

**EARLY DAYS
IN THE FOREST SERVICE**

Volume 4



St. Mary's Lookout, Bitterroot National Forest, from photo by Charles H. McDonald

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE**

NORTHERN REGION

MISSOULA, MONTANA

EARLY DAYS IN THE FOREST SERVICE

Volume 4

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Jessie Thompson

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Northern Region
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover

Cover Photo: St. Mary's Lookout, Bitterroot National Forest, From Photo by Charles H. McDonald

Cover design by Robert Neaves; Pen and Ink drawings of lookout towers by Thomas Reul

Preface by Steve Yurich

Foreword

Stories By:

The Lookout by W.K. "Bill" Samsel

The Ranger in Charge by W.K. "Bill"

Thompson Falls, Montana by I.V. Anderson

Top Ranger, Diplomat, Judge, Jury and Advocate by I.V. Anderson

Chief Paul Charlo -- 4 Elk and 12 Deer by I.V. Anderson

"Never Become Beholden" by I.V. Anderson

A Smokechaser on Pot Mountain by Robert G. Elliott

The Decker Saddle by Clyde P. Fickes

Early Panhandle And Kootenai Years by Charles B. Hand

Backfire (Martin Creek And Peter King Fires) by L.A. Williams

Old Pioneer Rangers' Wives by Leon L. Lake

Lightening On Mount Emerine by Leon L. Lake

True, Mischievous, and Destructive Facts by Leon L. Lake

The Pinkham Creek Closure -- 1924 by Sam Billings

Timber Cruising on the Kaniksu by Sam Billings

Anecdotes and Fireline Philosophies by Ralph L. Hand

The Roundtop Telephone (Swan Song of a Dispatcher)

Selway Forest Fires of 1934 by C.B. Sutliff

Kootenai Forest Incidents -- 1940 by Ernie Richards

Civilian Conservation Corps In Operation by Carl A. Weholt

Letters to Folks Back Home -- 1929 by Wm. F. Guntermann

The CCC's As R-1 Forest Fire Fighters by Bert W. Morris

They Pioneered The Bitterroots by Carl A. Weholt As recounted by Lloyd Rupe

Tree Planting Projects On The St. Joe by Lloyd Donally

First Year In The Forest Service by Carl G. Krueger

The "Battle" On Bass Creek by Charles H. McDonald

Fire Crews Firefighting in 1941 by Berle E. Davis

The Modern Bulldozer, A Forest Service Project by Howard R. Jones

Indian Creek Ranger Station by Ralph L. Thayer

Early Snow in the Bitterroots by Ray S. Ferguson

The Grave on Pollack Hill by Lou Hartig

Other St. Joe National Forest History by Lloyd Donally Submitted by Ray L. Hilding

The Forest Service Heliograph by E. Clayton McCarty

A Cargo Plane Crashes by Jack Nash

Memories Of George Haynes and Honeysuckle Ranger Station by John F. Breakey

Evolution of the National Grasslands by Bernie Alt and Glenn Mueller

Mules of the Remount -- A Legend Is Born by Peyton Moncure

From the View Point of a Lookout (Poem) by Bernice Williamson

Early-Day Ranger in the Priest Lake Country by Henry A. Peterson

Index *(omitted from the online edition)*

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Spotted Bear Lookout, Flathead National Forest, From 1923 Photo
2. St. Mary's Lookout, Bitterroot National Forest, From Photo by Charles H. McDonald
3. Nub Lookout, Clearwater National Forest, From 1924 Photo
4. Decker Pack Saddle, 1920, design/specifications drawing
5. Middle Sisters Mountain Lookout, St. Joe National Forest From 1950 Photo by W.B. Apgar
6. Chewelash Mountain Lookout Tower, Colville National Forest From 1950 Photo by W.E. Steverwald
7. Sheep Mountain Lookout, Clearwater National Forest From 1924 Photo
8. Blue Mountain Lookout, From 1958 Photo by J.E. Sanderson
9. Junction Mountain Lookout, Clearwater National Forest, From 1924 Photo
10. Map along Idaho-Montana line, Kelly Creek Ranger Station, Trojanowski's Grave, Clearwater River, North Fork Creek
11. Swan Hill or Mission Lookout, Flathead National Forest From 1923 Photo
12. Lookout Tree on Horse Butte Point, Gallatin National Forest From 1963 Photo by W.E. Steverwald

Pen and Ink drawings of lookout towers by Thomas Reul



PREFACE

Missoula, Montana
January 1976

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE NORTHERN REGION:

In keeping with our policy of preserving for posterity the rich and colorful history of the Forest Service, we are continuing with our series of publications known as "Early Days In The Forest Service." This, our Volume No. 4, is the latest in the series begun in 1944 by the then Regional Forester Evan W. Kelley

We continue in this volume the well-accepted style of its predecessors, namely, to publish the letters and articles from Northern Region retirees or about-to-be-retirees just as they wrote them or spoke them. In this way we feel that not only are the sights, sounds, and feel of that era better preserved, but that the character and personality of each of these former employees is more perfectly presented to those readers who either knew them personally or knew of them.

Since this present volume is appearing during the Bicentennial of the American Revolution, we are dedicating this published collection as a Bicentennial project. It also happens that this year marks one hundred years of Federal forestry. So this volume indeed makes its appearance at a particularly auspicious time.

I hope that all of you who read Volume 4 of these early days will get the thrill of going back into history and thus feel closer to those dedicated employees who, in many cases, endured hardship and privation in order to do their job to the best of their ability. By its very nature, the Forest Service is an agency, which has always attracted the best to its ranks. And I have every confidence that, as stewards and managers of much of America's forest and rangeland, the employees of the Forest Service will continue to create a colorful history.

Sincerely,

STEVE YURICH
Regional Forester



SPOTTED BEAR LOOKOUT
Flathead National Forest

from 1923 photo

SPOTTED BEAR LOOKOUT
Flathead National Forest
from 1923 photo

FOREWORD

It is with pleasure that we present to you this Volume 4 of "Early Days in the Forest Service" to coincide with our Nation's bicentennial observance during 1975-1976. Coincidentally, 1976 also marks the 100th anniversary of the concept of forestry as is now practiced in the United States.

This volume is the fourth in the series to appear. These volumes have been published roughly one volume each decade, beginning with Volume 1 back in 1944. In all of these volumes we have utilized the memoirs, letters and articles written and given to us by retirees and former employees of the Northern Region of the Forest Service. In some cases, we have used material by long-time employees who are still employed by the Forest Service. We are indebted to these faithful and interested "alumni" of the Forest Service for the material, which has gone into these four volumes.

The stories or accounts in each volume are not in chronological sequence. Neither are the volumes themselves. The reason for this is apparent: various accounts and reminiscences continue to surface and come to light as the years go by. So we must assiduously preserve these earliest accounts as they come into our hands. Thus, this volume, as do the preceding three, represents a well-rounded collection of activities representing Forest Service activities dating from the earliest years down through more recent times.

Both this volume and the others, retain the language and speaking style and writing style of its contributors. We feel that this adds to the color, flavor, and individuality of each of the contributions. This variation in "style" of each item helps to show and preserve the personality and character of each of these "oldtime" foresters, rangers, smokechasers, lookouts, and all the others who have contributed material. Consequently, editing of material contributed was done with that objective in mind rather than trying to achieve flawless grammar and sentence construction. We think you, too, will agree that that was "the way to go."

Historians, students, and writers who are researching various source material in order to obtain firsthand accounts of how things were done in the Forest Service "back in the old days", will find this and the preceding three volumes informative. The casual reader will also enjoy it. The informal presentation of this material, too, will add to the interest since this gives a sense of reader participation and identification with the characters and situations. The value of this information will, obviously, increase as time goes by.

THE LOOKOUT

By W.K. "Bill" Samsel

Most of the Forest Service's early day lookouts were above timberline, in the cap rock, where timber did not obstruct their view. In the beginning, of course, these points were unimproved. There was no protection from the elements, for man or equipment. It was common practice then for the lookout man to camp in the nearest sheltered place below the lookout point, from where he could quickly hike up and take observations. During periods of high fire danger and lightening storm activity he might make several such observation trips in a day's time. In some cases, in order to observe more area, a man might use two or more observation points located a considerable distance apart. In such cases the man would hike from one point to another taking observations on each point and return. Such stations were referred to as patrol routes and the person manning such a station was known as a patrolman.

Living quarters on these early day detection points were most primitive. The Forest Service furnished a tent, a few cooking utensils, and a bed, consisting of 3 GD army type wool blankets and a tarp, a double bitted axe and fire tools. It was up to the man to use his own ingenuity and skill as a woodsman in making his quarters as comfortable as possible.

The first three summers I worked for the Forest Service I was stationed on one of these unimproved points. I was fortunate, however, that there were two of us stationed at the same point. In such cases one man was designated the lookout and the other the smokechaser. I played the latter role. The advantage of two being together was that we could throw our bedding together and make a much better bed. We built a good substantial bunk up off the ground and covered it deep in fir boughs for springs and mattress. We stretched our tent in a good sturdy manner so it would afford us, our bed, food, and personal belongings the minimum protection from the elements. Believe me, the elements can be rough at an elevation of 8,000 feet, what with wind, lightening, rain and even hail and snow.

Since the Forest Service did not furnish a stove we built a rock fireplace where we did the fry cooking and boiling, then an oven in the rocks for baking bread. This done, our quarters were complete, still quite primitive but we managed to get along and be quite comfortable most of the time. It has been said before and I am sure it is true, that it took a special breed of men to fill these jobs and live under such primitive conditions. They had to love the mountains and be possessed of the old pioneer spirit. Starting wages for a first-year lookout man were \$70 per month, including board and room. And, at first, room was "all the outdoors."

The first structures to be built on the early day lookouts were small, crude log cabins for man shelter. The observatory might be just a ladder up a tree to where a small platform with a railing called a "Crow's Nest" was built. On this Crow's Nest the lookout man had his map board and alidade and could do his fire spotting. On points where there were no trees suitable for observatories a crude tower was sometimes fashioned out of poles. These structures were built by the lookout man and smokechaser with no plans or blue prints. Many of them did serve the purpose for quite sometime. The first somewhat modern lookout structure to be used in this region was a 14'x14' frame structure with windows on all four sides. This type of structure was placed directly on top of the lookout point and served both as living quarters and observatory. It

was a vast improvement over any previous facilities. Several different versions of this structure were built during the period ending World War I and the early 1930's. Many were constructed from logs and native material with a cupola added on top. This cupola was used for an observatory and made the structure much more functional.

At this point I should say something about the food, which was furnished by the Forest Service. Because all food had to be packed in by mule train, which took from 4 to 6 days from the road end, and because there were no facilities for keeping fresh foods, they had to be of a nonperishable nature. A typical grub list would run about as follows: Flour, baking powder, salt, sugar, coffee, beans, rice, dried apricots, prunes and raisins. Sometimes there were dehydrated potatoes. For meat there was ham and bacon, and sometimes a little canned corned beef. Other canned foods consisted of corn, tomatoes, milk, and syrup. Some years later when the Forest Service began to furnish canned fruit and apple butter we thought this was really high living. It is only fair to say that we supplemented our diet with huckleberries and fish when we were able to get to where they were. Also when grouse season opened that helped, too.

The water supply was often a problem. Most lookout points were located a considerable distance above a source of water, so keeping an adequate supply on hand for drinking and for camp use was quite a chore. In the beginning about the same system was used by all. The Forest Service furnished a 5-gallon water bag with shoulder straps attached. This was called a man-pack water bag; old-timers referred to it as a "coon." At any rate, the lookout backpacked his water to his tower up from the nearest spring, creek, or lake. This might be a distance of 2 or 3 miles. In these cases, water had to be conserved. No bathing was done; dishwashing was cut to a minimum. Such utensils as frying and baking pans were never washed — as soon as a slick glaze was burned on them they were simply wiped out with a cloth. Other dishes were scraped and wiped as clean as possible before they were put in the dishwater. In this way the water remained clean enough so that it could be used two or three times.

In later years better methods of supplying lookouts with water were developed. One of the better systems should be credited to Jack Clack who was assistant supervisor on the old Missoula National Forest at the time he developed this system. He fabricated a 200 gallon tank from galvanized sheet metal. This tank, cylindrical in shape, was sunk in the ground on the leeward side of the lookout. The top plate was perforated with nail holes and was then covered with a 4- to 6-inch layer of gravel. When the deeply drifted snow melted in the spring this snow would filter down through the gravel and fill the tank.

In the beginning, communication was just as primitive as other facilities on these remote points. The Forest Service first attempted to use the heliograph. For many obvious reasons there was little success with this instrument. Next we tried to tie in telephone communication with a fine insulated wire, which we hung on the tree limbs. This was called emergency wire telephone. It was a little more dependable than the heliograph. However, it was vulnerable to breakage by windstorms, falling trees and by wild animals, such as elk and deer tangling in it. The first fairly dependable communication did not come until the advent of the standard Forest Service tree line. In this, No. 9 galvanized wire was used. It was hung on trees with a split tree insulator which, when a tree fell across the line, could render through and go to ground rather than break.

Early in the 1930-decade the first efforts were started to organize the fire detection system on a plan wise and scientific basis. The first step in this plan was the mapping of scene area. Mappers were sent into the field to map the scene area from all the improved lookout points and many unimproved points. From these data gathered in the field transparent overlays were made. Then various combinations and composites could be studied to determine what points or combination of points afforded the greatest area of detection coverage. Many of the points included in this study group had flat tops and a tower was needed to increase visibility. If it was decided to improve and use the point the scene area mapper determined the height of the tower needed.

At this point in the planning, Major Kelly made the decision that where towers were needed, living quarters as well as observatories should be on top the tower. This would allow the lookout man to be at his post 24 hours a day. With this in mind Kelly commissioned Clyde Fickes and his architects to design a tower and lookout house combination. Clyde and his crew soon came up with suitable plans. The house or cab portion of the structures were to be cut out at the Spokane warehouse and the towers would be constructed from native lodgepole, fir, or larch, or whatever was available nearest the site.

This was during the depression and the Forest Service had an abundance of CCC and other work relief labor. Therefore, a concerted drive was made to get all our primary lookouts improved while help was available. A typical tower construction crew consisted of an experienced carpenter foreman, one who was skilled in framing round timbers. He would be given a crew of six CCC boys. These boys would act as helpers, cooks, flunkies, etc. Some of these little crews became quite skilled and were able to put up a tower, with lookout house, in approximate time of 6 weeks, more or less, depending on the quality and availability of tower material and other factors. Transportation of material was a big job. Practically all the sites were accessible by trail only. Therefore, material had to be packed in by mule train. The Remount was at full strength during this period. Much of the transportation job was accomplished by remount packers and their strings of long legged, slab sided, lumber mules. Just how many lookouts Region One constructed over a period of about 6 years I do not know. There were many. During the summer of 1938 I managed to complete three lookouts on the Seeley Lake District. Towers were 20, 30, and 40 feet in height. When this regional system of lookouts was fully manned it afforded quite adequate detection coverage.

The best I can recall, the prefabbed lookout houses cost about \$500 at the Spokane Warehouse. Cost of tower construction varied in proportion to the difficulty of securing tower timbers at the site. It runs in my mind — and this is only a guess from my recollections — that some lookout towers were completed for as little as \$1000. At any rate, the cost was minimal compared to what a similar structure would cost today.

During the war years, because of shortage of manpower, a system of manning fewer lookouts and supplementing by use of air patrol was tried. This system worked quite well and has since been developed to a point where Region One mans only a small fraction of the number of fixed lookouts it once did. This system, in my mind, is more economical and more efficient than the older one.

Also during this period, for the same reason that air patrol was implemented, the Forest Service relaxed its standards and allowed the rangers to hire high school boys and girls as young as 16 years of age to fill lookout positions. I was in charge of the Plains District at that time and I employed a number of teenage boys and girls. While this may sound like a plug for Women's Lib, I have to say it because it is true. The girls of the same age as boys turned in much better performances. They were able to stand the loneliness much better and were more alert and they displayed a sincere interest in the job. It has been 13 years since I hired and organized my last fire protection crew so I am not current on just what goes on in this line. I am informed, however, that many more women are filling lookout and other fire protection positions, today, than they did a few years ago. Reports are that they are doing a good job.

The modern lookout structure and all its facilities is a far cry from the primitive lookout of long ago. Transportation has advanced from mule train and backpack to automobile and helicopter. Communications have come from heliograph and telephone to two-way radio. They have accurate maps, aerial photos and modern fire finders as instruments and aids in accurately locating fires. Food service is such that the lookout can fare just about as well as if he lived in town. In spite of all this the sentinel of old and the modern day lookout still have a few things in common. They were, and still are, the eyes of the fire protection organization.

THE RANGER IN CHARGE

By W.K. "Bill" Samsel

It was on April 30, 1925 that I reported for duty with Edw. MacKay at Lolo Hot Springs. After supper that evening Ed came up to the bunkhouse and we sat down together while he verbally outlined his plans for spring work. "It will be a month yet before we can get into the Lochsa country to do any maintenance work. In the meantime you and I will clean up most of the spring maintenance work on this side of the divide. We can get into the Fish Creek country so we will start there first. I have my two saddle horses and a packhorse. We'll pack up an outfit and head into that country tomorrow morning." Thus begins the saga of a summer's work with Ed.

Dressed in logger boots, Filson water repellent pants and jackets, woolen underwear and sox, plenty of extra sox, (this was the standard Forest Service uniform for the back country in that day), we moved out. The first couple of days were uneventful. Ed with his big 4-lb. double bit axe, (the standard F.S. axe was 3 lb.) cut the windfalls out of the trail and off the telephone line. I wore the climbers, did the climbing and rehung the line. The third day out we were ready to move camp a few miles down stream to the end of our maintenance. About half way to our destination the trail crossed Fish Creek. A bridge made of log stringers about 16" in diameter and decked with pole puncheon spanned the creek. The heavy snow pack of the previous winter had broken the up-stream stringer so that the decking at that point tilted at about a 30-degree angle to the water. Melting snows had swollen the stream to its flood crest. There was a good ford below the bridge and although the water was deep and swift we knew our saddle horses could ford it. The packhorse was following and when he came to the stream he stopped and watched us until we had reached the opposite bank. Then instead of fording, as we had done, he tried to cross the broken bridge. Just as he reached the spot where the deck tipped to the water his feet flew from under him and he landed midstream. The swift water wedged him under the broken stringer. Ed jumped down and grabbed the horse's head and pulled his nose above water so that he could breathe, at the same instant yelling at me to bring his axe and take the horse's head while he chopped the stringer in two. All of this was done in much less time than I can write about it, and Ed was swinging his big razor sharp axe with an effectiveness that would have made one of Paul Bunyon's disciples look like a rank amateur. In a very short time the log stringer was severed and the horse freed. Ed snubbed the halter rope to his saddle horn and dragged the horse to shore.

By the end of the week we had worked out this drainage so we broke camp and headed back to headquarters. Just as we hit the trail it began to pour down rain. As I recall it took about four hours to reach Lolo Hot Springs and the rain never let up the entire trip. We were just passing the Lolo Springs post office when Herman Gerber rushed out and stopped us with a "hey there Ed, what the hell do you mean goin' by my place and not stoppin'? It's suppertime and I'm just fixin' some grub. You're soakin' wet and you must be cold and hungry, come in and have somethin' warm to eat!"

Ed said, "We can't refuse your generous invitation at a time like this," so it was that we had a hot bean and ham dinner. This was prohibition days; however, Herman always had something on hand and just before we sat down he asked "how would you like a hot toddy before we eat?" Ed thought that would go pretty well, so Herman graciously fixed us each a large tin cup of hot

moonshine. After dinner as we were riding up to Mud Creek Ed said, "Bill, I don't know whether that moonshine really makes a man feel any better but it sure make him think it does!"

The next morning Ed received word that his F.S. truck, which was in the Missoula Central Purchasing Warehouse, had a two-ton load of T.N.T. on it and that the city ordinance did not allow explosives to be stored within the city limits for more than 24 hours. It was therefore a must that it be gotten out that afternoon. Ed said "how are we going to get that damn truck out of town?" I replied that I could bring it out if I had a way to get into Missoula. "Can you drive that thing he asked?" I said "Sure;" however, up to that time I had driven nothing larger than a Buick touring car. Ed's truck was a World War One vintage army type. It had solid rubber tires and would spin out and stall if the road was the least bit slick. My problem of getting to Missoula was solved when a man drove up just then in a Model T Ford. He turned out to be an old army buddy of Ed's who just dropped in to say hello and was going back to Missoula so I rode in with him. Ed had instructed me not to try to get beyond Bob Anderson's Ranch that night, which was about 6 miles up Lolo Creek from the town of Lolo. I made it fine to this point, arriving about sun down. When I called Ed by phone he seemed happy that I had gotten that far. He instructed me to start on in the morning and he would come down and meet me. He doubted that I would get much farther as the road became much worse with mud holes, rickety bridges and high water. He was sure right, as I had not progressed more than four miles when the rear wheels of the old truck sunk to the axle in a bog hole. I started to lighten the load by taking about 20 boxes of powder off the tail end. At this time Ed arrived on the scene. Looking around he found a dry lodge pole tree the size of a good-sized telephone pole. With his great strength he would get the end of the pole under the axle of the truck, raise it up while I blocked under the pole, then pry down and I would block under the wheel. After a couple of trials and failures Ed said, "All right, we will raise and block the damn thing above the level of the ground and see if it will run down hill." We did just that and the truck came out. We left half the load and came back after it when the roads dried. Later as we were unloading the powder Ed chuckled and said, "That was a rather shaky assignment I gave you. It was bad enough hauling two tons of T.N.T. on that old wreck of a truck but, you know, you could have gone through any one of those old rotten log bridges." Well, I didn't and I am still here. I feel that our modern day truck drivers, who never wrangled one of those old pelters, has missed quite a lot. As Ed had planned, by the time we had worked out the rest of the maintenance in the Lolo Creek drainage, it was near the end of May. The packers were bringing the mules in from winter range. They had to be shod; tails and manes trimmed, and fed up with hay and oats before they were ready to work. All this was done at the old Mud Creek station where there were feed corrals, a blacksmith shop, and fair bunk and mess facilities for the men. As headquarters boss I was also the supply office and it was part of my job to head up the cooking. Most of the packers and other help were pretty good at volunteering for K.P. so we made out OK without a cook. Ed had three pack strings and Bill Bell had two strings besides some extra saddle horses, making a total of about 50 head to be shod. At that time the Forest Service did not provide blacksmiths, so the rangers and packers did the shoeing. Bell and MacKay, both good blacksmiths, did the shaping and fitting of the shoes and actually nailed the most of them on while the packers did the wrangling, holding and tying when necessary. Most of these packers were good men at their jobs. However, they had a common weakness: when they got to where there was liquor they had to go on a binge. One of Ed's packers, a real character, really went ape when he started drinking, and to make matters worse he was apt to carry a hangover a couple of days. The day that Ed was shoeing this Packer's string, the packer had been

on a binge the night before. He was holding a mule by the halter rope while Ed was dressing its hoofs with a rasp. The mule was giving Ed a little trouble and he was cursing and scolding the mule a bit. Some devilish impulse seized the packer and he punched the mule in the nose with his fist. It reacted with a violent lunge and Ed realized what had happened. In one motion he whirled and grabbed the packer by the nape of the neck, and bringing him across his leather-shoeing apron laid half a dozen good licks on his hinder parts with the rasp. "Now," he said, "I'll help you get this pack outfit loaded and I want you to drag out for Powell. If I catch you back here before fall I'll break your neck." The packer headed for Powell, but he rode his stirrups instead of the seat of his saddle. If he came back to the springs that summer he sure didn't let Ed catch him there. By about June 1 most of the lookouts and smokechaser stations had been manned and the trail maintenance and construction crews were being placed. All together we had about 50 men in the Lochsa area and around 25 in the Lolo area. These regular district maintenance and construction men were also our first line defense forces when a fire escaped the smokechasers. If these men could not handle the fire, then it was necessary to recruit crews of what we called pickup fire fighters. Usually they were recruited in Missoula, but sometimes it was necessary to draw from the Spokane labor market. To put it mildly they were a very poor caliber of men, agitators, "I.W.W.s" and derelicts. We would truck from Missoula to Mud Creek and hike them to the fire. Ed would personally take charge of the fire and the crews, using his district men for foremen, straw bosses, etc. It was on such an occasion as this that Ed with his district men had been battling a stubborn fire for a couple of days. The pickup crew arrived just before supper and sat down for a little breather. Mr. Agitator decided that now was the time to get with his program. Accordingly he mounted a stump and began to orate with an Adolph Hitler gusto. Just as he was getting full steam ahead and seemed to have his captive audience coming his way, Ed walked in from the fire line. He stood for a moment just sizing up the situation. Then very quietly and nonchalantly he stepped over to the speaker, tapped him on the shoulder and said: "Hey, fella, pipe down, you might start something that would be hard to stop." Completely disarmed by Ed's cool, matter of fact expression, the man turned to see Ed slowly walking away. What type of man the speaker expected to see I do not know. What he did see was a man who stood better than six foot, weighed 225 lbs. and carried no surplus fat. With two weeks growth of whiskers, his blue shirt open at the throat, he was smeared with pitch and blackened with soot and ashes. His filson pants staggged off above the tops of his logger boots likewise were soiled from the grime of the fire. His pine tree badge rode inconspicuously on his left belt, not noticeable by the orating agitator. All this dirt and grime seemed to enhance the image of this superman of the woods. Behind it was a tower of strength, a man of sincerity, firmness and determination, who led his men to victory on some of the toughest forest fires. Most of all Ed MacKay was a man who good men were proud to follow. When our erstwhile orator regained his composure, looking into the faces of his audience, whose expressions had changed from seriousness to amusement, he asked: "Who is that guy?" Someone answered, "He's the Ranger in charge."

The fires are all out, lookouts, smoke chasers and crew men have been laid off and it is time to take the mules to winter range. Bell brings his in from Elk Summit; Ed's packers bring the last of his stock in from Powell. All stock is assembled at Mud Creek. A camp outfit with food for men and animals is loaded on the old truck. MacKay and Bell will be camp tenders. They will go ahead and establish camp. Loch Stewart, Bill Clark and I will trail the mules. Mules trail best when they are led by a bell mare. Since Clarkie was the oldest of the wranglers Loch and I voted

him to lead with the bell mare. When the mules were trailing nicely and our saddle ponies were jogging along behind, Loch would raise his voice in song. I remember his favorite was "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows," a popular number of that day. It was quite appropriate too, as none of us had steady jobs although we were aspiring for permanent appointments. "Heading for The Last Round Up" would also have been appropriate because as soon as we got back to Missoula we would be laid off until next spring. Our first stop was a couple of miles below the Woodman School. Just before we finished our breakfast next morning a boy, who looked to be about eight years old stopped by. He was carrying a lunch pail and heading for school. Looking over our outfit he asked a few questions. Clarkie, who was fond of kids, soon engaged him in friendly conversation. Then suddenly the boy looked around and said, "Well, I got to be goin'. I can't waste any more time here with you guys." With these parting words the boy marched briskly on his way. His remarks drew a hearty chuckle from Ed who in turn remarked to Clarkie, "Well, I guess you know where you stand with that boy."

Then in a more serious tone he added: "You watch that kid, he has really got something on the ball, he will amount to something when he grows up." Just a few years later this lad was working for Ed, manning lookouts, chasing smoke, fighting fires and working his way up to Alternate Ranger. Then World War II interrupted and in 1943 our boy joined the Marine Corps and for the duration of the war he saw much active duty in the South Pacific Theater. When the war ended he came back to Powell and picked up where he had left off and worked his way on up. In case you haven't figured it out yet this boy is none other than our own Bud Moore who is presently Chief of the Division of Fire Management, Region 1, US FS, (Ed. Note: Moore retired in 1974.)

We've got to get those mules to winter range so let's get rollin! Next camp is the Missoula Ranch at the foot of Evaro Hill. At that time this ranch supported a beautiful orchard of Macintosh apples. It was apple-picking time and many boxes of apples were sitting under the trees. When we arrived with the mules Ed was frying elk steak for supper. He remarked to me that some of those apples fried would go good with the steak so I stepped over the fence and brought him a box of the delicious fruit. He cooked up a big pan of the apples and indeed they were good with elk steak. It was so pleasing to our appetites that about midnight we cooked up another feed of the same. This was the first fresh fruit we had eaten in several months. It has been a half century ago yet I never pass the old Missoula Ranch, now the Cates Ranch, without thinking of the night we camped down behind the big orchard. The next day we shoved on to Ravalli and camped for the night. A Kalispell outfit that had range land up in the Big Draw had contracted to winter the Lolo Forest pack stock. They met us here with their riders and took over the drive. We had mixed feelings of emotion when these cowpokes with chaps and spurs threw their heavy double rigged saddles on our old gentle saddle ponies and tore out after the stock. I don't believe a man fully appreciates a good saddle horse until he has spent a summer in the mountains with one, and especial if he happens to be leading a string of spooky mules. Many times your faithful saddle pony is the only dependable partner you have. This is especially true when the whole string of broom tails seem to conspire to wreck the outfit.

On our way back to Missoula Ed made the announcement that he was going to buy a car when we got to town. He said he was tired of driving the old Forest Service truck or going on foot. He had saved his money and he was going to have a decent car to get about in. We landed in Missoula about noon and went into the old Grill Cafe and each ordered a big T-bone steak. We

sat in one of the old time booths, which all fancy restaurants featured in that day. This was still in the prohibition era, however just before our meal was served, from under the table Bell comes up with a bottle of moonshine. He poured each of us a goodly portion, which we swallowed and agreed that it spiked our appetites. Where and how Bell got that bottle without the rest of us knowing none of us ever figured out. However he had that faculty.

The steaks behind our belts, Ed said, "Well, let's go buy that car." We stopped by the Western Montana Bank where Ed cashed a check for enough money to pay for the car. A concern by the name of "Murphy Motors" had the Dodge Agency at that time. They were located about where Auto Electric now is. The Dodge car of that day was about the best on the market for negotiating the mountain roads and trails such as we had to travel. Ed had made up his mind about the make and type of car he wanted and he knew about what it would cost. When we entered the show and sales room we were greeted by a well-dressed man who asked, "What can I do for you fellows?" Ed simply states: "I want to buy a car." The salesman, in a rather suspicious and doubting tone of voice said, "Oh yes: Well now, what type of car are you looking for?" Ed answered "A Dodge." The salesman said, "Well, we have two types of Dodge," and pointing to them as he spoke, "Here we have the deluxe model, and there the standard, which would you like to try?" The deluxe model was closest to Ed so he said, "Let's just give this one a try." The salesman backed the car out then nodded to Ed and said, "OK let's go for a ride." Ed turned to the rest of us and said, "Get in fellows, let's go." There were five of us in all, still dressed in our logger boots, staggd pants and greasy shirts with a week's growth of whiskers and covered with trail dust. We were a motley crew that climbed into that beautiful new sedan. The salesman just drove us a very short distance, across the tracks by the old brewery and right back. By the expression on his face it was evident that he felt he was the one who was being taken for a ride. We all piled out of the car and the salesman rather reluctantly asked Ed if he would like to try the standard. Ed said, "No, I think this one is all right," then to Bell, "What do you think?" Bell said, "Yes, this one seems pretty good," so Ed said, "Well, I guess I'll take it. How much is it?" The salesman replied that it was \$1,250. "Now what kind of terms do you want? We have several different time pay plans." Ed told him he would just pay in cash, and with that he reached in his shirt pocket and handed the salesman a fifty, two one hundreds and a one thousand dollar bill. The salesman's eyes had begun to pop a little with the hundred dollar bills, but when Ed handed him the thousand he exploded: "Jesus Christ, look what this man is carrying around!"

We packers and smoke chasers scattered and went our several ways to find jobs for the winter. Bell drove the old Forest Service truck back to Mud Creek and the Ranger in Charge drove his new Dodge sedan home.

THOMPSON FALLS, MONTANA

By I.V. Anderson

In the early '20's Sinclair Lewis could have found material in Thompson Falls, Montana for a sequel to his best seller - Main Street. The setting was different, but the characters were there even to the last of the remittance men, plus philandering males and females; if you accepted the people of this small (population 600) and scenic mountain village they took you to their bosom. I arrived there September 1920, to accept an appointment as Ranger-at-large, pending certification of eligibles at the magnificent salary of \$1220 per year. I left a job with a tree surgery company in Wheeling, W. Va., where I was making over twice that salary. I never regretted the move—Thompson Falls was the beginning of the culmination of dreams I had as a 12-year-old boy. I roamed the Cabinet Mountains on mapping assignments, timber surveys, and range appraisal. The hunting and fishing I found answered my fondest dreams. I was free as the wind. If there was ever a place in the world where peace and tranquility reined it was Thompson Falls in the early '20's. I arrived there in the late evening, about the middle of September. Chicago, Burlington & Quincy train #41 was a bit late, it was dark, and the whole valley seemed lighted up. What a big town, I thought. But I was disappointed when I checked in at the Ward Hotel and found out that the lights were from the big dam and hydroelectric plant completed in 1914. I registered and the hotel clerk took my dollar-and-a-half. He said, "Up the stairs, left four doors, room 210." Half way up the stairs I thought, oh, oh - no key, so I started back to the desk saying I forgot my key, but he turned me right around when he said, "Hell, we don't have keys here."

The next 5 years I lived in Thompson Falls, I don't remember of any petty thievery. We never locked the doors on our house. In fact, Jack Bowen and I had 3 rooms in the Ward Hotel. One for sleeping, one for sitting, one for catch-alls. We used to be gone for weeks at a time and leave the door unlocked. One time they had a fire in the hotel and most of the rooms were emptied of their belongings. When Jack and I came back we found all of our belongings about 3 or 4 doors down the street in storage. They had been heaved out the window and gathered up. Not a thing was missing.

The fall of 1921 I took the ranger examination, passed it the second highest in the region. No credit to my skill, however, as technically trained foresters were scarce and the Civil Service Commission gave you a lot of points for your technical training. I was pretty busy the first couple of months getting acquainted and especially studying for the upcoming ranger exam. So I had a little time to frequent the small town meeting places such as the local poolroom, which seemed to be the headquarters. They had a bar reminiscent of pre-Volstead days where you could buy pop, near beer, and moonshine for 25-1, a shot. You could also get into a "panqingy" game or a solo game with anybody ranging from the local banker on down. That winter I participated in the home talent show. I had the stage all by myself in which I displayed such non-forestry talents as singing some of the folk songs, which the university boys were singing during that era, accompanying myself on the ukulele. I must have made quite an impression. The following week the Sanders County Independent Ledger included the following news item: "The Bowery Kid (Anderson) could make a good living on the vaudeville stage, he is a real fellow and some who took him for a sissy will admit now they are poor judges of human nature." And so I was accepted at Thompson Falls. I always figured that Judge Nippert was the author of this item. It seems as though everybody had to have a special name in those days. I became just one of the

many characters around Thompson Falls, by getting accepted as the Bowery Kid. Amongst these characters was Red Sheridan, Pop Adams, Danny Mack, Swift Water Bill, Nigger Bill, "River Pig" Jack Prouty, Kelly Davidson and Dave Snyder. There were still a few remittance men in the west in the early '20s. Judge Nippert, or Nip, as his friends called him, was one. It was rumored that someone in the Gamble family from the soap firm of Procter & Gamble back in Ohio was paying Nippert to stay away. But it didn't seem to bother Nip. When he first arrived from the east he took up a homestead on Bull River, then came to Thompson Falls and was appointed a U.S. Commissioner; also, Justice of the Peace. Hence the title Judge.

Sinclair Lewis would have devoted a full chapter to any of the characters I found when I arrived at Thompson Falls, but in the interest of brevity I am going to confine my stories to Nigger Bill and Judge Nippert. I don't think any of the people of Thompson Falls felt that Nigger was a derogatory term when they referred to Nigger Bill. I always thought the term was used to identify or separate Nigger Bill from Swift Water Bill who was constantly in the limelight around the village with his unusual tales. He often boasted about being the biggest liar in Sanders County. Years before I came to Sanders County Nigger Bill had squatted on a piece of Anaconda Copper Mining Company land about 12 miles west of Thompson Falls at what is known as the Blue Slide, a beautiful spot overlooking the entire Clark Fork river valley. I remember Nigger Bill as I infrequently saw him on a corner on the main street in Thompson Falls giving his usual religious discourse. He frequently talked about Armageddon. Sometimes his audience was confined to a single straggler. I stopped to talk with him or listen one day and he gave a talk on Armageddon that would make Billy Graham look like a piker. There he stood, tall and stately. I think he was over 6 feet tall, must have been between 50 and 60 years of age might have been older than that, kind of hard to tell the age of some of these blacks; they are pretty well preserved. I think Bill was in that situation. His hair was white and gray. He always let it grow long enough to come down over his ears and it didn't kink up too much. He presented quite a prophetic appearance. I used to think of John the Baptist when I saw him. I don't know why he talked so much about Armageddon. Anyway, he should have been more interested in or given his version of heaven because his Blue Slide home was certainly located in a bit of paradise.

We left Thompson Falls, and after an assignment in California, and another at Newport, Washington, we finally transferred to Missoula. One day I saw a notice in the Missoulian that Judge Nippert was in the Thornton Hospital, later known as Community Hospital. So my wife and I went down to see him. Nip was overjoyed to see us. When we got in there, the room was all topsy turvy, the typical hospital bureau and set of drawers was down at the foot of the bed with the mirror tipped up so old Nip could lay there on his pillow and see himself in the mirror. It was winter and bitter cold. Nip had fallen off the sidewalk down at Thompson Falls when he was pretty drunk and didn't have enough in him to keep from getting badly frozen. When he arrived in Missoula they didn't know if he was going to make it or not. Nip said, "You know, the other day they didn't know whether I was going to make it or not, so I thought I better preach my funeral service. Because I never used one of these Gideon Bibles I thought I better make use of one. So one of the nice gals around here shook the dust off 'Ol Gideon,' put the good book in my hands, and propped me up like I am now. After she had rounded up the rest of the gals I proceeded to preach my funeral service. That made me feel better and now I'm going back to Thompson Falls and be there for a long time yet."

TOP RANGER, DIPLOMAT, JUDGE, JURY AND ADVOCATE

By I.V. Anderson

In the early 20's I heard much about those hearty guardians of Uncle Sam's National Forest classified in Region 1 as TOP RANGERS. One that I was personally acquainted with and worked with was a tobacco-chewin', whiskey-drinkin' character. Another was a suave diplomatic and God fearing individual. Both types were much respected as community leaders and were jacks-of-all trades and doers. They knew how to inspire loyalty and high performance in spite of a paucity of funds and low salary.

Ben Saint was on the Region's Top Ranger list and in my book was a real diplomat, judge, jury and advocate. His district when I knew him was headquartered at Noxon, Montana, on the old Cabinet Forest but now a portion of the east end of the Kaniksu. I was the only technical forester on the Forest with the exception of Harry Baker, the Forest Supervisor. In those days of manual performance, technical foresters were viewed with a rather critical eye. In the fall of 1921 Supervisor Baker sent me to Noxon to help Ben cruise a few small tracts of timber. All timber sale activities were centered in the Supervisor's office at that time. Winter had set in and there was already about 8 inches of snow up and down the valley. Even though it was only 40 miles from Thompson Falls to Noxon, the job down there was at least a 3- or 4-day proposition because of transportation difficulties of those times. Travel up and down the valley from Thompson Falls was by the NP local train known as the Dinky. The Dinky was a cozy little outfit. After a few trips on it one knew the train crew by their first names. The engineer would stop most any place to pick you up or let you off.

Upon my arrival at Noxon, Ben and I loaded our gear on his buckboard and left for the Harker place near Heron, downriver approximately 12 miles. The road was barely passable at that time of year, but wasn't a bad road for horse and buckboard. Our buckboard ride terminated at the Harker place. We still had to get across the river because there was no road on the north side of the Clark Fork River in those days nor was there a bridge at the Harker place. We crossed by cable crossing. That was one of my first real thrills as a forester on the Cabinet Forest. The cable was suspended better than a hundred feet over the river and had quite a belly in it, so when you started out you picked up speed until you got about two-thirds of the way across then had to handline your way up to the anchor tree on the north side of the river. Before I had been around that part of the country very long I learned to operate that river crossing with little or no trouble. We landed on the north side of the river at what is now state highway 200. At this time in 1921 the wagon road on the north side of the Clark Fork River dead ended at the Rhodes homestead about 1-3/4 miles beyond the present Bull River crossing. Then, it started up again about 2 miles further on. Even though we were on a road on the north side of the river it was a hikin' chance, so we hiked on down river three or four miles and then up on the mountain where we cruised our proposed timber sale. This didn't take us very long; in fact, the job of getting there and getting back to the ranger station was much the bigger part of the job.

As soon as we finished we started on down the mountain towards the cable crossing of the river. We hadn't gone very far before we saw a trail where somebody had dragged a deer down the mountainside within the past several hours. In those days Forest Rangers were game wardens by cooperative agreement with the State of Montana. I had just received mine and was rather proud

of the assignment, so I thought here was a chance to exercise our prerogatives as game wardens. I said to Ben, "It looks like we'll get somebody here without much trouble, with a trail like this to follow." Ben didn't seem too interested in it; in fact, seemed a little bit bothered. Nevertheless we started on this hot trail down the side of the mountain, slipping in snow here and there. In about 1/4 of a mile we arrived at one of the homesteads on the north side of the river, a rather humble looking affair with log barns and an all-log house. The trail led across a small clearing just on the uphill side of the barn. I said to Ben, "I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what that deer is hung up inside the barn. Maybe we should go in and pick it up so we have the evidence." In those days we didn't think as much about the search seizure law as we do now. Neither Ben nor I thought of a search warrant, but nevertheless Ben was expressing his feelings by dragging his feet. Finally he said, "Yes, Andy, I think probably we'll find that venison in there, but before we go in, I want to tell you something about this family down there." Then he proceeded to give me their name, and said, "You know Jim has had terrible bad luck the last few years. His wife took sick a year or two ago, had to go to the hospital at Sandpoint, then to the doctor at Spokane, and she came back here and died." He said, "You know there's only a 12-year old girl keeping house for Jim and 2 other kids. Jim is trying his best to keep the family together. I really think it would be a terrible calamity if we went in there and made an arrest; furthermore, I doubt very much if we'd have a Chinaman's chance of proving their guilt at the JP court at Thompson Falls." Well, I began to see the light. I said, "Ben, you're the boss, I'll follow." Ben discreetly led us around the clearing and down to the road out of sight of the place, and we completed our journey back to Noxon. All in all it took us three days to complete a job of that kind. It took me a couple of years and several administrative mistakes to really appreciate Ben, and only then did I come to the realization that many of the early day rangers were truly judge, jury, and advocate all wrapped up in one package.

CHIEF PAUL CHARLO - 4 ELK AND 12 DEER

By I.V. Anderson

On January 1, 1940, I was assigned as Assistant Regional Forester in charge of Wildlife Management under Regional Forester Evan Kelley. One of the wildlife problems of that time was excess population of deer and elk. This resulted in overuse of the land and caused range depreciation and winter die-off.

The Flathead elk herd was estimated at approximately 5,000 head. The herd was very much under-utilized. The range, particularly on the South Fork of the Flathead and on the White River, was badly overused. This, of course, was due to the remoteness of the country, the terrain and the abundance of escape cover. The Thompson River and Fisher River deer herds, located on the old Cabinet and Kootenai Forests, respectively, were very much under-utilized, so the range suffered serious degradation.

These problems are serious in some areas today, and will continue to plague public wild land managers because the multiple-use management of wild land is not and never will be an exact science. Dude ranchers and dude hunting had not developed sufficiently to take care of the surplus from the herds.

The future looked dim. So, why not give the nearby Flathead Indians special dispensation to take a specified number of elk and deer from these areas of overuse on a permit basis in order to get the game herd in balance with the range? I thought we owed it to them after the way we had shoved them around, in violation of the Treaty of 1855.

I discussed the matter with Regional Forester Kelley. He endorsed the idea, said we hadn't done much in the way of relieving the overuse of game ranges and that this was worth a try. I then told my story to Joe Severy, who was then a member of the Montana Fish and Game Commission. Joe was chairman of the botany department of the University of Montana. His paramount personal interest was in the general field of wildlife.

We rolled the idea around a while and agreed that I should make the contact with the Indians. Joe was to discuss the matter with the Fish and Game Department and with the other commissioners.

My contact with the Indians was Aeneas Granjo, Chief of the Flathead Tribal Council at that time. I had met Aeneas several years previously in Arlee when I was looking for someone to make me a pair of Indian moccasins. I had accumulated several deer hides and had told Aeneas I would give him the hides for a good pair of Indian moccasins that would fit me. "Yes," said Aeneas, "we make you a good moccasin. My woman best moccasin maker of the Flathead. My moccasins were a long time in coming, but when I got them they were a gem of Indian art. I still have them. From then on, whenever I found an extra deer hide I dropped it off at Granjo's place in Arlee.

We had many discussions about the Indians hunting the Thompson River and Flathead country. Over the years Aeneas had taken many parties over the old Indian trail into the South Fork of the Flathead via Pyramid Pass. Granjo endorsed my proposal with as much enthusiasm as the

average Indian displays to the white man. He agreed to bring Chief Charlo and others who were interested into Missoula to see me.

Several weeks passed by, and I thought he had forgotten. One day as I opened my office door to enter, I was greeted by the strong, smoky buckskin smell of an Indian tepee. There to my left, sitting in a row of chairs reserved for callers, were Chief Charlo, Aeneas Granjo and Ninepipes.

Neither Charlo nor Ninepipes would speak in English. Granjo acted as their interpreter. I spent the next 2 hours in the most interesting powwow of my life. It took us about an hour before I had gained the confidence of Charlo and Ninepipes to the extent that they were willing to open up and tell me exactly how they felt.

Charlo started out on the exodus of his tribe from the Bitterroot in 1891. Next, from his shirt pocket he pulled the original parchment copy of the Treaty of 1855 made with the Indians at Council Grove, near Missoula. Once again I heard the story of the earth being the mother of the Indian, that it produced their clothing, their cover and their food. He pointed to that part of the treaty that said "...as long as the grass grows, as long as the river flows..." etc. He told me the tribe had dwindled to not more than 35 or 40 full-blood families that still clung to the tribal custom of the annual hunt. He told me that each of these families needed at least 4 elk and 12 deer per year to furnish their needs for meat and clothing. Granjo in his turn pointed out that if these Indians were granted a special limited license, it would mean a drain of only 160 elk and 480 deer out of the over-populated area of the Flathead and the Fischer, Thompson River country.

This meeting gave me something to go on. I reported back to Joe Severy. He told me that his discussions with the other commissioners favored further investigation of the proposal. To further acquaint the public with my proposal, I arranged for Chief Charlo and Granjo to appear on the program at one of the annual Western Montana Fish and Game Association banquets, held at the Elks Club. Charlo appeared in all the regal splendor of an Indian chief—eagle feathers, bonnet and all. Charlo repeated the speech made previously to me in my office, while Granjo interpreted. It really made a big hit as entertainment, but I could read in the faces of my fellow sportsmen that there were many skeptics. Not many of my fellow Americans were yet ready, even partially, to right the wrongs that had been inflicted on the Flathead Indians after the Treaty of 1855.

Nevertheless, we went ahead with further discussions with the Flathead tribe prior to presenting the matter to the Montana Fish and Game Commission. Granjo arranged a meeting for us with the tribe at the Moiese Council house. This was a memorable meeting. The council chamber was about 30 x 50 feet. After the necessary formalities, Severy and I stated our proposals. We were seated at a table with chairs in the middle of the room, alone with the members of the tribal council, the Flathead Indian Agent, the interpreter and a few others. There were a few chairs on one side of the hall for those who wished to sit on them and a section bare of anything for those who wished to sit on the floor. The floor by the east wall was occupied by blanket squaws who sat like graven images, never uttering a word to one another, but listening intently to all that was said. An Indian interpreter stood beside each Indian speaker.

Aeneas Granjo, chief of the tribal council, opened the meeting with a brief introduction, saying he hoped it would result in more and better hunting for older Indians on the reservation. In typical Indian English, Granjo eloquently outlined to the long-hairs on the blankets the prospects of a better hunting ground. This was interpreted in Salish.

One Indian speech was most noteworthy. It was given by a long-haired, moccasined, blind Indian whom I recall as Moses Chouteh. Like all American Indians, as well as those of us who profess Christianity, he began with the creation. These may not be his exact words, but I am sure they express his message accurately:

"Many, many, many snows ago, when the Great Spirit made the earth, so long ago only Mother Earth knows. From the ground there sprang the first Salish people. The earth is my mother, and from her comes all the things her children need: food, shelter, clothing, and all the other essentials of life ...

As he proceeded, the interpreter began to leave the monotone he was using and entered into the oratory of the speech. He had heard this speech many times before. The speaker went on to say, "The Flathead Indians lived in peace with other tribes for so many snows that the older chiefs could not remember when they had been on the war path. Then the white man came. Some Indians became sick and died from new diseases the medicine men had never seen. Other tribes of Indians went on the warpath. All Indians were troubled. The Great Spirit had forsaken them; no longer could they hunt the buffalo; other tribes went on the warpath with them because there wasn't enough for all. The white men made wire fences, turned the earth upside down. No longer could it produce the feed for our ponies and grass for the buffalo. Our mother earth was being destroyed, and the Great Spirit would rise some day and strike the white man dead if he continued this desecration. So the white man's great father in Washington sent the pony soldiers out and they signed the treaty at Council Grove, near Missoula. It say as long as the grass grows, as long as the water flows my tribe can hunt all the lands from the Yellowstone to the big bend of the Columbia River. Now we no longer hunt that far. Indian tries to be white man; so now not Indians nor white.

White man turns ground upside down and raise potatoes, cabbage, corn, carrots, many other things Indians never like." (And when he got to carrots, I thought both he and the interpreter were going to throw up; the facial grimace and guttural, throaty sounds sounded like it.) He continued... "old people of our tribe still must hunt to live, so maybe white man let us take 4 elk and 12 deer at times when white man not hunt."

And so the meeting went. After it adjourned, the Indian women filed out quietly, while the men stayed to powwow. While I was talking to Severy, one of the long-hairs who had made a long but eloquent speech in Salish through the interpreter, came over and bent close to my ear and said softly in English, "You think we get to hunt over in South Fork of Flathead?" It was Nick Lassaw, a graduate of Carlisle and football teammate of Jim Thorpe.

When the idea of having the Indians harvest the surplus of elk and deer had been proposed, I was quite aware of the attitude of the average western Montana sportsman toward the Indians would be the same as it had been for 200 years ... mostly negative. Nevertheless, I was bitterly

disappointed when Joe Severy advised me that the Montana Fish and Game Commission had unanimously turned down my proposal.

Actually, I never knew exactly what had motivated me to make the proposal in the first place. Perhaps it was to assuage that corner of my conscience that would not forget the time when as a Cub Ranger I had backed up Bill Hill, Montana District Game Warden, with a Winchester carbine while he searched the two Indian tepees on the ancestral hunting grounds of the Salish Indians on the Thompson River: His instructions to me had been, "Shoot the damn squaws if they get the drop on me!"

About 20 years after the Moiese meeting, while I was crossing Higgins Avenue in Missoula, I saw an old longhaired, moccasined Indian. He was coming out of the Oxford Bar. His shoulders were rounded; he was quite stooped; his gait was slow. But it had to be Aeneas Granjo.

He returned my salutation and I said, "Have you hunted the South Fork of the Flathead lately?" "No," he replied. "The trail is too long for an old Indian. Sometime soon, though, I go over there. Nobody use the old Flathead hunting trail through Pyramid Pass any more; beside, not many elk left. White man now hunts all over the South Fork of the Flathead. No room for the Indian."

Then he looked off at the distant mountains, up toward the old Indian trail at the head of the Rattlesnake, and continued, "Once there was a boy named Anderson who tried to get back hunting right for the Indians. He find white man not care about Treaty of 1855. He was a good boy."

There was nothing I could say except "So long" I walked down the street. About a block away, when I reached the old Smith Drug Store, I turned around. There was Aeneas, still standing in front of the Oxford, looking my way. Aeneas had long since gone to the happy hunting ground. I'm sure he has found good hunting. I'm glad that he thought Anderson was a good boy. And I think the old fox knew me even if he didn't let on.

"NEVER BECOME BEHOLDEN"

By I.V. Anderson

Perhaps the best piece of advice handed down from a father to a son was by the old Vermonter when his son left home. His one admonition was, "my son, never become beholden to anyone." That is a real sound piece of advice, no matter who you work for, whether you're in public or private employ. Sooner or later (and it happened sooner to me) a situation comes up where you are gravely in danger of becoming beholden to somebody. Sometimes it is a bit difficult to tell whether the favor that is being extended to you is genuine hospitality or a bribe.

