

## FIRST EPISODE

I was appointed a Forest Guard on July 6, 1907, at \$720 per annum, and it was required that I furnish a saddle and packhorse and board myself. My first assignment was with D. C. Harrison, a topographer detailed from the U.S. Geological Survey, to survey and plat administrative site withdrawals, June 11 claims (Forest Homesteads) and, incidentally, to instruct Rangers in public survey matters. Mr. Harrison was one of the finest men I ever knew. The lessons he taught me in surveying have stuck with me better than anything else I have tried to learn.

Mr. Harrison and I left Kalispell about 11 a.m. on Friday, July 5, with a team and wagonload of equipment and supplies and my two horses. At Bigfork, we met Ernest Bond, the Swan River District Ranger, who was just recovering from his Fourth of July celebration; and he told us to camp at the A. J. Campbell summer home at the outlet of Swan Lake, and he would meet us there. The road ended at the outlet to the lake; and there was no bridge or ferry across the river, so we had to boat the supplies across the outlet to the Campbell place. Bond took my horses with him, and I rode the wagonload of supplies to the lake. This was sure a good place to stay overnight. A Negro man and his wife were the caretakers and excellent cooks. Strawberries were ripe, and there was Jersey cream. We lived the life of Reilly for one night. A very amusing and embarrassing accident happened to Mr. Harrison; but fortunately, it turned out all right. The restroom was a two-holer near the riverbank below the house. Under the seat was a trough with running water going through it and discharging into the river where there was quite a current. (What a storm would blow up over such arrangements today!) Mr. Harrison carried a wallet with money and papers in his hip pocket. The wallet dropped out of the pocket into the trough. When Mr. Harrison excitedly alerted the rest of us as to what happened, I grabbed a fish landing net that was handy and rushed down to the outfall of the water trough and was successful in trapping the wallet intact, except for some Swan River water.

The next day, Saturday, Mr. Harrison and I loaded all the supplies, etc., into a 14-foot steel boat and rowed it to the upper end of the lake and the Bond homestead, which was also the Ranger District headquarters. Ranger Bond and the cook brought the horses up the trail on the east side of the lake. The next day was Sunday, and there was no activity, as Mr. Harrison insisted that we observe the Sabbath. On Monday I took Ranger Bond's boat and towed the Campbell boat down to its home at the foot of the lake. This took me most of the day, and that's how I learned about Swan Lake and have never forgotten.

Tuesday morning we packed up and moved camp up to Beaver Creek, which took about 4 hours. After setting up camp, we ran two lines on a proposed Ranger Station location; and late in the evening, in rode Ranger John H. Clack. I will never forget my first sight of Jack as long as

I live. He was a tall, well-built man, brown as an Indian, sitting on a long-legged bay horse and leading a packhorse. Bareheaded, his hat on the saddle horn, he ran his hand back over his bald head; it came away covered with mosquitos and blood, which he nonchalantly shook off as he greeted us. The mosquitos were terrible! Clouds of them kept everybody slapping and cussing (not much of that around Mr. Harrison)--and the poor horses really suffered. I had been, and have been, in bad mosquito country, but the Swan tops them all! Of course, I haven't been to Alaska or the northern tundra. I was fortunate. Mr. Harrison had a mosquito tent and insisted that I share it with him, which I gladly did. When I got back to Kalispell, I purchased some cheese cloth and persuaded my aunt to sew it together for me. I still have it--63 years later. We had to build smudges, three of them spaced triangle-wise, and the horses would get right in the middle and stay there until the cool of the morning when they could graze in some degree of comfort.

Along with mosquitos, our young man, who hired on as a cook, turned out to be a disappointment. He may have known his way around a stove; but as a campfire cook, he was a total loss. In addition, he knew very little about cleanliness. So Jack and Ernest had to do most of the cooking. It was here that we met a homesteader named Vanderwalka who was going out to Bigfork. On Wednesday we completed the survey and corner-marking of the Beaver Creek Administrative Site about 11:30 as Frank Thompkins passed us with a crew of six students and a packer heading up the river for some timber survey work. In 1970 I learned that John B. Taylor was a member of this party.

After dinner we moved camp to Soup Creek. Jack's horses pulled out while we were at Beaver Creek; he spent the day looking for them--without any success. We ran the survey of the proposed station at Soup Creek on Thursday, the 11th, and on the 12th moved camp to Goat Creek. Jack found his horses and caught up with us about 1 o'clock. We surveyed part of the proposed Goat Creek Administrative Site in the afternoon. The mechanics of our survey work was that each of us took turns, running compass, carrying chain, clearing line and platting the survey. We were students, and we had an excellent instructor who did a very thorough job. Our main handicap was the d----d mosquitos from which there was no letup, day or night. We finished the Goat Creek survey.

Then it was Sunday, July 14, 1907, and no work. We did do some washing and shaving and fishing. It was no chore to have all the fish we could eat, as anywhere we were, it was only a matter of minutes to cut a 10- or 12-foot willow, unwrap the fishline wound around your hat band (the royal Coachman was already tied on), catch a couple of grasshoppers and there was fish in the pan.

On Monday, July 15, we rode up to the Simmons Cabin and surveyed a Ranger Station site and returned to the Goat Creek camp. It

was a long day. The next day, July 16, we moved camp to Salmon Prairie. It took us 3 days to make this survey, but we finished it by Thursday evening. I was slated to take the Forest Ranger Civil Service Examination at Kalispell on July 23 and 24, and it was time for me to leave. So I left the party on the morning of the 20th and headed down the trail for Swan Lake and Bigfork.

