

Maureen and Mike

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**Oral History Number: 422-033, 034**  
**Interviewee: Leonard Moore and Ethel Moore**  
**Interviewer: Suzanne Vernon**  
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Leonard Moore: The name Gordon Pass came into being from the doctor that used to go into the backcountry with Hollands. That's how it got its name. And that would have been late 1800s. . . Some of the early (residents) Hartwicks, spent time with the Holland family when they were building their homestead where Clarks live now. My folks bought that in 1936.

Suzanne Vernon: Why did your folks decide to move here?

LM: They were looking for a headquarters for the pack outfit. They had been working out of Pablo and making thirty day-trips from Pablo into what is now the Bob Marshall. I made my first trip in 1926. I wasn't walking yet! I was born in May and I went in the hills with them in September.

SV: What trails did they use?

LM: We came up Crow Creek and down Piper and then over Lion Creek and down Palisades to the South Fork of the Flathead. (remember) how rough the trail was in the beginning. It was originally just a trail that the Indians used for hunting and the Blackfeet would come over that way to steal horses from the Flatheads. I do know where there is a camp that they used. I think it's been set aside. It's on Lion Creek before you get to the steep part of the mountain. (on the west slope of the Swan Range). I did some work with the Forest Service historical group on getting that set aside. It's pretty well concealed and they haven't set it up. . . to keep it that way. There's quite a few people around the valley that know about it and where it's at.

SV: What group used that the most?

LM: The Blackfeet and the Flatheads both used it when they came across to go hunting. Then supposedly the Blackfeet used it when they were stealing horses. There's a place up on Lion Creek where one person could stand off a whole army, just by rolling rocks. That trail has been improved many times since the Indians started using it. I can remember how steep and how many switchbacks there were on the other side of it. We used that trail quite a bit up until the sixties, when we started trucking the stock. But when we were working outta Holland Lake we'd trail the stock across. I had a ranch at Pablo and we kept the stock there except when we were in the hills. We raised a lot of horses and mules. My folks had the Glacier Park saddle horse concession, they were there for about twenty years. Father was George Moore, mother was Fern. George grew up in Montana. My dad's parents went to the Flathead in 1917 from the Bitterroot. They'd migrated to the Bitterroot from Illinois. (Nationality?) Welch, English (dad). Mom was German descent and she was born in Pablo.

SV: When you were born in '26, they were living in Pablo. Had he just started?

LM: He'd been at it a year or two. They outfitted for pretty near sixty years. The last name they used was Monture Lodge Outfitters. When they were in Glacier Park it was Montana Outfitters. Then they went under the name of MG Camp for awhile. That was dad's brand. MG Ranch.

SV: Did he like the Lion Creek route?

LM: No, that was one reason they were looking for a different location, he didn't like that trail. It was steep and rocky down this side and the other side down Palisade was mud. When they got a chance to buy the old Hartwick place they did. But we'd been outfitting for a couple of years from the Lodge before then.

SV: So, who owned the lodge?

LM: The people that built it were named White. Joe Wilhelm's folks helped build the original one. I think Joe's mother and Mrs. White were sisters. I remember the original lodge before it burnt down. Those people probably knew me and knew who I was . . . I made my first trip up Holland Creek in 1936 when they first opened up that trail.

SV: What do you remember. . .

LM: How scary the cliffs were! When dad bought Hartwicks he got permission from the Forest Service to build a trail from the ranch around and tied into the trail in the creek bottom. It was kind of a bad trail too, it had some cliff rocks in it you had to go across and the crossing at the creek was pretty bad 'cause we crossed below the falls and went up, there's a big slide in there and we went up that slide to tie into the trail below the first creek crossing.

SV: Must have been some switchbacks?

LM: No, dad had traveled so many old Indian trails that that's about what we had.

SV: Somewhere I had read he'd started a trail through from that side.

LM: Yeah, the original trail through from that side he made. He connected into the East Foothills trail there somewhere close to the ranch. I forgot just where it was. He tied into the East Foothills Trail and went up to where it turned south to where it went toward Seeley Lake then he turned north and went around the east end of Holland Lake, but up pretty high.

SV: He didn't have to truck stock then?

LM: Well, it saved about two hours travel time from going out and going around the lake past the lodge. We were packing to the mouth of the Gordon then. When we had to go around the lake to the lodge it was eleven hours from the ranch to the camp. After we got that new trail in there it cut it down to nine hours. About eight miles (difference).

SV: What kind of people did you take in?

LM: Well, one year they had four people from Germany and they had people from England and some Swiss people one year. I think the most surprising was he got one bunch of colored people. Well, they were at Monture Lodge then and he went to pick these people up from the airplane and he got back home about 11 o'clock and they were going into the hills the next day. The boys had things pretty well ready to go. He come in and started to get into bed and he was laughing. Mom said, "What's the matter?" "Well," he said, "it finally happened. This is a group of colored people." But they were good.