During my first few months in the Forest Service in the fall of 1920 I had occasion to hire a saddle horse from a rancher on the Cabinet Forest. As I put my saddle on the horse the rancher inquired, "Is this for you, or is this for the Forest Service?" I said, "Well, it's a little of both, but it's a Forest Service job I'm on; what's the difference?" He replied, "If it was for your personal use, you could have that horse for a dollar a day, but for the Forest Service, it'd be two dollars. It's a darn good saddle horse." Right then I decided it'd be better to hire the horse for two dollars a day. It was optional in those days whether you furnished your own horse or hired a saddle horse. You were right at the in-between-era those days, when the Forest Service was in a transition from all horse and buckboard or saddle stock, to motorized equipment. Today Forest Service employees are often warned against accepting a meal from other participants at a meeting. It really makes it difficult to have a hard and fast and arbitrary rule because sometimes when genuine hospitality is extended to you, you can offend a mighty good cooperator and friend of the organization by refusing his hospitality.

I was still pretty young in the service when the first real opportunity to take a bribe came along. I think it was along in about 1922-23, Howard Larson, District Ranger at Plains, Montana, and I were cruising a small jag of timber for a stump farmer in the vicinity of Paradise. We had plenty of applicants for small jags of timber around 200,000 feet. It made a good size job for a farmer to make a stake of \$1500 - \$2000. With saw logs selling for from \$8 to \$12 per thousand at the river, none of them got rich at logging. AC White Lumber Co. of Laclede, Idaho, drove logs from St. Regis cut-off and Perma, Montana, all the way down to Pend Oreille Lake then across the Lake and down the Pend Oreille River to Laclede, Idaho, where the mill was located.

Seems as though something always happened when we were out on a timber job of that kind. We just got nicely started when we heard rifle fire over in the next draw to us. It was in the draw just opposite and south of Paradise, Montana, which was the division point for the Northern Pacific Railway (now Burlington Northern). I looked up from my compass and said to Howard, "Sounds like rifle fire, doesn't it? I'll bet somebody is doing a little extra season deer-hunting." "Yes, and I think I know who it is. Let's go and see if we can't get them." This we proceeded to do. We went west about 400 yards and topped out on a ridge to the east of the draw I mentioned. It didn't take us long to spot the poachers. There were two fellows down there that had just completed the kill and were dressing it out. Must have been 1 or 2 miles down to the road along the river on the south side of the river. I said to Howard, "We sure don't want to take that deer way up in the end of that gulch, let's use our head and wait till those fellows get it down to the mouth of the gulch near the road." "Good idea," Howard said. "There's some big rocks at the mouth of the gulch within 50 yards of the road, why don't you go down hide behind one of them while I keep tab on

them to see they don't change their course." This he proceeded to do. I hurried down and concealed myself behind a big rock. For the next half hour I could hear those fellows coming down that draw, sometimes stopping for a smoke chatting and laughing the while. They were in a jovial mood having taken a buck approaching Boone and Crockett caliber. Now and then I could hear them grunt and cuss as they lifted that big blacktail buck over logs and windfalls. Finally they arrived. I stepped out and said, "Well, fellows, this is it, I'll take the deer from here on. This isn't deer season, is it?" They stuttered and stammered. After the first shock of surprise was over they started to become a little belligerent and wanted to know my credentials as a game warden. These I proceeded to give them. Then it began to look as though it wasn't going to make any difference. Neither Howard nor I had a gun. Although Howard always carried one it was back on Kennedy Creek. I was getting a little bit anxious as Howard hadn't showed up yet and I was wondering where the heck he was. So I started to reason with the fellows. "You've told me who you are, that you're an engineer and brakeman on #1 North Coast Limited of the NP RR, I don't see how you fellows can afford to get hung up on a thing like this. Now that you are in it the best way and most honorable way is to go plead guilty, pay your fine and have it done with."

But they weren't for that kind of solution. Finally one of them said, "You don't have to remember anything about this. How much would it be worth to you if you just forgot about it?" I said, "Well, I'm just not one who is agreeable to a deal like that." One of them spoke up, "Everybody has their price. How about 200 bucks; would that buy us out of it? That's a pretty nice buck we've got here, in fact, that's the best mule deer head I ever did get." "No deals like that. The next time you guys saw me walking down the street in Paradise, Plains or Thompson Falls you'd say, 'There goes that cheap bastard from the Forest Service that sold out for 200 bucks.' Nope, no deal." Then one of them says, "There's two of us, and one of you." Along about that time Howard stepped out of the brush saying, "No, don't you think it, there's two of us and I can handle a couple like you guys." All of a sudden I felt about 10 feet tall. The fellows quieted down right away. We then made arrangements with them to come to Plains the following Monday to appear in court and plead their case. We confiscated their rifles and deer. We could have taken them right in if we'd wanted to be ornery about it, but we knew they were just in Paradise for only a few hours, figurin' to get their deer and take their train out. Their train was due in Paradise in a couple hours. The next week they appeared in court in Plains pleaded guilty, and paid their fines. In those days it was customary to auction off the meat. They asked the local justice to put the meat up for sale right away. That was when they had another big shock. Some of the fellows around Plains didn't take to railroaders coming in and killing deer right under their noses out of season, although they might be doing the same thing themselves. They bid that venison up to \$150, which made it pretty costly game law violation for these two men.



ST. MARY'S LOOKOUT
Bitterroot National Forest
from photo by Charles H. McDonald

A SMOKECHASER ON POT MOUNTAIN

By Robert G. Elliott

In 1924, I was about to graduate from a small high school in Northern Idaho and I badly needed a job for the summer so I could enter college in the fall. I had worked the three previous summers in the hay and harvest fields on Nez Perce Prairie but the pay was low and there were many days when one could not work because of rain, so the take-home pay at season's end was pretty small.

I talked to the principal of the high school about my problem and my desire to go to college. He was most sympathetic and also wanted me to continue my education. "Maybe I can help," he said. "How would you like to work in the United States Forest Service? The job pays \$80 a month and food."

Eighty dollars a month and food. That meant that if I could get the job, I could bring home three month's wages or \$240.00 at summer's end—a small fortune!

So, I filled out an application form and the professor attached a letter of recommendation to it and sent it to the Forest Service Supervisor, Paul A. Wohlen, at Orofino, Idaho.

I got the job! I took a train to Orofino, the Forest Service headquarters, with the clothes and personal effects I would need for the summer. The Forest Service put me up overnight in a hotel. My "room" was a cubicle no more than 8 feet long and 4 feet wide! The bathroom was way down the hall and was shared by about 40 Forest Service personnel.

Next morning, I trudged over to headquarters commissary with my duffel bag on my back and was told that I was to go out on the next truck. The truck was a Nash-quad, a four wheel drive rig; I, along with three other guys, rode in the back on top of all sorts of food and supplies for the Clearwater Headquarters—Bungalow Ranger Station.

After lurching and tearing around 60-some miles of hair-raising mountain road, we arrived at Pierce City, Idaho.

"Well, this is where you guys get off," the truck driver cheerfully announced. "The Oxford Meadows Ranger Station is down that muddy road 16 miles ahead. It's so muddy that a four wheel drive can't navigate it. It's only 16 miles, though, and you can easily get there by dinner time. However, a piece of advice—ask the Commissary Clerk for a Forest Service pack bag; put in just what you barely need, carry that much and leave the duffel bags for the pack train—he will deliver them in a few days to the Bungalow."

Off we go to Oxford Meadows: Sixteen miles doesn't seem to be very much but over a completely muddy and slippery road with a pack—even though small, for a kid just out of high school, it became quite a trip.

The Ranger Station, Oxford Meadows, at last. A beautiful, big log building with several wings; cook shack, bunkroom, and Ranger's quarters and office. A wonderful dinner—the Forest

Service feeds its people splendidly—next morning a fine breakfast and then, pack on your back, we were off for the Bungalow.

This hike was only 12 miles. Also, it was downhill for the first 3 or 4 miles and then we were on the road alongside the Oro Grande River. It was pretty much water level but more importantly it was graded out of river sand and did not have the deep slippery mud of the day before.

The Bungalow at last. It had a separate bunkhouse—two stories, a Commissary, a cookhouse and mess hall, a barn, a blacksmith shop and numerous sleeping tents. It looked like a real city:

We checked in with the Ranger, Lester Van Arsdale, one of the fine guys I have met in a lifetime and he assigned us to the various tents. He told us that the "Wake-up" triangle would be rung by the cook at 6:30 a.m. each morning, the breakfast triangle at 7:15 a.m., and then we would be assigned to our job or crew for the day at 8:00 a.m.

My first day at work——Disaster:

I was awakened at about 8:15 a.m. by a hand on my shoulder—the hand of the Ranger. He said, "Look, youngster, you slept through the wake-up bell, the breakfast bell, and did not show up for assignment to work."

I guess the two days' hikes of 16 and 12 miles had really tired me out but anyway I had slept through all the bells and had not reported for work. I thought to myself—well, I start the long hike back, I really blew this one. In those days no one was guaranteed a job—you either produced or someone replaced you.

The Ranger, Lester Van Arsdale, was completely patient. He said, "Go get some breakfast and I'll put you to work." I said, "Mr. Van Arsdale, I don't need any breakfast, just tell me what you want me to do." He replied, "Nonsense, I'm not going to send you out with an empty stomach—go to the mess hall and get something to eat."

In the course of this brief conversation, I was completely dressed and off at a trot for the mess hall. The cook snarled, "What do you think this is, a short order house?" I replied, "I don't want anything to eat but the Ranger sent me over. He insisted I have something."

With very poor grace on the part of the cook, I was served a lot of food, not a bite of which I could eat. In less than 2 minutes I was out and trotted up to the Ranger.

"Do you know anything about tools?" "Sure, I have been a farm kid all of my life." "Well, that's what your application said—go to the Commissary tool house and get a mattock, an axe, a pick and a shovel." He took me about a half mile up the trail from the ranger station and showed me how he wanted the trail graded and cleaned. I was all by myself where most of the other kids were under the supervision of a foreman who could show and instruct them. Man, did I move dirt!

About 2 weeks later—Recognition and Triumph! We were all sitting at dinner in the mess hall when one of the pack-string pilots who packed to Canyon Ranger Station, down the trail which I had been digging, said, "Hey, what crew is digging on the trail above the swinging bridge—they're sure doing a fine job?" Ranger Les answered "That isn't a crew—it's Bob Elliott who is sitting just across the table from you—he's working all by himself."

The packer looked at me and asked, "Do you know that old badger stationed at Larson Creek?" Well, of course I didn't know the "old badger" so I just shook my head. "Well," the packer said, "that guy has the reputation of digging more trail than any other guy in the Clearwater Forest and you're doing twice as much." When I got up to leave the table, my shirt buttons would hardly hold my chest!!!

Two or three days later when I was really throwing dirt, the Ranger rode up on his horse. Only the Ranger was permitted a saddle animal (other than the packers, of course). Ranger Les's saddle mare was named Bonnie. She was a spirited animal and yet very gentle. She liked nothing better than to nuzzle all of us "trail monkeys" in exchange for a neck pat or an ear scratch.

Ranger Les rode up, smiled his charming grin and said "I guess you know by now why I put you to digging trail all by yourself, don't you?" "No, why?" "Well, when you slept through the wake up bell and breakfast bell on your first morning, I thought I might as well send you home. Then I thought, 'I'll give him a tryout.' Well, youngster, you have measured up, you like to work so now I'm giving you another assignment—the Telephone Crew. Fred Baldy has been watching you and he wants you on his telephone crew."

"Lord, Ranger Les, I don't know how to climb or anything about telephones." "I know that and so does Baldy, but he'll teach you and he wants you. You'll like the Telephone Crew much more than just digging trail all by yourself. You'll be in a crew of four and they are all good guys, hard and knowledgeable in their work and you'll enjoy it." "When do I start?" "As of this minute."

"Clean up the bank you have stripped down, pick up your tools and take them back to the commissary and try to learn something about telephone crews—how do you dig a pole hole in soft dirt?—how do you dig a hole in solid rock?—how does a split tree insulator work?—how do you tie it to a tree or a pole? The Assistant Ranger is there and so is the blacksmith and the tool Commissary man. They'll all help you for the rest of the day; and by tomorrow you won't be so ignorant about telephone work."

Wow! Here I was on the telephone crew my first summer in the Forest Service! How lucky could I get? We were an "elite" crew, only four of us to build and maintain telephone lines and telephones in the whole Ranger District! Most of the other sixty-odd guys were digging trail or cutting trees—but we were telephone men—all except me, of course, who didn't know anything about telephones!!!

I could hardly wait for Fred Baldy and his crew to come in that night! When they got in, I went out in the packer's yard to meet them and before I could say a word, Mr. Baldy came over to me with his hand out and said, "Bob, the Ranger rode by where we were working today and told me

that I could make you part of the crew and that you had accepted. I'm very happy and I hope you are." "Happy, Mr. Baldy? I am tickled to death!" "The name is 'Fred'; not Mr. Baldy, ever."

"You and I and Les and Jack will be a closely knit unit which will do anything that is necessary to make this Bungalow District the best District in the whole Clearwater Forest!"

"Our basic work is to build telephone lines but we'll smokechase and fight fires when necessary. We'll repair trails when we see the need. We'll blast rocks and build bridges when necessary—we do everything. I want only people with me who can do lots of things and I asked for you."

This was the start of two very happy and productive summers under Fred's supervision. Supervision??? No—he worked as hard as any of his crew. Guidance would be a much better word: He was an inspirational guy. He might show up in our bunk tent at three o'clock in the morning in his underwear and say to us (his crew), "Look, there's a fire on Bald Mountain and they've assigned it to us—Let's Go!" We would go: Cheerfully and enthusiastically!

Two summers I spent on the telephone crew. Hard work, no doubt. Varied work, of course. Good companionship, the very best! We had an esprit de corp that never varied. The same crew for the two summers with Fred as the boss, and each of us thought the others were the best guys who ever came down the trail! At the end of the second summer when all of the outlying crews were called back to the Ranger Station to police it up for winter duty, Ranger Les hunted me down one day and said, "Hey youngster, how would you like to be on 'Pot' next summer?"

I darned near fainted: "Pot" was Pot Mountain, one of the highest peaks in northern Idaho. "My gosh, Les, do you mean it?" "Yep, I mean it, if you would like to do it." "You know Turk Oliver who has been in charge of Pot Mountain for several years? He and his partner didn't get along this summer and he has asked for you."

Again, "Wow!" This was the elitist of the elite! A lookout-smokechaser job. We didn't have too many peaks in the Clearwater Forest high enough to justify a two man crew and Pot was the most revered and wanted of all of them. The top mountain crews were truly looked up to by everyone in the whole forest. When I somewhat recovered from my amazement at my luck, I rushed to the telephone and called Turk.

"Do you really mean that you and I are going to be partners on Pot next year???" "Sure do, if you agree—I asked Les to send you up!" Agree?? Good, Lord, if I could have kissed him over the Forest Service telephone line, I would have.

Well, in a few days Turk was down at the Ranger Station, having winterized the lookout cabin on Pot Mountain, and we spent all of our nights planning for the next summer. We spent most of our days sharpening tools, oiling them and just generally getting things ready for winter and talking about "Next Summer on Pot!!"

Turk decided to enter the university that fall and my joy was unconfined. What a joy it was when the two of us would get together at night, forget the studies and quizzes of the next day, and just talk about "Next Summer on Pot!"

Well, next June came and I told my mother that after final exams I was just going to be lazy and loaf around for a few days before I went back to the woods. She thought it was a splendid idea and seconded it immediately. On the first day of my loafing period, I told mother to lay out my stuff, that I was leaving for the Forest the next day. She just smiled and started getting out the clothes I would need.

When I arrived at the Bungalow Ranger Station three days later—after a train ride, a four-wheel truck ride and two days' hike—Turk was already there. Instantly, we were full of plans—When do we get to Pot? Turk got the latest report. "Well, Ranger Les asked a guy going to Chamberlain Meadows a day or two ago to look at the trail up the side of Pot, and the guy called and said that it was still covered with snow and ice and would be impossible to negotiate with pack mules to bring us our grub. We'll have to wait a few days." A day or two later, Ranger Les caught the two of us together.

"O.K., I've noticed the two of you following me and looking at me, so why don't you start for Pot tomorrow?" I'll tell you what I want you to do. Take enough grub to last you for a few days, some telephone tree climbing hooks, insulators and tools and start toward Pot, fixing up the telephone line as you go. Lord knows, Bob, that you should know something about telephone service after having worked with Fred Baldy for two summers. When you get to Elk Camp, call in and tell me how the trail on up to the top of Pot is. (Elk Camp was about four miles below the top of Pot.) When the trail up the side of the mountain is in good enough shape for two or three mules to negotiate, let me know and I'll send up the packer with your grub and the rest of your stuff. Don't give me any funny reports before the ice is gone from that trail because if a mule rolls and breaks his neck, just remember that I think more of him than I do of either of you."

About a week later Turk and I were at our summer home—the top of Pot Mountain—7,500 feet above sea level. We could see all of northern Idaho and on clear days a lot of western Montana and some of eastern Washington. An inspiring sight!

When we arrived at the lookout, we arranged our grub and policed up the place. The lookout cabin was 12 feet by 12 feet in size. It contained two army bunks, one stacked on top of the other, a sheet-iron "shepherd's" stove and a small table just big enough for two to sit at and eat.

The cabin was constructed of whipsawed lumber. If you have never seen whipsawed lumber, you have a new experience coming. To whipsaw lumber you carefully cut a tree so that it will not completely fall. Instead, it will lean against another tree. Then two men take a whipsaw and start to work. The whipsaw is like a cross-cut saw except it is longer—ten to twelve feet long and all of the teeth are slanted or hooked one way. One man gets on top of the log and pulls the saw up. The other man on the lower side pulls the hooked teeth down and does the cutting.

A whipsawed board is something fearful and wonderful to behold, depending upon the skill of the two men who did the sawing. It may be anywhere from six inches to eighteen inches wide and its thickness may be two inches on one side and one-quarter inch on the other side.

Nonetheless, our lookout cabin on Pot was constructed of whipsawed lumber and did make an enclosure of sorts. There were plenty of cracks through which mice, chipmunks, rock squirrels, birds and occasionally rats could, and did, enter. All four sides had glass windows—carefully brought up the mountain with one small window sash on each side of a pack mule. On top of the cabin we had a map board platform (reached by means of a board ladder) which we used to spot fires or "smokes".

When we got the place policed up and our grub arranged, Turk said, "O. K., now let's decide who does what about the daily chores—can you cook?" "If I have to, to sustain life, I can, but it's horrible to have to eat." "Well, I can cook and I like to", Turk answered. "If you will carry the water from the spring down the mountain side, I'll do all the cooking." "Agreed", I said.

The spring was down the side of the mountain about 3/4 mile and the way to bring the water up was on your back with one of two water pack bags, one which held five gallons and the other ten. Needless to say, coming back from the spring was all uphill since the cabin was on the very top of the mountain. Carrying the water was a rough job but I never made a better bargain!

This guy, Turk, was a superb cook! He made homemade yeast rising bread as well as mother ever made it; pies, cakes, cookies, candies, casseroles, and everything that could be made with our limited larder.

After meals, we would play "Pedro" with our worn deck of cards to see who had to wash the dishes. We would start out with a declaration of—best two out of three—then we would agree to the best three out of five, four out of seven, etc., etc. Sometimes we did not determine who was to wash the breakfast dishes until it was time to get dinner!

Other days, we would target shoot to determine who had to do the dish patrol. Turk had a specially made 32-20 single action Colt pistol with a seven inch barrel and I had a 22 Colt Woodsman with a six inch barrel.

We used the 22 caliber for the most part because of the cost of the cartridges. We burned up more than 1,200 cartridges for the 22 that summer.

I thought I was a pretty good pistol shot, and I was. I proved it when I won two handgun matches at American Legion Turkey shoots that fall. I never, however, was a match for Turk with the handgun. He could shoot it just like pointing his finger. After the target matches, I generally washed the dishes so I tried to steer the competition to "Pedro"—sometimes I could win there.

When we started for "Pot", Ranger Les told us that he wanted us to level off the rock ridge south of the present cabin so a new lookout station could be built.

"You know, that old whipsawed cabin could fall down with the snows of any winter or the winds of any summer. I want you guys to build a new level foundation so that we can set up a new lookout station. I'll send up some dynamite, some caps and fuse so that you can blast off the rocky points and break up some more boulders to fill in the cracks. Before the summer is ended, I expect to see a level foundation at least fourteen feet square so that we can set a new cabin up

there. Be sure and take some rock drills on the pack string and a single-jack hammer so you can drill blasting holes when you have to."

We worked at the foundation for the new cabin in desultory fashion for a lot of the summer days, but needless to say, it was not our most pleasant project. However, at the summer's end when Les rode up to see how we were doing, he was most complimentary on the progress we had made on the new foundation.

In this connection, I must mention that we dragged up some tremendous rocks to the top of that lookout ridge. We did it by means of a crudely constructed windlass and a couple of skinned tree skids! When Ranger Les looked at it he laughed and laughed, but then said, "It sure is a solid foundation and can certainly hold up a twelve by twelve cabin!"

Again, speaking of the new cabin, how do you build a new cabin unless you want to whipsaw more lumber? Well, we had a sawmill down at the Bungalow Ranger Station. This old crude mill could certainly saw lumber. That is in terms of two-by-fours, two-by-sixes, two-by-eights or eight-by-tens, but one-by-fours was about its smallest dimension and I suspect that if anyone had ever asked the sawyer to turn out some tongue-and-groove, he would very quickly have had a peavey imbedded in his skull. The sawmill could, however, turn out beautiful white pine of limited dimensions suitable for cabin building.

How did we get the lumber to the top of a mountain for a lookout cabin? By mule back, of course. The mule was the universal freight facility once you left the wagon road! We would cut the two-by-fours into six or eight foot lengths and then tie them into bundles. We would put one bundle on each side of a mule, pointing downward, with the upper ends crossed over the top of the mules back. Then we would rope it solidly to his packsaddle.

You had to know your mules. Some were inclined to panic when they saw that menacing cross of lumber just a foot or so behind their ears.

Panic? I'm afraid I do injustice to the mule family. A mule will take apparent fright if he has space to buck off the pack and make you laboriously load it on him again. But—if you start him up a trail where his bucking or plunging might cause him to roll over a cliff and break his own neck, then he will become surprising docile. A mule has a great sense of self-preservation. A horse is completely different. He will run and plunge until he kills himself if he takes fright at the look of a pack on his back. That is why mule pack strings are safer than those made up for horses.

Speaking of the idiosyncrasies of mules—we had one in the Forest named "Fudge". She was a big, strong, bay animal with a very tricky disposition. It was always great fun to have the youngest trail monkey recruit hold Fudge by the halter while she was being loaded with the two packs. She had a real uncanny sense of timing and just as the last rope knot on the two packs was about to be tied to her pack saddle, she would start to buck and run, throw off both packs, dragging the trail monkey with her by the halter.

I myself was victimized, not knowing Fudge. The two packs were bucked off and Fudge and I ended up knee deep in the edge of the Oro Grande River. The trick with Fudge, as they then showed me, was to take the halter rope and put a loop—a "hackamore" over her nose. It didn't have to be tight, just as long as it was there Fudge would be as docile as a kitten.

We had another mule named "Ginger". He was a small stocky animal of reddish roan color. His trick was that just as you were about to lay a 150-pound pack on his saddle, he would take a step away from you. Well, you would wrench your back and legs and try it again and Ginger would take another step away. With Ginger, when you got acquainted, you would slap his left front leg. He would obligingly lift the leg. Then you would put a rope tie around the knee to keep the leg bent and Ginger would stand and doze while you put on his two packs.

Well, back to Turk and the lookout. The mountain itself was an old volcanic crater on the north side - the highest point - where the cabin was located. From the cabin, located on the edge of the old crater, a ridge extended south for a mile or so, like a handle. The old-timers had a slightly more descriptive name for the Pot, but the early map makers cleaned it up.

The result of the peculiar geography of Pot Mountain was that we could see our own smokechaser area to the east, the west and the north, but there was a section of about thirty degrees at the southwest which was blocked by Pot's handle.

So our routine as "lookouts" was to get up about three in the morning, go up on the roof to the map board tower and carefully scan all the territory we could see from there—the heavy and slightly more humid air of nighttime would settle the haze and you could spot smokes much better just at daylight. Heaven help you, however, if you spotted a fog or cloud wisp in another's' territory and send him scurrying to it only to find it was just fog! Well, after the trip and the scanning on top of the lookout cabin, the next thing on the routine was to walk the mile or so out to the end of Pot's handle and look in that direction. Turk and I took turns in this early morning "get-up". The part I liked best about it was the trip out to the end of Pot's handle. There was a big rock which I would climb to do my "scanning". It had a nice flat top and after my looking duties were over, I would stretch out flat and sleep for an hour in the nice morning warm sunshine. An idyllic life? It sure was for the most part but remember we had responsibilities. We had the foundation to build which we did in unenthusiastic fashion.

We also had another duty charged to us—making a decent map of our smokechaser district. The panhandle of Idaho in the mountain section had never been mapped! The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey was around the territory and doing their best but we had no accurate maps. The Ranger told us when we went up to the Mountain, "I expect you two guys to come in this fall with a pretty good smokechaser map of the District. Put your pack on your back and go as far as you can in three and one-half hours and then mark as well as you can where you are so we can begin to get some reasonable smokechaser districts."

We took turns on mapping trips. Now, when you leave the top of a mountain and everything is down, you can go a long way in three and a half hours. Coming back up is a different proposition. Our smokechaser packs weighed 38 pounds. They included the standard tools; a

mattock, an axe, a shovel, a compass, and the things which fed the smokechaser and made him happy at night.

The food—three "Smokechaser Rations" each one good for one day. Each ration had a can of corned beef hash, a can of bacon, a bar of chocolate, two packages of hardtack and some dried rice, as I remember. Poorer provender I cannot ever conceive of! So we changed our "rations" to something which would give you energy and be a lot more tasty. We would mix up "bannock" flour which was just plain white flour with some baking power and salt stirred through it. We would put about four pounds of this dry mixture in a cloth sack. Then we would put about four pounds of dried beans in another sack, and then cut off a big hunk of the hard smoked bacon we were furnished and that was our smokechaser ration—not only for three days but for several more in case you got caught on a big fire that you couldn't leave.

Mail was the most precious thing; and shelled walnuts or candied fruits, which Turk loved to put into his pies and cakes were another. Also, flashlight batteries for our two-cell flashlight (the Forest Service did not furnish flashlights or batteries in those days and if you tried to have too many batteries, they very quickly became shelf-worn and dead). The flashlight was of great assistance around the cabin at night when a mouse or a trader rat would come into the cabin. You could throw the beam over the barrel and sights of the 22 caliber colt and the varmint would be blinded and "freeze" and could be dispatched with one shot into the whipsawed floor or wall.

Well, as to the "river trip"—it was eight miles down to the river from the top of Pot (at 7500 feet elevation) to the river (at about 2500 feet elevation). This made a round trip of sixteen miles and, unfortunately, the last eight miles were all up! But periodically one of us would make the river trip to pick up mail and other "goodies" which we had the commissary ranger order for us from the stores in Orofino. These trips had a plus value—we would always take along a piece of fish line and a big feathered fly hook and catch a few trout from the river for a change of diet!!

Talking about the smoke and haze and the lack of visibility—we had a fire on Skull Creek that year that covered 15,000 acres before the Lord mercifully gave us three days of gentle rain which permitted the firefighters to get it under control. It was not in our district but we could look directly down into it at night when the dew would settle the smoke and it was an awesome sight. Perhaps 1 to 2 miles wide and extending up Skull Creek for ten or so miles and all ablaze. It was a scary sight!

Before the rain put the fire under control, the Forest Service had more than 700 men fighting it.

These men were all transported in from Orofino first by four wheel drive trucks to the Bungalow Ranger Station and then by hiking for thirty-some miles to get to the fire.

All supplies, of course, were taken from the Bungalow Ranger Station by mule pack-train and if you don't think that was a logistics problem, you have never seen one!

Our job on Pot during the Skull Creek fire was to watch at night and look for spot fires ahead of the main fire and report them to the fire team captains. In a big fire like Skull Creek, the heat and

draft of the fire will carry burning limbs for a half to one mile ahead and set another one! We watched for spot fires ahead each night and reported them.

The first part of our summer on Pot was fairly quiet. We patrolled, mapped, built the new foundation and had a few small lightning fires of no consequence in our own smokechaser district. We took turns going to the few small fires that we had in the district.

One sunny, hot afternoon, Turk and I were both sitting on the shady side of the lookout with our shoes off with not a care in the world. All at once, the sun went behind a cloud and almost simultaneously there was a peal of thunder! We both ran around the cabin and looked to where the sun should have been! There was a small, very black cloud and directly below it a big smoke where the lightning had struck! It was about four miles away as the crow flies but across a deep canyon from the lookout. I hurriedly pulled on my caulked logger boots since it was my turn to go to the fire—Turk had taken care of the last one.

By the time I had laced up my boots and picked up my smokechaser pack, the cloud had enveloped the whole mountain and the adjacent basins on the north and the south and it was raining torrents (rain mixed with hail). However, I had a fix on the fire so I started out! I was just outside of the lookout when another bolt hit. This one was about one-quarter of a mile away and it struck a small, stunted sugar pine. I was walking past one of the guy cables we used to keep the cabin from falling over the cliff. When this bolt came down, the lines of force cut across this cable and it made an explosion fully as loud as Turk's 32-30!

I jumped about four feet and went on. I was about 100 yards from the cabin and another bolt came. I couldn't see anything but a blinding flash but I could certainly smell the ozone! The lightning had burned all of the oxygen out of the air. Turk told me later: "I'll swear that that flash forked right over where you were and splattered all over the rocks on each side of you!—I was most happy to see you still walking after the flash!"

Since the top of the mountain was above "timberline" there was very little to burn—only a few sparsely scattered sugar pines and some mountain ground heather so strikes on top of the mountain were of no bother.

The cabin, although it was on the highest point of the mountain, was guyed by five one-half inch braided steel cables, all of which were solidly grounded and bonded to a ring of steel wire completely surrounding the map board on the roof of the cabin so the danger of a strike on the cabin itself was very small.

Well, I plodded on. I wanted to reach the fire, which was burning because the strike had come somewhat below the top of the ridge some miles away but in heavy and valuable timber. The strikes on top of the mountain were just incidental annoyances and of no danger unless one of them hit you.

To get to my fire, the quickest way was to go out Pot's handle and then cut down a ridge into the heavy timber where the fire was. I went, and when I got to where the fire was supposed to be in about one and a half hours, I couldn't find any fire! Smokechasers of my time will remember—

how do you find a fire in heavy timber? Your visibility is only as the trees will let you see. Sometimes this is a few hundreds of yards and sometimes it is a few yards. Many times your nose is the best guide; you can follow the smell of smoke and finally find the blaze. However, if you are upwind from the smoke, your nose is no good either.

I looked for a long time but I could find no fire. Well, I said to myself, there was enough rain with the lightning to put out the fire, but—I had better get back to the lookout to see if some other fires were set by this storm—I had heard thunder rolling all the time I was hurrying to my supposed fire and all the time I was looking for it.

By the time I got back to the lookout, it was just about dark. Turk had spotted four more fires and had gone to what he thought was the most dangerous one. He left me a note telling me which fire he had gone to.

I picked up the phone to call the Ranger Station and the phone was dead. However, I soon remedied that because it was just lightning burns on the carbon protectors and scraping them with my pocketknife made the line alive again.

I rang up the Ranger Station and told them that I was back to the lookout and was going to another fire and they told me that I didn't know from nothing we had seven fires on our smokechaser district. I talked to Ranger Les about where the other lookouts had spotted them and agreed with Les as to which one might be the most dangerous and said, "I'll head for that one." Well, heading for "that one" was not as simple as it might appear—it was by now completely dark and getting from here to there was a bit of a problem. Unfortunately, lightning rarely strikes and sets fires right by a trail—it generally strikes as far from a trail as possible, just to add to the smokechaser's woes.

So I got out my light so that I can see a little something about where I am going. My light—what is that? It was a "Palouser" pronounced like Palooser—and consisted of a three to five pound empty lard can, scrubbed and polished. To make a Palouser, you turn the can on its side, put a piece of wire from bottom to top for a handle, then in the opposite side with a sharp knife, or can-opener, cut a hole and shove in a long candle for a few inches of its length. The jagged edges of the cut in the lower side would hold the candle and when you lighted it, the polished interior would reflect some light forward—and it would not blow out. It was not a bad light.

So, with the light of the Palouser and my pack on my back, I took off for the fire which might do the most damage—at about 10:00 p.m.

When I got to that one, it had about burned itself out. A little trenching on the ground and not too many shovels of dirt soon had it under control. I went to another one, which had been reported, and luckily it also wasn't much of a fire so I had it whipped promptly. I went to the third one and it was a horse of a different color! It was burning about one-half acre.

The lightning strike had split (as it often does) and had set seven old dead hemlock snags on fire. You may say, well, so what—a bunch of dead hemlock snags on fire. The object was to save the young growth around the dead trees.

In an old burn, the seeds and cones on the ground will re-seed themselves about one time but if the little trees are burned and killed one more time, the forest itself may be dead and no more trees. So the idea was to contain the fire and protect the new growth. On this one, my work was certainly cut out for me.

Seven dried trees on fires and pieces of them flying hundreds of feet away to start new "spot" fires. I trenched as best I could to stop the fire from spreading on the ground and then I patrolled around and around the fire to put out the spot fires. There was no sleep that night. Nor much the next. Or the next.

When you get to a fire the objective is to put it OUT! If you don't, it may burn up the whole forest and yourself with it.

The immediate object is to corral or trench it so it cannot spread on the ground through the pine needles and "duff" as we used to call it. Then the next thing is to fall the snags or trees, which are burning in the tops or toward the tops. Then you have yourself a nice big bonfire of who knows how many acres but it is on the ground and you can shovel dirt on the hot spots to keep it from burning too fiercely or throwing burning limbs or bark outside of your trench.

When I arrived at my fire, I trenched madly for several hours to stop the ground fire and then I surveyed what I had to do—seven old dead hemlock snags from one foot in diameter to more than three feet—and I had to cut them all down with my axe so that they wouldn't throw other burning brands outside of my trench.

Did you ever try to cut down a burning tree with an axe? The first blow you strike with the axe will vibrate the tree and down from the top will come all sorts of burning limbs, knots, bark, etc. What you do is hit a lick with the axe and then jump. As you work on the chopping for a while you get less burning debris from the top because it has mostly been jarred loose. Then, if you have cleared away the fire from the base of the tree, you can work in some kind of comfort.

I worked as many hours as I could stand up—then I would curl up in my blanket for an hour and rest, then get up and start working again.

On the fourth day of my battle on this fire, I heard something—looked up and there was my partner, Turk, with a big grin on his face but looking about as tired as I felt. He said, "Well, looks as if you got this one about licked. I put out the little ones and then called the Ranger Station to find out where you were. We have one more a couple of miles but it's on top of a rocky ridge where there isn't much to burn. Let's the two of us make this one safe and then we'll both go to the last one".

We worked for several hours taking care of the fire and then lay down for a few hours of rest. Next morning, we were off for the "last one". When we got to it, Turk's judgment had been right and the fire was going out by itself—very little fuel having been available. We made short work of this last one and then started back for the lookout. The cabin was only about five miles away but unfortunately all of the five miles were up. We were extremely tired and somewhat hungry as

well. The last we had to eat was the night before when we had cleaned up the last of my beans, which had been simmering in the edge of the fire.

We called in from Elk Camp, which was just a smokechaser locker with a "bear proof" cast iron tree mounted telephone to tell the ranger that we had all the fires out and were headed back to the cabin. Both of us could normally walk at a rate of three to four miles per hour but tired and hungry as we were, and going up the mountain, I suspect our pace was between one half and one mile per hour.

About half way home up the mountain Turk said, "Shh." There was an old rooster grouse walking across the trail. Turk made a beautiful headshot and we had meat. I said to Turk, "I'll pick him, clean him but how do we cook him?" Turk said, "I haven't been able to wash out my frying pan from my last bacon a couple of days ago because of no water, so it still has bacon grease in it; and, besides that, I have some bannock flour left—start picking!"

Pretty soon we had fried grouse and bannock biscuit right in the trail and no meal ever tasted better. The old rooster was as tough as his years deserved, but man, was he good. When we finished this magnificent repast, Turk said, "I'm awful tired, let's lay down for an hour or so." We both lay down on the mountain heather and went sound asleep for about two hours.

When we finally dragged into the lookout cabin, it was almost dark—it had taken us most all day to make about five miles. Turk said, "I have an idea for dinner." "What?" I asked. "A big coffee pot full of cocoa." "Great."

So Turk made up the coffee pot with condensed milk, cocoa and sugar and both of us went to bed.

About 16 hours later, somebody moved and the next day started—somewhat late, but at least we were up and we were rested. We made out the necessary fire reports the next day or so and went back to our regular routine.

The only complaint we got from the Ranger was a telephone call when he said, "I didn't send you two guys any help because I know you are both able and competent and you would call in if you figured you had something that you couldn't handle. Now get back to working on that foundation. You have a pretty soft life up there—Ha, Ha."

The summer went on for about two weeks and Turk and I worked on the foundation in our usual lackadaisical fashion, patrolled the "handle of Pot" and just assumed the usual routine life.

One afternoon in bright sunlight, Turk looked up from the foundation rock we were wrestling and said, "My Lord, do you see what I see?" Across the canyon in the same spot I had gone to about two weeks before and failed to find a fire, there was a h—lluva smoke!

It was a "hangover"—the kind of a fire that is almost extinguished by the rain accompanying the lightning—but isn't quite put out and which flares up later as the trees and the duff dries out. It is

the most dangerous kind of a lightning fire because by then everything will be completely dried out and it can spread rapidly.

I said, "Well, it was mine and I missed it before, so I'll get it this time." I had no trouble finding it this time because there was plenty of smoke. It had burned on the ground to cover about an acre and was in the tops of a few trees.

Again, trenching in front of the spots of ground fire to prevent spreading, I threw dirt on the bases of more of the trees which I thought the fire might climb and then started to work on chopping down the trees which were on fire in the tree tops. This time the fire was in green, valuable timber and it was most important that it didn't spread. Green timber, however, has the important advantage in fire fighting over dead snags—the green trees are much easier to chop down.

After working the rest of the afternoon and all night, I had the blaze under control so it could not spread. Then, the only problem was to put it out!!! I worked for days on that stubborn fire—days and nights. Trenching, shoveling dirt and chopping down trees and brush.

I scouted around the ridge and found a small water seepage about one quarter of a mile away, from which I could fill my canteen and cooking pan. After I had scooped out a hole in the ground I had water.

When I became so tired that one foot would not lift in front of the other, I would lay down and rest for an hour or two. This was always at night when the natural dew would slow down the burning process and this was also the time I burned up another army blanket, unconsciously rolling toward more warmth.

About sunset of the fourth day, I heard something coming through the brush, which I thought was probably a deer or an elk and stopped shoveling dirt to watch. Here again was my partner, Turk, with that big grin on his face. "You've been gone so long that Ranger Les and I agreed that I had better come over and see how you were doing. I was sure you were doing Okay because the smoke had practically disappeared, but being awkward like you are, you could have fallen on your axe." Boy, was I glad to see him.

"I have a pot of beans cooking over in that hot coals spot", I said "and some bannock flour left and if you will mix up a biscuit, we'll have something to eat". Turk replied, "I brought lots of grub because I figured that you must be just about out. I can fix us a good meal, but I won't eat with you until you wash your face. You must have found water not too far away or you couldn't be boiling beans, so go to it and wash. You are about the filthiest specimen I have ever seen."

My trips to the water hole had for four days been pretty hurried; and just to get water, not to improve my appearance. So I guess I did look pretty bad. I wobbled around the mountainside to my water hole, stripped to the waist and really had a wash.

When I got back to the almost-out fire, Turk had some things that he had brought with him, cooking that simply smelled like ambrosia after four days of bacon, boiled beans and bannock

biscuit. He said, "Let's eat. You sleep and tomorrow we'll both put out the rest of the coals". Next night we went back to the lookout and there was never a more comfortable bed than that steel army cot.

This was the last fire we had on our smokechaser district that summer.

A few weeks later, in late August, we had a gentle rain with no lightning, that lasted about three days. It completely soaked the forest and made it pretty safe inasmuch as the lightning season was about over.

Ranger Les called up and said, "Bob, I think it is safe to leave the lookout and Turk will button it up for the winter. I want you to go down to Larson Creek and help Roy Whitmore to close up his station. Get your personal stuff together and take off for Larson Creek in the next day or two."

Larson Creek was not only a smokechaser station, it was also an overnight station for the pack trains which supplied Canyon Ranger District and it thereby had a lot more supplies than just a lookout like Pot. The winterizing of a combined station such as Larson Creek was much more of a job than winterizing Pot....

So, in a couple of days I was off for Larson Creek. It was a distance of about 15 miles by ridge-top through the trees but with no trails. You just went the easiest way. However, it was all down hill.

When I got within a few miles of the river, I began to find some real well worn trails—not as the Forest Service would have made them, but as the deer and the elk had made them. Then I remembered—the "Larson Creek Elk Lick!" It was famous throughout the Clearwater Forest as the place where the elk went to lick the salty water seeping over a big rock bluff.

When I approached a little closer I went more carefully and with as little noise as possible. I heard the bugling whistle of a bull elk or two and then I knew I was real close to the lick. It was no trouble to find it because all the trails down the ridge were converging on a small valley. It was an unusual sight when I finally arrived at the lick.

There was a granite rock ledge about 100 feet high, almost vertical. The granite ledge was perhaps 200 feet wide. Over the entire surface was a fine film of water seeping down the face.

All around the small valley, the fallen and half-fallen trees were rubbed bare of bark and actually polished by the visiting elk scratching themselves. It smelled like nothing as much as the cattle yard on the ranch at home.

As I sneaked up to the lick I counted thirteen elk. Some were licking the rock, some were lying down like cattle, and others were rubbing the trees to soothe whatever irritations they had.

I watched fascinated for several minutes and then a movement of mine caught the attention of a bull elk. He let out a piercing bugle and they all left—clumsily but, nonetheless, rapidly.

So on down to Larson Creek. I arrived there in mid-afternoon and Roy knew I was coming. He said, "The ranger told me you would be down today. I have a treat before I cook supper."

Where upon he brought out a crockery jug of homemade wine. He said, "I've been practicing all summer long, and this is my best product—I make it from the dried and canned fruit the Forest Station furnishes us, plus the sugar and a cake of yeast and, now in the fall, some huckleberries."

It was delicious and powerful.

We worked around the station for a couple of days and reported in to the Ranger Station. The boss said, "Okay, come in and fall any snags which are over-hanging the trail and fix up the telephone line as you come."

Next morning we got ready to head for the Bungalow. Roy had several jugs of his "Best Product" and he said, "I know that if I leave it here, these winter game ranger surveyors will drink it all up. I'm going to be back here next summer so let's take it out into the woods and bury it." We did just that, all except one jug, which I suggested we take along with us.

We planned to take two days to go into the Ranger Station, some 17 miles away since we were working on the way. We started early in the morning and worked all day long, falling snags and bolstering up the telephone lines.

About sundown, we arrived at Cave Creek Camp, another pack train camp where we were going to spend the night. Roy said, "I know you are famous throughout the whole forest as a guy who can't cook and I can, so you cut the wood and build the fire and I'll rustle up the grub." "Fine, but let's have a snort of your 'Best Product', first."

After about three snorts, I was really ready to cut the wood and build a fire. On about the third splitting stroke the handle of my axe caught on a bush and the reverse side of the axe went into my shoulder, clear to the bone. Roy patched it up as best he could, but said, "I'm damned if we are going to stay out here tonight while you bleed to death—we'll leave our packs and go on to the Ranger Station tonight so you can take the truck out to the doctor in the morning."

So, off we go for another 7 miles to get to the Ranger Station. Incidentally, we abandoned the remainder of the jug of the "Best Product."

Next morning after a miserable night, I boarded the four-wheel-drive truck for about a 98-mile drive to Orofino and the doctor. They did dignify me by letting me sit in the seat with the driver instead of the metal box behind, since I was an "accident case."

The Doc looked at my wound and said, "Well, this is going to hurt a little bit because it is all encrusted, I will have to swab it out and then stitch it up." Hurt a "little bit?" It did. The Doc said, "I won't let you go back for a few days to be sure that there is no infection."

After loafing around Orofino for two days, I called up Ranger Les and told him that if I came back, I could only work for a few days or so because University was about to start—anyway, I

wouldn't be much of a worker. Les said, "Okay, youngster, I'll send your stuff out by tomorrow's truck and you go on back to school. I'll see you next year when you and Turk head for Pot Mountain."

So ended one of the most wonderful summers I had ever had and I suspect that any kid of my age could ever have.

I almost changed my course to "Forestry" so I could spend my life in the out-of-doors but since I had had two years of electrical engineering I decided to continue on Engineering and just to dream of "Pot", for next summer!



NUB LOOKOUT
Clearwater National Forest
from 1924 photo

NUB LOOKOUT
Clearwater National Forest
from 1924 photo

THE DECKER SADDLE
FEBRUARY 4, 1943
By Clyde P. Fickes

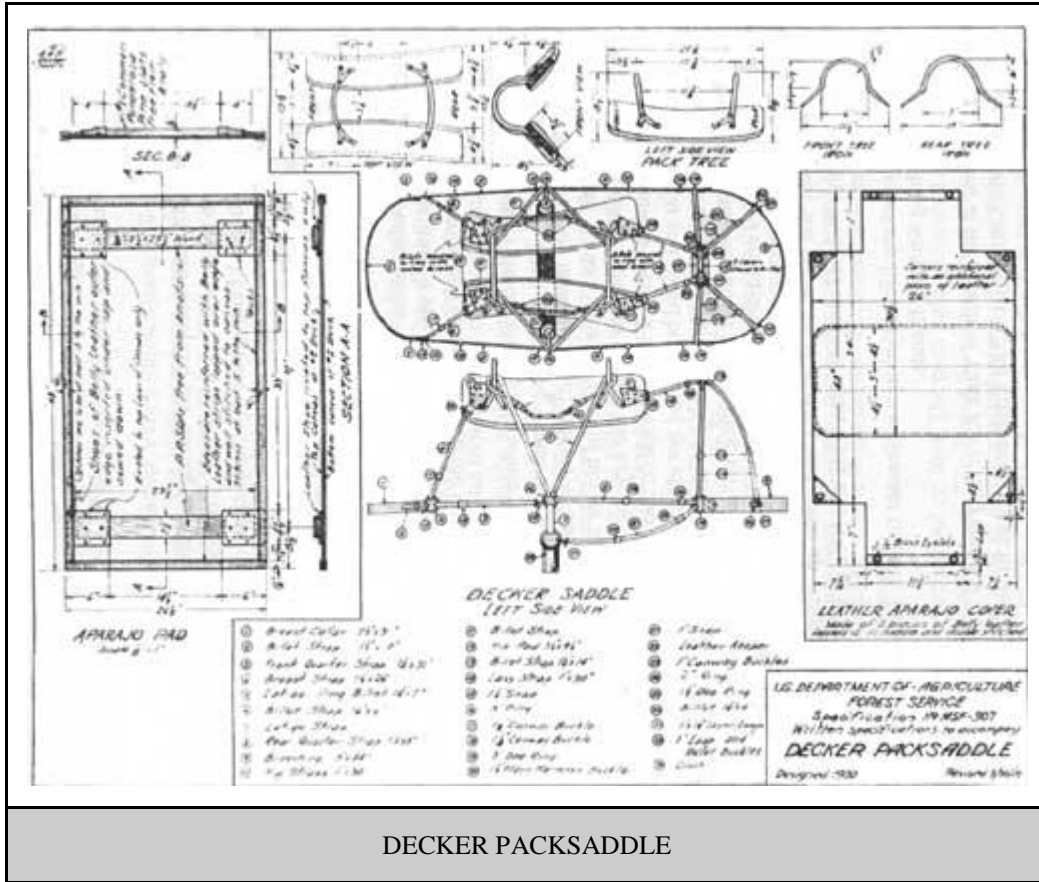
This type of packsaddle originated in Central Idaho in the country around Buffalo Hump and during the mining boom that occurred in that country from 1898 to 1900. Old man McDaniels, an old-time aparajo packer from Oregon and California, was the originator of the idea for the tree and half-breed (as it is called) aparajo cover, which greatly resembles the aparajo. Several brothers named Decker saw the practicality of the idea and adopted it, making some improvements. They applied for a patent on the tree and rigging but I believe the patent was never allowed. Anyway this is where the saddle gets its name. Old man McDaniels was quite an eccentric character, about one of the best packers that ever coiled a sling rope. The way he moved tonnage on his half-breed rigging was an eye opener to the natives in the Salmon River country and old "Mac" soon became a well-known character among packers and miners. He could do more with a green mule in less time than anyone else around the country.

Forest officer soon saw the utility of this rigging and took it over bodily. The latest refinements in the tree and rigging are largely due to improvements made by Forest Officers and packers working with them. The tree as now made is the product of O. P. Robineet, a blacksmith long employed on the Selway Forest. The present Decker saddle is considered by all old-timers who have used it as being far superior to either the cross tree or sawbuck or the old Army aparajo in usability, especially for one-man packing in the mountains. These saddles have stood the gaff of packing every conceivable thing that could be used in either a mining camp or a logging camp, and that with the least amount of damage to the mule.

Loads for the Decker saddle are cargoed in canvas mantee the same as they are prepared for the aparajo. They are fastened to the saddle with the regular swing or sling rope. The diamond hitch is not used nor is it needed. In fact, there are many first-class packers now working for the Forest Service who could not throw a diamond hitch on a bet. The advantage of this is that the lead on each side of the animal has some "give" to it if the mule accidentally encounters a tree or rock. If the load is displaced in this way it immediately shifts back into place as soon as the obstruction is passed. With the use of the diamond hitch on the aparajo or cross tree the lead was solid on the animal and the mule went with the load.

The boards of the Decker tree are cut and fitted from green cottonwood, the sideboards being fastened together with a 3/4-inch iron loop or fork as it is called. The half-breed pad consists of two pieces of heavy canvas sewed together around the edges and stuffed with hay, excelsior, or curled hair. The most satisfactory material for this stuffing is bear grass which, when cut green, has been tied in a square knot and allowed to dry that way. After it is thoroughly dry, the knot is untied and the dry grass then has a springy quality, which cannot be equaled for purpose. The pad is fitted to the tree by having two slits cut in it, which fit over the iron forks allowing half of the pad to hang down on each side. Constant use tends to wear holes in the canvas half-breed, which is comparatively inexpensive to replace. The half-breed is protected with a piece of heavy canvas called a mantel fitted over it. The mantel can be replaced at small cost as they become worn, thus prolonging the life of the half-breed pad.

Some packers use a heavy, oblong saddle pad and single wool blanket next to the mule under the tree. The Forest Service has designed a heavy saddle pad stuffed with deer hair, which has proved to be very satisfactory. The side next to the mule is covered with a heavy ticking, which can be cleaned easily and also sheds the perspiration in place of absorbing it.



DECKER PACKSADDLE

EARLY PANHANDLE AND KOOTENAI YEARS

By Charles B. Hand

When I was fourteen I went to work for Ranger Charles Dennis, Skinner's Pond, in the Troy area. Here there was no ranger station. He used his home for an office. My duties included a daily hike to Yaak Mountain to look for fires. Also I took supplies to Forest Service camps, by wagon and pack horses.

Being a Forest Service Guard occupied me during my sixteenth summer. At that time guards were required to furnish their own horses and food. I owned two horses: My diet did not include bread; I lived mainly on fish I caught near my camp sites, dried fruit, bacon cooked over a camp fire and hot cakes. The Forest Service furnished a tent. This was on Long Meadow, on Yaak River. There was no road, just a trail; neither was there electricity nor telephone. Nothing to read till I found an old gun advertisement. This I read every night. Was it ever lonely? For this I received \$75.00 per month. It was only summer work.

That winter I made cedar posts for Earl Cowles, Troy. I gypoed the job and averaged approximately \$1.00 per hour. I also worked at Meadow Creek, Idaho. I used a four-horse team and a sled to log. A day consisted of ten hours on the job.

The spring I was nineteen I almost lost my life while working on a log drive. It happened on the Kootenai River just below Troy. During the winter it was customary to dump logs over the steep bank of the river, where they landed on end, sideways, and criss cross. On a small island near the center of the stream Bill Walker with his team of horses and a heavy cable was holding the logs. I was out on the logs endeavoring to release the key logs that would break up the jam with my peavey. I heard an ominous creak. I knew the cable had let go and that the logs would soon be upon me. I jumped as far as I could but I could not clear that surging mass of logs that bore down upon me. Realizing there was no safe place to go I dove to the bottom of the river. The logs piled upon me. They were moving and I was sliding on my stomach on the slippery rocks on the bottom of the river. I felt I could do nothing to help myself further. If my life were to be saved it must be by a Higher Power. Then suddenly a big log came by and lifted me off the bottom of the river. It cleared the way for me to break surface and come up swimming. Throughout the ordeal I held on to my peavey. With it I climbed upon a log and rode in safety to the island.

During the next few years my life settled into a pleasant routine. I worked hard but found time to enjoy hunting and fishing with my friends.

My family was camped at the mouth of Yaak River. In February 1918 I hiked from there to Troy and enlisted in the 29th Company of 20th Engineers. I was in the war in France for almost two years. Throughout the most difficult times, my buddy, Lea Kensler, also from Troy, and I were sustained by the thought that when "it was over, over there," we would return to Troy and enjoy the excellent hunting and fishing there. Our dreams were fulfilled; we came back safely.

