It was about this time that it was suggested to me, "If you want to get ahead in the Forest Service you had better join the Blue Lodge of the Mason's." As a convert to the Catholic faith, I had no intention of doing any such thing, and later experience leads me to believe the advice was constructive insofar as advancement in Region 1 of the Forest Service was concerned. Other Catholics in the Region had a like experience.

The Supervisor of the Madison in 1924 was Walter Derrick, an old timer who had started as a Ranger "a way back there." He was not too enthusiastic about having me as his new assistant and said so but accepted the situation and gave me a tough problem to work on. In talking over Madison Forest problems I learned that the work was 75 percent grazing, 15 percent road building, and 10 percent a lodgepole tie sale at West Yellowstone. The Forest had been getting quite a bit of money for road building, and Walt was quite immersed in the mechanics of road building. The Madison had always been and still is primarily a grazing forest. As an old-time grazing Ranger and supervisor, Walt was confident that he had the Madison in good shape and not much to worry about grazing-wise. My first assignment was to make a grazing inspection of the Ruby River cattle range which District Ranger Ben Martin had reported as deteriorating. Well, I spent 2 weeks with Ben going over the cow range in detail and talking to both permittees and herders. When I checked in with Walt, he asked, "Well, what is your opinion of the Ruby?" I guess I was a little too blunt, which offended him, "Too early, too many. The division is overstocked, and the season is at least 15 days too early." Walt blew up. He was chagrined to think that he might have missed a grazing problem that was so readily obvious to a man for whose opinion he was not prepared to have any, or very little, respect. I was really in the doghouse, but I was getting used to that. An intensive grazing survey the next year confirmed my judgement, but that was the end of my having anything to do with grazing administration inspection and supervision on the Madison.

In 1924 the Madison office staff consisted of Elva J. Leach who was replaced shortly by Mary Jo Pershina as chief clerk, and Mary Parr who was doing the secretarial work. It was a well-known fact that there was friction between the chief clerk and the Assistant Supervisor over minor office details; but any time one of us was in an argument with the Supervisor, the other was certain to back him or her up. Walt remarked more than once that he had a fair chance in an argument with one, but as sure as he called in the other for help, he was licked. The Ranger force was Harvey B. Rust, Sheridan; Claget Sanders, Pony on the east side of the Tobacco Roots; Ben Martin on the Ruby; E. H. Billsborough at Ennis; Frank Riggle at Wall Creek; Charles Joy at Lyon on the upper Madison; W. A. Donaldson at West Yellowstone; and William W. Larsen on the tie sale at West Yellowstone.

We were, on the whole, a fairly congenial bunch on the Madison. Chick Joy had been transferred from the Deerlodge about the same time I arrived on the Madison. He was freshly married to a fetching young

schoolteacher from the Bitterroot. After my visit to the Ruby, my next assignment was to visit the Lyon Ranger Station and see how Chick was getting along. While Chick's official problems were primarily concerned with cow and sheep grazing permittees, his principal problem was reconciling his bride to living conditions around a somewhat isolated Ranger Station. Doris has never forgiven me for an unnecessary remark I made the first morning I was at the Station. While Chick was out wrangling the horses I sat in the kitchen-dining-living room visiting with Doris. She was trying to sweep the floor, which was uncovered 6-inch flooring somewhat worn; and I casually suggested that if she swept with the cracks instead of cross grain she would get better results. I sure put my foot in my mouth that time.

When I came to the Madison I had never driven an automobile. The Forest owned a Model-T Ford touring car, and one of the first things I had to do was to learn to drive the Ford. On a Forest like the Madison, good transportation was a necessity. Any place one wanted to go was 20 or 40 miles, so it was not a very good saddle horse chance. Four miles an hour against 40; and a Ford could be driven cross country on at least half the Forest, especially if the Ford was equipped with a Ruckstell Axel. One of the problems I found on the Madison was a large number of isolated, alienated and patented land parcels that were not shown on the Forest map. We were instructed to get them tied in. I requisitioned a transit and one of Jim Yule's five-chain tapes and got busy making the necessary surveys.