SV: Trophy hunters?

LM: They were after trophy elk. One of them got scared of the bear and we had to bring him out, but. . .

SV: I would imagine that your dad ran into wildlife on a scale that we can't imagine today. . .

LM: Grizzly bears. I remember lots of them. We worked the south end of the Bob Marshall, pretty much from Bartlett Creek on south. The first camps I can remember having were at the old airstrip at Bartlett Creek. Over the years we worked south where we ended up at Hahn Creek with Ralph Cahoon and his dad, Lee Cahoon. Cahoon's folks had a camp there and dad ended up with that. (After Lee died.) Ralph ran it for a couple of years.

Bears. We'd see grizzly bear every two or three days and sometimes bunches of them. There'd be families of them. Bill Rose and I, one of my buddies, we laid on a ledge one time and watched a family of six grizzlies completely eat up a six point bull. I had killed that bull the day before. And it was kind of in a touchy place. So, Bill went with me to get him out. We had stock. We were up on a rimrock where we could look down in that basin. When we got there was six grizzlies on that elk. When they got done there wasn't nothing left but the bones and the horns. But we've seen grizzlies a lot in the South Fork, at the South End. I really think there's twice the grizzlies there that the Fish and Game thinks there are. You get into them high side drainages and it's not uncommon to find a family of grizzlies, even now.

SV: You have to know what you're looking for. . . but the biologists would know that. . . ?

LM: Well, there's so many of the places that the biologists don't get to.

SV: Did you ever wonder where a grizzly bear's favorite place to be was. . . aside from eating your six point bull elk?

LM: They favor high rocky country an awful lot. The way their feeding habits had to change over the years has made quite a difference. They are losing a lot of the big pinion nut feed. And the ladybugs they like to feed on in that high country in a certain time of year, they've diminished quite a bit. Their world's changing. Of course the more we push into it the more it's going to change. . . They like this country here (behind present house in Condon--Cooney creek) Especially in the spring. They can get in there and dig the roots and stuff out easy. We've had one griz that lives back in there that's been here twenty years, I s'pose, that we've seen him different times.

SV: What color is he?

LM: Big, gray silvery. He must stand this high at the shoulders. I haven't seen him this year. I'm kind of wondering if maybe he didn't make it last year. No berries. They probably went to bed thin. He'd be quite old. He'd be twenty, twenty-one years old, since we got acquainted with him. He never bothers anybody, just minds his own business.

SV: What drainage was his home territory?

LM: He lives over here in the Cooney Creek drainage, and he comes back to that same area every summer and has for years and year. But we haven't seen him this year. I've got my irrigation ditch comes from up there, and I have to go up there once or twice a week and inspect things. Usually that's when I see him. He'll be working along the stream up there. Some other people have seen him, too. He's been back as far as Mary Phillips' place. The claw marks on his foot will stick out in front of my hat. He goes into the sand about that deep (three inches).

SV: A male bear?

LM: I'm sure it was. He could reach up in the tree a whole lot higher than I can.

SV: It's funny you didn't see a sow around sometime. . .

LM: Well, they are more secretive than the males. Not quite as aggressive. They keep them young back as much as they can. We've never had much trouble with them over the years in the camp. Once in awhile one would come in and help himself to a piece of elk meat. Several times we had the kitchen tore up. But I think the more they handle them, putting tags and collars on them, pretty quick they think, "Oh, that old guy didn't hurt me that much" and "we'll go for it again." Well, the more you're around them the more they lost their fear of strangers. It just seems to be that it would be better off to pick one out and watch him and leave him alone,

than just trying to capture him. They gotta have some family secrets, too. I think they study them too much.

SV: Did you ever see any white bears?

LM: No. I've seen shades of from buckskin clear to as black as you can see. Even the grizzly bears run from a light brown to a dark, shimmery silver.

SV: What about elk hunting? When you went in '36 was it a hunting trip.

LM: Yeah it was an elk hunting trip. We went to Bartlett camp, mouth of Bartlett and I killed my first elk that fall. (Ten years old.) That was the first one I'd killed there. I'd killed one when I was seven. .303 Savage. Dad's old rifle. I finally wore that one out.

SV: I've just heard a lot of stories that the elk population plummeted toward the sixties.