Alas for me: My gun and all my equipment had been stolen. I had to make a fresh start so to the woods I went. I worked first for Perry Wilson - logging at Moyie. Then, again, with Earl Cowles.

Wages continued to be \$1.00 per hour. I also scaled logs for Bill Hewett in Bonner's Ferry for a time.

Work of an exciting nature lured me from woods work for a time. Bob Bakker and Charles Ordish were catching cougar alive. They worked out of Kalispell and Libby, Montana. I joined them. Cougar were in demand for zoos.

In 1921 and '22 I worked for Ranger Vern Collins, Grangeville, Idaho. I was assistant ranger. I owned my horse and I packed and built telephone lines. After three years I took the ranger exams. Supervisor Fallaway was in charge of the district.

On September 22, 1922, I married Miss Mabel Folden of Clearwater, Idaho. We were the first couple to be married in the new Lewis and Clark Hotel, Lewiston.

In October of that year I was assigned to Graham Creek ranger district. Charles K. McFarg was supervisor. Accordingly we set out for our new home. It was near Carter. It proved a difficult trip for my new bride and myself. We left Coeur d'Alene by boat, crossed over the lake to Harrison. Previously I had left the Forest Service speeder at Enaville, but a couple of other men had broken the lock and taken the little car. We had thirteen miles to go to reach our destination. What could we do? Pearl Bailey came along and took us in his car twelve miles to Coal Creek. There we met Oscar Hopkins with his speeder and he took us to our destination.

The house was large but there was no electricity or water in it. I bought myself a horse and one for my wife as she often accompanied me when I rode to the lookouts and camps. At that time we were allowed to keep a cow and chickens. These we bought. We also had a garden for our own use. My crew lived in small cabins and did their own cooking.

There were no roads to the lookouts at Grizzly, Cougar, Grassy and Graham Pk. We had 14 horses and 7 mules in our pack string. In the winter the packer took them to Salmon River. We had the government speeder and the logging train to take us the thirteen miles to Enaville. On the train we rode in the cabooses. Here there were often prospectors going out with their rock samples. They were filled with hope and dreams. The return trip was bleak - no hope and an uncertain future. Still they were anxious to prospect again. During both winter and summer I made many trips taking sick people to the doctor. It seemed these errands of mercy were more often at night than otherwise.

Dozens of fires we searched out on foot. The pack string followed. I had a fine crew of efficient, dependable and trustworthy men. The Forest Service was not popular with the settlers but when they found I could ride a log or do other woods work as well as they, I was okay in their books.

While we were in this remote ranger station two daughters and one son were added to our family.

In 1931 I was transferred to Pritchard Ranger Station. In 1932 five camps of CCC's were moved in to work on trails, bridges and blister rust. In the winter of 1933 a great flood washed out the bridges near the station. To get our equipment across the river we built a raft of cedar logs.

In 1934 I was transferred to Cataldo. We lived in a tent close to a CCC camp. This was of short duration and we were moved to Kingston the same year. I had my office in a hotel there. A new Ranger Station was built near Kingston. Several winters I worked in the Supervisor's Office at Coeur d'Alene. I had a very reliable crew at Kingston. Wherever I had a crew I always found them to be the best. I am convinced one reason was that I always had the highest meal cost in the Forest Service in that area.

In 1942 I was transferred to Troy, Montana. Was it ever good to be back. Here I had charge of prisoners of war. There were fifty Germans and fifty Italians. Here again I found a fine bunch of men. Besides overseeing them I had charge of the fires and timber sales. I found life as a ranger versatile and interesting. I retired in October of 1952.

BACKFIRE
(The Martin Creek and Pete King Fires)
By L.A. Williams

I was a District ranger with the U.S. Forest Service in 1934, in northern Idaho. Assigned to the St. Joe Supervisor's staff, heading up reforestation, fire control studies and timber management. That year was probably the worst-fire year the region ever experienced. Probably worse than 1910. However, elaborate fire and burning condition records were not available for 1910 as the Forest Service was but a lusty infant at that time. By 1934 it had grown to a rather large and experienced organization with an enviable fire record. Nevertheless, they had had several bad fire years previously, such as 1925, 1929 and 1931. Thousands of acres of forest land had burned in those years.

It was mid-August and burning conditions were very explosive. Worst of all in the Selway-Bitterroot Primitive area where no rain had fallen since March. There were several large fires burning throughout the Region. The atmosphere had become so smokey that sometimes fires were a half section in size before even being detected.

I was on detail at the Regional headquarters in Missoula, doing some work for the Chief Forester's office. One evening the Fire desk called me and ordered me not to leave my hotel room without permission. They stated I was being sent to the Selway-Nez Perce to take charge of a fire that had exploded that afternoon. I was to go to the Moose Creek R.S. by plane next a.m. if the planes could get through the smoke. The Fire desk was checking and would advise.

My wait was short. The phone rang, I was ordered to report to the Fire desk with my war bag immediately, which I did. I was somewhat awe-struck to find that Major Kelley, the Regional Forester himself, had taken over the fire desk and was giving the orders. I did not know him well at the time but had a healthy respect for his reputation. He had commanded the "Forest Engineers," at Bellieu Wood in World War I. He was a lifetime Professional Forester and had been assigned to Region 1 to whip the Fire Problem.

All personnel were aware that the Major believed sincerely, that if a forest fire blew up, some ranger, forest supervisor or fire boss had failed. His solution was simple. Any one who failed was discharged, after a hearing of course. All fire control officers knew, therefore, that they must place any fire under their jurisdiction under control within the first burning period. If they did not do so they must be able to prove that control in the first burning period was beyond the realm of human capability, else wise, finis to a Forest Service career.

Naturally I listened to Major Kelley very carefully. I was to take charge of what they called the "Small fire" on the Selway named "Martin Creek". It was estimated at the time to be 35 miles in perimeter. Burning in severe mountain terrain at elevations ranging from 1,500 to 11,000 feet.

285 men were then on the fire, bossed by local woodsmen. No roads, no bull-dozer, all wilderness area, several days hike from the nearest roads. It was being supplied with an increasing number of pack strings from the nearest roads and the flying field at Moose Creek R.S. Manpower was being flown in whenever the bush pilots could see through the smoke.

Kelley advised that 5 fresh saddle horses had been arranged for me in relays, "Pony Express" fashion. He emphasized, "You can make it by daylight. Kill those horses but get to that fire and control it!" More manpower he promised when possible. When? No forecast. Reason? (1) Mostly too smokey to fly them in. (2) The Big Fire further down river where the need was greater. Manpower on it that day was 4,000 and 50 Forest Officers.

I rode all night, driving each of the horses in turn, at full gallop. A wild ride into the unknown.

Pitch dark. I held my hands and arms extended to protect myself from overhanging boughs.

Since I'd once been a buckaroo I was unseated only 2 or 3 times.

I made it by dawn and took charge. Then. — Several days of heart breaking labor. I wore out 5 horses and burned their feet, getting to, through, around, away from and back to the Martin Creek fire. I would chase it one day, and be chased the next. Kelley was marvelously faithful, sending a few men, till on Pete King I had 985. We had luck, good and bad. The fire burned one 150-man camp with all its supplies including two string loads of fresh beef. The fire barbecued the beef but we ate it later anyway! A wild rumor went out that we had burned up 77 men that day! Headlines in the Spokesman Review said. But it was false. The rumor occurred because the cook had stayed at the camp till the fire hit it, then losing his nerve, he ran all the way down the Selway river without stopping, till he reached civilization! But we did control the Martin Creek fire. On that day of control its perimeter was 51-1/2 miles. The Little Fire!

The day after we had controlled Martin Creek, I was inspecting the fire line and looked west around noon. In the distance I could see a huge smoke cloud boiling up. It was as great as the clouds which now result from the atomic bomb! Also an ominous roar, as of a thousand electric sub-stations, convinced me that the Big Fire "Pete King" had blown up and a huge fire storm was headed our way.

We had seven camps on Martin Creek Fire that day. Six had telephone or radio, one had no communication. I pushed my horse to the latter camp and met my assistant Fire Chief Gallagher there. "What are you doing here?" he joshed, "Don't you see that Big fire coming, all the guys at the Big ranger station will want to talk to you." "Yeah," I said, "I see it, I hear it, that's why I'm here. I must get some sleep as must you or we'll be useless tomorrow. Get some sleep, we'll have a message from Kelley by daylight."

At daylight this message came from Kelley: - "Tell Ranger Williams the situation is desperate. Tell him to take every man he can spare from the Martin Creek fire and get up there on Moose ridge if he thinks he has time and see what he can do to stop the Pete King Fire. Tell him to BACKFIRE. With a line if he can. Without a line if he thinks he must. Anything else he thinks he can do, tell him to try. If it does not work out I will not hold it against him."

"Wide open orders, what now?" asked Gallagher. "Holiday for all hands except you and me Chuck," I replied. "We'll go up and reconnoiter. If we tried throwing men up there into the path of that fire storm without knowing our ground, all we'd do is burn them up." We started for Moose Ridge on horseback and were halfway there when the fire topped Moose Ridge. The sight

was eerie and terrifying. Whole trees 3 and 4 feet in diameter and 150 feet long were shrieking, moaning, groaning and floating crazily through the air 4 and 5 miles ahead of the main fire. We retreated to Wylies Knob, a peak 11,000 feet high with a rock thumb 200 feet tall on top on which was bolted a lookout house. We studied the scene from there. At that point the dying Martin Creek fire had blocked the Pete King fire for a swath 16 air miles wide. However, it was still galloping past, slowed slightly by huge Moose Ridge, but burning unchecked for another swath 10 or 12 miles wide. If not stopped in the next 24 hours, given 48 it would be deep in Montana. It had made 25 airline miles across many canyons the first afternoon.

We talked with Ranger Case at Moose Creek R.S. George would have been on the line himself but he had a broken leg in a cast. He had a plan. Briefly: Back up to the Rattlesnake bar-Shearers Peak ridge which extends from the Selway river southerly to Shearer's Peak and the Martin Creek Fire. This was about 12 miles ahead of the main fire. If we could fire out downhill that night; by next a.m. we could make our backfire run up Bitch Creek. Thus temporarily change the wind direction and hold the Pete King fire at the Selway River. Meantime Case promised to shuffle in as many more men as could be flown in the time available.

The plan went into action. 900 or so men were used. That evening, first firing narrow strips a few feet wide; then burning increasingly wider strips as it became safe. By 10:00 a.m. next day, which is blow-up time, back fires were being set a half mile wide. Then suddenly the entire backfire began running up the Bitch Creek canyon with increasing speed due to the suction of the onrushing Pete King fire. At 11:00 a.m. the two fires met in one boom. The backfire's drive had become great enough to halt Pete King. The whole trees that had been flying ahead of the Pete King fire were blown straight up in the air where they cooled and fell harmlessly. Not a single spark got over our lines!

Next day we had to backfire Magpie Creek as the Pete King fire was raging down it. About 6,000 acres had to be fired out in a manner to change the wind direction. Halfway up Magpie Creek was an old burn where crisscrossed windfalls lay 4 and 5 deep. If we could fire that first, then drop back to the canyon's mouth at the rivers edge; the heat from the first backfire would pull the second to it and control the sparks. I picked 7 men for the job. All fire bosses. Bill Boyd in charge on the east side of the canyon. Myself with assistant Chief Gallagher and the Swede Fire boss Waldron took the west side. We were sticking our necks out, I explained to Chuck and Bert as we hiked up the canyon. We wanted it to burn, but we had to get our backfire going first or we couldn't control the draft. Meantime our Bitch Creek backfire might crawl down the hill behind us before we got back. If it did we'd be trapped! Risky: But we had to chance it.

We went on up the canyon and touched off the backfire in the old burn about 5 miles wide and it went roaring up the mountain. About 9:00 a.m. I saw smoke puffing occasionally down Magpie Creek behind us. Worried, I sent Waldron back to see if the fire there had burned across Magpie Creek behind us. "If it has," I said, "Rush back and warn us, as we'll have to get out of here." He left. Minutes later I saw more puffs of smoke. Alarmed. I called the other 6 men to come quickly. Busy, they paid little heed. Scared! I called them vile names and really bellowed! Surprised at my language they sheepishly hurried up toward me. One stopped to light a smoke. I hollered "Don't smoke, you might start a fire." They came on, laughing, as setting fires is all they had done that day. Arrived at my side they looked down the canyon. By that time the fire was racing

at us a mile or so distant. Gallagher only, could speak. "Which fire is the coolest, which way will we run?" he asked. I replied, "I don't know, but head straight at the fire below. You take the lead. I'm afraid of a panic. If any of the men stampede, clobber them with your walking stick! There's a gorge back there which is only a few feet wide. It's all rock due to a slide some years back. There is nothing on the ground there to burn, if we can get there we'll follow the seam up to a rockslide above and be safe. I'll bring up the rear and if anyone tries to run back I'll clobber him!" Long before we got there the fire was racing through the treetops over our heads! My gait wobbled, I almost ran back myself, but managed to stagger ahead. We reached the gorge and staggered up the seam like squirrels up an eave spout. My thoughts. "This is it!" Well my insurance is paid, my family will be ok as they'll also get a small pension as this is line of duty! I wondered also what people would say of the ranger who burned himself and 6 others up in his own backfire! But we kept on. We made it to the rockslide. For a while we were breathless and speechless and thoroughly cowed! Then the 7 of us slapped each other on the back like maniacs and laughed hysterically. Finally we remembered Waldron. We thought he was a goner for sure. Minutes later we heard a crow like a rooster above us. There stood all 6 foot 4 of Waldron on a little cliff flapping his arms and crowing like a chanticleer! "Hey Bert," I hollered. "Hey Buck," bellowed Bert, "The fire's across the creek!" In a few moments he joined us. I asked him how he escaped. He replied in his slow Swedish drawl, "I vill tell you. You remember dose cliffs you call a precipice?" "Yeah," I said. "Vell I got on pun, and pen de fire singed my butt I went Yumping from precipice to pace-a-prec and back to prec-i-pice again and here I am!" Everyone roared. The mental picture of a 270-pound swede jumping from one cliff to another safely! Was quite a relief.

That night in camp. The cook had made some dough gods. They were rectangular in shape but black in color as the campfire was too hot. The Fiery Finn with the red beard was staring moodily at his plate, occasionally poking a finger at the dough god on his plate, his moustache drooped. "What's the matter Finn?" I asked. "Can't you eat?" "That ain't it," he said moodily. "I was just thinking, if you and the Swede hadn't been there today, we'd all look just like these doughnuts! But I still think you timed that one too d— in close." I flushed and stammered, "I—I—I— I didn't really think it would do that."

We continued to fight the fire all fall until it finally rained. All told my crews built and held 160 lineal miles of fire line on Pete King. How big was the fire? I don't know exactly. I flew it one day by airplane for 2 hours and didn't see it all. I always described it as being 75 miles long, 25 miles wide in the widest place, and 2 miles high since it burned from 900 ft. to 11,000 ft. elevation, about a half million acres. A wildfire.



MIDDLE SISTERS MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT

St. Joe National Forest

from 1950 photo by W.B. Apgar

MIDDLE SISTERS MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT

St. Joe National Forest

from 1950 photo by W.B. Apgar

OLD PIONEER RANGERS' WIVES

By Leon L. Lake

Seemingly not very much has been written about how the old Rangers' wives helped their husbands in fire emergencies. And in those days compensation was out of the question.

We lived in the small mining town of Basin from June 1, 1935 to December 1938. The town had about 600 inhabitants with six or seven saloons. A few of the old mines were being leased and worked again. Nearly each night someone was hurt with plenty of drunks and fights, causing shootings or stabbing, sometimes. It was about 1936 or 1937 when I had three fires in the Elkhorn region where we fought fire all day from the 2nd of July to past the 6th of July, using CCCs from Helan, Burch Creek and our own Thunderbolt Camp. My wife, Gladys, acted as Dispatcher in the office. One day a local drunk came in and wanted to hire out as fire fighter. She told him he was in no condition to fight fire, but he insisted on saying that he was going to die tomorrow. She stated that he would die if he didn't quit drinking. Well he went on to say that if he didn't quit drinking he might die. He went on to say, "Now if I do die, I want you to sing at my funeral." She asked him what he wanted her to sing. "Just sing, Lay My Head Beneath a Rose." At this, she told him to get out.

One night as I was about to close up the office, which was in an old bank building, a French lady came in and she was dead drunk. She asked me to change a \$100 bill and I tried to tell her that this wasn't a bank anymore, but it didn't register. She went on to say that she had a quarrel with her husband, as she partly talked in French and fluent English both in a drunken manner, and he had hid her money so she had to take some gold down to the liquor store to buy her liquor and then went home and found a \$100 bill and wanted it changed so she could redeem her gold. I tried to get a few words in edgeways, but they didn't register. Finally she says "Maybe you don't believe I have a \$100 bill:" Then she pulled up her dress clear up to her waist, pulled down her garter and out came a billfold full of \$100 bills. Finally it dawned on her as I said again, "This is not a bank, and I believe everything I see and hear, but I cannot change your \$100 bills." Out she went in a huff. My wife stood behind the stove and heard it all as it was rather amusing.

Many a time my wife made up lunches and kept the coffee pot going for fire fighters who were waiting the call to embark. This occurred at Basin, Philipsburg, Warland and Deer Lodge. One time an old gold mine at Sunrise, being leased by some Finns, caved in and caught one man. It took part of one day and one night for rescue miners to tunnel through the caved-in dirt fallen from the hanging wall. Well we went down to offer as much help as we knew how and again my wife kept the coffee pot going and made up lunches for the workers. The cave-in just flattened this man in a horrible style.

I firmly believe that a good many old rangers' wives helped out immensely during critical fire seasons and I, for one, appreciate their true blue help. Once in awhile my wife received a thank you letter from the Supervisor's Office and that was very much appreciated.

In 1945, my first year on the Deer Lodge District, we had an after Labor Day fire at Albicaulis Lake in the North Fork of Race Track Creek. However the fire was reported in one branch of Rock Creek which heads up toward the North Fork of Race Track Creek. World War II was in its

final stages but manpower was scarce. The Forest Service had a contract with the State Prison to use their trustees on fires. I had sent in a scouting crew to locate the fire and send out a report for everything needed. In the meantime I asked for twenty trustees from the State Prison to be ready by 5 a.m. the next morning. We went in by way of the south fork of Rock Creek until we met my assistant on the trail. He stated that we would be unable to get to the fire as it was over the divide. We returned to Rock Creek Lake and radioed for transportation back to Deer Lodge. After arriving, my wife had sandwiches and coffee ready for all of us and then I sent the trustees with my assistant to Race Track Creek where they would camp at the old mining cabins called Danielsville. The next morning I rustled packhorses and a packer and went up to the fire and slept with that bunch of criminals at Albicaulis Lake. They worked better than a good many pickups that I have hired. Two of them were good smoke chasers so I detailed them to blaze in all the spot fires, make them safe and easy to find from the main fire.

All we had to eat were Class C Army rations until we could get a pack outfit a-working. This fire was in the 8,000 to 9,000 feet altitude and the trail up there was plenty tough. Later on we had a plane drop in a pump, hose and gasoline; also some supplies. Well, the Prison was harvesting and they yelled for their men to be brought back, so we had to take them in and all the way back to Deer Lodge. I was scared that they might jump out of our truck and I would be short of men and thus be held responsible. However upon arriving at the prison about midnight the guard counted noses and they were all there. I had taken along a supply of cigarettes and a few other items which they stole from my truck and which I had to pay for. We took inmates from the Warm Springs Hospital for a few days. Their Foreman had to watch them very carefully as they were inclined to keep the fire trench straight even though it hit a long finger of the burn, they would go straight through. Well, we let them go and finished up with a bunch of Mexicans from Thompson Falls. Several sources of manpower were used on this fire and none of them could be considered high class. That night as I sat around the campfire with those trustees at Albicaulis Lake, I heard the awfulest tales of how each convict was railroaded to prison and a few said they were going to kill off all the guards when they got out. A few were murders, a few in for burglary, attempted murder, rape and other crimes. The guard said to not wear any gun or they would take it away from me. So I trusted to luck that everything would be O.K., and it was.

LIGHTENING ON MOUNT EMERINE

By Leon L. Lake

It was about 1932 or '33 that we decided to build a new lookout tower on Mt. Emerine on the Philipsburg District as the old tower was rather unsafe to occupy. I had hired a carpenter and helper plus the lookout man as it was in July. Mt. Emerine is about 8,640 feet in altitude and in a bad lightning zone.

M. E. Skillman, Assistant Ranger, and his son-in-law, hired some pack stock and made a trip up to the mountain nearly each day carrying loads of cement, sand, and gravel for the footings of the new tower. It was about a seven-mile pack from the old West Fork Ranger Station. The trail near the top was very steep and a No. 12 gallon wire telephone line paralleled the trail practically all the way.

One day while the packers were up on the mountain a bad looking storm was looming up from the west so Skillman said, "Let's get to h—l out of here" as he was afraid of lightning. It seemed to affect his arms and legs from past experiences.

Well they had gotten down the mountain trail about one-half mile and just past the steep grade, when all at once the thunder rolled and a lightning flash came down the telephone line knocking out both men and all seven horses. No one knows exactly how long both men and horses were laid flat. However Skillman "came to" first and found one arm paralyzed, but rolled over and looked over at his buddy who laid unconscious on the ground with blood oozing out of his mouth. Skillman finally got to him and found that he was breathing, and then one horse got up and before long each of the other horses came to their feet, but what a predicament they were in. Finally Skillman's buddy came to and in a course of time they managed to get the horses together, but all were minus some halters, ropes and lead straps, and helped each other on their saddle horses and made the last 62 miles into the West Fork Ranger Station. Jim Templer, new Supervisor of the Deer Lodge Forest, said they looked like a couple of ghosts riding in and hanging desperately to their saddles, Skillman had a partial red cross on his back and his buddy had five or six teeth knocked out as he fell on the rocks.

Needless to say that we rushed these men to the Butte Hospital, where they were for about a month recuperating. They had to hook up a bleeder to Skillman to drain off the electricity. His buddy had to have several false teeth made and installed in front.

The horses all survived but one or two had strips of hair taken off their backs. For about one-half mile that No. 12 grounded telephone was all burned up, then a few pieces were found welded together in the most fantastic irregular shapes, then a few short pieces were found on the ground, and lower down longer pieces until finally the wire was found without being broken but wavy and brittle. For about five mile's that entire line was rendered useless.

After the men came into the West Fork Ranger Station I sent a reliable man back up to Mt. Emerine, in the night, to check on those remaining up there. He found them in the old cabin dazed and somewhat shocked but no other injuries. It seems the lightning had struck the old tower and a heavy flash went down the telephone line. It made a shambles of the old tower so the

new one had to be pushed as fast as possible and a new telephone line put in, using #9 wire this time; and ground wires every three or four per half mile were run up tie trees.

I called for #9 wire but they sent out No. 12 from the Supervisor's office, so I received No. 12 instead. I called the office up about it and was told by the Chief Clerk who took over most of the Supervisor's duties to use what was sent to me as it was No. 9. Then I cut off one piece of No. 12 wire and one of No. 9 and sent them in for reference and asked again for No. 9 wire. At last it was sent out. Only two men remain alive that worked on this project. All others have passed away, even the Supervisor and Chief Clerk. However, the recovery of the men and horses from that lightning flash was practically a miracle.

TRUE, MISCHIEVOUS, AND DESTRUCTIVE BEAR FACTS

By Leon L. Lake

I was transferred to the Kootenai National Forest in December 1938 and stationed at Warland until March 1945. However the first winter I worked in the Supervisor's office where Karl Klehm was the Supervisor. My job was compiling Work Project Inventories for the entire Forest. In the spring of 1939 I moved to the Warland Ranger Station. In my sojourn on the Warland District, I became acquainted with a good many new problems.

Lincoln County embraces the largest portion of the Kootenai National Forest and within this big area of 2,354,993 acres there was an estimated total of 1,000 black, brown and grizzly bears; besides oodles of White tail and mule deer, elk, moose, mountain sheep and mountain goats in the Cabinet range.

This story refers mainly to black bear troubles. They had become quite a problem in some ways and somewhat destructive in others. They were mischievous, inquisitive and adorned with a ravenous appetite for sweets, bacon and garbage. They loved to mutilate the big signs by tearing down or biting big chunks out of them. They also loved to break into a cabin or lookout station and leave it looking like one of Hitler's bombs had just exploded but this seemed to be good pastime for those kingpins of the Forest.

Once while riding over trail inspection, I ran into five bear in one day and quite often I usually saw one or two.

One day after the 1940 fire season ended with a big rain in August my wife and I took half a day and went huckleberrying up toward Banfield Mountain. It was getting late evening and we were about ready to go home when all at once the dog barked and out came a black bear. I sicked the dog on the bear and he went up an old snag; took a big look at the dog and down he came after him. I went to the car after my six-shooter and a camera. Back came the bear so I said sic him again but the dog had to have considerable backing so the bear went up a tree only a few feet and came down after the dog and barely missed him with his paw. Then he stopped to take a look at me only about 10 feet away with a rock in my hand. I heaved it at the bear's head, and lo, a bulls eye. It stunned the bear and he raised his paw and rubbed his head and when the daze wore off he ducked and lit out for parts unknown. Afterwards it dawned on me that I could have gotten into serious trouble with that bear.

Another bear depredation incident occurred after my packer and his seven mules returned home from work on another big fire. He had been gone night and day so after a day or two resting up we sent him up to Lawrence Mountain to pick up a tent camp, which had been vacated for ten days or two weeks. Upon arriving everything was O.K. so he went on to Parsnip Mountain to pick up the excess supplies and inventory the balance and close the shutters. Arriving back at Lawrence Mountain after dark he found that a big bear had made two exits into the tent and tore everything to pieces, what few food supplies that were left were scattered all over the bed, the stove torn down, the gasoline lantern smashed up. In fact things were in a terrible mess but he managed to crawl into some bed sheets without supper and in the morning he tried to find

something to eat, load up his mules and hit the trail. Lawrence Mountain was an emergency point with no tower, the camp being one-half mile away from the peak.

In 1940 for about two weeks in July we had a bad fire season. Dry lightning storms hit both day and night. All of my district men were out on fires and there was scarcely any sleep or rest during this period. The Kootenai Forest had about 450 fires the most of which were during this period. One district joining mine had 150 fires, with several Class C's over 300 acres in extent, yet the fire danger was low and only a few lookouts manned. Fires weren't supposed to spread but they did. The Forest had 150 burning all at the same time. Consequently labor had to be shipped in from Minneapolis and Seattle to man the bigger fires on several districts. Well, a fire had been reported by a distant lookout so I started for it with two CCC boys following and I would pick up an old woodsman en route. This fire was across my district boundary, but the Raven District was unable to send any men as they were swamped.

Now an unmanned Lookout called Sugarloaf was on the district boundary and I could see the smoke from this point so I tied up my horse and went inside but, behold, a big bear had made a big exit on one side, tore up everything inside except the fire finder and went out on the other side. Luckily I could get a reading on my smoke and thence ran a compass line to my fire, blazed a line back down to the trail and there were my men. After getting the fire under control I went for water for the men and then on to Boundary Mountain Emergency Lookout Station where I arrived about 1 a.m. in the morning. From this point it looked like the City of Butte all around and north into Canada.

After checking in with my Dispatcher, I pulled out for another fire located in the head of Cripple Horse Creek where the Warland Peak Lookout man had been gone to it for two days. It was under Weigal Mountain Lookout. This man, Rex Fleming by name, had held that one-acre fire alone but was nearly starved as his rations were all gone. I tried to get a phone call through the Weigal Mtn. Lookout but lightning had burned out the phone so I rode back to Boundary Station and ordered more men and the packer to come in with supplies. He had just got in to headquarters from other fires. Well, he made those 17 miles up the trail in the night to our fire with more men on the way. Rex Fleming was sent back to the Warland Peak to take over, and relieve an emergency man sent up by the Dispatcher.

Now to get back to Warland Peak Lookout, the CCC's and a foreman had built a new quarters on 12 ft. tower legs and in July I went up there to wire in a telephone. The Lookout man, Rex Fleming, was helping as necessary, when all at once we looked up and saw a black bear packing away our saddle blankets and pack bags. Well, we ran him down to a point where he dropped everything and we carried everything back and placed them inside the new quarters. I resumed my job and then heard the garbage cans rattling and there was that bear again. I told the Lookout man that I would like to get his picture so he went after some hot cakes and threw them at the bear and believe me he would catch them with his paw as if he were trained. Well, all I had was a 120 Brownie Kodak with me so we had to herd the bear around in sunlight and I would try to get as close as possible to snap a picture. I was about fifteen feet away from this big bear and snapped a picture and then tried to get a little closer when all at once he suddenly stopped, looked my way, opened up his mouth and brought his right paw around towards me as he bawled

out Woof-WOOF. Mr. Fleming yelled out did I have enough pictures and I said, "you bet I have," as I tried to recover from the shock and flatten down my hair.

When we sent the Warland Peak Lookout man to that Cripple Horse fire we located a qualified emergency man at Rexford so he was sent up to take over. So many fires going we overlooked telling the new man about that pesky bear. The observation tower is 100 feet high about 30 feet from the new quarters. The new man looked down there towards his quarters one day and there was that miserable black bear taking a bath in his wash tub. Well of all things that would raise one's ire that was it. Water had to be packed in 5-gallon man packs for about three-fourths of a mile and any reserve for laundry or bath was placed in the washtub on the north side of the cat walk. The new lookout man had forgotten to close the door to his stairway, but he scared the bear out.

When the regular Lookout man came back they exchanged talk about that pesky bear. Well, Mr. Fleming decided that he wouldn't get up into his quarters while he was there. Those years, bear were on the protection list until the hunting season opened. One day Fleming looked down toward his quarters and saw his garbage can turned over from where it sat in a corner of the railing, so he went down at once and raised the stairway trap door and looked in the cabin and there was that big bear on the table helping himself to sugar, syrup, milk and other canned goods. Well of all things and what table manners: Fleming opened up the door and yelled at the bear you get out of there you d—n bear as he took down his six-shooter. Well the bear pranced around the room with his paws hunting the exit where he came in, leaving footprints on all the windows. He finally found where Fleming forgot to close the sliding window and he jumped about fourteen feet to the ground as the Lookout man bounced a few bullets off the rocks near his anatomy. That bear never returned after that.

THE PINKHAM CREEK CLOSURE - 1924

By Sam Billings

Sometimes referred to as the Pinkham Creek Insurrection or the Pinkham Creek Rebellion, the entire Federal lands in the Pinkham Creek drainage, Kootenai National Forest, were closed to entry without permit beginning about the first of August 1924 and were kept closed until the September rains.

For several years preceding this closure, the Forest Service had had to contend with incendiary fires that were set within or adjacent to the drainage. These fires were believed to have been set by homesteaders in Pinkham Creek who set the fires in order to obtain work as firefighters. In the latter part of July 1924 a rash of these fires were set—some 32 fires, if the writer remembers right, were set at one time; and the Forest Service decided to take drastic action. The Forest was closed to entry except by permit, and seven camps were established around the valley, out of which patrolmen enforced the closure. There were three men in each camp - two patrolmen and a camp tender, who did the cooking and watched camp during the day. All the patrolmen were armed and were supplied a saddle horse apiece for riding out over the trails. Wages were \$100 per month and food.

This writer was one of the patrolmen and was assigned to Camp No. 1 the first camp on the road at the lower end of Pinkham Creek. Andy Fluetsch, sent over from the then Absaroka National Forest, was the other patrolman in this camp, and Bill Hillis, from Libby, was the camp tender. Andy was a long, lean cowpuncher-type and was a fast-draw artist. Bill was short and round and bald and was a retired professional gunman who had worked for years for the Peters Arms Company, doing exhibition shooting at circuses and on the vaudeville circuit. They picked me - they told me later - because I had served in a tough outfit, the First Division, in World War I.

The people who organized this armed patrol must have thought there would be violent resistance to the closure, but there was none—only the threat of it one day. Fluetsch and I usually left camp around 8 a.m. and rode out in different directions each day, sometimes together and sometimes each in a different direction. We usually returned to camp at around 4 p.m. Bill Hillis usually stayed in camp all day, but occasionally, he would catch a ride into Rexford or Eureka on business of his own, or rarely, he would go duck hunting. One day we returned to camp around 4 p.m., as usual, and found a note on the dish up table. Bill had gone to Eureka and had not yet returned. The note read "You get to hell out of here or we will shoot up your camp," and it was signed "Pinkham Creekers." Andy and I slept on cots in one tent, and Bill slept on a cot in the cook tent where we ate our meals. Naturally, we were a little nervous for a while after reading the note; and both Andy and I had our guns under our pillows at night. I carried a Luger 9 mm automatic, but Andy had a .38 Smith & Wesson, with an 8-inch barrel; and as stated earlier, he was a fast draw artist and practiced every morning at it before he sat down to breakfast.

The third night after receiving the note, and soon after getting to sleep some rattling of cooking utensils woke me up. There was a tarp stretched out in front of our tent and a small mix-up table under it on which Bill had stacked some pots and pans. I raised up on my elbow and looked out the tent flap and saw a pack rat rummaging around on the table and in and out of the dishes. There was a full moon - and very bright. Without arousing Andy, I pulled the Luger from under

my pillow, leveled on the pack rat and fired. Andy's reaction was instantaneous. It wasn't a second before his feet hit the dirt floor and he stood there with the .38 in his hand. I don't think I ever saw a man move that fast before. Had there been someone out there, it would have been just too bad.

Bill Hillis, our camp tender, had made a profession of shooting practically all his life. As a young man, he was a market hunter in California and made his living shooting wild ducks and geese before there were any game laws. He shot them day in and day out, as long as there were any to shoot; and he became as skilled at it as anyone alive. He could do anything with a shotgun and often demonstrated his skill while we were in camp. His favorite trick was to load his pump gun full of shells and start firing into the air, and he knew how to jerk his gun while ejecting the shell so that it would fly up and ahead, and he would shoot and hit each ejected shell.

After game laws went into effect, he went to work for the Peters Arms Company and traveled all over the United States and Europe with vaudeville companies and circuses doing trick shooting. He could take any type gun, whether he had ever had it in his hands before or not, and do amazingly accurate shooting with it.

I recall one Sunday a doctor from Eureka and his family stopped at the camp to visit. The doc had a .22 caliber rifle with him and was quite proud of his ability to shoot with it. He belonged to a rifle team and the National Rifle Association. He used a small pine knot on the tamarack flagpole we had at camp and put a very creditable group of five shots around the knot. Hillis complimented him on his marksmanship and asked if he might try his luck. The doc said Sure, and handed him the rifle with five shells in it. Bill fired the five shells at the same distance at another pine knot (about the same size as a .22 bullet) in quick succession, and all holes overlapped. He apologized for the overlaps, saying his eyes were failing him.

There were two arrests made during the patrol; both for trespass on a closed area. One of the arrests was made by Fluetsch and me. We knew that one of the homesteaders, living one-half mile or so up a draw and away from the creek, had to haul water for himself and family and stock. He had none whatsoever on his place. He hauled two barrels at a time on a stone boat pulled by a team of horses. His horses, when not in use, were turned loose and grazed on the National Forest. We knew what they looked like, where they grazed, and when they were used. The homesteader had been told two different times that he could have a permit for the length of the closure and to go out and get his horses. He assured us both times that his horses never went onto Government land - he always kept them on his place and, therefore, didn't need any so-and-so permit from us. He even told us what we could do with said permit.

Our camp was near the creek and within a short distance of the willows and alders that lined the creek. We discovered tracks in the soft, moist earth that indicated possibly two barefoot boys were sneaking through the brush after dark to within hearing distance of our camp and listening in on our conversation as we sat around the campfire and discussed where we would patrol the next day. We presumed our plans were pretty well distributed among the residents up and down the creek.

So, one night we talked about our next day's plans in tones loud enough to make sure anyone could hear it out in the willows. We were to go out along some trails on the east side. At our usual bedtime, we went into our tent, lay down for a half hour or so, and then rolled up our blankets and stuffed them into packsacks along with an alarm clock and a breakfast lunch Bill Hillis had prepared for each of us. We strapped on our guns and, with packsacks on our backs, we crawled out under the back end of the tent and across the creek in pitch darkness. There was no moon that night, and we had difficulty in finding the trail on the west side but finally did and without too much trouble reached the area where we knew the aforementioned horses would be grazing. They both had bells on them so they were easy to locate, and we bedded down on the trail close by after setting the alarm clock to wake us just before daybreak. When the alarm went off, we stuffed our blankets into our packsacks, hid out in the brush beside the trail while we ate our sack lunch and waited for the suspect. We waited but a short while before he came up the trail with halters and a pail of oats in his hand. Andy Fluetsch jumped out into the trail with gun in hand, and it scared the poor fellow to where I thought he was going to faint. We told him he was under arrest for trespassing in a closed area of the National Forest, helped him gather up his horses, and took him back to his home and thence to the U.S. Commissioner in Eureka, where he was placed under \$500 bond. As far as I know, neither he, nor the other man that was arrested, were ever brought to trial.

The closure ended in September with the first heavy rain, and some of us were assigned to construct the new cabin up the creek and some to build a new 72-foot lookout tower on Pinkham Ridge. After the first heavy snows the tower job was brought to a halt and I was assigned to go on game patrol with Charlie Hudson from the Upper Yaak country. I never knew the reason for this game patrol. Both Hudson and I were made honorary deputy game wardens, but we made no arrests or saw any evidence of poaching and very seldom saw any game.

We were quartered in tents with the crew building the new cabin. By the time the cabin was finished in mid-November the snow around the tents was stacked up against the canvas walls to the roofline. When construction was complete, all except putting a partition through the middle, it was decided to have a dance and invite the Pinkham Creekers. Most of us had become pretty well acquainted with most of them and found them nice, friendly people; and we had a very happy party that night. Whole families came - children and all. The younger kids were put to bed in the tents.

Our cook was a young Italian fellow, and besides being a good cook he was a good mandolin player. One of the Pinkham Creekers was a good fiddler, and he and the cook really made the folks step lively in the square dances. There was some moonshine imbibed outside between dances but none to excess. The cook had prepared a lot of food and coffee for midnight lunch after which the dance went on for another couple of hours. After everyone had gone and I crawled into my tent, I found the blankets soaked.

These people were largely from the hills of West Virginia and Kentucky and had been poverty stricken all their lives. Their ways of living back East had changed little or possibly for the worse in Pinkham Creek. The soil on most of the homesteads was white clay, too acid for the raising of most crops, and in dry summers not enough water was available for irrigating any land but that close to the creek. Some of the more able-bodied made a partial living hacking railroad ties from

the tamarack and Douglas fir stands on their homesteads and adjacent National Forest. These they hauled to the Great Northern tracks at Eureka for which they got \$.43 a tie - if they passed inspection. Some made moonshine; some had a few head of cattle and tried to raise hay. All of the land had been timberland - largely Douglas fir and tamarack (western larch) but some ponderosa pine - and there were stumps in almost every clearing. Some clearings were also rocky, and it was the custom with some to pick up the rocks and place them on the stumps. Noticing one day that the stumps in a quite large field were pretty well rotted out, I asked the owner why he didn't get rid of them so he could raise more hay; and he replied, "Well, what in hell would I do with all of the rocks?"

All at that time lived in log cabin homes. There was no electricity in the valley nor was there telephone line except Forest Service. All farm work was by manpower or horses. No one had any powered farm machinery. There were no radios. I bought an early battery-operated Radiola with earphones - the first one in the valley - soon after the Forest Service cabin was completed.

One Sunday I invited old Mr. O'Brien, who lived a mile or so down the road, to come up and listen to a church service from a Catholic church being broadcast from Winnipeg, Canada. He had never seen a radio before, and although a devout Catholic, he had not been to church for some 20 years or more. I sat him at the table on which the radio was placed, adjusted the earphones on his head, during which process he showed considerable nervousness, and turned it on. The services had just started and were coming in real good. The old fellow sat there with both hands cupped over his cane during the full hour without moving a muscle or saying a word. When it was over he carefully removed the headphones and placed them on the table; and without saying a word, he took his cane and left. But he spent the rest of the day walking up and down the valley talking to anyone who would listen about the great miracle he had just been a party to. He had attended church in Winnipeg while sitting in the Forest Service cabin in Pinkham Creek.

Tony, our mandolin playing cook, another man whose name I can't recall but who had a good singing voice, and myself visited the O'Briens two different Sundays. The conditions under which they were living appalled us. They had no running water but dipped it out of a barrel outside; a two-lid wood-burning cook stove that was warped all out of shape; an outside toilet, the door of which wouldn't close because the top hinge was gone; a potbellied stove for heating that seemed as though it put more smoke into the room than went up the chimney; windows that you could barely see through and with two panes of glass missing and covered with paper. They did have an old foot pump organ that the old couple said was brought over from Ireland by their grandparents and was in playing condition. Their granddaughter, a girl about 18 years old, was living with them and caring for them, and she could and did play the organ while Tony played his mandolin; and the rest of us sang from an old hymnal they had. The old folks' lives seemed to be made a little happier by these visits.

Money for my employment that year ran out the first week in December, and I left Pinkham Creek. Having just come from Massachusetts in early July, the things seen and experiences gained have remained rather vividly in my mind these 50 years. It is hoped that these recollections may add to those already placed on record by others.

TIMBER CRUISING ON THE KANIKSU FOLLOWING THE BIG FIRES OF 1926

By Sam Billings

Here are a few of my recollections of the cruising party that cruised the burned timber following the big fires of 1926 on the old Kaniksu Forest.

There was so much acreage burned on that forest that year they called it "The Lucky Strike Forest" after the cigarette of that name (it was toasted). Some of the finest Idaho white pine stands that ever grew were burned that year in Harvey, Grave, and Kalispell Creeks. And I guess, because of lack of a road system in those drainages, but little of it was salvaged.

Floyd Cossett was chief-of-party and we worked out of Sullivan Lake Ranger Station and out of the Crescent Lake Guard cabin up near the Canadian line and also out of tent camp on the Priest Lake side. We camped in a cabin up in the burn in Harvey Creek (I think that was the creek). By some miracle the cabin hadn't burned although fire had burned within a few feet of it all the way around and it was crown fire because the heavy stand of white pine was black clear to the tops. The cabin had a dirt roof and some of the crew said there were so many packrats in the cabin it couldn't burn. Art Bowman had a Colt 22 automatic and shot packrats every evening for a while after we had gone to bed and the gas lantern was turned out. The rats would come out almost immediately and some one would point them out with his flashlight and Art would shoot them.

The camp cook did his cooking under a tarp that was stretched and fastened to the front of the cabin. He had a little mix-up table directly under the glassless window at the front of the cabin.

One evening, as usual, a packrat was heard scrambling around, some one turned his flashlight on it just as it went through the window onto the mix-up table and Art took a quick shot at it. He missed the rat but he sure didn't miss the three nested aluminum kettles that were on the table. The cook was fit to be tied.

ANECDOTES AND FIRELINE PHILOSOPHIES

By Ralph L. Hand

Thinking back over the past and going over some of my old diaries and other notes, I find a few items overlooked or at least not included in the Volume 3 contribution. Instead of a narrative account in chronological order, I think it might be better (at least easier) to comment on some of those missing items which include anecdotes, fire line philosophies and apt sayings of some of my well remembered contemporaries in those early years; items that may be familiar to a lot of the old-timers, but which to my knowledge have never been seen in print.

One of the first that comes to mind is G. I. Porter's account of how he was traded by the Nez Perce Forest to the Regional (at that time District) Office for two pack mules. That of course was in the days of statutory salaries and it seems that when G. I. moved from Grangeville to Missoula there was an unexpended balance that had been budgeted for his salary. Instead of an immediate replacement, the Supervisor requested permission to use this surplus to purchase two mules, which he said were badly needed at the time. Permission must have been granted anyhow, the Nez Perce got two mules and the District Office got G. I. Porter, but it was some years later that I heard more about it from G. I. himself. At first, he said it seemed just a bit humiliating to have been ignominiously traded off for two mules (they might at least have thought him worth a short string) but after considering the value of a mule against the salary of a Forest Office in those days, he felt a lot better. There was no doubt, he said, that from a monetary standpoint the Nez Perce got the best of the bargain, but on the other hand he realized that the District Forester must have wanted him quite badly, to have accepted such a deal.

Another one that dates back to the early years was a favorite of Dean Miller of the Idaho School of Forestry. One of his students when asked to define a virgin forest, expressed it as, "one in which the hand of man has never set foot." And that brings to mind the historic reply to a question said to have appeared in one of the old Forest Ranger examinations - what to do in case of a crown fire? The answer having been "Run like hell and pray for rain." Almost everybody has heard that one, but I have heard the authorship of that classic solution to a common problem of the old time firefighter, disputed on several occasions. To the best of my knowledge, it was Lloyd Fenn, who spent a brief period in the Forest Service before switching to the law and politics; and I can say that it sure sounds like the Lloyd Fenn that I knew when, between sessions of the Idaho Legislature, he shared a combined law and printing office at Kooskia with his father, Major Frank A. Fenn of early Forest Service fame.

Among the tales that predate my Forest Service career, was one about a ranger on the old Selway who was short of competent overhead and had to leave a small crew on an inactive portion of a large fire in the charge of an earnest, but totally inexperienced college professor. Just before leaving the newly appointed foreman he said, "Now if you run into a problem don't hesitate to send me a note by messenger; all he has to do is follow the fire line up ahead and he'll find me." Next day there was a major blow up, the ranger was busy establishing new camps and it was a week later that he was reminded of the professor whom he had left 20 miles or so behind, when a weary and footsore firefighter staggered along the fire line and handed him a note. Written on a single sheet of notebook paper was this message: "The problem of today is the situation of tomorrow; we must attack with zeal and vigor."

Another incident, quite similar in geography and timing but entirely different in motivation, was told by Charlie MacGregor, another of the Selway old-timers. An experienced and capable foreman who was getting a bit too old to tackle heavy fire line duty was given a small mop-up crew at the rear of an uncontrolled fire. He was somewhat resentful on being put out to grass, so to speak, but accepted the situation and buckled down to work without comment. About three blow-ups and that many burned out drainages later, Charlie got a note by messenger, and it too, had been written on a single sheet of notebook paper. It read, "We're doing fine down here in the shade. Hope you're comfortable up there on top."

Some of the most original among the anecdotes and philosophic remarks were centered around the cook house or had to do with campfire cuisine. Jim Adcock, another of the old Selway gang was doing his best to cobble up a meal for a half-dozen hungry, unexpected visitors, from the inadequacies of a late-in-the-season, two-man camp. Jim had a deep bass voice, a southern accent and a slow, hesitant method of delivery. When he stuck his head out the door the expectantly waiting men started to rise, but instead of the usual "Come and get it!" they heard him say: "If you don't like soup ... supper's over."

Rosy Wagner was one of the few men I ever met who could hold up with the best, either at fire camp cooking or back country packing. He was a sour dough artist that could turn out a big wash boiler full of raised doughnuts over a camp fire as easily as he could cargo, pack and pull a string of mules cross-country, but he wasn't one to put up with foolishness. One morning after beating on a dishpan for ten minutes, without much response from the bedded down fire fighters he yelled, "Are you guys going to come and get it or do you want me to funnel you!"

I remember that one of the first things I was taught about preparing meals for woodsmen was to make the coffee strong; as one celebrated fire cook put it, the most important thing was not to lose your nerve when you put the coffee in. There were all sorts of descriptive remarks relating to weak coffee, ranging from the mildly ironic to downright exaggerated sarcasm. I heard one man compare it to his mother-in-laws cambric tea, while another swore that he could have seen a fish swimming in seven feet of it.

At least an occasional amusing comment relates to a lack of, or the use of improper ingredients. Buck Spalinger told of one time when he and his partner ran out of grease and had to fry their spuds in creek water. Asked how they came out, he said, disgustedly, "Tasted just like they were boiled." And Dave Robertson, with whom I cruised timber on the Coeur d'Alene in 1922, came the closest he ever did to offering the cook a compliment on one of his special concoctions, when he said, "Well, (long pause), most of the ingredients seem to be there." Even drinking water wasn't immune to such comments and it was another of my predecessors on the Selway that was often quoted as having said, "When you're really thirsty, nothing tastes quite so good as cold spring water out of an old, rusty tin can."

Sometimes an involuntary diet on short rations or no rations at all such as might happen when a fire camp was burned out, or had to be abandoned during a blow-up brought out an unexpected aphorism from some lumberjack philosopher. I'm sorry that I don't remember at least a few such incidents that occurred at Marble and Foehl Creeks in 1922 and on the Lochsa a few years later. The best that I can do is to repeat a story that Franklin Girard told me about an experience that he

had on the Nez Perce Forest when he was first assigned to a ranger district there. In order to get acquainted with a totally unfamiliar area, he set out afoot one morning and got completely lost in one of those big, heavily timbered basins in which the small tributary streams seem to twist and turn in all directions; I know what they are like, having been tangled up in one or two of them myself, in later years. Well, Frank wandered about, following game trails until they petered out, subsisting mostly on berries for the better part of two days, until he finally found a trail that showed possibilities of leading him out of the wilderness. Spurred on by encouraging signs of recent human occupancy, he finally spied a man ahead of him, with a packsack on his back and, it wasn't long until Frank caught up with the lone traveler, but when he tried to engage him in conversation he wasn't very successful. On being asked if he was returning from a fire, the answer was, "Hell no! Some dam' fool ranger got lost a couple days ago and everybody in the country - me included - has been out looking for him." That sort of put a crimp in Frank's plan of action which was to get something to eat without letting on that he was the primary cause of his fellow traveler's disgruntled feelings; but his carefully worded hints had no apparent effect on the grumpy stranger. Finally he broke down and with complete candor said, "Well you might as well know, I'm that dam' fool ranger that got lost; now will you tell me, is there anything to eat in that packsack - or if not, will you lead me to someplace where there's grub I haven't eaten anything but huckleberries for two days." There were some leftovers from a smokechaser ration in the packsack and Frank said it tasted better than anything he'd had in a long time. He even compared it with meals he had been served during his boyhood days back home in Tennessee, and once having started along that line, the conversation rambled into all sort of nostalgic memories.

I recalled the time that Bert Kauffman and I subsisted for about three days on rice and tea during a snowshoe trip in the upper Lochsa, and Frank retaliated with a vivid description of a night spent at a Nez Perce cabin that he called the "Arbuckle Inn." He just happened to stumble on it during a violent storm which he had expected to "tough out" in the open, and the name was inspired when he noted that old Arbuckle Coffee cans had been flattened out and used to seal up the gaps where the chinking had fallen out. Still, he said, they hadn't prevented a wood rat from sharing his quarters that night.

I wonder how many of the old Kooskiaites and Selway savages are still alive that remember the legend of how Deadman Creek - a tributary of the Lochsa River - got its name. There was supposed to have been a cabin not far from the mouth of the creek, but it was gone before I came to the Selway in early 1923, no doubt burned during the fires of 1917 or 1919, both of which were bad fire years in that general area. Anyhow, according to the story as it was told to me, a couple of trappers snowshoed down the canyon one stormy day, intending to spend the night at this particular cabin, only to discover that it was already occupied. The occupant was another trapper, known to the two as a loner who rarely associated with others of his kind. He was stretched out on the bed dead as a doornail - and frozen stiff as a poker.

They realized of course, that according to a recognized law of the wilderness, the other fellow had "squatters rights," yet they also realized that in his present condition he had far less need for shelter than they; so with a logic born of necessity and belief in the survival of the fittest, they each took an end of the canvas tarp on which he was lying, carried him outside and deposited him on a snow bank in the lee of the cabin. Then they spread their bedrolls on the dried bear grass and proceeded to get a comfortable night sleep. No one seemed to know whether or not

they returned the ousted occupant to the shelter of the cabin before continuing their journey, but at any rate the building was afterward known as the "Deadman Cabin" and the creek became Deadman Creek as could be noted by reference to the local USFS maps.

It isn't always an involuntary night in the open or the primitive facilities of a backwoods cabin that brings out a bit of latent philosophy from an unexpected source. I think it was in 1930 that I took part in one of those consolidated guard training programs that were becoming popular about that time. This one took place at the Avery Ranger Station and the Forest Service hay barn had been selected as a bunk house - it being the only available space big enough to house the combined seasonal forces of three large ranger districts. I believe Ernie Lemon was the barn boss at that time and to him had fallen the job of taking care of each of the groups as they came in from various directions and at intervals throughout the day; issuing beds, assigning quarters, explaining the no smoking rules, etc. The last groups arrived on the late Milwaukee train and it was well past midnight when Ernie finally rolled into his blankets. When the early morning call came a few hours later, Ernie raised up on his elbows and with a bewildered expression on his face said, "Well it sure doesn't take long to stay all night in this place."

I've heard it said that when you arrive at the point where the weather becomes the main topic of conversation, it's time to look around for the exits, so cheer up, this will soon be over. Pete Snyder held down Monumental Buttes Lookout - a primary point and important weather station - for many years. During one of the earlier years we had a terrific windstorm accompanied by huge quantities of rain and hail. Next morning in the course of reporting the various weather measurements Pete gave the amount of precipitation registered in his rain gauge and added: "That's just what came down; there was at least that much more than went sideways and never hit the ground."

