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Oral History Number: 235-001
Interviewee: Harl L. Bruner
Interviewer: Pat O'Connell
Date of Interview: October 5, 1989

Pat O'Connell: ...first house on South 15th Avenue in Polson. It is October 5...

Harl Bruner: Nineteenth.

PO: Nineteenth Avenue in Polson. He grew up at—

HB: Dupuyer, Montana.

PO: Dupuyer—is how you pronounce it? Let's see now.

HB: On a homestead ranch.

PO: On a homestead ranch. Do you remember the names of any of the teachers you had?

HB: The teachers we had were just generally local girls. I think one of my teachers was Miss Perkins. There was Miss Jones. I don't recall all the teachers. I know some of them they graduated from the eighth grade. They would maybe go into Dillon for a little while, and then come back and teach.

PO: When did you get interested in doing artwork? Did you start that right in grade school or what?

HB: Doing art work?

PO: Yes.

HB: No, I used to do a lot of doodling all the time. My hand was always going. I was drawing horses and stuff like that. I never got really interested in artwork until after I retired from the sheriff's office. I was 20 years in law enforcement. In '69, I retired from the sheriff's office. Then I took up art.

I studied under Sam Ingersoll (?), who is an art teacher from Stevensville, Montana. He had classes in Missoula. I went down there. He studied, I understand, under (unintelligible) who studied under Charlie Russell.

PO: Did you ever hear or see anybody that knew Charlie Russell?

HB: I met Charlie Russell, personally.

PO: Did you?

HB: Yes, I did. We were in Great Falls. I was walking up past his place. He had a little cabin just over on the first street east in Great Falls. I was walking by. The cabin was kind of back in the trees. So, I walked in there. He was sitting there doing some artwork. He said, "Can I help you?"

I said, "Well, I just kind of wanted to look around."

He said, "Make yourself at home."

I looked at all of his pictures and stuff in there. I sat down there and talked to him for a while.

PO: How old were you then?

HB: Let's see. That would be—

PO: Were you a kid or a grown man?

HB: No, I was just a pretty kid. It would be sometime in the '20s. It was probably... '23 or '24.

PO: You would have been about 20 years old.

HB: Yes.

PO: You were a long, tall, and gangling kid.

HB: Oh yes. I was six foot three inches tall when I was fifteen years old.

PO: And slim?

HB: Slim, slim as a rail. Yes.

PO: You are still slim, and you're still tall.

HB: Well...(laughs) I got a little bend with it now.

PO: Did he talk to you very much?

HB: Yes. He talked to me about his days that he spent with the Indians, how he became an artist, and what have you. I talked to him maybe for an hour and I went on my way. He was a nice fellow to talk to.

PO: Did he wear that red bandana or belt around his middle when you talked to him?

HB: Not when I seen him. He was in the house there.

PO: You always see pictures of him with that.

HB: Yes. I don't recall him having a bandana on that day. He may have. I don't know—

PO: But no red belt either?

HB: No.

PO: Sash or whatever they call it. So, you went to riding for ranches or...

HB: I let's see. In 1919, my brother and I—

PO: You were about 15 years old?

HB: 19...(counts inaudibly) I was in an accident, and I was 14 years old when it took place. My brother was 11 years old. He and I went to the mountains with my dad's cattle. We had around 100 head of cattle and about 150 head of horses. They had a drought in there at that time. The feed up in the mountains was pretty good.

We headed up to the mountains and stayed all summer, my brother and I, with these cattle. We lived in little, old longhouse. We rode the fences every day. One day, we would ride the south fence. The next day we would ride the north. We did all of our own cooking.

PO: An 11 year old and a 14 year old?

HB: Yes. We never saw our parents, on the average, but once a month they would come up. It was all horse and buggy then. They didn't have an automobile. They would come up probably to get a load of wood or something like that.

PO: Bring you some groceries.

HB: Yes, but our groceries didn't amount to much: a sack of flour, some grease, and some side pork. We called it sow belly. We had no refrigeration. We couldn't keep any fresh stuff. The only meat we had is what we killed. We ate snow shoe rabbits. We would kill coons once in a while. Once in a great while, we would get a hold of a young fawn. There was good fishing there in the stream. We would go down to the creek and catch a mess of fish maybe once or twice a week. We ate whatever we could get together.

