

**Oral History Number: 347-001, 002**  
**Interviewee: Arthur Lemuel "Mutt" Mowatt**  
**Interviewer: Gladys Peterson**  
**Date of Interview: June 28, 1994**

Gladys Peterson: Okay, let's start. This is an oral history interview with Arthur Lemuel Mowatt, whose nickname is Mutt, and that's what I will be calling him. And the purpose of this interview is to find out about him and about his family, and his deep roots in the Stevensville, Fort Owen, and Victor area. Now, Mutt, oh I think a couple months ago, you presented to the AAUW, little writing group, a little history of the Fulkerson Harris family, of which you are a member. And from this, this interview has resulted. First of all I wanted to ask you, who write this little history of your family, did you write that?

Lemuel Mowatt: No, that was my, the little book was my grandfather's.

GP: I mean who write this, what's on this paper? Who typed this up for you, and put this all together? You didn't do it did you, it was some other relative?

LM: No.

GP: You don't know where that came from, is that correct?

LM: I just had a copy...

GP: Oh he did this himself?

LM: He wrote it.

GP: He wrote it? Well that's very interesting, because he's been dead for some time, 1923 I think is what the chart I made says he died. In 1923; he was born in 1844, so he had a good long life, didn't he? Well, I think it would be best if we started at the beginning of this, Mutt, and let anybody know who is interested in Victor history how your family got started in the Bitterroot. One man named Thomas Woodson Harris would be your great-grandfather. And he married a woman who was named Losetta, and I think your little card said her last name was Rainier, is that correct?

LM: Yeah, it's simple there.

GP: Could I see those papers there? Because we want to get as much information about her as we can. Oh I see, maybe it's on here. Yes here it is, on here. It says, "Thomas W. Harris," that's Thomas Woodson Harris, "September 15, 1863." Now he must have married Losetta Rainier, it looks like "r", Losetta is what it says in the history book. He must have married her earlier than 1863, because their daughter Lucinda, was born in 1857 at Fort Owen. So right now we're not

sure when they got married. But I'm going to read what it says on here so we have it on the record; here it says that Losetta was part French, part Umatilla Indian woman, January 1858, Three Forks area. So, let's now go to what we know about their family. They had a daughter named Lucinda, didn't they? And they had, let's see, one, two, three, four, five, they had six children altogether, and Lucinda, who would be your grandmother, was the first white child born in the Bitterroot area. And her birthdate was February 7, 1857. So I know she died in 1904, so you never saw your grandmother did you? But she married Monroe D. Fulkerson in 1873, and he came from New York. Now you knew your grandfather didn't you? You knew him real well? I want to be sure I get your voice on here too, so I'm going to move this a little closer.

LM: He lived with us, up the Bitterroot, Victor.

GP: He did?

LM: For a few years, with my mother.

GP: With your mother? Now perhaps we should say right away that Lucinda, your grandmother, and Monroe Fulkerson, he had a large family.

LM: Yes, he had nine kids.

GP: Nine children and eight of them lived. One of them was your mother, who was Alice M. Fulkerson, and do you want to tell us a little bit about her, her getting married? Your last name is Mowatt so that was her first husband.

LM: First marriage.

GP: Want to talk a little bit about that, Mutt, about her marriage to him, and your early childhood?

LM: I don't know much about it. See, I was only two and a half years old when my father died.

GP: You were two and a half when your father died?

LM: He died in 1910.

GP: He died in 1910, I see.

LM: He died in Stevensville. They operated on him for ulcers. In 1910 they couldn't do much.

GP: Not in 1910, did they. Now I have, you were talking about your father, he died in 1910. I'm just going to add this to the chart right away so we have that for the record. Here, he died in 1910. Now did your mother ever talk about him, Mutt, about your father?

LM: Well, she mentioned him, but she didn't, they had a hotel at one time in Victor, the two of them.

GP: Was he from the Victor area also?

LM: Well, he must have been, he had a saloon there. And it mentioned something where he had a real estate business.

GP: I missed that. I was so busy looking for the Fulkersons.

LM: On that paper of yours, let's see.

GP: So your father had a livery stable.

LM: In addition to everything else, he had a livery stable.

GP: In Victor?

LM: Here's a picture of my...

GP: Of your grandfather's farm, yes. That's a nice picture. Well, but that's ok Mutt, we can just say that he had a livery stable, and he had a saloon.

LM: I mentioned it in the book, he had a livery stable. And he had a saloon.

GP: I see. Were there any other Mowatts around in the area?

LM: Well, there was one I can't figure out. He mentioned in this book, a Miss Annie Mowatt.

GP: Annie Mowatt. But you're not sure if she was related?

LM: Can't figure who she could be.

GP: Well she's probably been dead for quite a while now.

LM: Never knew who she was.

GP: Well, your mother then married again, didn't she? Was she single quite a while before she married?

LM: Quite a few years.

GP: Quite a few years, and she married a man named Van P-l-a-i-r-c-u-l (spelled out). And she had another son.

LM: Well she had a son by him, and she had a daughter, but the daughter died. My half-brother.

GP: And he's still living?

LM: Yes, he's over in Washington someplace.

GP: Washington State. But your brother who was named Monroe, and your sister named Vivian, are both dead?

LM: Yes.

GP: But you did grow up with them didn't you?

LM: Oh yeah.

GP: And you grew up in Victor. Ok, before we get to your growing up there, I'd like to be sure we cover everything about the earlier generations. We know that Tom Harris and his wife Losetta had six children, and your grandmother Lucinda Harris was the first white child born in the Bitterroot.