Early in December 1924, Chick Joy and I, with our surveying equipment, got in the Ford and headed for Pony to do some surveying. It was a balmy sunny fall day when we left Sheridan about 9 a.m. By the time we got to Whitehall the temperature was noticeably lower; and by the time we reached Pony and had lunch at the Claget Sanders home, the temperature was close to zero. After lunch, being tough outdoor men, the three of us headed up the creek to get some surveying done. While I set up the transit, Chick and Claget started unrolling the five-chain tapes which had never been used since they left the factory where they were made. When they started to stretch a tape out, the tape broke in three places. It was too darned cold for a steel tape. I had to keep my gloves on in order to turn the adjusting screws on the transit. We picked up the equipment and high-tailed it back to the Sanders home. It was 18° below zero, and the thermometer was falling steadily, the radio said. The next morning it was 42° below zero, but the radio said it would moderate during the day. We sat around the stove and visited all that day. The second morning the temperature was in the 20's, so Chick and I decided we had better head for home, which we did and arrived in Sheridan early in the afternoon, the thermometer still well below zero.

For Fiscal Year 1925-26, the Forest received authorization to build a Ranger dwelling at the West Yellowstone Ranger Station. Since I had some experience in construction of log buildings, Derrick decided that a crew of four Rangers, with the Assistant Supervisor in charge,

should be able to get the walls and roof on, and the District Ranger could finish it at his leisure. As I remember it, the building was about 24 feet by 30 feet and was to be log construction. Donaldson got the logs cut and decked at the building site. Sometime in October, Rangers Billsborough, Joy and Riggle and I assembled at West Yellowstone. Transportation was in a new GMC pickup truck that we were all pretty proud to have on the Forest. We rented a small two-room cabin across the street from the Ranger Station and batched. Each man took his turn in the kitchen. The long evenings were spent playing cards and listening to the radio.

In lining up the work, I assigned a corner of the building to each Ranger. When building a building with logs the corners where the side log meets the end log are the most important part of the whole construction. The object is to make a joint that will remain in place and to make the crack between the lower and upper log as tight as possible. There are various methods for framing the log corner. The simplest method is the kind we used which was a flat tenon which must be made the same depth at the ends of each log. The logs were lodgepole pine, average diameter at small end, 8 inches and 10 inches at the butt end. Logs are reversed so that the small and large ends alternate at each corner. After the first couple of logs each corner went up smoothly, and some competition developed as to neatness and speed. All were concerned to get the roof on and then they could go home. The weather was crisp but good, and in less than 2 weeks the roof was on, floor laid, window and door openings cut and framed; and we turned the job over to Donaldson to finish. I believe we all considered it a pleasant and profitable experience.

In the summer of 1925 I had another kind of experience in human relations. Along in August the Idaho country began having a project fire season, and I was detailed to the Clearwater Forest to help out. Bill Rush from the Absaroka and I arrived in Orofino at the same time. The Supervisor, Paul Wohlen, informed us that we were being assigned to the Scurvey Mountain Fire on the Weitas District. Two Pacific pumpers with fuel and firehose were being sent in to the Bungalow Ranger Station on a hired half-ton truck, and we rode this rig in to the Station, arriving there late at night. Early the next morning we headed for the Weitas Station, arriving there about noon and followed a pack train loaded with grub and equipment to the fire camp. The foreman in charge was a regular season smokechaser, and as soon as we arrived he headed back to his regular station. It was agreed that Bill would run the fire crew, and I would be camp boss and timekeeper. I would supervise the use of the Pacific pumper that came in with us. This was the first time these pumpers were used on an actual fire in the woods.

The fire was mostly in an old burn with lots of dead and down timber and reproduction. Bill scouted the fire and got the crew started building a fire line, and I set up the pumper. I found out how to start it and make it run, strung out some hose and started wetting

the fire perimeter behind the fire crew. We learned one essential fact almost immediately. You cannot put out a forest fire burning in down and dead timber and duff with water alone. You can cool down a burning perimeter so men can work close to the fire and build a fireline, but you have to burn the fire perimeter cold, down to mineral soil that won't burn. Water only helps to cool the fire edge down so that men can work and dig the fireline down into mineral soil and remove fuel. We wrote this up in our report, but no one believed us--for a time at least.