Supervisor F. N. Haines of the Lewis and Clark North, assisted by Deputy Supervisor W. H. Daus, who afterwards became the first Supervisor of the Lewis and Clark National Forest at Choteau, Montana, conducted the examination. Of the 10 or 12 who took the examination, I can only recall two names, Allen Calbick, of Kalispell, and Ben Dayton, a Forest Guard at Lubec--just east of the Continental Divide. The examination consisted of three parts: a written examination designed to show the extent of the candidate's schooling; a surveying problem with compass, pacing distances of a triangular section of timber land, preparing a plat of the survey, and estimating the timber in the section; and a practical demonstration of how well we could ride and pack a camp outfit on a horse. In this part of the examination we were not allowed to watch the other applicants until after each went through the mill--as it were. We were shut up in a small building and called out in alphabetical order. We were required to saddle a horse, then ride 100 yards at a walk and back at trot and gallop, unsaddle, and then saddle the horse with a packsaddle and load him with a miscellaneous batch of tools, cooking outfit, and what have you. Then we led the horse 50 yards and back and were judged on how the pack rode and if it stayed in place. About half the group did fairly good with this, but one fellow, an ex-sailor, said he had never even seen a horse packed; and he had a terrible time. We had a good many laughs at his endeavors.

It has always been my impression that I was not a very promising candidate for a Forest Ranger, in the opinion of A. C. McCain, Acting Supervisor while Supervisor Page S. Bunker was on detail to the Washington Office. So McCain figured, "I'll give this kid an assignment he won't accept and we will be well rid of him." So, they gave me a badge, a USE BOOK and a GREEN BOOK (fiscal) and told me, "When you get to the Hannan Gulch Ranger Station, you can take charge of the Sun River Ranger District." Fortunately, I had discussed with Jack Clack the possible routes to follow. He had suggested the best route at that time of the year was to go up "Big River," the Middle Fork of the Flathead, follow the railroad until I reached the east side, and then south, across country, until I reached Sun River.

Leaving Kalispell on July 26, we swam the South Fork--which was high at the old Fitzpatrick homestead where the highway bridge is now located--and camped for the first night. Fitzpatrick heard my yell for help and came over in his boat. I unsaddled, put all my gear in the boat, lined my saddle horse behind the boat, intending to come back and get the packhorse the second trip--but he had different ideas. Jumping in, he almost beat us across the river. I camped with Fitzpatrick for the night and absorbed some handy information about what was ahead of me on the trail.



Most of the trail followed the old tote road, which had been used when the railroad was built back in the 90's, and in some places where the tote road had been replaced by the tracks, it was necessary to ride between the tracks for quite a distance, which was somewhat hazardous as one never knew when a train would want to use the tracks. That second night on the trail I camped about 3 or 4 miles east of Belton (West Glacier) on the old tote road grade near some old cabins where there was some good grass for the horses. As I was setting up camp, six men on mules rode through camp headed up the river. Told me they were a Geological Survey crew making a topographic map of the area. The next day I made it to Essex and camped for the night with Ranger Dick Bradley and family. The next morning Dick went with me to the ford across Big River; he doubted if the river was low enough for the horses to cross without having to swim, and the current was rather fast. Anyway, we made it all right without any difficulty and proceeded up Bear Creek. Camped at the Phil Gypher place at his invitation, as there was good horse feed, and we were tired. That night I learned a lesson I never forgot in afteryears. It was necessary to picket the horses so they would be available in the morning, and I staked them by the head. Sometime in the night I was awakened by a lot of moaning and groaning from the direction where the horses were. Rushing out to investigate, I found that the packhorse, in trying to scratch his head, had got the heel of a hindfoot shoe caught in the neck rope of the halter and was choking himself to death. I never did that again--even for a few minutes, and I always used a half hobble on one front foot. A year or so later, the Regional Forester came out with a circular letter saying that in the future, no claims for dead horses caused while staked by the head would be allowed. Seems like there had been quite an epidemic of such losses.

From Bear Creek we rode to the Lubec Ranger Station where Guard Dayton was stationed. Flies were real bad, giving the horses no rest, and I stayed over the next day to rest the horses. This was July 31, 1907.

The problem now was to get across the Blackfeet Indian Reservation without having to go in to Browning for a pass. Jack Clack had told me of a place near his ranch on Dupuyer Creek, where I could get through the fence and save 2 days' time, as it was a long day's ride to Browning. Camped at Wolf Plumes' place on the Little Badger that night. I had worked on the cow roundup on the Reservation the year before and knew these Indians. They were camped on Wolf Plumes' personal allotment putting up the hay. There were five or six tepees of them. A couple years before that, the Government had built for him a two-room log cabin and partly furnished it, and it had never been used--even one night. The old man took me over and showed me the cabin and told me to camp in it for the night. I thanked the Chief and he said to me, "You got pass?" I shook my head. He grinned, shook his head, and left me to make camp. There was a new six-hole Majestic stove in the cabin, and it had never had a fire in it. I didn't disturb its virginity!

The next morning I saddled up early and headed for the hole in the fence, which I found easily. The fence was five barbed wires on posts, one rod apart, and the so-called gate was at a place near the Rutherford ranch on Dupuyer Creek on a little rise in the ground. By letting the wires down on two posts the wires would be close to the ground so you threw your coat over the wires, led your horses through, and put the wires back up in place. This had been done so often that the staples could be removed with your fingers. As I rode away, an Indian policeman showed up and yelled at me, but I kept right on going.