LM: That's what it mentioned in the book.

GP: Now, you've mentioned that there was a possibility that she spent some of her infancy in Salt Lake City.

LM: Some of them did.

GP: More than she? She wasn't the only one that did that?

LM: No, she was the only one I know of. I heard of. She spent it with Brigham Young's, one of his wives.

GP: One of his wives. Do you know anything about that, why she did that or anything? Or how old she was?

LM: No. no. I got it someplace, not how old she was, I don't know.

GP: Was she an infant or young girl?

LM: No, she was a younger girl.

GP: A younger girl. Did your family have any Mormon connections?

LM: Not that I know of, no.

GP: So you don't have any clue as to why she and maybe some of her brothers and sisters did that in Salt Lake?

LM: Just the one I think, in Salt Lake, just the one.

GP: Lucinda was the only one that went to Salt Lake?

LM: That was the one mentioned.

GP: I see. She was the only one mentioned.

LM: That I knew of.

GP: But you don't have any idea why she went there?

LM: No.

GP: Of course, being born in 1857, that was, Brigham Young was still alive, and had a lot of wives, didn't he?

LM: Yeah.

GP: Doesn't explain why she went there. But it's kind of interesting, isn't it?

LM: It mentioned it on one of those slips there.

GP: It's mentioned on one of those slips? What we're attempting to do here is clear up who it was who was raised by one of the wives of Brigham Young. And the notes that Mutt has here indicate that it wasn't his grandmother, it was his great-grandmother.

LM: That's right.

GP: And the name that is in the Victor history book is shown as Losetta, and yet the family records of that show his great-grandmother's name as L-i-z-e-t-t-e, and her last name was R-a-i-n-i-e-r (Spells out). And his notes indicate that she was raised by one of Brigham Young's wives in Salt Lake City, and that she was half Snake Indian, that would be her mother. She was born in Utah, and as we know, she became the wife of Thomas Harris. Now another record of Mutt's

says that she was Umatilla Indian, and the Victor book indicates that she was Shoshone. So there's some doubt about that, but evidently she was half-Indian. Now, I think we've covered that as much as we can.

LM: The information I have, I must have gotten it out of a book someplace.

GP: Sure, I can tell that you've done some research on your family. Now let me ask you then, since Lucinda was born at Fort Owen, she had, and her maiden name of course was Harris, she had, looked like she had one sister and four brothers. Do you know anything about them at all? Never had any contact with them at all? You don't know what happened to the Harrises?

LM: I don't know the Harrises.

GP: There was one thing that I found out in the Victor book, about a doctor, J. B. Harris. He was the first physician in Victor. And there was a James Harris that was a brother to your grandmother Lucinda. So I'm just wondering if that could have been your great uncle. But you don't think that was a relation? You don't know, but it doesn't sound likely, does it? Well, then why don't we get back now to your grandmother and your grandfather, Monroe Fulkerson. We've already said that they had nine children, and for the record, it might be kind of interesting to indicate that their youngest child was a daughter who only lived to be a little over two years old, and she died of bronchitis. Her name was Nina, born in 1892, and died of bronchitis in 1894. So that was a common occurrence in those days I'm sure. Yes. So we will continue now with talking about Mr. Fulkerson and his wife Lucinda, but I see we should back up one more time because there's a story about Lucinda's childhood at Fort Owen. We haven't said anything about the Harrises, and John Owen, Major John Owen, or about those cups, one of which you have in your possession. That was a gift.

LM: Did you mention where you saw that?

GP: Yes I did.

LM: She was given six cups.

GP: Your grandmother was given six cups.

LM: By Major Owen.

GP: By Major Owen, on her fifth birthday, that's what the record says.

LM: That's what it says, right here.

GP: That's what it says. That's correct. And you have one of those cups in this room. You don't need to get up. Ed, it's, would you say that's a pewter cup, or a silver, is it silver? (Pause) This

cup is silver, looks like sterling, silver cup, inscribed "John Owen." And this is a very prized possession of Mutt Mowatt. Now you said that there were six of these, and they were given to different relatives.

LM: Right. My mother got three.

GP: Oh, your mother got three of them? I see, and she gave them to?

LM: People, she gave one to my brother, my sister, and myself.

GP: Ok. Your mother got three of them. Well she was very fortunate, considering she had such a large family of brothers and sisters. So let me ask you if, because I remember reading it on here, your sister got one, and your brother got one, so do you know whether they're still in their families?

LM: The only ones I could find now, I got one, and my daughter has one.

GP: Oh your daughter has one.

LM: My daughter, and I can't find any more.

GP: Where did your daughter get hers?

LM: I gave it to her. I got them from my brother and my sister.

GP: I see.

LM: My brother, I think, gave it to me.

GP: So somewhere out there...

LM: She has one now, and I got one.

GP: Well those are really very historic things.

LM: I can't find it.

GP: One of the three.

LM: I can't think, here in my head but I never asked him.

GP: Well these are very prized possessions, I'm sure. You're very fortunate to have them. I do want to take a picture of that before the afternoon is over here. Now what about these other

brothers and sisters of your mother? It was such a large family, what happened to them? Did they stay in the Victor area?

LM: No, they left pretty much. My uncle, we call him George, he stayed around Victor pretty much. Harlan went to California, Mimi went to ...

GP: George stayed in Victor.

LM: For quite a few years

GP: Harlan went to California. And Tom?

LM: Tom, he was, he moved down to California, some place down there.