Long before the days of walkie-talkies, I spent a summer at Roundtop Ranger Station on the St. Joe Forest. Franklin (Judge) Girard was the district ranger and I had been assigned as his assistant, my principle job being to operate the switchboard that served the Roundtop, Pole Mountain and part of the Avery District. In addition, I was cook, housekeeper and general roustabout or handyman, but when it became apparent that we were in for a real tough fire season my job evolved into that of a combined fire dispatcher and short order cook.

During the first real let up, occasioned by an early September snowstorm, I took advantage of the break to spend a few quiet evenings writing down in rhyme some of my feelings that had been generated during those hectic days while I was hopping back and forth between the telephone switchboard and the cook stove. Soon afterward I was transferred to a cruising and mapping job on the Coeur d'Alene and the poem was forgotten. Years later, I ran across it among some old long forgotten papers, and polished it up a bit but failed to do anything else about it. I seem to recall that poetry was considered taboo (and perhaps still is) as far as in-service publications were concerned. Now, after more than 50 years since it was composed, I am brushing off the dust, giving it a second critical review but without changing the original context. I present it for what it may be worth. All I can add is that it is the best illustration I can give in the fewest words and least space of what a field dispatcher's job in the USFS was like some fifty-odd years ago.

I will concede that in a very few instances I have juggled locations and timing to a limited extent, but I guarantee that every incident alluded to is an item of fact and that each one did occur on the Roundtop District in the summer of 1922. There are a few references that may require a little clarification. The switchboard howler - we had three of these amplifiers - one each for the Avery, Pole Mountain and Fishhook lines, reminds me of the many times that they were the only means of getting through when the ringing circuit became ineffective. Tom Crossley from the Nez Perce Forest who spent much of that summer in one or another of the Marble Creek fire camps, seldom twisted a crank or pushed a buzzer button; he just yelled, "Hello Roundtop!" and I could hear him even if I happened to be out on the loading platform unloading supplies. As for the Wobblies (I.W.W.) we didn't have any real serious trouble, but agitators did appear in a few of our fire camps attempting to stir things up.

THE ROUNDTOP TELEPHONE (SWAN SONG OF A DISPATCHER)

Dedicated to "Mac" McHarg, Ashley Roche, "Judge" Girard, "Shorty" Piger, Gust Miller, Andy Callahan and all of those other old timers who took part in the Battle of the Roundtop District in the summer of 1922.

Purple twilight shades the valley of the shadowy St. Joe. While the last rays of the setting sun sets mountain tops aglow. A coyote splits the silence with his weird unearthly whines and a big owl from its tree top perch sends shivers up our spines.

When the coyote's howl is silenced and the big owls' voice is still there are other nighttime serenades, some soothing, some that thrill. The breezes in the tree tops have a meter all their own. But there is one note that gets my goat - that blasted telephone!

"Hello Roundtop, this is Bearskull - 'bout that fire in Section two, Jack and Charlie think they'll hold it, but were gonna need a crew. That old canyon's full o'broom tops; she's a nasty mess o'fuels. Better rustle up a packer for that extra string o'mules."

Here's a call from Mac at Avery, "Have you heard from Brandner's men? That last run took out their phone line - haven't had a word since then. Rutledge had another blowup, lost three camps with all their tools. Shorty's crew has wobbly problems; Pete just rolled a couple mules."

Next it's Gust at Monumental; couldn't make his ring come through. It's a relay from the Lookout - Foehl Creeks having trouble too. Mushroomed out and hit the ridge top - now the whole head end is loose. They need lots o'plug tobacco and a dozen rolls o'snoose."

Then a long buzz through the howler, "It's the horse camp, packer Joe. Fire crew came and stayed to dinner and our grub pile's gettin' low. We can use a hundred rations - just leave out the oatmeal mush. Gettin' awful tired o'bannoks so you better mark it rush!"

Then from down in Fishhook Basin through that ragged outpost wire Comes the news we've all been dreading - it's another logging fire. "Somebody down in Marble Creek took chances yesterday. Lit a fire to warm his chute grease an' it must of got away!"

"We need grub an' tools an' bedding and another pump and hose. That 'sociation fire's still spreading - where she'll end God only knows! One man's got a nasty axe cut; some stumble bum just out o'jail Drank up all the lemon extract; cook got mad and hit the trail."

"Where's that doctor from 'the Maries'? Lots of injured - it's a fright: Hillsides full o'widow makers - 'nother man was killed last night. Buckskin snag hit him dead center - got him wrapped up in a tent. All his bones that wasn't broken must be pretty badly bent."

So it goes throughout the evening - far into the lonesome night. Coyote's silent, owls' quit hooting; still the August moon is bright. Guess I'd better get some shut-eye, but each time I settle down It's first the bell an' then the howler; next a hungry crew from town.

Epilogue

I wonder if in some far land, asbestos forests grow where careless campers are unknown, where firebugs never go. Where lightning bolts have spark arrestors; smokers always roll their smokes in the fire resistant foliage from the tall asbestos oaks.

If there is such a spot on earth, you'll find me there to stay. Build myself a little cabin; sleep all night and dream all day. Just forget that busted ground line and the worn out batteries too. Forget the voices I can't hear and the rings that won't come through.

Forget the time they called to say a crew was coming out. And could they get a good square meal somewhere along the route? And after I'd prepared the food and waited all that day they called again to tell me they'd gone out another way:

Forget that heavy lightning bolt that wrecked the Fishhook line. And the nights they called me out of bed to ask about the time. Just relax ... and rest ... and listen, while the breezes sigh and moan and forget that bloomin' torture rack, the Roundtop Telephone.

SELWAY FOREST FIRES OF 1934

By C. B. Sutliff

Memories of the 1910 holocaust which burned over several hundred thousand acres of forest lands in northeastern Washington, northern Idaho, and western Montana identifies the really old timers among Forest Service Region One retirees, many of whom have departed this world, leaving only a few to recall those days. Lest we forget, 1934 spawned another holocaust second only to that of 1910. Following is a resume of the 1934 fires for the benefit of old timers of the class of 1920 to 1960 and others who may be interested.

INTRODUCTION: The author was in the midst of control action from August 7 to September 20 (then came the rains). Immediately thereafter he was assigned to make an intensive study and write a detailed report of the Selway fires for review and analysis. Three months were required for the field studies and report preparation. Only seven copies of the final report were made. The author has the only copy believed available now. This abbreviated narrative of the 1934 Selway forest fires contains only the very highlights of the battle for existence. The report from which this is extracted contains 44 pages of narrative, 9 charts and tables, and 5 maps. The original report will be shown to or excerpted for anyone having a real interest in or need for the historical information and data contained therein. Title of the report is "A History of The Pete King, McLendon Butte and Eighteen Other Selway Forest Fires-August and September 1934."

This resume is based upon the report. Complete statements and data copied verbatim from the report are shown in quotation marks.

LOCALE: Selway National Forest, north central Idaho embracing the Selway and Lochsa River drainages, with official headquarters at Kooskia, Idaho. There were five Ranger Districts—Pete King, Lochsa, O'Hara (now Fenn), Moose Creek, and Bear Creek

"HISTORY OF SELWAY FIRES - 1934"

"- FOREWORD -"

"This is a presentation of facts considered to be of value to fire control managers who are interested in taking advantage of the 1934 experiences on the Selway Forest.

"The information given is based on an examination of diaries, dispatcher and fire camp logs, and other similar records together with memory statements obtained from men who worked on the fires involved.

"This history is restricted to the period August 7 to September 20, the entire time during which the fires were active."

AUGUST 1 - THE STAGE IS SET: Last measurable rainfall was June 27 and no rain of consequence fell between then and September 20; relative humidity was well below normal August 1 to September 20; winds averaged 15 percent above normal for same period; and fuel moisture averaged 20 percent below normal. Selway forest fire danger ratings during June

through September were the highest since 1919. And then came August 7 and 11 with one man-caused and 19 lightning-caused fires with no rainfall!

"FIRES INVOLVED: The records show that one man-caused fire of August 7 and 19 lightning-caused fires of August 11 were responsible for the 1934 conflagration.

"Of the 20 fires concerned, two, the Pete King and McLendon Butte, were directly responsible for over 95 percent of all costs and damages sustained and area burned. They were both lightning fires of August 11. The remainders of the 20 fires were all handled without excessive costs, damages or area burned except two. The Pete King fire surrounded these before they were controlled.

"FUEL TYPES: The types of fuels which existed throughout the area were conspicuously above average both in rates of spread and resistance to control. This situation was the direct result of single burns of the years 1910, 1917, and 1919 and which constituted 75 percent of the area. The balance of the area was green timber—20 percent and multiple burn—5 percent.

"The three major factors which made this area one of the worst hazards of the Region were: (1) large, continuous areas of cedar and white fir snags and windfall intermixed with much fine fuel; (2) exceptionally long, steep slopes exposed to the ever prevalent, deceptive winds and drafts of the Lochsa and Selway River canyons; (3) the astonishing lack of reproduction or other green vegetation of sufficient growth to slow fire spread on ordinary burning days with a consequent over abundance of grass and other fine fuels which greatly increased it."

Both the Pete King and McLendon Butte fires started and continued throughout the first several days in fuels classified high rate of spread and high resistance to control.

LOCAL FIRE CONTROL FORCE AVAILABLE AUGUST 10: The Selway Forest "Average" fire season organization, less 20 percent reduction due to cut in regular presuppression financing, was in place. Also, 65 percent of the overload positions called for by current fire dangers were manned. This amounted to about 75 percent of the planned presuppression organization being available on August 10. Most of the available road, trail, and other Forest project manpower was on the man-caused Meadow Creek fire which had just been controlled (on August 10) at 1,500 acres. This fire had about exhausted readily available local project work forces and cooperators from the Selway and adjoining Forests. Total overhead and fire fighters on the fire was about 1,100 men.

GLEANINGS FROM THE HISTORY REPORT: Following are a few noteworthy excerpts of interest from the Official History Report:

"WEATHER FORECAST - AUGUST 10: Generally fair weather, little change in temperature and humidity, gentle, changeable winds.

"LIGHTNING STORMS - AUGUST 11: PETE KING STORM AT 3:30 a.m. A dry lightning storm came in from the west. Commencing with strikes at Woodrat L.O. it progressed eastward to Coolwater Creek, thence northeast over Van Camp L.O. to Fish Butte where, at 4:30 a.m., the

lightning ceased. The heaviest recorded rainfall along the storm's path was "Trace." A total of 11 fires were credited to this storm.

SELWAY FALLS STORM - AT 3:00 a.m. A very light storm passed over about 5 miles up river from Selway Falls R.S. leaving one fire in its wake with only a "trace of rainfall."

"MOOSE CREEK STORM: This storm covered the territory adjacent to Moose Creek R.S. to the south and east starting seven fires with only a "trace of rainfall." Lightning began at 3:00 a.m. and ceased about 4:00 a.m.

"There were 19 fires discovered and reported as having been started by the storms of August 11.

"AUGUST 11 - THE BATTLE IS JOINED: Between 3:00 and 4:00 a.m., three separate small, dry lightning storm clouds came in from the west and proceeded up the Selway-Lochsa River drainages. At 3:09, 3:58, and 4:03 a.m., the first three fires ignited were seen, located, and reported by fire lookouts in the area. Then followed one lookout report after another until a total of 19 fires, spawned by the dry storms, were located and reported. By 8:00 a.m., the situation appeared serious. The author, in charge of mop-up work on Meadow Creek fire, was called and directed to pull all manpower possible off the fire and report to Pete King Ranger Station fully equipped with tools, lunches, and beds for immediate reassignment."

Pete King Ranger Station, centrally located 1 mile up the Lochsa above its junction with the Selway River, was set up and used as base headquarters for action in the lower Selway and Lochsa Rivers area.

Moose Creek Ranger Station, about 20 miles by road and 25 miles by trail up the Selway River from Pete King, was supervision and supply base for seven of the 20 fires involved. A total force of 125 NIRA, CCC, and Forest crewmen and overhead without serious trouble handled all but one of the seven fires.

The Martin Creek fire was something else. It began spreading at time of discovery about 12 hours after the storm. By evening, it covered an area 2 miles long by 1 mile wide. A force of 335 men and overhead was put on the fire as rapidly as possible. All manpower, supplies, and equipment had to be planed to Moose Creek or hauled to nearest road point on Nezperce Forest. From these points, the men had to hike 10 to 15 miles and equipment and supplies backpacked by manpower or packed in on pack animals.

This force battled the fire until August 31 when the Pete King fire took over and, by September 6, surrounded two-thirds of the Martin Creek fire. The latter was considered corralled on August 31 at 9,000 acres of area.

Midmorning of August 11 found all local presuppression and project work forces exhausted. Also, by this time, it was obvious that at least two of the fires—Pete King and McLendon Butte were on their way to becoming major conflagrations.

INITIAL CONTROL ACTION: Discovery action was very good on all fires except the Martin Creek. Initial control action was also very good on all fires discovered. And, control results were also very successful on all but the three "Bad Boys" - Pete King, McLendon Butte, and Martin Creek. Following are quotes from the "History:"

"McLendon Butte Fire: McHone, L.O.-F. on Fish Butte, saw the lightning strike that set the fire at 4:18 a.m. Fire did not show up until 4:22. McHone reported it in to Bohn, headquarters guard at Lochsa, at 4:25. Bohn reported the fire to McGregor at Pete King at 4:30. McGregor called Sink at CCC spike camp at 4:35 and instructed him to take the six CCC men in camp and go to the fire. Sink and crew left camp at 4:50, traveled 4-1/2 miles by truck, 4 mile by foot, and arrived on the fire at 5:10 a.m. The total elapsed time from discovery to arrival was 48 minutes.

"Sink and his crew were equipped with packs from a standard 1- to 15-man backpack outfit.

"The area of the fire on arrival was estimated by Sink to be about 11 acre. The fuel consisted of several 24-inch cedar snags; numerous windfall of same size intermixed with considerable broken limbs and fine fuel, and a moderately dense growth of green ceonothus brush. The location of the fire was on top of a fairly high, exposed north ridge and a moderate, gusty wind was blowing at time of arrival upon fire.

"Sink states that work was begun immediately upon arrival and that main fire was practically controlled at 8:30 a.m., when a spot fire was noticed some 150 feet away. Leaving two men on main fire, he went to work with the balance of the crew on the spot. By 9:00, the wind had increased to brisk, the crew had the main fire and four spots controlled and were working upon a fifth when it, too, began to respot resulting in too much of a spread for the manpower available. Sink and his crew continued the losing battle until 9:30 a.m. before giving it up as a hopeless proposition.

"At 9:30, Sink moved the six CCC men onto the back side of the fire to work and he left for the spike camp to report conditions. While there, Keogh and 20 men arrived (at 10:15) from Pete King where McGregor had dispatched them by truck at 8:00 a.m. They were taken to the fire and put to work at 10:45."

"By 11:00 a.m., Sink and Keogh estimated the area of the fire to have been 10 acres. It was then burning too hot for men to work ahead of and had commenced to spot considerable distances ahead.

"Sink and Keogh continued to work upon back side of the fire the rest of the day. That night all their line was lost.

"The fire continued to burn hard and spot ahead from 11:00 a.m. until evening, some of the spots as far as 3 miles. By then, the main fire had reached an area of 1,500 acres, had set three spots of 60 acres or under on Zion Ridge within a mile of Lochsa Station, and another of 200 acres across Lochsa River in Big Stew Creek.

"PETE KING FIRE: The Pete King fire was discovered by L. Brown, Big Hill L.O.-F. at 5:50 a.m. The base of smoke could not be seen by Brown nor by two other lookouts who picked it up within 20 minutes after Brown. The three lookouts estimated the time of origin to be 4:00 a.m. at which time lightning strikes had been reported in that vicinity. Brown reported the fire to McGregor at Pete King at 5:55.

"John Rice, at Pete King instructed Brook Monroe, a crewman, and three pickup men to go to the fire from Pete King with regular smokechaser packs at 7:20 a.m.

"Monroe and the three men left Pete King at 7:35 a.m. Traveling 1 mile by car and 6 miles on foot over Pete King Creek trail, they arrived on the fire at 10:30 a.m.

"At time of arrival, Monroe states the fire was burning in about a dozen 16-inch cedar, white fir, Douglas-fir snags and numerous windfall of same size and species scattered through a heavy growth of green ceonothus brush. His estimate of area on arrival was 2 acres. The fire Was burning near the confluence of Jungle and Pete King Creeks.

"No work was attempted by Monroe and his three men as he states fire was beginning to spot ahead and was burning too hot to work near.

"The first reinforcements sent were eight men dispatched from the Jungle fire by Fred Harris about 10:00 a.m. after they were unable to locate the second Jungle fire reported. These men reached the fire about the time it commenced spreading heavily and as a consequence did no work."

"MARTIN CREEK FIRE: The Martin Creek fire, discovered in mid afternoon after hanging over about 12 hours after the storm, began spreading at time of discovery.

"The Martin Creek L.O.-F, who was at Tony Point, and the Tony Point L.O.F, were dispatched from Tony Point at once by Ranger Case. Before they arrived at the fire, it had begun blowing up. By night it covered an area 2 miles long by 1 mile wide."

SECOND LINE DEFENSE. By mid-afternoon of August 11, "All Out Second Line Defense Plans" had been set in motion on the Selway and adjoining Forests. An all out forest fire-suppression battle was the order of the day.

Before midnight the entire Region One second line defense plan had been activated. First call in Service forces had been called upon. Also, adjoining Regions had been alerted regarding possible overhead and assistance needs. By midnight a suppression force of 1,200 men and overhead, comprised of Forest Service Project, CCC, and NIRA crews and local cooperators was on the battle front or enroute thereto.

Total area of Pete King and McLendon Butte fires, after first day's spread, was 9,060 acres.

Additional overhead, manpower, transportation, equipment, and supplies arrived daily from August 12 on until a total of 5,475 men and commensurate overhead and service of supply were

on the battle line. Forest officer overhead was drawn from Regional Office, NRM Exp. St., inter-Forest and inter-Regional sources. Manpower was obtained from the general Region One area including NIRA, CCC, seasonal project crewmen, cooperators, and contract fire fighters.

MANPOWER USED: The following table shows the maximum number of men employed, type of labor, and approximate total man-days worked by each class:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Class of Men</u>		<u>Man-Days</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Forest Officers	50	.9	1,300	1.2
NIRA-Overhead*	70	1.3		
F.F.	35	.6	50,000	49.4
NIRA-Crewmen*	1,120	20.5		
F.F.	1,600	29.2		
E.C.W. - Overhead	125	2.3	50,000	
C.C.C. - Crewmen	2,475	45.2		49.4
<hr/>				
Totals	5,475	100.00	101,300	100.00

*NIRA - National Industrial Recovery Act, was the source of funds with which the Forest Service recruited local residents in need of employment.

NIRA overhead and crewmen provided the nucleus of the fire control organization and the key to all suppression efforts.

The ECW - Emergency Conservation Work Employees (CCC-Civilian Conservation Corps) were of little help in the Selway situation at the outset. The program was too new (initiated in 1932), and the leadership (camp superintendents) were appointed from political party registration lists. Consequently most of the CCC forces were inadequately trained and quite inexperienced. However, it must be said that in subsequent years the CCC became the backbone of second line defense in the USFS Fire Control organization, and it remained so until the program was discontinued in 1942.

FOREST OFFICERS: Since this is a write-up about "Old Times" - (and Old Timers), a list of the "Old Timers" involved, together with a key to their present status is appropriate. Headquarters (1934) is shown for each, together with latest information on their present status including those who have gone to their last reward. R - denotes retired; U = denotes unknown; and D - denotes deceased.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Headquarters Name</u>
Anderson, B.A.	R	B.R.C.
Anderson, I.V.	R	N.R.M.
Anderson, W.R.	U	R-6
Apgar, W.B.	R	RO

Blake, C.B.	D	Flathead
Brandborg, G.M.	R	Nezperce
Case, Geo.	D	Selway
Crocker, C.S.	R	Selway
Coleman, W.W.	U	Cabinet
Coster, R.A.	R	RO
Cox, Dell	R	Selway
Cramer, A.J.	R	Kaniksu
Deihl, J.N.	R	Clearwater
Duncan, Geo.	D	RO
Eastman, V.	D	Nezperce
Evans, W.C. (cap)	R	RO
Falkner	R	B.R.C.
Ferguson, R.S.	R	Selway
Foltz, Frank	U	St. Joe
Ford, K.W.	D	RO
Fields, R.E.	D	St. Joe
Flint, Howard	D	RO
Galt, R.V.	U	R-3
Gerrard, P.H.	U	Clearwater
Godwin, Jack	D	Selway
Gurley, H.H.	R	RO
Hendricks	U	B.R.C.
Hibberd, N.E.	U	R-2
Hough, John	U	R-6
Howard, Lawrence	U	Selway
Jefferson, F.J.	D	RO
Jefferson, L.F.	D	Clearwater
Jemison, Geo.	R	N.R.M.
Jost, Jack	D	Clearwater
Kerr, L.C.	U	RO
Koch, Elers	D	RO
Koogler, W.H.	U	R-3
Lewis, Leroy	R	Selway
Linthacum, V.T.	R	RO
Lommasson, Tom	D	RO
Lund, H.W.	U	R-6
Lyman, C.K.	R	RO

McGregor, C.A.	D	Selway
McKenzie, Stanley	R	Selway
McLannahan	U	R-6
Myrick, E.H.	D	Selway
Owens, Chas.	U	B.R.C.
Parsell, Jack	R	Selway
Phillips, Roy	D	Nezperce
Poppe, Sid	D	Selway
Reimler, Fred	R	Selway
Rice, John	D	Selway
Rust	U	RO
Schwable, Abner	U	Nezperce
Shaner, Frank	U	Selway
Stockdale, L.C.	D	RO
Strand, Paul	U	Selway
Sutliff, C.B.	R	RO
White, W.W.	D	RO
Wilkerson	U	R-6
Williams, L.A.	U	St. Joe

Following the losing madhouse scramble of the 11th, the tempo of fire control action began to smooth out. But the weather influences and fire burning capers became anything else but cooperative or predictable. Control efforts went along fairly well through the 12th and 13th with only a 6,500-acre increase in burn. Again, the 14th, 15th, and 16th produced only a 7,990 acre increase. Then the lull ended. About noon on August 17, all "Hell busted loose!" After the fires cooled off, around 3:00 a.m. the 18th, an additional 53,330 acres were blackened. At this stage of the battle there was about 77,000 acres of fire, and held control line stood at about 15 percent of total fire perimeter. A very handicapped situation at best.

Howard R. Flint, early day R-1 Forest Supervisor and Regional Fire Control Chief, scouted the Pete King and McLendon Butte fires by airplane the afternoon of August 17. Flint and his pilot flew their plane, as high as they could go, around the tremendously spectacular single smoke column above the two fires. They estimated the top of the column to be 40,000 feet high. The mushroom top of the column was visible from Lewiston and Grangeville, Idaho and Walla Walla and Spokane, Washington. The smoke from the fires darkened Missoula and Hamilton, Montana, and the Bitterroot Valley. All of the many experienced old timers on the fires said they had never seen or experienced the likes of the rate of spread, heat, and smoke column before. Spot fires were set from 1 to 3 miles ahead of the main fire. Most of these were overrun by the main fires before nightfall. Needless to say, there was very little control line constucted and far less held on this day of holocaust.

Now that we have covered the "Blowup Day" of all days, summary of all of the blowups and burns is in order.

BLOWUP DAYS AND ACREAGE BURNED. These figures include only the Pete King and McLendon Butte fires. At end of first burning period, August 11, burned area was 9,060 acres.

August 12 through 16 - 14,490 acres burned.

August 17, worst single blowup day - 53,330 acres.

August 18, moderate blowup - 15,560 acres.

August 19 through 21 - 3,740 acres.

August 22, moderate blowup - 19,940 acres.

August 23 through 29 - gradual spread - 24,620 acres.

August 30 through September 1, heavy blowup on all fronts - 67,040 acres.

September 2 through 21, low to moderate spread due to cool weather and light rainfall - 44,470 acres.

Total area burned - 252,250 acres. This is an average of 5,995 acres per day August 11 through September 21. Rate of spread on August 11 was 4,444 acres per hour; for 3-day period August 31 to September 2, rate of spread was 14,823 acres per day or 2,238 acres per 6-hour burning period. Rate of burn per hour on worst blowup day (August 17) was 6,666 acres from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The following report excerpts afford some idea of the intensity of the fires on August 17, the worst burning day of the entire battle period:

"About noon, a very strong, shifting north and west wind set in causing havoc in general with all fires. Tests taken during the afternoon at Coolwater, Mud Creek, Moose Creek, and Salmon Mountain showed the velocity to be as high as 20 and 25 miles per hour at times.

"The Pete King fire commenced blowing up at 1:00 p.m. in upper Lowell and lower Pete King Creeks. At 3:00 p.m. it was seen to blow out of Lowell Creek and spot across the Lochsa River on Coolwater Ridge in front of Pete King Station. Girard and Brandborg started 100 men from Pete King after the spots, but before they could get organized and out of the Station yard, the main fire had surrounded them and it was necessary to use all hands available to save Pete King Station."

"For the next 4 hours, Brandborg, Rice, Girard, and 100 men battled with Pacific pumps and backfire to keep Pete King from burning.

"The only lines held throughout that eventful day on the Pete King fire were those on the northeast, north and west sides which had been constructed for some time and were well burned out.

"And in the meantime, at 1:00 p.m., the McLendon Butte fire blew up in Alder Creek and crossed Fish Creek-Bimerick divide routing Camp X crew along roadway by spotting behind them in Bimerick Creek from one-fourth of a mile inside the back fire line. About 10 men were trapped between the new break and the main fire. They retreated into the old burn until evening, then were brought out with no casualties by Carl Elmin.

"Crocker's 4-mile line in Bimerick was entirely scooped, and his crew under Poppe forced to run for safety.

"Sutliff and Crocker, on Middle Butte, saw the fire jump the Lochsa River at Macaroni Creek and run to the top of Huckleberry Butte Ridge in approximately 3 minutes - a distance of 2 miles.

"Coleman's Camp Y crew was run out and all line lost. The fire backed into the wind crossing from Alder Creek into Fish Creek below Ant Hill L.O.

"And on the Fish Butte-Lochsa sector, Crew Foreman Buck Weaver and a crew of 150 men were forced to make a desperate run for the Lochsa River from their line under Fish Butte when it could no longer be held. No direct injuries were caused by the fire although there were many cases of mental and physical exhaustion caused by the mad run down the mountain side with only one thought in every mind; that "the fire had them."

"By 5:00 p.m., all men were accounted for at the Lochsa Station. At the same time, the situation was beginning to look critical even there, and preparations were being made to protect men and station.

"Occasional live embers were falling about Lochsa by 6:00 p.m., and at 7:30 p.m. they were raining down by the hundreds and the fire front itself was rapidly closing in. About 8:10 p. m. the climax was reached when the main fire surrounded the station on all sides and overhead. Lewis, Anderson, and about 25 men withstood the onslaught and came through unharmed except for many sore throats, parched lips, and sore eyes caused by the dense smoke and acrid fumes. At one time during the melee, the main pump line was burned in two, but a quick repair job put it back in service. Again and again during the evening the building roofs caught fire, but each time were successfully extinguished. By 9:00 p.m., the worst was over and a welcomed breathing spell afforded.

"The toll exacted that eventful eve at the Lochsa, in addition to the surrounding burned area, was the loss of the equivalent of a 100-man outfit of tools, beds, and some grub which the men were unable to save along with the buildings and themselves. Also, all means of telephone communication were destroyed, the radio being the only connection with the outside world thereafter for several days."

"The Coolwater and Hellgate fires also blew up, the latter causing McGregor to pull the Hellgate camp and move to Idaho Point.

"The situation as it existed that night can be summed up as follows:

"The Pete King, Hellgate, and Coolwater fires were practically joined into one fire with northeastern extremity on Sheep Hill Ridge and southeastern extremity well up Kerr-Lotty Ridge.

"The McLendon Butte fire was well into Willow, Sherman and No-see-um Creeks on the north and east; had burned all of Big Stew Creek and was up Oldman Creek 4 miles on the south and east.

"The only line held throughout the day was in Pete King and Rye Patch drainage along backside of the Pete King fire and Canyon and Rye Patch spots.

Blowups on August 30, 31, and September 1, were second only to those of August 17 from a spectacular and fire control frustration standpoint. The following report excerpts afford some of the highlights of fire control force anguishes and control line losses. It was certainly a miracle that no deaths or serious injuries occurred among the control forces during this most disrupting and discouraging period.

"SECOND DEFENSE ACTION - AUGUST 30

"Sutliff, the 60-man crew scheduled for Obia Creek, and 50 additional men were shifted to Renshaw Creek arriving on line at 11:45 a.m. With this additional force, a control line was completed by 2:30 p.m. from Renshaw Creek around the east end of fire to upper side beneath Fog Mountain where it tied into a double burn. At 3:00 p.m., unburned islands within the fire line in Renshaw and Teepee Creeks blew up and routed the entire 215 men, cutting off the Fog Mountain and Packer Ridge crews from their camps and chasing them all to the river.

"One man received severely scorched lungs while trying to hold a sector of the line and had to be transported out to a hospital. He had not regained consciousness when taken from Renshaw camp. Later, it was found he had fully recovered after several days of convalescing.

"The fire front advanced from Renshaw Creek to Ballinger Creek. A large spot was set 2 miles ahead of the main fire in Pinchot Creek and three others were set on the south side of the Selway River in Jim and Wolf Creeks, about the same distance away.

"The entire Fog Mountain and Packer Ridge camp crews were thrown in with Sutliff's Renshaw crew after the rout. The men were pretty badly shaken and 15 or 20 quit, hiking out that night. The main fire up Renshaw Creek was within 20 chains of Renshaw camp that evening, down to the River and 1 mile above, and it was threatening to close in below camp at any time."

"At the time of the Gedney spot blowup in Teepee and Renshaw, the main fire head in Gedney Creek also blew, running into and around either side of the rear end of the Gedney spot. The

Gedney Creek spike camp was burned in this blowup; it had never been occupied after establishment on the 28th. All line east of the Glover-Gedney Ridge was lost.

"AUGUST 31

"The combined Renshaw crew was split up and placed upon the four advance spot fires at daylight. The three south of the river were controlled while, on the Pinchot spot, the crew was insufficient to do more than hold the fire from spreading materially. The Pinchot spot, the largest, was about 40 acres, Jim Creek spot, 25 acres, and the two Wolf Creek spots, 3 acres each.

"Shortly after noon, high winds again came up causing blowups in unburned portions of Teepee and Renshaw Creeks. A spot was set 1 mile across the river on Otter Ridge which immediately blew up and went to over 500 acres in 15 minutes as witnessed by men from the Renshaw camp. It was in an old, single burn. This spot continued on up river reaching Jim and Wolf Creek spots about 5:00 p.m. and forcing the crews working there to flee to the river. From there it respotted back to the north side of the river and then advanced up both sides to Meeker and Martin Creeks by midnight, with several spot fires, 1 or 2 miles in advance.

"The Pinchot spot crew fled to Three Link Cabin, up river some 5 miles where they arrived just in time to battle all night to save the improvements.

"The foremost point of fire joined up with the western end of the Martin Creek burn some time during the night.

"By 2:00 p.m., the safety of Renshaw camp was in jeopardy. Pacific pumps ordered for morning delivery had not arrived. A hand pump and backfire battle was commenced by the camp force, about 10 men, and waged with successive losses until the arrival of the power pumps at 4:00 p.m. At that time the fire was within 3 chains of camp on two sides and in heavy fuel. Fifteen minutes after delivery of the pumps the fire closed in to the river on all sides blocking the trail in or out. With one pump running continuously from arrival until 10:00 p.m., about 1 acre of area was protected and the camp suffered no losses.

"In the meantime, upper Gedney Basin blew up, burning the Packer Ridge and Fog Mountain camps, which were abandoned the 30th.

"The Glade Creek spot was manned within 30 minutes after origin with 28 men, but could not be held. This force was increased to 150 men who worked all night."

"SEPTEMBER 1

"The effects of the August 31 blowup were still in existence and the eastern end of the Pete King fire continued on up both sides of the river to Halfway Creek and Puzzle Point, throwing spot fires 2 miles over Moose Ridge into Magpie and Bitch Creeks.

"The Glade Creek spot was controlled at 9:00 a.m. with a force of 320 men. Final area was about 400 acres.

"The Camp B spot was controlled at 3:00 p.m. at about 300 acres.

"The lower Gedney Creek backfire line was completed during the day and preparations were made by Duff Jefferson, Brandborg, and Lund to fire it out at night. The burning out was not started before the main fire ran across the backfire line and down Gedney Creek to within half a mile of the river. The entire line was then abandoned.

"All line constructed to date in Obia Creek by the Camp 20 crew was lost.

"An increase in burned area of 17,560 acres resulted on this date.

"SEPTEMBER 7 to 20

"There were no blowups to any appreciable extent during this period and as a consequence, all mop up crews rapidly completed their work and were released. All hot spotting and herding crews made good progress, too.

"No further reinforcements were added to any sector of the fire after September 7. Instead, daily releases were made as mop up work was completed on controlled sectors.

"Responsibility of handling of the remaining forces was turned back to the Selway Forest on September 8.

"On September 20, the weather became unsettled and on the 22nd a heavy rainfall came. From that date on, crews were released and camps were pulled as rapidly as it was possible to do so. The last of the outlying camps were moved in on the 26th."

VITAL STATISTICS: Now, let us take a look at the vital statistics involved in the battle for the survival of the Selway National Forest.

FIRE CAMPS: A total of 74 fire camps were established during the Selway fire battle, exclusive of the several camps on Meadow Creek and Martin Creek fires. Access to, duration, and size of camps were: access by road - 24 camps and by road or plane and trail (foot travel and pack stock transportation) - 50 camps. Duration was 1 to 2 days - 13 camps; 3 to 5 days - 8 camps; 6 to 10 days - 10 camps; 11 to 20 days - 12 camps; and 21 to 50 days - 31 camps. Camp sizes were 10 to 50 men - 32 camps; 51 to 100 men - 13 camps; 101 to 200 men - 16 camps; 201 to 300 men - 11 camps, over 300 men - 2 camps (Pete King base and McLendon Butte Camp X). This latter camp had 400 CCC and 200 NIRA for a total of 600 men and was used from August 12 to September 9. Tom Lommasson was camp boss and C.B. Sutliff was fire boss. It is quite possible that this was a first in fire suppression camp size and duration.

Five camps were burned up during the battle; one 30-man, one 75-man, two 100-man, and one 210-man. Of the five camps burned, two could probably have been saved had manpower and

pack stock been available to do the job. In addition to these established camps, the equivalent of a 100-man camp outfit of tools, equipment, supplies, and bedding was burned during the August 17 battle for the Lochsa Ranger Station.

TRANSPORTATION - MOTOR AND PACKSTOCK: All freight and hired fire fighter personnel hauling between sources outside the National Forests and the Selway Forest fire area was handled by commercial transportation.

Transportation of all Forest Service personnel, including Forest Officers, seasonal overhead, and crewmen including CCC and NIRA personnel, were transported, inter-Forest, by Forest Service trucks and cars. Likewise, all equipment supplies and personnel were transported within general fire area by Forest Service owned or hired trucks, cars, and pack stock. This part of the transportation job required:

75 trucks for a total of	180,000 miles
15 F. S. cars for a total of	15,000 miles
<u>25</u> hired trucks for a total of	<u>38,000 miles</u>
115 vehicles for a total of	233,000 miles

Pack stock transportation required:

150 head F.S. stock for a total of	7,000 animal days
<u>325</u> head hired stock for a total of	<u>12,500</u> animal days
475 head	19,500 animal days

"CONTROL EFFORT: Line construction, held and lost records were very inaccurately kept in many cases and were not kept at all in others. Therefore, to show the exact amount of fire line constructed, held, and lost is impossible. However, the best information available has been rounded up and the following approximation set forth:

Amount of final perimeter intensively worked	- 200 miles
Amount of final perimeter extensively worked	- 110 miles
Amount of final perimeter not worked	- <u>100</u> miles
Final perimeter	410 miles

Total line held	- 310 miles
Total line lost	- <u>100</u> miles
Total line constructed	- 410 miles

Man-days per chain of line constructed	- 3.1 days
Man-days per chain of line held	- 4.1 days"

"Percentage of constructed line held 75.5% "

INITIATION OF BULLDOZER LINE CONSTRUCTION: What is believed to be a first in mechanized fire line construction was the use of bulldozers during the period August 16 through 26 on the McLendon Butte fire. One "Cletrac 55" was put into use August 16. A second dozer was put to work the 24th and a third dozer on the 25th. The use of the dozers in heavy fuels created by a 1919 fire was the key to controlling about 20 miles of fire perimeter. A separate report was made covering this initial use of bulldozers on fire control line construction.

ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, AND FATALITIES:

Even though safety rules and standards were few and far below what they are today, the so-called old timers in the fire game were inherently safety conscious - not only for themselves, but for their fellow workers. Despite the 2,500 CCC men and overhead with no fire experience and 2,800 NIRA and transient fire fighters, most of who had little or no fire experience, fatalities and serious accidents were exceptionally low.

Early in the battle, the two first and only fatalities occurred. These were caused by inexperienced CCC men (boys) snag falling in a fire line construction crew.

Except for the two CCC fatalities, there were no others, nor were there any real serious, permanently disabling injuries. There were the normal number of minor accidents such as bumps, bruises and bellyaches, also a few physical and mental exhaustion cases.

Summing up the overall holocaust battle, it must be said the Selway battle rated tops for low number of accidents, injuries, and fatalities.

"DAMAGES: There have been no damage surveys made of the areas burned over. Due to this fact and the lack of up-to-date timber estimates or type maps, an accurate damage appraisal could not be worked up. Using the best information available, the total damages have been estimated to be approximately \$234,000. The damages were distributed as follows:

Timber	\$ 12,000
Young growth	17,000
Sub marginal timber and young growth	100,000
Protection types	84,000
Improvements	19,500
Grazing	1,500
	<hr/>
	\$234,000

"In addition to the above, there was an inestimable amount of damage done from a recreational standpoint through destruction of range feed for game, especially elk, and in the destruction of fish and game itself."

It should be noted here that for some political or other reason unknown to the author of the "Selway Fires History," the damage figures quoted were handed down by higher authority. It was the opinion of the author, at the time, the overall damages were at least \$2,000,000. By 1975 values, the damages probably exceeded \$10,000,000.

"SUPPRESSION COSTS: Final cost figures were not available at the time of this compilation, but the following totals were arrived at from Regional Office and Selway costs and liability records as of December 15, 1934, and are considered to be very close to final:

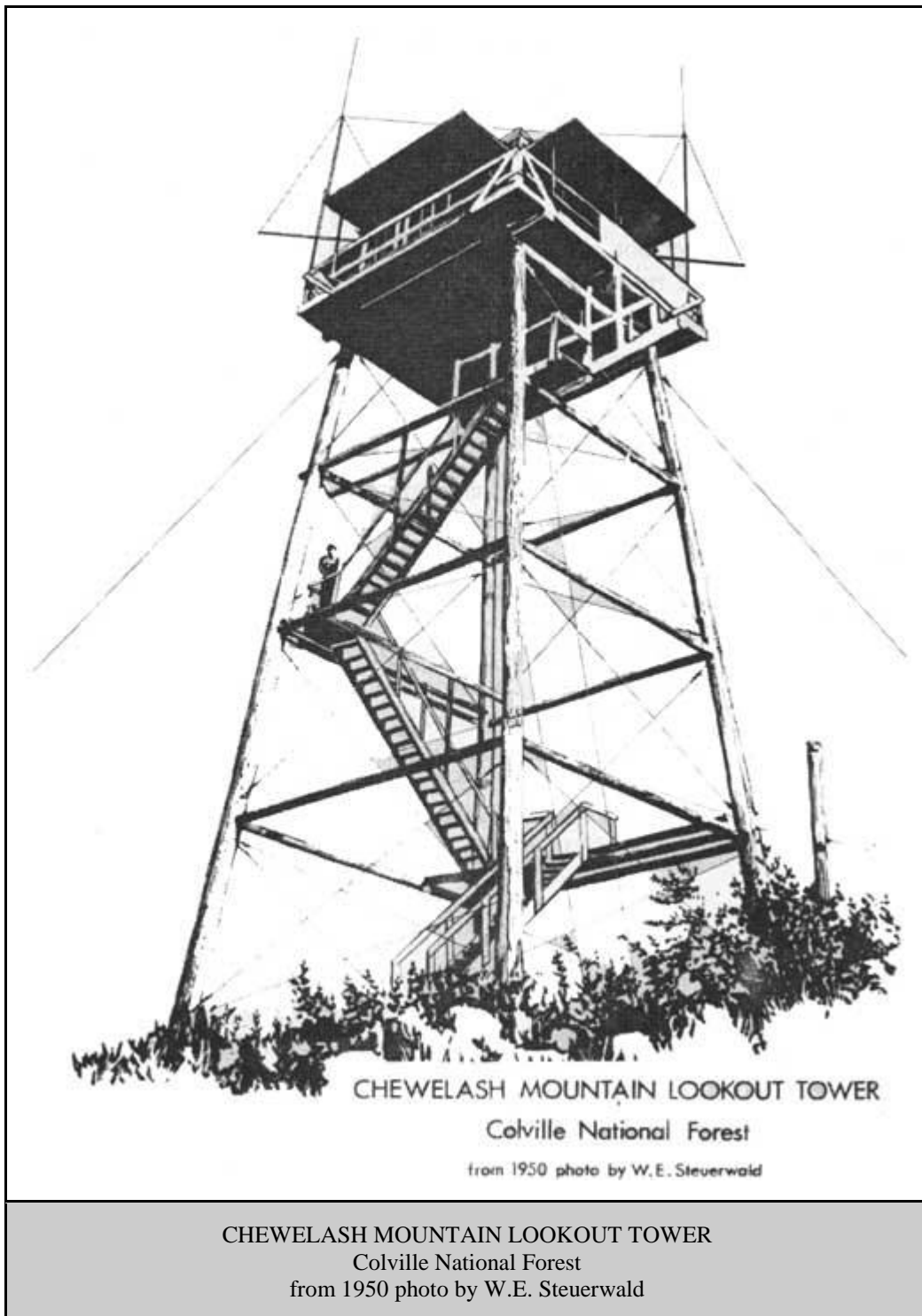
(Salaries \$9,500 Expense \$1,000)		
Indirect (Forest officer's time and expense) - \$ 10,500		
(CCC & ECW @ \$.25 per hr. - 12 hr. a day)	150,000	\$160,500
Direct (Labor)	285,000	
FF (Transportation)	76,500	
(Subsistence)	126,500	
(Other from FF)	35,500	
(R0, O.M. charges, C.P. Eqpt., etc.)	<u>223,500</u>	747,000
Direct E.C.F. charges - labor and other		4,000	
Total Cost			\$911,500
Total Cost plus damages			\$1,145,000

Average cost per man-day, including all classes of labor (including direct and indirect)	\$ 9.00
Average cost plus damage per man-day	11.30
Subsistence costs per man-day	1.25
Average cost per chain of line constructed	27.79
Average cost per chain of line held	36.75"

What would the costs amount to in 1976? Probably several million dollars and, in all probability, the suppression results would have been little if any more successful under the same climatic and ground conditions.

Shortly after the fall rains had cleared away the smoke, and snowfall had covered the blackened forest, the Selway was divided up between the Clearwater, Bitterroot, and Nezperce National Forests. The Selway Forest Supervisor's Office at Kooskia, Idaho, was closed out, the Lochsa and Pete King Ranger Districts were transferred to the Clearwater, the Moose Creek and Bear Creek Districts to the Bitterroot, and the Fenn (O'Hara) District to the Nezperce National Forests. And so ended one of the most picturesque National Forests of Region One, and perhaps the lower 48 states.

I wonder what would be the fire control results, costs and damages today, under the same climatic and ground conditions, road accessibility, etc., and assuming the benefits of present day aerial fire control smokejumpers and fire retardant solutions.



CHEWELASH MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT TOWER
Colville National Forest
from 1950 photo by W.E. Steuerwald

KOOTENAI FOREST - 1940

By Ernie Richards

INCIDENT #1

I had just come in off the East Fisher River Fire a day or so before when I received a call from the Supervisor, Karl A. Klehm, to go to the Libby airfield and meet the plane that was coming to drop a hundred man fire camp by parachute on the Bull Lake Fire. I had been running a pack string packing grub and other fire supplies in to the Fisher River fire for a couple of days, and now Mr. Klehm wanted me to help the Pilot get the plane gassed up and help load the plane with the necessary equipment to put in a hundred man fire camp up in the top of the mountains so they could work on the upper side of the fire without having to hike clear up over the mountain to get to it.

When I got over to the airfield, I discovered it was Dick Johnson with one of their tri-motor Ford planes. When Dick saw me he said, "Ernie, you are just the man I'm looking for; I need a cargo dropper. My regular dropper is sick and can't come, and I don't have anyone to throw out the cargo at the drop area." I told him we would have to get the Supervisor's OK first, but if it was all right with him I would be glad to help him out. I called the Supervisor and asked if it would be all right for me to do that. and he said it was all right with him, if I didn't mind doing it. So I took Dick over town so he could get some lunch and get the gas man to come over to gas up the plane. Then we started loading up the plane with grub, fire tools, camp equipment, sleeping bags and a short-wave radio. While we were loading the plane, Mr. K. D. Swan, the Forest Service photographer, came over to the field and set up his camera and started taking pictures of the loading process. When we got the plane loaded, we took off for Bull Lake. Dick circled the area a couple of times to get familiarized with the location of the drop spot before he had me start dropping the cargos. Right after I kicked out the first bundle, I placed one hand against each side of the doorway and looked out to see if the 25-man ration box I had just kicked out was going to land in the camp spot, and while I was looking out the plane hit a down draft and dropped several feet about straight down, and the top of the doorway hit me on the back of my head right at the base of my skull and slightly stunned me which almost caused me to fall out the door. I managed to push myself back away from the door and then sat down while we were circling around for another pass, and by the time we got about half way around I was all right again. So I got up and got another bundle of stuff ready to kick out. Needless to say, I never tried that again, and we got the rest of the stuff dumped out in good shape. It took us two days to get all the material for the hundred man camp dropped in place.

My wife and I were staying in a tourist cabin across the river from town, while we were looking for a house, at this time. Mr. K. D. Swan and his wife were staying in the cabin next to ours while he was taking pictures of the cargo loading and dropping procedure. The first night, after we had supper, we were all sitting out in front of the cabins talking, and Mr. Swan told me he had been on the mountainside, across from where we were dropping the stuff for the camp, taking pictures of the bundles as they drifted down by parachute. So I told him he almost got a picture of me going down without a parachute, and then told him what had happened. He said he was glad I was lucky enough to keep from falling out.

Some time after that I had to go to Spokane after a load of freight, and had to go into the warehouse office to sign some papers, and there on the wall was an enlarged picture of me carrying a bundle of stuff into the Ford Tri-motor the day I was helping load the plane when we were putting in the hundred man fire camp on the Bull Lake Fire.

I don't know what ever became of that picture after they moved the warehouse out of the old Marshal Wells building on East Trent Avenue over to the building the Forest Service rented on South Howard Street. I wish I had a copy of that picture and also some of the ones Mr. Swan took while we were dropping the camp in for the Bull Lake Fire. That fire was in July, I believe, of 1940.

That was a real bad fire year for the Kootenai Forest, because we had one dry lightning storm after another, and in about three weeks time we had over four hundred fires. Luckily, most of them were just spot or real small ones. The big ones, as I remember, were as follows: The East Fisher River Fire, the Lake Creek Fire South of Troy, Montana; the Mount Tom Fire at or near the head of Pipe Creek; the Quartz Creek Fire Northwest of Libby; the Bull Lake Fire, and the Caribou Creek Fire North of the Upper Ford Ranger Station near the Canadian Border.

INCIDENT #2

They were bringing in a big horse-truck load of pack mules to the Mount Tom Fire, and while going up Pipe Creek the driver got too close to the edge of the road on a sharp curve, and the edge of the road gave away and the truck tipped over spilling all the mules out in the creek. It skinned a few of them up a little, but not bad enough to worry about. I was headed back to Libby after setting up a Pacific Pumper unit at the base fire camp, and came along right after it happened. Shortly after that, Fred Thieme came along and, after getting cable and block and tackle riggin, and with Fred's and the CCC mechanic's help, I rigged up a kind of a three-way hitch on the truck and a big rock up the hillside a ways and then up the road to a dozer they had called off the fire line, and finally got the truck back on its feet again without doing too much damage to the truck.

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS IN OPERATION

By Carl A. Weholt

Educational Department

The educational adviser was selected from applications. Experience, schooling, references were considered. It helped to have political backing. With the recommendations of Senator Borah, the governor, the local political boss, and the county superintendent, I was the first educational adviser assigned in the Fort Wright District (27 camps).

The first company commander I encountered was a retired Naval Commander. He had 3 junior officers. He usually started his week-ends on Thursday, and returned on Tuesday.

Since the educational program was voluntary, the commander advised me that I shouldn't expect too much. He said he had tried the same deal in the navy. The first evening he had a room full. He had to end the program in a week. No students.

I worked out a program based on the needs of the enrollees and the job. With the aid of forestry personnel, local experienced men (LEMs), and experienced or skilled enrollees as instructors, I had a program in operation involving around 80 percent of the men.

A Partial List of Subjects

grade school boxing Spanish
barbering cooking typing
simple architecture baking journalism (camp paper)
auto mechanics carpentry orchestra
principles of diesel first aid clerks
supply

On the Job Training (See Forestry)

At Santa, Idaho, there were 54 enrollees out of 200 who could not write their names. They were from the coal mining area of Kentucky where the company store took care of everything. We brought them up to 4th grade level in math and reading. For their final exam I requested that they write a letter home. I was informed by a big six foot lad that "We all don't dare write no letter home. If our mammy and pappy knowed we was gettin' book larnin' they would't like it."

In a LEM camp where ages ranged to 72, there was great interest in the program. A 60-year-old enrollee was an architect. He became an instructor in house and cabin plans. Older men became so involved they often missed meals. We used an old 1-1/2 ton truck to teach driving. To qualify, the enrollee had to enroll in the auto mechanics course.

Education

The carpentry class built the first school house in the district and became quite efficient in carpentry and maintenance. I soon found that I needed a class in teaching. The instructor in auto mechanics came to me after 3 classes and said, "What do I do now? I've covered everything." We had a table for Spanish students, at which only Spanish was spoken. If one forgot the name of a food, he did without.

At Renfro Creek tent camp, the only place for inside classes was a big abandoned barn. The sign over the door read: "Renfro College. The only college in a barn in the world." A picture of the set up and the story got in most of the larger papers in the United States.

My assistant was from Brooklyn. His father was a drunkard. The boy was the oldest of 11 children. To feed the family, he had to steal food from stores and fruit stands, and then steal coal to cook it. He was a good boy. I heard dozens of similar stories.

Need for and Results of the Program

Under Hoover and the gold standard, one of the worst depressions in our history hit all at once. Hoover maintained that it was a local problem and would be of short duration. Men with families would get \$9 per month for working on roads. They could not buy tobacco or other nonfood items. Factories and businesses closed down. There was no money to be had. Bankers would not lend to their own mothers. Banks were going broke by the thousands. Foreclosures were on every hand. Wheat sold at 16¢ a bushel. I sold a registered mature hog for \$4. I was offered a job as superintendent of a high school at \$100 per month. Since the district had no money they paid in script, which was discounted 15 percent at the bank, if they would cash it at all.

The training the boys received fit them for military duty in World War II with little additional training. It kept the home folks from starvation and gave the kids a feeling of responsibility.

Forestry Department

The forestry department was independent of the military. Usually, however, they cooperated very well. If they did not, a transfer was in order.

The camp superintendent in this district of 27 camps was always a local experienced woods worker, chosen for his ability to lead men, and for his knowledge of the forest and the operations required. The foremen were chosen much the same way. Some enrollees were promoted to foremen.

Work in the forest camps consisted of tree planting, thinning roadside beautification, and development of camp areas, blister rust control and road building. One camp built 57 miles of mountain road in one summer.

Marble Creek camp on the St. Joe was quite typical. The enrollees were trained in jack hammer, axe and saw, powder, surveying, heavy equipment, heavy equipment repair, truck driving, auto

mechanics, pick and shovel, fire fighting, stone masonry, mapping, reports, carpentry, etc. Much of the job training was supplemented with class instruction.

The Military

The camp commander and his junior officers were reserve officers called to CCC duty. Most of them came from New York and New Jersey. The army personnel usually consisted of a captain.

The cooks could not read, so it was an extra chore to tell them what to cook, and set the cans out because "them there cans ain't got no pitchers on 'em."

Most officers were quite efficient, although some did dumb things. After the flood, the Lieutenant, the sergeant, and I went on an inspection tour. Water filled the sheet iron stoves to the top. The lieutenant always prided himself on making a decision. "Sergeant, take a pick and knock a hole in the bottom of these stoves and let the water out." "Yes, SIR." Bam!

