything about the albino calf?

CY: Yeah, yeah. He wasn't all albino. He was half. His front part of him was white, oh, from about the middle of his belly. Head was white. Then, of course, the big rear-end. He looked pretty much white all over, but actually he did have some brown color. He was kind of a pinto, is what he was.

EK: What happened to him?

CY: They cut him out up there and was it going to take extra good care of it. They put him in a pen by himself, and he just worried or run himself to death, I think, fighting the fence.

EK: At High Point?

CY: No. The buffalo corral. On the upper pen there, where we hold...where we hold the live herd.

EK: It says, "born in '24, and died in '26."

CY: He was about around a two-year-old when we got him in.

EK: That's all it says.

CY: We had his hide there for years and years, waiting for the Washington [D.C.] office to make up their mind what they were going to do with it. They couldn't decide whether they wanted mounted life-sized or tanned or what the hell they wanted to do with it. So it laid around there for years and years, and finally the hair began to slip on it so we threw it out

EK: 1918 they introduced six mule deer from Yellowstone Park.

CY: '18? 1918?

EK: 1918. In 1921, they introduced 17 more.

CY: Mule deer?

EK: Mule deer, and that is the extent of the record on the mule deer.

CY: I never did know where the mule deer come from, but this guy—I told you his name the other night—over there around the mission. [unintelligible] him and another guy brought up six or seven white tails and branded them and turned them loose in here.

EK: Okay, that was in 1910. The city of Missoula donated—there's no number. There's no number, and in 1921, there were 17 head donated by Frank Conley of Deer Lodge, and that comprised the total whitetail herd, unknown number—

CY: Bert Leash (?) was the guy that said he brought him over here and branded them, but he didn't say where he got them.

EK: City of Missoula was supposed to have donated them in 1910.

CY: Maybe he was working for the city or something, I don't know, [unintelligible]—

EK: I wonder if he's still living?

CY: I imagine he is. I've never heard of him a-dying.

EK: Leash?

CY: Bert Leash.

EK: Bert Leash, okay. That's another lead. Did you ever see any moose in here other than that one that broke that fence, or come in on that...or wasn't you here yet or [unintelligible]?

CY: You mean the one that got in here and stayed in here?

EK: Yes, for about three weeks.

CY: I, probably, was over in the hospital.

EK: Yes, I think you were over in the hospital, if I remember right, because I was working here then.

CY: I almost got one in one time. He come up the river from down around the Perma country there, in the Plains country. I think he come out of that Swamp Creek country across the river from Plains, and he kept working up the railroad and working up the railroad. The crews along the morning train, they'd see him about every morning. He kept getting a little closer, a little closer, a little closer. Finally he got up along the Jocko between Dixon and Ravalli, and he stayed in there quite a long time. Some of the elk came back from...We turned a bunch elk loose up

here in Hog Heaven country—that's north up the Bitterroot country there—and there's a few of them drifted back down in. About 20 of them, drifted in over on Ny's range there, stayed along that timbered ridge there for a long, long time.

This moose, and there was one big cow elk come back, and her and this moose got running together down on the Jocko. One day, I was living at the substation, and riding on that country over there, watching the sheep pretty close, and I'd seen them about every day. One day I seen them coming along the fence, heading east towards Ravalli, and I sneaked back to the Trisky gate. Right where the water gap is there, there was a saddle gate. I got the gate open, and then got back up on that little flat there where I could peep over, where you got the reservoir dug out up there. I peeped over and watched them quite a while, and the old elk, she didn't hesitate very long. She'd stick her head through, and then she'd back up. She'd stick her head through and back up, and every time she'd back up, why, the next time she'd come about six inches further. Finally she got to where she got her shoulders through the gate, and then she come on through. The old moose stood there and looked at it quite a long while, and she come up and she stuck her head through two or three times. Hell, I thought nothing to it, I sure got her. She finally backed out. The old elk there, she got through. She kind of edged-off along the saddle trail. There was a saddle trail just inside the fence, going along that hillside. Just about where the road is now, maybe a little below, but after the elk started on, she backed out and come up along the fence on the outside.

About a week later, I seen a big pile of guts laying on the creek bank on the south side of the creek bank down there about where that second floodgate west is...I mean, it would be the second gate from the east going west, right along there about where the fence leaves the road and goes down to the fence. So I kind of suspicion who done it all right.