GP: He left anyhow. And Alice was your mother?

LM: Yeah,

GP: And Ellen?

LM: She was in Washington, you see.

GP: Went to the state of Washington?

LM: Yeah. Yes she's been down, she's been up. (Mumbles)

GP: Spokane?

LM: No. Wallace, Idaho.

GP: Oh, Wallace Idaho?

LM: Yeah she was in Wallace, Idaho. And Maud lived in Missoula. She got married, was in Spokane for many years. He was the youngest, married, I think, he married a Mormon girl.

GP: Well it's interesting that none of them stayed except George.

LM: He stayed for quite a few years, yes.

GP: And then he left too, huh?

LM: Oh no he passed away after in Deer Lodge, in Victor.

GP: Oh I see. He passed away in Victor. Do you want to make any other comments about all those Fulkersons or shall we get back to your mother and your grandparents?

LM: (Unintelligible) and then Ellen died.

GP: Do you remember anything about that family, about your aunts and uncles?

LM: Well.

GP: Did you see them much?

LM: Not so well. No I didn't. My mother's sister married a... he had, they owned the Lolo Hot Springs. She lived in Missoula, her husband was an owner of Lolo Hot Springs.

GP: I see.

LM: I should...

GP: Well that's all right. I guess I'm just kind of interested in whether or not they stayed in the Victor area.

LM: Maud, I think she and Ruby both were in Idaho, Maud had a, they had a hotel. That was in Idaho or Washington.

GP: Wallace.

LM: Wallace, yes.

GP: You said that that was Ellen a while ago.

LM: No, Ellen was in Missoula, or wait a minute. Yeah, Ellen was.

GP: Ellen was in Missoula?

LM: No, no, Ellen was the one who was in...

GP: Wallace?

LM: Wallace.

GP: That's what you said before, and Maud was in Missoula.

LM: Maud was in Missoula, and Ruby was in Wallace.

GP: Oh ok. I thought you said Spokane. But she was in Wallace too.

LM: She was in Wallace, they had a cleaning establishment in Wallace, a cleaning store. For a long period.

GP: What kind of a store?

LM: Cleaning.

GP: Cleaning? I see.

LM: Cleaning clothes.

GP: Oh dry cleaning, dry cleaning. I see. So none of them stayed around there except one out of, two, well with your mother of course, and George. That's very interesting. Now we haven't said anything much at all about your grandfather and his farm. We should say that he came from New York. We know that.

LM: This here shows pretty much...

GP: Yes it does, but we want to get a little of his background on the tape too. Now you told me, you showed me a paper that indicated how he got to the Bitterroot Valley. He came on the Missouri River you said. To Fort Benton. And that's very interesting. Let's see if we can find that again. [Long pause with shuffling paper] Yeah I got that information, but let me ask you a little bit now, talk to you a little bit more about your grandfather. In the Victor book, which has a lot about your family, it says that many people came to the Fulkersons' ranch, which was on Sweathouse Creek wasn't it, to pick currants, gooseberries and apples on shares. And the camps of Indians did farm work, and harvested potatoes. Did you grandfather, or grandmother, or your mother—you didn't know your grandmother, she was dead. Did your grandfather or your mother ever tell you anything about the Indians who came? Where did they come from? Were they Salish?

LM: They never mentioned it.

GP: Nobody ever mentioned those Indians.

LM: Not that I know of.

GP: Well that's interesting.

LM: Well my grandfather pretty much here, in this book, that he lived in Deer Lodge for a few years.

GP: Your grandfather did.

LM: (Unintelligible.)

GP: After your mother had remarried. I see. Well what happened to your grandfather's farm? Lest put this down so it's not—his farm, he had such a big farm there on Sweathouse Creek, didn't he? He must have had a lot of people working there to add shares, it says. What happened to his farm? Did he sell it?

LM: He must have sold it, to a Midtower or a Blake.

GP: Either a Midtower or a Blake.

LM: Midtower and a Clark, Clarks had land close to his ranch.

GP: I see. Well I'm glad you mentioned Midtower, because somewhere in my notes, I learned that Abram, Abe Midtower, was your grandfather's first cousin.

LM: They came together, west.

GP: Yeah, and they were both from New York. Abe Midtower, he had farmed in New York and Illinois. I guess he was about your father's, grandfather's age. He was born in 1846, and your grandfather was born in 1844. I learned that he drove the first, he drove a stagecoach between Missoula and Skalkaho Creek and Missoula and Deer Lodge. Then he homesteaded near where your grandfather had homesteaded. Then he settled on Indian Prairie, wherever that is. I don't know where Indian Prairie is, do you remember where that is?

LM: It was beyond Victor.

GP: Out of Victor somewhere. When this Victor book was published, let's get the date of that, his ranchhouse was still standing. Let's see if we can find that date here. It was published in 1985, so your grandfather's cousin's house was still standing in 1985. I think this would be a good time to indicate—

LM: 1885.

GP: No, it's still standing in 1985. Let's see, the old house was. We should indicate that Abe Midtower built the first bridge over Big Creek, according to the Victor book here. Also, it turns out that the author of this book, Jeffrey H. Langton, is somewhat related to you. You want to explain that again?

LM: Well not really related to me maybe.

GP: In an indirect way he is because you see, Midtower and your grandfather were first cousins.

LM: That was Abe Midtower. And his son was Harry Midtower. He's the grandfather of this boy, Langton.

GP: Harry Midtower is the grandfather of this boy.

LM: Her daughter, or his daughter, his wife Louise Langton, was a Midtower. Harry Midtower.