LM: Well, yes. The first trips I remember good was about '33 and '34. Some of the things that happen then come to mind. Couple of wrecks we had. We didn't have any mules until '41, then we managed to raise enough of them. When dad sold out he had about 50 head of mules. It was different them days. We'd never see anybody but the people in our own camp. And elk herds, oh, they were like they are around Ovando now. But those elk herds migrated in and out of the valley with the seasons. In and out both directions, into the Ovando area, too. But we'd see bunches of 35 or 40 head of elk. Dad always said, "If you want a spike elk, don't worry about it if he isn't in the first bunch, cuz you're going to see another bunch before the day is over." And that was about the way it worked up until about '49. Then we had a tremendous big winter kill, '49 and '50. Deep snow and cold. Then the same thing happened in '50 and '51. The fall of '51 I picked up over a teacup full of elk ivories out of winter kills. So you can imagine how hard that winter was on them, to get that many teeth. I've still got quite a bunch left.

SV: The deep snow doesn't effect the bears that much. . . it's more the berries and bugs. . .

LM: Yeah, you lose the younger bears maybe. The pine nuts. . . on the high ridges like in the Missions. Pine pinions, they grow a cone that's about eight to twelve inches long. Big seeds. When those cones start to drop, the bears get up there and rattle the seeds out of those cones, and make a meal out of it. But there's so much of that that's dying out. They aren't there any more.

SV: Where in the Bob Marshall (nuts)?

LM: Not so much in there. There was some on the Eastern side of the valley in there, but this Swan Range I don't know of any on them.

SV: Mostly when you came across the Crow-Piper area?

LM: Yeah, in that high, rocky country. Windswept ridges. Them gnarly old trees, you wouldn't believe how they can hang on.

(Elk). Those heavy winterkills helped the bears and coyotes and stuff. There was so much winter kill for them to feed on. The elk have never been the same since then. They've had so much hunting pressure along with that. And we were as guilty as anybody about the hunting pressure.

SV: Well, it was one way to make a living here. There weren't that many choices for you to survive here, that I can see.

LM: Well, there was three falls that I can think of in the late forties that we'd take in about fifty hunters and we'd bring out about 48, 49 elk. But then after the big winterkills it was down to thirty percent (success rate).

SV: What about other game?

LM: We hunted both species, trophy hunted. Dad always said, "Don't you dare kill any in here, there's too many at home."

And fish? Before the reservoir was put in down there? Ethel and I have caught five-pound cutthroat just one right after another. And bull trout. We caught one bull trout that weighed 17 pounds after he'd hung in camp for three days! We finally got him to the scales.

SV: Lures or flies?

LM: We fished with lures for bull trout. For cutthroat we used dry flies. Oh, sometimes if we were in a hurry we might put a piece of elk meat on a hook and throw it in there. Get some camp meat.

SV: That's something that everybody talks about. The fishing. You could always get fish for dinner.

LM: Well, the camp fare has really changed over the years!

SV: When did your folks go to Monture?

LM: When they sold the Glacier Park outfit. Must be about '63 or '64. They worked at the mouth of Gordon for a couple of years after they sold the park outfit. Then they moved to Cahoon's camp. (They had a nice lodge up there.) The lodge is still there. Two Creek Ranch. But Jim Anderson got the pack outfit and he still uses the Hahn Creek camp. That camp has been in existence for seventy years. It's got pretty slender for Jim and Carrie. People don't go in there

to hunt much. It's a sight-seeing trip. Then Jim and Carrie have got changed over and they run wagon train trips from, oh, they live out about halfway from Helmville to Ovando and they make a five-day trip through the backcountry with teams and wagons and end up at Avon. They take two days off and come back the other way. That's been so good to them, they kind of give up on the pack outfit.

SV: Tell me about when you first got married?

LM: Well, Ethel was a town girl. (raised in Missoula) You (Ethel) ought to tell the story about when we got married and moved to Potomac. December 11, 1943.

SV: Were you in the service?

LM: No, every time I got to the induction center I had a cast on somewhere! I'd been rodeoing. Finally they told me to stay home and raise beef.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

EM: My aunt and uncle had a ranch up the Rattlesnake and I'd stay there in the summer. I learned to ride horses. Well, we got married. My first trip into the Bob Marshall was June of '44. We spent our honeymoon up at the Hartwick place. Shoveled in, shovel out, when we went there in December. In June it rained the whole time and I pretty well got broke in to ride horseback in any kind of weather. We fished at Doctor Lake. (Note: LM said there was a cabin at Doctor Lake earlier years. It was gone by 1943. Just the base of it was all that was left in 1944.)

LM: There was a little log cabin there that Doctor Gordon built. He used that quite a little bit. There's no camp sites or horse pasture much there. So they'd take him in there and drop him off. That's how it got to be named Doctor Lake. On the first of July, we had a geological survey crew to take through the Bob Marshall. We left Missoula, it was before the 4th. Trucks were hauling stock on the 3rd and the 4th. It took us twenty some hours from Potomac around to Spotted Bear.