Bill sprained an ankle and was forced to go around on homemade crutches. Then it snowed, and we released the crew. They would have taken off anyway because no place is as miserable as fire camp in a snow storm, as there are no tents or any shelter. From the beginning to the end of this fire, we had trouble getting supplies delivered to this camp. We were short of food supplies from the start. The cooks were constantly short on staples and vegetables, and we never saw a piece of fresh meat. We were told there was none available, or transportation was tied up. Cooperation from the Weitas Station was a negligible item. Bill's ankle was very painful. I called in to the dispatcher at Weitas and asked that a saddle horse be sent in so Bill could ride out. The reply was that none was available, and no man was available to bring the horse in anyway. So, late in the afternoon we started up the trail planning to stay at the Lookout for the night. We ran into fresh snow, and that didn't help either. We made a dry camp of sorts with a small fire for company and started out again at daylight. Bill could only make about a mile an hour, and after 5 miles or so we arrived at the Weitas Station about noon. The corral was full of horses and mules, and I looked in the storehouse as I went by and saw five or six quarters of beef hanging there. We arrived at the cook shack where six or seven men were eating dinner. Assistant Supervisor, Fire Assistant, District Ranger, and several packers or smokechasers were among those present. No one, in response to my howdy, invited us to come in and eat. I waited a couple minutes, and then I told Bill, who had limped in, to sit down here while I brought him something to eat. I went to the serving table for set-ups and without any I, yes, or no, we fed ourselves some dinner. When we were through eating I asked if there was a gentle saddle horse with saddle that Bill could ride to the Bungalow. "Well, no," they said, "we don't have any extras here." I turned around, went out to the corral, and picked out a likely-looking horse, found a saddle and bridle. The packer, looking somewhat sheepish, came out and helped me get Bill mounted. We made it to the Bungalow in good season. I was wet to the waist, caught a ride in to Orofino and found a warm room at the hotel. The next morning we informed the Supervisor of our experience, but he could have cared less. The attitude was--so what? I have related this experience to a considerable number of Forest officers and have learned that this was the usual attitude toward official visitors on the Clearwater. It was a closed corporation, and outsiders were unwanted and unwelcome.

The summer of 1926 was another fire season, and I was detailed to the Pend Oreille Forest at Sandpoint, Idaho to fight fire. It was a big project fire that started on Caribou Creek, and by the time I arrived on the scene it was spreading toward Myrtle Creek. No one seemed to know just how big it was. The base camp was near a place called Moravia. Fay Clark of the University of Montana School of Forestry staff and a former Forest Supervisor was fire boss. Elers Koch of the District Office was on the fire someplace, also Duff Jefferson, Assistant Supervisor of the Pend Oreille, was among the welcoming group. I do not recall how many men were supposed to be fighting the fire, but it was several hundred, and more on the way.

It was quite a shock when it was learned that there was a woman in one of the fire crews. She was with her husband and was rated as good a firefighter as any man on the crew. My first assignment was to scout the area north of the fire, particularly to assess the possibilities for control when and if the fire ran out of Snow Creek drainage into Myrtle Creek. I found a saddle horse and started up the Myrtle Creek trail and ran into a pleasant surprise when I reached the Myrtle Peak Lookout. The lookout turned out to be a young man from Bedford County, Pennsylvania, who was well acquainted with all my cousins who resided there. We had quite a visit while I looked over the country to the southwest of the Peak. There was so much smoke that very little could be seen, although the lookout man had kept a running account of the progress of the fire from the time it started. The lookout persuaded me to stay and have supper with him and he would show me his pet herd of caribou that visited the peak every evening. Since I had never seen a caribou in the wild I was not hard to persuade. I was a little worried about my saddle horse staked out in a small meadow under the south side of the peak, but he was contentedly feeding on the good green grass. The 10 or 12 caribou were an interesting sight.

I returned to the base fire camp around 10 o'clock and learned that the fire was across Snow Creek and would probably reach Myrtle Creek within 24 to 36 hours. I also was told that a fresh, 50-man crew was on the way from Spokane, and I should take them into Myrtle Creek and do what I could to cut the fire off. From what I saw around the base camp, I was not too much impressed with the way the firefighting operation was being handled. There was considerable moonshine liquor in evidence with the fire overhead, and the temporary fire foremen seemed to be pretty much on their own.

