

Oral History Number: 304-001
Interviewee: Nancy Powell Peck
Interviewer: Terry L. Peterson
Date of Interview: October 10, 1993

Terry L. Peterson: Nancy Powell Peck in Missoula on October 10, 1993. May I call you Nancy?

Nancy Powell Peck: Yes.

TP: Okay Nancy, Where did your family live when you were growing up?

NPP: We lived at Apgar in Glacier National Park.

TP: What did your family do there?

NPP: At that time, my father was working for the Park Service. That's what he did originally when he got there. Then they took the (unintelligible) out. Then also...my mother was a school teacher. She taught in Apgar West Glacier (unintelligible)

TP: Really? Okay, when was this when your parents were there? They settled there by soon after the park started?

NPP: Shortly after, the park was established in 1910 and they moved there in 1914. My father moved there first and my mother moved there shortly after. When they moved there, park headquarters was in Fish Creek and his first job was to haul limber to the present park headquarters at this time, where they were building the offices and homes there.

TP: Then you didn't live in Park Service housing.

NPP: No.

TP: You actually bought a place or built a place.

NPP: Right. I don't know when they first bought their land or for how much they bought it, but I do know, they did buy it from the Apgar Family. That's the family that had homesteaded there and owned lots and lots of land in that area. Most of the people or families that did live there had purchased their land from the Apgar Family or another old man called Charlie Howell and he had a lot of land too. They were the two original homesteaders.

TP: When you lived there, was Apgar were just a few houses?

NPP: There were lots of summer homes of course, probably the same amount as now around the lake. There was some cabins. There was a service station. When I was little, there was an ice cream parlor that opened up during the summer. There was a little grocery store. Actually, Apgar hasn't changed too much. It is still kept very small. There was a school house. There is now a bookstore.

TP: A one room school?

NPP: One room school.

TP: What grade?

NPP: One through eight during that period. Eventually, they had one through sixth and the seventh through eighth graders went to West Glacier. When I went to school there, it was one through eight. Usually, we had between six and seven - up to eleven - students who dropped out. It was wonderful. It was open schooling. In second grade, you knew seventh grade history.

TP: That's ideal! When you went there, did your mother teach there also?

NPP: She didn't teach there when I went to school there. There were a few years there that she did not teach at all. She went back and started teaching during World War II and she started at West Glacier. Then she later became principle at that school.

TP: Oh great. Where did your family have to go to get supplies like groceries, whatever you needed?

NPP: In the summer, of course, we could get lots right at Apgar. Otherwise, we went to West Glacier. Originally, West Glacier had been called Belton, Montana. It was on the other side; it was back little from where it is now, across the road and down towards the river. Then the post office was changed over there and stores were built. For big purchases, of course, we had to go to Kalispell.

TP: Did you always have a car?

NPP: As long as I can remember. I think when I was real little my dad had Model As, I suppose, and things of that kind. I can't remember too much. We always had a car. I do remember my mother telling about when they first went up there and the snow was very, very deep. She used to ski just for fun too into West Glacier. She would put a pack on her back. She had a friend and they used to ski a lot. Sometimes she would ski right behind a horse or put a rope behind a horse and it would pull them to help her bring the groceries back.

TP: Do you remember how much snow you had?

NPP: Oh...

TP: Like thirteen feet?

NPP: I don't know. I do know we had cabins and sometimes, very often in winter, it would be deep enough where we could jump off the roof in the snow drifts. Although, a lot of it was probably from being pushed off the roof because all people had to shovel on the roofs. They also did that for the summer people, to take care of their homes.

TP: When you were first there, there was no road like Going-to-the-Sun Highway to go over the top of Glacier.

NPP: It was being built. I think they started in '22 or '23, my brother told me. It was completed in '33. So I was born; I was very little. I was born in '27. He told me an interesting story about that when they built it. They started from the top and built down so the rocks wouldn't...they tarred from the roof, they call it up there (?)...so the rocks wouldn't roll on the men as they were working on it. They completed the west side first. Then they started at the top on the east and worked down.

TP: How far could you go on the east side from the bottom up or west side from the bottom up before the road was built?

