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This transcript represents the nearly verbatim record of an unrehearsed interview. Please bear in mind that you are reading the spoken word rather than the written word.

Oral History Number: 090-001

Interviewee: Leo Kinney, Della Schmitz Kinney

Interviewer: Jim Peterson

Date of Interview: 1978

Note: A portion of the interview is restricted because the interviewees discuss the location of an indigenous burial site.

Jim Peterson: I guess mostly the first couple things I wanted to ask you is where did Lothrop and Alberton get its name?

Leo Kinney: Alberton got its name from superintendent of the Milwaukee Railroad, and his name was Albert Earling.

Della Kinney: [unintelligible].

LK: And there was a controversy—

DK: Alexander wasn't it?

LK: There was controversy for several years or for a long time. A lot of them thought it was named for the Albert family, the homestead that lived over across the river over here, but we found records, city records, that showed definitely that it was named for this Albert Earling. Lothrop—

DK: [unintelligible].

LK: She's got it? Okay.

DK: [unintelligible].

JP: Do you want me to turn this on?

LK: Yeah, just for a minute.

DK: [reading from something] Lothrop was named in 1890, or was established. There was a post office there and depot for the NP [Northern Pacific Railroad-]. For L.R. Lothrop, NP construction engineer. See, this doesn't have to do with Alberton because it's just...

JP: How was it started? Was it started as a railroad town?

DK: Sawmill.

JP: Sawmill. What was the sawmill built for then?

DK: Western Montana...

LK: Just Western Lumber Company. It wasn't Western Montana. It was Western Lumber Company. It was a tremendous, big mill, and they logged all around here. Then they also logged a lot of the Nine Mile, and it was floated down the river. They hauled them down from the mouth of Nine Mile Creek and dumped them in the river, floated them down the river, and caught them in booms and brought them into the big mill over there.

JP: So that was started before the railroad was here?

DK: In 1890, you see, the NP went through, and the railroad was finished there in 1890.

LK: Yeah, but he says was the mill before the railroad?

DK: No.

LK: No.

DK: No, [unintelligible] because the railroad was there.

LK: Well, okay. The railroad was first then. That's what I thought.

DK: But just immediately afterwards until around 19...between 1907 and '10, they tore it up and moved it down to Bonner.

JP: So that's the same one that they have in Bonner?

DK: No, no.

LK: No since that they've added lots or put in all new equipment and everything, but it was. In fact—of course, this gets away from Alberton—at the same time, they bought the big mill from St. Regis and the mill from here, and they took the both of them to Bonner and made one mill out of the two of them. But of course, in later years, they put in all new equipment and everything.

Turn that off just a second.

[Break in audio]

DK: This is the pond where they shunted—where those piling are up there—they shunted the logs in here, dragged them up this ramp into the mill, and this is canal that went on down and dumped into the river.

JP: This right here is the pond that is right outside of...or is right there...

LK: Yeah, did you ever ice skate over on that?

JP: Yeah, I used to ice skate.

LK: Yeah, that's the old mill pond.

DK: This was the school house, this was the union hall and they sat up on the hill over there where Gustafsons or Wiltsons (?) up in that area.

JP: So actually then, Lothrop was the first town here.

LK: Lothrop was established before Alberton. Alberton didn't really start until the Milwaukee Railroad came in.

JP: But the logging—once they got all their lumber and stuff done—what'd they do with it then?

LK: Oh, they shipped it out on the...it was the NP then, it's the Burlington Northern now.

DK: What didn't wash out.

LK: They shipped, yeah. 1910—

DK: 1908.

LK: 1908, they had a tremendous flood that washed out the Higgins Avenue bridge in Missoula and several other bridges and houses and everything, and all of this stuff was floating down the river. All of the mill and the lumber yards and everything was afloat over in Lothrop, and a lot of the stuff floated away, floated on down the river to Coeur D'Alene Lake or where it ended up. But one of the bars had doors at both ends of it, so the lumber company told the bartender that they would pay 75 cents for each of these big timbers that the lumberjacks would catch. So they'd go out there and wrastle [wrestle?] a big timber, [unintelligible] and stuff and get it, bring it in to one door, stop it at the bar, collect their 75 cents and turn it loose. It would go on out the other door and on down the river. [laughs] Yeah, it's quite a deal.