The 50-man crew, with a pack string to move the camp and supplies, was on hand at Myrtle Creek shortly after daybreak. The foreman seemed to be experienced, and we soon had the tools distributed among the crew with straw bosses designated for the axe man, sawyers, grub hoe and shovel men. The packer was instructed where to set the camp. The foreman and I took the lead up the trail with the crew strung out behind us. I figured it was about 3 miles to where we could expect to leave the creek on the south side to find the edge of the fire

where we could start work. Smoke became heavier as we moved up the trail, making breathing a little difficult at times. The slope south of the creek was steep and rugged with a heavy timber cover. The smoke was getting thicker, and we could occasionally hear the fire-burning noises but could see no flame.

We reached a place where there was a large expanse of bare rock, fairly smooth and probably 40 to 50 yards wide and running from the creek up the north slope. I told the crew (we counted to be sure they were all there) to sit down in the middle of the rock slope; and if the smoke got too thick, they were to lay down with their faces close to the rock surface, which some of them did. Then I told the foreman, "We'll go look and see where we can get at this thing." He blew up. He started yelling, "We'll all be burned up. Get out of here." So I just tapped him gently behind the ear with my shovel handle; and when he came to himself, I sent him down the trail under escort. A young straw boss had been helpful so I made him foreman. By then the pack train had arrived, and I told the packer to unload the packs on the rocks and then pull back down the creek with his string. Then I got the cook started fixing something to eat for the crew and straw boss. I went looking for some handy place to start work on the fire.

We never did catch up with it as it jumped clear across Myrtle Creek as if the creek weren't there. It left an unburned strip along the creek bottom as much as a mile wide in places. Along about noon Fay Clark came in to where I was, and we talked the situation over about what to do. About half the crew walked out after they were fed. From Clark I learned where Koch was working--somewhere around the heads of Caribou and Snow Creeks, so I took off across country to find him and have a visit with the Old Master himself. I found him and his crew in the burned over area where it had cooled down enough so you could walk around without getting a hot foot. Their camp had been burned out, but they had saved or rescued enough food for a day or two. The head of Caribou Creek, where there was a magnificent stand of mature timber, burned out that evening, and we stood and watched the most awesome and magnificent display of fire pyrotechnics. It was beyond imagination. Trees that were a hundred and more feet high would go off just like a Fourth of July sky rocket. Koch was just as much concerned over what was going on among the fire overhead as I was, but he said, "There isn't much you or I can do about it."

On the way back to my camp I was walking or climbing down the Myrtle Creek bottom, which was mostly round rocks of every possible size, when my calked shoes slipped on a smooth rock. In falling, I poked my left hand down between a couple rocks making mush out of the area around the thumb. I wore an aluminum splint for about 6 weeks. Then it rained, and we all came home as fast as we could.

My family met me in Butte with the Dodge. We all went to the dog races to celebrate my homecoming, and I actually won a few dollars in the pari-mutuel. A week or so after I got home we all toured Yellowstone Park in the Dodge. Then it was schooltime for the children.

The Gallatin and Madison Forests had an irregular and unsurveyed boundary along the Divide between the Madison River and the head of the West Gallatin from the west line of Yellowstone National Park. It was desirable to have the boundary surveyed and platted before preparing a new map of the two Forests. The District Office of Engineering sent a young engineer over to do the technical survey job, and the two Forests supplied the necessary help. The crew consisted of a young engineer to work the transit; Frank Riggle, the Upper Madison Ranger; a young forest guard from the Gallatin; a cook-packer who furnished both the saddle and pack stock; and Fickes to ramrod the job. We set up camp near the Divide on the west boundary of the Park, located the place of beginning, and went to work. The survey was with transit and stadia rod. The engineer (his name escapes me) ran the transit and kept the notes, Riggle carried the advance stadia rod, and the Gallatin man carried the back sight rod. My job was to scout ahead and determine the points that were to be located as the divide and boundary line between the two Forests. We started late in September and finished up at Moose Butte in mid-October, with 8 inches of snow. That was my last field job on the Madison. Along in March came word that I was to be transferred to the Pend Oreille National Forest at Sandpoint, Idaho to be in charge of improvement work on that Forest.