NPP: I don't know. I don't think very far. I'm sure it was just past Lake McDonald Lodge, just ahead of Lake McDonald; maybe far as Avalanche, but not over that.

TP: Your dad not only worked for the Park Service, he took pack trips into Glacier like outfitter and guide trips.

NPP: Right, he worked for a company called Skyland and also for George Nossinger (?). When they...originally they built the Sky Land Lodge on Bowman Lake. It was so lovely. Big log lodge.

TP: Wow!

NPP: I never saw that but my...that was where it started. They took out many interesting people...the Colgate family and Mary Roberts Rinehart. I was reading in a book about Glacier that the Great Northern Railway had actually encouraged, or maybe they even hired, Mary Roberts Rinehart and Frank Bird Linderman to write a listing for Glacier Park. They were trying to publicize it because they owned a concession of the hotel. I'm sure that's why they came out.

TP: When your dad was taking pack trips in, were the chalets there?

NPP: Yes, they were there. But they stayed in tents. Sometimes they would go to a chalet and start and stay in a chalet one night and then go on. During many those years, my mother who was a home ec [economics] major from Stout...she would cook for them.

TP: Then she went with the trip?

NPP: She went with him. They hired a nanny and she would go with him. Also, my older sister told me that at one point, they stayed with another family at the North Fork with my parents (unintelligible). The woman that took care of them up there had been a former teacher. She wrote poetry. In fact, she had a book of poems published.

TP: When your family went out on these pack trips, your mother went. Did some of your brothers and sisters?

NPP: Yes, my two older brothers and especially, Richard, that I mentioned to you, went along to help. They were twelve and thirteen years old.

TP: How many horses? How many guests do they take? How long did they stay out?

NPP: That I don't know. That's kind of information that you would have to get from my brother. I do know that most of the trips took about a month. They were long trips. It took a long time. They were taking out too many parties...during that summer because it had...

TP: In your memory, what were parents doing by the time you were old enough, say ten or eleven, and could have gone? Had they quit horse packing then?

NPP: Yes, they had.

TP: Did that quit with the highway being built?

NPP: Quite a lot, it really did. In fact, the companies they worked for weren't there then. There were still trips going on and there still are today from Lake McDonald, but they are smaller, shorter trips. They are not...like the Sperry Glacier or Granite Park or rides through (unintelligible). They are not long trips like they were then.

TP: When your parents would take people out, would they book the year before or months before? And then they would come out and...

NPP: Yes, they would usually book like a year before. Another group of people that they took out very often were different girls from some of the prestigious girl schools. I know they made friends that would come see them forever. One woman I remember was just lovely. She was married to Colonel's (indistinct) son. They owned a Culver Military Academy in the south. They came often, she and General (unintelligible) this was years after...That's how they met her.

TP: Where did you keep all the stock for these trips?

NPP: They kept them at the Skyland camp then Nossingers kept them. Then, later on, I think they kept some up at the head of Lake McDonald up there near the hotel.

TP: Now where are these camps?

NPP: Skyland camp is no longer there. It was a lodge. It was a marker up by Bowman Lake. That is gone. Then what would happen is like Mr. Nossinger and these people would have a concession through the whole town to do this. I'm sure they had people in Glacier who did the same thing. I don't know who...

TP: Did they have to haul hay every year? Did they have hay ranches elsewhere to buy and haul hay?

NPP: I'm sure they did because they kept horses at park headquarters too. They used horses when my dad first... They had corrals. Then still had horses there for a long time because they had to pack in all the water and food and supplies to run those. My one brother, Richard, would do that for a long time.

TP: He would look out for the park?

NPP: No, he did the packing ...I can remember them doing that even when I was a little girl, seeing the packs (unintelligible).

TP: When you attended school at Apgar, during what grades was that? Do you remember the years?

NPP: That was first to eighth grades.

TP: You did all of them. Do you still have friends that were there when you were there like going through school?

NPP: I do have some. Everyone is so far away now. I used to keep really close contact with them. But we all have gone our own ways.

TP: Did you have running water?

NPP: We did. Actually, my parents were pretty inventive. We didn't when I was very little. We always had a pump in the house. Then before rural electrification (?) came through, my father had a generator. There was a noisy little thing: if somebody left the light on it would go, "put, put, put." So he built like cave on the riverbank and had this generator in there which would

muffle the sound. Then we had water and bathrooms probably before anybody else up there because of this generator. So we had that.