We made our own bread. They call them bannocks now. The way we made them was we would take the flour sack and folded this sack down in. We hollowed the flour out like this. We had a milk cow there. We poured the milk, shortening, baking powder, and everything that goes into biscuits or bread. We stored it right in there.

PO: You stuck in just the right amount of flour.

HB: Yes. When it would go stiff enough, we would put it in a frying pan. Then we would put it on top of the fire until it was stiff enough to stand up. Then we'd stand it up in front of the fire and let it bake. It would come right out. That's all the bread we had all summer long. We made our own bread.

PO: You got experience riding then and being on the ranch.

HB: Yes

PO: When did you get your first job riding for somebody else?

HB: The first job I had riding was for Hamilton Sheep Company over on the reservation down on—

PO: On the Blackfoot Reservation?

HB: My job, along with an Indian kid that rode with me, was to keep the wild horses off of their range. At that time, there were thousands of horses over there. They had about 32,000 acres of range. We were supposed to keep the horses run off of it. We maybe run off 100 head on one side and 200 head on the other side.

It was just the right job to ride. We did more playing than anything. We would round up them horses and learned to rope. We would catch them and ride them.

PO: (laughs) These wild horses—

HB: Yes, wild horses until they played out. Then we would turn them loose and go back to our saddle horses. We had a wonderful time. We had—

PO: What was the name of the Indian kid?

HB: Clint Selloway (?). The Selloways lived in Dupuyer. I think they had 10 to 12 kids. I don't know what they had. He was about the same age as me. We went over and got this job. During lambing time, they took us in, and we worked with the sheep. During shearing time, we worked—

PO: You had always worked with cattle before?

HB: Before, yes.

PO: This was your first experience with sheep.

HB: With sheep, yes.

PO: That's the Hamilton—

HB: Hamilton Sheep Company. They were right on Birch Creek just north of Dupuyer about—

PO: Near Heart Butte.

HB: They were east of Heart Butte. Yes. One morning the...Henry Hamilton came to a bunk house and woke me up. He said, "All right. I want you to ride over to the winter camp. I am going to Great Falls today. I want to get a list of groceries today if they are cheaper over there."

I got up and got on my horse. I rode over there. It wasn't daylight yet when I got over there. It was real dark. There was no sheep around there. There was no dogs and no herder.

PO: But a sheep wagon?

HB: There was a...they have...

PO: A cabin?

HB: They had a little cabin built there by the winter camp. I rode out to the corral. I swung off my horse. In there, the herder lay shot. We never knew if he had killed himself or if somebody else killed him. The gun was lying off about ten feet. He was laying there.

I had never seen a dead man before. That just about scared me to death.

PO: Where did he shoot himself or—

HB: Right—

PO: —or if he did shoot himself.

HB: He was shot right in the head.

PO: What a mess.

HB: I jumped on my horse. When I got back over to the ranch, my horse was just lather all over. I was so excited. I couldn't even talk. I couldn't tell—

PO: (laughs)

HB: (laughs) —Henry what happened. He finally got it out of me that he killed himself, and he was dead. We had breakfast, and then we went back over there. Henry said to me, “Now you'll have to—”

PO: You rode horseback back over there?

HB: Yes. I went over on horseback. He went in the car. We found the sheep. The dog was with them. He said to me, “Now, you'll have to stay with these sheep until I can go into Great Falls and hire a sheep herder.”

I had never herded sheep. I didn't want to be a sheep herder in the first place. I said, “Well, okay. I'll stay here.”

The dog wouldn't stay with me because he knew more about herding sheep than I did. I just about run him to death.

PO: He said you were such a dumb guy. He wasn't going to put up with you.

HB: (laughs) Yes. He quit me. My horse got loose and got away. There I was left with 2,000 head of young sheep in the spring of the year when the grass was just coming up. Those sheep just about ran me to death. I was scared to death they would get away. I didn't know how.

It was six days before he came back. When he came back over there, I'll tell you...He had one of his help come get my horse. He brought the dog back with him. The dog was the last one taken. He was sick of me.