From the time of my arrival in Sheridan, I had been a member of the Sheridan Business Men's Club. It was part of the public relations job, and I was appointed chairman of the Sports Committee. As such, I was instrumental in organizing the town baseball and basketball teams. There was a considerable amount of rivalry in sports, amateur that is, between the towns of Whitehall, Twin Bridges, Sheridan, Alder-Laurin, Virginia City, and Dillon. The summers of 1925 and 1926 we had a fairly good baseball team and won quite a few games. In the winters of '25-26 and '26-27 our basketball team gave a good account of themselves. Chick Joy had played basketball in high school and on university teams, and he played center on our town team and was, in fact, the anchor man for the team. The Joys drove a Model T coupe, and the three of us usually traveled to out-of-town games in the coupe. We had fun. The summer of 1925 the Fickes family acquired its first automobile, a 1925 Dodge sedan. The family usually went along to some of the games in the Dodge

The winter of 1926-27 we organized a town basketball tournament in which all the seventh and eighth graders and high school boys who played participated, as well as the town team of eight or nine men. Then we persuaded most of the men in their 20's and 30's, who had played sometime or other to participate in the tournament. We signed up enough players and would-be players to make up nine or ten teams. We put all the names into a hat. As we drew them out, the players were assigned to team No. 1, 2, 3, etc., until all were assigned to a team. This resulted in a potpourri of teams, with the seventh graders and 30 year olds on the same team. For instance, a 6-foot center might be jumping against his seventh-grade nephew. We played short games--30

minutes, as I recall it--and practically every resident of the Sheridan area attended every game. It took us a whole week of evenings to run it off, but interest never faltered. I also had a special thrill the last evening when the boys presented me with a silver loving cup as a token of their appreciation for my part in the community activity. The editor of the local paper printed a very nice piece about my part in the club's activities when I was to leave Sheridan for Sandpoint. It read as follows:

"FICKES FAMILY DEPARTS FOR SANDPOINT

C. P. Fickes, of the local Forest Office, who has been transferred to the Pend Oreille National Forest with headquarters at Sandpoint, Idaho, expects to leave today or tomorrow for his new station. Mr. Fickes was transferred to the Madison Forest from the Nezperce on March 5, 1924, and has since that time occupied the position of Assistant Supervisor on the Madison Forest. His work on the Pend Oreille for the time being will consist principally of the supervision of a large improvement program--consisting of building miles of trails into the inaccessible portions of the Forest and such other improvements as are necessary in the advancement of forest administration. The position is one of great importance, and his assignment to it is in recognition of his efficiency and energy. His work on this Forest has been of a high order, and his going at this time is keenly regretted by the entire local Forest force.

One reason for the transfer is that a lower altitude has been advised for the health of both Mr. Fickes and his children. The family has gained a high esteem in the community, and both Mr. and Mrs. Fickes will be missed from the places they have filled.

Mr. Fickes has been untiring in his efforts to accord good recreational sports for the community, serving as chairman of the sports committee of the Business Men's Club. He has succeeded exceptionally well in putting over a program that was self-financed, and his work in this line will not soon be forgotten.

Mr. Fickes' father, A. Fickes, who has been making his home with his son, will go by train to Kalispell to visit relatives before going to Sandpoint. The Fickes family will go by automobile to their new home. While the community deeply regrets the departure of these estimable folks, the good wishes of all follow them to their new home."

In due time I reported to Forest Supervisor Ernest T. Wolf at the Pend Oreille National Forest office in Sandpoint, Idaho and met Assistant Supervisor L. F. "Duff" Jefferson, Forest Assistant George M. DeJarnette, and Chief Clerk Walter W. Schwartz. The office was in a storeroom on the ground floor level with a private office partitioned off for the Supervisor. The Forest was in need of improvements of all kinds, and my first job was to acquaint myself with what we had and then help to

prepare overall plans for future development of the Forest. C. E. Middleton was the Ranger at Clark Fork; L. M. Beard, better known as "Bud," at Snyder; Franklin Girard at Shiloh; H. K. Ludington at Meadow Creek on the Moyie and Frank Casler at Copeland on the Port Hill District. We had a very light fire season in 1927, so I was able to visit all the Ranger Districts and visit with Rangers about their improvement problems. The Port Hill District was allotted money for a lookout house on Smith Peak for which we did not have any construction plans.