GP: Harry Midtower married a Langton, no, I got that wrong. Harry Midtower had a daughter, who married a Langton. Ok. So I guess you couldn't call it a close relationship, but you are related a little bit. We would have to draw that all up.

LM: Were good friends. I call her just about every night just to talk to her. She's the one who got this book for me, her son, is the author.

GP: The author, yes.

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

GP: Your grandfather then, he is credited with doing a lot of important things in the Victor area. One thing I noticed was that he started the grange there. Yeah that's in the book, he started the grange and that he was the postmaster; his picture is in the book. Let's see, what else did he do? Well, he had that store called the Victor Cash Store. Now do you remember that store at all?

LM: That was in 1910.

GP: You were just pretty young.

LM: Well I was born in 1907.

GP: So naturally you wouldn't remember this store. Well, why don't you tell me what you remember about him, because he did live with you in Deer Lodge. He must have been fairly old at that time.

LM: He lived quite a few years in Deer Lodge. He also lived in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

GP: Oh, he did. Well what I learned from someplace that I checked, he died in Omak, Washington.

LM: That's what the book said.

GP: I was going to ask you, what was he doing in Omak, Washington?

LM: He had a, he was in Washington quite a few years. I don't know if he had a business there or what.

GP: He was quite old when he died though wasn't he?

LM: Yeah.

GP: Let's see, he was, let's see, 60, 83, around 80 I guess when he died wasn't he. He died in 1923. I guess it wasn't, well they had the railroad he could travel on it in 1923, couldn't he? Do you recall that having been a businessman and a very successful farmer that he had a lot of money? He was comfortable, or that he didn't?

LM: No, I don't think money bothered him. He lived with us.

GP: Of course his wife died, your grandmother, killed in 1904 in a horse and buggy accident [clock chimes] in Victor, wasn't it?

LM: Just out of Victor.

GP: So he lived a long time after she died. What was it like having him there? Did he talk a lot about the old days?

LM: He didn't have much to say.

GP: He didn't.

LM: He and my mother were together, pretty much.

GP: They had a close relationship. Did your mother talk about the old days, about her mother, or her childhood?

LM: No, she never said much, she was a pretty busy woman.

GP: Your mother was.

LM: She married this guy Martin, he passed away. She was alone for quite a few years. My mother worked an awful lot for different people.

GP: What kind of work did she do?

LM: Housework.

GP: She did housework?

LM: Paperwork for houses.

GP: Paperwork?

LM: You know.

GP: Papering, wallpapering. I see. She must have been a strong woman to do that.

LM: Well she worked awfully hard for many years.

GP: You had an older brother and an older sister. And later you had a half-brother, a Van Blaircom. Who took care of you children when your mother was a widow, working so hard, any family, aunts or uncles, or anything like that?

LM: No, my mother, my brother left, he worked in Missoula, about 1918. He was on the, he was 18 years old, went to work for the railroad in Missoula.

GP: And his name was Monroe wasn't it?

LM: Yeah he left Victor, went to work in Missoula. And my sister, she graduated in 1921 from high school, and she married this, Gibbons or Gibson.

GP: I saw the name somewhere, was it Slavens, or something like that?

LM: No, that was her, later she married.

GP: Oh she was married more than once.

LM: She married just—my uncle was—she got boxed into that some way, but it only lasted just a few months. Then she went to Great Falls and worked in a bank. After that she lived in Spokane. She worked in a big store in Spokane. And that's where she married Slavens.

GP: I see. It is kind of interesting how few of these people stayed in Victor isn't it?

LM: My brother left, my sister left. It was just my mother and I, were up there. And then I had this half-brother.

GP: Yeah, and you said he left too.

LM: I don't know where he went. He was younger than I was. He went through high school in Victor.

GP: I see. It doesn't sound like you were very close to him.

LM: No.

GP: Well, let's get back now, see if you can recall some things about your grandfather Monroe Fulkerson, when he lived with you. How did he spend his time?

LM: He had a garden.

GP: Oh he did?

LM: And my mother worked on it. My sister left, she left early on, and my brother, I don't remember too much about him.

GP: Maybe this is a good time for me to zero in on you a little bit more, Mutt. Did you go to high school in Victor?

LM: Grade school and high school.

GP: Grade school and high school. What kinds of memories to you have about those years?

LM: I was quite an athlete in high school.

GP: What did you play?

LM: I played basketball, and I didn't do much (?), I was a good basketball player.

GP: How far did the teams go? Did you play the other little towns?

LM: Oh yeah. We played Stevensville, and even at that time, we played Darby. We even took the train to go to Darby to play basketball.

GP: Oh, that's interesting.

LM: We had to take a train and stay overnight. They put us up, played basketball, and took the train back to Victor the next day. At that time there wasn't any cars around. Not too much.

GP: I guess not very many. The roads weren't very good either were they?

LM: It was 1925 when I played basketball.

GP: You were born in 1908, right?

LM: 1907.

GP: 1907. I see.

LM: 1907.

GP: Did you have any indication when you were in high school about what you wanted to do when you finished high school?

LM: Well I worked in the drug store a couple of summers in Victor.

GP: While you were in high school.

LM: In high school. Before then grade school and then, I worked for Harry Lictower(?) quite a few years. In a hayfield, I was a, what do you call it, derrick.

GP: Derrick?

LM: Derrick? When you had the horse to take the load of hay, the haystack?

GP: D-e-r-r-i-c-k, derrick?

LM: Derrick.