JP: About how many people where there then in Lothrop?

DK: Used to be 3,000 at one time.

JP: Three thousand in Lothrop? It is hard to believe from what it is now.

DK: [unintelligible] it is here now was Thorne's Store over there, and it was one of these two buildings right here. I have a key that tells what all of these are, but it was one of these buildings. The bridge was washed out and they had a ferry down here on the river, but they brought these across on a flat boat—different buildings, some of these up here—and floated them across on flat boats and rolled them over to Alberton area here on log rollers by hand. A few of them they took apart.

LK: Hank Rhode's (?) house was brought over from there for an engineer by the name of McCullough (?), and it was set up there. Part of Merlin Lemmer's (?) house was brought over from there. Gary Hornses (?), Elmore Smith's (?) house was brought over from there. In fact, it set up on the bench up there where Guy Spence (?) and [unintelligible] now lives.

JP: So they just took everything and moved it from Lothrop?

LK: Well they tore a lot of it down, but they did move six or eight houses over and business buildings over here.

DK: The front of Al Manuel's (?) house and the Hunt house.

LK: Chet Wiley's (?) house.

JP: Up to 3,000 thousand people—that's quite a few.

DK: Yes it is, and there was no indication of anyone living there. It was a very little bit of the mill left. We went over one day this spring and took a picture, and there's just a little bit of foundation. Indication that [unintelligible] was there.

LK: That's the bench up there where Guy Spence now lives.

JP: There isn't any trees up there now at all. I mean compared to what there was.

LK: No.

DK: No, no, that was all cut down.

LK: This was part of the lumber yard. Petty Creek runs right down through the middle of this here, and it was all bridged in so that they could cross almost anywhere on it. Cribbed up on the sides. It was just a straight channel down through there.

JP: That's neat. Another question I wanted to ask you is, continuing with Lothrop and stuff, where did Cinderella Mountain get its name? Do you have any idea about that?

DK: Well, there are different stories. Willie Clark says that it was named for a mine that was not a very good one, but one that was started up there on the side and it was called Cinderella. Some other people dispute that and say it's because it stood out all by itself, and it was like Cinderella that it was different—a little bit different than the rest.

LK: That's the big mill, looking west. This is from the east looking west. The smoke you see here was the planer building which set down west of Petty Creek, which we will show you a picture of later there.

JP: Boy, this is fantastic. It doesn't look anything like it.

LK: This is pretty much the same picture, all though they were taken at different times. If you'll notice, there's smoke coming out of this smoke stack where there isn't in this picture here.

DK: A train across—

LK: And there is also a train across one of them, but there isn't in the other one.

JP: Is there a railroad tracks up there?

DK: Yeah, right where they are now.

LK: Yeah, they go right down through there. On this one, you can see part of the train. In fact, that's the smoke from the engine of the train that's pulling down through there right past the mill.

DK: See, that's right here because if you're looking at it from over here sort of—you're looking toward the mill and these building—the train blocks the view of those in the one and not in the other.

LK: This is another picture of the big mill building itself, and this shows all the lumber. There was 300 million feet of lumber piled in that yard at one time. This was the planer that set this west of Petty Creek about where Skip Armstrong (?) and people live in there. In fact, there's part of the old foundation still setting there. Somebody built a house around it or something. They had the pipe running clear across the railroad tracks down to the river bank between the present bridge and the mouth of Petty Creek. If you go over there, you can still find old brick and stuff where this big burner sat out here on the river bank that they burnt the shavings from this planer mill.

This is part of the business district and one of these was Thorne's store, and this set down about where Runyon's gate is there that goes into their place. This was one of the saloons that was over there called the Columbian. W. A. Garrett...W. J. Gerrity...and I have a token, you know they used to make tokens for businesses, good for 25 cents or 12 and a half cents in trade or something. I have a token among my collections that came from that. This was a school that was over there. It set up on the bench up in there above Brian Gustafson's. This was students that was over there at one time or different years. This building is still there. This is the old section foreman's house. Set back in the depot.