TP: How old were you when he had the generator and the water?

NPP: I was probably sixth or seventh grade.

TP: Wow you lived a long time without it.

NPP: So I lived for a while without it, yes.

TP: That's amazing!

NPP: It was.

TP: What kind chores did you have to do?

NPP: Actually, being the second to the youngest (laughs), we helped with the dishes. We had to take care of our own rooms. But I had nothing like really chores. We used to help my mother clean the cabin, fold the sheets, and all of those things.

TP: So you worked in the summer mostly. I bet all of you kids had to work in the summer.

NPP: I'm sure my older brothers and sisters had to work much harder than my younger sister and I. Actually, we spent most of our summers in the lake.

TP: Did you!

NPP: Lake McDonald, we just lived at that lake. Oh god!

TP: Did you go swimming? Was it warm enough?

NPP: We thought it was. We were used to it. We loved it.

TP: How did your mom keep food before you got electricity?

NPP: We had an ice house. That was another thing that was quite nice. They cut ice from Lake McDonald. I remember watching the men and dad when I was little. There was an old man that had a wagon and horse. They pull it out; cut the ice in big chunks. My parents had the ice house down by the river. It was full of sawdust. They put a layer of sawdust. In fact, in the summers, we loved to play down there.

TP: What did you do all winter then about food freezing? I mean like fresh vegetables...

NPP: We didn't have frozen foods. Most of it was canned back then. I remember my mother canning a tremendous amount of food.

TP: And everything had to be kept in the house that was kept from freezing.

NPP: Right, we had a basement. There was stuff down there. I remember they would go huckleberrying. We had all kinds of sauce and jam. I don't know. As I look back on it, it must have been extremely difficult or at least it felt like it was.

TP: Yeah, I think about meats so often. I can't imagine living on canned meats.

NPP: We didn't live on canned meats. Actually, I think it was cold enough in the cans or out in the chest that it would freeze. I'm sure people just kept it out. It's strange. When you are small, you don't think about those things that are always there. I never thought about it.

The only thing that amazes me is I wonder my mother got eggs. She baked every day. She was a marvelous baker. We had beautiful cakes with icing. I think where did all those eggs come from? In the summer, there were people that would buy them and buy eggs from that lived in Columbia Falls down in the area and also had trunk farms. They would come up in the old cars and bring their vegetables. My mother always got fresh vegetables from them all summer. I know we always had fresh oranges and I don't where they got them. They would buy them in wooden crates and apples. So I told my...

TP: When you had guest in the summer, would only guest that were going out horse packing stay in the cabins?

NPP: No, they didn't. I think many of them stayed in the hotels. That was before my parents had cabins, when they were doing that. I think that most guests did stay at the hotels or at this lodge at Bowman Lake that I mentioned. I'm sure they all came in by train.

TP: Then mom didn't have to cook, do laundry, do everything for them?

NPP: No. Actually the people that came and stayed in our cabins were just like staying at a motel now. There wasn't laundry.

TP: But they ate other than in your home or...

NPP: Yes.

TP: When your brothers and sister were older but they were young enough to still be in school, was there originally a school in Apgar so they also went one through eight?

NPP: Yes, they did. They also went to school in Lake Five for a while. They lived down on Lake Five, which is about five miles from Apgar. The reason they moved there was my mother was teaching there. They just rented a little house down there for a while. I was born in Kalispell in 1927. My brothers were starting high school. That's why my parents moved to Kalispell that year because they wanted to go to high school there.

TP: What did they do with the houses in the park?

NPP: Actually, what had happened...in 1920, they had built a smaller...They lived in small house. They built a bigger one. In 1929, it burned. Thirty-two homes burnt in that area. It was a tremendous fire. It started in Columbia Falls in a mill. They thought it was under control. Then it just was completely out of control.

TP: It was a forest fire and it just went through that whole area.

NPP: Yes.

TP: Boy, Columbia Falls is a long ways away for a fire to get...