Ethel Moore: They were just getting ready for the Hungry Horse dam. They had some really rough roads there. So, we went to Spotted Bear with these geologists, two of them.

LM: We went up to Pentagon.

EM: Then we went out to Kalispell to get groceries. Got my first cookbook there.

SV: You hadn't been taking camp cooking lessons?

EM: Well, no, I wasn't of age to cook. . .

LM: She was only 17.

EM: So the geologists decided, enough of this, we've got a woman. As far as we know there never was a woman government cook. But, because of the war, they hired me. After we came back from Kalispell. I never boiled water hardly ever before. Never. Peeled potatoes, maybe. But anyhow, that's the way that went. So, from Spotted Bear we went out to Gibson Dam.

LM: We came out at Gibson on the first of September. Then we trailed the stock back over to the Hartwick place. Went to Missoula, stayed two nights. Then we went back in and stayed until Thanksgiving.

SV: You had a real quick introduction.

EM: It was fun. I just thought you just gotta do what you gotta do.

LM: We were just kids. I turned 18 in May and she turned 18 in August. That was her initiation to the backcountry. About 120 days.

EM: My first initiation was at the Hartwick place. All that shoveling. We didn't see any wildlife. Just snow. And packrats. That place was full of them. That's what you get when you get way out there.

LM: When we moved from Potomac to the Hartwick homestead in early June of '44 we had two wagons and a six horse team. Had wagons tied together at the curve at the Summit. Couldn't get around with the trail wagon. Had to unhook it and then go back and get it. The road was so narrow. We met two cars between there and Seeley, and they had to back up for us to get by. One of them we met was Tauno Strom. He had a car that day when we met him. He had a big International truck, too. He and Harold both started hauling lumber outta here at that time.

My folks, from '39 to '42, they had the Double Arrow Ranch. When we moved there in March, there was about a hundred head of horses had been running in the Salmon Lake hills that had been wild. Stallions in there that were four and five years olds. Never had a rope on. And we rounded them up when they were thin. Took care of the stallions and branded everything. Dad had a two day rodeo. 4th and 5th of July. Used that stock for bucking stock. Right after the rodeo, Lee Johnson (used to be the lone ranger for Eddy's bakery) we started breaking those horses to ride and pack. Boy did we have a handful. Big stout thoroughbred horses. Then the mares, we turned back out in the hills. They were still there when we left the ranch. We went back to Potomac in the spring of '43. Just before Ethel and I were married. Swanson place, where Plohars are now.

EM: Bossevain had the place.

LM: Dad bought from Bossevain. The Missoula Mercantile staked my folks to that. They bought all the saddles and the camp equipment and that that was with it. We outfitted out of the Double Arrow for four falls. I forgot how it changed hands. The spring of '43 we went back to Potomac. Some people that were movie moguls at that time--Cory and ? was the last name, and Rahn was the other one (see Cabin Fever book. Coyle photos.) But then Ehtel and I went to Perma then, to the horse ranch. . .

We spent two summers at the Gordon Ranch. I put the first logs in the pond (1940s) with a team. You was pregnant with Mary when I was working there and putting up the hay and logging. (Ethel: It would have been '45, '46.) They hadn't started building the mill yet. They come in and built the pond for the mill. And some of them logs were so big, it took four horses to roll them. You couldn't drag them. They were ponderosa pine. 40 inches on the butt, and bigger. I had four Belgians and I'd put a cable around them and roll them to get them into the pond. They were so big that the pond wasn't deep enough, they had trouble making them float. Before they got the mill finished and got it to operating. After that, we moved to Perma. I worked for the Forest Service then.

SV: How long did you stay with the Forest Service?

LM: I broke horses and mules there at the horse ranch. Two summers we packed up Big Prairie. 1948 and 1949 we were at Big Prairie. (Ethel remembers the flood of '48). In the Bob Marshall, we were at Big Prairie.

EM: I flew in with the two girls we had.

LM: I worked five years in the forties for the Forest Service.

EM: I flew in in a Ford Trimotor out of Missoula. Where the Sentinel School is. It was May 29.

LM: They wouldn't let me sit in the seats. They made her get in the back with the freight.

EM: I was just cargo . . .!

LM: We lived in a tent down at the Big Prairie Ranger Station. When I'd get a day off we'd put the girls in the wheel barrow and go fishing.

EM: That fall, when we came out, the end of August . . .

LM: They sold the horse ranch down there and I lost my winter job. So that's when we went back to Pablo to my grandparents' place.

EM: But, always packed every fall. . .

LM: Oh, I'd quit a good job to go in the hills. Then we'd come out of the hills and there'd be no jobs. And no unemployment. You lived off the land and the garden, if you were there long enough to raise a garden. I trained an awful lot of horses for the neighbors. I got ten dollars a head for putting a rein on them. Now they charge ten dollars an hour.