Sometimes the officers carried the army image to extremes. When I arrived at the camp, the officers had a small room boarded off for their mess, and a white-jacketed orderly waited on them. I refused to eat in the walled off area, and moved out with the men. In a few days the walls came down and the enrollees could see that the officers ate the same kind of food as they.

The mess hall was kept very clean and orderly under the supervision of the army. At the beginning an allowance of 36¢ a day for food was provided, later increased to around 60¢. A first cook, second cook, and a half dozen K.P.'s prepared the food, and a baker kept a good supply of goodies on hand. All kitchen personnel were enrollees.

The Canteen was usually located in the recreation room. Candy, tobacco, shaving materials, soft drinks, and many other items were on sale. The canteen bill was deducted from the enrollee's \$5 allowance on payday. The other \$25 was sent to his parents. Leaders got \$45 and assistant leaders \$36. Sergeants got \$45.

Clothing was issued free. Replacements were issued at intervals. At supper one evening I cautioned the boys to don their long johns. I had a mixture of Kentucky boys who were as honest as they come, and New Jersey kids who, if the truth were the best story, would prefer to lie. "I ain't got no long johns," a Kentucky boy announced. "Where are they? They were issued to you." "I don't rightly know." I had a showdown inspection. A New Jersey boy had 22 pair in his locker.

Recreation was plentiful. Football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, boxing, track, skiing, ping pong, pool, cards, and picture shows. On week ends, trucks transported enrollees to the nearest town, often 40 miles away.

Ministers of various denominations visited camp nearly every week.

Payday was once a month, in cash. The commanding officer was very impressive, dressed in his best uniform and toting his moneybox and revolver.

Minority groups were not well represented. In the 8 years that I was with the CCC, I can recall but 6 Negroes and 30 Mexicans. Negroes were assigned to the kitchen, and the Mexicans worked on the job.

Enrollees ranged in age from 16 to 24, except in the LEM camps where several were in their 70's. Enrollment was for a 6-month period. At the end of that time they could reenlist or go home. A majority stayed - some for 2 years.

My experience was with men from Arkansas, Kentucky, New York, New Jersey, California, and Idaho.

Enrollees slept in barracks of 50 men each. A leader or assistant leader was assigned to each barracks.

LETTERS TO FOLKS BACK HOME - JULY AND SEPTEMBER 1929

(Ed. Note: The following are two letters from William F. Guntermann, fire lookout on the St. Joe National Forest back in 1929, to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Guntermann in Santa Barbara, California. Young Guntermann was stationed at Bird Point Lookout when it was first manned and called Bird Creek Lookout. The letters had Avery, Idaho, postmarks.)

Bird Creek Lookout
July 2, 1929
I R. Scribner

Dear Folks:

Well, it has sure been a long time since I last wrote, but I have been busy. Anyway, no mail has gone out. It is drier this year than last. The season opened sooner, so the big rush of pack strings was over when I got here, and mail does not come in and go out so often.

I worked on trails for 3 days with some other young fellows. Then for 2 days I showed a new fellow from U. of Minnesota (John Hunt) around and taught him the ropes in trail work, fire detection, and fighting fire. Then I was sent over here. I have been making camp ever since. It has sure been a job, because I have put the tent right on the peak a few feet from the map board and telephone. It is nearly solid rock, and I had to dig way into the steep slope to get a flat place big enough for my tent. Now I am just finishing my bunk and table. Everything must be made out of split logs. I tried splitting a green spruce log 231 feet in diameter yesterday to make my bunk with. It took me all afternoon, and I wouldn't have done it then except for an idea I got when I remembered a picture I had seen a long time ago of Abe Lincoln splitting a log. It worked fine. I still have to make an egg box, (I have them, 12 dozen, buried outside now so they will keep). I have to make a meat box, toilet, slop hole, washstand, kettle rack, and shelves for various purposes. So I have lots to do yet. Besides I have to get my 2 weeks reserve supply of wood before a "high up" come around.

The weather is much warmer this year than last year. It is about the same for dryness, I guess. The flies, mosquitoes, buffalo gnats, and "noseeums" are terrible this year. My hands and face look like I have the measles. I am going to write to the Missoula Drug Co. and see if I can get some Flit, Bel Dent, films and citric acid on credit until fall. I guess I could send some cash to start an account, though, I never thought of that before. Citric acid sure goes over big here. While at Quarles Peak Ranger Station we all went fishing a couple of times and made lemonade. U.S. furnishes a few lemons this year, too, so we had some lemons to make it taste right.

The wind has blown hard this afternoon and has blown most of the bugs away, but this a.m., when I woke up, one side of the tent inside was nearly black with mosquitoes and buffalo gnats.

While at Quarles Sunday before last five of us went fishing into Montana. Three of us were college kids; the other two were young woodsmen. We went to a small lake where we fished, rowed on rafts, and explored old mines. We found a pile of magazines dating from 1905 to 1925, and we packed them home, so we have a little to read, anyway.

The second night I was here on Bird Creek Lookout, I was sent over 2 miles to old Blackie's (Blacky Longley) camp. I was sure glad to see him. He says he wrote me at 1355 Dove and got the letter back. He didn't trap last year, because on his way through Butte to his district, he was slugged and lost all his cash, pack, and guns. The latter nearly broke his heart. He got them all back the other day from the sheriff in Butte who found them. He was sure sorry to let on that anyone had been good enough and awake enough to slug him. He thought no man or men on earth could lick him. He looks lots older this year, but is still strong as an ox and happy again. He worked in the A.C.M. camps near Missoula all winter. He is now grub staking old Con Faircloth, an old pal of his who is 72 years old and who can't do much work any more. Con is doing a little digging for gold and has found color pretty heavy. Con can still run off with a pack that I wouldn't tackle.

Next morning I left Blackie's at 8:00 a.m. and started for the St. Joe River with the records of his camp for June. I got on the wrong trail after hunting for blazes for over an hour in one place and got to the river far below where I was to meet Charlie Scribner. It was 9-1/2 miles that morning over terrible trails. The trails led through wonderful woods of hemlock and spruce, though. And the river was sure a great sight for sore eyes. It is sure a beautiful river with crystal clear water running fast and with timber growing right down to the water's edge on steep slopes that are nearly straight up and down.

I ate lunch with Charlie and the assistant superintendent (Frank Foltz) and camp keeper at Turner's Flats and then went up the river fishing as I went. I was in it up to my hips at times and had a hard time standing up. The cold water felt great on my blisters in my boots. It kept me from getting more that afternoon, too. I didn't get any fish for 3 miles. Then I turned up Bird Creek and went along it and caught some beauties. Bird Creek basin from my lookout is the most desolate looking hub you ever set eyes on, but right down on the creek it is absolutely great. The woods are very thick along the creek for several hundred feet. There is very little light coming through the thick growth of cedars and white pine even on a real sunny day. The ferns are so thick you can't see the trail at all. They are as high as I am, too. The creek roars and booms its way down the canyon through, over, and under logjams, etc. Cedars from 2 to 6 feet through have fallen across it all along and make it look wild and weird. It makes you think all the Schwartz Wald stories, etc. I shot a huge porky along there. I could barely lift him off the ground, so he was a giant specimen. Then I climbed out of the green woods that the 1910 fire had jumped over and got into the open and sunlight and old burn again. The trail was a cliff for several hundred feet. Then it leveled somewhat, but was still steep and was an awful trail. Half the time I couldn't even see any blazes. The windfalls and down logs were 10 or 15 feet deep in places. I went through, over, and under that stuff for about 31 miles to my peak. I was sure tired. It took me 3 hours and 15 minutes to make those last 3 miles, so it was sure tough going. I ached all over from climbing windfalls. It was 9:00 p.m. when I got in. I sure slept.

It is my job during the summer, whenever the fire danger is low, to work on that bad trail. I'll sure work slowly on it, but I'll make it resemble a trail anyway. I'll probably get about 11 mile or a mile of it done all summer. What is worrying me is that fire might start in all that stuff. It seems nearly crazy to me to try to fight fire there.

I'll write the kids and Paul one of these days when I get things set up for housekeeping.

A lookout job is slow part of the time, but I have lots of time to yoddle Gregson's music, to brush my teeth three times a day, to study surveying that I have forgotten, and to learn to play the mouth organ that I have. I wouldn't have time for any of it, if I were at the Ranger Station or elsewhere. I get plenty of exercise making things and carrying 9 gallons of water up from my spring over 1 mile away every day and keeping the main trails in good shape for 2 mile around me.

Love,
Willie

Dear Folks',

You would have a swell time trying to come and see me here or even in Cal's. woods. Up here the country is so rough that the nearest spot for a camp would be 2 miles from here. And that is in old burn, but nice nevertheless. There are lots about old burn that green timber can't boast of. But, of course, I like green timber better. To come and see me you'd have to take a pack train from town and do some real camping for a few days. But it would be fun—except the second day of riding.

I didn't even know the Zeppelin was in America. How did that record endurance flight in St. Louis come out? And in Austin? They sure stayed up according to that paper Mama sent.

We have had big fires all around us this year, but have been lucky ourselves. Charlie Scribner (ranger) keeps us all tuned for fires all during the season, though. He doesn't get as much trail built and protection costs more than other rangers, but his fires never get a fair start even. He knows his oats and doesn't try to get in good at St. Maries or Missoula by cutting protection costs and by taking his lookouts off to do trail work all the time. The district south of us is run by a good guy, too. He isn't a ranger, but in the absence of enough rangers they let him run it. They get more there than we do all the time. But they haven't had a big fire either. They had 48 lightening fires at one time in an area of about 60 square miles. They haven't found them all yet, but they killed them all so that nothing came out of it. They get treated like that about every 3 weeks over there. They don't have time to rest hardly.

The Army wouldn't do much good, except save money, unless they were really trained for fires and posted in towns like Avery in the woods. The fires get big while the men are hiking from town to where the fire is. There is an army of unemployed lumber jacks in Spokane all the time. They all know how to fight fires and are all good with ax and saw. Soldiers wouldn't be as good as sawyers or axmen. They probably would take it easy on fires, too. They can get 1000 jacks out of Spokane and St. Maries any time, but the ride on the train and the long hikes (up to 60 or 70 miles) take too much time. The woods here are awful dry in summer. We get nearly all the fires, but once in a while about one out of every 500 gets going in a deep canyon where no lookouts can see. The smoke may lay flat on the ground below the treetops for days, so no one could see it anyway. Then a favorable hot day and wind bring it to light after it is several acres big. Then lookouts and trail crews and smoke chasers go for it, and it is growing all the time they are hiking their heads off to get there. They usually are at least winded when they do get there. It is hard work going through these rough, log strewn woods with 40 pounds on one's back. Then

they fight the fire and a lookout keeps his eyes on it for size, etc. Maybe no lookout can see it. Then, if it gets too big, they send a man to the nearest phone for help, which takes hours again. If a lookout can see it, then he phones in the orders for more men and grub, etc., wherever he thinks the fire looks like it is getting away. The whole business is no joke and isn't easy as in Oregon or Germany where it rains all the time. But they are working on a new system in Washington by which they will have a trained crew of some many hundred men who are efficient fighters. They will somehow keep them busy during the whole year; instead of letting them go to stray all over the country. Some come back (most, in fact) but they have to use so many greenhorns every year.

The main thing is money. Everybody tries to cut down expenses because of party politics, etc., etc. If Congress would appropriate (or someone) enough to really cover the whole woods where it is needed and to open up whole forests where there are as yet no trails or men, then the fires wouldn't get away so often. The Forest Service can do the work, if they can have the money to do it with.

The weather has warmed up somewhat again. It is still cold enough for wool shirt and underwear and a fire in the stove, but it hasn't frozen for three nights. The air is just nice and nippy. It snowed on the fourth of this month, but hasn't done much since. It looks like more snow right now, so I may get to leave this peak soon. Charlie has promised to let me go over to Blacky Longley's camp in Entente Creek (in green timber near streams and lakes). The old fellow is alone and doesn't like it so much. He wants me to come over. He got a lot older since last year and doesn't like to be alone anymore. He used to be able to live a year a stretch without seeing a soul. He can't hold a gun as steady or hike as far as last year, too. It gets his goat. But he is still strong enough to break big logs and can shoot better than any man in this forest. He is proud of the fact that he, with one partner, can make trail as fast as four-or-five men camps. He goes ahead and drags, pushes, or breaks all the logs and young trees in the way—what other men have to use ax and saw for. Then he uses the saw now and then to clean up. His partner just digs along behind and one man can hardly keep up with him. It usually takes two men behind with saw and axes, one to cut brush with brush hook, and two to dig, but Blackey's (Blacky Longley, lumberjack and trapper) camp of two men makes more trail actually than the five do. His partner got tired and quit 3 weeks ago, so he is making trail alone now.

Until I leave here I have a job of making a mile of trail down to the creek from my spring. I probably won't finish it, but the lookout next year can do it. I've done up two trail jobs since the first already.

A little bear was around again trying to get into the tent. He was inexperienced, though, because he didn't know where the door was, nor how to lift up the wall of the tent, so he didn't get in. I'd like to get a bear rug, but I don't want to kill a bear to get it. I'll go down and see the shepherd the first clear day we have and see if he has any. He has to kill them to keep them away from the sheep.

I haven't decided to go to Missoula yet. Oregon would be a good place, but my cash wouldn't last the first quarter unless I got a good job, which isn't probable right away. The country is sure it for logging and lumbering. I just read a book on it by the dean of Forestry at Corvallis. But Missoula is a great place to be and darn hard country to leave. Besides I want to see some more of the

country (Glacier, for example) before I leave it. My cash would last nearly through the first quarter without a job and I could get a job quicker. But I couldn't go home for Christmas unless I wait until then to move to Oregon, which would be a good idea. But Missoula is probably healthier country (although colder than sin). Whenever I get enough cash to have an estate - ahem - it will be a nice house in Missoula or on a hill slope overlooking the whole Valley, town, and mountains. You just can't beat Missoula.

I guess I've raved long enough so will sign off and cook dinner.

Willie

P.S. I'll probably be around here until the 25th or so. Then, ¿Quien sabe? until I get a room somewhere.

**THE CCC'S AS R-1 FOREST FIRE FIGHTERS
(PLUS A LOOK AT TRAIL CREW AND LOOKOUT LIFE)**

By Bert W. Morris

Outside of fishing, hunting and a little trapping my career as a tree squeak really didn't get off to a start until the summer of 1935. A local fuel dealer offered four of us punks (I was the oldest and only 14) \$1.50 per cord for making cordwood. This amounted to falling tamarack snags, bucking them into 4 foot lengths, splitting these with wedges and a 12 lb. maul and then packing the pieces to where they could be loaded on a truck. Some of the hardest work was extracting our pay, which averaged about 75¢ per day per kid.

The boss would pick up some broke lumberjack every now and then to speed production. One character was telling us about watching a young Indian climb out the chimney in the Pierce, Idaho, jail when he was a temporary guest. He said it was tough but the kid made it. I checked that jail years later and that must have been a small Indian.

The next summer, '36, I enlisted in the great Hooligan Army, the Civilian Conservation Corps. An outfit better known as the C.C.C. The book said no one could enlist unless he had passed his 17th birthday. If you were from Montana they were inclined to bend the rules such as if you said you were 17 then that was your age and you were supposed to sign up for 6 months but they gave an honorable discharge if you found a way to return to school. The reason was most of the Montana kids were quite familiar with WORK and without exception seemed to know how to use common hand tools like a pick and shovel.

Wound up with some of the real personalities of that time. There was Oley Johnson who was Camp Superintendent at Thompson Falls, Pat Duffy who was foreman and ramrodded the Plains Spike Camp; Bill Sheldon, foreman and Frenchy whose last name sounded like Laffin Ear who was the Headquarters Guard at Plains. That crew of Montana Kids was really something. We had two kids over 16 and were supposed to build a 6-strand telephone line into Bend Station, build a new Ranger Station at Plains, repair telephone lines from Plains to Thompson Falls, and fight fire when the need arose. The camp was never at its authorized 25 men. The month of August I managed 3 days work on the project. The rest of the time was fire. Because of the practice of making up a camp of men who all came from one locality we had little Italy's, Little Hungary's, Little Chicago's, etc. all over the region. The people around Plains called our camp Little America. We really had a good relationship with the people of Plains. The show house gave us the kid's rate and made a refund if there was a fire call in the middle of the show. One of the local bars let a few of the older ones charge a beer a day providing we paid promptly on payday. (We did.)

The flat where the station was built sits on hardpan clay. I still think it would have taken less labor if they had laid all the lines on the ground and backfilled over them. That was sure a lot of ditch digging. When it got hot and dry they resorted to dynamite to loosen the stuff so we could dig the ditches. They wanted a cesspool for the cookhouse, so Owen Grinde and I were given the job. In a day and a half we had a hole 10 ft. x 10 ft. x 10 ft. deep. We didn't get many coffee breaks.

The C.C.C. system was to move in a few men, and maybe a sawmill, cut the lumber, dig the ditches, lay the pipes, build the buildings, and then go to work on projects. It was sure fine training in a lot of trades.

In 1936 the uniforms were still WWI surplus. We were issued 3 undershirts, 3 boxer shorts (all 44 inch waist), 1 pull-over wool shirt, 1 wool blouse styled for and called a Mae West coat, a blue denim hat, a blue denim jacket (large), 1 pair of wool blanket trousers, 2 pair of Munson Last shoes, socks, and 2 pair of denim work pants (size 44 waist, 40 inseam). We were also given 2 towels and a sewing kit. Those 44-40 work pants presented a problem. The first thing was to chop the block with a sharp ax and shorten the legs to where you could get your feet out of them. They had a short belt in back. By running that to the front belt loops and then back they would fit most of those no-assed kids.

It was comical watching a bunch of those skinny kids wearing those oversized denim jackets, (the wool shirts itched something awful), and those pants. Because of the system of shortening the waist, the pants usually appeared to have an extra 12 qt. bucket in the rear. And the crotch, depending on the wearer's height, usually hit at the knees.

Getting to go to a Spike Camp was duty that everyone wanted; mainly it took us away from the military at main camp and such things as inspections, bed checks, standing reveille, forming for retreat and most important was that the main camps fed for a daily man allowance of 30¢. In the Spike Camp this allowance was beefed up by an amount of 50¢ per day per man. The reason for this was that shipping and hauling was tough so they let the cooks and Forest Service buy locally to inject some money into the local economy. As tough as times were it wasn't long before they were getting plenty of competition from the suppliers. We really ate high off the hog in those camps.

To be chosen for the Spike Camp you had to be able to work hard, with little supervision and generally do a high standard job. There were drawbacks—if you weren't on fire standby you could go into town in the evening. The hitch to this was in event of a fire call you had 3 minutes to be either at the Ranger Station (about 2 doors from the Silver Dollar) or at the Spike camp where the present station now stands. If you missed, you knew well what would happen. The next morning you were on your way back to main camp. A few dry runs were held and those who missed were always given the same treatment. We also had a 'flying squad of four men'. These four men were among the best fire fighters in the camp and they were assigned duty with what was then a revolutionary piece of equipment. The district had a new 1936 V-8 Ford pick up, painted a bright red, a loud siren, an 85 gallon tank with a marine pump and live hose reel. They also had complete tools including 5 five-gallon backpacks to take care of a ten-man crew.

Someone came up with a directive that the pick-up could not leave the station without its CCC crew on board. After the first of July the flying squad was on 24-hour stand-by. (When you heard the siren at the station you had better be in the road in front of the camp when that pick-up came by.) The men were rotated every two weeks or so to keep them from going nuts under those restrictions. One evening, Barney Mendenhall, the Ranger, decided to show how the rig worked to a couple of his friends. The "Fire?" was reported at Weeksville and Barney came by camp in a cloud of dust and the crew hit their perches. About a half hour later one of the foremen took one

of the crew trucks out, which was puzzling. When the crew got back they gave us the scoop; Barney was doing better than 60 MPH down the road and an old hereford cow walked out in front of him. Those mechanical brakes, the speed of the vehicle and the closeness of the cow only meant one thing; anyway, the local body shop had the rig back on the road in two days and you could not detect a scratch to it. I often wonder if all the accident reports had been made out or if Barney just paid the bill and said "To hell with it."

The year 1936 was one terribly bad fire year. I was on my first fire about the 25th of May. Lightning had struck an old snag in a patch of ceanothus about 8 miles west of Thompson Falls and right on top of a mountain on the north side of the Clarks Fork River. That was something when daylight came to look down and see a herd of Mountain Goats 500 to 1000 feet below you. Besides the lightning Alley along the Clark Fork and the Little Thompson we also had certain things that led to troubles. The Anaconda Company was logging private lands north of Plains and they were using Shays (a type of locomotive) and railroad logging. Those danged old teakettles threw a lot of sparks and they were not practicing right-of-way management. The other trouble was the Northern Pacific Railroad. For some reason there were not the best of relationships between the local railway hierarchy and the district staff. The engines were still burning coal and it seemed they would shake their grates wherever they felt like it. That would be equivalent to scattering a pick-up load of hot coals over a 4 mile of track. Then they had a zealous section gang. That bunch of Italians was charged with keeping the right-of-way burned clean and fire proof. Some of this was tough burning so they would wait until it was real hot and the wind was blowing then touch off the tough spots. We caught one a half-mile away. It left good tracks. We would try getting facts from that section gang on who did what and I never saw a bunch that understood so little English.

Over the 4th of July my buddy, the telephone construction technician and I chased 6 fires out of Bend Station. We figured we walked over 30 miles. It is interesting going through beaver swamps at midnight with only one headlamp for the crew. Our uniforms weren't the only part of the outfit that was WWI surplus. The emergency rations had hardtack that was stamped U.S. Army 1918. The rest of the ration consisted of a can of beef (knew a guy who swore he found a spur rowel in a can of the stuff), a tin of bacon, a large molasses candy bar, a can of beans, a can of grapefruit, a can of cheese, and a box of raisins. We had two-piece shovels that we would take apart and use the blade for a frying pan. We would fry our bacon in the shovel and then soak the hardtack in the grease. Not too bad if you were hungry. Some of the older smoke chaser packs had cast iron cooking utensils and a wool blanket in them.

We hit quite a few fires in the project class. Two really stand out, the Cow Coulee Fire south of Cascade and reputed to have had as many as 5000 men assigned to it and the Edna Creek Fire on the Old Ant Flat District of the Kootenai. It hit around 13,000 acres on Cow Coulee. Our crew went into a sector camp about eight miles from the end of a road. We were assigned a sector well over 2-1/2-miles long. The hike in was pack your own sleeping bag and a fresh shovel in one hand a sharp pulaski in the other. Our 25-man crew replaced 125 New Yorkers; we figured that was about PAR. The next day we were on control and after that moved into mop-up. About the 5th day we were sometimes going a mile into that fire for a smoke. The "we" is loosely used, as one man was sent to each smoke. After 8 days we had all the smoke out in one hell of a lot of real estate. Pat Duffy had worked us 14 hours a day except Sunday when we only put in 10. 75

Kentuckians replaced us. We knew we were good but not that good, i.e., 25 of us replacing 125 New Yorkers, controlling over a 2-1/2-mile sector, mopping it up and then being replaced by 75 Kentuckians. Someone must of thought we were supermen.

Our camp had been dry, all water coming in by pack string. We were given a quart of water a day to wash in. When we hit the base camp on Smith River someone took a look and threw each of us a big towel and a bar of soap. Smith River was nice and warm and it sure ran muddy for some time. We went home from that fire without a repairable pair of shoes in the outfit. Stretching out to shovel had caused those low crotched pants to rip and split. You should have seen the skirts that were fabricated as a cover up when they stopped to feed us in restaurants on the way home. We used towels, burlap sacks, and blankets. The guys may have looked like something from Hades but at least we didn't get arrested for indecent exposure.

All of our traveling was in the back of 1-1/2-ton stake trucks. These were open with absolutely no protection from the elements. I sometimes wondered in later years about the necessity of sending out two pick-ups when 4 men were going somewhere. After 'ceilings' that was cured because we only had two men and they were going different directions.

We hit Edna Creek the last part of August. The nights got quite cool. The first night the camp boss heard that the crew was from the Flathead Valley so he wouldn't issue sleeping bags, as he was sure we would hide them in the bushes and come back for them after we were discharged. There was a small mountain of baled bags in the supply area. Did you ever try to get some sleep when three men are trying to sack out under one small WWI Army blouse and it freezes an inch of ice in a water bucket?

Here on Edna Creek was where we almost had a riot and it wasn't from sleeping without bags either. All of the local WPA crews had been drafted to fight the fire. They had a funny situation: the most they could make on WPA was \$40.00 per month and if they missed their scheduled week of work it took another full month to reestablish their eligibility. Most of these men then had to make at least \$80.00 to come out even. The going rate for line workers was 35 cents per hour so it took a few hours to make up the difference. Us Hooligans were doing the same work but only getting \$5.00 per month take home (\$25.00 was sent home). The fire overhead wound up putting CCC night crews on where CCC crews had been doing the day job and all the hard feelings ended.

Edna Creek was where I saw a horse team used to plow a fire line. In the lead would be about three teams of CCC sawyers who cut windfalls and the large obstructions. The team of horses followed. The horses were two big logging horses and hitched in tandem to a two-way fire plow (right or left). Following was about a 10-man crew that sanitized the line; limbed up trees, broke up concentrations of fuel against the line and did some spotting. Even in the very heavy fuels of Edna Creek we had no trouble getting as much as a mile an hour of line with this set up. I would say that the line built was about the speed of a modern dozer but we didn't have the troubles of pushovers and buried fire. In that period backfiring was verboten and burnout was kept to the minimum, so usually you had your butt in the flames. I saw spruce crown out close enough to singe that big team and they wouldn't bat an eye, just keep leaning into their collars. The line was a full 18 inches wide and usually as deep as needed to turn mineral soil.

When I said the Forest Service was not permitting backfiring during this period, I was not joking. Many of the bad escapes during 1929 and the very early '30's had been caused by the improper use of backfires. The 1929 Half Moon Fire that burned a good share of Glacier Park was a classic example of what could happen. As an 8-year-old I was out watching the fire with my folks. The fire had started around 2:00 p.m. about 5 miles west-northwest of Columbia Falls. Pushed by about a ten mile per hour west wind it was heading toward the Northfork Road and a mile or so north of Columbia Falls. The fire plan was apparently to backfire from this road when conditions were right. When we got up there they had men lined along the road with torches. The word came down the line to start backfires. I can still vividly remember an old lumberjack about 30 feet away from us putting his torch to the east side of the road and my dad saying "We better head for home." Within one half hour it was on top of Teakettle Mountain to the east. I believe it was during WWII that backfiring again became respectable.

Of that old CCC bunch there are many memories: Bud Mitchell and I met several times and I understand that he retired from the Forest Service as a dispatcher. Winnie Cowan is a yardmaster here in Whitefish. Owen Grinde is some kind of executive for the Burlington Northern. Our crew had an Indian who we called 'Chief' Malatare. For him I had a particular soft spot. One evening a drunk Indian (not a CCC) got me in a corner in the old hospital that we were using for our first camp in Plains. This guy had a long wicked knife and was bound and determined that he was going to see what my insides looked like. 'Chief' talked him out of it but things were sure tense for a while. Malatare was badly wounded in the Marines in WWII. The corps let him go home to Augusta to die. 'Southy' Southerland who, with me, wheeled all the cement used for the garage at Plains is still in the Arizona at Pearl Harbor. While job-hunting in Seattle during February of '41 I saw another of my friends, well manacled, being taken into the police station. Another of my friends used to stop and visit quite often when I was Ranger at Lincoln. He lived in the Alice Creek area. My wife and I were in Sparks, Nevada, when he made national news. His son had shot and killed him when he was using a bullwhip on the youth.

The CCC experience was a part of my career that cannot be forgotten. I often wonder if such a program would be successful under today's climate? We had a true mixture, college graduates and prison rejects and well mixed. There was an education program that was different. You could learn anything in their classes from running a jackhammer to planting trees. The only requirements were that you had to really want to learn the subject, that an instructor could be found, and that the process was on your and the instructor's own time. Forest Service and Army personnel both put in many long evenings teaching classes in trades and formal education.

Should I live to be 100 the things I shall always remember is Pat Duffy putting his head into our tent at 4:00 a.m. and hollering "I want four volunteers for a fire, Morris, Clark and two others!" Also "Oley" stopping the crew in early September saying he had a letter from Major Kelley saying we were the best organized fire crew in the Region.

The next summer, 1937, I figured I was all set to try for a seasonal job with the Forest Service. I approached Charley Shaw, who was then Ranger at Tally Lake, for a job. I gave him my experience and references and he sent me to guard school. I passed with flying colors. Casey Streed was one of the instructors. One of the trainees asked Casey how you could keep warm at nights on a fire and Casey replied "Simple, there will be a blanket in your smoke chaser pack.

You stand up and wrap that around you, then you start shivering and if you shiver hard enough you can shiver yourself warm, then you lay down and go to sleep." I am not sure but I think someone leaked my true age to either Carter Helseth or Charley, anyway I didn't go to work that year as a regular. I wound up as a per diem guard in Whitefish. They had about 15 of us ex-CCC boys lined up and they would give us a call if either the State or the Forest needed any extra hands in an emergency. The work was quite intermittent but there were no restricts. If you were ready when they called, fine; if not, still OK. One nice thing about the set-up was that we usually were paid as faller or straw boss and that was 45 cents per hour against the usual 35 cents for a line worker.

During the summer of 1937 I caught one good project fire. It happened on June 4th and we were there 3 days until it hit control. The fire started on state land above Whitefish Lake. It happened in old tiehack slash where the brush had been all hand piled but not burned and it was about 10 years old. One of those old hand piles would start and they would burn hot enough to throw brands over what seemed like the whole north end of Flathead County.

We, myself, and five friends, were picked up about dark at the old Stillwater station when Morris Cusik came in from the fire and said, "I need all the help I can get." They assigned the six of us to a strawboss. This guy was a huge character wearing dashboard overalls. About 10:00 p.m. I had some questions for him and apparently he had got tired, as we never saw him again on that fire. At midnight they took us off the line and were feeding us from a pile of brown bread, tin willy and Moss Rose beans. They asked for some volunteers to go back to the station and go on a new sector at daylight where the fire had jumped Swift Creek. I volunteered the crew (I was now strawboss) as the station meant a good meal and a couple of hours sack time. We had a good supper, a 2-hour sleep, and a good breakfast and were on our way across Swift Creek at daybreak.

Everything went really smooth to about 10:00 a.m. At that time a brisk dry wind sprang up from the southwest. We had only been building line, not having enough men to drop off for patrol. That fire started spotting and spotting hot. The first spot I gave to two of my crew. The next spot 2 more went. The last fellow and I took the next one. Except for the one crewman who was with me I saw no more of that crew until after the wind shifted about 8:00 p.m. One of those crewmen was my brother. The fire burned out a camp that had been set up for use and they had a new one in the process outside the line when we walked out through the fire. The Forest Service had taken over the fire and they had installed an old cow camp cook as a slum burner.

They had 200 men waiting to be fed and to go on the line where our 25-man crew had been trying to stop it. These 200 men were hungry and they were making a lot of noise about it. Finally it got to that old cook and he stood up and hollered "Not a one of you sons of bitches gets a bite until every man who came out of that fire has been fed." They shut up. He had piled all his Kimmel stoves in a heap and was cooking in big bake tins on bars over fire pits. There was a hindquarter of beef and he just cut it off the bone, sliced it and fried it. We had steak, canned corn, mashed potatoes, gravy, with strawberries for dessert. The cook told me later that the 25-man crew ate the whole hindquarter of beef and he had to feed hot dogs and ham to the 200 going on the line. We had 3 big days on that fire and I drew strawboss wages for the whole time and the check came to \$14.00. One of my crew was a good worker but he never stopped

bitching. The state was doing the paying and their schedule was 45 cents per hour for strawing and fallers, 35 cents for a productive line worker and 25 cents if you didn't put out. This one fellow rated the bitcher on my crew at 25¢, and then he did howl.

Fires weren't coming too fast so I signed on with one of the Great Northern's steel gangs. After about 3 weeks I got tired of 10 hour days, 20 minute noons, damn poor grub and only clearing \$2.00 per day. The Norsky boss and I also had a disagreement and I told him where he could shove his railroad and where he could nail a cross tie after he got it shoved there. Then I grabbed the first empty tie truck heading back for the woods.

I wound up working for Wilford DeSeve in his camp. My job, for the most part, was staring at the south end of a northbound skidding team. Part of the time I would be swamping and the crew couldn't figure out my not tiring after swinging that 42 lb. ax all day. After 10 hours with that 8 lb. spike maul the ax seemed like a toy. The camp was strictly of the classic type. The bunkhouse was a long, low log building with one little sky lite window in the roof. Bunks were rough board frames filled with hay taken from the horses.

Sanitation was a board trough with a few tin washbasins; and the bull cook would bring in two buckets of warm water morning and evening. The toilet was a pole between two trees over a rather shallow pit. There was a Christmas tree frame over the stove where you could dry your socks at night and a deacon seat that ran down the middle. There was also a kerosene lamp in each end of the bunkhouse. The cookhouse was about the same except it did have a window, a big wood range in the cooking area, and plank tables covered with white oil cloth. The system was typical: you were assigned a seat and you sat nowhere else, you walked in when the gut hammer was rung, you sat down, you ate, you DID NOT talk, you finished, you got up, and you left.

Every evening someone was usually leaving camp with a rifle. A little questioning brought out the fact that a venison would knock quite a bit off your 35 cent a meal board charge.

The logging area was the Edna Creek burn of the year before and the ashes were still deep. Beings there were no bathing facilities in camp a few of us prudish ones used to catch the last tie truck after supper heading for Trego. We would get off at an old splash dam on Wolf Creek and wash the black off.

About a week before school started the boss told me one morning that he would have to lay me off. A couple of his old jacks had come back to sober up. I said OK, and then he said I do have a job if you want it, bucking ties out of the mill. I asked him what it paid and he said 60 cents per 100. They cut 600 ties a day and when a truck had trouble you were stacking them 8 feet high. I told him I thought I would go fishing. My check was good but I met some of the crew a few weeks later and they said on the next payday that all of the checks bounced.

The summer of 1938 was quiet as far as project fires for the local per diem crew. I managed to hustle a couple of jobs in the tie camps to bring in some beer money. During that period of time it was expected that a scaler would pay his wages every day with a long thumb on the "gyp stick." On any falling job you could expect to have a scaler in the woods weighing up each crew

daily. In the one camp it was the practice for each crew to write their gang number, an arrow for direction of fall, number of tie lengths and the date on the tree stump. Our scaler really had a big thumb and was also a little stupid. A couple of the crews decided to recapture some of our work. When we would head out in the morning the first thing we would do on the edge of the last day's work was to scalp the tops off a few stumps that had been tallied the day before. We would hide the disk cut off and write the dope for the present day's cut on the new stump. I guess we got over-eager as he caught on within a week. We did get a few days pay that was almost equal to our cut.

The summer of 1938 was also the one that I decided to get rich as a cedar pole maker. The job was up the North Fork of the Flathead and another typical logging camp. The outfit had one set price, 3/4 cents per running foot of pole made. This meant falling, bucking and peeling. Those poles all had to be real good or they were culled. Two 50-ft. poles, about 4 hours work, netted you and your partner a total of 75 cents. I decided to quit when it looked like I would have to buy a sack of 'BULL DURHAM' on the time pay plan.

During these years it seemed as though I was always chasing jobs and filling out applications. Our present personnel section heads would really go "gunny bag" if they were to view the hiring procedures of those days. The form was mimeographed and had about 25 questions on one side of a sheet and that was it. You did not fill it out except for the original copy. You could use anything you could write with to fill the blanks.

The Forest Service form asked how old you were. How much time you had spent in the woods. Could you handle stock? Could you cook for yourself? What hand tools could you use? etc. Down at the bottom they had one personal question—Are you married or single? You can bet that if you were married you didn't get the job. This was because you were expected to stay in the brush all summer and most married men seemed to get a yearning for Mama about the middle of August. By contrast the Park Service also had a form (printed) still just one side and fill out one copy. Their questions were—Are you married? How many children? Are you on relief? What relief organization? Are you a veteran? and at the bottom of the page there was one very short line following the questions: Do you know anything about the work you are applying for?

The employment contract for Temps was about the same caliber. It was mimeographed on both sides. Mainly it had your name and mailing address, the terms of employment, to wit: If you quit or were discharged for cause your pay stopped and your travel was without benefit of Government food or transportation. You also pledged to take care of all government equipment and stay with a fire until it was put out or you were properly relieved. They also asked whom to notify in case of serious accident. Jelmer Rainey wrote "The undertaker."

In May of 1939 I received a note from Carter Helseth stating that I had been selected for a position as LOOK-OUT, FIREMAN on the Big Prairie Ranger District. The salary would be at the rate of \$1200.00 per annum. Would I please reply if I desired to accept. There were other things not explained in the note. One was that I would pay out \$18.00 per month for board and \$5.00 per month for quarters. This was a flat rate whether you were at headquarters or eating bear grass roots and sleeping on a hillside by a burning snag. Take home amounted to \$77.00 per

month. Even in those days \$200.00 was not a hell of a lot to get one through the winter. Maybe that was the reason for the question, "Are you married or single?" Many of the crew used to bitch, saying the Forest Service at least fed its mules during the winter. There were some fringe benefits. One was that if a seasonal employee wanted to use a Forest Service cabin as headquarters for a winter trapping operation he would usually be given permission. The trapper was expected to provision the place from his own funds before the snow hit. He was also expected to leave the place cleaner and in better shape than when he found it and the woodpile should be a little bigger when he left. The Service would also act as a clearinghouse for other Government agencies that were trying to find men for short-term employment. Carter Helseth placed Steve Wilkie and me with the USGS the fall of 1941. Our boss was Arthur Johnson, one of the finest cartographers I ever knew. We mapped dam sites on the lower Flathead from Polson to the old remount ferry site. The crew was broken up when Steve received his "Greetings."

The problem of eating, living and working were the interesting part of this era. To place things in perspective one must remember there were no, or practically no, pre-packaged foods. Aluminum foil, plastics, dehydrated, and freeze-dried were not yet words in the dictionary. The Forest Service then, like now, was always looking for the low bid and whenever you hired one man you could be sure that you turned down from four to ten men that wanted the job real bad. If an employee didn't pan out he would be summarily separated and replaced by someone who would. In all truth it wasn't unusual for a 'crew' to head down the road if they didn't like the way things were being handled.

The standard workweek was 44 hours, five eight-hour days plus Saturday morning. Safety standards were in force but not if they interfered with production. Those 3 seasons in Big Prairie I worked less than ten days on a crew having more than two men. The first summer I spent 6 weeks without seeing another human being. Crews were expected to hit the different camps or cabins on the day the ranger had scheduled. This sometimes led to 16-hour days when there were a lot of logs in the trail or the telephone line had a lot of breaks. One trail job was particularly unique. The trail up Little Salmon to Lion and Smith Creek passes. The main camp for our two-man trail crew was about 22 miles up the Little Salmon where the phone line and trail went up to Point 56 Look Out. The ranger, Bill Gaffney, did not believe in trail crewmen having horses as they were expected to "be in condition" for smokechasing when the season got bad. The crew would roll some grub in their sleeping bags, tie on a can for coffee, a frying pan and a couple of pie tin plates, one man carrying the axe and the other the jungle harp and away we would go for the upper reaches of the Little Salmon. No matter how you did it, it would be four days before you would be back to the comparative luxury of your tent and Kimmel stove at the trail camp. You were also completely out of communication for the entire period. There was a camping spot of sorts where [?] and Smith Creek formed the Little Salmon. I think the distance was about 13 miles and you were expected to make there the first day. There was some really massive spruce in that drainage. We cut several that were over 4 ft. through and across the trail. That really speeds up the mile per day production.

My first summer I worked with John French, now an attorney in Ronan. We started from Spotted Bear about 1:00 p.m. and made Meadow Creek cabin by supper. The next day we made Salmon Forks. From there we headed for Tango Cabin. Tango was a long 13 miles away and the cabin was supposed to be stocked from the winter game count so we didn't have to cut out ahead of a

pack string. Just cut out the trail and hang the telephone line. We cut out the trail but lacked 4 miles of having the line all up that first day. We also picked up a grizzly cub for company. When I first saw him he was on a back-slope of the trail and about 20 feet in front of us. My six-shooter sort of jumped into my hand and I said 'Johnny, watch out for mama.' Mama never showed up and the cub followed us to Tango Cabin. At that time (1939) the elk population was at its peak. At Big Slide we wandered into a herd of elk. One calf came up and sniffed the two of us; we were probably gamy by then.

One must remember that everything we ate came in by way of a long day's truck haul to Spotted Bear and then a minimum of two days by pack mule to wherever we were working. Fresh bread, meat, and vegetables were not in the picture for a trail crew. Breakfast was invariably hotcakes with either canned ham or bacon, lunch would be a small can of fruit and sandwiches made from baking powder biscuits; the lunch pail was a sugar sack tied to the back of the belt. Supper was the big meal: baking powder biscuits, (enough for next days lunch), canned ham, or tin willy, or canned stew, spuds and a canned vegetable followed by canned fruit. This meal regimen seldom varied. We could have baked bread on week ends but the yeast that was furnished would not work (remember the low bid). We usually saved the mouse-chewed bacon to toss into the beans in case we ran out of rations.

After getting our "talking wire" patched into Tango Cabin, Johnny and I started to work trail and line up to Holland Peak Look Out. This had been the main trail for years from the Swan into Big Prairie. And it wasn't much of a trail. They had finished the Pendent Creek Trail the previous fall. This was a much shorter trail with an easier grade and went by Upper Holland Lake. After we finished pulling the telephone lines out of the snow banks to see if they were in one piece we started up Big Salmon for the Pendent trail. Some of those spruce stands were really falling apart. In one place we had ten big ones in less than 100 yards. Late in the afternoon Johnny stopped sawing and said "Bert, am I riding this saw?" I told him he had but I was scared to say anything because I was sure I might have been. Anyway we headed for camp a little after five that day. Our last day at Tango we went all the way to Upper Holland Lake and back. This was about the 10th of July and the days were long. We got to camp at dark having left there a little after six in the morning. We had to hike eight miles to start work. When we hit the cabin John walked to the phone and called the Ranger and said "Bill we just got in. How many more days like this before I'm promoted to alternate?" I am sure he got Gaffney out of bed to answer that phone.

When anyone had any complaints about the long hours or work drudgery, someone always came up with a stock answer: "You can rest when you get on the lookout." That resting on a lookout was a crock in that period. You were not expected to. You had to maintain at least a two weeks' supply of wood, a 3 days' supply of water, keep your quarters and yourself clean and often, depending on the point, the lookout would have a patrol to make following every lightning storm. The one on Garnet Peak was six miles long and rough. That amounted to a 12 mile round trip carrying a smokechaser pack, a portable phone, and enough water to get you by for 24 hours. Maintaining that 3-day water supply was also labor as a lot of the water trails involved as much as 4000 feet in elevation as well as the rather short horizontal distance. Frank Bailey used to go from the top of Sentinel to the Southfork River for his water and often he would do it before breakfast. He must have got up early.

I have tried to show the work conditions, the food, and the wages, but this brings up an interesting corollary. There were men who had been returning to these jobs year after year after year. Many of these men must have kept returning because they liked the life. I forget the man's name but I understood that he sat on Holland Peak for a total of 17 summers. Jelmer Rainey must have had close to that time on Crimson. Everret Sommers and his brother were both close to 10 years when I knew them. Norm of Norm's News in Kalispell also put in quite a few seasons.

The attraction for the jobs could not have been money, glory or the chance of promotion. No promotions were available. The one thing that sticks in my mind was the independence and freedom that one had. Almost 75 percent of a summer would be spent alone. When you were working with another man you still had no interference, no supervision, and damned little direction. This, plus the fact that regardless of how tough or easy it might be, you knew that tomorrow was going to be different and something new. This was an ERA for many of us and no one can take it away no matter how much the management may change.

There are a few stories about some of these 'characters.' Jelmer Rainey used a lot of snoose. During August of '39 he ran out. To him there were just two alternatives: No. 1, he could walk out and get more (quit). No. 2, the Forest Service could see that he got another roll. Dick Johnson came in to the Prairie in the Travel-afire to take out Lee Clark with a case of Spotted Fever. He took along a roll of snoose when he headed for Missoula, approaching Crimson from the east. There was one real bad down draft on that side and they just about didn't make it over. They must have dumped the snoose to lighten the load as the snoose hit the cliff. That rock face is about 1500 feet vertical. This didn't bother Jelmer; he crawled around and down and picked it up, damaged though the cans were. He came up with eight of the original ten boxes of the snuff.

In 1940 Ev Sommers on Lena was given a horse so he could do a better job of smokechasing. Ev didn't like horses, preferred walking, so he left the pasture fence down but the horse wouldn't leave. Ev then hit on the idea that if the saddle was unusable he couldn't use the horse so he threw the saddle out on the ground hoping the porkys would eat up the cinch. They didn't even look at it so Ev was considered mounted for the summer.

While Harry Lanagan was cutting out trail by himself, he was standing on a log axing it out between his feet. The ax glanced and he had one awful cut in his right foot. He had to ford and swim the Southfork at Salmon Forks cabin to get to a phone to report. The ranger made arrangements for him to be picked up and transported by horse to Holbrook the next day so he could be flown to medical attention. Harry really argued with the ranger because his brother Jim was coming in from working trails pretty quick and he could sew up the cut with his sewing kit and when he went back to the lookout it would have plenty of time to heal. Good thing he went out as they had to connect two tendons.

During 1938 one of the lookouts was sent on his point early because of fire danger. Quite often you wound up cutting these spur trails out ahead of the packstring carrying your summer's supplies. This fellow didn't have a string behind him, all he did was patch his telephone line and get up there. Well the pack strings were real busy elsewhere; he had quite a few beans, rice, corn meal, flour, sugar and salt, but nothing in the way of meat. After a week this got old so he called

up and asked when the string was coming? They still didn't know so he shot a kid goat. He said it was real good eating and he had stretched and cured the hide. It was sure a beautiful thing.

One other item that was standard in the ration was "Fay Bantos" corned beef. This was packed in a yellow tin shaped like a pyramid with the top chopped off. I don't know what Argentina put in those cans but it was generally left to be used only as a last resort. After WWII was cleaning the warehouse at Coram. In the basement must have been at least a good-sized pick-up load of this stuff. The ranger told me to haul it to the dump. Being I had a dog, I high graded a can or two to try out on him. The danged dog wouldn't eat it either. We also used to get some stuff in one pound cans that had the word "COFFEE" stamped on it with a rubber stamp in big purple letters. You could not have told the contents without the stamp. Steve Wilkie made the coffee one evening when we were working together, it took him over 45 minutes and he watched like a hawk so the stuff did not boil, just simmered. It was probably as good a cup of coffee as I have ever drunk. That stuff was just too sophisticated for us "Bileing" types of cooks.

The year 1939 was about the first year that anything was tried in the field of smokejumping. Part of this nucleus crew was stationed at Big Prairie. Dick Lynch is one of the individuals who sticks out in my memory. I understand he died of cancer while still quite young. Dick had spent the day haying, without a shirt, and had acquired one heluva sunburn. The next day a WO delegation came in and wanted a smokejumping demonstration. The crew obliged but Dick grabbed a chute and forgot to fully adjust the harness. This is before the day of static lines. He made a free fall for a ways then pulled the ripcord. That harness snapped against him when the chute popped. You could see every mark of the harness above his waist that night. Carl Nussbacker (changed his name in WWII) told me that during those ripcord days he missed the ripcord and pulled all the buttons off his canvas jumper before he reached the ripcord.

In 1946 I was running a small work crew at Coram. This crew all consisted of returning vets and not fully responsible. One of them was part Indian and his name was Clark. He told me, and the ranger vouched, that he had been part of the 1939 and 1940 jumper nucleus. I had a standard practice that if I wanted my crew on Monday I would have to start late Sunday afternoon and hit all the bars in Whitefish and Kalispell and before I had completed the rounds I would have the crew gathered and would then haul them to Coram. This one time I found Clark in the Pine Grove or Stockholm and he was a real mess. On the way to the station I got to asking what had happened. He said "Well, me and this big guy started arm wrestling, then we got more serious, we wound up on the floor. I was doing fine until he hit me on the head with the open end of a spittoon." He not only looked it but smelled like it.

I was interested in photography and purchased a Kodak 35mm in 1940. By today's standards it was rather crude but I did get a lot of wonderful pictures with it. Most notable are the sunsets and mountain goats. I have one series where we chased a yearling goat into the Little Salmon and then captured him. Harry Lanagan and I carried him to Salmon Forks Cabin on a stretcher made from one of Ranger Anderson's mantas. Don't pack a goat on a stretcher unless you can keep the rear end higher than the head. That goat was vicious and knew what his horns were for. They tried to get him to the Crazy Mountains for a goat plant but he died from not eating before plane connections could be made.

On the Little Salmon I got a picture of a huge grizzly. He was on an old slide about 200 yards above our camp and he can still be made out in the negative of the 35mm black and white. I have over a hundred of these negatives that I have never had printed.

Garnet and Mud Lake Look Outs were the subjects of quite a few color slides. It was a real shock when I flew big Prairie in 1963 to see the cover changes on much of the area. There was a 5-acre view clearing around Mud Lake and when I sat there I could almost reach to the tops of the trees. The Necklace Lakes had been surrounded by large mountain meadows. Twenty-four years later the area was well stocked with timber. An uneducated guess was that recreational stock had overgrazed the area allowing the timber to move in.

There were a couple of seasons at Coram that were quite different. The fall of '46 I got a chance to work with John Pike cruising the Hungry Horse flowage area. That was an interesting job and John Pike was a real good guy to work for. When he took over the project the first thing he did was throw out all the data requirements except for volume and species, this speeded us up a lot. The fall of '47 I became a scaler at Pinnacle for Rocky Mountain Lumber Company. Morris Raskin who owned the set-up tried to hire me. He offered \$100.00 per week and 10 percent of the action. He said "Any week the 10 percent is less than your wages I'll expect you to quit." I had a wedding date set and my bride and I decided I should return to school. Years later when U.S. Industries bought Rocky Mountain, the 10 percent would have been \$400,000.00. The summer of '48 my wife and I spent in the checking station a mile out of Martin City. That summer there was a man shot within 50 feet of my wife in Martin City. The Flatheads moved enmasse into the huckleberry patch south of our cabin. One night they all got drunk and were chanting war songs. Remembering my encounter in Plains I laid the six-shooter on an apple box by the bed and locked the doors. I told her that if one of them came around that night he would be there in the morning.

I spent most of the summer of '47 trying to keep the telephone line through the clearing operations patched together. Quite a few farmers decided to come up for the big money when the haying was over. That telephone line was really an attraction for those fellers in dashboard overalls. Saw one crew walk up to a big larch with an old Mall-6. They started in on one side and went straight through to the other, no under-cut. I was running when it started to topple. We had 5 fires break out from a dragging brake shoe on a Great Northern freight the day that 13 men were burned up in Mann Gulch on the Helena. One of the jumpers was Hellman. His dad, Jim, worked at Coram and received word about the time we got our fire calls. Jim insisted on working until we had control. The Ranger, Bert Beally, almost had to make him go home to his wife.

Other real sad parts of my career were when Fred Metcalf took a disability retirement. I was sure leaning on him and he had given me a lot of good training in my early years. The other major hurt was when Oliver (Slim) Meyers died of a heart attack while setting up a winter cruise camp in Hay Creek on the Glacier View District. I had worked under Slim for several seasons and his wife and mine were close friends. By a quirk he was then working for me. I never met a person with a better sense of humor and who could get more work real easy out of any crew assigned him.

One thing I'll always remember is one day during the winter of '54 and '55 I went to check on a cruising crew working out of Ninko Cabin on the north end of Glacier View. It was snowshoes every day and the thermometer had been dodging around 38 below. The crew was sleeping in tents. This day one of the young foresters looked at me and said, "Bert, you old bastard, now I want you to tell me how tough you had it in the old days." Hell, I was only 33 then.

**THEY PIONEERED THE BITTERROOTS
(EARLY DAYS ON ELK SUMMIT AND THE LOCHSA)
By Carl A. Weholt as recounted by Loyd Rupe**

In 1911, five men brought a bit of civilization to the Elk Summit and Hoodoo Lake region in the Bitterroots. They had been preceded by a few trappers and prospectors, but the only signs of their having been there were a few blazes on trees, marking the way they had traveled.

Major Fenn, Supervisor of the Selway Forest, assigned Adolph Weholt and his crew consisting of Loyd Rupe, Sam Weholt, Lou Lisne, and George Eckel, all of Harpster, to build a cabin and open trails in the Elk Summit area. Hoodoo Lake was a black gem, nestled in the heart of a miniature meadow, rimmed about with miniature lodgepole pine. The lake which was teeming with small black trout, drained to the north, though it could easily have drained from the south through a low saddle.

Grass grew belly deep to a tall bronco. Deer were fat and plentiful. Moose fed on the tangled mass of vegetation on the bottom of the lake. To the south, Diablo peak stood sentinel over the primitive area, while kid goats romped over its precipitous face, and billies and nannies lay unconcerned on ledges.