He said, “Well, I'll go down to Great Falls, and I'll get a herder this time.” So, by gosh, I stayed there six days before he showed up again. When he came, he didn't have any herder. He drove out there where I was out with the sheep. He started bragging about saying things like how good the sheep look, you are doing a wonderful job, and all this.

I decided that I would fix him. I said, “Get out and take a look at them. They are really fatter than you think they are.”

He said, “I can see them.”

I said, “No, get out and walk over there close to them where you can see them.”

He got about half way over to the sheep. I ran over and jumped in the car and left him herding his own sheep.

PO: (laughs) I love it!

HB: I went to Great Falls. I hired a herder and brought him back. I thought, as soon as I got back, he would fire me, but he didn't. He said, "Go back to your riding job." That was my first experience really riding for somebody else. I had ridden for my dad. I had herded his cattle all the time.

PO: I bet as a young kid you liked the money that you got, didn't you?

HB: Oh yes.

PO: That would be a big deal for...

HB: They didn't pay very much. I think, for what we chased there, we got 25 dollars a month. We didn't even get a dollar a day. But it was welcome money too (?).

PO: A kid with his first paying job is a pretty big deal.

HB: Yes.

PO: These wild horses: were they horses that had just gotten away from people or...?

HB: They belonged to the Indians. They had just run there. You would see a mare, and she would have five horses following her, maybe a five year old, a four year old, three year old on down to the colt. They were inbred. Then they would just run wild. Any Indian who wanted a horse, he just went out and got one. He didn't care whose horse it was. They didn't have any brands on them or anything.

In 1919, they had a terrible drought. The pasture was awfully short. A storm came in September. We got about 18 inches of snow. It started to chinook and then froze.

PO: Like it did in that winter of '86 and '87?

HB: Yes. Those horses couldn't get a thing to eat. They estimated that, in the first storm that hit in September, 100,000 head of horses died there on the reservation. The horses died all winter long. People were out there skinning horses for the horse hides. You could get three and half for a horse hide, and you couldn't get 25 cents for a live horse.

PO: There were just too many horses.

HB: There were too many horses, and they weren't worth anything or any money. People all over the country...There was a big rancher west of our place that had a cattle company. They didn't have hay enough to winter the cattle with. They hauled hay all winter long from Valier up to the ranch there. Fellow by the man Ted Or (?) with ten head of horses and two big wagons hauled hay all winter long. It was hay that was cut on the ice down in the Dakotas. The cattle would just lie down on it and die. It was no good. They lost every hook. There were 500 cattle.

Another neighbor on the side of us, whose name was George Camel (?), he had 100 head of horses. His fence came up right close to our bind (?). Those horses died right over our fence all winter long.

PO: It is just so sad, isn't it? To think that...

HB: We would call him up, and tell them that they had a horse down. They wouldn't even come over. There was nothing they could do. They had no feed and no way to get any. Come spring, they really had mess to clean up. (unintelligible)

PO: Now this Hamilton, where did he live? Was the sheep...?

HB: They lived in Great Falls.

PO: What? Did they have a brand or anything?

HB: No. They just...

PO: Sheep you don't...

HB: They don't brand sheep. They just stamp them or mark them when they shear them.

PO: All you were supposed to do was to keep the wild horses out of where the sheep were going to eat.

HB: (laughs) Yes, in the winter. Right.

PO: Then you had Babcocks on one side of your dad's family?

HB: Yes. They were west of Dupuyer about five miles. They had a big ranch.

PO: Did that break some of the business?

HB: Yes, they practically...All the big cattle outfits (unintelligible). This fellow by the name of L. B. Hale was the manager of the Babcock Cattle Ranch. He came down to our place one spring. He said to my dad, "I want to hire Harl to come up and work for me."

My dad said, "I don't know what you want him for."

He said, "Well, I have seen your teams out on the road. Everybody thinks you are a good teamster. I got a lot of team work to do. I could use him."

My dad said, "It's up to you." So, I went up.

The first job I had...He had big duckfoot weeder (?), and it was built out of an engine just (unintelligible). We hooked twelve head of mule on to that. I drove that twelve head of mules.