GP: Oh I see.

LM: All I did, I would take a horse, had a horse. I'd drive ahead. Had to take the load up, and I'd have to bring it back, put him back. Then the last two years I worked in the drug store.

GP: You never worked on your grandfather's farm though.

LM: No.

GP: Did he still have it when, he'd given it up by then.

LM: Yeah quite a few years.

GP: I see. I'm sure you know where his farm was down there. Is it still being farmed?

LM: I don't know who lives there now.

GP: Oh you don't. Yeah I see. Well if you were born in 1907, you must have some memories of World War I, do you?

LM: I was too young.

GP: I see, well I know you were too young.

LM: Too young and too old for any wars.

GP: You didn't, one thing that, so you don't remember World War I at all? You would have been in school.

LM: That was about 1918?

GP: 1918, 1917, 1918.

LM: We moved to Missoula for two years, and I was going to grade school, I was in eighth grade or something.

GP: I see.

LM: Went to school in Missoula, for a couple years. Then we moved back to Victor.

GP: Why did you move to Missoula, you have any idea?

LM: My stepfather was a coal contractor on the railroad.

GP: I see.

LM: At the time he spent, his work was between Paradise and Garrison, Montana, coal contractor for many people for many years, so that quite an important job for him.

GP: Sure. He died too, while you were a child.

LM: 1921, I think.

GP: 1921.

LM: Right around there sometime.

GP: So you still were not grown were you, when he died?

LM: No, my mother and I were pretty much alone then. My brother was gone.

GP: I see. She moved back to Victor when he died then?

LM: Well, he died in Victor. He had diabetes and he had 20 acres in Victor, I didn't tell you that. Well he loaned his 10 acres and went to California when he was sick. He died in California.

GP: I see.

LM: Shipped him back to Victor and buried him there.

GP: Why did he go to California?

LM: He had this disease.

GP: Diabetes?

LM: Diabetes. He figured that would help him.

GP: But he went by himself?

LM: Yup.

GP: Well your mother had a lot of tough luck, didn't she?

LM: She was alone, pretty much.

GP: Was her third husband a man from the Victor area?

LM: Yeah, he'd been married before. He had children up, around in Deer Lodge. I didn't know him too well. He was two years, but I was at the University when she married him.

GP: I see.

LM: I wasn't home with him.

GP: I see. I did want to ask you, you were too young to know much about World War I, but you know there was a big flu epidemic going on at that time. Do you have any recollection of the people being very ill with that, where you were?

LM: Well, my mother had a daughter, and a boy by then and they were in Missoula.

GP: Oh yeah, in Missoula.

LM: The daughter, she had pneumonia. She died.

GP: She died of pneumonia? Was she pretty young?

LM: Just a baby.

GP: Just a baby? And she died of pneumonia?

LM: A couple years old, something like that, two and a half years.

GP: That was pretty dreadful. There wasn't anything you could do about bronchitis or pneumonia.

LM: I remember that my mother and I, and my brothers looking it up. We took a picture on a train. They had a funeral, in Victor. She passed away. The train that day.

GP: You were quite young yourself, weren't you?

LM: Yes I was only a fifth grader, it was fifth grade.

GP: I see.

LM: 1918, I was about 11 years old.

GP: You did go back to Victor though, and you graduated from high school there. I know you worked hard in those years, and you were in sports. What else did you do for fun in those years, besides work? Was it a happy time?

LM: I went fishing a whole lot when I was a young boy. Take a little wagon (?) to the creek, which was a couple miles over and fish, catch a lot of fish, and eat and cook a couple myself. I'd give them to my friends and neighbors when I'd come back. I did a lot of fishing at that time.

GP: I see. Did you have friends you went with or did you just take off by yourself?

LM: Pretty much by myself.

GP: I get the impression that you were a pretty hard worker. You were probably a hard fisherman too.

LM: I did. I worked for this area for years. And they were awfully good to me, just like that.

GP: Yeah well, that's very interesting.

LM: That's how I got to know this Louise. She was just a young, she was about, she must have been eight or ten years younger than me, when I was growing up, younger than that probably.

GP: Harry's daughter, I see, the mother of the author of the book. I'm gradually getting all of this straight. You did go to the University of Montana right?

LM: Yes.

GP: When you went there, that took a little cash. Had you earned that money beforehand?

LM: Pretty much.

GP: Did you go directly after high school?

LM: No. 1925, I was living with my brother in Missoula. He was working for the Northern Pacific, and he had a room. He wasn't married or anything, I roomed with him. I painted the University "M". I worked downtown at a restaurant. Every night I went down with a hundred pound sack of spuds, served pitchers, cut about ten loaves of bread.

GP: What was the name of the restaurant, do you remember?

LM: The Atlantic.

GP: The Atlantic? Was that in a hotel?

LM: No. The Atlantic Café.

GP: The Atlantic Café. Was it on Higgins? [519 N. Higgins Ave.]

LM: Yeah, just about half a block from the NPD [Northern Pacific Depot]. Every morning, I'd go down for breakfast, and they'd fix me up lunch, I'd eat lunch, then I'd go down every night, peel my potatoes, and cut the bread.

GP: So you got your meals out of that too?

LM: Worked for that.

GP: I see.

LM: So I lived with my brother, and I worked for my food. Well, I worked every Sunday.

GP: In Victor?

LM: No. After I went to the University, I worked for the Bureau of Public Roads, surveying. When I first got out of high school a friend of mine wrote to me, a friend over in Tusker Montana, in a sawmill.

GP: Tusker?