These are all Lothrop pictures but...a real good view of Cinderella Mountain there. There was a big water tower set just west of Petty Creek. I don't know if that shows in any of these pictures or not. Here's the depot when it was setting over there. Don't ask us where we got all these pictures. It'd been 30 years. Every time we hear of somebody that has a picture we borrow, and we get copies made of it and so on. That book there has all kinds of history about Lothrop and Alberton in it.

DK: And it isn't complete. It has to be redone.

JP: Well what happened to Lothrop then after? Why did it big boom?

LK: Well, they run out of timber around here, and they just moved everything out. Just went back to nature quite a few years.

DK: It was about 15...it was about 20 years that it was in there, and they just wiped out all the old town.

JP: Did most of their stuff then come from Nine Mile, or did it come from all over? All their lumber and stuff.

DK: Their logs? I have an idea that they probably logged all those mountains, logged through up Petty Creek and along the river there, but they logged Curchie Creek (?) and brought it down there and there was a bridge—an old wooden bridge, and we do have a picture of that too—that was toward the pond a little bit. We got [unintelligible] down a little. This is where the new bridge is right now and here was the first bridge, and right in the middle here is where the one washed out—the one just before this. But they would take the logs down and haul them across on that old wooden bridge to the mill or else over to this...over to put them on the railroad and send them to Wallace. Down toward Wallace at Henderson they had a mill, and then they had one at St. Regis that was called the Blackfoot Milling Company. That's the one they tore out and moved down to Bonner too. The one at Henderson I don't know just what happened to that. That's too far out of our territory.

LK: There was also an old saw mill that sat over here on the Ponderosa Subdivision out here—out this side of where Frank lives there. Up into the narrower part there before you come out

onto the narrow grade as you come out of there. They logged all of Curchie and all these hills and stuff here into that mill.

JP: That's quite a bit.

LK: In fact, all the ponderosa and everything was logged and taken into that mill.

JP: Was that all covered with trees then at one time?

LK: Yes. Oh yeah. Even when we first came here, there was still some pretty good-sized pine trees. In fact, I logged part of them off there, off the Ponderosa right out there where people are living now—trees this big around.

JP: Well, like how would you haul them then? Did you just drop them into the river or did you...

LK: At that time, we had a mill built on the same foundation as this planer building here—the planing mill—and we hauled them by truck over to that. We hauled a lot of logs out of Petty Creek and stuff, but that's modern times—that was in the late '40s and early '50s that we would go up there.

DK: But years ago, the fellows had teams [unintelligible] to take all of our wagons too, and right down in the farm where the curve in the road comes this side of the upper Nine Mile ridge. On that side and down into the river there, there was a place that they used too...they had some kind...at one time, they had some kind of a tram or something across there, crossed the river from Nine Mile, but it didn't stand up too...Well, I don't know it went down in 1908 or before that, but the fellow that lived there—

LK: It was part of the old piers and stuff. It was a cable suspension deal either for a tram or a ferry that they ran across there. Some of the piers are still standing out there.

DK: Well, I've been told that it was a tram.

LK: Yeah. At the mouth of Nine Mile Creek, just across the road from where the present Nine Mile house is was an old stage station also run by a guy by the name of Brown. The town of Alberton was homestead was Brown's, and they weren't related. This Brown run that state station there for years and years and years, like I say, when the old Mullan Road went down through here and up into later years.

JP: That's another thing I was going to ask you is how did the Mullan Road, how did they put that...do you how it went through here?

DK: I can tell you how it went through—

LK: The location or why?

JP: Well, why, yeah. Why and the location.

DK: You don't know why they built Mullan Road?