PO: Had you ever driven a 12 horse—

HB: Not before.

PO: —or mules?

HB: I had driven eight horse teams strung out on the road, but there were three or four of us. They would just tie you through a heap (?). He helped me get hooked up that first morning. I got up on there... Boy, they started out bucking and kicking. (laughs)

PO: (laughs)

HB: That old duckfoot weeder would set right in there. By the time they had gone about a quarter of a mile, they all settled down and they were really working. So, he said to me one morning, when...

PO: This is Mr. Hale?

HB: Yes, Hale. He was the manager for the ranch, Babcock Cattle Ranch. He took and showed me a mule when we were on the mend. He said, "Now that mule there is an outlaw (?) mule. The last guy that tried to work him almost got killed. Don't ever try to work that mule."

I was around there for about two weeks. One morning, one of my mules had a bad sore on his shoulder. I just couldn't stand working him with that sore shoulder. I looked at that outlaw (?) mule. I thought, "Mister, maybe you should earn some of your keep too." I threw the rope on him tight. I tied him to a gentle mule.

We had a barn there that was a 140 feet long. It was just one manger straight through. There were no stalls. I drug him through this barn there. I tied him to the manger. I put the harness on him.

I worked him there for several days. The first day, when I hooked him up, he was very jumpy. That is one thing about a mule. They might kick over the tub, but they won't stay there. They will get back. A horse will stay there; not a mule. By the time I made it around the field, he was going right along with the rest of them.

Every morning, I would get the manger to harness him. I would tie it solid so he couldn't get away. I would go around the front of him and put the collar on. This harness was just chains, back band, and chain cuffs. We never even cuffed it up. We just let them drag. I thought this one morning, I can hardly (unintelligible). I put my harness and collar over my arm. I said, "Get over there!" He stepped over to the side. I walked up along the side of him. I went to stick that collar up around his neck, and he caught me behind. He slammed me right back against the barn!

PO: (laughs) That really wasn't funny. I don't know what I'm laughing about.

HB: Somebody had made a deal. It was a wagon spoke about two feet long. It had piece of chain on it. I put a chain around his neck and tied him down to the manger. I worked that mule over. By gosh, I made him get down. I made him get up. Finally, by gosh, when I worked him over enough, I thought, "Well." I got down, and I hollered, "Get over there." He stood over there. I harnessed him. I never had to get into the manger. I am glad nobody had seen me because I really whipped him out.

He turned out to be one the best mules I had. Mr. Hale came out to the field one day. I stopped. He was walking around looking at the mules. I had this mule clear up to the lead. He was a good mule then. Mr. Hale walked around him. He snorted (makes a snorting noise) and stepped back. Hale looked at him. He asked, "Is that that outlaw mule?"

I said, "Gee whiz, I forgot you had an outlaw mule." (laughs)

PO: (laughs)

HB: I worked him all summer.

PO: (laughs) They say mules are awfully smart.

HB: I tell you! You got to know a mule, or you can't work one. I'll tell you that. If the mule gets the upper hand on you, he will run the parade, I'll tell you.

PO: Have you been down and seen the mule things at Arlee?

HB: No, I haven't. I haven't down there on Evaro Hill. I know that guy.

PO: I really haven't seen mules work for a long, long time. Of course, I haven't seen horses work in the fields either.

HB: No.

PO: Then, later on, you went to work for the Fry's Packing?

HB: Yes. It was the fall of 1923. They shipped 4,000 head of cattle in from Oregon into Montana. They had had a drought out in Oregon. These cattle were real poor. They shipped them into Choteau by the train load. The first train load that came in had 21 head dead in it.

PO: Oh heavens.

HB: So you know the shape the cattle were in. We unloaded them in Choteau there. We drove them out to this ranch at Agawam. This ranch was the old Malone and Twoshort (?) Ranch. It was part of the original Flying U. In fact, the Flying U still has a hundred and sixty acres there. They run cattle on it. It was right by the (unintelligible).

PO: Twenty-one head of cattle out of one load. Don't they usually load them up...?

HB: Out of a train load.