NPP: Eighteen miles. Just people that had heard from my mother which...that that fire was coming through, she had to do it. Two days before, she started moving everything that we had on the dock that we owned because my father was working for the Park Service and he was away. She did this alone because there were few men around there. They were very unhappy. She moved everything except the piano. My mother played piano and she taught piano in that area to whomever. They would not help her move that piano. She was just hysterical and everything. Then, of course, the fire was so close.

When my dad finally thought about it, then he and a park ranger came down. He said that he had this old truck. He said that the last few miles, they just drove through the fire. They just drove as fast as they could. They got to our home and, just as they got there, it caught on fire. There was no water. He said that not only the home burned, but they had a lumber pile by the garage and it burned.

This I do remember growing up. It was such a traumatic time for all the people. I remember being on a boat that took me, took all of us children, to the hotel. They evacuated all of us...My mother and the other women stayed there. They cooked for the men. They were fighting. They came from all over to fight this fire. I remember her telling me that she had sterling silver and everyone just threw their all silverware in a pot or dish to feed these men. She never ever recovered any back. She was always so grateful that she had saved everything that we owned. Then we moved into another...I don't know if we had built it after...but I remember that my brothers and sisters saying it was just a terrible place until they built a new home.
(unintelligible)

TP: Were there cabins that burnt down too with the first house?

NPP: No, not yet. They built the cabins later. They bought more land, extended on to build the cabins. I don't know what year that was. I'm sure it was in the '30s.

TP: Was your father also a concessioner with the Park or did he actually work for a concessioner? How did that work?

NPP: Originally, he worked for the Park Service as...driving these teams that would bring the lumber down in. Then he worked for what they called a ranger or something and I'm not sure that's what they called them then. A couple years later probably, they started working...I don't even know if there were concessions at that point. I think the park was so young, there probably weren't. When they did bring the concessions in, that was when he started working for them. That was in the late...he probably was in the park five years? I'm sure that it started in 1918 because he told me they had General Pershing scheduled. That's when World War One broke out. He couldn't leave. So that was (unintelligible).

TP: Wow. When the CCC volunteers came in to build Going-to-the-Sun Highway, where did they live in relation to your home?

NPP: They lived across the way four or five miles. They lived down the river.

TP: Oh, they did.

NPP: Between us and West Glacier.

TP: Did they build anything?

NPP: I think they built some of the park houses. That's what my dad did later is build houses for Glacier Park. They sent them all over to do that. Then later he had some of these crews that would work for him. I remember at point he had conscientious objectors that lived in an old...

TP: How late is this? How do you mean...

NPP: This would have been...

TP: Like World War Two?

NPP: Just before World War Two because my dad went away during World War Two for...He was gone for about two years working as foreman (?) in Washington.

TP: Did your family stay at the lake?

NPP: We stayed at the lake. My mother started teaching.

TP: Oh, she did.

NPP: Again. She taught until she was seventy years old.

TP: Really?

NPP: She retired when she was seventy. She said that she thought that she better retire before they asked her to.

TP: That's amazing! When did she teach at West Glacier and quit at Apgar? Did they close the school in Apgar?

NPP: They hadn't at that point. Actually, my mother, she enjoyed teaching older children. When she started at West Glacier, they still had the seventh and eighth graders. She taught the seventh and eighth graders. Later, they bused the seventh and eighth graders to Columbia Falls. That's when she taught the fifth and sixth graders. She did enjoy teaching older children.

TP: They had combined grades. Like two grades to each class?

NPP: Yeah, in each room. There was three rooms. (unintelligible)

TP: Is the only economy for Columbia Falls logging maybe and Park and...?

NPP: Mainly, there was logging. We never shopped at Columbia Falls. We were hardly ever there. We went to eighth grade graduation in Columbia Falls and that's where we went to high school. We rode a school bus every day from Apgar to Columbia Falls, which is 18 miles.

TP: That is a long way in the winter.

NP: It was especially with a bad (unintelligible).

TP: Yeah. When you were little and you were at the lake all winter, were there other, maybe, four or five families there and children?

NPP: Probably. I think most of the time there were approximately eight. They were usually Beats (?) and forest rangers. There was the Greenwald family that had lived there forever too. And the Sibley family. Then there was another family called Coopers. I can't remember that man or where he worked. But there were several... and of the Apgars and young Dimey, or Dimon Apgar. Also, the Apgar girl was married and lived there, Jeanette. So there...at different times, there were different ones.