LK: It was built for a military road to get supplies from Fort Benton to Walla Walla, Washington. They didn't have any connection through this whole country so they sent Mullan [Lieutenant John Mullan] through here to lay out a route and then what would be same as our present corps of engineers came through here with military, soldier labor and built this road practically by hand. There's still portions of it that's very plain, and for instance out west of town here at the east-bound rest area, if you take off from there and go up across the Milwaukee tracks and back up in there, you can follow the old original Mullan Road clear through the Meads (?). Then it went over—and stayed on that side of the river—and climbed and went clear over the top of the Big High—the gorge down there and the big purple cliffs and stuff. Then it came back down into the bottom over where the present...well, it was called Crystal Springs where Stu Nichols (?) lives there now. Came down at the bottom again there and went on down west. Out through here, I would presume it was close to this street right here.

DK: No, it was down below there. It went right through the rocks that used to be down here, [unintelligible] river bank. And that was [unintelligible]. It went over and right through the middle of his field, just skimmed their cemetery up there, and went on out and followed the river along out there for a way. You know where that big cliff is out there by the current bridge, from that point on over past that farm, it was a swamp [unintelligible].

LK: What they call Corduroy Road [unintelligible] in there and laced together. They drove across.

JP: Just like what we do on trails.

LK: What?

JP: Just like what we do on trails sometimes.

DK: Right down here, maybe somewhere this side of the cliffs where the dump was or maybe it was just right straight down like where Hunt's live down there or in that flat down there, Mullan camped.

LK: He camped right at Frieda Miller's (?) where the spring was for the company...what's now the city water supply came, run right down to the river at that time. All them big springs up there came right down that draw and ran to the river, and they camped there where that water was.

DK: Three or four days [unintelligible].

LK: It was a tremendous job building that road, but they got it.

JP: I heard too...Is there such thing as a Yellowstone Trail that had gone through here?

LK: Well, this old highway was at one time was called the Yellowstone Trail.

DK: Number 10.

LK: The old highway—later, it was highway 10—was called the Yellowstone Trail.

JP: It was after the Mullan Trail?

LK: Oh yeah, way after.

DK: Oh, much, much later. As late as in the 1930s probably. That was as early as it was named that. I think it was named that for tourism.

JP: Well then after everybody moved to Alberton—

DK: They didn't all move to Alberton though. Only a portion of them. Others went away.

DK: Well, then there was still those the ones that came down. Did they move just because of the railroad?

LK: Yes, because the Milwaukee was moving in here, and this was in...oh, it started in about 1907 that the Milwaukee bought 6 and 7—the Milwaukee bought Brown's homestead—and his homestead house sat over where John Gloria (?) feeds his horses there. He owned everything down to Chet's Bar and from there on west, and they bought that from him. Then they bought, in later years, this east section was homesteaded by a man by the name of Perry and then by a man...Bill Adams bought it from him. Then he subdivided all of it into town lots—this whole east section. That is the reason this is called Adams Street here, after old Bill Adams.

JP: But was Alberton anywhere near as big as like Lothrop was?

LK: No.

DK: It's never been bigger than it is now.

LK: Well, I would say, oh, before the highway went through here or when the new interstate went through here, we lost 12 houses that used to sit down clear to the river here.

DK: But there are others.

LK: there have been a few others built to replace them, but I don't think we've got quite as many houses, but it's average from 350 to 400 population pretty much ever since it was built.

JP: Another question I guess I'd ask, was there any mining or anything done besides like up at Cinderella or anything around this area?

LK: Very little. This area right through here from about Fish Creek or more—really more than that—Quartz Creek east until you get way up east to Missoula, seemingly was kind of barren. There's been people who have tried to mine up Petty Creek, up the west fork of Petty Creek and two or three other areas up there. There was mines that the people...in fact, one of them was even proved up on and got to be a patented mining claim eventually. That was in Ed's Creek [Eddy Creek?] by the back of Mose Longpre's old house there about a mile up the creek. That's the only one I know of that was patented, but there was several other diggings scattered around but nothing ever commercial came out of it.

DK: [unintelligible].

LK: Yeah, okay, but it never...nothing commercial. It was never able to take any commercial ore out of them. Was good showings there and everything, but there is supposedly one area up there that does have a lot of copper in it, but it belongs to the...well, it's not the ACM [Anaconda Copper Mining Company] now but it was ACM ground. I don't remember who bought them out. Just in recent years, somebody bought the ACM out, and they owned timber and land all over this whole Western Montana—the Anaconda Milling Company. They run the big mines up in Butte and everything. Several people tried to get a lease from them on this one diggings up there, and they said, no they knew what was there and if they ever needed the copper they would come in and mine it themselves. So it's still sitting there.