I stopped at Jack Clack's home on Dupuyer Creek and then pulled into the little town of Dupuyer for the night. We were tired; it had been a long, hot day. A manger full of hay looked good to my horses. I went looking for a steak for myself. It was late--10 or 11 o'clock--and the only light in sight was the town saloon and eating place. The bartender said he would raid the kitchen and see if he could find a steak or something. There were three men at a round table against the back wall, and I went over to "looksee." It was a poker game, and there was around \$3,000 on the table. The county doctor by the name of Long and two ranchers were having at it. The bartender said they had been there since noon, and they were still there when I went in for breakfast the next morning. I saw the bartender a year later; he said they didn't quit until the doctor had all the money on the table. I knew the doctor quite well later on.

The two horses I had were small Indian ponies, and each one was carrying 175 to 200 pounds. They were getting leg weary; and as the previous day had been a long hot one, we didn't leave Dupuyer very early. Late the next afternoon we pulled into the Hoy ranch on Blackleaf Creek. Ranger Linc Hoy was not at home, but Mrs. Hoy invited me to make camp beside the creek not far from the house, as Linc might be home during the night. There was a Post Office called Raymond near the Hoy place. Hoy was a holdover Ranger from the Land Office days of the Forests. He was a political appointee from Philadelphia. The principal business of the Teton District was selling sawtimber to a small sawmill operator named McGurk. The mill was Hoy's principal activity; consequently, he spent most of his time on the ranch. I got away from the Hoy ranch fairly early in the morning with some rather confusing directions as to the location of gates I would find on the way. Finally, I rode into the Godwin Ranch at the forks of Deep Creek and was made welcome for the night. The horses had a good roll and spent the night in knee-deep grass. Godwin was an Englishman and ex-sailor with one good hand, and the other, a steel hook on the end of his forearm. He was quite a talker and really gave me quite a lot of desirable information about the neighbors, the weather, and the doings of the Forest Rangers in that area. It was haying time, and he tried to interest me in helping him with his haying job. He was a little put out when I informed him that I would be the District Ranger at Hannan Gulch.

Left Godwin Ranch about 9:30 and finally arrived at the Hannan Gulch Ranger Station about 2:30 in the afternoon. It was quite a climb

down into the Sun River Canyon on a narrow, winding trail, across bare slide areas made by deer and elk on slopes as steep as 60 degrees and more. Found the two one-room cabins occupied by Ranger McCain's family: his wife, two children, Mrs. McCain's mother, father, and brother. Assistant Ranger Henry Waldref was in charge of the Station when I arrived. Waldref was another oldtimer who was appointed each year for 6 months to patrol the forests and watch for fires. He had a mining claim near Lincoln, and his 6 months' wages from the Forest Service were his winter's grub stake. Henry was camped in a tent along the creek, and I joined him there. He had a black saddle horse and a team of bay mares, one with colt at side. They were about the fattest things I ever saw before or since. Henry never urged them out of a walk; and if a wet hair showed up on one of them, he stopped until it dried out. To him the job was just a summer's outing. He had been in the hills for years; and I sure picked up a lot of handy ideas about life in the hills and living off the back of a packhorse that have been useful to me all my life.

At that time, the Sun River Ranger District, with headquarters at the Hannan Gulch Ranger Station, included all of what is now called the Sun River drainage, then called the North Fork, the Deep Creek drainage to the north and the Willow and Ford Creek drainages to the south. At that time, the stream running through the town of Augusta was known as the South Fork of Sun River. What is now called the South Fork of Sun River was then known as the South Fork of the North Fork, and we also had the West Fork of the South Fork of the North Fork of Sun River.

The Ranger District to the south was known as the Dearborn Ranger District, with headquarters at the Elk Creek Ranger Station, where Eustace A. Woods was District Ranger. On occasion, he was known to his close friends as "Useless."

The Sun River country comprises some very interesting, not to say spectacular, topography. The river comes out of the mountains in a due east and west course some 8 or 9 miles and breaks through a series of five sawtooth-like reefs, ranging in elevation from 6,000 to 8,000 feet, with the river at 4,500 feet. The reefs are perpendicular on the east face and at a 45- to 60-degree angle on the west. Looks just like a row of sawteeth. At the junction of the North and South Forks, the river runs due north and south for some 45 or 50 miles and forms a beautiful valley with many open parks and side streams which head up against the Continental Divide on the west, part of which is known as the Chinese Wall, as spectacular a piece of country as you will see anywhere. Natives of the area are brown, black, and grizzly bear; blacktailed deer; elk; moose; mountain sheep and goat; and the usual run of mountain small fry. Cattle grazing was permitted on all the Sun River Ranger District except the West Fork of the South Fork and Pretty Prairie, which was reserved for winter elk feed. In May 1908, I counted and estimated that 500 to 600 elk wintered on the West Fork licks and vicinity. That was about all the elk in that area at that time.