There were grizzlies, too. Unaccustomed to humans, and curious, they reared on their hind legs, and with their weak eyes got as good a look as possible at the intruders they were seeing for the first time. On returning from a fishing trip on East Moose, Sam and Loyd met a grizzly in the game trail. It stood on its hind legs for some time, while the boys fingered their Colt 45's determined to make a good account of themselves in case the old boy was hungry. Its curiosity satisfied, it moved off the path and allowed the fishermen to proceed.

The building of the Elk Summit cabin was accomplished in a rather primitive manner. Logs were snaked in by lariat ropes tied to saddle horns. The timbers were then hewed to shape and lifted into place. Boards for flooring were whipsawed. To accomplish this feat, a platform was built several feet off the ground to hold the log that was to be sawed. The man who handled the top end of the 8-foot saw had the best of the deal. The tall man on the ground got full benefit of the sawdust. It filled his eyes, plugged his ears, plastered his hair, ran down his neck, and filled his boots. The crew managed to get out four or five boards a day. By fall the cabin was laid up and the cracks were chinked with mud and moss.

The Blodgett Pass trail was another project assignment. It extended from Elk Summit, over the Bitterroots to Hamilton, Montana. When Loyd Rupe packed supplies over the trail, he found it necessary to reduce his packs to 35 pounds to keep the horses from tipping over backwards, as they clawed their way up the rock bluffs. The bleached bones of rolled animals could be seen far below—bleak evidence that an unfortunate hunter or trapper had met with disaster.

On the Montana side of the pass, Loyd felt that he had entered Paradise. Broad valleys, green pastures, and civilization stretched before him. His enthusiasm was dampened somewhat when a man he met on the road told him that ticks were numerous in the valley. Loyd charted a course right down the middle of the road thereafter.

Weholt instructed Loyd to hire three men in Hamilton to improve the Blodgett Pass trail. He picked up a husky doublejack man named Gus, an Italian, to turn steel, and a powder man whom the crew dubbed Armstrong. In addition to the food supplies, Loyd loaded his string with dynamite, caps, steel, and fuse to use on the trail project. At the end of the season, the trail was steep and hazardous. On the numerous switchbacks the horse's heads would protrude into space as they made the turns.

It was planned to build a trail around the sound end of Big Sand Lake, but in laying out the route, Loyd got into quicksand. Had it not been for a lot of washed in poles, he could easily have lost his horses.

A heavy snowstorm hit early in September. On the following Sunday three of the men went to Diablo Peak to hunt goats. Adolph and Sam each got trophies, "so tough you couldn't stick a fork in the soup." Loyd got a two-year-old billy that was pretty good eating. The trip had been an arduous one and Loyd was so "done in" that he lay down to sleep alongside the camp fire and burned the stock off his rifle.

After the snow hit, Major Fenn dispatched a man from Kooskia to tell the men to come out. It had been a good summer, and an eventful one. The memory of wild game, fool hens, grouse, mosquitoes, blowflies, the sour dough jug that exploded in the middle of a pack, wonderful scenery, and comradeship, stuck with the men the rest of their lives. Perhaps the thing they remembered best was the unbelievable supply of little black trout in Hoodoo. Three men would go out on the lake with a raft. Two men would fish while a third was kept busy taking the fish off the hooks and dropping them in a tub.

It took rugged men to challenge the many traps that Nature had set for those who pioneered its remote uncharted areas. Major Fenn was one such pioneer. He was respected by the personnel, and was knowledgeable of the problems of the forest. The supervisor's office was two small rooms on the second floor of a brick building in Kooskia. His office force consisted of an administrative assistant and an office gal. Adolph Weholt came in from the backcountry to assist with reports and mapping during the winter.

Number One was a ranger station 15 miles up the Middle Fork of the Clearwater. The semblance of a road had been scratched out that far. From #1, crude trails led to some of the most accessible backcountry.

Weholt had chosen his crew from husky mountain kids from 18 to 20 years of age. The wages were \$75 per month. The workers furnished their own riding horses, and boarded themselves. After a tryout in the corral full of half wild horses, Loyd Rupe was judged the most adept at handling stock and throwing the diamond hitch, so he was chosen as the official packer.

The Lochsa was still swollen from the spring runoff when the crew reached the forks of the Selway and Lochsa at Lowell. Lou Lisne, Sam Weholt, George Eckel, and Adolph Weholt crossed without incident. The pack string also swam across nicely. Loyd, however, was just breaking in a colt. He finally spurred the critter into the water. Three times the colt and Loyd

went under. Loyd said later, "I choked that saddle horn till it turned black." He finally made it across, white wooly chaps and all.

In 1909, Adolph Weholt and his crew built a trail from Selway Falls to Moose Creek. When they got to the foot of Goat Mountain, cliffs blocked their path, so they went around the mountain and came back to the river. By following the trail, it took a full day to advance 4 miles up river.

It took seven days to make the trip from #1 to Elk Summit. When they reached Moose Creek they had to swim the stock across the rushing ice-cold stream. When they forded East Moose, the salmon were so thick they splashed around the horses legs and bellies. Up Moose Creek they followed blazes left by trappers. Up to 6 feet of snow lay in sheltered spots near where they were to build the Elk Summit cabin.



TREE PLANTING PROJECTS ON THE ST. JOE

By Joe Donally

(Editor's Note: This manuscript was submitted to us by Forest Service retiree Ray L. Hilding, for Lloyd Donally who is now deceased. Hilding writes, "Lloyd probably supervised more planting projects than anyone else in the Northern Region.")

At the age of 29, I decided I wanted to work for the Forest Service, and applied for employment on the St. Joe National Forest. On May 26, 1927, I received notice to report for work on a tree planting project.

Another fellow and I boarded a C.M. St. P. & P. Ry. passenger train at Superior, Montana, destination Herrick, Idaho. On May 28, 1927, we were assigned work, planting trees, mostly white pine, on the Middle Fork of Big Creek. The job location was 15 miles by trail from Herrick. Our salary was \$0.53-1/8 per hour less \$0.40 per meal. All supplies, camp equipment, and seedlings were brought in by mules. Quarters for the men were in brown-colored army pyramid tents; 6 to 8 men to a tent. Bunks were made by using two 6-inch poles or split cedar placed on the ground about 30 inches apart and filled with straw. Blankets and a tarp were furnished—no pillows or hand towels those days. The work was hard; the food delicious with all you wanted to eat. On June 20 the spring tree planting was finished and I was assigned to district work.

(In the fall of 1926 an epidemic of spinal meningitis had hit the camp on Big Creek. Two men died. Then the men slept on the ground with whatever they could find to put under them - boughs, ferns, grass, etc. It was decided this was not good, health wise, and in 1927 bunks were made as previously described.)

On September 27, 1927, I was assigned to help set up camp on Slate Creek, 15 miles from Avery, for the fall tree planting of white and yellow pine. The planting lasted until October 21 when winter weather set in. My job at this camp was supplying, by mule pack, seedling trees and water to the crews. There were no trails in the planting area and in some places there were so many windfalls and such thick brush the mule would get tangled up and fall down with his legs up in the air. The crews were chiefly men hired out of Spokane. It seemed a crew would be working, another crew coming, and still yet another one leaving, most of the time. The men were offered \$.25, a day bonus, plus board and railroad fare, if they would stay until the job was completed. Not many stayed. The disadvantage of planting in the fall is that so much time is lost due to rain. I remember that fall, during the latter part of September and the first part of October, it rained and snowed for ten days straight. Free board was declared in order to hold the crew so they would finish the job.

On May 17, 1928, I arrived at the tree planting camp on the North Fork of the St. Joe River above Avery on Ramsey Creek. We started planting on the 18th and by the 30th we had to give up as the weather was so hot and dry that when a hole was dug the dust would fly up in your face. When this happens it is too dry for little trees to grow. My salary on this job was \$4.50 per 8-hour day less \$1.20 per day for board.

I wasn't assigned to tree planting again until April 13, 1930, on the North Fork of the St. Joe River, north of Railroad Creek. I was on this job until May 5th when I was called for district work.

On September 27, 1930, I had a 14-man planting crew on Slate Creek. My salary was \$110.00 per month and board. The crew was chiefly Forest Service men with a few locally hired men.

This job closed down when winter weather set in on October 17.

On April 27, 1931, we had a 40-man planting crew on the North Fork of the St. Joe River on Rougin Creek. The camp closed May 15.

On September 17, 1931, a 40-man planting crew worked on Slate Creek near Slate Creek Ranger Station. My salary rate was \$125.00 per month including board. Crews were comprised of Forest Service employees and locals. Men were arriving as some were leaving. Tree planting is rough, hard work; climbing steep hills over windfalls and through thick brush. Very little level ground is involved. Men were expected to plant 1,200 trees per 8-hour day. I believe I sent more men down the road talking to themselves who were unable to meet this quota than on any Forest Service job I was ever on. Anyone who ever worked under my supervision on tree planting never forgot how I routed them over the hills.

From April 25, 1932, to May 26, 1932, a 48-man planting crew worked on the East Fork of Big Creek. Crews were made up of Forest Service employees and locals. Bunks at this time were made from split dead cedar and a tick filled with straw for a mattress.

The next planting project, from May 5, 1933, to June 4, 1933, utilized a 50-man planting crew near Early Creek on the Middle Fork of Big Creek. Salary rates were going up. On this job I received \$155.00 per month gross.

From September 12, 1933, to November 10, 1933, I had a 65-man camp planting trees near Flume Creek on Slate Creek. Here we had four crews requiring one foreman for each. This was during the depression days and the men were paid National Relief Association (NRA) wages.

Men stayed on the job as jobs were scarce.

From April 10, 1934, to May 26, 1934, again I was assigned a 60-man planting camp near Horseshoe Creek on Slate Creek. Here again the men stayed on the job. These men were from all walks of life: railroad men, lumbermen, farmers, etc., going to work wherever they could get a chance. Planting camps were becoming more modern. Folding canvas cots with a pad 4" thick for a mattress were now regular camp equipment. Kapoks with 2 blankets were now issued instead of just blankets.

From April 1, 1935, to June 4, 1935, we had a crew of five foremen and 65 CCC boys planting trees on Avery Creek and North Fork of the St. Joe River about 4 miles above Avery. The average number of trees planted per day dropped considerably when CCC crews were used. The daily average planting was only 400 to 600 trees per man.

Then on October 11, 1935, there was a 75-man Emergency Relief Association (ERA) camp at Collins, Idaho. Our work was hazard reduction and tree planting. Crews were worked planting trees in the fall of 1935 and the spring of 1936. My work ended here the 5th of May 1936.

From May 10, 1936 to June 15, 1936, we had a Forest Service planting camp on the head of Setzer Creek, and the crew of 60 was all CCC boys. To this day I have never seen boys who could stow away food as they did. At mealtime everything was cleaned up. The cook couldn't seem to put out enough food. One morning at breakfast a boy ate 32 hotcakes! Another ate 28. These hotcakes were ordinary size, 6" to 7" in diameter. This is not an exaggeration—I was there. It apparently did not bother them as they immediately went to work. After being there about two weeks these same boys couldn't eat over 6 hotcakes and then they wondered how they had gotten away with 32. Sometimes some of these boys would lay down on the job and would not plant correctly. I would say to them, "You either keep up your end of the work, plant the tree correctly, or go back to the main CCC camp." With such good food for an incentive, they would pitch in and do their part rather than go back to the main CCC camp.

Again from October 15, 1936, to June 13, 1937, it was a 90-man Forest Service ERA camp at Collins. As in 1935 and 1936, these men were from almost every profession and/or vocation. They were not on relief and allowed to work a limited number of hours a month. Many men with very good past experience worked at whatever they were called to do. There were cooks, carpenters, mechanics, plumbers, truck drivers, and many more. Some of these men were used planting trees in the fall of 1935.

In the spring of 1936 all ERA crews and CCC boys from Clarkia were put to work planting trees on ground that had been prepared and burned-over during the winter and early spring. These plantations were at Collins, on Nat Brown Creek, and southwest of Bovill. Ray Fitting won a box of cigars from Elers Koch on a wager that when the first examination of these plantations was made they would show 98 percent survival—and they did:

From May 1, 1940, to June 10, 1940, I was with a 10-man CCC crew. We planted trees on Beaver Creek on the Red Ives District. This crew was the poorest tree planting crew I have ever supervised. For some reason they were not interested in what they were doing and about 60 percent of the trees were not planted correctly.

Next, from October 1, 1940, to November 30, 1940, it was three 10-man crews of CCC boys, planting trees on Marble Creek. And again this same set-up in this area the spring of 1941, April 2 through May 31.

From April 10, 1942, to May 30, 1942: two 12-man CCC crews planting trees on Charlie Creek north of Baldy Mountain. These crews were fairly good tree planters, but of all the CCC boys I worked with, these possessed a real streak of orneriness. They would steal, lie, were destructive, and out for a fight. Later I learned some of them were former jailbirds from back east.

I was with a small Forest Service crew planting trees on Marble Creek near the mouth of Daveggio Creek from April 20, 1944, until May 8, 1944. From May 1, 1948 to May 20, 1948, I

had a Forest crew planting trees at St. Joe City near Bond Creek. I was also on a few replanting jobs on Willow Creek, Ramskill Creek, and Bechtel Creek.

Today, Dent, Ames, and Early Creek Plantations, near Bronson Meadows on the Middle Fork of Big Creek, and Mowat Creek Plantation on the East Fork of Big Creek, are recognized as some of the finest white pine stands on the Forest.

FIRST YEAR IN THE FOREST SERVICE

By Carl G. Krueger

It so happened that most of my 38 years in the Forest Service were in R-2 and R-8, but my first year was in R-1, so I'll write a little about that year. The job was somewhat different than most, which might make this a little more interesting.

I was graduating from the U. of Minnesota in Forestry in the spring of 1927, but had decided to work a year before taking the Junior Forester exam. A classmate, C. E. Knudson was doing the same. He had worked in various capacities for the Office of Planting, in D-1, under Dave Olson, then Chief of Planting. Through Knute I got a job on a planting survey party for that summer. We went west from St. Paul in mid-June, and reported to Dave Olson, in Missoula.

A few odd jobs for a day or two here, then on to the Savenac Nursery, at Haugan, Montana. This was the tree nursery for all of District (now Region) One, and was a sizeable operation. Except for a few locals, all the crew and transients like us slept in bunk houses and ate at the Forest Service mess. It was a good one too, in fact I never saw a bad one, though some were better than others. The work crew for the ranger district was located here too. The District ranger was Frank Hawn, a veteran of the 1910 fires.

Here again we only worked for a few days, as the survey party was really assembling on the Kaniksu National Forest in Idaho. Part of the time at Haugan was spent in getting camp gear together and shipping it to Priest River. Knute and I went by train to Priest River, via Spokane, then Forest Service truck to the Benton Ranger Station which was located where the Priest River Experimental Forest headquarters is now. That entire set-up is now gone, and it is hard to find where the old ranger station even was, but I did locate the site once. Charles Tracy was the District Ranger.

We were a planting survey party. Experience had shown that areas burned over once nearly always reproduced satisfactorily naturally, but those burned a second time didn't. The year 1926 had been a bad fire year on the Kaniksu, and a number of areas had burned the second time. We were to map these areas and recommend the species to be planted. We stripped the burns on compass lines, working in two-man parties, a compass man and a mapper. We got all distances by chaining, and took slope measurements with Abney levels, so the maps we made were accurate, and I believe were later incorporated into the USGS maps.

Our total party consisted of two mapping crews, Knute and myself, I being the compass man.

The other party was Charles (Chuck) Hagemeyer, a forestry student from the U. of Washington as mapper and Jim Rickey, the compass man. Chuck was from Tacoma and Rickey from Missoula. We had a cook too.

The first one was no good and only lasted a couple of days, but the second one, Jim Donner from Missoula, was a good one and was with us all summer. At the Benton Ranger Station we used their mess facilities, but all the rest of the season was a tent camp proposition. Usually we just set up a tent and fly for the kitchen and dining area, and slept under the stars.

At that time the only three species of trees being produced and planted were western white pine, western yellow pine and Engelmann spruce. So on the maps we designated western yellow pine for the warm, dry sites; spruce for the wetter areas and white pine for north and east slopes and deeper spoiled areas on all exposures. In practice this worked out well, except for the yellow pine, where there were many poor plantations. The failures were more due to wrong seed source than to poor site selection. The spruce and white pine, especially the white pine, did very well until blister rust came along later.

Our big boss, Dave Olson, visited us at Benton and elsewhere. At the Benton visit, Dave was accompanied by an engineer, Jim Yule, who checked us out on our surveying. Another visitor to the Experimental Forest was Robert (Bob) Marshall, who later became the noted Wilderness devotee. In later years I was with Bob a number of times.

After about ten days at Benton we went by truck to the Forks of Granite, as it was then known. This was above Nordman, at the end of the road, such as it was. There was a guard (smoke chaser) cabin here, and also a road construction camp. A Forest Service road crew, Bert Mains, was extending the road on up to what is now the Roosevelt Grove of Ancient Cedars. This was also the headquarters for a couple of pack strings, so it was a busy place. The packers were Smith, George I believe, and I think the second was Johnny Marquette. Here I met I. V. Anderson from the Kaniksu Supervisor's office, and District Ranger Clarence Sutliff, who was at the Bismark Station near Nordman. Both are still alive, but retired.

At the Forks of Granite I got kicked by a mule, appropriately called Dempsey. No harm done. Another mule somehow got turned around in his (or her) stall, and broke its neck. We also had to perform an operation. Richey had developed a felon on his left thumb; it had swollen until it was about as big as a lemon, and had a kind of greenish yellow color. Richey's dad was a doctor in Missoula, and had just happened to come over to see Jim at that time, but did not have his kit with him. So he honed a pocketknife to a fine edge, we stretched Jim out on the bridge across the creek, which was just the right height, held him down, and his dad lanced the finger. It looked as if a cupful of pus came out, but that did the job. No after effects.

From Forks of Granite we moved by pack string to Zero Creek, then Gold Creek, then to Hughes Meadows and finally to the Navigation Station on Upper Priest Lake. We mapped a number of areas from each camp. We were, of course, subject to fire call and fully expected to be on fire duty before the summer was over. It was a wet year though, and the only fire we were sent to had been rained out by the time we got to it. I was introduced to huckleberries that summer, and have liked them ever since. We did not see much wildlife but the fishing was good. There were supposed to be woodland caribou in the Hughes Meadows area, but we didn't see any. We did see a few deer, black bear, but no elk or moose.

At Navigation we were loaded into outboard motor boats, and went to the Beaver Creek Ranger Station, through the Thorofare. Upper Priest Lake was beautiful then, as now. The Thorofare channel had not then been cleared of logs. The water was low as this was mid-August, and we cut off several shear pins on the way through. At Beaver Creek Station I met District Ranger Hugh Redding, who I was to see many times later, in the South. He was a real character.

At Beaver Creek all our stuff was loaded on a small barge and we went to Coolin, making a number of stops at various landings and logging camps along the way. We were on the lake all day, but it was nice, both the day and ride. From Coolin we went to Priest River by truck, then on to the St. Joe NF by train. We unloaded and camped at Roland, at the west end of the Taft tunnel, on the Milwaukee RR. We surveyed two or three areas in this vicinity. One Sunday we hiked through the tunnel to the Montana side. On the way back we met a train and had to get into one of the escape nooks built for that purpose. That train sure made a racket as it went by about six feet from us.

From Roland we went on to Haugan, and the party broke up. Richey and Donner went back to Missoula, and Knute went back to the Kaniksu to get ready for fall planting. Dave sent Hagemeyer and me to Burnt Cabin Creek on the Coeur d'Alene to gather white pine cones for seed in the area where they were logging. Again we went by train, going to the camp from Garwood on the Ohio Match Co. logging railroad. We went to the camp at Bottom Creek. The Ohio camp was the first one I had been in Idaho, though I had been in camps in Minnesota. Quite a contrast. It was a tent camp; all equipment was first class and the food excellent. Cone gathering was not good, they scattered so when the trees hit the ground that they were hard to find, so after about a week Dave took us back to Haugan, this time by car. We went by the road up Wolfledge, not Cedar Creek as now. At the Fourth of July Summit there was a resort of sorts, and a black bear was chained up. It would drink any given quantity of pop right out of the bottle. In the mining area we saw several places where the families had their outdoor toilets sitting on logs right over the stream. Flush toilets of sorts. We went over the divide at Mullan Pass, not Lookout. It was a grind for Dave's Dodge, but we made it in fine shape. By this time it had rained enough so fall planting could begin, so Hagemeyer and I went back to Priest River and on to Zero Creek, where we were going to plant part of one of the drainages we had mapped in the summer. It was to be a big camp. Knute was camp boss, Hagemeyer timekeeper. I was just a tree planter, flagman on a crew that had Hank Peterson of the Kaniksu for foreman.

The camp was typical of those at that time, and warrants some description. Everything was in tents, kitchen, dining and sleeping tents, etc. The stable for pack stock was an open fly. Six men slept in each bunk tent, which were the Army pyramid squad tents, with a Sibley stove for heat. We were furnished split cedar slats and a straw tick for a mattress. No cots. We could make up the bed any way we wanted, but of course it was on the ground, or a pole frame. The bedding was also furnished, a couple of quilts (soogans), a couple of army blankets and a shelter half for a spread. No sheets or pillow. Bath facilities were the open outdoor rack for washbasins, and tin washtubs. Water was heated and available for the wash rack, but you heated your own if you took a bath. Chairs in the tents were blocks of wood, or you sat on your bed. We did have Coleman gas lanterns though.

There was a cook, Charley Johnson; two flunkies, Jack Cairns and Paul Martin; two bull cooks, Brown and Donaldson. There were two packers who packed trees and water to the crews; they were Frank Bracy and Earl Mixer. I think all of these men were locals, but practically the rest of the crew consisted of transients recruited off of Spokane's skid row, and were a real bunch of characters.

Most were just working for enough money to hit Spokane for a good spree, but some did mention buying some new clothes. Several in my tent had their red IWW cards and were proud of them. One grumbled a lot over the fact that the 'bosses' had cots to sleep on, while all the rest of us slept on the ground. When camp was over Charlie Johnson had a stake of several hundred dollars, and was broke a few days after he hit Priest River. I expect a lot of the others were in the same boat.

We were in this camp at the time of the Dempsey-Tunney championship fight in Chicago. The whole crew was pulling for Dempsey. We did not learn the result until the pack string got in from Forks of Granite. The men were much let down when they learned that Tunney had won.

There was between thirty and forty tree planters in camp, divided into three crews. I was flagman on Peterson's crew. We regularly planted a thousand trees or more a day, and got up to 1200-1300. But instead of planting small patches of 30-40 acres or less, we were in a big burn and planted from creek bottom to ridge top so little time was lost turning around. Generally there were few logs or other barriers, as this was a clean burn. There were some down logs though. One day a man on the slope above me dislodged a log, which rolled down the hill. The planter next to me and I threw ourselves behind another log, and the rolling one went right over our heads. The planters were closely checked, and a consistently poor planter, or one who was unable or unwilling to keep up was sent down the trail pronto.

The planting camp closed down about the middle of October, partly on account of snow, but I think we had also about completed the planned work. As soon as the camp closed, Olson sent Hagemeyer and me to the Falls Ranger Station where there was a seed extraction plant for white pine seed. We operated that until mid-January 1928. We bought cones from ranchers @ \$.75 per sack, cut the wood, dried and threshed the cones, the whole operation. Nominally we worked eight hours a day, but it was much more than that, as we had to keep the kilns fired nights and holidays too. We ate Xmas dinner with Ranger Jim Ward and family, otherwise we did all our own cooking. During the summer I got \$60.00 per month plus board, now I got \$70.00 as I was in charge of the job. Moving up.

On October 25, 1927, Hagemeyer, Knute and six or eight others, plus I took one of the last of the so-called Ranger Exams at Newport. This differed from the Junior Forester exam in that instead of being based on technical forestry education and thesis it was based on practical items, log scaling, woodsmanship, knowledge of horses and the like. Later in the winter I learned I got a grade of 83.10, but nothing ever developed from this. I think this was the next to the last Ranger Exam ever given.

Then Knute and I went to Missoula for a couple of months. We wrote our theses and studied for the Junior Forester exam, which we took March 7, 1928. At that time this wasn't the quickie type of exam it later became, we wrote hours and hours. Any passing mark was good; I learned later in the spring that I made 76.45.

From Missoula I went to Spokane where I met another classmate, Dick Delaney, and we spent a couple of weeks. Then I was able to get a job on the Kaniksu NF on a timber stand improvement crew, so went back to Priest River. Our job on the stand improvement crew was to follow the

loggers, pile the brush for burning, cut small grand fir and hemlock, girdle the big ones and generally open the stands up for white pine reproduction. It worked, too; many fine stands of white pine resulted, on the Kaniksu and elsewhere. While we were a Forest Service crew we stayed right in a Dalkena Lumber Co. camp, and as far as bunking and meals were concerned we were the same as the loggers. This was near the Pekle Guard Station; I have forgotten the number of the camp. I worked at this until about June 1.

Then I really went up in the world, worked on logging trails for the Kaniksu @ \$100.00 per month, plus board. Many of the trails were not accurately located on the maps, and especially for smoke chasers it was essential that they be correct. So I made a compass traverse of the trails, pacing distances. Every time I crossed a section line I had to tie in to the nearest corner, post the markers on the trail and correct the map. I worked mostly in the area around South Baldy, staying in whatever logging camp or Forest station was nearest the work. It was while I was on this job that I had the experience of having a mountain lion follow me along the trail. I did not know it at the moment, but I left the trail to tie in to a corner; when I came back I saw the cat's tracks on top of my own. He had followed for several hundred feet. I have heard of this happening a number of times, but this was the only time it has happened to me; at least to my knowledge.

Towards the end of June I was told to go to the Benton Ranger Station for a fire training camp for lookouts and smoke chasers. Here my mail caught up with me for the first time in several weeks. Included in the mail was a job offer from [?] of the Forest Service, as timber sale ranger on the Washakie NF in Wyoming. I wired an acceptance at once. A little later I got two other offers, the Malheur in Oregon and Plumas in California, but I was already committed. Anyway I completed the training session at the Benton and then went to Wyoming by train. My assignment was to the Wyoming Tie and Timber Company sale on the head of the Wind River, above Dubois. And that is another story.

The whole year from June 1927 to June 1928 had been an interesting one, and I had learned a lot. All my belongings were in my pack sack; moving from one job to another just meant putting on the packsack and taking off. I had not made much money but had worked about all the time I wanted, at a variety of jobs, with a wide variety of people. It was a good year.

THE "BATTLE" ON BASS CREEK

By Charles H. McDonald

One of my more shaking experiences as Ranger on the Stevensville RD was the "Battle" on Bass Creek. Two half-drunk loggers jumped me, and I had to shoot one of them to change their notions.

These fellows had bought the timber on an N.P. quarter section up Bass Creek, and were after rights-of-way and road to haul it out. I was able to get a right-of-way from the ranch owner, in the Government's name, providing that certain culverts, cattle guards, bridges, etc. were installed, all of which these loggers agreed to do before they started hauling logs.

Awhile afterwards the rancher came to me, saying that I'd better start action, since much of the timber had been hauled out, and but little of the agreed upon work done. I went to Elmer, one of the loggers, about it. He made fun of my concern and said it was up to his brother, Charley, so I told him I would go see his brother. While looking for Charley at a joint in Florence, I was told the two had gotten together there over a bottle, and were talking loudly about running over me when they met me again.

I called G. M. Brandborg, the Supervisor at Hamilton, and asked him to send the Sheriff down as I expected trouble. "Oh, don't worry about that," he said, "try to reason with them and I'll be down later in the day with the Sheriff." "Alright," I agreed, "but I'm taking my .45 along, as I don't intend to let them beat me up." They had a gory reputation for ganging up on those they dealt with, especially old folks, and putting them in the hospital.

I couldn't catch up with the brother, but returned later in the day with my assistant, Jim Whilt, and met the two of them in their loaded logging truck, in a narrow part of the road where I couldn't turn out. Here the road was rough and lined with large boulders. They stopped, and I stopped some thirty feet from their truck, and stepped from the pickup, leaving my .45 in its holster on the seat, butt towards the open door. We both walked to the right side of the logging truck, in which both loggers sat. I could see they had been drinking heavily, but spoke to them. The nearest one, Charley, said in a nasty tone, "Well, what's your beef today?" I replied, that I guess he knew what I was after.

Without further comment, he shouted, "yes, you chicken — son-of-a-bitch, you've asked for it, and now you'll get it," the while he was leaping from the cab, on his side, and Elmer quickly jumped out his side and ran around the front to where Jim and I stood.

I drew attention to the F.S. badge I wore, and advised them to keep their shirts on, that it was a penitentiary offense to attack a federal officer in the performance of his duty. Up to this instant I had made no threatening moves, nor raised my voice. Elmer quickly grasped my right arm, while the other grabbed my shirt and tie at my throat, clawing off my glasses, leaving long, livid scratch marks. The glasses were broken. By now, what with their screaming threats, and the final eyeglass indignity, I sensed that I had better start to defend myself or I might very well land in the hospital, the destination they said they intended for me. Just at this point Jim threw himself across the arms of the one holding my arm, and I whirled vigorously to the left, all of which

threw them into a knot, and by leaving them parts of my shirt, I pulled loose and ran for the open door of the pickup.

Quickly grasping the gun butt I whipped around to see Elmer, the larger brother, with arms upraised, poised to leap at me, and only two or three jumps distant. I cocked the gun and yelled "stop." I had it centered on him, but as he took another step with no apparent hesitation, I forced myself to swing the muzzle towards his uplifted arm, and pulled the trigger.

That stopped him. Grasping his arm he started to back away shouting "Don't shoot anymore, you've hit me." I advised them both that I was arresting them. Charley dropped to the ground, grasping Jim around his legs, and peered out from behind, probably to see if I might shoot him, as well. I told him he was under arrest.

I called to Jim and between us we bound up the wounded arm, then holding him between us, drove to the Stevensville doctor's office. Here, old Doc Prince shook a pinch of sulpha powder into the wound, then bound it up again, no better job than I had done. About this time, Jim became sick and threw up. He asked me to let him go home. I phoned Brandy again and told him what had happened. Taking the wounded Elmer to my office, I had him lie down on a back room cot, with instructions to my dispatcher, Lyle Wilcox, to watch him and not let him leave.

No word from Brandy or the Sheriff. I got to thinking that maybe I should tell my story to Atty Graves, my next door neighbor, and get his advice, so I went in to see him. A few minutes later Lyle ran in to tell me that the wounded man had brushed him aside and left despite his efforts to stop him. I sent Lyle to follow and keep me informed of Elmer's movements.

Evidently, his brother Charley had tried to wheel the heavily loaded truck over that narrow road, at high speed, and in his inebriated condition, ran into a deep side ditch, over-turning the truck and spilling the logs into the adjacent field. He had then gone into Feronato's, a rancher nearby, phoned his wife to come get him, and so the two got together in a Stevensville bar, where they made plans to go to Hamilton at once for legal help. They met the Deputy Sheriff and Brandy on the way, but refused to stop and be arrested again. The Deputy Sheriff followed them to their attorney in Hamilton, and later did affect an arrest, but more of that later.

Graves prepared an affidavit and we went to the local J.P. Keith Lameroux, to secure a warrant of arrest for the two, since they had escaped from their first arrest. By this time it was late, eight or nine o'clock, and no supper, with the strain of uncertainty growing by the minute. At the J.P.'s the sheriff finally caught me on the phone, or rather Brandy did, and ordered me to come up at once, no delay. Graves then talked with the Sheriff, Fay Burrows, and told him we had a warrant ready for the arrest of the two loggers, and for hits to bring them down and all would be handled under the jurisdiction of this J.P., according to the law. He refused to do this, so Graves said, "now look here Mr. Sheriff, if you refuse to bring them down to this jurisdiction, we will have you up for false arrest."

Well, we finally agreed to come up, after Brandy got on the phone and told me to quite horsing around, that he would take care of things up there. By now Joe Canton, my son-in-law, had caught up with me, so the three of us drove to the sheriffs office, where everyone was waiting. It

was decided that our warrant for the loggers would be handled first. It charged them with attacking a Forest Officer in the performance of his duty, a felony. They pleaded not guilty, and posted a cash bond of \$200. When their turn came, they charged me with attack with a deadly weapon, so the judge set my bond at \$500, which Brandy and Joe took care of with three property bonds.

Long about midnight, Joe, Graves and I went back to check the overturned truck. We picked up the bullet against the radiator, where it had split in striking a steel grill, after piercing the license plate located several feet above the ground.

There was no celebration this day. Later we visited with a Bass Creek farmer, who told us he had seen the tableau several seconds after he heard the shot, but that the loggers' attorney had been out to try and get him to say he had seen me shoot without provocation.

The next day Regional Forester Pete Hanson and Regional Engineer, Fred Thieme, came in to get my story. They facetiously said the only thing that appeared to be wrong was that I hadn't provided for all of this in my work plans. The pros and cons of the case differed markedly up and down the valley.

A day or so afterwards, a U.S. warrant was issued for Elmer's arrest, and he was placed in the Missoula Jail, and still later was let out on a \$3000.00 bond. This took a lot of the heat off me.

A month or so later, a hearing was held in the courthouse. The loggers had two lawyers. The Assistant Solicitor from Butte handled our side.

At the hearing, Elmer testified that he was leaning, with elbow on the truck radiator, with his head in hand, just looking at me when I fired. Even his own lawyers had to laugh at the course the bullet had to make to get down through the license plate after striking him in the arm.

Well, they postponed trial until District court term, and the lawyers fought it out, with both sides accepting a draw by Christmas time. So far as I could see, the principal good resulting was that irritated folks quit inviting me to settle Government business out behind. Thereafter I was able to discuss and settle most disputes in a calm atmosphere, even though not always the most friendly.

I later heard that other Rangers had benefited to some extent - and at a Nine Mile Forest Service jumper party they had put on a show lampooning the case.

FIRE CREWS AND FIREFIGHTING IN 1941

By Berle E. Davis

The spring of 1941 found three of us college student buddies bemoaning that soon we would be parted for the summer and none of us had any prospects of a summer job. But we heard that the U.S. Forest Service had a recruitment booth on campus to sign up firefighter and blister rust crews. During the war the Forest Service was having troubles getting necessary manpower, thus the campus recruitment.

"Why not give it a try?" asked Arthur F. Anderson, an architectural student on the Bozeman campus MSC. (Yes, I know it is now MSU, but at that time "MSU" was a dirty word to us Bozeman students.)

"Maybe if we signed up together, we will be sent to the same camp, if we are lucky," thought Graeme Baker, a Chemistry student.

The seventy-five cents per hour plus board sounded good to me, and firefighting sounded exciting too, and a summer in the woods hit the spot after a stinky old Chemistry laboratory. I was game so we all filled out an application right then.

It wasn't until June, we heard we had all been accepted. Anderson and I, a little older and more experienced, were sent to the "Hot-Shot" firefighter camp at the old Nine Mile CCC camp but Baker was exiled to the heart of Idaho to a blister rust camp. Even today the mention of the word "Blister" makes him use some colorful language.

About mid-June, Anderson and I reported to the Federal Building in Missoula. We were signed up and trucked to the old CCC camp up Nine Mile creek. Not the one next door to the Remount Depot; the one a couple miles further up the canyon. The upper camp was later abandoned and moved to the location closer to the Remount Station. The recruited students here were organized into five, twenty-five man crews with Hank [?] as a project foreman and Mel Morris as the camp boss. Morris was a professor at Missoula MSU in the winter. Each twenty-five-man crew was assigned to the Carl Simpson crew and Anderson to a different crew. Simpson's crew won the flip or toss so we were assigned as the crew to be broken up into two-man smokechasers crew, and trained specially for this.

After two or three weeks of rigorous training in firefighting-and survival in the woods we were called to Yellowstone Park on two very tough fires, Grizzly Lake fire and Heart Lake fire to cut our teeth on firefighting and to practice what we had learned. After a couple of weeks there we were returned to the Ninemile base to clean up a bit and to see who we were. Then sent on the wildest project of all. It was called the "Troy Slash Burning Project." It was all logged off, all in one piece and they wished to fall all cull and non-salable timber and to burn off these and the logging slash for a fresh start on that land.

We firefighters were quartered at the Troy Ranger Station and were broken up into two-man saw crews with crosscut saws. We got to pick, to some extent, our saw partner; so Anderson and I teamed up as a crew. We got a lot of experience at falling trees and dominoed them. You cut one

almost to the falling point and aimed the second tree at it to knock it down and aimed a third tree at the second, etc. until about the fifth one you call clear down and, with luck, knock them all down like dominoes. This led to a lot of dangerous cutting down hang-ups, where it didn't go as planned. Anyway after about fifteen days the whole slash was on the ground. You could walk clear across the area on the downed trees, twelve feet above the ground. Boy! What a pile of fuel. It was now time to burn it. I was not on the lighting crews but their synchronization was poor as those boys on the head end of the burn were the last to get their areas lit with propane burners. They were trapped ahead of the burning sides, so they had to abandon their burners and slip out along a ridge on the backside. They made it to safety amid the exploding abandoned propane tanks. The rest of us were spread out along the road on one side of the slash area to watch for possible spot fires outside of the line. Also to be readily available for any escaped fire across the line.

In about thirty minutes, our smoke cloud gave the A-Bomb mushroom cloud serious competition for size and color, and noise too, as there was a terrific roar as it went on that hot and windless day before the fire. Tornado drafts in the fire area, actually rotated end for end trees that were fifty feet long and were lifted twenty feet off the ground in the burn.

By nightfall, most of the flash fuels were gone but we stayed a couple of days and nights to clean up the fire line and patrol and mop up the over-burn, where we didn't want it to burn, as some fifteen acres of good timber went up in spite of us. No mop-up of the main fire was attempted, as they wanted everything to burn in that area that would go. After a couple of days, it was turned over to a district crew to finish it and watch it, as some hot fires still burned hotly out in the center. It was considered a successful burn by the overhead and nobody was lost in it!

By morning we were all packed up and ready to truck back to the Nine Mile camp, but there was some holdup. The Troy District found they were missing twelve or fifteen blankets from the bunkhouse so we were all searched. None of us was wearing a blanket, nor had one in our pocket either. They finally found the blankets stashed in one of our trucks under the seat or in the toolbox. Six eastern boys confessed. They took the blankets as they were planning a cold trip home that fall on the roads or in railroad boxcars to save their summer money.

In the layover waiting to be searched, we got a hurry-up fire call. Many of the crews were planning to quit to return to early college or take some time off. These returned with the truck to the Nine Mile camp. But a crew was formed of those left. This crew flew to Missoula via the Ford Trimotor and trucked to Lost Horse Lake end of the road out of Hamilton. We hiked into Pettibone Ridge on the Moose Creek District now on the Nezperce Forest, (then a part of the old Selway Forest as I remember it, but not sure as I was not too hep to the various Forests then). It was just another fire to me, but it was in Idaho so was hoping to see Baker again.

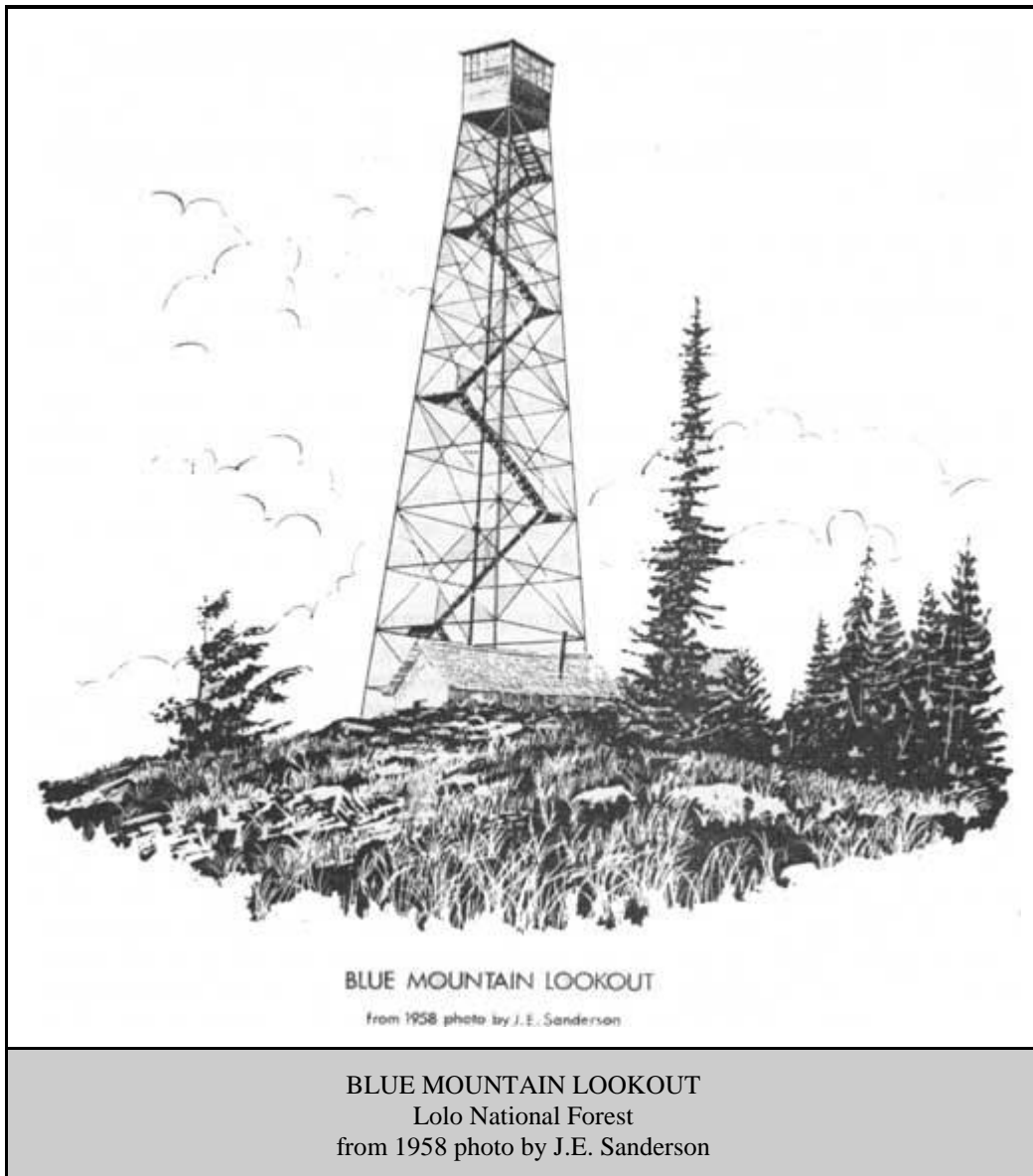
They said it was just a twenty-five or thirty-mile hike in. To old short legs me, it seemed more like a hundred and thirty miles, but I made it with a full fire pack, in time to witness my first aerial drop of a camp from the Ford Trimotor again.

Never saw a thing of Baker. Guess the state of Idaho was bigger than I thought. There were many other people already on that fire when we arrived.

That was my last fire of that season as college called. On reunion with my buddies on the campus, we spent much time comparing stories. Anderson went back to camp from the Troy burn and missed the Idaho fire altogether. We all agreed it was an exciting life and wanted to return for another summer at least.

Anderson later went "permanent" Forest Service and is still in their midst today. Baker did not return at all but stayed with his chemistry career full time. Blister rust just did not have the recall power that firefighting did.

But for me, World War II intervened so did not make it back for six years, and then, as a smokejumper.



THE MODERN BULLDOZER
A FOREST SERVICE PROJECT
By Howard R. Jones

A U.S. Civil Service examination taken in June of 1929, led to an offer for "the position of Junior Civil Engineer in the Forest Service at a salary of \$2,000 per annum, effective January 16, 1930" at San Francisco. We moved to California.

Early that spring Chester Jordan, who was in charge of roadwork for the Forest Service California region, came into the engineering office and spoke to the man I worked for. He said, "Earl is having trouble making those drawings of the bulldozer and that he would like to borrow someone who could make them". So, I met Mr. Jordan and also met Earl Hall, a Forest Service road construction foreman.

Now, to go back a few years to the late 1920's, when the Forest Service was beginning to push fire protection roads into back country where hillsides were too steep for convenient work by the methods of that time. Mr. Jordan made a visit to Montana and Idaho, where Fred Thieme then was the Forest Service Regional Engineer with office at Missoula, Montana. The two men looked at road jobs and talked over their problems. Mr. Thieme writes to me about this:

"The first step in our road building of that time was to build a sort of trail by means of a horse-drawn, two way, reversible, breaking plow. After a couple of furrows which made a better footing for the horse, a one-horse-drawn Martin ditcher was used to widen the tread until wide enough for a team to pull a small grader."

Thieme mentioned to Jordan an idea he had been thinking about for some time, that a plow mounted in front of a crawler tractor might work a lot better than the horse drawn rig. They decided to attempt to develop that suggestion and arranged with each of their offices to share in the cost, with the work to be done in California where the Forest Service had an adequate shop. Jordan told Earl Hall to go ahead and he did, not with a plow, but with a blade in front of and extending across the full width of a crawler tractor. The blade was set at an angle like the blade of a road grader.

Earl first built a little wooden model of a tractor and blade, about two feet long and a foot high. He called it a trail builder. Then, at the shop near Oakland, he built a full size model and mounted it on a crawler tractor. This was the birth of the "bulldozer".

I don't know about the test runs of this machine, but it was considered to be a success and by early spring of 1930 the decision was made to have several built. Thus the need for the design drawings that I made for Mr. Jordan.

To make these drawings was like old times to me; a happy chance to get out of the office and spend some time with Earl Hall in the shop. Measurements and sketches were made and then back to the office for the drafting. From these drawings a firm in Davis, California, built a number of bulldozers, under contract with the Forest Service.

Forest Service files contain a memorandum by Hall dated August 12, 1930, describing his demonstrations of the new bulldozers in the Montana-Idaho area. This was the first use of this type of equipment in the Northwest. Hall ends his memo by saying, "They surely need roads up here." I'm sure that while testing his first dozer and during demonstrations of the manufactured ones, that Hall was careful to keep within the machine's limitations. Obviously he wasn't about to bust up this child of his. However, under other operators, failure of parts was all too common and so Fred Thieme had a sturdier unit made by the Isaacson Iron Works of Seattle.

The thing that made Hall's machine revolutionary was the hydraulic cylinder and pump powered by a takeoff from the tractor engine. This was a power control device with which the operator could raise and lower the dozer blade without leaving his seat on the tractor and if he wanted, while the tractor was moving. Also the blade being set at an angle for side casting of excavated material is an important item of the design for construction of roads along hillsides.

The dozer was an instant success. It quickly became known to representatives of tractor manufacturing firms and to others that were in or wanted to get into the road machinery business. The Forest Service did not apply for patent nor make any effort to control the manufacture or sale of this machine. Isaacson Iron Works, LeTourneau, Bucyrus-Erie, Gar Wood Industries and others were soon making similar machines, somewhat different in design and heavier, but of the same general principle. The LeTourneau dozer had a power operated drum and cable to control the height of the blade. This was quite different from the hydraulic control and it worked well.

The bulldozer tremendously increased the uses of the crawler tractor. Hundreds and hundreds of miles of forest roads have been built with the bulldozer as the primary, often the only, earth moving machine.

A question comes up sometimes about who should have the credit. All but Fred Thieme are gone now, (Editor's note: Fred Thieme died this past year) so perhaps it is not too important at this late date. Such things start long, long ago, with the man who thought of the wheel. There were blades pushed in front of teams of oxen, thus the name bulldozer. When crawler tractors came, blades were hung in front of them. They could push loose soil and were used for backfilling trenches.

Thieme and Jordan, Forest Service officers who recognized the importance and probability of improved methods and decided on action toward that end, should share the credit. They acted under the traditional Forest Service decentralized management that gave them responsibility and authority to make decisions, arrange financing and take action; which incidentally is the factor largely responsible for Forest Service being a top agency.

Earl Hall must be given the major credit. He built the first modern bulldozer. If we ever have a hall of fame to preserve the memory of those who made outstanding contribution to development of construction equipment for work like road building, Earl Hall certainly should be high on the list of men to be honored in it.

I don't know anything about Jordan's background. He was about sixty years of age when I knew him. He never talked much, in fact as I recall, hardly at all. Likely he worked mostly out of

doors, not much of an office man. He was tremendously pleased with the design drawings and he had a wildly exaggerated notion about the skill it took to make them.

At that time the Forest Service did not have any orderly personnel management procedure. The voluminous files and lots of people employed in personnel offices common today, were mostly unknown then. If a man was doing well in his current job, it was usually assumed that he would do as well anywhere. While this old quick and easy practice seems to me to have worked about as well as the modern slow and careful one, it did involve too much of an element of luck for advancement.

The Chief Engineer of the Forest Service asked Jordan to recommend a man for a job in the Washington, D.C. office. I was transferred to Washington in April 1931 with a substantial raise in pay. A time when thousands of good men were out of work. I remember Jordan and Hall with affection, Hall because he couldn't make the drawings and Jordan because he was so pleased with them.

In the spring of 1933, President Roosevelt established the Civilian Conservation Corps. Most of the CCC worked on the national forests. At that time the engineering office in Washington handled the procurement of automotive items and construction machinery for all Forest Service areas. Jack Haile did this and I worked for him. We wrote specifications, reviewed bids and Jack signed the purchase orders. This was sort of a side issue to our varied engineering jobs, but as the CCC rapidly expanded, it took a lot of time. Jack left in 1934 to become head of the road machinery division of Gar Wood Industries at Detroit. After that, for a couple of years, I was the part-time procurement officer.

Jack and I bought tractor-dozers by the hundreds, trucks by the thousands and a lot of other equipment. When the CCC was disbanded in 1942, most of that material that was still useful was taken by the U.S. Army. Some of it was used by the Army on construction of the pioneer road that since has been improved to become the Alaska Highway.

The bulldozer made history in World War II. General Eisenhower, in his "Crusade in Europe" gives it credit for being one of the items of equipment responsible for victory in Africa and in Europe. He also tells of mounting dozers on Sherman tanks. These machines provided safety for the operators and were not easily damaged by enemy fire. They were used to make passable the mountain roads partially destroyed by retreating enemy forces. They worked with the advancing front lines so that transport could bring up supplies and take wounded back.

The bulldozer in record short time became known the world over, so well known that to most people everywhere, the word bulldozer includes the tractor on which the attachment is mounted, and thus means the tractor-dozers combination.

(Reference: "The Bulldozer" a Forest Service, Region One publication, 1955. It includes parts of Earl Hall's memorandum of August 12, 1930, a photograph of the first hand made dozer of Hall's design, and a copy of one of the drawings from which the first commercial order of dozers were manufactured.)

INDIAN CREEK RANGER STATION

By Ralph L. Thayer

I first went to work for the Forest Service in June 1911. I helped move the office and files from Indian Creek Ranger Station, which was in Glacier National Park, near what they called the Henshaw Ford. You could ford it when the water was low or Park Service had a boat above the ford about 31 miles. We hauled and carried some of the equipment to the boat landing about 4 mile from Ranger Station. The cabin was a log cabin made out of big logs. It had two doors and two windows 24"x24". Harry Vaught was the first Park Ranger. He and his wife were there for about two seasons. She was a real all-around woman. She homesteaded west of Belton, Montana, on the Middle Fork River. She had a trap line in the hills south of Belton on which she made her living until she and Harry Vaught were married, then they moved to Indian Creek Ranger Station on the North Fork of the Flathead River.

Anyway, I saddled up four head of pack horses at Moran Ranger Station on Moran Creek on west side of the river. There was no regular trail, just the best way to get through. Well, being in the first part of June the water was high. I couldn't get through the river bottom or the A. N. Smith bottoms. I had to back track and go up the hill west of the river bottom in order to keep things dry. When I went up through the Bottoms Empty I made it o.k. The river rose in p.m. so couldn't make it. The Ranger at the Indian Creek Ranger Station in Glacier National Park, that is, the Forest Service Ranger, was Theo. Christensen. A man by the name of A. E. Clark, USFS Ranger, took Theo. Christensen's place that summer. Also an Indian who was working for Theo. Christensen. He was a Kootenai Indian. He enlisted in the Canadian Army in WWI; he never came back so I guess he was one of the missing in action. He was a Park Ranger in Glacier National Park, also.

The last part of June 1911, we had Smokechaser School at Indian Creek in Glacier National Park. Supervisor R. P. McLaughlin was there also. Along with Ranger W. C. McCormick I helped build Moran Ranger Station, skidded the logs into where we put up the Ranger Station. George Grubb was an old-timer from eastern Montana. He was a blacksmith at Zortman, Montana, in his early days. In 1908 he settled on a homestead in what is now Glacier National Park. He was a real good broadaxe man. A fellow by the name of Ben Mace and myself sawed the logs for George. Between cooking and times chasing smoke we hung an emergency wire telephone line. We hooked on the Glacier National Park line. It was a No. 12 wire at first, and then they put up a No. 9 wire. It was something in those days-to keep the telephone lines up.

In the book "Early Days in the Forest Service," (Vol. I) there is a picture on page 128 (facing Page 139). It shows some old-timers. F. N. Harmes was supervisor of the Blackfoot Forest when I first went to work. It also shows J. C. Cosley, which I spoke of.