As I say, there has been very little commercial mining. There's been some prospecting. Fish Creek has gold on it—a certain amount—and as you get on west, lots of gold. The Nine Mile, they did take a lot of gold out of that—the upper Nine Mile. There was two towns up there. Martina was the main town and Stark. Stark, though, was more or less originated not as a mining town but as a post office and a headquarters when they was logging that company. See, they even had a railroad run up there. The main road going up the bottom of the canyon and side roads running up every one of them draws and everything in later years, when they logged Nine Mile.

JP: Were those railroads, were they too Milwaukee...or Northern Pacific?

LK: Apparently, they tied on to the Milwaukee. Either that or they—

DK: [unintelligible].

LK: No, either that or they brought...It was a separate unit in itself, and it may be that they hauled in logs down and dumped them in the river and they came down to this mill. I'm not sure about that. Or whether they did—

DK: [unintelligible section].

LK: You keep asking questions, and we'll answer them instead of rambling off to the side of the thing. [laughs]

JP: I like it that way though. That way I can learn too. What mine was it?

LK: Bessie Bell. And another that was called the Copper Smith.

JP: Where was that Bessie Bell at?

LK: West fork of Petty Creek. So Bessie Bell was up the west fork of Petty Creek, the Copper Smith was up Ed's Creek, which is right back of Mose's, and then there was another one farther down the canyon.

DK: I don't know if you know which was Mose's do you?

LK: it was called the Inverness. It was never actually a...Oh, I don't think they ever run a shaft in there. In fact, I run more shaft in there myself than anybody else, about 30 feet, was all up there that was ever a shaft driven in on that. I have a copy of the assay here that I sent in for an assay report, and it showed 11 percent copper with presumably enough gold and silver to pay the smelting charges. It was owned at that time by the Northern Pacific Railroad—ground it was on—and I got a lease from the Northern Pacific Railroad—what they called a prospecting lease—so I could go in there and work it legally. Then if I ever started taking ore out, then they would have switched over and given me a regular mining lease, and I would have paid them royalties on the ore that was taken out. But, believe right now, the time and ambition and so on their geologist even came out one time and went up there and looked at it, and they said that they thought if a person would continue it that they quite likely would get a paying seam of ore. But it's just sitting there.

But anyhow, like I am saying, commercially there was another old guy...this was pretty much local. This peak over here back of Sandstroms (?), it's called Ballard Peak. This was named for an old prospector that, apparently about the time that Virginia City folded up and the miners were all moving away in the Wallace-Kellogg area started discovering ore over there. Well, all these people were traveling through the country, and one of them would see a country and think, well, that looks pretty good, I am going to go up there and prospect a while. Apparently, that's what this Ballard did. He liked the looks of this country so he moved over in here. He must have spent—near as we can determine from old-timers and so on—close to 30 years, and the

amount of tunnels that he dug he'd have had to have spent a long time in there because everything was dug by hand. He would go out in the summer time or in the fall over in Frenchtown Valley when they raised lots of grain there and work for the wheat farmers to get him a stake to buy a few beans and some dynamite and stuff. He'd carry it back in there, and the rest of the year he just stayed right in there working. I've been to a least six or seven of his diggings. I never went back into the shafts, but from the size of the dumps that's out in front of them and everything, there's some of them that he must have been 300 feet back into the hill.

JP: He did this all by himself?

LK: All by himself. Then just all of the sudden, he disappeared. Nobody ever knows what happened to him. But 20 years, 15 to 20 years ago, we went back up and found one of his diggings. In fact, up on top of a little ridge he had dug, through solid rock, a hole six-foot square and about 40 feet deep. We went to that first, and apparently he was finding indications in there that made him think there was something good there. So he went down in the bottom of the draw east of this hole and started a tunnel in there, built him a log house with a sod roof on it. He had a blacksmith shop and everything there. In my mind, I feel that that is where he died, or maybe is even back in the tunnel—got trapped or something happened.