Next time I seen him, old Oscar Ludding (?), I said, "Say, Oscar, what the hell did you butcher my pet moose for?"

"Oh, I didn't kill him. I didn't kill him. Charlie Gay (?) killed that moose."

So, a few days later, I see old Charlie and I jumped him. I says, "Hey Charlie, how come you killed my pet moose?"

"I didn't kill that moose. I didn't kill that moose." He says, "Oscar Ludding killed that moose."

EK: They were in it together, I guess?

CY: So evidently. [laughs] They both had a hand in it. Nice big cow. She was a dandy, just a dandy.

EK: What I could find up there, in 1910, they introduced 12 antelope. 1915, three from Connolly...The first ones came from Yellowstone, the first 12. 1916, one from Corvallis. Then in

1922, in reports up there, it says they're completely disappeared, but in 1926, there's a report of eight head and then no more.

CY: They must have been at least a dozen when I first seen them. That was in '26.

EK: Then they died out?

CY: Yeah.

EK: Right about that time?

CY: Well, there was a few around. We turned them out. They'd go up there in that damp meadow, so one or two died, and they turned the rest of them out. That was the winter that coyotes were so gosh awful thick.

EK: Then there was about a 25-year period there till 1951 when they introduced 15 more from Yellowstone.

CY: Yeah. There was a long time there that there was no antelope at all. They just finally disappeared. I found one head over along the Jocko there, right just a little bit west of the east floodgate, right along the fence. What happened to him, I don't know. I just found his head, whether he was killed and the head cut off or whether he died, or dogs or coyotes got him, I don't know.

EK: Then, the sheep, in 1922, they got 12 from Wabamun, Alberta, Canada. In '29—

CY: They got how many head?

EK: It says 12 in the record. In '29 there was 100 sheep, when they began to first find the dead ones. That's what it says.

CY: That's about right. That's about right.

EK: Then there's pretty much a continuous—

CY: They were up and down and mostly down from then on.

EK: Up and down until they were down to about—

CY: They went right down from 100, right down to less than 50 just within a year, and then maybe two years. Then they'd raise a lamb or two now and then, and they'd get up a little bit and then down and down. They was mostly down until they was—

EK: Why don't you tell us a little bit about that serum that Norton tried to—

CY: Well, they kept going down and down, until we saw there was definitely something that was going to have to be done with them, because they were going to all die off the way it looked—the way they were keeping going downhill all the time. So one spring they had about...In '31, we had 15 lambs, and I found every one of them right in the bottom of Trisky about 300 yards below the barbed-wire fence there that crosses Trisky [Creek]—the contour fence, right down there where there's a steep spot on the road. Right in the bottom of that draw is a lot of brush there and a little water, and these lambs would get in under that brush and that's where they all died. Then the next year they got busy, and the trouble of it was, we never could ever find one fresh enough to post him to find out what was doing it. So the next year then, I just got over there and lived right with them. I was out there three o'clock in the morning until dark at night, just following them around and watching. They was a lamb got to sneezing and coughing, so we decided that we probably better get him before he died and get him down there. He was laying right under a little shelf rock, and I sneak up on top of the rock and reached over and caught him. We rushed him down to Hamilton, and we posted him and found out what was the matter with him. They got some of these bugs, and then they developed a serum—

EK: Culture.

CY: —culture for the bugs. The next year then, we took the CC [Civilian Conservation Corps] crew out and rounded the whole works up and brought them down to the buffalo corrals. Well, the first year, we trapped them there at the substation barn. We had a corral there. Maybe, it's still there.

EK: Yes, It was there when I came, and it's—

CY: Well we trapped—

EK: —real high fence—a board fence, 1 by 4s or something.

CY: They come into the substation to water, and go out to drink out of those old creosote barrels. I was treating posts. I had a post-treating plant there just blow the barn, and I had about a dozen barrels. As I would empty the creosote, cut the tops out of the barrels, and filled them with water for fire protection. These sheep would come in there, and instead of drinking out of that nice spring-water that was piped in there in the trough, they go through those creosote barrels and drink that hot water creosote that you stick your hand in and it pretty near take the hide off of you. They got to coming in there for that, so we decided that was a good place to trap them. We got to trapping them, and for a year or two, we vaccinated them there at the barn. Get them in the corral there and catch then them, trap them, and vaccinate them. After that then, it was a couple of years that we used the CC crew. We just took them all up there a-foot and kind of surround them and moved them along—drove them along—and

brought them down to the buffalo corrals and vaccinated them there. Then we put them in the sheep pasture. Then just a regular crew could go up there with the CCs. Just a regular crew could go up there.