My father was a carpenter and builder, and I virtually grew up among carpenter shop shavings and small building construction. I drew up some detailed plans for a 12' by 12' building of frame construction with a 6' by 6' cupalo, and ordered some lumber and hardware. Frank Casler hauled it up to the Smith Creek Ranger Station, planning that sometime during the winter he and I would cut it up in the required dimensions so that the material could be packed up to the peak during the next season. In January or February 1928, I attended, along with the Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor, the annual Allotment Conference of the Idaho National Forests in Spokane. Fire control was the principal topic of discussion, and the great need for more and better fire discovery facilities. At that time there were only half a dozen or so satisfactory, improved fire lookouts on the Idaho Forests of Region 1. At that time the Region did not have any kind of structural plans and specifications for a lookout structure. While I was on the Nezperce I had had something to do with the construction of a log lookout on Graves Peak on the Nezperce. The few lookout structures that had been put up were built by someone handy with tools and knowing something about carpentry work and where the building material could be hauled within a short distance of the building site. Our problem was to move materials on pack mules. Region 6, at Portland, Oregon, had a plan for a 12' by 12' building with an observation cupalo on top which was developed for that Region by some architectural engineer. However, the specifications were such that the cost of the material for the building was so high that Region 1 did not feel we could afford a building that cost from $1,200 to $2,000 to construct. It was related to the Allotment Conference group that Fickes had prepared plans for a ready-cut lookout to be built on Smith Peak on the Pend Oreille the next year. Cost of material was less than $100. During the discussion I made some remarks about the simplicity of the problem and its solution, and that anyone with a little know-how and savvy should be able to solve it. Sometime in February or March, Casler and I went up to the Smith Creek Ranger Station and cut up all the lumber into short pieces as shown by my plans and cargoed it so as to be ready to pack in when the snow was gone. The lookout man at the peak was to do most of the construction with some help from Casler. When I returned to the office after this chore, I was informed that the Regional Office wanted me to come in on a detail to design a lookout house for the Region. The first plan I developed was for a 12' by 12' building with a 6' by 6' cupalo top. Joe Halm, a draftsman in Engineering, did all

the finished tracing for the readicuts. Each individual piece was shown and numbered on the plans. Detailed instructions accompanied the plans as to the procedure to be followed in erecting the building. Millwork, such as window sash and door, were all standard millwork which could be purchased in any lumberyard along with the hardware. No item needed special fabrication. Then it was decided to build a sample to prove out the plans. At a lumberyard in Missoula I made arrangements to purchase the materials, and for a place to cut the material. I hired two carpenters to do the cutting, and I did some of the work myself. The bundled material was hauled down to the Lolo Forest and packed up to the top of Mt. Baldy, a lookout point on the Superior Ranger District. Then Joe Halm and I went up to the Lookout and put the building together, using only a hammer, screwdriver, and carpenter's level. The total cost was less than $400.

Joe was an excellent photographer and took many pictures of all stages of the construction for the official record and to convince skeptical Supervisors and Rangers that it could be done. Orders aplenty for the new type of lookout structure came in, and the next winter the Spokane Warehouse set up a plan to readicut and assemble all the material for a number of the new lookouts. A crew of District Rangers who were experienced packers (mules that is) was assembled, and the complete material for each lookout house was assembled into mule pack loads to be shipped as a unit. Upon arrival at the Forest shipping point or Ranger Station, all that was necessary was to load the bundles on the mules, pack it up to the peak, and send up a couple of handymen <u>who could read</u>, equip them with a hammer, screwdriver, and level. We had some complaints, of course, about shortage of pieces or incorrect lengths; but in every case, it was found that the erectors had not followed the numbered instructions for assembly. Eventually, we had crews around the Region bragging about how fast they could assemble a 12' x 12' lookout with cupalo ready for occupancy.

Then it was decided that Fickes should become a part of the Regional Office staff in the Office of Operation. In May 1928 I moved my family from Sandpoint to Missoula. It was considered our home ever since, except for a couple years at Seattle and Los Angeles.