TP: What did your families do for entertainment and were they good friends?

NPP: The people were good friends. My parents were avid bridge players. As we grew older, we all played bridge. They entertained. They socialized most of the people at the park headquarters. They had a lot of dinner Bridge groups and then...My mother played bridge twice a week when she wasn't teaching with another Missoula girl. There was one group that played for about thirty years. That included the judge's wife from West Glacier, or park headquarters, and the post mistress Helen Gibb. You remember hearing about her. It was just an interesting group of women. Another woman's husband owned a grocery store and she was the book keeper in that store for many years. She was lovely. They were interesting women, very interesting. Most of them were well educated. They were quite the social events.

I can remember when I was real little, I remember my mother reading out loud to us. When I first heard of the book *Cimarron*...I remember her reading that book *Cimarron*, when I was real little. She would...all of us would sit there. I mean my father and all of us would sit when she read.

We had wonderful checker tournaments. We played played...The people were fairly artistic in that area. The women did a lot hand work. Then men always had projects. I remember one year my dad built a beautiful table which was burned. He did lots of things like that. Of course, I'm sure it kept him busy, chopping wood, keeping the fires going, and shoveling snow.

TP: Where did they get wood?

NPP: They would go out and get...

TP: In the immediate area?

NPP: I don't know where they had to...how far. I remember stacks and stacks. In fact, we had this fabulous little wood shed. It was like a cute little house.

TP: Yeah. Where there many eagles there then?

NPP: They weren't. There really wasn't. There had been. But I can remember my father from the time we very small coming in and saying, "The salmon are coming; the eagles will be here soon." We go out look in the river and see the salmon coming up. Of course, they would be in terrible shape by the time they got there (unintelligible). So we didn't think much about them. It was just part of...then all at once there weren't so many and now they're returning.

TP: What about bears? Were there bears...I mean with your house right there on the edge of the creek. Did you see lots of bears?

NPP: Lots of bears. In fact, we had huge bear traps in our back yard every summer because they just eat in garbage constantly.

TP: Bear traps like culvert live traps?

NPP: Right.

TP: Or leg hold traps?

NPP: No, they were the big culvert type that they walk into. There was meat hanging in there. They would walk in and just like that a big door comes down. Then they would paint them, just put a streak of paint on and take them way up in the park and release them. If they kept coming back, they were very troublesome. I can never ever remember hearing of anyone being mauled. There were certain areas at certain times that my father would say, "Don't go out there to Trout Lake now. Don't go to Iceberg Lake or don't hike here or there because the bears are there now."

TP: Then did you just throw all your garbage in...?

NPP: Cans. Then we had to haul ourselves. There was a garbage dump in West Glacier.

TP: Okay. So you had this garbage pile somewhere adjacent to the house like how far?

NPP: No, we had just cans like we do here now in town. Everybody had garbage cans. The only difference was that we had to take care of our own garbage and take it to the dump. There was a dump at park headquarters and then one out at West Glacier.

TP: Did you ever have any encounters with bears?

NPP: Yes, I did. I remember one time my mother had invited some people for dinner. Of course, there is no telephone, so I had to deliver this note to them. They lived up the lake from us. Instead of walking up the road, I cut through the woods. We had a trail through there. Our parents had always told us to put rocks and cans or things...certainly in more places but I never...I was just running along there. I just came face to face with this big black bear. It stopped and I stopped. I remember leaning down and tapping. I picked up a rock and just threw it way back in the woods. It heard that noise. Of course, bears can't see well at all, but it heard that noise and it just turned around and run back in the woods. I ran. That was frightening. We really weren't raised to be extremely afraid of them; cautious, but not extremely afraid.

[End of Side A]

[Side B]

NPP: I saw Moose. I remember there was one area in Glacier that had a lot of moose. It's called Howe Lake. My parents used to go up there. My mother loved to huckleberry. She would huckleberry. My dad would fish in the lake. There were always moose up there, just constantly. We were very careful of them. They are very unpredictable. My mother always told us a wonderful story about one time this moose was diving down. There were lots of lilies that grew like lily pads. They were coming out of that lake. It was kind of a stagnant lake for in Glacier. She said this moose had dived down, put his head down to get a drink of water. He came up and these fabulous lilies were hanging on his horns. It was the cutest story. She said that it was just one of those sights you see you never forget. It was wonderful.