EK: You had quite a bit of trouble getting them in. I see in the reports, over the years, they would say there's 12 outside, or so, yet.

CY: Well, they never was all in.

EK: Yeah. That's what I meant to say.

CY: First batch...Even with the CCs, we never did get them all in, but we had the bulk of them in.

EK: Yeah. They were still trying to catch sheep the first time, one of the first times, over there in the Elk Creek. I was riding old Freckles, and we were catching sheep for some reason or other.

CY: Well, I think, that's probably the bunch that they wanted to catch some to move them to transplant. Two or three different bunches went to Fort Peck. That must have been what you was doing.

EK: Because you were there. You were still riding.

CY: Was I?

EK: Because I was writing Freckles, and all the big ram comes down—

CY: Yeah, I know, I remember that now. That was for a plant at Fort Peck. The plant, the built a fence and fenced them up over there.

EK: Oh, I saw those sheep last summer. I didn't realize that's where they come from. That was the day you give me the devil for letting the horse— [laughs]

CY: For what?

EK: —for running my horse up to the next to the fence, and we were going to stop this big buck. He went right underneath old Freckles' neck, and you come over there and said, "That a damn fool thing to do kid." [laughs] You were telling me something about one of them boys hitting you or something, didn't he?

CY: It was a big old buck deer that hit me. Right in the middle.

EK: Oh, a deer.

CY: His horns straddled my leg. Hit the horse, and straddled my leg. It was in the spring of the year, and his horns was getting a little loose. They both fell off, or he'd have stuck them right through that horse.

EK: [laughs] [unintelligible].

CY: Oh, yes. Even the horse didn't do too much. He jumped and snorted and kind of kicked at the old buck. I don't know when we did quit. They stopped dying. They quit dying there for a while.

EK: You got the numbers down though.

CY: They seemed to be getting immune to the...What you call it? I don't know, maybe it was during the war that we quit trying to vaccinating them. I guess it was.

EK: There's only about three years that I could see where there's anything done with vaccinating. Maybe it was longer than that.

CY: Well, I know we vaccinated them two years with the CCs, and then a couple of years before that, when we first started down at the substation.

EK: Well, it probably was, but none of that's ever in there, see. There's no report of how or where, or anything. Just absolutely nothing. That's why I thought maybe you'd fill it in a little bit.

CY: I think we kept after them, though, until about the beginning of the war. Then most everything was discontinued.

EK: They analyzed, or tried to analyze, the records up there from 1920 to 1925. I know some of this, or all of it I guess, is before your time, but I thought it might be interesting to you. They had in 1920 it says there was 45 born—

CY: Sheep?

EK: No, this is buffalo now.

CY: Oh, talking about buffalo.

EK: There was 335 at the end of that time—that year of 1920. In '21, there was 62 born with the total number for them in the year of 390 buffalo. In 1922, there was 75 born and a total of 460 buffalo. Then in 1923, there was 106 born, and it says, "sold or donated – 33." That left 533 buffalo. Then in '24, there was 142 born, "sold or donated – 219." Now, that should have been the first big kill. What happened in '24?

CY: In '24?

EK: '24.

CY: They sold 40 head...Seems like that was a little later though. Might have been '24. There was 40 head sold to Luther Burbank (?) in California, and they were shipped to California. Ike can give you that story. He went down there with them.

EK: I was going to say. Maybe Ike could fill us in, because that's...then the next year, Cy, they took 110.

CY: Butchered or sold?

EK: '25, it says, "sold or donated." Now, how they were sold or who they were donated to, there's no record whatsoever. That's the thing that I'd like to try to get cleared up.

CY: '25—

EK: In '25, it was 110, and '24, there was 219 that they got rid of.

CY: In 1924?

EK: 1924. That was two years before you came here.

CY: I never heard about that. The only thing I heard about was just a few bulls that they would shoot out on the range.

EK: That's what the record up in the office says. Where they went or what...but I was trying to—

CY: They were trying to peddle them all right, but old Ike, he'll know about that.

EK: We'll have to be sure to ask Ike about this, because it's one of the things that's kind of stumped me, because I thought that disposal program didn't start until about '26 or '27 or '28.