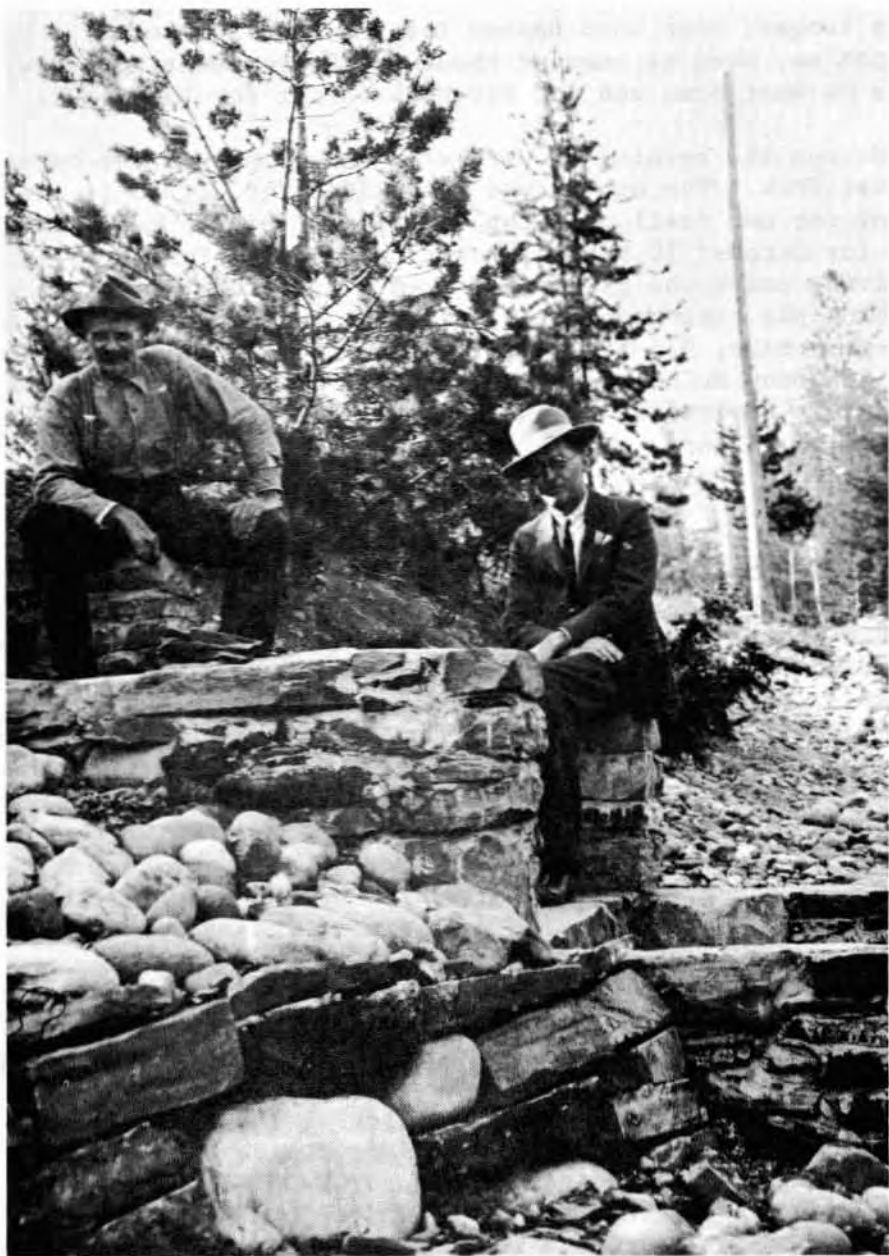
As a fledgling Forest Ranger on Sun River in the old Lewis and Clark National Forest, I had many interesting experiences. One of the most interesting was my first Ranger meeting, held at the mouth of the White River on the South Fork of the Flathead River from October 14 through 18, 1907.

On September 30, notice was received from Supervisor Page S. Bunker at Kalispell that the meeting would be held. The Supervisor had just returned from a 6-month detail to the National Forest Office in Washington, D.C.; and I guess that he wanted to find out if his Rangers could get around in the mountains and forests satisfactorily. Also, it was desirable that the Rangers be informed of the objectives of the newly-formed National Forest organization under Gifford Pinchot.

E. A. Woods, who was the Ranger on the Dearborn District, was in town at the same time that I was. We agreed that in company with Waldref and Guards Nixon and Converse, we would assemble at the mouth of the West Fork of the South Fork of the North Fork of Sun River and all trail over the Continental Divide together. Nixon had been over the route with a hunting party and was to be the guide. I call it a "route" advisedly because there was no such thing, at that time, as a located and constructed trail. You just went where you could get through, in the general direction of your destination. At this time, there were no constructed trails on the Forest, as we knew them later on. The appointed day of the meeting was October 8. Due to an unforeseen circumstance, I could not get there.

From the time I arrived at the Hannan Gulch Ranger Station, August 5, 1907, until September 22, my District headquarters was a 7 x 9 tent at the upper end of the hay meadow since the Ranger Station buildings, two 14 x 16 log cabins, were occupied by Ranger McCain's family. After I arrived, the first job of primary importance was to cut and stack the hay crop for winter use. It took Ranger Waldref and I 2 days to get that done. The next job was a 25-mile trip to Augusta to lay in needed supplies and to write the Supervisor that I had arrived and was on the job. The next thing was to start getting acquainted with the layout of the District and to know the people I would have to work with. Then it developed that the two horses I had brought from Kalispell could not do the job so I went looking for a good saddle horse at a price I could afford to pay. At the Anderson ranch I found a 5-year-old buckskin gelding, black stripe down his back, priced at \$65. I bought him and was not disappointed.