EM: He always managed to go into the Bob. Help his dad, or . . .

LM: After the girls were out of school, well, Jan was in high school. (Kids: Mary, Margie, Sharon, Jan. And two of Ethel's sisters were with them a lot. Leonard had one brother and one sister. Bill got killed in a logging accident in '63. My sister lives over at Polson. Mom is over there. She is still alive. 90 years old.) Mom tells a story at the Double Arrow, we had quite a little trouble with black bears there, mainly because we had a few milk cows and the separator was on the back porch next to the kitchen. Them bears like that milk. She woke up one night and looked out the window. There was a bear out there with a white patch on its back. She got Dad to watch. Pretty quick the white spot fell off. It was an old cat that had kittens under the porch. Rode that bear outta there! Then she tells the story about the bear having the nail keg stuck on

his head, too. It was a deliberate thing. We'd baited him. Put bait in the bottom of that barrel. Had nails in it. When he stuck his head in there he couldn't pull it out. We finally had to do it in.

EM: You went to school in Seeley

LM: Part of the 8th grade. Where Rammels live now. We rode horseback from the Double Arrow. In the wintertime we'd take the team. Make a team outta the saddle horses. Take a little light sleigh. The Anderson kids. Bud Anderson and his sisters. The Perro girls. They'd catch up with us at Seeley and we'd all ride in one sleigh. There was 14 of us in 8 grades. Johnny Christenson put shotgun shells in the heater. And Pel Turned was bigger than me. We ran off four men teachers before Christmas. Then we got a woman that grew up where Florence Carlton school consolidated. She straightened things out. She knocked Johnny, she cuffed him one and knocked him over about three rows of seats. That got attention.

When I started high school then I had a job at a little cafe in Bonner. Friday night Bill Rose and I would catch the logging train and go to Woodworth and ski across the hills to the Double Arrow. At night. Probably eight, nine miles. Bill and I knew that country like the back of our hand. Bill's got a lot of pictures. I don't have very many. (Bill grew up in Seeley Lake.)

SV: Do you remember people talking about the name Condon?

LM: I don't remember. I think he might have been an early-time trapper.

SV: When you had the Double Arrow was that the era when the Indians came and put on shows?

LM: They came one time. There was some smaller groups came, pretty regular. They had a camp up on Drew Creek that they went to for hunting. Harry Morgan, the old game warden, rode a big black horse everywhere. He was stationed at Bonner. But he had all of the Blackfoot up this direction and up Ovando way, too. He caught my brother and I fishing in Trail Creek and it was closed. He warned us. "You kids know this creek is closed. There's signs. You know it's closed. No you better get your fish and get for home. And if I catch you here again, I'm gonna tell your folks!" I can remember him on that big black horse, riding around.

SV: Do you remember other game wardens?

LM: I can't remember any of them except Harry, and I probably wouldn't have remembers that except we were kids and thought we were in real trouble. He was keeping us from getting into something more serious.

SV: I wonder, when your dad was outfitting in the twenties if there was much game warden activity to kind of monitor outfitters.

LM: I kind of remember them coming into camp and checking things out. I can't remember the guy's name now, but we were camped below the bridge at Big Prairie. We called it the sunshine camp. The game warden took a liking to Dad's big saddle horse. And horses at that time were worth \$45 or \$50 and he gave Dad \$125 for that horse. The reason I remember it so well, I had to ride outta there on top of a calf elk on the pack horse! I was only ten or eleven. For some reason we went out Monture that time. There was a telephone there hanging down over the trail below Hahn Creek, and I didn't see it. It fetched me off the top of the pack. The old ground line. I packed an awful lot of that ground line out of there in the seventies.

A guy fell a tree on me over in Idaho and they told me I couldn't work in the woods anymore. So I went to Forestry School. I came up here the spring of 1970. Best thing that ever happened to me.

EM: When we came out of the hills, after we'd taken bags and bags of samples out of the hills for the geologists, speaking of telephones, your folks were to meet us at Holland Lake. At the swimming beach, the old smoke chaser's cabin. We rode horseback from the Hartwick place, because Leonard's folks didn't meet us. We had to do something because we were out of groceries. I don't know where the communications got messed up. We went there (cabin at beach) I was riding an old buckskin. I'll never forget Leonard's dad saying, "Don't you ever ride that horse." But my horse was just plumb wore out, and his was, too. So, we went down there. Oh, and we were hunting grouse, too. We couldn't get through on that telephone. Finally, it went around through Kalispell. From Kalispell, somebody there called my folks in Missoula. I don't know how many days we were there.

LM: Three or four days there before anybody showed up and all we had was rice and grape jam, was all that was left in the cabin.