CY: Well, that's always been my understanding.

EK: But this says '24.

CY: All they got rid of was just what few they could—

EK: Shoot handy?

CY: —shoot handy and so forth.

EK: Well, we'll have to ask him about it. Do you remember anything about the Cameron exchange? There was two buffaloes exchanged with the Cameron Ranch in 1949.

CY: That was the Rising Sun Ranch, just up the Gallatin there just out at Yellowstone Park. It was a dude ranch, big dude ranch. They had about a dozen or 15 and 20 buffalo.

EK: Well then, this place exchanged two with them, apparently, was what happened.

CY: Did we still have old Yellowstone when you come on the Range?

EK: Yes.

CY: Well, he was one of them.

EK: Oh, well, let's see what else—

CY: The reason I called him Yellowstone was because he originally come out Yellowstone Park.

EK: In 1953, we got two from Yellowstone.

CY: That was right from the Yellowstone Park. That's different. That was different from this Cameron outfit.

EK: Okay, that's what I was wondering.

CY: This Butler outfit, he owned the ranch—the Butler that puts up the Honeywell electric stuff from Minneapolis—he was the one that had the dude-ranch and had the buffalo [unintelligible].

EK: The name they gave was Cameron.

CY: That might have been the guy that was running the ranch for them.

EK: What was the name of the ranch?

CY: Rising Sun Ranch.

EK: Rising Sun. Okay, October 29...let's see, 1948, there was a calf born with a tail out its side. Do you remember that?

CY: I never did see him, but I heard about it.

EK: What did they do with him?

CY: Damned if I know. Killed him, I think.

EK: He was a morphodite.

CY: I heard them talking about him, but I don't think I ever saw him.

EK: Well, that's sure funny.

CY: You'd have thought something like that that was that unusual—

EK: I'd guess. In '29 you'd been here for—

EK: Yes. I had been here then a few years. That was the time of the morphodite calf?

EK: October 29, 1948.

CY: I'll be damned. I'd forgot all about that. The only deformed one I ever found out there was, his feet turned right up instead of his feet setting on the ground, they were setting off at right angles and turned up. All the hooves were sticking up in the air, and he walked on his ankles and hocks.

EK: Was you here when that cow had them snow-shoe feet?

CY: Yeah.

EK: I helped bring her in. We butchered her up here.

CY: Yes, I remember her.

EK: We were bringing a bunch of them down there above the fence coming up Elk Creek and going to push them into the sheep pasture there, and I was above them. I was alone. I don't know when the rest of guys...what happened to them, but there was about 60, 70 in the bunch. When I started around the hill there with them, she couldn't keep up, because she'd hook them big old long feet behind her back joints and throw her down. I think, that's the first time I ever saw her.

CY: Was her hind feet long too?

EK: They were just like snow shovels. [unintelligible]

CY: Yes. I remember seeing one of the front

EK: —18 inches long.

CY: One of the front feet, it was the same thing.

EK: All four of them. When she would run, she'd get them tangled up, and she'd hook them behind her legs and it'd throw her down. So I had to leave her, and I put the rest of the bunch back. Then I come back and got here, but she couldn't do nothing. She got completely on the fight alone, and she'd fall and knock herself out and when she got up you couldn't even move her. Then we just let her go, and she finally wandered down there by herself. We got her in, but that was a real freaky—

CY: Did they ever have anybody look at her? Vets or anything?

EK: Well, Corcoran (?), but they never could—

CY: He couldn't arrive at no solution?

EK: —decide what it was. There's pictures in the files of her.

CY: Well, it must have been freaks some way or other. Her ankles might have all been weak, that she was broken down in the ankles and just naturally with no weight on her toes, and they just kept a-growing and growing, and she couldn't wear them off. That pretty near has to be the answer.

EK: That's sure pathetic.

CY: All four feet.

EK: Sure pathetic. Although through all the years, there hasn't been too many freaks in here. I mean, as far as thing like that.

CY: No. We never had any two-headed ones or anything like that.

EK: I noticed in there that Frank Groom (?) reported twin calves.

CY: Well he just reported a pair that he thought might have could have been a pair of twins up in the corral, but we never know positive, for sure. So, I just forgot about them. But there was two there, and there was only one heifer that showed signs of having a recent calf. So that's why he thought it.

EK: But you never seen her suckle the two together?

CY: No, no, they were both dead. They were dead. Both laying right close together.