[Break in audio]

LK: —up there and nobody has no idea what happened to him. But this one place that we went to, the cabin of course, had all fell in—the sod roof was laying right down on the floor. We dug in there a little bit, moved this sod and stuff, or dirt roof, out of the way. We found a cook stove, cooking utensils, gold pan, and everything just like he had you might say walked away and left it there. Outside was another little lean-to, and there was a forge and all these drill steels and some coal and hammers and everything there. In my mind, I feel that that was his last place that he worked, then something happened to him. Either he got disgusted, just walked off and left everything. Which you can't quite see anybody doing, to leave especially their gold pan. Them old prospectors, that gold pan was pretty important to them. We have the gold pan out here in our shed.

JP: Especially since he did so much work up there.

LK: Yeah. So I feel that he died, as I say, some way or another back right there, or while he was living in that area. But he did dig diggings, well, back of Sandstroms up the draw there and over in French Gulch. In Albert, clear over into Albert Creek, why, he had cabins and diggings clear over in there. This one that I am referring to is just east of Corral Creek about half way up the slope from the river to the top of the ridge. I'd like to go back to it. I've wanted to go back ever since we were in there, and I've never made it. You know that's where Ballard Peak got it's name from—this old prospector.

JP: You know I was thinking about that. We'd hunted before up around Corral Creek and stuff for elk, but I was wondering, I'd heard a lot of different stories about it, whether the elk, did they just migrate here or were they, do you know if they were planted?

LK: The elk was planted in here. They were hauled, the first elk was hauled in here on the Northern Pacific Railroad, unloaded right over here at Lothrop and her dad, Bill Schmitz helped unload them and drive them up Petty Creek.

JP: Was there just a couple of them?

LK: No, no they was two or three carloads of come, probably, oh, maybe 30, 40 head.

JP: Where'd they come from?

LK: Transported in here, quite possibly, from Yellowstone Park or somewhere. I don't know where they was brought from. No, the elk was definitely stocked in here. In fact, there at one time her uncles could remember when there was nothing but deer in this whole country here. Wasn't any elk.

JP: That's strange because nowadays you're lucky if you see the deer.

LK: You're lucky if you see the elk in this country any more.

JP: Well, I've never seen either one.

DK: Too many roads make them too available.

LK: Too many roads and too many hunters for this country here anymore.

DK: But the sheep have been planted in here recent years.

LK: It has been at least 15 years now since they planted the first sheep. They unleaded 18 head of them up Petty Creek just above Spring Creek, above Cooper's place there, and they have migrated all around. They are up in French Gulch, and they're scattered all up and down Petty Creek. They've come across the river, and they're all through here. I know of them, I've heard of them from Six Mile and seen them as far west as Stark Hill. So they're moving. It seems as though they stay in small bunches. They don't stay concentrated in big bands. Five, six, seven I believe was the most that pretty much anybody ever sees in a band.

JP: Well, how much did they plant of those?

LK: Well there was 18 in the original plant, and I understood they planted some more after that.

DK: [unintelligible]

JP: Quite a few. Did they also come out of Yellowstone?

LK: I think—

DK: [unintelligible].

LK: Either there or a surplus out of the Bison Range up at Moiese. Again, I'm surmising—about six or eight years ago, they had real deep snow over in the Bison Range. In fact, it drifted deep enough that they had 80 head of sheep inside of the fence there. They all got out, and they got about 40 of them back in eventually. They walked over the top of snow...over the fence on the snow. So there was 40 of them unaccounted for. Well of course, the Indians might have tasted a few of them and maybe a few white people too, but I would presume some of them might've come on up into this country. This might've accounted for the ones that were over in Six Mile drainage. They came over the hill there because it isn't too far across the top of the hill there to come over into there.

JP: Well, with just thinking about the Indians and stuff, with them as close as they were up through the Flathead up through there, up through the valley there, were there many that came around to this area?

LK: Indians?

JP: Yeah.