PO: Oh.

HB: Anyhow, we got these cattle up there on the ranch. The day before Christmas, we were out there cutting these cattle and putting them to graze, and feeding them. There was grass up there, so they didn't have to be fed yet. All day, we could see a storm coming in from the northeast. Over in that country, you could see the storm was coming here for miles.

PO: Flat land.

HB: This storm was coming. We were out there in our shirtsleeves working these cattle, cutting them, and putting them in different fields. At about four o'clock in the afternoon, that storm hit. That night, when we went to bed, it was 35 below zero. It was snowing, blowing, and huffing...

PO: And these cattle are from Oregon...

HB: They had never seen a storm before in their life. They just started milling the fences. The next morning when we got up, it was 52 below zero.

PO: Oh Harl!

PO: It never got above 50 below there for two weeks. Those poor cattle, they had never seen a shed. They didn't know what a shed was. We had sheds just roughly built with brush on top. It was more of a wind breaker than anything. We hauled hay and coaxed them into the sheds in different fields. Those cattle, after we got them in the shed, you couldn't get them out. We'd haul hay up to the shed there. The strong wind would come in the front. They would lie in the back and die. We lost an awful lot of cattle there.

PO: Harl, wait a minute. A lot of people cry about those animals having a hard time. You fellows had a hard time too. You were doing the best you could, and the owner was doing the best he could.

HB: Yes.

PO: Trying to get hay in and trying to get the...

HB: Carl Malone came out to where I was feeding cattle there and hauling hay. I was dressed warm. I had wool underwear on and a wool shirt, a light shirt, and a heavy shirt. I had a jacket that could break the wind. I was dressed warm enough for the weather. Carl Malone said to me, "My god kid! You are going to freeze to death."

I said, "No, no. I am doing all right." He went through his car and he got a coon skin coat. He had just bought himself a new one. He had this old coon skin coat. I think they run around 300 dollars for a new one.

He throws this coon skin jacket. I couldn't wear it while I was working, but I put it on when I got through and started for the house. I went into the bunk house with this coon skin coat on. I backed up to the fire because I was cold. I cooked the back of that coon skin coat! It just split right down the back.

PO: (laughs) I can see you, a big, tall kid. You were still a kid really.

HB: Excuse me, I have to get a...

PO: These cattle from Oregon were brought there by the Hamilton...

HB: No, the Fry Packing Company.

PO: The Fry!

HB: They shipped them in there, and we...

PO: You said they owned a lot of cattle?

HB: All over the country, yes. What they did was, wherever they could buy hay, they would take enough cattle to that place to feed them. When they had hay, they had cattle up at Heart Butte and all over just wherever the hay was. When they got those cattle together in the spring, they had about 35,000 head of cattle. We took these 4,000 head from...

PO: (laughs)

HB: We took these 4,000 head from Agawam to the Milk River. It was 100 miles over land. We got orders from back east to put those cattle out to grass on the first of April. Everybody there knew it was wrong, but we had to take orders. Orders were orders. There was no grass on the first of April on the Blackfoot reservation, but we headed for the reservation with them anyhow.

When we came to Birch Creek...that would be about 30 miles from the ranch. Birch Creek had a big thaw. It was clear out of its banks. Water was running high. We camped one night on the south side of the creek, and the next night on the north side of the creek.

We had about 1,000 little calves. Those calves, you couldn't shove them into that. You would shove them in, and they would probably turn around and come back. All day long, we roped calves and drug them across that creek.

The creek was clear out of its banks. It would swim a horse for about two jumps. We worked there all day roping those calves, dragging them across, and then going back and getting another one. That's all we did that day. Some of those calves never did find their mothers after that. We lost a lot of them.

Then we went on to the Milk River. It took about two weeks to get them up there. A fellow by the name of Fred Sherman was the foreman down at Agawam. He and I went back and got the bull herd. They had about 150 head of bulls. He and I drove them up.

They put the cattle up in the mountains up around Babb. It was three of us boys. We camped east of Babb down in the flat there. We would ride the Canadian line. We would run and keep those cattle shoved into the mountains. Along in about the middle of July, they brought the crew up. We rounded up about 15,000 head and took them into Browning. We shipped them down to the Dana outfit at Harding. I went with them when they went down there. Then I quit. I went to the (unintelligible).