TP: Did you ever hear anything about wolves or see wolves?

NPP: You know I never saw them. I heard about them, heard that some were there. But I don't think ever very many. It was the same with mountain lions. We knew they existed and that they were there. I remember one winter my father saying he thought he found mountain lion tracks. They never came near us. They just never bothered us. Coyotes, of course, we heard all the time. I know they were there. The wolves and mountain lions just seemed very remote.

TP: During the first part of the Park Service, was the military operating the park or did they have regular Park Services Administration?

NPP: They had Park Service Administration. One name that evidently was very...Ruhle. I know it's (unintelligible).

TP: Did any artist's come from back east and either stay at your family's cabins or outfit out with your family to commune at the park?

NPP: No artist, but my father took out [T.J.] Hileman and (indistinct name) who were very well know photographers. In fact, most of the postcards and everything at Glacier still were photographs taken by these men. My father took them out every year. I think he took them out alone...my brother told me...That at least once a year, he took those photographers out.

The other people that came, most of the very, very wealthy ones, would bring a photographer. My parents have these wonderful photographs that I am still trying to track down for you. They were marvelous. They were big, beautiful photographs. They were usually taken by a photographer that these people brought along.

TP: Did your parents ever have any writers?

NPP: Mary Roberts Reinhardt was one. Then of course they had the Colgate Family and that was an interesting experience.

TP: Do you remember that?

NPP: I remember hearing about this forever because they had given my mother a beautiful gold watch as a tip after. She enjoyed Mrs. Colgate and she was going to be so sad. They had a sixteen year old son that was a pyromaniac. My parents didn't know that until they were way up in Glacier. It was an extremely difficult trip because of him.

TP: He did try to start a fire?

NPP: Yeah, they said that he required constant watching. It was kind of a problem. Then, my dad went with Charlie Russ on a little hunting trip. We had a horse head that he had given my father that was just beautiful. He said that he had been on his hunting trip with him. He had carved out little bears and given them to everybody else, but he didn't give dad one. When he got back, he sent him this horse head that had been molded. He said, "You know a ton about horses and I thought you would appreciate this more than a little wooden bear." It was lovely.

TP: Now your brother is Ace Powell, how did he start painting? Was it due to a Charlie Russell's being or...?

NPP: Partly, my mother was very artistic and she encouraged it a lot. When he was a very small boy, she said she noticed it then, a lot of talent very young. She always encouraged him a lot. She had...He just grew up doing it forever. I think he was very influenced by Charlie Russell because they had a summer home very close to us. He spent a lot of time up there.

There was another man, another artist, that I don't know if you ever heard about him. His name was Jody Young. He had...he was a very, very close friend of Russell. He and his mother in fact did live with Russell down at the lake. In that book, *A Woman Behind Every Man*, by Nancy Russell, there is pictures of Jody Young and his wife in there. I have a letter from him. He wrote to my mother all the time for many years. He was very interesting in art. He also had been an actor. He was deaf. I think they said it was caused from an accident when he was acting in Prescott, Arizona.

There were really many creative people in that area. There were writers and people that did come there and weren't...There are a lot of creative people up there now. I think at that time it had a lot of appeal.

TP: You mother sounds like she may have been really in all sense the word the matriarch of family or really the head of your family. Is that true or how did your mother and father...?

NPP: I feel like she was a stabilizer of the family. I think my father was more fiery, inventive, and wonderful that way. She definitely was the stabilizer in the family. She tried to raise us even though it was such a remote area. She demanded good manners. We ate dinner in the dining room every night and we learned to set the table properly. These things were just part of the

way we were raised. It was very important to her and that we always felt very comfortable and liked our situation in life. I feel in that way she was definitely the stabilizer and very encouraging. Also, I think both of my parents were about fifty years ahead of most parents because they encouraged us to do what we felt like doing. Free spirited, this type of thing. In other words, just no set mold. Everyone in my family is so different. It is just amazing.