EM: Needless to say, Leonard shot a grouse and my horse started bucking and I ended up in -- I can still see those big old pine trees and the limbs -- Leonard come over there and said, "You gotta quit kicking that horse!" Well, he was so strong that every time he bucked my spurs would hit him.

LM: She was just hooking the hell outta him!

EM: So I was just up and down, up and down, one spot.

LM: There wasn't too many people could ride him when he got to going.

EM: The telephone was not very dependable. Can you imagine miles and miles of wire for communications. No radio or anything. Now, we depend on electricity and phone. When the electricity goes out, you're stuck, right? It's a lonely feeling. . .

LM: You didn't know anything else. I was forty years old before I found out I could do anything but pack or ride broncs.

EM: That was just a way of life and I'm sure the people that came up into this valley felt like there was no way they would stay. . .

LM: Well, they were land hungry. And the Hartwick place was the last piece of property that went into the Homestead Act. It was the last one mapped up here. They were really interesting people. I can remember talking to Bob and Mary when I was a small kid. Man the stories that they had. The way they had to live. They got as far as the Daisy Ranch in the spring of the year. They had to leave their horses and come on with their back packs. They were just a pack sack, and the load all fell to the bottom of them. They got into their place afoot. But he'd been there the fall before and had built the little cabin. Then when we went there, when we got it, they had built the house that we lived in. The little cabin was pretty well rotted down. It was on that little ridge to the south of where the buildings are now.

EM: We took Leonard's mom back there, about five or six years ago and she just couldn't believe it.

LM: We had to pack water up out of the creek up over that steep bank. Finally, I got tired of that and took one of the mules down there. Put two ten gallon cans on him. That was the way we hauled our water up the hill.

EM: And we didn't have giardia.

LM: We drank out of that beaver pond. Dipped the house water out of it. I think maybe we built an immune system. From being associated with it all the time.

(LM has a picture of the swimming beach at Holland, with LM and a pack string. LM and one of his first strings. He was about 13 or 14 in this picture.) About the swimming beach, they later moved the corrals and the cabin up across the road from the swimming beach, where the parking area is now, across the road in that little opening. They moved the cabin from the beach up there.

Gene Fox and I are twins. Birthdays the same day. The fall we were 14, he had a string and he was going to the mouth of Cardinal Creek. I had two strings and I was going to the mouth of the Gordon one day and back out the next. I was on that trail 45 days straight.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

LM: That flood was the first year we went to Big Prairie. I was with the stock, off the winter range. I was on the last horse drive that the Forest Service made. Three of us left Perma with 350 head of stock. Went to Hot Springs the first day. Then we went to Kila to Glen Fanco's ranch (spelling?). I and Addie Funk, and Glen Fanco, and forgot the other guy's name. Anyway, Glen was ahead of us with the pickup, flagging. From Kila we took stock down to Libby. We took stock up to Rexford. We took stock up the North Fork of the Flathead. And we brought stock up here. Addie Funk and I ended up at Spotted Bear with the last of them, all of the South Fork stock. I ended up at Big Prairie on the 27th day of May, with the last of the stock. In 10 days I had ridden 550 miles. The reason I remember that so well, is my birthday is the 29th of May and Ethel came in on the Ford TriMotor, her and the girls.

EM: The water was so high.

LM: I crossed White River with 14 head of mules behind me, and when I hit the other bank I was down right where the South Fork and White River came together. It pushed me downstream purty near a quarter of a mile. I don't know why they made me go that way. There's bridge on the west side, across Black Bear and Big Salmon. I could have gone right up to the Big Prairie bridge. But the ranger said, go the east side trail, so we did.

SV: I've got a whole set of questions about wildlife. Do you remember salt licks?

LM: Goats and elk, both. At the time we were in there, the Forest Service was dropping salt out of airplanes on the high ridges in hopes that that would pull the elk up out of the bottoms.

SV; Why?

LM: They were overgrazing. They were trying to disperse the herds more, get them up in the higher country. I know of four different places where they dropped salt out of the airplane. Six to eight fifty-pound blocks at a place, that they'd kick out. Some of them blocks of salt laid there for eight or nine years, before they completely dissolved.

SV: So, did it work?

LM: It didn't pull the elk that much, but the goats. . . the only time I ever seen a sheep in the Bob Marshall, on the west edge of it, the only time I ever seen a mountain sheep, was from the top of Tilson looking down into the head of White River. In the 1940s. Before the bad winter. Then there's a natural salt lick in Nanny Basin that the elk and goats both use, and the mule deer. And there's a natural lick on the north side of Bulletnose in the head of Cluster Creek. There's a natural lick in Cabin Creek, south of the Young Creek cabin. Forest Service cabin. There's one in the saddle between Jumbo and Foolhen.