On September 23, McCain arrived at Hannan from his new headquarters at Ashland, Montana; and on September 26, the McCains left for their new home. I immediately moved into the main cabin and set up housekeeping. When McCain was called to Kalispell to be Acting Supervisor, he rode to Lubec, Montana and left his saddle and packhorse at the Ranger Station there. Arrangements had been made for his horses to be trailed to Hannan by the Rangers of the Dupuyer and Teton



Eustace "Useless" A. Woods and Clyde P. Fickes,  
Ford Ranger Station, Kootenai National Forest.  
About 1940.

Photo by author



Districts. I was to ship his saddles, etc., from Augusta to Ashland. Also, I had agreed to buy the saddle mare. On October 3, Lincoln Hoy, the Teton Ranger, rode into Hannan leading McCain's horses. Hoy prevailed upon me, when he learned about the Ranger meeting, to wait for him while he went home and got his pack outfit for the trail.

We left Hannan the morning of October 9 and camped at the beaver dams on the West Fork. The others had not waited for us, so it was a case of finding our own trail over the Continental Divide to White River. My diary for October 10 reads, "Moved up the West Fork trail, camped on the Divide under the cliffs. Jumped 5 miles of logs. Bum trail." I was riding the best mountain horse I think it was ever my pleasure to fork--gray mare, 3/4 Arabian, 8 years old, and sound as a dollar. I bought her from McCain, who acquired her from Gus Mosier (the first Montana Forest Supervisor under the Land Office) of Ovando--via a poker game, so I heard. Sure-footed as a goat, never excited, would jump any log she could put her nose on and best of all, was never known to leave her rider afoot.

The next day, October 11, we pulled down to the mouth of the White River to be the first arrivals at the meeting site. We beat the other party to the meeting place. They had stopped to try and get some elk meat but failed to do so; we ate bacon and trout. In camp on October 12 were Rangers E. A. Woods, Henry Waldref, Linc Hoy, and Guards Converse, Fickes, and Chet Nixon. Saturday was spent setting up the camp. Each of us had a 7 x 9 tent; Sunday we went fishing. For the whole time we were camped at this place, old Henry kept the camp supplied with flat trout--16 to 20 inchers. All we could eat and then some! Monday, October 14, Forest Supervisor Page S. Bunker rode into camp about 2:30 p.m. His first words before he got off his horse were, "Well, Linc, I didn't expect to see you here." Bunker rode a good-looking bay horse with an Army McClellan saddle with leather saddle pockets. It was legendary that Bunker never carried food or bedding; the Rangers were expected to supply what was needed. He was followed by Ranger John Clack, Spotted Bear Ranger District; Ranger John Sullivan, Coram District (Bull of the Woods); Ranger Dick Dean, Dupuyer District; Guard Hale; Ranger Ellis Hoke, Big River District; Guard Phil Clack; Ranger Dick Bradley, Essex District. Then on the 15th came Inspector D. C. Harrison, Washington, D.C.; Ranger Tom Spaulding, Missoula; Ranger Ernest Bond, Swan River District; and Ranger Higgins. There were several others whose names I failed to write down.

There was much talk led by Bunker and Harrison, and we ran a Ranger Station survey of a proposed White River Station. On Wednesday, the 16th, we all moved down the river to Black Bear to survey the proposed Ranger Station and to look over a log cabin being built there by Jack and Phil Clack.

I was informed that Tom Spaulding would be going to Hannan with me. He was to do some surveys on the Sun River District and on the Teton and Dupuyer Districts. I was detailed to furnish transport for him

as well as assist with the surveys. It was getting late, and storm clouds were showing up every day. On October 19 the meeting broke up, and everybody pulled out for home.

At the White River meeting, I first met Tom Spaulding who was later to be Dean of the University of Montana School of Forestry. Tom was my first contact with anyone who even pretended to know something of what forestry was all about. He introduced me to a book by a German forester named Swappach (this little red leather-bound book has disappeared from my collection) and Pinchot's PRIMER OF FORESTRY--books which I later acquired and studied.

We arrived at Hannan on October 23. During the next 2 weeks we surveyed administrative sites on Pretty Prairie and Palmers Flat; and also June 11 claims at Big George Flat and Beaver Creek. Nixon, Converse, and Waldref made up the survey party. Tom hired a team and light wagon from Nixon. We left Augusta on November 10, stopping at Choteau the first night. It was cold with the usual wind, so we were glad to be in the wagon with some protection instead of being in the saddle. We stopped at Dupuyer the night of the 11th.

The next morning we drove out to Ranger Dick Dean's ranch about 3 miles west of town. Dean was expected to help us with the surveying. He was not at home. Mrs. Dean made us welcome. She expected Dick any day. That night the horses got out of the pasture, and I spent the next 3 days hunting them. It was cold, and I did not have a very good saddle horse. On Wednesday, November 13, with Dean's hired man, we rode to Bynum, 20 miles south of Dupuyer. On Thursday we rode west to Ranger Hoy's ranch on the Blackleaf and back to the Dean ranch. No horses. Friday I posted reward notices in Dupuyer and then rode west and found the horses about 10 miles from the Dean ranch. All this time, Spaulding was enjoying the hospitality of Mrs. Dean and her two charming daughters and basking in the comforts of the lovely home.

On the 16th and 18th, we surveyed a June 11 claim for a man named Riley. It was cold and windy and almost impossible to set up a compass or hold a chain without breaking it. On the 19th, I put Tom on the train at Conrad and returned to Augusta via Choteau on the 21st.