EK: It never said they were dead. It said they were born, and that's all that was said.

CY: Well, they was born all right, but they was born apparently dead or died soon after birth or something.

EK: No wonder [laughs] the record got cut short. I looked up those bulls from Niobrara [Nebraska], and there was four.

CY: That come up with the steers?

EK: It says, "October 4, '52. Four from Niobrara," and, "in '53, two from Yellowstone."

CY: Four? [unintelligible]

EK: Well that's what it says, that why [unintelligible].

CY: That could be an error too. Where did you get this, out of the narrative?

EK: No, these are this condensation of their buffalo reports. They've gone through all these narratives and put this stuff in.

CY: All I can think of is three. Five head, he had a total of five, as far as I can remember, and he had the steers in the back and these three buffalo up in the head.

EK: I know we talked about it the other night, and I thought we said we thought it was three.

CY: I just remember branding three of them. That's all I can think of that we branded.

EK: They have it in there that he weighed 1,193 pounds, old Whitey, when he died. Did you know that?

CY: Well, I knew he was pretty thin.

EK: Yeah, 1,193. So they figured he weighed 18, 1,900, when he was in his prime.

CY: Yes. When he was in his prime, he was way over that, I'm sure.

EK: What about this old Colonel Sheldon? Now, who was Colonel Sheldon?

CY: He was in charge of big game refuges in Washington. I mean, he worked out of the Washington office all the time.

EK: Is he the one that was in on this Bison Society?

CY: No, I don't think he was. It could have been.

EK: That was Sheridan, wasn't it?

CY: What?

EK: That was Sheridan, wasn't it? Wasn't there a General Sheridan that was a—

CY: I don't know, but that book should tell you.

EK: I read it, but I saw this name and I got to thinking it was him, but I may be wrong.

CY: Yes, there was Garretson who was the head of that Bison Society and got it formed. Him and the old man Seymour. But that Sheridan, they quote him a lot, but he was out on the range and they assigned him the job of trying to estimate the number of buffalo that was between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains. He took his company, and he scattered them out on the what they figured was the east boundary of the buffalo back around the Mississippi River there some place. He headed west to the Rocky Mountains, and they all got together. They got just as far apart kind of so they could kind of keep, more or less, track of each other. Just as far away as you could...Maybe sometimes it was a mile or two miles apart. When they get to the Rocky Mountains and they began to compare notes, and Sheridan asked his men and said, "How many buffalo did you see and think you saw?" So the guys, they all put down what they estimated that they had seen and averaged them up. When they got them added up, it averaged up to close to a billion. So they knew that nobody would ever believe it, even though that was the fact. So they kept cutting it down and cutting it down, and finally they settled on 160 million minimum, at the very minimum.

EK: I read that last night. I finished that book.

CY: That was Sheridan's story. That was only just a strip maybe 50 miles wide from the Mississippi River to Denver, or wherever it was they rendezvoused.

Unidentified Speaker: We got a new buffalo book up there. Would you like to see it? It's like Garretson's only it's a new one—great big thick one. He cites Garretson, and a lot of the other references. It's a new book.

CY: Recent publication?

US: Yeah.

CY: Yes, I'd like to see it.

EK: What color was this old horse of Hodges'? Was he a big old blue roan? With a bald face?

CY: I think he was. I think somebody told me he was a roan.

EK: Yeah. Somebody told me the other night—I don't know who I was talking to now—and said he was a big blue roan. There I did took him for a sorrel all this time, and I thought it was a different horse.

CY: I think someone told me he was a roan.

EK: Oh, I guess it must have been Henry Henningsen. He was telling about when he used to ride that big blue horse in there all the time. Then when they started riding some of their bays in there, the buffalo were pretty curious, and he jumped off and ran down the brush and hid once or something.

CY: Old Bill was a big...He was a blood bay. He was not quite as dark as Popcorn, but he was a little shade lighter. Real nice horse. Rose [Frank H. Rose], I think, bought old Bill. I don't know, probably Andy wouldn't sell old Baldy.

EK: I never did hear, or haven't heard yet, what happened to Baldy.

CY: Hodges had him since he first come. He must have been too old for Rose to ride anyway.

EK: Can you tell me a little bit about...Well, one of the men you mentioned in the CC crew was Tom Fisher (?).

