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Among my early experiences in the Forest Service, I recall the following incidents.

My first summer the district ranger sent word of a fire and requested me to ride down to the fire with what Indians I could get together, and start control of the fire up the easterly side, working northerly. He would come up the west side and we were supposed to meet near the summit. The south line was along a rocky river and no work was needed there. With five Indians armed with shovels and brush hooks across their shoulders, we rode down a canyon to the fire, tied our horses in a safe place and went to work according to plan. By midnight we reached the summit and had our line out. We could see the west line still burning, but could not hear or see anyone in that direction. Having had nothing to eat since breakfast that morning except a little jerky, I always carried in my saddle bag and which I shared with my Indians, we decided [sic] to rest for a couple of hours. Then we proceeded down the west side of the fire, a tough job as the fire was burning toward us and we had a hard time keeping on the outer side of it.

By daylight we had worked this line almost down to the canyon when we saw the district ranger starting up from the bottom with his crew. Our control lines were connected about 9 a.m. Of course, I was anxious to know what had gone wrong with his side of the job, and where the grub was he had promised to pack in. He was quite unconcerned,

having slept in at a road camp a few miles down the canyon and had both supper and breakfast. He said there had been a slip up on the grub. I had then been on Uncle Sam's payroll two months, but seriously considered turning in my badge and going back to the cattle business. But after all, it was a sort of carefree life - the pay was \$75.00 per month and I furnished my own pack and saddle stock, and after showing receipts for horse feed amounting to \$50.00 for the year, Uncle Sam graciously furnished feed for the balance of the year.

There was no deduction for housing as we found our own shelter near the job - often a one-room abandoned shack, the roof leaked, and where windows had once been, we nailed burlap or boards over to keep out some of the breeze.

Oh yes, I was married and had one small son, so we all camped together wherever the work demanded.

After all, 3 year old steers were selling for about \$35.00 a head and the only way you could make a little profit in that game was in hopes of finding several unbranded strays among your spread, as it was the custom to brand any maverick you could locate.

Two years and many hard days later I was promoted to district ranger. Here in the early part I had another (efficiency) experience.

I was to ride over to the adjoining ranger district and help construct a trail and assist in surveys and examination of homestead applications that had accumulated. The district ranger had established a tent camp near the work projects and I was to meet him there.

So, with saddle horse, bedroll, survey equipment, etc., I headed for this camp, arriving about dark. I found two tents. I believe we called them Burch tents - they

were about 5' x 7' and A-shaped. The camp was deserted, but the ranger's blankets were spread out over some hay. I rolled these up and fed the hay to my horses.

The only grub in camp was a can of pink slamon [sic], a can of green chili pepper, and a little cream of wheat. I ate part of the salmon and chili and then rolled up for the night. In the morning I was still quite hungry so I cooked the cream of wheat and stirred in the salmon and chili, washed it down with water. (Breakfast deluxe.) Then I decided to ride over to the ranger's headquarters. He had the first government ranger station I had seen - quite a comfortable layout.

He welcomed me and explained that he had come in for supplies. I took my horses to the barn, and upon opening the hay storage, found it piled full of beehives instead of horse feed. He explained that he was in the bee business, but he would go to the store and get me a bale of hay. I might add that this ranger's services were terminated a few months later.

Now that my training was completed I recall other experiences.

A trail was needed to reach a point where a lookout was to be constructed, if and when money was available to buy the material. No money for trail construction, so being winter I started out with saddle and pack animals (my own) with wife and baby, to build the trail. We made camp in a grassy spot where the horses could rustle feed and went to work. We had government-owned quarters, a 9'x7' tent. The rood was too low to allow standing upright without scraping the canvas. A #4 field range set in the opening flap, a bed on the ground over some brush, kyaks [sic], grub etc., piled in the corner and we were all set.

I worked about a week, and then a severe rain storm set in and continued for about 3 weeks. The little creek near camp was a raging muddy torrent and the whole place a bog hole.

I had planned to finish the trail by this time, but the storm had upset my schedule. Being low on supplies we decided to ride down the mountain to a little settlement. We secured a buckboard, hitched one horse to this, and leading the other behind, we headed for town and supplies. On the way we had to cross a southern California river, usually dry in summer, but it was quite wide and flowing rapidly. We thought we could make it across. The horse had gone about a third of the way and could go no further. He was floundering in deep water and rolling boulders, and struggling to keep his footing.