On November 6, I received notice from the Civil Service Commission that I had passed the Ranger examination and was eligible for appointment. On July 6, I had been appointed a forest guard at \$720 per annum; promoted to \$900 on August 1; appointed an Assistant Forest Ranger November 11 at \$900. By this time I had acquired five head of horses with necessary riding and pack equipment, some furniture and kitchen tools.

The Hannan Ranger Station consisted of an old log cabin, 16 x 20, and dirt roof, a 14 x 16 hewn-log cabin with box corners, a log barn,

corral, hay meadow and pasture--all taken from a former homesteader or squatter named Jim Hannan, who allegedly operated a station on the old Oregon-Montana horse rustling trail. The story is that Jim also liked beef steaks and occasionally butchered a steer, regardless of whose brand it might bear. Seems like the neighboring ranchers, led by one of the largest cow owners in the Sun River country, surrounded Jim in this old cabin and convinced him with a few "Winchester salutes" that it would be advisable to do a little dickering if he wanted to continue life's journey. Bullet holes were still evident when I occupied the cabin. Old Jim agreed to leave the country and not come back. Shortly after that, maybe 2 or 3 years later, the Government preempted it for use of us Forest Rangers.

For a Ranger Station, no more isolated or lonesome spot could have been found. Visitors were practically unheard of for months at a time. The nearest neighbor was Johnny Mortimer who homesteaded in the gulch named for him. Johnny was a recluse and a bachelor. He never went to town. He had complete surveillance of all approaches. If he was not in the mood and a visitor approached, he would simply fade away into the rocky cliffs behind the cabin and would not come out until the visitor left. Whenever I was going to Augusta, I would let him know. He would give me a list of anything he needed, and I always picked up any mail for him. Several old-time friends paid him periodic visits. Sometimes one of them would stay all night at the cabin, but Johnny would not come in.

About the most convenient facility connected with the Sun River District was the built-in bathtub with hot and cold running medicated water. There was a warm, almost hot, mineral spring at the forks of the North and South Fork. Over the years users of the spring had dug out a sizeable pool. There was a cave where the water came out. I took advantage of this convenience whenever possible. I was told by some of the old-timers that in the 90's, in the late summer and early fall, a hundred or more folks from as far down as Great Falls would be camped at the springs. It was a beautiful spot until the Reclamation outfit ruined it with Gibson Dam. In the fall of 1907 I helped build a beautiful two-room log cabin on the flat just below the spring. When Gibson Dam was built, the cabin was moved up to Arsenic Creek and burned in the 1919 fire. Incidentally, there was a double log cabin on Arsenic Creek known as the Choteau or Medicine Cabin, built by some Choteau men and used as a hunting camp in the fall. It was a convenient stopping place for all of us travelers. Then there was the Scattering Springs along the trail below Big George where I nearly always saw mountain sheep, especially in the winter. They seemed to love the watercress that grew there.

The next nearest neighbor was Bob Palmer who had a homestead just below the canyon of Sun River. Bob farmed a little, raised a few colts, and ran a trap line in the winter. I have some pictures of him taken on the high-water trail along the north side of the river. There was another trapper and handy man by the name of Sumner Franks who usually headquartered at the old mine cabins near Benchmark. It



was here one night that I found out how effective my new Luger pistol was. Lots of pack rats, of course! I was sleeping in the top bunk in the northwest corner of the cabin when a rat ran over my bed. "Sum" was in the bunk in the southwest corner. He lit a candle, and I could just see this rat--a big one--sitting on the top shelf. I blazed away. It made quite a splatter on the wall, and we didn't have any sourdough for breakfast--the rat fixed that by falling in the sourdough bucket. Such is life in them thar hills!

About all I had to do for the 4 or 5 winter months was rustle some wood to keep warm, do some cooking, and throw out a little hay for the horses on a stormy day. I learned to bake fairly good bread and an occasional chocolate layer cake--my special weakness. Rode 25 miles to Augusta every 2 weeks to get mail and supplies. There was one ranch on the way to town, the Keller homestead, about 10 miles from Hannan. Mrs. Keller made excellent butter and had eggs to sell. I also got oats for the horses, spuds for myself, and an occasional home-cooked meal. I helped Keller butcher a fat pig and earned a couple pork chops as well. He was a socialist and was always quoting the APPEAL TO REASON, a socialist paper printed in Kansas, and tried to convert me. Otherwise, he was a good guy and a real hard worker. Augusta was a friendly little town, 50 miles from the railroad, with fine, friendly people who were both helpful and tolerant with a pale-faced young sprout who was trying to learn how to do his job. They taught me to play solo, about the best card game there is. I have many fond and pleasant memories of those good people.

Then it was Christmas time that year, and I went to Kalispell to connect up with some of my personal belongings and visit with a certain young lady. Getting to Kalispell via public transportation from Augusta in 1907-08 was a circuitous business. I left Augusta on Friday at 7 a.m. on my way to Craig, which was on the railroad. It was 40-some-odd miles by horse-drawn stage and was a good 10-hour ride, with a half-way stopover for dinner, to Craig. Then, by train from Craig to Great Falls, arriving at 5:30 p.m. Left Great Falls Monday (no Sunday train) at 12:30 p.m. on the "TURKEY TRACK" railroad to Shelby and the Great Northern, and arrived in Kalispell Tuesday at 2 a.m. Returning to the Sun River country, I left Kalispell Monday, January 6, 1908, via Great Northern train at 10:15 a.m., changed trains at Shelby, arriving Great Falls at 10:30 p.m. Caught train to Craig and horse stage to Augusta on Tuesday, January 7, 1908, where I learned that I had been promoted to assistant forest ranger at \$1,000. Caught my horses, had them shod and rode out to Hannan Ranger Station the next day.