They named Peter Degrant in the wrong place. He is kneeling in back of Fred F. Clark and Bill Owens.

EARLY SNOW IN THE BITTERROOTS

By Ray S. Ferguson

This is not exactly a tale of the olden days, but is an experience that many of us had during the early snow in 1942.

It started to snow on October 27, 1942 and continued until we had 36" at the State Line Checking Station, about 24" at the Powell Ranger Station and varying depths on the high roads, i.e., the Lolo Motor Way along the Lolo Trail, the Elk Summit Road, Beaver Ridge Road and the Tom Beall Road. And too, we had parties on the Brushy Fork hunting under Skookum Butte and at the end of the Crooked Fork Road hunting in the forks of the creek. However, these parties all checked out early during the storm and did not have to be plowed out.

At this time we had well over 300 hunters in the woods. Just about every part of the District that you could drive a truck or drag a pack animal. There were two commercial pack outfits in the Elk Summit area, a short string at Tom Beall Park, a string at Beaver Ridge and a string at Jerry Johnson Lookout packing into the Mocus Point area. From the Clearwater side there were several outfits with a horse or two heading into the Horseshoe Lake country.

Camps were strung along the roads and many had been packed into the backcountry. Then too, a number of hunters had come in with one or two head on trucks to pack out their own game.

The snowstorm was unexpected and piled in with considerable fury for about a day and a half. Very likely, much as it was with the Carlin party in the 1890's. The depth of the snow was appalling along the high country roads. But the thing that gave us our real trouble were the drifts. We had considerable wind in the high country following the snow and the drifts in many cases were around 10 feet and parts of the Tom Beall Park area reached up to 20 feet.

We had some equipment at Powell Ranger Station and immediately started all of it to work. The grader headed for the State line and on to Lolo Hot Springs, as this was the road we had to keep open for outside help and to furnish egress for those who were leaving early. Since the bulk of our hunters were along the Elk Summit Road and beyond we started the dozer up that way to plow them out. It is impossible at this time to name many of the parties.

Supervisor Eldon Myrick in Missoula was contacted and clued in on our situation and he had machinery and operators headed for us the same day. In fact, they were pulling in all night. As soon as they were unloaded and the men fed, 'operation snowplow' got under the way during the night.

When a hunting party entered the District through the Checking Station, we recorded their destination, who they were, and duration of stay. The party was checked out as they left. Parties new to the Powell area often didn't know where to go but we at least had the road they would be on. Later, patrols by me and my assistants and the State Game Warden pinpointed their camps.

By November 2, we had every one out or on plowed roads so they could get out except a party of 6. This party was Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Scoles, Coeur d'Alene, Laddie and Roberta Noland,

Kellogg and Manie and Evelyn Arnold from near Coeur d'Alene. They had been fishing and hunting every year in the Powell area and were experienced woodsmen. They had signed in as headed for the Chain Meadows area under McConnel Mt. They had not shown up by November 3, so Frank Bustard, my assistant, and I took off that morning with a short string for Jerry Johnson Cabin. We had grub, emergency equipment and six extra pair of webs. We left our string at the Jerry Johnson cabin and took off up Warm Springs Creek with our saddle stock and the webs. The snow was melting and we got to within two miles of where the Tom Beall Trail crossed Warm Springs Creek and we met the party. They were headed out and were carrying as much of their duffel as they were able to.

During the storm the party had moved back down to Warm Springs Creek and, being acquainted with the country, decided their best bet would be to go down Warm Springs Creek. Frank and I went back to their camp with them and got as much of their camp as possible and hung the balance in trees. We didn't have to use the webs. We got back to Jerry Johnson Cabin that night. We made Powell Ranger Station the next day. On our way to Powell we met several parties who were hunting along the river (and elk were thick) and they told me about my youngest son who was born that day in Missoula. One even said I had a four pointer.

Ironically, I received the only injury chargeable to Operation Rescue. While packing up at Jerry Johnson Cabin during a sleet storm, I threw an icy pack on an icy saddle. The mule leaned away as the pack hit him and it cascaded down into my stomach, breaking a blood vessel, causing a traumatic ulcer, eventually. My youngest son was born on November 4th. On November 5th I drove to Missoula to report our progress to Supervisor Myrick and while reporting I hemorrhaged orally and passed out. By the afternoon of November 5th, I was in St. Pats Hospital with my new son.

There were many high lights of hardship and fun during the opening of the roads. The hunters were helpful and cooperative. One hunter from Wallace volunteered his services on the dozer and worked day and night as long as needed. I truly believe these machine men were the most dedicated men I have ever known. Truly they did a stellar job with knowledge and dispatch. They were wonderful. Overtime was not even a word in those days. They just worked as long as there was a job to do.



JUNCTION MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT
Clearwater National Forest

from 1924 photo

JUNCTION MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT
Clearwater National Forest
from 1924 photo

THE GRAVE ON POLLACK HILL

By Lou Hartig

Several years ago I thought it might be of interest to the inquisitive of the future to have the facts regarding who is buried in the grave on Pollack Hill and why. I wrote this story, which never did reach a finished form.

As far as I know Pete Potvin, Kingman, Arizona and I are the only living members of the burial detail. Gunefson, Peters and Kern are dead. I lost contact with Landerville and Monty years ago. Both were my seniors by several years. (Signed, Lou Hartig)

Otto Trojanowski, Frank Monty and Jim Trexall spent the 1933-34 winter in and around Wallace, Idaho. With the arrival of balmy spring weather in mid-April they welcomed the opportunity to leave Wallace when offered work at the Independence Mine where all three had been employed the previous summer. Monty and Trojanowski as laborers and Trexall as cook. Their immediate assignment was to go to the mine camp which had been shut down during the winter and make preparations for a larger crew that would arrive some time later.

The mine was located on Independence Creek on the Kelly Creek Ranger District. It lay two miles east of the old Moose City (1) diggings where mining took place in the late 1860's and early 1870's. In 1934 this locality was deep within the Clearwater National Forest. The year before a road had been punched through from the Montana side up Trout Creek over Hoodoo Pass and down Long Creek to Cedars Ranger Station on the North Fork of the Clearwater River. On the west side of the Forest, also the year before a Civilian Conservation Corps crew had begun construction of a road from Bungalow Ranger Station up the North Fork toward Kelly Forks. (2) However in the spring of 1934 the roads were still blocked by snow. From the Wallace country the old route from Rivulet, Montana, via Fish Lake and Pollack Ridge (3) was the shortest way to the mine.

Rivulet was accessible by rail or auto. From there travel was by foot. Since the overall distance from Rivulet to the mine was about thirty-four miles the men had to plan on at least one and perhaps two over night stops. They went prepared accordingly.

Although the 1933-34 winter had been unusually mild the men did encounter snow in the Fish Lake country, which lies at an elevation of around 6000 feet.

It was a fatiguing trip for the three men. Trexall was by profession a cook. He was middle aged and heavy set and appeared to be in good physical condition. Frank Monty was the smallest and most wiry of the three but he, too, was past his youth. Otto Trojanowski was a tall, husky, graying man who appeared to be in robust health. On the afternoon of April 19 they were making their way down Pollack Ridge. Otto began to lag behind, taking frequent rest stops. The others took part of his pack and adjusted their pace to his. Late in the afternoon Otto urged his companions to proceed on to the mine and get the cookhouse open for occupancy. He would follow at his own pace and arrive either that night or some time the next day. The two left him thinking only that Otto was tired. They arrived at the mine shortly before dark exhausted and

hungry. These men were all self-reliant outdoor types so there was no alarm when Otto failed to show up during the night.

All day of the 20th while the men recovered from the wearisome trip they expected Otto to arrive momentarily. Late in the day Frank Monty went back over the trail to Osier Creek. There was no sign of Trojanowski. As it was nearly dark and Monty had no artificial light he returned to the mine. Monty and Trexall were now worried and apprehensive. Early on the morning of the 21st Monty again left the mine in search of Otto. He found him dead on the trail less than a mile from where they had parted from him on the 19th.

Monty decided that his best move would be to make a trip to Kelly Creek Ranger Station at the mouth of Moose Creek. If the Station was opened for the summer he could get assistance there.

On the way he met Forest Service employee Andy Kern who, with another employee, Harold B. Brown, was doing maintenance work on the Moose Creek trail.

Kern was one of a four-man party including myself that had arrived at the Ranger Station on April 19th - the same day Trojanowski had last been seen alive. I was an Assistant Ranger on the district, and with an advance crew of five men, had been sent by Ranger John Gaffey to open the station and begin maintenance of trails and telephone lines in preparation for the summer season. Men in the party were Kern, Clarence Gunefson, Everett Haney and brothers Frank and Harold "Heck" Brown. Frank Brown and Haney were working out of Barnard Cabin. The others, myself included, had finished what work we could from Kelly Forks Cabin before moving to the Ranger Station. As yet neither the telephone nor trail was maintained to the station. The nearest operable phone, at Kelly Forks, was twelve miles down stream. Short wave radios were not yet in general use by the Forest Service.

Kern brought me word of Trojanowski's death at 3:00 p.m. on the 21st. Knowing that the County Corner should be notified, I left shortly by foot for Kelly Forks. Except where maintenance work had been completed the trail was in wretched condition. Snow slides from both sides of the canyon had deposited great piles of logs, rocks and snow across the trail. Some of the snow slides were up to one-fourth mile across and up to twenty-five feet in depth in the trail. In other places sections of trail were missing - washed away by high water from side streams.

I arrived at Kelly Forks Cabin at about 6:30 p.m. Fortunately I soon made contact with Bungalow Ranger Station and was switched through to County Coroner Wayne Herres at Orofino. Upon learning what I knew of the circumstances he authorized me to conduct an investigation and if no evidence of other than natural death was indicated to proceed with burial of the body on the spot.

On the morning of April 22 I began the return trip to Kelly Creek R.S. I tried to tie the telephone line together between Barnard Cabin and the station but finally had to abandon the attempt as much wire was missing - torn out by snow slides. Monty was at the station when I arrived. We made plans for investigation and burial on the following day. He then returned to the mine.

On the morning of the 23rd Gunefson, Kern and I went to the mouth of Osier Creek. Here we met Monty. With him were miners Charles Peters, Pete Potvin and Oliver Landerville (4) who wanted to attend the burial and help in any way they could.

We made the steep climb toward Pollack Hill arriving at the body at 9:30 a.m. While Gunefson, Monty and I made the examination and inventoried Otto's meager personal effects the others selected a gravesite in a grassy opening on the brush covered hillside and began digging a grave. It appeared that Otto had taken off his packsack, perhaps to sit and rest on a wind thrown tree that lay across the trail. He lay beside his pack by the windfall. Appearance indicated a sudden collapse perhaps a heart attack.

The body was wrapped in a canvas pack cover and bound with a rope. When the grave was completed Otto's remains were gently lowered to his final resting place. Frank Monty who knew him best delivered a short eulogy while the others stood by with bared heads. After the grave was filled a wooden marker was placed to mark the site.

Otto's only known relative was a sister, Mrs. Carrie Niemeyer who, if I remember correctly, lived in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Due to remoteness of the grave plus transportation difficulties she decided to leave the body where it was buried. At a later date she had a concrete headstone erected at the grave. The Forest Service built and maintained a wooden fence around the grave for a number of years. The last I heard the fence was no longer maintained.

So beside the trail on Pollack Hill in NW-SW-1/4, sec. 31, Township 40 North, Range 22 West, Boise Meridian the passer-by may see the lonely headstone that marks the grave where Otto Trojanowski lies in eternal rest.

(1) Moose City, where gold was discovered by Thomas O'Brien and William Shepard, at the height of its popularity in 1869 boasted a population of 600. Moose City lived and died with little fanfare.

(2) After a road was completed into the area parts of both, Independence Creek and Moose Creek were dredged, apparently with some success as dredging continued for several years.

(3) Pollack Hill was named in memory of Frank Pollack who was a trail construction foreman on the Kelly Creek District until his death in the late 1920's.

(4) In addition to the miners mentioned in the story others who were still finding gold in this area in 1934 were Hans Ehert, Walter McCluskey and Joe Uzellac. Many others came to the area each summer to prospect the streams and search for the mother lode.



Scale
 1/4" = 5mi

Trojanowski's Grave
 ---- trails

OTHER ST. JOE NATIONAL FOREST HISTORY

By Lloyd V. Donally

(Submitted by Ray L. Hilding)

In 1927 when I came to the St. Joe, there was no road at Avery or on the upper districts; and not many trails, just well-traveled main line horse trails. Most of the trails were constructed in the early 30's. In 1929, 1930 and 1931 the Roundtop District had a ten-man trail crew on the Little North Fork Clearwater River building trail from Rutledge Creek on down the river to mouth of Foehl Creek. Another 10-man crew was building trails on Sister's crew. Three other crews of five to six men were building trails on other parts of the District. Most of the lookout towers and buildings were constructed in 1930 and 1931 by Forest Service crews and in 1934 and 1935 by C.C.C. labor. The road to Avery from Wallace was connected up in 1928, and travel from St. Maries to Avery by road was in 1933. Both roads were completed by Forest Service crews, but not entirely built by Forest Service. Until roads were developed, the Forest had about 140 head of pack stock horses and mules. Each District had from 12 to 24 head, and about 30 head were used packing out of Avery.

There were five Districts: Avery, Roundtop, Pole Mountain, Quarles, and Palouse. In 1930 the Clarkia District was established with Dean Harrington as Ranger. In 1932 the Calder District was formed taking over the area administered by the Coeur d'Alene Timber Protective Association, Charles Scribner - Ranger. The Slate Creek District was abandoned, part going to the Avery District and part to the Calder District. Also Quarles District was abandoned, part going to Avery and part to Pole Mountain.

By 1942, the last year of the C.C.C.'s, roads were showing up over most of the Forest. Pack stock on the Forest dropped about 50 percent. In 1946 the St. Joe called for smoke jumpers for the first time to suppress a fire near Middle Sister Lookout. They were ordered by myself, through the Forest Supervisor, R.R. Fitting, 12 of them.

THE FOREST SERVICE HELIOGRAPH

By E. Clayton McCarty

Use of the heliograph as a means of communication in the Forest Service caused argument and talk, both for and against. But before telephones, mankind had very little choice throughout the centuries of ways to get messages over distances greater than his own voice could reach. A messenger could be sent on foot or on horseback, requiring hours or many days to deliver his message. Hand signals or flags could be used by parties close enough to maintain direct sight of each other. For any greater distance there was left only fire, smoke, or flashes from the sun.

Since speed was extremely important in reporting, assembling a crew, and getting it on to any fire in the remote areas of western forests before it burned beyond hope for control, the heliograph was the only practical means available to the Forest Service in its earlier days. Its flash could carry fifty miles or more in clear air, and its message could be delivered in a matter of a few minutes, which meant a fire crew could be working on a new fire many days earlier.

But the heliograph was a tricky instrument for the untrained person. It meant the sun must be shining. It meant controlling and directing those sun flashes. It meant knowing and using a complicated code, and many-men found the heliograph hard to use and frustrating.

In my own experience in the Northern Region (1917-1920) things worked out well enough so that I actually learned some camp cookery by heliograph. It was on the Clearwater National Forest. I was a high school student at the time, and green. So I could not cook too well. Many days I'd ask Osier Ridge Lookout by heliograph how to boil water or bake bread or mix up some sort of goulash. Osier would get instructions by phone from the cook at Fish Lake Ranger Station, then flash them to me on Blacklead. There were gaps in the messages, but I usually caught enough to cook up the messes.

I remember there were two types of heliographs left for me to use on Blacklead. One consisted of two tall tripods that could be extended somewhere near shoulder height. I am not certain whether the two mirrors and sighting device were on one tripod and the shutter on the other, but I believe that was the arrangement.

The other instrument I used was a smaller portable heliograph, with both mirrors, sight, and shutter all on one tripod which opened out to an elevation somewhere near thirty inches above ground level. It was my favorite.

But anyway, the essential parts of either heliograph consisted of the main mirror, which actually flashed the signal to the other station, a straight arm which held this mirror at the rear, and a sight somewhat like the front sight on a rifle near the front end of the straight arm. This main mirror was adjustable in all directions and had a tiny hole in its exact center.

You used the tiny hole as you would use the back sight of a gun. You looked through it, with the shutter open. You sighted through it to the front sight and lined the straight arm exactly on the receiving station as if it were a rifle. Then you locked it in position.

Next you closed the shutter and focused the sun on the shutter by means of the main mirror. This made a shadow of the front sight on the shutter. Also, the tiny hole in the main mirror appeared as a small shadow dot on the shutter. The trick was to adjust the mirror so that the dot shadow rested exactly on the tip of the front sight's shadow. Any flash then would go directly toward the receiving station.

This was easy when the sun shone directly in front of the instrument or only a few degrees to the side. When the sun got too far overhead, or to one side, or in back of the main mirror, you had to catch the light first on the second mirror. This meant, of course, that the second mirror was not only adjustable in all directions, but that it must be mounted on an auxiliary arm fastened to the tripod to catch the sun from any angle. The arm could be rotated about the tripod. Then this second mirror would focus sunlight on the main mirror. From there it went through the shutter in the regular manner. Sighting of the main mirror was the same when the second mirror had to be used.

The smaller portable instrument seemed to me to be the most practical and most simple to set up and use. Its flash carried easily from Blacklead to Osier Ridge Lookout, and sometimes their answering flash seemed to my eyes to cover the whole Osier Ridge, almost blinding on a good day. I imagine mine looked the same from Osier.

There was one slight problem on the smaller heliograph. If you snapped the shutter open and closed too violently it tended to throw the instrument out of line, and, of course, the flash would no longer be seen from Osier. Very careful and gentle opening and closing made it unnecessary to re-sight the instrument, though.

The main problem I had was keeping the sun focused exactly right on the shutter. As the sun moved, the shadow dot would crawl away from the tip of the front sight's shadow. So, I had to use my thumbscrews after every few words to center the dot again on the front sight shadow tip. Just a quarter of an inch off would interfere with communication. The operation became automatic with me — open and close the shutter to spell out a word or two, twist thumbscrew to re-center the dot, send several more letters, adjust the thumbscrew — over and over.

It took a bit of patience and, with relatively inexperienced people, sending or trying to read code from the other station was tedious, obviously. Even a short message took time. An experienced code man could have worked faster, of course.

There was one other problem also. The sun's movement took its reflection on the second mirror out of line with the main sending mirror and dimmed the flash, so it had to be adjusted periodically, although not as often as the sending mirror's dot on the shutter.

I think maybe these constant small adjustments made the men hate to use the heliographs, but it wasn't too hard to keep them in mind. And the Forest Service's own simplified code made it much easier to master the letters, even though you still had to keep part of your mind on both problems of signaling and adjustment at the same time.

Fortunately we had only one fire to report in Blacklead's area that summer, if I remember correctly, and it burned itself out in one stump the lightning struck. Maybe we'd have had some trouble with trying to get alidade bearing numbers across if that had been a bad fire summer. I did try to spot some that got started in the territory toward Moose and Osier, and we somehow seemed to have more trouble with numbers than with letters — our own lack of experience, I'm sure. I never knew whether any bearings I sent helped in triangulation for pin-pointing any of their fires. I don't think either Osier or I ever got a message through without a lot of repetitions, but that was because neither of us were experienced signalmen. Once I think we tried to focus on bonfires as an experiment at sending a signal at night, but only got faint glimmers. I've been told that it can be done.

I think the main problems of those who tried to use the heliograph for Forest Service communication were due to inexperience rather than to the instrument itself. It takes many months of hard work and practice to be able to send and receive code with any ease at all. Anyone without that experience would probably need to check himself on every letter he sent. And in receiving from the other station it would be easy to make mistakes in the number and duration of flashes and pauses when your mind and eyes were twisting from the code sheet to the flashes coming in.

Even with a couple of years of weekends here and there practicing signaling with flags in the Boy Scout troop I belonged to did not make me able to come anywhere near the skill needed to get a message across without mistakes and repetitions. The professionals on ship-board, in the navy, send and receive extremely fast — with lights, of course, which do not have the added factor of keeping up with sun movements with the focusing screws. For an amateur, to use the heliograph would take plenty of patience. I know, because I was one of those amateurs.

I think I mentioned to you the IWW smokechaser on Blacklead who called it a toy; and because of my age, I suppose, assumed I was simply playing like a kid. He threatened me with a knife several times to make me put up my instrument when he caught me trying to make my report to Osier. He went into rages at times that made me afraid he'd smash the heliograph.

The other interesting incident of that summer connected with my heliograph moments was more fun. A coyote began to come out of the trees down a bit below me every time I got the heliograph out. He always sat up, almost like a dog, and watched me until I finished and started to pack up. Then he would trot back into the woods. I never saw an animal so curious.

The heliograph was fun, but I will confess that I was glad when they sent me to Moose for my second summer and I could use the phone.

A CARGO PLANE CRASHES

By Jack Nash

My first fire was in 1932 in Glacier Park. After standing in line most of the day at one of the warehouses bordering the Missoula railroad tracks near the Northern Pacific Hospital (Now the Missoula General Hospital). I was signed up to go.

We rode in the back end of Reo speed wagon trucks — with various pieces of equipment.

Just past Evaro we were treated to heavy dust from road construction. It was so dense we could not see the truck about a hundred feet ahead of us.

Next, a fire at Hubbard Dam. On the return trip, signed up to go to a fire at Thompson Falls. My last fire, Tri Creek, 1974, was within view of my 3rd fire of 1932.

My wife and I moved to Hamilton in 1936. And I went on a few fires from there. I was on a fire high up on White Cap Mountain with Rod Krout the day the Germans invaded Poland. Within a day or two of this, the Devil's Wash Bowl fire blew up. We could see the smoke cloud. But in August of 1939 I had signed up for the Roaring Lion Fire just above Hamilton.

It was still daylight and we had just got a good start up the trail toward the fire which the Ranger, Fitzgerald, said was one of the most cooperative fires he had ever had as it did not wait for him to walk in to it but met him half way.

Our crew was met shortly after starting into the canyon by a CCC boy coming down the trail at a run, and very excited. We became somewhat excited, too, when he explained that a plane dropping cargo in the canyon had crashed. One of the foremen asked for hurry-up volunteers and fifteen or more of us grouped and, leaving our tools, hurried ahead of the main crew. It was dark, though not black dark, when we got to the crash. Clarence Sutliff from Hamilton had gone along on the plane as cargo dropper and had been able to get pilot Dick Johnson out of the wrecked plane which, if I remember right, was upside down in the slide rocks.

We made a stretcher of poles and (I suppose) sleeping bags — for there were some with the plane — and placed Dick upon this. He was conscious but made no effort to talk or move.

Thus began the long night, though it must have been 11 p.m. then. There was a man at each end of the stretcher and never less than two on each side ALL THE TIME — no matter what the trail. We moved over the slide rock several hundred yards to the trail, where Sutliff, who was able to ride a horse (I have no idea where the horse came from) talked to Dick; saying that the worst was over and that everything was going to be fine.

How many times we changed stretcher-bearers I have no idea, but often. And in spite of the very, very-narrow places in the trail we kept six men on the stretcher at all times.

Dick Johnson was a tough bird — no complaining or sound unless we accidentally all got in step and the stretcher would sort of "lope" - then a small groan told us to break step.

Finally daylight and then the assembly point where other hands put him in the ambulance for the trip to the hospital.

Another crew with an army stretcher met us but we continued to use the one we had.

The stretcher crew, with arms feeling like they hung near our ankles, had coffee and sandwiches; and then to bed before again heading for the fire.

Sutliff I saw later that month in Hamilton where his oldest boy was in my group of Cub Scouts.

Later (1942) Clarence Sutliff recommended me into the Smokejumpers — and Dick? Well, he piloted the Ford Tri-Motor when I made my first jump on June 13, 1942 on the long-obsolete Sixmile field west of Missoula.

The following was written some time in August or September 1942 —

MY FIRST FIRE JUMP - 1942

Tom Poole and I were hauling and stacking some oat hay at Moose Creek Ranger Station on August 3, 1942, when our Squad Leader, Earl Cooley, told us we might have a chance to jump on a fire on Pettibone Ridge in the Moose Creek District yet that day. "Our first fire jump" was our thought as we were the last two of a squad of eight to get our jump, as Art Cochran and Dick McClung had jumped on a fire and returned; while Don Whitmarsh, Al Nielsen and Harold Fuller were at this time on a fire, having jumped the evening before. Earl of course was an old hand at the game, with this his third season.

About 3:30 p.m. Dick and Art relieved us of the mule team and loaded hayrack so we could get ourselves ready. First a checkup on the map showed a good jumping chance on the Pettibone ridge about a mile above the deep saddle with the fire to the south and east of the saddle. Alternate Bert Waldron told Tom we should go from our landing meadow to below the old burn and then grade around the hill to the fire - also that the timber around the fire would be large, limby, white fir. Both statements were later of value to us in helping locate and fight the fire.

Earl then helped supervise assembling of our supplies. Our fire packs, which were ready for individual use, were roped together - our canteens filled - spotting burlaps set out, the saw with it's burlap chute and the climbers spurs and belt, also.

Then a last moment checkup of our jumping suits to be sure everything needed was there. Then we were ready for the plane.

At 4:30 p.m. the Travel-Aire plane, with Dick Johnson as pilot, arrived. We were in the process of suiting up and as soon as our packs were adjusted and inspected we climbed in.

To me there is always an odd sensation to leaving the ground and this time it was no different.

With the landing field only about a hundred feet below, then to come over the river at the end of the air field with its additional sudden depth of cliffs, it seems one has raised up an additional several hundred feet with no effort.

As we headed down river for the turn, gaining altitude, the river seemed to shrink to toy size and pools which we knew were ten to fifteen feet deep appeared the depth of water in a wash tub. We made the turn and were on our way up the Selway toward the fire. The gum I was chewing didn't keep my mouth moist so I know I was more tense than on practice jumps, but not so much so that I didn't keep looking for lookout towers and the Bear Creek Ranger Station. Then dead ahead we saw smoke. We flew through deep saddle and scouted the fire, which was smoking considerably, but apparently not traveling much. Then on to a higher altitude to look over the spot to jump.

Earl looked at me and asked "OK"? The spot looked small but open and no rocks. I nod back "Yes". So out went the first spotting chute, but it went down over the hill, and we released another. It drifted past the opening so Earl prepared to let me out well above the ridge with the expectation that the wind would carry me back onto the spot if I kept my chute headed directly into the wind.

Tom and I had put on our helmets when the first spotting chute went out. Then as the second one went out I snapped my static line and placed my right foot on the step preparatory to the jump.

On the next pass Earl called for Dick to cut the motor. I waited a moment for the slipstream to diminish and out I went. Though it is a physical shock, the opening of the parachute is always welcome. And so it was this time. I tipped my head back to visually inspect the chute, which was ok. So, grabbing a guideline, I turned so I could see the spot and then turned the chute to face the wind. Watching the ground by sighting over my feet I didn't seem to be drifting right. I seemed to have hit the same current of wind as the first spotting chute so that I went down hill. There were plenty of green trees to land in but it wasn't the spot.

Earl had said to hold into the wind, as I'd overshoot the field. But finally I had lost so much altitude that I turned and headed directly for the field - only to land in the trees at the lower edge of the meadow.

I was about eight feet up a green lodge pole so after throwing out my streamers to show I was uninjured I took my short let-down rope and fastened it around the tree, made a loop for my foot and thus raised myself up high enough to unsnap the harness from the canopy, then slid down the tree.

I had made my first fire jump. I was down safely. Now to locate Tom, who by this time had jumped, and then to locate the fire.

It was nearing 6 p.m. Tom had landed in the center of the spot a good landing, and was he tickled. We located our fire packs; hunted up the saw and began to fold up Tom's chute. I had to cut down 4 small trees to get my chute and of course it had two small holes in it.

Tom put up the streamers so the packer could locate the equipment. Then, shouldering our packs, we took off down the trail through the lodge poles. Soon we reached the old burn. Across the canyon the Twin Buttes Lookout stood out against the sky like a sore thumb.

At the lower edge of the old burn we turned left and angled down through the green trees. Elk and deer tracks were plentiful as we crossed well-worn trails and then the smoke was just ahead of us. We were on our first smokejumper fire of 1942. 8 p.m. and we were on the fire. Taking my shovel I scouted the fire. There were several snags afire which had to be felled before dark. The fire wasn't traveling but had been hot enough to sear the lower branches on several large trees so they seemed to be wearing a two-piece suit. Green above; brown below.

Until 10:30 p.m. we worked on snags and the placing of a trench along the upper side and end. Then, everything quiet, we crawled into our down sleeping bags. What sleep we got was sound and we were on the go again at 5 a.m. Breakfast at 7 rather hurriedly. Then a trip for water.

A large old grouse sidled along and over the end of a downed log with all the dignity of a judge. More fire control by falling a large white fir, which was burning. A 42" tree with a 48" saw - some fun - but a good fall with no spread of fire. At 4:30 p.m. I headed for Pettibone Lookout to get more grub. Slim Tunstall and Leo Walker were there and the coffee Slim made especially for me was indeed a welcome addition to the supper he had already prepared.

Back to deep saddle by 9 p.m. with thunder and lightning but very little rain. To camp at 9:30 and soon to bed. While gradually the sky cleared and the stars one by one came out from behind the clouds. Another day. Mop up work all day. We'll go home tomorrow. Home meaning Moose Creek Ranger Station.

Earlier to bed that night and an elk snorted and stamped as we got in bed. No, we never saw him. A bat cut pinwheels over my head again and again and then I was asleep.

Daylight again and I warmed up some grub. Then it's inspecting the fire. No hot spots here not even warm; so it's cold trail all the line and fire.

By 8:30 a.m. we assured ourselves the fire was out so we loaded up our fire packs and started for the Bear Creek Ranger Station.

From the lodge pole and white fir stands through the stately cedars down the trail we hiked - the packs getting heavier. A half hour at noon and on to Bear Creek Ranger Station at 2:30 p.m. to where Jack Krout welcomed us with something to eat. Here we learned that eight of the Seeley Lake Crew would be there that night, they all having jumped on a fire.

I called Earl Cooley at Moose Creek and reported in. We were ordered to go with the packer, Jess Peele, on the following day to Moose Creek where we arrived at 4:30 p.m.

There's been no report of smoke so my first fire jump is officially ended.

We take to the air
On other men's wings,
No airplane landings for us
You can bet we'll be there
In the middle of things,
When your forest fire starts a fuss.

We'll go out the door
And give a big shout
That will sound o'er the motors roar
We'll take the shocks
Though it jars our socks
When the parachute billows out.

So down through the air
We'll come when we're called
Whether here at home or abroad
So when the fires flare
And you want the flames stalled
Just call on the parachute squad.

1974: The Forest Service smokejumpers have done a good job through the years - many changes in equipment and the 30' nylon parachutes with modifications that give good steer ability and handling, while their packing and deployment bag gives an easier opening shock than the 30' steerable silk eagle parachutes though now they jump at faster airspeeds.

Those early '42's were days of long hours. Our jumper pay was \$166.66 per month and board. (The board added for hazard pay.) It was the spring of 1946 that overtime came into the Jumper project.

Earl Cooley started me rigging parachutes at Moose Creek and I took a two-week course that fall from Frank Derry (in a building on the 200 block on West Front Street, Missoula) to obtain my FAA Riggers Certificate before entering the Navy as a FR 3/C in January 1943.



SWAN HILL or MISSION LOOKOUT

Flathead National Forest

from 1923 photo

SWAN HILL or MISSION LOOKOUT

Flathead National Forest

from 1923 photo

MEMORIES OF GEORGE HAYNES AND HONEYSUCKLE RANGER STATION

By John F. Breakey

I shall now endeavor to reminisce, recounting some of my experiences with George Haynes, District Ranger, in early days on the Coeur d'Alene, beginning in 1932. We were at the old Honeysuckle Ranger station. Frank Bishop, of the Coeur d'Alene NF, was trying to complete the Crooked Ridge road, then being built on George's district. He had commenced the activity a couple of years previous to my arrival at Honeysuckle. As usual we were short of funds and working long hours. We often joined crews including Bishop's men, extras working for me, and Haynes' crew. By October, our personnel were reduced to a total of twenty men. Bishop had pulled his crew off Haynes' district; then occupied elsewhere. No relief until snow. My brush clearing crew was rushing to finish our assignment of removing the low land brush and debris, in preparation for burning the following winter, after summer's drying, then controlled burning next autumn.

I had spent the previous winter, designing and supervising construction of a brush rake assembly, mounted on a gasoline-powered swamp, wide-gauge tractor. The rake attached to a bulldozer frame, roared through the brushy stream bottoms, stacking its gatherings, windrowed neatly near the center of the clearing. Cleanup crews were required to slash and trim fringes of collections. It was necessary to saw down logs into sizes small enough to be man handled, and tossed on the windrows. Machine was a Caterpillar, an R5 with power of the previous 75.

One instance, vividly remembered. George converted four of his pack mules to harness. Hitched the pairs tandem. Used them to skid logs and poles as bridge repairs and reliners for cross drains. George's pickup skinner, proved unsatisfactory. In my crew was a Kentuckian; tall, raw-boned with red hair. Ishram overheard George complaining of his driver's inability to manage the skidding team. Ishram immediately offered to give the mules a chance of obeying his commands.

The agreement resulted in a happy ending for the ranger's skidding job. Red's first act was to remove the gear from mules. Fit them with sweat pads, collars that suited each mule, and halters; discarding the blinder equipped bridles. Ishram's method was leading his team, avoid aggravating already sore mouths.

It suited the converted pack mules. Being used to lead lines, the animals began responding to commands, skidding logs better than horses, as they managed the wet steep hill sides, surprising the ranger. Red lowered the kitchen's sugar cube supply considerably. Soon, the mules were following Ishram, regardless of lead lines, braying whenever he became lost from sight.

We worked together until the pass to the lake was snowed in. Collected all rigs behind the tractor fitted with makeshift planked A-frame. Came over Honeysuckle pass, making the trip between daylight and dusk in a blinding snowstorm.

"EVOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL GRASSLANDS"

By Bernie Alt and Glenn Mueller

The predecessor of the National Grasslands had its beginnings in the mind of Phillips Company, extension agent Henry Lantz and the Malta Commercial Club at Malta, Montana, in 1925. For a number of years this group had watched the erosion of the hopes and dreams of small farmers and ranchers in northern Montana, trying to make a living on 160 or 320 acres of homestead. This erosion extended very dramatically to the land itself in the late 20's and early 30's because of the extreme drought in the Great Plains.

The "Malta Plan", as it was known, to begin with, was sanctioned by Congress in 1934 after Mr. Lantz had been called to Washington, D.C. to explain the proposal to M. L. Wilson, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and the U.S. Congress. Mr. Lantz was the first manager of the Milk River project of the Resettlement Administration.

The gist of the plan was that the Federal Government would take options to buy or buy outright land from farmers and ranchers who could not continue to operate as in the past because of low prices, drought, erosion of land, and other reasons. Any of the individuals who desired would then be resettled in the Milk River Valley and be loaned the money to level and otherwise prepare for irrigation.

Along with this, the Resettlement Administration would re-seed the denuded farm land to grass - primarily crested wheat grass, which had recently been introduced from Russia by Professor Hanson of South Dakota State College and develop livestock water by dams, springs or wells. *Concurrently grazing districts were formed under state law and the newly located farmers would run their cattle on the grazing land during the spring, summer and fall, and bring them to the valley to feed in the winter from hay and crops raised on the newly irrigated lands.

*Bernie's uncle, Charley Alt, was on the Grazing Board at Roundup almost from the inception of the district until he retired in the early '50's.

This re-purchase and resettlement program was put into effect over a large portion of eastern Montana, North and South Dakota, the Thunder Basin in Wyoming and other Great Plains states in the "Dust Bowl" along with areas where problems occurred in timber denuded areas of the Northeast and Northwest.

In the U.S., as a whole, approximately 7,000,000 acres were repurchased. As the country gradually got back on its feet, the land was transferred to the Farm Security Administration in 1937. By this time, thousands of dams had been built, fences constructed, old hazards such as homestead fences and cellars had been eliminated and the land had been stabilized, and was again producing for the American people - this time in grass rather than wheat.

In 1941 the land administration was again moved. This time to the rather new but highly capable Soil Conservation Service, the brainchild of H. H. "Big Hugh" Bennett, the first administrator.

The Land Utilization or Resettlement, or S.C.S. lands, as they were known, were very capably administered through World War Two and were completely restored and considered as some of the best grazing lands in the Great Plains. These lands, which 20 years before were considered worthless and were being bought for from 50 cents to \$2.00/Acre, were now being fought over in modern day range wars. These L.U. lands were worth every bit as much as any other western dry grazing lands.

In connection with the modern range wars, a big argument had occurred in the early '40's in what was known as the Kropp-Weber pasture. As a result, a walking plow was used to plow a furrow to show who grazed where. In 1955 when new range disagreements occurred, the division of the range was again made on this furrow. This time however, it was fenced.

January 1, 1954, all of the L.U. (Land utilization) lands in the Great Plains were again transferred, this time to the U.S. Forest Service, a land managing agency in the Department of Agriculture. Interest ran high among Forest Service officials on the new acquisition, so in the early summer of 1954 a number of Forest Service brass descended on the Malta area. The group included Floyd Iverson, Fred Kennedy, Chic Joy, and Zane Smith. We took these fellows on a visit of the L.U. lands, proceeding in the process to get thoroughly stuck, and covered Floyd Iverson with mud as he and the rest of the visitors pushed. The next day Mueller managed to hit a washed-out culvert, 60 miles from anywhere and put the car engine through the radiator. There were two very nervous new local employees of the Forest Service. The fact that Alt and Mueller are still F.S. employees speaks as to the good nature of the visitors.

In 1956, a group of brass, i.e., George Mahrt, Ed Stein, "Jack" Curtiss, Fred Johnson - one other, can't remember the name now - came out to look at Badlands. First of all Curtiss ran over a rock and punched a hole in the gas tank so we had to go back to Malta for a different car. Next we were about 20 miles north of Whitewater on the Canadian line and he lost a bet on whether a distant object was a rock or a resting eagle. I told him it was a Golden Eagle and that's what it turned out to be. There were lots of Golden Eagles in northern Phillips country then and, while perched, they looked like big black rocks. He tried to sneak up on some geese - spent an hour when he had been told it was impossible. And it was.

We traveled East through Frenchman, past Thoeny, Opheim, and then south by Baylor and 300 square miles of the roughest badlands in Montana - to Glasgow, then back to Malta, over 400 miles.

The concept of grazing district administration by local grazing boards was not lost, however, and the Forest Service continued this. It was probably the most successful of all grazing land management practices in the Region.

At first it was very hard for the Forest Service to understand the concept of fire control by the districts and associations. The districts were responsible for fire control, but being a fire organization, the Forest Service felt it was their responsibility, especially when they heard about the 40,000 acre "Election Day Fire" in 1952, or the 3,000 acre John Richardson fire in 1955, which we didn't even bother to report. However, with land scattered over an area 170 miles by 160 miles, centralized fire control would have been an impossibility.

Even under Grazing District Management, there were problems. One permittee north of Loring threatened to shoot Mr. Mueller's airplane out of the sky if he flew over his ranch counting his cattle again.

Problems arose with some individuals running too many cattle. The districts handled the trespass. We had a trip one spring before the turnout time of April 1, in 1956. We counted all of the permittees in the Murdock-Anderson area and found over 1,000 head of "extras" ready to be turned out.

In North Dakota, a permittee had 75 head of cattle on the association ground early. We counted them and the count was turned in to the Board at Medora. The Medora Association rule was \$5 a head the first 5 and \$10 for anything more. His total fine was \$725. Didn't even have to gather - the trespasser did that.

The Coal Creek Grazing District, north of Zurich, Montana, had about 30 permittees. It also had about 700 head of excess preference on the books. The excess could not be run because of range conditions. After we carefully mapped each allotment, we explained to each individual why the preference had to be reduced. The grazing board, along with Mons Tiegen of the State Grass Conservation Commission, met with all members in a meeting and read the rancher's name, his preference, and what his reduction would be. There were no protests.

The year 1958 saw the last move of the old L.U. lands. This time, however, only the Montana lands which were transferred to the BLM. This was done in the interests of better service to the public as many of the L.U. lands were interspersed with the BLM lands. The rest of the lands in the northern region, along with those in South Dakota, Wyoming, and the rest of the Great Plains, were retained by the Forest Service and named the National Grasslands in 1961.

In the Northern Region area, location for management units were at Malta, Lewistown, and Miles City in Montana; at Lemmon in South Dakota, and at Watford City, Dickinson and Lisbon in North Dakota. When the Forest Service took over the lands on January 1, 1954, there were 9 men in the region responsible for management of this nearly 41 million acres of land. Glenn Mueller, Manager; Bernie Alt, Assistant at Malta; Al Whitten, Manager, and Jake Callintine, assistant at Lewistown. Doc Cornell, manager at Miles City, Lloyd Good, Manager at Dickinson, North Dakota, with Arnie Winsness, Watford City, and Harold Johnson, assistant at Medora. Doc Dyson was the manager at Lemmon, South Dakota. He incidentally was the only manager of that project from the beginning until he retired in 1959. Mueller, Callintine and Alt are the only ones still with the Forest Service.

What should be the future role of these lands? They served as a home for Indian, buffalo and other early inhabitants. Mountain men probably roamed parts of them. The Homestead Act of 1862 eventually opened them for entry and they served the America that was being settled.

With re-acquisition of the lands, they were rejuvenated. They produced for a country trying to recover from a depression, a drought, and a world war. Now again, the direction of the country has changed. This time to an awareness of the environment we live in and how we can protect and maintain this environment so that all forms of life people, animals, birds, etc. - can live in it

For this reason it would seem that all of the National Grasslands can best serve the American people by being there for the people to use, with wisdom, as a part of the public lands system.

MULES OF THE REMOUNT - A LEGEND IS BORN

By Peyton Moncure

Nineteen Thirty was a good year in the Northern Region. Good because, among other reasons, that year saw the beginning of a colorful project that became closely identified with the U.S. Forest Service—the establishment of the Remount Depot with a promising program involving pack mules and saddle horses.

Here, in a beautiful location up Ninemile Creek about 30 miles from Regional headquarters in Missoula, Region 1 began the acquiring and breeding of superior pack mules and saddle horses which were to have a special destiny. Here would be headquartered the elite in pack and riding stock especially developed for the western mountains; and here would take place their training for the important role of transporting freight in the rugged forests of the Region, hauling supplies to fire lines, servicing lookouts, transporting construction materials into back country Ranger Stations and spike camps. This was the "Time of the Mule." This would be transportation with a capital "T".

Begun in 1930, phased out in 1954, the Ninemile Remount Depot saw history made, saw colorful characters and colorful events, saw the passing of the mule era with the great pack strings, witnessed the coming of the "Tin Goose"—Ford Tri-motor whose ilk was responsible, in the final analysis, for the demise of the Remount Depot. In between these dates, the Remount Depot and its neighborhood partner, the Winter Range near Perma, saw such events as the Forest Service "field days"—exhibitions put on for the public during which anyone could partake of a barbecue lunch for twenty-five cents, could watch packers load and show their pack strings in action, and could watch rodeo-type displays of bronc riding, lassoing, and other skills expected on a working stock ranch.

During these field days of the 1930s and 1940s, Dave Pronovost, the Forest Service blacksmith, demonstrated how the toughest and most stubborn of mules could be shod efficiently and without injury to either blacksmith or mule. It was during the early 1940s that Pronovost became known as the "Flying Blacksmith" when the Forest Service started flying him into Big Prairie on the Flathead to shoe the large number of mules kept there during the summer. He attained a record of 34 horses and mules shod in 1 day.

The Remount Depot acquired some new neighbors during the winter of 1933-34—a contingent of 600 CCC enrollees. Ed Mackay, the Ranger at Powell, spent that winter at the Remount Depot organizing and constructing what was to become Ninemile CCC Camp about 3 miles above the Depot. Mackay later became the Superintendent of the Remount Depot from 1940 to about 1950, following W. C. "Cap" Evans, who was superintendent from 1935 to 1939. The other superintendents were Jake Williams, who was the first, and served until 1935; and Don Chamberlain, the last, who served until the Depot was phased out.

It was at the Remount Depot that a delegation of United Nations foresters stayed for several days and nights as part of their educational field trips to forestry-oriented projects in various parts of the world. These foreign foresters, most of who could speak very little or no English, were an interesting group. One of the highlights of their stay here was the capture of a bothersome black

bear in a bacon-baited bear trap made of a large culvert. The most interested observed was a German forester, a "Baron" something-or-other, who was so fascinated by the bear that the rest of his colleagues immediately dubbed him "Smokey Baron," and the name stuck with him. Lloyd Noel, Regional Supply Officer, was in charge of the Remount at the time and his cooks turned out superb—according to the visitors—meals everyday, with plenty of hot tea for the predominantly tea-drinking Europeans and Asians.

The Remount and its pack strings took part in some of the filming of "Red Skies of Montana," by 20th Century Fox. Incidentally, it was on a motorcycle ride between the Remount Depot and Missoula that the originally chosen star, Victor Mature, was involved in a wreck that landed him in a Missoula hospital for a time with a broken leg. After that happened the movie company packed up and went home to Hollywood, but were back the next summer for another try at filming the movie. (The final version was shot the following year with Richard Widmark as the star.)

It was during the late 1930s that a fleet of three giant "transporters" for mules came into existence—giant stock bodies built onto Kenworth chassis, each capable of carrying an entire pack string and its lead saddle horse. These 10-animal trucks had 10 wheels, the four sets of rear dual wheels being driven by tandem drive shaft, and were planned and developed at the Forest Service Engineering Shop in Missoula by Dave Pronovost, the blacksmith in charge of the stock. Frequently during the fire season these green behemoths—sometimes all three in a caravan—would pass through Missoula loaded with mules on their way to a fire, many pedestrians stopping to gaze at the thrilling sight of the unusual travelers whose heads and necks extended above the solid metal truck racks.

Many of the "old-timers" who were associated with the Remount Depot during its heyday have died, and information and photographs are not as complete as could be desired. But an old letter written by E. Arnold Hanson, Assistant Chief, I&E, Northern Region, bears this bit of interesting information:

For your own personal information, you might be interested to know that during the time the Remount Depot was in operation, we raised Morgan, American Saddler, and Thoroughbred horses. Heavy-grade brood mares were crossed with jacks, which in turn were crosses between Spanish and Mammoth breeds to produce the mules we needed for our fire strings. At one time there were ten pack strings at the Remount Depot utilized almost exclusively for fire suppression work. The Depot was abandoned primarily as an economy measure, but also because of our increasing use of aircraft in forest fire control and the constantly increasing number of miles of road in the Region, which cut down our need for pack stock.

Yes, "those were the days." And then it was over. The airplane had won. Planes could drop cargo by parachute onto a fire so much faster than a mule could deliver it. And fewer lookout stations needed to be supplied by pack strings—helicopters could do the job now. In fact, the airplane was even beginning to phase out the lookouts themselves. The fire-spotting plane could do the job better and cheaper.

The words "Remount Depot," "Winter Range," "mules," and "pack string" were fast fading from use. The times—in the words of a certain folksinger—"they were a-changing."

But a legend was being born.

FROM THE VIEW POINT OF A LOOKOUT
June 6, 1938

Do you like to fish in a cold mountain stream
or camp by the side of a creek?
Do you appreciate the vastness of a forest, green
And the wild game that its shelter seek?

Does it occur to you what might happen when you
Throw cigarettes from an automobile,
Or leave a campfire when it's only half out,
And return to your post at the wheel?

Do you think it is fair to be careless as that
In timber that's not only yours,
But the property of millions of other folks
Who also enjoy native lores?

Please folks, remember, it's not any fun
To watch a blue curl of smoke
Arise from a prize piece of nature's White-Pine,
And I really mean, it's no joke.

To assemble a crew of brave fighting men,
And rations, and pack strings, and tools,
And send them to work on a hot fire line
That is fast getting out of control.

They battle the flames and the dirt and the heat;
Discouragement drags at their heels.
In spite of their efforts the giant trees fall
In the path of the great monster's zeal.

At last, at the end of a long weary time
The fire is finally out,
We have a charred blackened mass of debris
Where once God's great masterpiece stood.

So please, won't you think, when you picnic or camp
In this wonderful timber of ours,
It's your duty to watch your campfire and pipe
And be sure, when you leave, that it's out?

Is it too much to ask that you remember these things?
The forests are really yours you see.

So please make your watchword from now on, henceforth
"From Fire We'll Protect Our Trees!!"

Bernice Williamson
Hudlow Mountain Lookout



LOOKOUT TREE ON HORSE BUTTE POINT
Gallatin National Forest
from 1963 photo by W.E. Steue

EARLY-DAY RANGER IN THE PRIEST LAKE COUNTRY

By Henry A. Peterson

INTRODUCTION

My career with the U.S. Forest Service started in June 1925 as a lookout on Cuban Hill on the Falls Ranger District of the Kaniksu National Forest. All of my Forest Service employment, with the exception of details, was on the Kaniksu. I retired April 1, 1956, at the age of 62 from the Forest Supervisor's Timber Management Staff at Sandpoint, Idaho, after 30 years with the Forest Service.

When I was 9 years old, my parents came from Minnesota in March 1903 and homesteaded near Camden, Washington. I attended the local schools and grew up in that community. Recently I was requested by the Pend Oreille County Historical Society to write an article of my recollections of our early pioneering and homesteading experiences. After completing the article it occurred to me that I might have personal knowledge of facts, incidents and experiences during my tenure of duty in the Priest Lake Country not known to others that may be of interest and have some historical value. Especially, since it appears that very little has been recorded about the so-called "Good Old Days" of the Priest Lake Country.

THE BEGINNING

I decided to apply for employment with the Forest Service for the season of 1925.

A girl friend whom I had known since childhood was operating a beauty shop in Newport at this time. Occasionally we would go to shows and dances together. At that time the Kaniksu Forest Supervisor's Office was in Newport. Emory M. Kapp, now retired, was the Administrative Assistant in the Supervisor's Office and was also dating this girl friend. Often, we both wanted dates at the same time. Kapp and I had never met but we knew of each other via our girl friend. So we became rivals; but this was a challenge I accepted. However, soon afterwards I met Kapp downtown in Newport more or less by accident. We became acquainted and from then on we were very good friends. When I filled out the application for employment Kapp introduced me to the office force, obtained and assisted in filling out the application, which was referred to District Ranger John Murray at the Falls Ranger Station. I was hired and assigned as lookout on Cuban Hill during the summer of 1925.

This incident with Kapp and the girl friend started my career with the Forest Service. Incidentally, Kapp and I both lost out. Our girl friend married someone else.

The fall of 1925 was dry and I finally came down from the lookout about the middle of September and was assigned to recondition fire tools. During October, as before mentioned, I took the assembled written Civil Service Examination for the position of Forest Ranger. Later I was notified that I passed with a grade of 84 plus with 5 points added for veterans status during World War I, which gave me a grade of 89 plus.

The frame cabin on Cuban Hill was of gable roof construction. Part of my job in addition to being lookout was to remove the gable roof and replace it with a cupola type roof. Lumber and material were packed in. I was furnished with a set of plans, cut the lumber to fit and tore off the old roof. About the middle of July a fellow by the name of Tom Terrell was hired as an emergency smokechaser and assigned to Cuban Hill to assist me in getting the new roof on as soon as possible. Terrell later was employed by James Evenden and made a career in the Service. Believe he was in charge after Evenden retired.

There were millions of yellow jackets that summer; and while the roof was off, it was difficult to eat, sit, or stand without getting stung. There were also many small flying ants and at times they were constantly falling down our necks and the yellow jackets were attempting to make a meal of them. After attempts at slapping them and getting stung, it was decided it was best to let them have their meal and fly away in peace. It takes a lot of willpower to allow yellow jackets to roam around on the back of your neck but after getting stung with each slap one soon tries to make friends with the pesky insects.

Terrell was a very likable fellow and I was sorry when the roof was completed and he returned to the Ranger Station. I rather enjoyed life on the lookout despite the loneliness. I made friends with a flock of young blue grouse and they became quite tame. Mother grouse would sit on a large rock watching while the little fellows scampered around catching grasshoppers until one day a large hawk spotted them and attempted to have a grouse dinner. The hawk missed but after that I never saw them again. I dug a small hole on the north slope and installed a wooden box for a cooler; soon I had a large pet toad, fed him all sorts of insects until one day a large garter snake spotted him. When I kneeled down to get some butter I almost placed my knee on the snake, which had the toad by the front foot. I killed the snake but Mr. Toad decided it was time to find a safer place and, I lost another friend.

During the summer I had cut and ricked about 5 ricks of buckskin larch firewood, all with a double bitted axe, as I had no saw. Believe this was probably a record supply of firewood on any lookout on the forest. Had to carry the wood about one-eighth mile. It was an early morning and late evening project.