LM: Tusker, on the other side of Paradise. We went over there, and we were logging, they'd cut down the tress, and he had a job, he had a different job, he knew the fellow that ran the place, he gave me an axe and I'd cut the limbs. That was my job, I worked there a month. Then my brother brought me to Missoula and said, "I have a job for you," so I came back to Missoula and I worked for the Bureau of Public Roads. It was government job, road surveying. My first job was Swan River. I started work and ended at Seeley Lake.

GP: Did you have to have any special training for that?

LM: I was stake artist.

GP: Oh I see, stake artist.

LM: I had stakes about so long. Depended where the (unintelligible) was, whether it was 25 feet apart, or 50 feet, or something like that. (Unintelligible.) Every 50 feet I had to put a stake in the road.

GP: So you earned enough money to stay in college anyhow.

LM: One summer there. My brother, my brother did give me a hundred dollars once, but I paid it back later. It was good to last a year of school. I had borrowed a couple hundred dollars from the bank.

GP: Did you know you wanted to be a pharmacist?

LM: I worked at a drug store for a year or so, in Victor.

GP: In Victor?

LM: When I went to Missoula I went into the pharmacy school.

GP: You had a pretty good idea then.

LM: I guess so.

GP: How many years did pharmacy require in those years?

LM: Three years, but it took my four years because I only went to school one quarter in my third year, I didn't have enough money to go to school.

GP: Four undergraduate years and then?

LM: Three, you completed it in three years at that time.

GP: You could graduate, get a degree in three years?

LM: In three years.

GP: I see.

LM: I went four because I went to school for a year, I just didn't have enough money.

GP: But then pharmacy school came afterwards didn't it?

LM: No, that was including pharmacy school.

GP I see. So it's different now, you get a bachelor's degree then you go into pharmacy isn't that correct, or am I wrong?

LM: No it's about five years now I guess, five years.

GP: Oh yeah, I guess in five years you're certified.

LM: Of course you had to take English and you had to take chemistry, and pharmacy. It was a tough three years.

GP: Yeah that's courses you had. It took you four, I'm sure you're right its five years now isn't it. I think it is, I know somebody who's in pharmacy school.

LM: It was a three-year course at the time. Three quarters right, graduate in three years.

GP: Probably the liberal arts classes have been added on since then, don't you think?

LM: I'd imagine. It took a few actually, you had to take English, and you had to take bacteriology.

GP: Did you go directly to Deer Lodge to work after that?

LM: Well, I graduated from high school on a Monday—university—and between that night, I went to Deer Lodge the next morning.

GP: How did you get a job so fast?

LM: I heard about it about two weeks before, so I went up to Deer Lodge and talked to the boss and he showed me around town, and I guess he kind of must have kind of liked me a little bit because he went around and he said can you go to work tomorrow? I said I was in school yet.

GP: What year was this?

LM: My senior year, 1925.

GP: 1925.

LM: I finished that afternoon, and I went to Deer Lodge that night. I didn't have any money and my brother had to get me a ticket on the NP [Northern Pacific] to get me to Deer Lodge.

GP: I see. Not a very long ride, but still required a ticket, didn't it. So you spent your entire career down in Deer Lodge.

LM: I worked for the fellow about five years, he passed away. Then another fellow that was up there at that time, he and I started a drug store, and there were quite a few others involved in it. We started Deer Lodge Drug. And I was there for about five years. It was a little too much, too many people involved. I couldn't get ahead helping them there, there were only two of us. So I went into a partnership with a fellow named Gallagher, he and I were partners for 15 years I guess.

GP: Was he a pharmacist also? What was the name of your business?

LM: Keystone Drug, we changed the name to, it was New Keystone Drug, is what we called it. And then after 10 years I bought him out from it. And I called it Mutt's Keystone Drug.

GP: The what?

LM: Mutt.

GP: Oh Mutt. Mutt's Keystone Drug.

LM: For 10 years, then I sold that.

GP: Was that when you retired?

LM: Well, no. I sold that then I went to, they were short on help in Galen at the hospital. I moved out there. I knew a fellow out there, he used to play basketball, he asked me if I would come out, and I went out there to Galen and I worked 10 years out there at the pharmacy.

GP: Did you like that as well?

LM: I was a nice deal. I was my own boss just about, and I'd go in the morning, and do my work, and leave a lot of the times two, three o'clock in the afternoon.

GP: And you didn't have to be purchasing drugs, or keeping a stock up, or did you?

LM: I had to do that.

GP: You had to do that.

LM: I had to do all that. That wasn't hard. Everything was on a card. You filled prescriptions needed, you put that on the card, you knew how, at the end of the month you knew what you had in stock, and how much you used. Every three months we ordered.

GP: This was the mid-, well I mean when you graduated from college, it was the mid-20s. Times were pretty good.

LM: '25 is when I went to Deer Lodge.

GP: To Deer Lodge.

LM: No '29.

GP: '29?

LM: When I finished high school.

GP: '29, I wondered about that. [Phone rings] I'll back this up for a minute.

LM: I went to Deer Lodge in '29.

GP: Your brother didn't go to college did he?

LM: No.

GP: And what about your sister? Was she interested in going to college?

LM: No, she went—I don't think she did—she went to Great Falls and then she went down to Spokane.

GP: You were determined to go to college?

LM: I went to college and I was Sigma Chi.

GP: Sigma Chi? That's interesting that you had time to be a fraternity man, as hard as you were working.

LM: Well, I didn't, I worked on there a couple years and got paid. My sophomore year I was house boy at a sorority house [laughs].