While I was in Kalispell, Supervisor Bunker informed me that Ranger Stations were required to fly the U.S. flag on all business days. He gave me a flag and the necessary rope for the halyards but no pulley. I solved that problem along with some others. On January 10, I cut a dead lodgepole tree, some 40 feet long, and snaked it down to the cabin. I took a picture of the cabin after the first time I raised the flag and sent a print to Supervisor Bunker.



(See photo, page 4.) The next time I saw him, he wanted to know who helped me raise the flag pole. I told him, "no one." How did I do it? "Well" says I, "cutting the pole and getting it down to the cabin was no chore. My trusty axe and saddle horse took care of that. Then I dug a hole 4 feet deep and a trench 12 inches wide with a sloping bottom about 5 feet long from the bottom of the pole hole, then I rolled the flag pole with the bottom end over the deep part of the trench. I made a 1/2-inch hole through the top of the pole about 4 inches from the top with a red hot iron rod. I did not have a boring machine. I threaded the rope through the hole and spliced the ends. To erect the pole I made a crotch with two small poles to put under the flag pole as I lifted it with my shoulder. The dead and dry 40-foot lodgepole was not too heavy, and as the butt end dropped in the hole, it balanced quite well." After the flag was flying, I took a picture with my Eastman Kodak and sent a print to the Supervisor.

That picture brought about a reaction I had not anticipated. When Bunker saw it, he remarked to Deputy Forest Supervisor Schoonover, he had been the Ranger on the Dearborn. They don't have any snow over there; why don't you go over there and get some of that Ranger Station and June 11 claim surveying done. It happened that on January 30 I recorded 8 below zero and rode to Augusta; on February 2 it was 12 below zero with snow and rain for the next week. On the 8th, I rode to Augusta and found Deputy Supervisor Schoonover and Ranger Woods getting ready to go out to Hannan Gulch for some surveying work. On the 10th, we surveyed the Hannan Gulch Ranger Station site. On the 11th we moved up to the Medicine Creek cabins on Arsenic Creek. Saw 13 mountain sheep and five deer on Big George Bottom. Surveyed the Patrick's Bottom Ranger Station on the 12th and 13th and moved back to Hannan on the 14th. We visited the hot springs for a bath after finishing the survey.

On the 15th we moved to the Ed Anderson ranch on Ford Creek and camped. From there we surveyed the Haun Creek and Willow Creek Ranger Station sites and then moved to the Elk Creek Ranger Station on February 18. After surveying the Elk Creek Station, we bid "Useless" farewell; Schoonover and I rode to Augusta. He left for Kalispell on February 20, and I returned to Hannan and winter--quiet and lonesome. Put in some of the time building and repairing fence and cutting firewood--a constant and everlasting chore. On March 5, I recorded -12°. It stormed and snowed most of the time. On March 9, we had a chinook. Most of March was spent building fence and cutting firewood, with a couple trips to town for mail and supplies.

Modern Forest Rangers might be interested in what I had to work with in the way of Government property. My March inventory included the following:

2 d.b. axes w/ handles	1 pick	3 padlocks
5 auger bits	2 scale rules	1 F.S. compass
1 bit brace	1 X-cut saw	1 letter file "Favorite"
1 log chain	1 hand panel saw	1 F.S. key
1 carpenter chisel	1 hand rip saw	1 spirit level
1 surveyor compass	1 long hand. shvl.	1 F.S. shield (badge)
1 emery wheel	1 steel square	1 tomahawk
2 nail hammers	1 linen tape 75'	1 marking hatchet w/case
	1 7 x 9 tent	

In those days a Forest Ranger was required to keep a daily diary of his official doings. At the end of each month a copy of his diary, on a special "two days' page", was sent to the Supervisor. The official diary of one Forest Ranger in 1908 reads like this:

April 7, 1908. Rode from Hannan Gulch to James Caldwell's, then to the Grand Christian ranch, then to Augusta 9 to 6. Left instructions at Christian ranch in regard to salting cattle. Also called on Jordan and Cain for the same purpose. Also notified E. Beach of Augusta on the same thing.

April 8, Wednesday. Had saddle horse shod. Rode out to Witmer Ranch. Met E. Anderson, J. S. Balinger, and foreman of Willow Creek Stock Co. Delivered instructions regarding salting and herding on Div. 6.

April 9, 1908. Rode from Witmer's to H. Ford's, thence to J. Ford's. Gave instructions in regard to salting and herding. Returned to Witmer's (a favorite stopping place). Thence, to Sun River Stock & Land Co.'s ranch. Instructed foreman in regard to salting and herding. On making inquiry, learned they intended to finish fence at Home Gulch soon. Then rode to Hannan Gulch, an 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. day.

April 14, 1908. Tuesday. Repaired hay corral fence 7:30 to 9. Hauled rails and posts from old fence row between house and barn and piled them behind barn. Cleaned up garbage dump and hauled cans away, 9 to 3. Made some garden, planted peas, parsnips, radishes, and lettuce, 3 to 5 p.m.

April 15, 1908. Wednesday. About 4 inches of snow and more coming down. Stopped at 9 a.m. Skidged out and skidded 27 house logs and 25 posts, cut by A. C. McCain winter of '06 to '07, 8 to 5 day.