CY: Yes, Tom Fisher, he was a carpenter foreman. He was a top-flight carpenter in construction. He built, oh, a lot of the big buildings and major buildings in Butte, before he come to the Flathead. He had a homestead up here. He and Ed Gotch (?) were right close together up there. Clarence lives in Ed Gotch's place now. Fisher's place burned down. He was here in charge of building construction during the CC days, and any other time we had carpenter work, we always got Tom Fisher.

EK: He built these present buildings, a good share of them?

CY: All of them, all except Schwartz's house and the two new ones. He built the office up there where Grant lives, and he built all those tin sheds around there and the barn and the pump house along the creek and the reservoir up on the hill. Everything that was here except the old cow barn and the old house that Stipe bought. Everything else, he built. He was a cracker-jack

carpenter. He could turn out more work by himself than two or three average carpenters, and he could take a crew of men and he could get three times as much work out of them as the average guy.

EK: Is Tom still living?

CY: No he died...oh, he's been dead ten years.

EK: Did we talk the other night about this Mission Creek down here? Fishing and something? We talked about that any other night?

CY: Yes, about Hodges shooting the fish poles and [unintelligible]?

EK: No, just how good the fishing was in there.

CY: Well, it used to be good. I used to fish a lot in there. Up until the big flood of '48, it was no trouble at all to go out...I could go out here, and catch my limit between the flood gate out here and the bridge up there, just most any time. If you went on up the creek, the farther up you went, the better it got.

EK: [unintelligible] in other words.

CY: Yeah. It was real good. It was nothing to catch two, two-and-a-half pounders, right along.

EK: Yeah, that must have been something.

CY: Rose, by gosh, he could just fill his basket any time of day. He didn't have to wait for the dark of the moon or anything like that to get his limit. He was a fisherman, a fly-fisherman. He'd laugh at you if he ever caught you using worms or squawfish or any of that kind of stuff, but that's the only way I could catch them in those deep holes, you now, was to put on a piece of squawfish or a worm and sink for them.

EK: They were there.

CY: But they were there. He didn't like the big ones, so he he'd get on the riffles or swift water. He wanted the smaller size—half pound, three-quarter, along in there. That's the kind that he liked. Good for eating. Those big ones; anything over a two-pounder, you pretty near had to bake him. Either that or filet him, one of the two.

EK: That '48, about, you figure—

CY: We had a big flood just exactly like we had here this time. Just as big, and it washed out all those good holes. Seemed like it kind of silted it in all those places that used to be rock riffles,

and things like that, that kind of left mud there. The squawfish moved in and the suckers, and it seemed like the trout just moved out.

EK: Don't you think that the Kerr Dam has something to do with it too, on the way they regulate that water down in the river below, Cy? I mean, after all, they'll raise that water three or four feet there in a few hours, and then they'll drop it clear down and cut it off to practically nothing. Wouldn't that affect this here?

CY: Well, I don't think that would affect this, unless it would do it down at the mouth of the creek there.

EK: Cy, you've talked about old Yellowstone—bull Yellowstone. Why don't you give us kind of your recollections of him from the time you got him until—

CY: Well, he was, I think, about a yearling. Long yearling when we got him. I believe he come up in the fall. In fact, I'm sure he did. That's a long yearling. Him and two or three more, and we just exchanged bulls with this outfit. The others, I suppose they got, probably, killed off. I never got them all marked in time until they got out in the rain. So how long they lasted, I don't know. But this one, I do know that I branded him. I put a big Y on this hip. He stayed around here until he died. No, we finally shot him, but he had something wrong with him. I mean, inside, his water was draining into his stomach instead of into his bladder, see. So we killed him all right, but he was so old, he was no good for breeding anyway at that time. He was bought in '39?

EK: Well, I don't remember.

CY: That's about the time he was brought in. Anyway, we just killed him here after Schwartz come. So he would have been at a ripe old age. He'd have been at least getting close to 20.

EK: He was up in the sheep pasture up there, and they shot him up there.

CY: Yeah, he liked that head of Elk Creek, and he stayed there.

EK: He was a mean old bugger, wasn't he?

CY: No, no, he was a good bull until he got sick and didn't want to travel. Then he wouldn't run from you, he'd just kind of make a few jumps at you like he was going to hook you. But he never did chase you much or anything like that. He a pretty good old bull. He never bothered nothing up until the time he got to where he couldn't run.

EK: What about old Paul Bunyan? What's the story on old Paul Bunyan?