GP: Oh I see. So you spent a little more time on campus then?

LM: Well yeah. I didn't have, I could eat right there, see I had my board.

GP: Do you want to comment on any memories you have of your college days at UM?

LM: When I was a freshman, I made my numeral at the University, making, I got my sweater and numeral, in the high jump.

GP: In the high jump? You were an athlete there too, at the high jump?

LM: My freshman year, 5 foot 9. Got my number, that's what they gave the freshman.

GP: What did they call it?

LM: Numeral.

GP: Numeral?

LM: Numeral. "29," I had on, they gave me a sweater, and "29" was on the sweater.

GP: And that was for the year?

LM: That was the year that I was supposed to graduate. So it was "25" on that, no, I graduated from the University in '29.

GP: Yeah, that's when you said you went to...

LM: Went to school in '25.

GP: Yeah, that makes sense. So you got your number anyhow for your freshman, numeral for your freshman year in the high jump.

LM: Yeah. They don't give a freshman an "M." You have to be a sophomore to get an "M."

GP: Oh I see. They still do that?

LM: I think they do.

GP: Well it's interesting that when you were working so hard you were able to go out in athletics as well.

LM: I got my numeral my freshman year, and then I played basketball. I never made the team, but we had a team of our own. In college, I was told I was ineligible. We used play, we used to go to Ronan, play with the high school team, the high school would pay our transportation,

overnight. We stayed overnight. But I never made the basketball team, I asked once to come out and play with the freshman team, and I did once.

GP: So did you have much social life with the sorority girls?

LM: Oh yeah, I was, like I said, a house boy with the sorority house one year. A good friend of mine, Cal Pearson, we were good friends, and we were invited quite a bit to the dances. Both of us liked to dance, and he had a car. We were invited quite a bit to the dances at the sorority houses.

GP: Did you meet your wife at the University?

LM: No, met her down at the Bureau, she was a teen-aged girl. She was just going to high school when I went there. She just finished high school when we got married. She finished high school in May and we got married in July.

GP: I see. And you had two daughters?

LM: Anne and Marilyn.

GP: Anne and Marilyn. And one lives in Pullman and one in?

LM: She teaches school in Pullman. They both went to school, both went through school. Anne went to school 20 years ago in Missoula here, and she went, graduated from school in Billings. Billings Tech or whatever they call it, Billings' school?

GP: It's Eastern Montana College.

LM: I guess, yeah. Then she taught school for one year in Great Falls after she finished. Then she got married.

GP: I see.

LM: My other daughter, she went to school for years down at the university—

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

GP: The other one, what did she major in?

LM: My youngest one?

GP: Yeah.

LM: Well, she's been teaching Physical Ed pretty much in Pullman.

GP: But what about the one in Bigfork, what did she major in?

LM: She only went to school one year.

GP: And didn't work after that, I see.

LM: She got married then.

GP: So if you graduated in '29 that takes us into the Depression years. You were working in a drug store then. How did the Depression affect the drug business, the pharmacy business?

LM: They got along pretty good, course they had to work long hours. Salary wasn't great, \$125 a month.

GP: You were salaried, in the drug store?

LM: For the first five years.

GP: I see, what about the customers, how was the Depression affecting them?

LM: They seemed to be doing okay, didn't have too much trouble.

GP: Not too much trouble. What was the main employment in Deer Lodge at that time?

LM: The railroads were the main.

GP: The railroad. And the railroad kept going.

LM: It was a real good at that time. The Milwaukee.

GP: I see. Were there any effects, political effects over there, and the government programs that were so popular in Missoula and elsewhere? Were they occurring in Deer Lodge? You

know there was the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] and the WPA [Work Projects Administration] and all those.

LM: Not too much.

GP: You don't remember that they were?

LM: I was working in Deer Lodge. After I ended the partnership with Gallagher that was during the war, I was, I was an engineer, a fireman on the Milwaukee Railroad. I worked on there for it.

GP: During the war?

LM: That was on top of the partnership in the drug store. So any time I had off that I was wasn't working for the railroad, I was working in the drug store.

GP: I see.

LM: The first thing they did was send me over to Burley, (?) Idaho, for about three or four months.

GP: The railroad did. Why did you do that?

LM: Well, like you say it was...

GP: It was a service.

LM: During the war, I figured one of us had to do something. My partner, he was quite a bit older.

GP: So was that rough work, pretty hard physical work?

LM: No. It was easy work. I was a fireman on the Milwaukee Railroad. I was an electrician, electrical work. So it wasn't any physical work at all at that time.

GP: Well, did your wife work during all those years? She stayed home?

LM: No, got married in '31. She stayed home. Our first child was born.

GP: When did you retire, Mutt?

LM: Oh, my last job was up in Galen and I remember I quit there about '76, but after that I still worked in Anaconda for about five years extra.

GP: Anaconda.

LM: Anaconda, worked up there.

GP: As a pharmacist?

LM: Worked there about five years.

GP: Let's see, you stayed in Deer Lodge all those—you lived in Deer Lodge though?

LM: I went back and forth.

GP: How did your life change after you did retire? Did you have an opportunity to travel or do anything special?

LM: No, I didn't retire until my wife passed away, about that time. '82 she passed away. I lived in Deer Lodge for 10 years by myself. Nice home out there.

GP: So now you don't have any ties to Deer Lodge either?

LM: No.

GP: No relatives, well maybe your wife's family is there?