April 20, 1908. Monday. Spaded garden. Cleaned out irrigation ditch. Albert Furman rode in at 2 p.m. I agreed to go up on the South Fork with him to look at some timber. Rode down to Keller ranch for some butter. 7:30 to 7:30.

April 21, 1908. Packed up and rode to John Mortimer's. Picked up Furman and rode to the Medicine Creek cabin. Started to rain, and camped. 9 to 2:30.

April 22, Wednesday. Rode from Medicine Creek cabin up S.F. of N.F. Sun River to mouth of Wood Creek. Then returned and rode up Bear Creek 3 miles, thence returned to Medicine Cr., 7:45 to 5:10. Saw 500 elk, 13 goats.

April 23, Thursday. Packed up and returned to Hannan Gulch. 8:30 to 11:30. Made out report on Albert Furman Special Use application. Made out timber sale application by A. Furman and Dr. Long 1 to 4.

April 24, Friday. Started to rain at 5:30 a.m., stopped at 9. Rode to Augusta (25 miles) to mail timber sale application by A. Furman and Dr. Long of Choteau. 8:45 to 2:30. Wrote letter to Supervisor.

April 25, 1908. Saturday. Rode from Augusta to Hannan Gulch. Stormy. 9 to 2:30.

April 26. Sunday. Washed and scrubbed. Took inventory of Government property. 8 to 3.

April 27, 1908. Monday. Left Hannan with pack outfit at 8:45. Arrived at Medicine Creek cabin 11:45. Cut firewood 2 to 4:30. Stormy.

April 28, Tuesday. Set permanent corners on Patrick Ranger Station survey. 7:45 to 6:10. R. C. Palmer (trapper) came in from Bear Creek at noon. Camped here.

April 29, Wednesday. Returned to Hannan. 11:30 to 3:30.

April 30, 1908. Thursday. Baked bread. Made out monthly report. Prepared letters to Supervisor (Supervisor's Office in Kalispell). 2 inches snow 6 a.m. 7:30 to 4:30.

May 1, Friday. Rode from Hannan to Augusta. Forwarded monthly report for April and inventory. Sent telegram to Supervisor relative to Furman & Long timber sale application.

May 2, Saturday. Wrote four letters to Supervisor. Rode from Augusta to Hannan. 5 to 8:30. Issued Free Use Permit to J. R. Witmer for 10 cords wood.

May 3, Sunday. Rained all day.

May 4, Monday. Made garden, planted onions, peas, radishes, and lettuce. 8 to 12:30. Rode to Augusta to get Furman and Long timber sale permit. 2:30 to 7.

May 5, Tuesday. Talked to Guard Cunniff on telephone. Will report on S. Fork Friday. Rode from Augusta to Hannan. 8:30 to 12:30. Gathered up pack outfit in afternoon and prepared to go up the South Fork.

May 6, Wednesday. Left Hannan at 8:30. Arrived West Fork at 3:30. 17 miles. Camped.

May 7, Thursday. Rode up South Fork to Bench March Cr. on Wood Cr. Returned to camp on West Fork. 7:30 to 11:45. Broke camp at 1:30. Camped 1 mile above W. Fk. on east side of river at 2:30. Chopped 10 logs out of trail from camp to about 3/4 mile above. 4 to 5:30. River rising.

May 8, Friday. Cloudy and drizzly. Opened up high-water trail over bluffs above camp. 7:30 to 11:45. Rained all afternoon. Cruised around looking at the timber. Posted one fire-warning. 2:30 to 5.

May 9, Saturday. Rain--rain--rain. (I am camped in a 7 x 9 tent.)

May 10, Sunday. Cleared up about noon. Ran north and south lines on cutting area, 1:30 to 5. Started to rain again at 5:30.

May 11, Monday. Rode up South Fork to Wood Creek. Found Furman cutting timber. Stopped work and ordered camp moved to proper cutting area. About 30 cord cut on Wood Creek. Furman says water was too high to come down further and supposed it would be all right to cut there. Also said that Guard Cunniff told him it would be proper. Returned to camp. Rained all day. 8:30 to 5.

May 12, Tuesday. Furman moved camp in forenoon. Started cutting after dinner at 1 p.m. Ran out lines on cutting area of about 40 acres. 1 to 4. Estimate about 500 cords. Guard Cunniff came in forenoon. Made out timber sale application for Furman and Long. Gave Guard Cunniff instructions in regard to cutting, skidding and measuring. Rain.

May 13, Wednesday. Left Camp Furman at 8:45. Arrived Hannan 3 p.m. Cleared up until noon. Started to rain at 12:30 and still at it.

May 14, Thursday. Left Hannan 10:45. Arrived Augusta 3:30. Prepared map, estimate and forest description, timber trespass report, and wrote letters to Supervisor. 8 to 12:45.

May 15, Friday. Rained all day. Stayed in town. Delivered permits to E. Beach, J. P. Woolman & Christian, Mrs. S. T. Christian, Herbert Sherman.

May 16, Saturday. Rode from Augusta to Christian Ranch. Talked to McDonald over the telephone, then rode to Elizabeth P.O. Delivered permits to Woolman & Christian, McDonald and Rimell's to herder and to Olaf Brucegard. 9:30 to 5:30.

May 17, Sunday. Counted 20 head cattle for Olaf Brucegard and 315 for Woolman & Christian. Arrived Hannan 3 p.m.