Following the 1929 fire season, there was a lot of discussion of the ways and means to improve fire discovery, which involved keeping the lookouts comfortable and, by all means, on top of the lookout point. Evan Kelly decided that the 12' x 12' house with cupalo was not satisfactory. The lookout men wasted observation time climbing up and down. Why not build a 14' by 14' house where the lookout would be seeing all the time? The lookout house designer said--OK, can do. Mr. Howard Flint, Regional Fire Chief at the time, disagreed; and the 14' by 14' house was designed and built "over his dead body" so to speak. Howard never had a good word for me after that, and it wasn't long until Frank Jefferson relieved him as Fire Chief.

Chewelah Mountain Lookout Tower, Colville National Forest. "Readicut" in Spokane Warehouse, cargoed for mule transport, the tower was designed by C. P. Fickes in 1929.

Photo by W. E. Steuerwald (1958)

In 1929 Evan W. Kelly became Regional Forester, and by August 1 we had a real stem-winder of a fire season. Whether or not it was a fitting introduction to the new Regional Forester I would not attempt to say. Fire Control was then under Operation, as it had been modernized. L. C. Stockdale was Assistant Regional Forester for Operation, with Howard Flint in charge of fire. G. I. Porter was Assistant to Stockdale and responsible for so many different things that I never did find out what he wasn't responsible for. Henrietta (Hank) Sell was secretary to Stockdale and, next to G. I., was the office inspiration. The writer was trying to handle the many details of the improvement job and the many miscellaneous errands that no one else wanted or had time to do. When the fire season began to boil over, following the practice of previous years, the operation of the fire desk in the RO fell to the lot of Porter with Fickes to tail down for him.

At first the Forests asked for equipment, axes, shovels, hoe dags, saws, mess equipment, bedding, etc. Then as local supplies of men were used up they asked for equipment and men. Then before long, pack stock appeared on the requisitions. Since I had been hiring men and dispatching them to the Forests, getting horses and mules was turned over to me. We had a hiring office on North Higgins Avenue, a storeroom in the Belmont Hotel. We maintained a hiring staff there day and night. Men were plentiful--these were Depression days, and it was no trouble to round up 50 men, day or night. In fact one enterprising saloon keeper in the next block north of the Belmont, who ran a working man's flop house, regularly put a crew of 25 men to bed at 10 p.m. so they would be available if we needed them during the night, which happened quite regularly. He collected from the men and didn't lose a dime by it.

At first it was easy to get fully-equipped strings of commercial pack stock, but this supply was soon exhausted and it was necessary to hire unequipped stock. Our supply of packsaddles (Deckers) was rapidly used up and soon Central Purchase was having saddles made to order for immediate use. I neglected to state that another part of Operation in those days was what was called Central Purchase or P&S, Procurement and Supply, which was responsible for all purchases of any kind. Orrin C. Bradeen was in charge, with Harvey Marsh as Chief Clerk. When I contracted for trucks or horses and mules I was acting as an agent of P&S. In place of saying "Good morning," Harvey greeted us with "FIRE IN THE MOUNTAINS," which became a byword before the season was over. Fortunately, the Regional Office had just been moved into the first addition to the Missoula Federal Building, and we had all the office space we could use. We had a hiring office, or corral, on West Main Street at Orange for horses and mules; we took over a feed-and-sale stable run by Morris DeBell. He was one of the best cooperators I ever worked with. Of course, we paid him well for services he rendered; but he did innumerable things which were helpful and for which he received no return but our appreciation. At any hour of the day or night he or his stable man was on the job to keep things moving for us.

Another who was unflagging in his efforts to help was Doc Carson, BAI veterinary inspector for this district. Doc inspected every animal that went through Missoula and helped load them into the trucks as well. He spent practically every waking hour at the stable so as to be available when needed.

Then there was the problem of transporting the animals from where they were to where the work was. Up to that time there had been very little hauling of animals by trucks. We had to pioneer that field of activity and develop means of loading and unloading the stock on such trucks as we could hire. Lloyd Zbinden, with Marion Duncan and several others in the Missoula Warehouse crew, were most helpful with this part of the fire activity. We had much trouble hiring experienced men to be packers of the horses and mules we hired. Men who had never even seen or put a saw buck packsaddle, or a Decker either for that matter, on a horse would hire out as packers, so we had to give elementary lessons in cargoing and packing. Consequently, we had many injured animals to be treated by the veterinarians. We hired about 3,000 men through the Higgins Avenue Office, many of them repeaters, of course, and over 1,500 horses and mules. The animal contract provided that the animal had to be turned back to the owner in the same condition as received. At one time I had over 100 head with sore backs and other injuries in Johnny Anderson's pasture at the south end of Higgins Avenue. I did not get the hospital cleaned out until Thanksgiving.