SV: Do you know of any salt licks on this side?

LM: I think it's a manmade one that's in there on. . . comes down by Peck Lake, in the bottom, just up, there's a bridge there by Peck Lake, and there's a lick just upstream a ways. I don't know of any natural ones. But I spent, most of the time I spent in this country, was the Bob. The South Fork of the Flathead is what we called it, before it got to be the Bob.

When we were living on the Hartwick place, we used to bring a packhorse down to get groceries, down here. It was an all-day trip. (Ethel comment: No fences!)

SV: What kind of things did you get?

LM: Coffee. Potatoes. Sometimes we'd get lucky and get some canned vegetables. But we never bought any bread or rolls or anything that way. Ethel made pretty near everything. Mom did, too.

SV: How about eagles?

LM: When we were young, very, very seldom would you see eagles. They've really picked up in the last few years. When we were first married, there weren't very many elk here in the valley, either. But after the highway came in, and they got to logging and opening up some areas that made feed for them, they really jumped. There's not as many here now, I don't think, as there was in the fifties and sixties.

SV: What drainages do you remember elk?

LM: I set on Spook Ridge one time before there was any roads into here and looked across the Pinto Mare drainage, oh, probably the first of November, and counted over 80 head of elk in one bunch.

SV: That's the first time I've heard Pinto Mare. . .

LM: That's when you go up Barber Creek and you come to the forks in the road up there, you go down the hill and cross the culvert, and the roads fork? The right hand one is Pinto Mare. We hunted that an awful lot. We hunted back towards Clearwater Lake, too. There was just Forest Service trails then. There was no access in there, unless you were a good hiker or had stock.

SV: What about the Missions side?

LM: Cheffs had a camp in there. When we first came, Cap Laird was there. They hunted that an awful lot.

SV: What about wolves?

LM: There used to be a pair at the mouth of the Gordon. They didn't stay there, oh, just one fall. We would see them occasionally. I think they had four pups. They used to play on the sandbar, when you get down to just above the mouth of the Gordon, you can look across and see the creek and the sandbar there. We used to see them on that sandbar sometimes in the evening. But that's the only ones that I've seen in all those years. I know there are some others around, cuz I see their tracks. Even now. There's some areas back in here where I've ran into two wolves traveling together, but I've never seen them. I just know they are there from the signs.

SV: Do you remember your folks talking about hearing wolves?

LM: No they never did. We never had very many mountain lions either. Very, very seldom we'd see a mountain lion.

SV: See any evidence of mountain lion kills?

LM: Occasionally, but not like nowadays.

[Break in audio]

SV: Any wolverine?

LM: One time, camped at Big Prairie, I counted 300 head of elk that morning in one bunch. I was packing on the Hemlock Fire one summer when we were at the Gordon Ranch, whatever year that was. We were packing from Newman's cabin to Hemlock. There was no roads in there then. But I hit that fire camp there at Newman's cabin, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Dobb and Ting Wilhelm had my string loaded and I had just got the saddle horse outta the truck and they had the string loaded and I made five trips to that fire and never seen it in the daylight.

SV: Where did you see the wolverine?

LM: Years later, after the fire, Burl Kratzer and I went up to Hemlock Lookout to clean up trash, and we saw one in the old burn. And then when we were in Idaho, I seen two that were working on a gut pile from an elk kill.

SV: What about lynx?

LM: I've seen lynx several times. Not in the last few years, but in the earlier days, once in a while we'd see one run across the trail ahead of us.

When I was on the trail so much that one fall there was a big griz that hung around just below Shaw Cabin. Every time I'd go down that trail I'd see his tracks in the trail. You could tell him, he

had one club foot. We called him old Club Foot. We didn't see him just once in awhile we could see him moving in the brush away from the trail. But nine times outta ten you go down that trail, his tracks would be in that trail between Shaw Cabin and Shirttail Park, along in there, in that muddy area. He tore up the Shaw Creek cabin, quite a few times. He tore the roof off. I made the welcome mat for him. That kinda stopped some of that. I was packing the Big Prairie string that summer and he tore the cabin up. So I got a bunch of one-inch stuff and nailed it together into a pad and drove nails into it. When we'd leave the cabin, we'd lay that down on the porch.

We used to try and be out of the Bob by the 15 of November, because of snow conditions. Now, that's changed. They've been staying in there longer. Cheffs got caught in there two falls ago. They had to toboggan their loads over the top. The snow was so deep, it kept pushing the packs up. Finally they unloaded and they came over this side with toboggans. But then they got caught and had to come out down river. Had to hire a bull dozer to plow the road from Hungry Horse up so they could get the stock out.

SV: Did you ever know any of the old trappers who were around here?