PO: What did you think of the Dana Ranch?

HB: It was something new to me. You've heard the story of the ride of the purple sage. This sage brush down there is just about as high as a cow's back. You looked out across there, and you wouldn't think there was a cow out there. There might have been 1,000 head out there. I didn't like that.

PO: It was such a far different country than you were used to.

HB: Right.

PO: I don't know where Agawam is.

HB: Agawam is about ten miles north of Choteau right on the Muddy River. It ain't a very big river. It is just a small, little river right on the Muddy. It is about ten miles from there up to Pendroy. It is between Choteau and Pendroy. You got your machine running?

PO: Now Agawam is east?

HB: Of Bynum.

PO: Yes, east of Bynum.

HB: North of Choteau on Muddy Creek.

PO: Who was the head of this Fry Packing? Who was the big shot in Montana?

HB: It was a fellow by the name of Bill Shoot (?). He was the big boss up at Milk River. He was the only one that I ever met because the ones out at the ranch (unintelligible).

PO: How did you get the cattle down to Dana's Ranch? That must be five hundred miles.

HB: We took them into Browning and loaded them on the train. We shipped them down there. We shipped about 15,000 head there.

PO: At the Great Northern, shipping them east?

HB: Yes.

PO: Where would they turn?

HB: We brought them in there and unloaded them at the stock yards in Browning. Then they shipped them down on the railroad from there through Billings then out to Hardin.

PO: Did you ride in the caboose?

HB: Yes. We went along with them when that train moved the cattle. Us fellows that went down there, we...They also shipped a bunch of saddle horses down there for us. We rode in the

caboose going down. After we got down there, I didn't like it. I quit. I went up to Livingston to work. I went to work for the railroad. That is where I met Alice.

PO: How old were you when you went up to work for Northern Pacific?

HB: Let's see. I wasn't of age yet. I had to write home and get a release from my parents. That was 1922, the first time I went and worked for them. I was working for them for a while. Then I quit and went back up home. I was up there for three or four years. Then I went back again.

PO: What did you do when you were at home?

HB: I worked out most of time. When I wasn't out working, I worked on the ranch there. Dad had run about 100 head of cattle. He farmed about 300 acres. There was always plenty to do.

PO: Then you decided you would go back to Livingston.

HB: Yes. I went back to Livingston.

PO: Did you meet your wife before you went back? Which time?

HB: I never met her until the second time I went back. My brother was going with her sister. Come Christmas time, I was there alone, so he invited me down for Christmas. That's when I met Alice.

PO: (laughs) Then how long did you stay in Livingston?

HB: I was there ten years. I worked for the railroad for ten years. After we got married, we...I quit the railroad. We leased a big ranch at Sand Coulee. Alice and I went out there and worked. That was in the '30s when stuff wasn't worth anything.

PO: Boy, you had a bad time.

HB: Oh boy, it was terrible. We raised cattle and hogs. You would get two cents for a fat hog and five cents for a fat steer. One year, Alice raised 100 turkeys. That was all the money we had to live on for a full year. You couldn't sell anything. You couldn't sell your cattle. You couldn't sell your hogs or anything.

I had a big barn there that had a lot of hogs feed in it. We had ten head of hogs in the fattening lot. Then barn caught fire and burnt down, so it burnt up the hog feed. The only thing I could do is sell the hogs. I called up Great Falls Meat Company, and they came out and got them. A few days later I got a check for them. For the ten head of hogs, I got 19 dollars and 30 cents. You couldn't buy a pig off that now. (laughs)

PO: No.

HB: Yes.

PO: Young people couldn't believe these prices.

HB: No.

PO: I don't know how much cattle is up to a pound now.

HB: They are down about a dollar a pound, live weight. They say they can't make it on that. I am sure I could make it on a dollar a pound for cattle.

PO: You couldn't probably drive a Mercedes and have a five room house.

HB: I couldn't buy a 100,000 dollar combine every year, leave it set out in the fields, get all rusty, and then buy another one.