TP: It sounds like your mom appreciated...I don't want to say activities...From being well educated and teaching school, to playing piano, to socializing, it sounded like she was just a well-rounded, popular person.

NPP: She was. She was so very well respected. It seemed at that point I remember many people coming and asking her the proper way to do things or asking her to write letters for them. She just kind of knew what was right and what was wrong. It was very nice, very kind. She was a very, very kind person. Both my father and mother appreciated the beauty of nature. They absolutely loved Glacier National Park forever. My father built a beautiful rock garden. He loved the gardening. He just...they loved beauty. Our home was attractive. I remember him building a beautiful Flagstone walk and porch. He really appreciated nice things.

TP: Oh, I need to remember! Did your mother sew you kids' clothes? How did you get clothing?

NPP: Yes, she did. But we did have some cousins that were quite wealthy that lived in the east. They would send clothes to my sisters mainly. Then as we got in high school, we worked and bought our clothes. When we were little, I'm sure she sewed most of our clothes. I remember that I was fifteen years old and they had to send away for shoes. I hardly ever found...they were deerskin. They were real soft, but they were high tops. Just the ankle like little boots. (unintelligible). I remember them sending for the catalog. I hated those shoes. They would always say, "Well they are much more expensive than those shoes. Pretty soon you won't have to wear them." There were catalogs. I think they used the catalogs a lot. Sears and Roebuck.

TP: What ever happened if the kids got sick? What if you got seriously sick?

NPP: Well...my daughter...

TP: ...or hurt?

NPP: We just never got hurt. We just never had a broken bone or anything. But there were doctors. There were doctors at the CCC camps. They were marvelous about helping people in emergencies and helping them in that area. I think they used...people used them a lot or they would go to Kalispell or see that they got to Kalispell. In emergencies, you always called the park rangers.

I remember in I think it was 1944; my brother and Dimon Apgar, who Apgar is named after, were in a small plane. Dimon was the pilot. They had been in Kalispell and they came up. They

had been buzzing our home. They flew down the river and they hit a power line. They crashed right in our back yard. They were extremely hurt. They had broken backs and legs and facial injuries. Everything. I remember when it happened. It was just so strange. I walked out; I knew they were coming down. They hit the power line and twirled around and crashed right near a home owned by Gene Sullivan who was really a picturesque character that was in Glacier forever. He had...So they called the rangers.

The rangers came immediately, of course. Then they had like an ambulance that took them to Kalispell. I can very rarely remember being sick when I was little. In fact, I was so isolated that I contracted all the childhood diseases when I was in high school. Because I was never...of course, like I mentioned before, I lost my sister. She was two years older than I am. She had whooping cough and it turned into pneumonia. That wasn't too rare in those days.

TP: Yeah. Did your mom always go to town to have her babies?

NPP: Yes, she did, except for my youngest sister. She was born in Apgar and she had a midwife. Actually, I think there were midwives...because she went into these homes...This lady in Kalispell's name was Miss Strattenburg. They would go to this home. I don't know if the doctor came to this home and delivered them or...I know I was delivered by a doctor in Kalispell, but I don't know if the others were. Then she would stay there. She told me that they kept the mothers in bed for ten days. When she came, she would always have help until the baby was a month old. She thought that was marvelous.

TP: Oh, I bet.

NPP: Of course, I didn't see what was extremely important (unintelligible)

TP: Did you ever have to help with cloth washing? Did you wash clothes by hand until you got the generator?

NPP: Yes, she did. Then they had gas...I can remember I was real little seeing her wash board plus boiling cold on a big boiler. When I was very small. I remember that she had a gas. I hated that. It always had that strange odor. I hated washing with that smell of boiling water and soaps, peachy soap. It's not a pleasant thing. Then later, of course, she had washer and dryers. I think they needed help. They did have hired help.

TP: You almost couldn't run a household by yourself. I can't imagine.

NPP: It was difficult.

TP: How many brothers and sisters...how many children did your parents have including you?

NPP: They had nine children. There were eight living. They lost one. There were four boys and four girls.

TP: What is the range of ages? Like the youngest one is how much younger than the oldest one?