Water was pouring over the buckboard up to the seat. We were in real trouble. The shafts on the buckboard against the horses sides were the only things that kept the rig from being turned over. It looked serious. I worked the horse we were leading up alongside [sic], planning to get on him, then with my riata, hook on and assist in crossing. But I miscalculated. I could make out the wheel of the buckboard under the water and attempted to step down onto it and then reach the saddle horse, but I slipped and down into the river I went. I don't remember much of what happened until I found myself down-stream clinging to a tree on the opposite side of the river. The horse was also across nearby.

I looked back and saw my wife up on top of the seat holding the baby out of the water. I caught the saddle horse and took the riata from the saddle. We shouted back and forth what best to do. Every minute it seemed that the

buckboard would be turned over. First, we thought of tying the baby to the rope and I would haul him hand over hand through the water. Then we decided the swift icy water would drown him before I could pull him across. So I threw the riata over the horses neck and passed it around a tree hoping to keep the horse from drifting down stream, and proceeded to pull, while my wife applied the whip praying the rig would hold together. Plunging and struggling and with a whoop of joy we made it across. By the way, this child still lives in spite of many rough treatments and narrow escapes.

One winter we were camped in a tent when he suddenly developed croup and seemed to be choking. We poured some coal oil from the lantern and dosed a spoonful down his throat. Yes, he made it.

Another harrowing experience, I well remember, was when I was riding in the San Luis Rey river country and attempted what appeared to be a short cut up on to Palomar Mt. where I was to check grazing conditions. I had crossed a dry ravine and started up a very steep slope covered with loose round rocks. Never being one to walk when I could ride, my horse was going almost straight up, then it happened. He slipped and went over backwards, too quick for me to get clear. I wound up with my left leg under him and my head hanging down hill. The horse was lying across the slope with his four legs uphill. I was in a bad way - my body was acting as a wedge to keep him from rolling over and splitting me in two. I talked to him and tried to keep him quiet, trying to decide how to save myself. My first idea was to shoot him and then whittle my way out with my pocket knife. I always carried my six-shooter inside the right leg of my chaps. I took the gun out and was about to

shoot the horse when I realized that when he gave that death relaxing shudder, he would roll. So that idea was given up. About that time I felt a slight slackness on my leg when the horse tried to move. Taking advantage of this I gradually worked down and toward the horse's hindquarters. Things looked a little more hopeful; if my leg would not break, I might make it. Little by little I worked myself free until finally the bottom of my pants and chaps held me fast. Unbuckling my belt I slipped my pants and chaps down, but my boot and spur still held me. After what seemed hours, I managed to pull my foot out of my boot and worked myself free, just as the horse rolled past down into the ravine.

My left leg was bruised from the hip to my ankle, but bones were not broken. Crawling and hobbling I made it to the horse, then for a 15 mile ride back to camp. This was agony.

My wife held the horse and I rolled and fell off and into bed.

I called the Forest Supervisor and informed him I would be out of circulation for a while. I'll never forget his kindness and consideration for my recovery. Yes, it was none other than Supervisor Sedman W. Wynne who later died of a heart attack while watching a ball game.

We had law enforcement cases too, in those days. I recall an amusing one. I came across a large campfire burning along the roadside with every chance of spreading.

After putting it out, I trailed the camper by his wagon tracks, and caught up with him. He admitted having camped at this place and said he did not put out his fire. I told him he had left such a dangerous fire I would have to take him into the J.P. We found the J.P. digging

potatoes in his garden. I told him that I wanted to swear out a complaint against the fellow I had with me. He never stopped digging, but asked the defendant if what I had said was true. He admitted he was guilty and would pay his fine.

The judge said, "Well, I find you not guilty for lack of evidence."

I could recite many more experiences of the earlier days - stockmen troubles, fake mining claims, one man telephone line construction jobs, pack train distasters [sic], etc. These were the good old exciting days. - work or ride all day, then at night pick outreports [sic] on the old Oliver typewriter by the light of a coal oil lamp, and up the next morning at daylight for another field day.

No, I would not trade those hard days for all the mechanized, 8 hour, 5 day a week plus overtime pay of the present day.