LK: Oh, yes. They scattered or traveled...see, the early Indian...well, people called them nomadic, but that's not the word. Anyhow, quite a lot of them were travelers. Even the ones that lived in the Flathead Valley would travel clear over east of the mountains to hunt and then move back, and they had lots of big battles. Of course her uncle or cousin or whatever will no doubt tell you about this, Hellgate. What was it called originally? The meeting place there? Where the town of Hellgate was before the town was ever there, the Indians all congregated and had big rendezvous and stuff right out over there in the Grass Valley.

DK: Council Grove was near—

LK: Council Grove is what it was called.

DK: But that was named mostly for at the time when the soldiers and Indians went there to sign treaties.

LK: Yeah, but the Indians would meet there, and of course, they always camped pretty much on top of a higher area so they could watch in case the tribes that was wanting to do battle with them was coming in or anything.

JP: They didn't trust them any?

LK: No, they had lots of battles among tribes.

[This section of the interview is restricted and has been removed from the transcript.]

JP: That's pretty interesting. Do you know if like the Indians, did they come down here to hunt or anything?

LK: Oh, yes.

DK: What times?

JP: Any time.

LK: Probably in well in the...I would say—

JP: Not anything special.

LK: Yes, out here right this side of our present Lothrop interchange that they just finished for us, there was trees and stuff—quite a grove of trees that set about where the westbound ramp, you know, how it makes that curve and comes down—about at the head of that there. Then there was open area down towards the river. They camped in them trees up there and they fished in the river and everything. You can still go out there and find all kinds of arrowheads and stuff. Apparently, they worked along the waters and stuff. You could go down here before they put the interstate in here and take a piece of screen and screen this sand down here and find arrowheads all over right down there below the house. All down at Forest Grove was another nice little flats in there that they apparently camped at and made arrowheads and stuff, there because there was all kinds of them found there.

JP: Is this Forest Grove, is that the one down by Hunts?

LK: No, Forest Grove is almost 20 miles west of here. About ten miles this side of Superior. The freeway bypasses it on the old highway. Used to go—

DK: Past Quartz.

LK: Yeah, it went past the old Quartz ranger station and stayed on that side of the river, and it was about two miles further west from the Quartz ranger station.

JP: Okay, I know what you are talking about.

LK: Yeah, they had picnic grounds and stuff down along the river. Where them picnic tables and stuff there away, that whole flats was covered with arrowheads and spear points and everything at one time. Then this big rock that you mentioned that Mullan had corduroyed past, it has Indian paintings on it which dates back undoubtedly, possibly, before the white man ever came in here. What they did in the early days—especially the medicine man, but it wasn't necessarily the medicine man, it might be any chief or high ranking brave or something like that—they would go and set on these rocks and stuff. Before the old highway went through there, there was quite a shelf of rocks that jutted out there. They would set there and starve themselves for enough days that they would start getting, well we would call it, hallucinations, but to them it was...they were seeing into the future and so on. Then they would come back and tell the tribe what they had seen in their dreams and stuff. Was able lots of times to foretell that there was a warring party coming and different things like this that they would have in these dreams. Anyhow, what's the name of that rock?

DK: I don't remember. [unintelligible].

LK: Chomoepa (?) [unintelligible], it's called vision rock. It is called Chomoepa.

DK: Chomoepa. It may have dated back as far as Lake Missoula.

JP: That's quite a while.

LK: So there has been Indians, and even in, oh, I would say up until about 1935 to '40 the, Indians from the Flathead Valley would come over and go up Petty Creek and up the west fork and camp up there for a month or two every fall and kill deer and skin them and make their jerky. These squaws would tan the leather and everything. I can remember the Indian camps up there in west fork Petty Creek. In fact, I took some hides up there one time and traded them three, four, or five hides for a pair of moccasins that they had already made.

JP: Were there regular trails up there, or was it a regular road up there?

LK: No, it was just trails at that time. They traveled by horse with travois to carry their guns and stuff on. In later years, they came in...I suppose even at that time they was coming in there with car, but they did also have horses. Whether they hauled them in there with a stock truck or what, I don't know, but they had horses. I suppose to pack their game on and stuff like that because there was always a big band of horses there.