NPP: Let's see. I think about eighteen years is the difference. It was remarkable. The older ones, I think they were gone because the boys went away to school. They left early to work when they were young. Actually, my younger sister and I didn't know them that well until we were older because we were real small.

TP: Did they ever have to leave home to board?

NPP: Yes, my brother Ace did. He boarded in Browning. He became extremely good friends with Bob Schreiber at that time. They were high school.

TP: I know Bob.

NPP: Uh huh.

TP: Why did he go to school there when everyone else either went to school in Columbia Falls or Kalispell?

NPP: At that time, there wasn't a school bus when he went. Then shortly after that, there started to be a school bus. My brothers and sisters, the older ones, told me that the first school bus was something unbelievable. It was kind of like an old truck with something built on the back. There was a little lead stove in there, if you can believe it, with a chimney sticking out the top. They said it was so cold. They all went to school in the school bus. I remember during those years, everyday my mother baked two cakes one for home and one for their lunches. They said that everyone wanted to trade them anything for these pieces of cake.

TP: What kind of... Did you have contact with Indians from the east side? Did Indians come in and use the park in traditional ways? Do you know about any of that?

NPP: I don't think they did on the west side. Most of that was on the east side of the park. The only Indian couple that we knew very, very well were the Gardens and he was a park ranger. They were both full blooded Indian. I can remember them coming down a lot, very often. They...in fact, now I think he is a park ranger in Florida. They were a wonderful couple. I know my parents enjoyed them a lot. But once...Indian ceremonies and things were either in the Flathead farther down by Flathead Lake or at East Glacier.

TP: When did your family move away from the house at Glacier for good? What happened there?

NPP: My father passed away in 1973 [Perhaps NPP is confusing this date with the date of her mother's death]. My mother lived there and continued to teach and to live in the home. Then in...she finally decided it was getting difficult, the winters. She had retired. I was living in Choteau then. She moved to Choteau in 1962. She lived there. When we moved to Missoula, she moved to Missoula. We moved to Missoula in 1969. She moved with us and lived with me. She died in January 1973.

TP: What happened to your home at the lake?

NPP: This was another strange thing. The people she sold it to were...it was the son of an old, old family. His name was Eddy Bruster. He also owned a store at Apgar and everything. He just...The Park Service had offered her of course much more money. She just simply could not sell it at that point. She was hoping that Eddy would be able to part from his store (?). She sold it to him. And he did. He ran the camp for a few summers too. Then he eventually sold it. I think he moved to Kalispell. He sold it to the Park Service.

They decided to have it returned to the way it was. They pushed the house, another one they pushed to the bank (?), burned it, and torn down all the cabins. They let it grow back. You would never know there was a house there except there is a little bit of flagstone left from the laundry. I am delighted with the way it is rather than...The trees are all growing back. A lot of land had washed away in the flood for the land behind. Consequently, there isn't nearly as much land there.

The only thing that's so interesting is my dad had this...there was a huge stump that was being neglected and could never get it out. Finally, he built this fabulous rock garden around this stump. It was by the corner of our home. That stump is still there. It just would not be moved. It's still this great big stump. Otherwise, you would never be able to tell there had been a home there, six cabins, three of them being homes.

TP: Where is it in relation to the current fishing bridge, where you can watch eagles from the bridge?

NPP: Okay, its closer to the lake. It's where that old little wooden bridge was across there, just out by...

TP: The lodge that is on the lake now, was that always the lodge there or is it different now? Has it been rebuilt?

NPP: Yes, they have added that motel right next to the lake. That is fairly new. But there are still the cabins remaining back there. Those little log cabins were built originally by the Apgar family. Some of those, my dad built too. But all of those were...Across the street from Eddy's store in that area, where the Greenwalds (?) lived...They were an old, old family from there. They had a very nice home there. They had two daughters and son. They had a service station in the corner

up there. They eventually had cabins, had their own cabins. Cabins were great because they were very personal. Often, they put little teapots (?) in there and a little bouquet of flowers. They were nice. They had a motel. Eventually, they built a dance hall and kind of a bar in that area. They had good dances there. Lots of people went to those dances, from Kalispell and all over. They were just fun near the lake.

TP: Oh, yeah!

NPP: And they had a restaurant there of course.

[End of Interview]