During 1925 while I was on Cuban Hill, the upper part of the Upper Westbranch drainage was burned over by a series of fires set by a dry lightning storm. On the day prior to this storm, District Ranger Murray and Assistant Forest Supervisor Francis Carroll were locating trail in the vicinity of South Baldy lookout and decided to spend the night at the lookout. A forestry student by the name of Blickensderfer was the lookout and Bill Blake, a native in the Bear Paw country, was the smokechaser. Since Murray and Carroll had hiked all day, Blickensderfer and Blake insisted that they sleep on the regular bunks. Blickensderfer and Blake slept on the floor with Blickensderfer next to and in front of the stove. Lookout buildings had no lightning protection those days. During the night a bolt of lightning came down the stovepipe, jumped to the floor under where Blickensderfer was sleeping, killing him instantly. Murray and Carroll gave artificial respiration instantly and worked over him until it was evident that nothing could revive him. Blake was not hurt and immediately grabbed his pack and controlled three fires before returning to the lookout. A bronze plaque was later cemented to a rock near the lookout building and the present Blickensderfer Creek was named in his honor. This storm was also the cause of

the fires, which burned over the upper part of the Upper Westbranch drainage. Also caused the death of two other men.

One afternoon on a steep south slope, south of the present Gleason Mountain, the fire picked up in fury. The overhead, fearing a crown fire, decided to remove the crew to safety and ordered all the men to follow.

Two men, Jackson and Gleason, decided there was a safer way out and refused to follow. Their bodies were later found where they had been trapped by the crown fire while trying to gain the ridge top.

The present Gleason Mountain and Jackson Mountain were named in honor of these men. As I recall, both were transient firefighters. I believe both were laid to rest in the Priest River Cemetery.

Prior to the beginning of the 1926 fire season, Ranger Murray offered me the position of office man and dispatcher at the Falls Station. The summer of 1926 was considered a severe fire season on the Kaniksu as well as on many other Forests in Region One. This office experience was invaluable to me during the coming years. My fiend, Emory Kapp, was very patient and helpful, and made several special trips to the Falls Station to explain policies and procedures. Paper work and office procedures were quite simple in those days as compared with those of 1956 when I retired and 1956 was simple compared to 1968. Those were the "Good Old Days."

THE NAME BISMARK

For years the present Priest Lake Ranger District was known as the "Bismark." While serving as District Ranger, I often wondered why. A nearby mountain was also named Bismark as well as the large meadows on Reeder Creek south of the station. I received the answer from John Nordman, John E. Hanson, and Andy Coolin. These old timers were living in the area during my tour of duty at the Bismark.

John Nordman homesteaded adjoining the Ranger Station on the west, now owned by Mrs. Rose Hurst. Nordman received his H.E. Patent April 30, 1913. The town of Nordman was named after Mr. Nordman. Nordman was related to the three Hagers: Ole, Swan, and John who also homesteaded around the Bismark meadows.

John E. (Jack) Hanson, homesteaded in Section 23, T60N., R5W., about one-half mile north of the Luby road. He received his H.E. Patent April 14, 1906. So far as I know Hanson was a bachelor. I recall Hanson telling that when he first came to that country, Bismark Mountain was covered with brush.

Andy Coolin was an early-day resident of the Priest Lake country. The town of Coolin where he lived was named after him. Do not know whether or not he ever homesteaded. I heard that Coolin had done considerable prospecting around Priest Lake. He had a son named Stewart.

According to these men, during the early days two trappers by the names of Bush and Bismark lived in a cabin near the site of the Bismark Station while trapping on the Bismark meadows, Reeder Creek, and surrounding area.

Bush was killed by a passenger train in Priest River. Had too many drinks and fell asleep on the railroad track, and the evening passenger train ended his career.

Bismark continued to trap alone. Very few knew him but for some time no one had seen or heard of him, so Nordman investigated and found him dead, frozen to death in his cabin. This was during the month of March; do not know the year. Nordman sent word to Hanson and Coolin to help bury the deceased. On an agreed date Hanson hiked from his ranch about 8-miles and Coolin came by boat from Coolin to Reeder Bay and hiked to the cabin. Being in March most of the country was snow covered. They selected a bare spot for the grave somewhere between the late Ralph Lambert's new residence and Reeder Creek and between the old and new highway. The site was covered with wild meadow grass with a few scattered wolf type lodge pole pine trees. I was shown the grave in its natural state by A. S. (Del) McQuilkin. Nordman and Hanson related that they had difficulty digging on account of fairly large round rocks. That required all hands to lift out. They estimated the grave was 4 feet deep. They then went to the cabin and attempted to make a rough box from split cedar but lacked nails to fasten it together. So they carried the body over in blankets, since he passed away in bed. When they arrived at the gravesite, about a foot of water had seeped in and they wondered what to do. They had no bucket to dip out the water and it was getting late so they lowered the body, placed the troublesome rocks on the body and filled the hole. There was a distinct mound as I recall with a headboard of split cedar. Nordman said that the cabin where Bismark lived was the worst smelling place he had ever experienced. He said they skinned the fur animals inside the cabin, threw the carcasses out the door, which added to the smell, and that the smell inside the cabin was almost unbearable. He also stated that Bismark's body was covered with open raw sores. No one knew the cause of death.

Later, after Ralph Lambert bought the Ole Hager place and built the new residence, I attempted to locate the grave for Mr. Lambert in 1957 but was not successful because they had messed up the area with a bulldozer for a cattle pasture. Nordman also stated that some time after the burial they burned the cabin to dispose of the smell and any possible contagious disease.

I have looked in vain for some evidence of the cabin location but never found any clues. It is believed this happened prior to the creation of the National Forests in 1908.

Thereafter, locally the site of trappers cabin was referred to as "Bismark." Later, due to the available horse pasture, a Guard and pack station was established and in 1927 after the creation of the Bismark District it was known as the Bismark Ranger Station. The District name has since been appropriately changed to Priest Lake District. However, a mountain and a large meadow were also named in Bismark's honor and probably will remain for all time.

Recently I was talking to Leland L. (Lee) White who succeeded me as District Ranger in March 1940. Lee also was shown the grave by Del McQuilkin. Lee promised to attempt to locate the grave. Later he told me he was not able to find it due to clearing activities. We both thought that

if the site could be definitely located, it should be preserved as an historical site if permissible by the owners.

THE DALKENA LUMBER COMPANY - August 20, 1912 Timber Sale

Prior to my retirement I was assigned the job of sorting the very old closed timber sale folders for the purpose of retaining those of historical value and disposing of the others.

That was about 1954. Among the hundreds of sale folders reviewed of which many were retained, one sale stands out in my memory, which had a note stapled to the folder, which read "The largest sale in the Region." This was the Dalkena Lumber Company 8-20-12 Timber Sale.

Thinking that some of the statistics, volumes, and stumpage prices, personnel involved, etc., may be of interest to some of the present day personnel, most of which probably never heard of this sale, I recently reviewed this sale folder for some of the highlights.

The sale agreement was signed May 3, 1913, by E. W. Harris, General Manager for the Dalkena Lumber Co.; witnesses were E. B. Tanner and Meyer H. Wolff. The agreement was approved at Washington D.C. September 9, 1913, by Henry S. Graves, Forester, and witnessed by R. Y. Stewart. (Stewart was later Chief Forester in 1931.)

James W. Girard's signature appears on many of the cost reports; his title was scaler. I never met Girard but heard of him many times during my early employment. Mallory N. Stickney was the Forest Supervisor during 1912. Howard R. Flint signed several papers as Forest Supervisor in 1920.

About 1925 the National Geographic Society and the U.S. Geological Survey conducted an expedition down the Salmon River during the month of October. The article "Down Idaho's River of No Return" was published in the July 1926 issue of the National Geographic magazine.

Howard R. Flint, at that time Regional Forest Inspector, was assigned to the expedition by the Forest Service to study the plants and animals.

During the trip Flint came down with a cold. A few days later he became very sick and weak. The party rushed him to Mackay Bar 25 miles down river, 2 days away. In the meantime they radioed for a plane to meet them. Dick Johnson of the Johnson Flying Service met them at Mackay Bar; Flint was rushed to Missoula, but all was in vain; his cold developed into pneumonia and he passed away while the expedition was in progress.

Fred Morrel was District Forester (no Regional Forest) in 1941.

Fred Forsythe is mentioned in an undated memorandum; he was in charge of a cruising party on the sale area. The sale was advertised in the Spokesman-Review on January 19, 1931, with the following volumes and stumpage prices.

Total volume 263,000 M feet B.M. on 18,240 acres, located as follows:

No. 1 Lower Westbranch Chance

5,000 acres

66,000 M. feet B.M. 57% white pine and 66,000 cedar poles

No. 2 Moore Creek - Upper Westbranch Chance

11,000 acres

140,800 M. feet B.M. 55% white pine and 110,000 cedar poles

No. 3 Main Priest River Chance

2,240 acres

32,100 M. feet B. M. 51% white pine and 15,500 cedar poles

The following stumpage prices were advertised and bid. Apparently there was no competition in the bidding.

No. 1 White pine	5.00
Yellow pine	2.00
Spruce and dead W.P.	1.00
All other species	.50

No. 2 Same except white pine 3.00

No. 3 Same

(See following page for prices paid for cedar poles.)

This sale was reappraised periodically and continued until the summer of 1930 when the company sawmill located at Lakena, Washington, burned to the ground and the company ceased operation.

During the spring of 1930 after returning from Half Moon Fire damage cruise in Glacier Park, I helped cruise the remainder of the sale which was up for reappraisal. Lester Eddy, Neil Fullerton, and I were in the cruising party.

As I recall, we had to walk to Camp No. 1, near the old Pelke Station because the road was impassable to motor vehicles of any kind. We walked on the railroad tracks. It usually was July 1 before the road was passable.

According to the contract the company was responsible for brush disposal under the supervision of the Forest Officer in charge. Some years later this was changed and the company deposited cooperative brush disposal funds.

I wonder if this is still the largest timber sale in Region One?

CEDAR POLES UPPER WESTBRANCH CHANCE

River Chance			
6" 25' .10	6"	25'	.15
7" 25' .15	7"	25'	.15
6" 30' .20	6"	30'	.30
7" 30' .25	7"	30'	.40
7" 35' .40	7"	35'	.70
8" 35' .65	8"	35'	1.00
7" 40' .65	7"	40'	1.00
8" 40' .85	8"	40'	1.25
8" 45' .90	8"	45'	1.40
8" 50' .95	8"	50'	1.60
8" 55' 1.10	8"	60'	2.00
8" 60' 1.20	8"	65'	2.15
8" 65' 1.30	8"	70'	2.30
8" 70' 1.45	Shingle Bolts .50 per cord		

Split post 10 cents per hundred

THE YEAR 1926

I was snugly settled and enjoying my new job when all thunder broke loose. On the night of July 12, several hundred lightning fires were started by a dry storm. It was reported that the lookout on Monumental Lookout counted 240 individual fires visible from his station. The weather continued hot, dry, and windy for many days. Within hours all Districts were out of smokechasers and men. There were very few roads or trails. The road from Priest River ended at Nordman and Coolin. There were no side roads. The only trails were up the major drainages and as a result many small fires burned together within a few days, which resulted in fewer but bigger fires (but not necessarily better). The Kaniksu, this was prior to combining with the Pend Oreille, after a week or so had about 1500 men on fires from all walks of life. Many camps were pack camps with long hikes, in many cases trails had to be reconstructed to reach the fire. All camps were crying for more men but few came. The atmosphere was so thick with smoke that lookouts were useless. Fire scouts made trips but when they returned they did not know where they had been since visibility was almost zero.

During 1925 and 1926, J. C. Whittum was Forest Supervisor, Francis Carroll was Assistant Supervisor. Emory M. Kapp was Administrative Assistant. Floyd Cossett was Staffman of Lands & Recreation. John Breen was Staffman in Timber, Management. There were two women clerks.

Robert Dow, Gordon McGillivray, Rolf Fremming, Bill Ferwerda, and Charles H. Tracy were on timber sale work.

Prior to 1925, I was only vaguely aware that there was such an organization as the United States Forest Service. My only experience with the Service was 2 weeks as a firefighter the summer of 1921 on the Sullivan Lake District and several weeks as a brush piler. I recall that Gordon McGillivray was office man for Art Pauley. Now after one season's experience as a lookout, I find myself holding down the position of office man-dispatcher. Little did I know what was in store for me that summer. There was considerable turnover among transient firefighters who were paid at the Supervisor's Office at Newport. Apparently, there were many errors made by the timekeepers at the fire camps, instructions were issued that I audit and OK all time slips prior to being forwarded to Newport, this took considerable time since in those days there were no adding machines or other office equipment other than an old Oliver typewriter. In fact, during my 30 years in the Forest Service, 16 of which were as District Ranger, I never had an adding machine.

The country from the Gleason Mountain ridge to High Rock Mountain, on the Priest Lake District, was on fire. Firefighters going into the Granite Creek drainage had to hike from Nordman to a base camp located at Stagger Inn, a distance of about 15 miles. After the 15-mile hike, some of the men more or less staggered in and someone appropriately named the camp "Stagger Inn." A sign from a ration box was nailed to a tree bearing this name and remained there for several years. It finally became officially known as "Stagger Inn." A year or two later a log smokechaser cabin was constructed on the site.

During 1926 fires also burned much of the Fedar Creek area and the upper part of the Lamb Creek drainage. Also, a good-sized fire in Section 22 and 23, T59N, R5W, in the lower Upper Westbranch drainage. The Quartz Mountain fire occurred in 1926. It covered several sections.

Another fire burned the area west of Kalispell Bay, now a plantation. Most of the fire-killed white pine timber was salvaged during the fall of 1926 and summer of 1927.

There were five Ranger Districts in 1926 on the old Kaniksu.

Falls : John Murray, District Ranger
Coolin : James K. Ward, District Ranger
Benton : Jack Yost, District Ranger
Beaver Creek : Hugh Redding, District Ranger
Sullivan Lake : Art Pauley, District Ranger

There were three of us batching at the Falls Ranger Station and we lived on canned goods from fire camps that had lost their labels. We never were sure what the menu would be until we opened the cans. At first we would shake the can and decide if it sounded like peaches. Upon opening the can we usually discovered that it wasn't peaches, but sauerkraut. Gradually we coded the cans by recording numbers, letters, etc., stamped on the can. This enabled us to distinguish sauerkraut from peaches.

In 1928, when I was the District Ranger, I met a car about half a mile above Stagger Inn. A man and woman from Spokane had come over Pass Creek Pass from Sullivan Lake and were trying to locate Stagger Inn. I told them that it was about half a mile down the road, the woman replied that was wonderful because she was starved. I informed them there was no eating-place there. She became very indignant and told me they saw a road sign indicating the mileage to Stagger Inn, and they had decided to have dinner there. The Forest Service received quite a tongue lashing for such a misleading sign. Between her outbursts, I tried to explain how the Inn had gotten its name. Apparently this did not satisfy her hunger. I directed them to Elkins Resort.

By the middle of August, most of the fires in the lower county had been controlled, but there were many miles of open fire line in the high backcountry. Finally on the night of August 16 it started to rain and continued for 3 days and nights. It even snowed in some of the fire camps in the high country.

I was a very inexperienced dispatcher. Ranger Murray had little time to train me and things began with a loud bang the morning of July 13 when all the fires started. Emory Kapp was very helpful. He made several trips to the Falls office to assist and train me in the policy and procedure. Mrs. Murray was also a big help. The office was located in the Ranger's dwellings with a door between the office and the kitchen. I believe Mrs. Murray knew as much about office procedure as Mr. Murray did.

George Duncan from Missoula was reconstructing the Priest River-to-Nordman Road. Duncan had a warehouse in Priest River stocked with the usual food supplies carried by the Central Purchase Warehouse in Spokane. Mrs. Duncan was in charge of the warehouse. Ranger Districts tributary to Priest River ordered their supplies from Duncan's warehouse. During the fires all fire camp supplies were ordered through Duncan's warehouse and delivered by their trucks. Usually it was midnight before I was able to phone in all the orders from the many camps. The basic fire tools in those days consisted of 2-man crosscut saws, grub hoes, mattocks, double bitted axes and #2 shovels. I had never seen or heard of the Pulaski tool at that time.

During March 1927, I was unemployed. Forest Supervisor J. C. Whittum offered me the opportunity to attend a 30-day Ranger school at the Priest River Experiment Station if I would do so without pay. Since it was planned to offer me an appointment during the coming fall, I attended this school. Instructors were: W. W. White from the Regional Office; J. N. Templar, Forest Supervisor, Deer Lodge National Forest; and Otto York, a District Ranger (I do not recall the Forest). Jack Yost was the District Ranger at the Benton Station at the time. Since we burned most of his wood supply, one weekend we had a "wood cutting bee." The crosscut saws we used were in poor cutting condition, so I volunteered to sharpen several. Mr. White was so impressed that he decided to have a saw filing class with myself as instructor. Everything went fairly well until it came time to swedge the rakers. Most of the new appointees were awkward with the swedging hammer, and the rakers on about six good saws were broken and the saws ruined. Mr. White said it was worthwhile. I doubted this since Rangers and appointed personnel seldom file the Forest Service saws.

After the disastrous fires of 1926 it was decided to create two more Ranger Districts. In 1927 the Bismark and Cusick Districts were created.

Clarence B. Sutliff, now retired and living in Walla Walla, Washington, (and a brother to Kenneth Sutliff employed at the S.O.) was the first District Ranger on the Bismark. Don McGregor was the Ranger on the Cusick District with headquarters at Cusick, Washington.

A. E. (Al) Spaulding, a student at the time, worked for Sutliff the summer of 1928. I was the office man and dispatcher during the summer of 1927. It was an easy fire season and most of the activity was directed on a large trail building program. George Duncan of Missoula was now constructing a road from Nordman to Stagger Inn. The work completed in 1927 made it possible to drive to the Forks of Granite. Within a couple of years it was possible to drive through to Sullivan Lake.

During 1927 the Dalkena Lumber Company logged the fire-killed timber in Fedar and Lamb Creek drainages. The timber from Fedar Creek area was dumped in Granite Creek just below where the Fedar Creek Road crosses Granite Creek. It was floated down Granite into Priest Lake during the spring flood.

The timber in Lamb Creek was decked for truck haul during winter by a fleet of solid rubber tired Republic trucks, owned by a Mr. Nelson of Spokane. Logs were dumped into Priest Lake at Kalispell Bay and towed to the outlet for the spring drive down Priest River. [1]

[1] See photos of scaling decked logs in 4 feet of snow.

For many years logs were transported to mills by a spring log drive on Priest River. Sawmills were located as follows: Beardsmore Mill at Priest River, Humbird Lumber Company Mill at Newport (now Diamond National), Dalkena Lumber Company Mill at Kalkena (burned 1931), Diamond Match Company Mill at Cusick and the Panhandle Lumber Company Mill at Ione.

The Humbird Lumber Company for years drove logs down the Lower Westbranch by a series of flood dams. In 1928 they constructed a log flume down the lower Westbranch from the dam site near the Falls Ranger Station, to the confluence with the Lower Westbranch and the main Priest River. However, this proved to be a bad investment since the grade was so flat that logs jammed in the flume due to slack water and usually the slides of the flume collapsed as fast as they were repaired. Part of the trouble was that much of the construction was done during the winter months and timbers were set on frozen ground and when the ground thawed the flume settled. I believe it was only used one summer and a few logs were delivered via the flume.

On October 27, 1927, while I was the foreman of a planting crew in the Zero Creek drainage, I received notice of my appointment. Clarence Knutson from Missoula who had made planting surveys on the Forest during the summer was in charge of the camp. Floyd Cossitt from the Supervisor's Staff was in charge overall. Karl Krueger, recently retired as Forest Supervisor of the Coeur d'Alene Forest, was my flagman.

There were three planting crews; it was the policy for the foreman to trade planters until gradually they were all the same speed. Roy Kinyon had the faster planters, known as the "Speed Balls;" the "In Betweens" were my crew and Billy Boar had the "Slow Pokes."

For recreation we had a set of horseshoes. One evening Clarence Knutson had won several games of horseshoes in a row. He challenged anyone in camp at \$1.00 per game. No one volunteered, so finally after much coaxing I accepted the challenge. The whole gang was cheering for me and I won three games and \$3.00.

This was a mistake on my part since I was from then on in the doghouse and Knutson criticized everything I did. I probably would have been discharged except for the fact that I had received my appointment. Knutson was later transferred to the Superior Forest in Minnesota. He passed away about 15 years ago. Floyd Cossitt transferred to a southern forest; I believe it was located in Georgia.

Several years after it was created, the Cusick Ranger District was abolished. Don McGregor was transferred to the Shiloh District during 1935 and was again transferred to the West Yellowstone District of the Gallatin Forest. A few years later he developed pneumonia while snow bound at the Ranger Station. He passed away before help could reach him.

During the summer of 1927, the first residence at the Bismark Ranger Station was constructed on a \$1500 limitation. Most of the labor was contributed. Most of the funds were spent for materials. When the building allotment was exhausted the residence lacked a bathtub, toilet, linoleum, etc. The inside woodwork was unpainted and the walls were plastered but not painted and had no built-ins in the kitchen. Sutliff was single at that time. He married a year or so later and had a choice of either a bathtub or a toilet. He chose the toilet.

Rolf Fremming, now retired, was in charge of the construction. Rolf was a mechanical engineer and on the Forest Supervisor's timber staff. Fremming's parents lived on upper Goose Creek near the Idaho-Washington state line at the time.

Prior to 1927, the Bismark was a guard and pack station. Improvements consisted of log cookhouse, log barn (still standing) a frame warehouse, the front of which was partitioned off for a small office which served the purpose until 1935 when the combination office, warehouse and kitchen was constructed under the C.C.C. program. The log cookhouse was then raised. The old frame warehouse stood where the present shop and garage stand now. It was moved to a temporary location, where it remains today. I believe it is now the sign shop.

The water system consisted of a cistern pump between the present gasoline pump and the meadow. After Sutliff was married and had moved into the residence, he dug a well in a draw about 100 yards north of the present bunkhouse, which barely supplied our needs. He installed a 1,000-gallon pressure tank in the basement and pumped with a gasoline engine. When the pressure reached 75 pounds a lever was supposed to flip at the tank and cause a short circuit on the engine magneto, but it never worked. When I took over as Ranger in June 1932, it was discovered that this well was on private land we later abandoned it and dug another near the cookhouse-warehouse and constructed a 10,000-gallon reservoir on the hill east of the warehouse. When pumping into the pressure tank, usually a flood sprayed the basement. I would plan to stop it in 20 minutes, but always I seemed to get involved with other chores. A safety valve would pop off at 80 pounds pressure and the wife would phone or call for me to shut it off. I can hear her words now "the basement is all flooded again."

During my tenure at the Bismark, we were short of water during the dry part of every summer. It was nip and tuck for domestic purposes. Stock was watered at the cistern pump which had a good supply of water, but we were afraid it was contaminated due to old garbage and pit toilets close by to the north.

After the planting job on Zero Creek, I was assigned to Timber Management work marking timber during the fall and scaling logs after deep snow. All large sales were handled through the Supervisor's Office. There were not too many at one time and each large sale had a project man in charge.

There was a gentleman named Bill Ferwerda who was the scaler and project man in charge of the Dalkena Timber-Company sale on Fedar Creek. Ferwerda was terribly fussy about his scaler's cabin, such as coming in with wet shoes, etc. Robert Dow and Louis Fuess while working in the area stayed at the camp and slept in Ferwerda's cabin. Ferwerda was very critical of almost everything they did. On their last day after Ferwerda had left for work, they decided to give him a farewell that he would never forget. They stuffed burlap sacks into the stovepipes on the roof, as well as inside the heating stove. They nailed the extra scale rule to the wall and clinched the nails. They wired the eyelets of his rubber boots, twisted the wires tight and clipped them close.

3. See photos of Tom Baker and myself scaling decked logs in Lamb Creek, 12/1927. There was 4 feet of snow on the ground with zero temperature.

Ferwerda had a new pair of Malone wool pants that he had not worn yet. All blankets used by timber management were stenciled USFS-COOP with 3-inch letters and yellow paint for identification. They found the stencil and yellow paint and labeled the seat of the malone pants USFS-COOP.

When Ferwerda came in that evening he had quite a time getting a fire started. Finally he discovered the sacks in the pipe, after smoking up the cabin. When Ferwerda discovered the bright yellow USFS-COOP on the seat of his new wool pants, he phoned John Breen and made a formal complaint. Breen gave orders that they purchase a new pair of Malone trousers. A Mr. Fann operated a clothing store in Priest River and they had Fann order the largest size trousers made by the Malone Company and sent them to Mr. Ferwerda. I never heard whether or not Ferwerda was able to trade them in for a smaller size.

Not long after this incident, Bob Dow was assigned as project man on one of the large sales. He considered this a demotion and resigned. Within a short time Dow established the Dow Insurance Company in Priest River. He was elected and served several years as State Senator from Bonner County and for many years was Democratic County Chairman. Foremen hired for employment in the C.C.C. camps had to be cleared through Bob Dow; however, Dow so far as I know, cleared all requests regardless of political party affiliation. Bob passed away some years ago.

THE LAMB CREEK FLASH FLOOD

The upper part of the Lamb Creek drainage was burned over in 1926. Later, the Dalkena Lumber Company logged it. It was snagged about 1935 by a Blister Rust WPA crew. They had a winter camp just below the burn in the green timber, frame cookhouse, bunkhouse, etc. That fall the late Frank Walters, myself, and a few men burned the area. It happened on a Sunday early in June, with only a few men in camp.

A rather small black cloud developed over the upper drainage, a few claps of thunder and a cloudburst happened. Since the area was denuded, the rain rushed down the hills gathering cull logs, tops, and debris of all kinds. Those that saw it estimate there was a 20-foot head of water, partially dammed by logs and debris; finally the log jam stopped and held about 1 mile downstream in the green timber. The water broke through, washed out all bridges, culverts, and much of the road. It required a week with a bulldozer to repair the road so that a truck could get through. Later we attempted to burn the logjam but, as I recall, were not very successful. No one at the CCC camp F-142 or at the Ranger Station knew about the flood until someone hiked out and reported the disaster. The upper part of Lamb Creek was a small, narrow stream with moss covered banks and rocks. After the flood it was gouged and scoured about 20 to 40 feet wide with large boulders exposed. The water at the camp was so high that a log floated into the open door of the bunkhouse. It is fortunate that no one happened to be traveling the Lamb Creek Road below the spike camp during the flood since there was a great possibility of loss of life.

THE DIAMOND MATCH COMPANY 10-26-26 Timber Sale - Kalispell Creek

On the night of July 12, 1926, a series of dry lightning storms set several hundred fires on the Kaniksu Forest. The following days were hot, dry, and windy. There were several crew-sized fires the next day located in the upper half of the Kalispell Creek drainage on the Priest Lake District and no men available for a week or more. Much of the drainage burned.

A few weeks prior to the fires the Diamond Match Company had purchased all of the Northern Pacific land and timber within the drainage. At the end of the fire season a large portion of their timber had been fire killed. The Forest Service also had considerable fire-killed timber in the drainage.

The Diamond Match Company considered writing off the loss since it was in the remote upper portions of the drainage. A salvage sale was negotiated. After 38 years I do not recall the volumes involved, which was mostly white pine. Larch was optional, none except right-of-way was cut. However, for silvicultural reasons an estimated 5 million board feet of hemlock was included in the sale contract. Stumpage as follows: dead white pine \$2.00 per M, no brush; green white pine \$4.00 per M, plus \$2.00 brush; hemlock \$1.00 per M, other species \$1.00 per M, plus \$1.00 brush. Hemlock and mixed species appraised at a loss, which was offset by reducing the white pine stumpage.

In those days sales were for white pine. Hemlock was usually included for silvicultural reasons and usually appraised with a minus value, which was carried by the white pine values.

During the fall of 1926 the company started construction of an in-between gauge (i.e., between a narrow and standard gauge) railroad extending from Kalispell Bay on Priest Lake, up Kalispell Creek to Deer Horn Creek in the extreme upper part of the drainage, a distance of approximately 17 miles. Clarence Griggs was the engineer who located the railroad grades. Griggs later had charge of the construction of the Bonners Ferry municipal power dam on the Moyie River.

The railroad grades were constructed by hand labor on a station-to-station gypo basis. Most of the crews were Swedish and White Russians. As logging was completed in the upper drainage, camps were moved to lower country. Rails and ties picked up and branch lines extended up the following tributaries: Chute, Hungry, Rapids, Virgin, Nuisance, and Bath Creeks.

They had two logging trains consisting of a locomotive and nine log cars each. The locomotives were 20-ton, gasoline powered Plymouth with extra ballast. The engineer shifted gears more or less like a truck. (See photos.) Roger Morris of Sandpoint, retired and a long time employee of Lou's Auto Parts, was one of the locomotive engineers. Logs were dumped into a boomed area of Kalispell Bay. (See photos.)

During the annual spring log drive on Priest River the logs were towed to the outlet of Priest Lake and headed for the Cusick Mill. Humbird Lumber Company owned the Diamond Match Company's Newport mill at that time.

During 1926 and part of 1927 J. C. Whittum was Forest Supervisor, John Breen was staff man in charge of timber management. Francis Carroll assistant Supervisor - fire control. A year or two later James E. Ryan took over as Forest Supervisor; Karl Klehm, staff man in timber management; I. V. Anderson was assistant supervisor in fire control. About 1928 Anderson transferred to Missoula and Albert N. Cochrell replaced him.

John Gray was general manager for Diamond Match Company; Jack Barron was chief cruiser and timber procurement. Charles E. Olson, a well-known lumberman and sawmill operator, was logging superintendent. Tom Tedford and Ted Dick were camp foremen. There were several other camp foremen that I cannot recall. There were three logging camps operating simultaneously most of the time. Camps closed down for the winter usually late in December or early January depending on depth of snow and opened in the spring late in April or early May.

During 1927 and most of 1928 John Murray was project man in charge of the sale for the Forest Service, during this period most of the logging was in fire-killed timber.

John Murray was District Ranger at the Falls Ranger Station in 1925. I started my Forest Service career working for Murray.

Late in August of 1928 project man John Murray became ill and requested extended sick leave and I was assigned on September 1, 1928. They were still logging fire-killed white pine but much of it was checking, and boring insect larvae were prevalent. Soon all logging of fire-killed timber ceased. From then on all green timber had to be designated for cutting by marking. About 5 million of green hemlock was included in the sale for silvicultural reasons. The hemlock appraised at a loss but the white pine stumpage was lowered to absorb the loss. The trouble was

the hemlock was very defective. The contract marking instructions defined a merchantable hemlock tree as any tree 50 percent sound.

During the winter of 1927 a marking crew snowshoed to one of the upper camps, batched, and marked the timber in Sec. 22, T36N, R45E. Part of the area was a large hemlock flat with scattered white pine. The crew marked about 50 percent of the hemlock. When I arrived they were logging in this area. Skidding with a 10-ton Holt Caterpillar from this landing logs were trailed over one-half mile of chute to the railroad below.

When I arrived there was a controversy as to whether or not the marked hemlock was merchantable. Some Forest Service personnel insisted that they had to cut it since it had been marked. The company had felled many hemlock trees but not one was merchantable. Most of the trees had visible conks. After looking over the area and cutting, I defied anyone to find one merchantable hemlock on the area. The sale area had many other areas with very defective hemlock that was included in the sale contract.

Karl Klehm was a proponent of clear-cut and burn of such climax types. Soon afterwards the sale contract was modified, marking instructions changed, etc. The sale was divided into three classifications, as follows: "Class A," selective cut, pile and burn; "Class B," selective cut, pile and burn with stand improvement; "Class C," clear cut all merchantable, control burn and plant. I believe this was some of the first clear-cut and controlled burn on the forest financed with brush disposal funds. Most of the felling was done by contract on a per acre basis, based on a cruise of the residual stand. We already had cost per acre based on hourly rates.

Incidentally, the plantation in Fedar Creek was clear cut, burned, and planted.

Most of my time was spent reclassifying the sale area into A, B, and C areas, marking boundaries, traversing the B areas for acreage, preparing bids, supervising cutting, marking timber, etc. I believe I marked 99 percent of the green timber cut on the sale.

I also had a 10- to 20-man brush crew with foreman. Crew boarded at the camps. Piling and burning kept pace with logging since camps were moved when cutting was completed. I had two and sometimes three scalers, depending on volume being cut on National Forest lands.

With the exception of a few long, flat skidding areas by tractor, all skidding was by horses. Very few old time lumberjacks on the job, mostly natives from around Priest River and surrounding area. Due to poor transportation they stayed in camp and went home over the weekends.

Logging was on a gypo basis. Strips at right angles to the railroad or chute were laid out and a price negotiated to saw and skid with horses rented from the company; the company furnished tools.

The logging camps were quite modern as compared to the old time camps prior to World War I when they worked the 10 hours per day and everybody carried his own bedroll, slept on double deck wooden bunks with a little hay for a mattress. Everybody hung their wet socks and clothes

around the central barrel stove in the bunkhouse. No bath facilities. Those days are sometimes referred to as "the good ole days" but what a smell.

Prior to World War I, I worked at several of these old time logging camps. Generally they all served very good food but living conditions were terrible.

A book could be written about the old time logging camps, lumberjacks, and camp foremen, many of which were characters in their own right and known throughout the Inland Empire. Wood-em-up George Yarno and Moonlight Joe Piatt were two of the camp foremen with reputations. But I had better return to the 10-26-26 sale.

As logging was completed in the upper part of the drainage, camps were moved to lower country, rails and ties picked up and railroads were extended up side drainages. There were many miles of hewn log chutes up some of the steep side tributary creeks, none of which can now be identified on account of the Gleason Mountain fire of 1939.

It is doubtful that any of the clear-cut and burn areas treated on the sale area could be identified today on the ground except by a map showing the areas. However, there is one area easily identified located in the xxxxx-1/4 of Sec. 34, T16N, R5W, about 1 mile north of the new Priest Lake Ranger Station. This area was felled during the spring of 1931, burned the fall of 1932, and planted the spring of 1933. The present highway passes through the east end of the area.

Washington State law required that private companies dispose of logging debris. Generally, the Diamond Match Company disposed of logging brush by setting fire to concentrated brush piles left by the gypos along skidding trails. Usually this resulted in a broadcast burn killing all residual timber and had the appearance of a forest fire.

Some years later the Government acquired all the Diamond Match Company lands in the drainage by tripartite land exchange.

Later about 1935 a CCC camp, No. 102, was established just inside the Washington State line. For a winter project the CCC crews snagged all of the 1926 burn plus the areas broadcast burned by the Diamond Match Company. It was planned to control burn the whole area the fall of 1939. However, Mother Nature decided differently; a dry lightning strike about 2 p.m. on August 25, 1939, started a fire in a draw near the top of the north slope of Gleason Ridge that contained a heavy concentration of fuels in the NW-1/4 Sec. 35, T36N, R45E. A sudden strong wind started soon afterwards, which within an hour or two spread the fire in a northeast direction. Before this fire was controlled it covered 9,300 acres. But that is another story covered by a separate chapter.

It is believed that the Kalispell Creek drainage, as a whole, especially in the State of Washington, experienced the most complete and drastic face lifting of any comparable drainage within any Forest in Region One. Personally, I saw the drainage prior to a tree being cut. When I visited the area during the late years, it was difficult to realize or visualize the changes that had transformed the old to the present appearances.

I was just looking at a list of Region One retirees and noticed the name of Joseph S. Boismier. Joe was a crosscut saw filer for the Diamond Match Company during the life of this sale. Later he was employed as a saw filer at the Spokane Warehouse. He had a Civil Service rating. He retired in 1955 and now lives in Spokane. I visited several times with Joe when I had occasion to visit the warehouse prior to my retirement.

It was early spring and camps were operating and our brush crew was burning piled brush. On May 8, 1930, Mary Podlas and I were married. I had only 3 days leave. We got as far as Wallace, Idaho, on our honeymoon which probably wasn't the most romantic trip ever taken by newlyweds. Afterwards, we lived on Priest Lake in a two-room government houseboat, which I had previously stocked with furniture and supplies. The houseboat was on float logs and anchored to piling on the south shore of Kalispell Bay near a permittee summer home. Waves rocked us to sleep on many occasions.

The men in the different camps took up a collection of \$130 to buy a wedding present. They couldn't decide what to buy, not knowing what we had or needed most, so they decided to give us the cash to purchase what we needed or wanted. One day while I was working, the landing camp cook came over and handed Mary a cigar box full of money and a box of chocolates with an apology for the amount collected because many of the fellows were short of funds, not having worked long enough to have received their first check. We were very surprised since we hadn't expected any present from that source. We bought a nice console radio.

Late that summer Mary's younger sister, Frieda, visited us for several weeks. One day while I was on the job the houseboat broke loose and took off toward Kalispell Island and the Upper Lake country. They were accused by everybody of attempting to explore Priest Lake on their own without a paddle. It was a windy day and only a few strands of telephone wire secured the houseboat to the piling and the wire appeared to have worn apart. The landing crew finally discovered they were afloat and leaving the country and rescued them via outboard boat and motor. All was forgiven and I really secured the houseboat for keeps.

The houseboat was later floated to the Beaver Creek Ranger Station, beached and used as a bunkhouse.

At the start of the sale the Forest Service had a used, small, three wheeled, gasoline powered "Buda" speeder for use by the project man. It was located at the landing camp locked in a small speeder house. When I took over, I made inquiry about it and was told garage mechanics could not make the motor operate and that it jumped the rails and was dangerous so I forgot about it.

However, after getting married, living at Kalispell Bay, the job 4 miles by car and 5 or 6 miles by railroad tracks (hiking) transportation was a problem. One weekend prior to marriage I experimented with the speeder. I succeeded in getting the motor to run but no power and the pesky thing did jump the track. Partially dismantled the motor and found that a badly worn part prevented the exhaust valve from opening. I made a new part by hand from the shank of a cant hook at the blacksmith shop, case hardened the part, and away we went, with plenty of power and speed. However, it still jumped the rails. Then I remembered the old saying "after everything else fails, read the instructions." There was an instruction book. After lining up the wheels

according to instructions, it never again jumped the rails. It was used daily to and from the camps, to home and from camp to camp during working days. Estimated I traveled several thousand miles by speeder. I could haul two passengers beside myself and usually met Ryan or Klehm or both when they visited the sale.

Incidentally, a new part was ordered from the company prior to making one by hand. It finally came after about 40-days but never was installed; the handmade part continued to work perfectly. After the sale the speeder was transferred to the Panhandle Lumber Company logging railroad in LeClerc Creek to haul planting stock to a backcountry plantation. I heard they never were able to successfully operate it and finally substituted pack mules.

Several years later while I was District Ranger I observed what I considered to be one of nature's phenomena in regard to restoring some kind of cover growth to barren burned area. This happened on part of the sale area so I should like to mention it at this time. Believe the year was about 1936. During the fall of 1936 we had control-burned a large area in Sections 10, 14, and 16, T36N, R45 E, with a CCC crew. The area concerned was fire-killed during 1926, and had been snagged by the CCC crews. The specific area was in the SE-1/4 of Section 10 and the NE-1/4 of Section 15, along the present road, mostly on the upper side on a south slope for a distance of about 1 mile before the road reaches Sema Pass. The soil was sandy with some rock here and there. The area burned very hard and clean to bare soil. The next spring the area turned a green with a thick stand of small *Ceanothus velutinus* commonly called "buck-brush." There was a very uniform stand as though someone had seeded it with a mechanical seeder. No ceanothus was observed on the area after the 1926 fire and prior to the control burn. My question is, where did Mother Nature obtain the seed? It is difficult for me to visualize that the seed was stored in the soil from the years past or to have been blown there by wind since the seeds are rather heavy.

The seed must have been stored in the soil, but how did they remain viable after two fires? Why didn't they germinate after the 1926 fire? I have asked many people but no one had any answer.

The area was planted to ponderosa pine during the spring of 1936; the survival was fair to good. Within a few years there was severe competition between the small pine and the ceanothus brush. Some years later, in the late forties or early fifties, the area was sprayed with an herbicide from a helicopter to kill the brush. I would suggest that anyone reading this should examine the area if their travels take them by there. The last time I visited the area was 8 years ago in 1960. Would like to visit the area and drainage next summer. I have often heard the saying, "nature abhors a scar." To me, what I have related demonstrates the amazing and persistent laws of nature to heal a scar in a seemingly impossible situation.

At that time it was a policy that the project man prepare a cutover area report at the completion of the large timber sales. I prepared such a report during the winter of 1931. As far as I know it was the only one submitted up to that time; primarily due to changing project men many times during the life of the sale and as a result nobody had the complete history of what happened. The changing of project men was due to the belief that after 30 days at one location they would have to pay board on their own. However, after Klehm came it was discovered that no one had to pay board regardless of length of duty on one sale. Therefore, I remained until the sale was completed.

The last time I checked the closed files on the Diamond Match Company 10-26-26 sale about 1954 the cutover area report was missing and so far as I know it never was located. However, there should be a copy in the Regional Office.

During the summer of 1930 John Gray of Spokane, Inland Empire General Manager for the Diamond Match Company, and Charles E. Olson, the company logging superintendent, visited the sale. I transported them via speeder, camp to camp and up side spurs, etc., to different operations. I mentioned that it was a mystery to me that there was a profit in matches which retailed at 5 cents per box, when one considered all the different activities and operations necessary to produce that box of matches, such as cruising, felling, skidding, loading, hauling, river-drive, pond storage, saw milling, air drying, shipping to Spokane block factory, cutting into match blocks, shipping to Chico, California, making into matches, packing in boxes, shipping to wholesalers, shipping to retail outlets and selling for 5 cents per box. Mr. Gray requested that I guess the average value to the company for 1,000 ft. b.m. of #1 match stock after being manufactured into matches. My guess wasn't even close. According to Mr. Gray the value was approximately \$2,100 i.e., the value they received from the wholesale trade. Then the question was, what was the production cost? Again my guesses weren't close. The production cost was about \$1,300. From those figures it was apparent there was a profit of \$800; I believe that is about a 61.4 percent profit. Not a bad investment. However, not all white pine lumber is suitable for match stock; only a small percent grades #1 match stock.

During the fall of 1926 and 1927 I helped mark considerable timber on quite a number of large timber sales. The marking policy in mature white pine stands was to leave three to five 24", full crowned "Koch. Specials" per acre, wherever possible and mark the balance for cutting. The Koch specials were named after Ellers Koch, for year's assistant Regional Forester, in charge of timber management.

PERSONALITIES AND LIFE IN THE OLD LOGGING CAMPS

I believe I would be remiss if I failed to jot down a few lines regarding some of the well known, old-time logging camp foremen and a few remarks about the old-time lumberjacks and logging camps.

John Specht was a logging camp foreman from the old school. He came west with the Lake states lumberjacks after Paul Bunyon more or less completed logging in that territory. He was an iced road sleigh-haul proponent. He settled in Priest River and for years was camp foreman for the Dalkena Lumber Company. John was a big, raw-boned man and a rough and tumble lumberjack style fighter. According to the tales they told, many tried but few could defeat him.

Specht had a dislike for low rubber shoes, the kind used without leather tops. Also, he disliked anyone who smoked cigarettes, roll-your-own or tailor-made; usually let them work 1 day and promptly discharged them. He also had a habit to kick the bunkhouse door open in the morning and yell "All out" and for no apparent reason would pick out at random two or three men, tell them to get their time slips at the office then on second thought tell the last man to wait, "I'll get you a partner." For a big man he had a high-pitched, squeaky voice, but when he spoke they usually listened. They tell of an incident in the early days. Specht was foreman of a logging

camp located on Priest Lake near Granite Creek. One day for no apparent reason, other than to show who was boss, he discharged a husky young lumberjack who had considerable experience with professional boxing. After he arrived in Priest River and had a few drinks he decided to return to camp and give Mr. Specht a lesson to remember. He told his plans to Buck Brozick, the company office manager at Priest River. From the looks of the man Brozick thought possibly the fellow was capable of winning the fight and figured he should phone the camp and warn Specht. However, he was busy and forgot to phone until towards evening the next day. Specht answered the phone, after Brozick warned him that so and so was planning to return to camp and give him a licking, Specht replied, "He has already been here."

Personally I never met Specht until about 1936 when he was hired as a foreman at the World War I F-159 CCC camp. I had developed a dislike for the man from the many stories told of his many escapades. The environs around the Bismark Ranger Station consisted mostly of a dense stand of seedling, and small pole reproduction, old windfalls, etc. It was a bad fire hazard. John Specht was the foreman of a crew of CCC's that spent several months fireproofing and cleaning up the area so I got to know him quite well. He must have changed; possibly he mellowed in later years. At any rate, I found him to be a very nice person; we all liked and respected him. He was a good CCC foreman.

George (Wood-em-up) Yarno. Wood-em-up George, as he was known, was for many years a logging camp foreman for the Diamond Match Company. He was of the old school, sort of cantankerous at times in that he liked to discharge men indiscriminately; however, he would rehire them a few days later. Wood-em-up George was a great lover of horses and all of his logging was by horse skidding. When the skidding jammers and heel booms took over the skidding, George quit the woods and moved to California and started raising racehorses. He was killed in a car wreck a few years later.

During my time as District Ranger on the Bismark (now Priest Lake) District, Yarno logged the upper Branch Creek drainage; had a tent camp in Section 24, T34N, R45E. It was in this camp where he shot a bear, which had been raiding the meat and cookhouse. (This episode is covered by a separate story, "Bear in the Logging Camp.")

Next he logged the Upper West Branch country, the camp was located a short distance upstream from the upper bridge on the Squaw Valley Road. From there they moved to Goose Creek and logged that drainage.

Hauling was by company trucks. During the summer the Squaw Valley road would get badly wash boarded with all the truck travel. We had a road grader operated by a CCC enrollee, Ishmael (Red) Evans. I believe Red is now grader operator for the Newport District. Since this was a Class I road with a lot of travel we attempted to grade it as often as possible but sometimes it became very rough between visits. About this time the residence phone would ring during the evening; it was often Wood-em-up George. First he would invite me to camp for supper the next day, saying they were having fried chicken and ice cream, etc. Then he would talk shop and other miscellaneous subjects, and then, finally, would inquire as to the whereabouts of the road grader. Later when I heard his voice on the phone I would inform him as to the grader before he could mention fried chicken and ice cream. Every time I happened to stop at camp during the

evening he always took me on a tour of the horse barn; they had beautiful horses. George would give me a verbal biography of each horse. The company sent him to the Palouse country each spring to purchase new horses so he had a complete history of each horse; how much it cost, weighed, age, etc.

From Goose Creek Yarno and the outfit moved to Little Lightning Creek. The company constructed a standard gauge railroad from Kootenai to the upper part of the drainage. The Plymouth gasoline locomotives used on the Kalispell Creek sale were modified to standard gauge and used on this job. Log cars were transferred to the Spokane International Railroad near Kootenai; then transported to a spur on the south side of Pend Oreille River just below the S.I. bridge below Dover where the logs were dumped into log booms in the river and periodically towed to Albeni Falls. This logging operation was about half completed in 1940 when I transferred to the Shiloh (now Sandpoint) District.

Dick Ferrel, a lumberjack preacher from a mission in Spokane was known throughout the logging camps of eastern Washington and Idaho. Dick, as he was known, traveled from camp to camp, made the rounds about once a month. He was always welcome and usually stayed one night. During the evening, services were held, usually in the cookhouse; afterwards a hat was passed and a collection taken. Dick was never charged for board or lodging. He confessed that in his younger days he was a drunkard, a gambler, and led an aimless, useless life.

I attended about four or five of Dick's services. In my opinion he gave a very common sense sermon, void of shouting and violent pleading, based on the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments.

I believe that most of the fellows in camp attended the services. Many of the lumberjacks have quite a vocabulary of profane words. However, it was noticed that they refrained from using cuss words in Ferrell's presence. Should someone forget, others promptly cautioned them.

Ferrel made regular visits to the logging camps on the Diamond Match Company 10-26-26 sale and always came over to my cabin for a visit.

The Blind Peddler

For years when logging camps were operating throughout the Inland Empire it was a common sight in the camps and surrounding towns to see an elderly, blind peddler led by an Airedale dog on a chain. I never knew the man's name although I have seen him many times. This fellow was a logging camp salesman; he usually had quite an assortment of shaving supplies, shoe laces, pencils, toothpaste, brushes, combs, and many other articles used by the personnel of logging camps. I have purchased many articles from him myself. I still have a razor (straight edge and strop) that was purchased from him. He usually stopped a couple of days at each camp. The seeing-eye Airedale dog seemed to be devoted and apparently a very intelligent, well trained dog; he seemed to know where his master wanted him to take him. I have watched him many times in Priest River leading his charge all over town; always waited until the street was clear of traffic before proceeding.

The Old-time Lumberjack and Camps

The old time lumberjack is a vanishing breed of man; very few are alive, today. They are the men who worked as lumberjacks in the Lake states during their younger days and migrated to the west as the timber diminished in the east. They were of many nationalities with Scandinavians and French-Canadians well represented. Prior to World War I they carried their own bedroll and each had a packsack with all of his personal belongings, and quite often his entire fortune.

I worked in some of the camps for short periods during this time. I was a sawyer. The bunkhouses usually were large and constructed of logs. A row of double decked wooden bunks was along each side. A double drum style heating stove made from oil barrels was located in the center of the building between the rows of bunks. There was a 2 x 12 plank (deacon) seat attached to the lower bunk and extending the full length of the building except in one corner which was occupied by a wooden trough on an incline that was used for wash-up. There were no drying rooms or facilities for taking a bath or doing laundry. However, they did have one luxury—hot water with which to wash. A hot water tank was an open metal barrel near the heating stove. The water was heated with pipe coils in the heater.

Most of the lumberjacks wore woolen two-piece underwear winter and summer. Usually they came in sweaty and often wet and hung their wet, sweaty clothes and socks around the heating stove to dry. The smell was indescribable. Talk about air pollution and smog!! This was something, with tobacco smoke, and 50 men drying their clothes and socks, and all the other odors of hard working men who seldom took a bath or changed their clothes for weeks and sometimes months at a time for the simple reason that there were no facilities for bathing or laundering.

There was one redeeming feature of the old time logging camp; they had good cooks and served very good food and plenty of it. The old salt pork and bean days of the past were long gone in this area. These camps were home to many of those fellows. They were single and foot loose. Many stayed over winter and some were short staked and moved from camp to camp. It was a policy that if they came to the camp looking for a job they received two or three free meals and lodging if there were empty bunks, otherwise they slept on the benches. They had a code of ethics. They would never ask for a job from the foreman; it was up to the foreman to offer them a job. Most of them were specialists i.e., teamster, sawyer, swamper, canthook men, etc., and if there wasn't an opening for his line of work, he took off for the next camp. There were many camps in the woods those days. The cookhouse also had a code of ethics. No talking at the table except to request passing of food. Should a green horn or someone start visiting, the cook or second cook, armed with a large butcher knife would tap you on the shoulder and remind you to eat and get out.

Prior to World War I they worked 10 hours per day, 6 days per week. In the morning when the foreman kicked the bunkhouse door open, the new arrivals would be sitting on the benches. The foreman usually knew the men and the kind of work they were looking for. If there were jobs available they were hired; otherwise, they took off for another camp. Usually the foreman visited the bunkhouse the night before and sized up the new arrivals; sometimes he would discharge a few men the next morning to make room for some of the new faces, especially if he knew them.

It didn't mean anything in those days to be discharged by a camp foreman; if you came back a few days later you probably would be hired again.

During the earlier days wages were so much per month with board. Later it was on an hourly basis with board deducted. Prior to and during World War I there was some effort to organize the woods workers into labor unions. First there was the Four L's: Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen. This so-called union was organized and dominated by the lumber companies. Very few of the lumberjacks were members; members were mostly sawmill workers. I personally know of one instance where the mill workers picked a spokesman to request a 25¢ per day pay raise. The manager promptly discharged the spokesman and the rest went back to work with no raise.

Later the I.W.W., Industrial Workers of the World, was organized. It is believed that most of the lumberjacks joined the I.W.W. for the simple reason that it advocated that the companies furnish bedding, mattresses, and steel cots; smaller and more sanitary bunkhouses, separate drying rooms and bath and laundry facilities. Many were arrested for membership, which was alleged to be violation of a law known as Criminal Syndicalism. I believe this law was to prevent sabotage during World War I. Many thought it was a vicious law when applied to the I.W.W. lumberjack membership; however, many were given prison terms for no reason other than membership. Some were radicals but most were only trying to better their working conditions. Generally they were given credit for forcing the companies to improve camp facilities. About this time a Federal law was passed making the 8-hour day mandatory.

After I was discharged from military service in 1919 I recall reading about a trial in Spokane. Several lumberjacks were arrested for having I.W.W. membership cards in their possession. A prominent lady resident of Spokane was on the jury. She requested knowledge as to why it was a crime to carry an I.W.W. membership card. The prosecuting attorney explained that the members of the I.W.W. wanted 8-hour working days, be furnished bed and bedding, bath and laundry facilities, etc., in the logging camps. The lady made quite a name for herself when she got through telling all within hearing that if it was a crime to want a place to take a bath, laundry, bedding, etc., there was something wrong with the law under which they were arrested. They were acquitted.

Many of these fellows stayed in camp all winter, saved in every way possible in order to make a "big stake," then headed for town—quite often Spokane—and bought needed new clothes, calked boots, etc., paid their room rent in advance and proceeded to paint the town red. After their money, which they spent freely, was gone they headed for a logging camp to make another stake.