CY: Well, he was just a...As I told you about Norton saying he weighed 6,322-and-a-half pounds. [laughs]

EK: He wasn't quite that big though.

CY: In my estimation, he wasn't quite that big. About two or three tons. He probably weighed 2,200 around in that neck of the woods.

EK: He was one that had a 35-and-a-quarter inch horn spread?

CY: No, that was Jack Dempsey.

EK: That was Jack Dempsey.

CY: No, Paul Bunyan, his head wasn't too wide or too big. He had a normal-sized horns on him, but he was just big all over, something like Paul Bunyan's ox.

EK: Which one of these was it that hung around the headquarters here all the time? Didn't you have one of them in the pen with Whitey for an exhibition?

CY: Yes. Yellowstone was in there for a while.

EK He and old Whitey used to go at it.

CY: Yes. They used to tangle. Although the last two times they tangled, they fought for a good hour each time they battled. Finally in the end, old Yellowstone—he was a lot younger bull than Whitey—and he just out winded old Whitey and finally licked him. But I'm telling you, there was two real honest-to-good battles. Disney had had that bull fight, he'd have had something.

EK: That old Whitey whipped him the first time.

CY: Oh yes. You're damn right he whipped him, and he whipped everything else up until that time, too. He didn't back down from nobody. When he was out in the hills there, boy, he took on the biggest. He was a scrapper, that old boy.

EK: Then, Jack Dempsey, what's the story on him?

CY: He was another big bull. He had an exceptionally big wide head. In fact, so wide that he couldn't get into the killing chute. We had to kind of remodel it so that we could finally get him in there. I hated to see them kill him, because he wasn't out of his prime by any means, but Muschbeck wanted to kill him so he could measure the head. He figured it was a championship head there. He wanted to send into the Boone and Crockett Club. That was the main reason he was killed.

EK: He was one of the original herd according to the record up there. He was one of the original animals that was brought in here.

CY: No, he wasn't that old.

EK: Well, it says he was 30 years.

CY: If he had of been, he would have had a tag in his ear. All the originals had tags in their ear.

EK: Well, that's what it says in the record. He was an offspring of the original.

CY: Well, he was an offspring, yeah. But he just wasn't old enough to be any of the originals, because he was—

EK: He was killed in 1945.

CY: —he was a scrapping young...Well at that time, he looked like he might have been 12, 15 years old. '45, that would only be 30 years ago, that would go back to about '35, wouldn't it?

EK: Well, it says he was killed in '45, and that he was 30 years old, up in the records.

CY: I wouldn't say he was anywhere near that old.

EK: [laughs] Well, I just wondered. That's why I wrote it down.

CY: Hell, his teeth were still good. If he'd have been 30 years old, they would have been getting wore down some.

EK: Can you tell me anything about the story of the two mountain sheep heads you found over on the Jocko?

CY: That were locked? Locked together? Oh, you mean the ones that the Indians butchered?

EK: We talked about that the other night though, didn't we?

CY: I think we did, yes.

EK: Yeah, we did.

CY: Tracking the Indians.

EK: Yes, that's right.

CY: Yeah, we got that all recorded. The guy on his way over here to kill me when he met his own Waterloo and got his head cut off going through a windshield in the car? We got that all on the tape.

EK: I think we did. If we didn't, why, I'll check.

CY: Somebody found the pair of sheep-head locked, didn't they?

EK: Yes, Ed Krantz found a set of them once.

CY: Ed Krantz. I found that pair of elk heads locked up at Firehole Canyon there one time. They got them down in the Smithsonian, I think, in Washington.

EK: We've got that set of white tails up there, too, that's locked. It's a pretty head. Pretty set.

CY: Sure had a hell of a time building a crate for them two locked heads. Big enough to put an elephant in. [laughs] They had to be packed so no chance of them getting shook loose or damaged. You couldn't have pulled them loose with two pickups, without breaking them all to hell.

EK: I pulled a good one here a few years back. I got up there, and I found a real nice head. It was pretty well weathered—real big head. I was going to take it down, and it was down off the hill there. I had a horse, and I was having a heck of a time getting the horse led and the head drug. So I decided to try to roll it like a wagon wheel, and boy, did I ruin that. [laughs] I broke that thing into about a dozen pieces.

CY: Them skulls, they won't stand too good.

EK: No, they sure don't after they get dry.

[End of Interview]