JP: They're the regular ones that came out of the Flathead?

LK: Yes. I also can remember...Still talking Indian, in the real early days up in the Flathead country at one period of time, the Flathead Indians got the idea of not burying their dead. Instead, they would build scaffolds and put them up on the scaffolds, and I have seen them laying on those scaffolds up in the Flathead Valley when I was a kid. They would lay them up there covered with a blanket—all of their possessions and everything was there with them so they could take that to the promised land with them.

JP: I guess this wouldn't be too much off, but during the 1910 fire and stuff did that...I've heard stories that it was up [unintelligible] Creek and up into that area.

LK: Oh yes, very definitely. It came clear over into Petty Creek. All of that big country and the head of Deer Creek, on the Fish Creek side there—that was burnt in the 1910 fire—all that big [unintelligible] country back up in there. It came—slopped over—onto the Petty Creek side toward Garden Point and what we call Diamond Point, which is below Garden Point and so on. It burnt all down through there. In fact, where that log house now sets over at the Upper Ranch, you know, they built a new log house here five or six years ago over in the mouth of a gulch. Do you know where that is at? On Cooper's old place up there or...anyhow. Well, that was called Garden Gulch, and the reason that was, the wife's uncles had a garden over there in the mouth of that gulch at the time of the 1910 fire. When the fire fighters were going by there, they seen this garden so it ended up Garden Gulch. John's Creek, Gus's Creek, Ed's Creek, Bill's Creek are all named for her great uncles. They homesteaded all of that country up in the early days. In fact, her dad was born in 1894 in Missoula, what's is now Perkins, but it was Smitty's Pancake Parlor—that straddles the Rattlesnake. He was born in a house right close to that, and as he was a small kid—but he didn't remember it—they used to cross the Higgins Avenue bridge. The only building south of the river, there was one building right at the end of the bridge there. Otherwise, that was all wild flats, and the Indians would come in there collecting bitterroot. In fact, again I can remember the Indians coming out in them flats, gathering bitterroot in the early days where it's all houses now.

DK: There were two university buildings.

LK: Yeah, there was university buildings, and there was a couple of farms scattered out in that country. But the road went straight from the end of Higgins Avenue bridge—Fort Missoula was there too—out past the fort and on up towards Lolo. Just went straight out across the flats there.

JP: There was quite a few bitterroots, then, around?

LK: Oh. Yeah, that flats was covered with bitterroots.

DK: Sometimes they find some there yet.

JP: It's hard nowadays to find any at all.

LK: More questions?

JP: I was going to see if I have any. Oh, okay, I guess I got kind of one. Did they ever use the Clark Fork at all for travel, because I know like a lot of big rivers like that they have. I was wondering if it was too rough or—

LK: Too rough, too much fast water and falls and so on. It never was navigable. Well, I don't know. I suppose they came up it a ways down on the lower end, but not very far. It's always been too many gorges. It just wasn't a big enough body of water, and still enough that they could run.

DK: Well, it flows into the Columbia, but it goes—from here—it goes up past Thompson Falls and on up into Canada. It makes it up into Canada and comes back down and flows into the Columbia River there. But just as you are going across the border into Canada [unintelligible] gorges that you can't get through, so I doubt, except maybe little—

LK: That's the reason that's is actually it's called...and that's reason because it does dump into the Columbia. It's called the Clark's Fork of the Columbia. It has been called a lot of different things. When we first hit this country, it was called the Missoula River. What you call the Clark's Fork now. All up and down through here, this section of it was called the Missoula River.

DK: But when Louis and Clark came through, and they split their trips and one would go one way and one another. And Clark followed this river through. Lewis followed the Lolo and went over Clearwater down that way. In the military records of that time, it was called Clark's Fork of whatever river. Now, whether they call this Clark's Fork of the Columbia at that time or not, I don't know. They may have because they were headed for that area, but I don't know if that Columbia was named at that time. Then the different areas...like it was called Deer Lodge River up that way, Missoula River down this way, and I think gradually they just wiped out those little portions and let it all be Clark Fork.

[End of interview]