PO: (laughs) There is something to be said for having to save, isn't there, and having to be careful?

HB: Yes. I was down at my nephew's place out in Conrad. He had three combines sitting out there. I said to him, "You have to have three combines to run this place?"

"No", he said, "I don't. But two of them are all rusty so I can't use them anymore. So I (unintelligible)."

PO: Now you came to Western Montana [Growers] in 1939?

HB: Yes.

PO: Where did you come to? St. Ignatius?

HB: I came to Arlee as the manager of the [Western Montana Growers] Co-op of Arlee. I was in Great Falls. The field man for the Farmer's Union said they needed a manager at Arlee. He asked if I would go over there and manage it. So, I went over there and managed the Co-op for 11 years. Then I...

PO: I must have seen you and Alice because I was welfare worker and I had Arlee.

HB: Oh, did you?

PO: Yes, and Evaro. Albert Dumeiers (?) and Louis Dumeiers (?) were so good to help me because I couldn't find some of these places in the country. They gave me more help than...you worked at the co-op there.

HB: I was the manager of the co-op for a while.

PO: Then you went into law enforcement?

HB: No. When our son graduated from high school, he wanted to be a farmer. We took him out on a farm out of Arlee. It took us about two years and 5,000 dollars to prove to him that he didn't want to be farmer. In the fall there, we had about a 150 ton of hay at five dollars (?) a ton. Half was his, and half was ours. He said, "Is that all I made?"

I said, "That's it."

He said, "I guess I better go to school."

He went to Havre. We went back to town. We bought out a store there. We ran the Bruner's Grocery there for ten years.

PO: In Arlee?

HB: In Arlee. I was then named deputy. We had the store. Alice ran the store. I was a deputy. We had a (unintelligible). We rented that out. We had storage there for (unintelligible). We had several rentals. I guess we did all right.

Then when Archie Collier (?) was the sheriff up here...We sold out in Arlee in '64. We came up here. I come up here because I was the sheriff in '64. I worked first for Boudry (?), Bill Graham, Archie Collier, and Bill Phillips. I took my retirement in '69.

PO: What did you think of law enforcement?

HB: I liked it. I liked the work.

PO: Did you work mostly around Arlee where you knew the people?

HB: I did at the start. I worked a lot with the kids. I enjoyed working with the kids and tried to keep them out of trouble. I spent more time trying to keep them out of trouble than I ever did arresting them. I tried to tell them what was right and what was wrong first before I'd ever...

PO: Now you say that you got interested in this artwork or got to work on it. You'd always doodled—

HB: Doodled yes.

PO: —and worked a little bit, but, after you retired, you got interested in it.

HB: Yes.

PO: Before I knew you, I bought some of your cards.

HB: Oh, did you?

PO: Yes, I liked them so much.

HB: Yes.

PO: I didn't know who you were or anything. They were just cards that I would buy.

HB: I still make those cards. We sold lots of them when we went to Arizona. For 12 years, we went to Arizona for six months and stayed up here for six months. I would take my artwork down there. I would sell lots of cards and stuff in Arizona. I never sold so much (unintelligible). I sold quite a few cards. One year I had 700 thousand cards printed and sold them all. (unintelligible).

PO: That paid for your trip down there didn't it?

HB: Yes.

PO: That paid for your trip and while you were there. It gave you something good to do.

HB: Yes, it did.

(Break in audio)

PO: Okay, we're adding this after...It is about a half an hour after we made the former one. Mr. Bruner had something to tell about feeding the cattle when he was riding. What was it now?

HB: There at Agawam, one morning, the foreman came over where I was hauling hay. There were three steer standing over in the fence corner. They were standing in snow almost up to their belly. I had been over there and looked at them. I was hauling hay. The foreman came over and said, "Why don't you get those steers over there."

I said, "I have been pretty busy hauling hay and stuff. Why don't you ride over there and hay them?"

He rode over there. When he came back, he said, "They're dead."

I said, "I knew they were. I thought you wouldn't believe me if I told you those steers froze to death standing up." (laughs) They were dead. They didn't fall over until they thawed out.

PO: Was that about 19...?

[End of Interview]