LM: No, they're all gone too, they passed away. Our folks, she hadn't any relations up there at all, and I hadn't either.

GP: I see, and so how did you choose to live here in the Village Retirement Center?

LM: Well my daughter did that for me.

GP: She lives in Pullman, how did she know about this place?

LM: Well she found out about it, and she didn't want me living alone and eating my meals out there by myself. She knew I wasn't eating like I should.

GP: Was this the daughter in Bigfork or the one in Pullman?

LM: The one in Pullman, she came over, made all the reservations, and she told me about it. She kind of gave me a...

GP: She said, "This is it, huh?"

LM: Yup. She didn't want me living alone and eating, because she knew I wasn't eating right.

GP: Was it quite an adjustment?

LM: Different, because I'd have my breakfast at home, I'd have breakfast, and then I'd go downtown maybe for lunch.

GP: What about the small quarters? Does that bother you to live in a smaller space?

LM: No, because the meals are nice. I don't do much. I didn't do much up there.

GP: In the way of cooking you mean?

LM: No, anything else. Well I had a large yard but I couldn't take care of it.

GP: So how do you spend your time here? There are lots of activities aren't there?

LM: Well I don't take in very much. No, I read the papers and get my meals. I don't do much. I take in a few happy hours or something.

GP: I see. Well I have an idea that you probably do some research on your family, obviously you have a lot of notes here.

LM: Oh yeah. When my daughter called me, both of them, they call me two or three times a week. The one in Pullman, she calls a lot. She's back in Tennessee, you see, right now. She calls from there. She'll be home the next day or two.

GP: So your daughter from Bigfork is going to take you to Deer Lodge for the 4th of July. Do you visit friends and stay with friends over there?

LM: Well I'll stay home, I have my home.

GP: Oh you still have it there? Still furnished?

LM: Yeah, I just have a few things I brought down here, but it's all furnished I have a bed downstairs.

GP: How often do you get out there?

LM: I've only been out there twice since I've been here. That was just for a day.

GP: You intend to maintain it over there?

LM: Well I don't know yet. I just had it painted, and I just had the inside cleaned up and painted. So I don't know, I may resell it one day. I have a big place.

GP: You do, yeah.

LM: Across the alley, I got a shed and a double garage. It's a large, large place.

GP: Well I know there are a lot more things I am probably forgetting to ask you about your family.

LM: No, not too much.

GP: The one thing that I feel I have not adequately covered is your great-grandfather, Thomas W. Harris, because he did an awful lot in community service, there in the Victor area, or in the Stevensville area. We don't have that on the tape.

LM: I don't know much about him.

GP: This information that you did give me is quite good. I might attempt to read this, and you can stop me if I'm not getting it right. Because I hate to leave this off, and feel that this might get separated from the tape, you know what I mean? So I think I, I started reading this a long time ago, I mean on the tape, at the very beginning. I'm going to pick up on this, and if it's repetitious, that's ok too. I'm going to start just by way of review. It says "Thomas Harris, whom Owens plans to make his heir, came to Bitterroot Valley in 1852." Now the Owens is John Owens from Fort Owen. John Owen, I should say. "Indian, Harris married Losetta Rainer, part French, part Umatilla Indian woman, January 1858, Three Forks area." And we questioned that date because, well maybe it's accurate. But anyhow your grandmother, their daughter was born in 1857, if I have the year right. "March 1868, Harris Journal," I suppose that's where you got this, "townsite laid out at rich gold ledge known as White Cloud." Now was that in the Stevensville area? You don't know. That was just information you got from someplace.

LM: A book.

GP: Ok. "1868, Tom Harris, one-time postmaster in Stevensville, fraternal organization, social and civic, Bes Buck..." Ok, I know what this is about. You're saying Tom Harris, your grandfather, Monroe D. Fulkerson, A. S. Blake, Mrs. Monroe D. Fulkerson, and Mrs. William N. Smith, organized the grange in, Fort Owen Grange, Number 18, in May 1874. "December 16, 1862, school in full blast, 10 scholars, all half-breeds, one Snake Indian girl. John Owen started the school." Now this must be about Fort Owen, obviously that's about Fort Owen. "February 28, 1862, Robinson, schoolmaster, set adrift for taking improper liberties with little daughter of William M. Harris, May—" I want to make a note there, because there's something about Harris that I want to mention, but I want to go through this first. "November 28, 1869, school pupils, Tom Harris and Lucinda Harris, Mrs. Harris' brother, Clark and Joe Rainer—" that's the first we've

heard about him— “and Mary” looks like Winslet. “Monroe Fulkerson married Lucinda Harris in later years, school in Hagger Farmhouse. Tom Harris appointed superintendent of schools, Missoula County, 1863, reappointed 1865. Lone Stokes school, 1885, 1893, Ravalli District Number 13 trustee. Thomas Harris—Mo Harris? Mo Harness?—reported that his son could wear a six-shooter to school if he wanted to. First real road, Bitterroot Old Stagecoach Road, 1867. Tom Harris was appointed with others to locate and log out, log it out, East Side Highway. “Petition,” it says, “May 1, 1870, Tom Harris also to help lay it out. 1885, Abram Midtower, parentheses, it says, (road from Stevensville to Victor), awarded contract to build three bridges.” We’ve touched on that someplace else. Anyhow, for what it’s worth, this information is now on the tape. So I hope I haven’t omitted anything. Is there anything else that you can think of that I should be putting on this tape? Seems to me that we’ve rambled around here, but still we’ve recorded a lot of important information. At least I hope we have.

[End of Interview]