LM: I knew Oscar Southern pretty well. And Jalmar Laine. Course, Johnny Hulett. The reason I knew Oscar and Jalmar was they were head of the trail crews when I was packing the Big Prairie strings.

SV: Can you describe Oscar?

LM: He was about my height, and an older man. He was probably in his sixties then. Tough. Quiet.

SV: Did he dress a certain way?

LM: He always had a little ole' black crusher. Suspenders. And wool. Lots of wool. He wore loggers in the summer, Whites. But as soon as it started raining in the fall, he wore those tight ankle rubber boots that came clear to your knee? Man, I think back on those things. Why we didn't have frozen feet. . . We'd get them darn things and they were tight around your ankle. I got mine big enough so that I could put a pair of buckskin moccasins on in them, and then I'd swap them around.

SV: Did Oscar trap down in the valley bottom and up high, too?

LM: He worked in the Bob Marshall quite a little bit. In the Gordon drainage. I found two different traps that he missed when he was gathering up, that were still stuck in the trees where he was trapping martin. He had one line that went up, on the north side of the trail between Shaw Creek and the mouth of the Cardinal, up to Sugarloaf, went up over that ridge, and around under Sugarloaf, and over onto Trio (?) and back down and Feline Creek. He had a

line that went up Cardinal Creek out to the saddle where you can look over into (?) Creek. Anyhow, it went back around past Cardinal Creek and came down Trail Creek. There's an old Forest Service trail goes up Cardinal and around out to the lookout. But where he came back down on the south side of the Gordon there was no trail in there.

D.K. was in there with hunters one time and he ran into an old meat trail and he started to following that down. I had forgot about it. I had been in there a couple of times later on. He found dad's name on a tree in there that was 1929. Dad had apparently went in there and picked up an elk for somebody and made a blaze on a tree. He said the tree was grew out quite a little bit and he had a heck of a time seeing but he could see George Moore, 1929.

But that, I know there's in the Little Salmon, Jalmar Laine he had a trapline in there. He'd gone in apparently over Lion Creek or Smith Creek. But they'd take supplies in in the fall before it snowed and go in there and spend the winter. Come out in the spring. There's an old trapper cabin up on the south side of the Gordon Creek, about half or three quarters of a mile from the forks where it hits the South Fork, there was an old trapper cabin there and the last time I seen it the roof had all caved in and the bottom logs were all rotting out. There were some old bottles and some rusted out cans and stuff there. Apparently he'd had a garbage pit there and it had got dug up. But I don't know whose cabin it was. But I've run into several of the around different places but no clue to who made them.

SV: What did Jalmar look like?

LM: He was a tall skinny guy. Chewed Copenhagen by the panful. That was Jalmar and Oscar that went in on the plane with Ethel when you went in with the kids. In '48. They were still working. One of the reasons I remember Oscar probably more than I do Jalmar, I was coming down from Danahar Cabin. They changed the trail. You used to have to go up over a real sharp ridge and then back down to the trail. They put cribbing along in there, water under a cliff? And built it out. It was about eight feet wide. They cribbed it up with logs and filled it with rocks, and dirt. The water was running over the top of that. When I went up loaded. But when I came back, we'd had a rain storm and the water was running over the top of that. So I turned my mules all loose. I had a load on Bonnie of manties. And she took a run at that, and her front feet caught and she went over off of the crib and ended under a log jam. I got her out, took her across. I got out on that log jam and got ahold of her head, got it turned. She got her feet under her. Got her out on the other side. I tied her up. The creek was so high and swift in there, I was looking for a place where I could get her back across. While I was doing that she broke loose and tried to get back up on that cribbing, and went underneath again. I couldn't get her out. Well, then Oscar and Otis Black had to go down and the only way to get her out of the stream was to cut her up. They spent two days getting her out of there and digging a hole to bury her in. They worked till dark getting her buried, and they went down the next morning to hang up a telephone line that had come down and a grizzly had dug her up and packed her off. I hadn't heard any more from Otis, he's a cousin of Argus Black, and Argus' brother was working in there that summer, too. This summer, the darn phone rang and a guy said, "Do you remember

a guy by the name of Otis that used to work in the Bob Marshall?" The reason I remembered him, he caught a badger with his bare hands. But anyway, here it is 50 years later, never seen him since. He'd been talking to Argus, and found out we lived here and he decided to call.

SV: Do you remember ever seeing any fisher?

LM: No. But we had otters in the river. We've seen quite a few. There was two or three colonies. One below Big Salmon Lake, there was a family of them there.

SV: Did you ever have skunks and raccoons?

LM: Skunks occasionally. No raccoons. No pheasants. But lots of fool hens and blue grouse. We were eating on them pretty regular (when LM worked for the Forest Service, lived at Hartwicks, etc.)

[End of Interview]