When the load really got heavy for one man, Charley Butler from the Custer was assigned to help me. His job was to receive the stock at the corrals, see that each animal was properly recorded on paper, organized into strings of five or more animals, fitted with saddles, and assigned to a packer--if we had one on tap. As soon as an order was received for a packstring, he would see that it was loaded on trucks and sent on its way.

I was engaged in rustling horses and mules from wherever I could find them. Only a small percentage of the stock hired had ever been packed, and the green packers had a breaking job on their hands in more ways than one. Frankly, it was a mess; but we did the best we could. When Ed Mackay wanted 50 head of pack stock for the "BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN FIRE" over at Powell, he had to have them. If I did not have them there within a few hours, the Major wanted to know what in hell was holding them up. After the close of the fire season, I prepared a detailed memorandum of our experiences of the season, along with some detailed and specific recommendations for plans for an organization to meet the like problems in future years. A year or so later it was discovered that all copies of my memorandum had disappeared from the files.

All this experience with trying to furnish for the use of the men on the fire something which requires time and training to put together started a train of thought in my mind. Over the years, along with

other experiences, I had learned something about the U.S. Cavalry Remount Depots where saddle horses for Cavalry replacements were assembled and trained for issue as replacements for lost or condemned stock. In the 1910 fires in the Flathead, I had observed an Army pack train of 40 or 50 mules in operation around what is now Glacier National Park. In thinking over my experiences of the 1929 fire season, it occurred to me that a remount of similar service for the Forest Service might be a desirable setup to have in the Region. Formerly, there was a large supply of commercial pack stock available for hire at several places in the Region; but what we failed to note was that the automobile and truck, along with some roads, were replacing this pack stock, and they were no longer available. It was up to us to supply our own. In my memorandum concerning the 1929 season as a suggested improvement in supply, I outlined a proposed scheme for a reserve supply of equipped and trained pack animals and saddle horses in a central location where they could be dispatched on short notice to wherever needed in the Region. In fact, I got carried away and went into considerable detail as to what could be done with such a proposal. In working out my proposal, I had some discussion about it with Glenn C. Smith, Chief of Grazing. The memo, through channels went to Stockdale's desk and, as was customary with Stock, laid there gathering dust. Sometime later in a Regional Conference of Assistant Regional Foresters, the fire season was being gone over, and Smith mentioned his talk with me about pack and saddle stock in reserve. The memo was dug up, read, and discussed. The Major thought the plan might have some merit. Later on Roy Headley, Chief of Operation from the Washington Office, read it and said, "Why don't you do it. It makes sense to me." Elers Koch, Silviculture, was against it. Meyer Wolff, Lands, was on the fence; and Howard Flint, Fire Control, was bitterly opposed. The plan finally received approval from Regional Forester Evan W. Kelly, and I was instructed to find a suitable place to set up the proposed "REMOUNT DEPOT."

The job of organizing, establishing and supervising the proposed Remount Depot was assigned to me. Tentative objectives for the new part of the supply operation were set up about as follows:

To provide reservoir of experienced packers and pack animals for fire emergency and other uses.

To supply saddle horses and pack mules of a satisfactory type to the Forests.

To develop adequate types of equipment for transporting pack stock on highways and roads.

To serve as a training base for packers.

To develop improved methods of packing and standardize packing practices on the Forests.

Pack strings being trucked to fire, about 1931.

Forest Service photo by Paul Fair

Civilian Conservation Corps Camp near Remount Depot in Ninemile Drainage (now Ninemile Ranger Station, Lolo National Forest.

Forest Service photo by K. D. Swan

The Remount as it looked in 1930.

Major Kelly on Como in 1932.

Other objectives such as the organization and training of plow units as carried on in 1931 and 1932 were added from time to time.

The first major problem we had to solve was to secure a suitable location for the proposed Remount. In general, what we wanted was a sizeable stock ranch, centrally located in the Region and also near railroad and highway transportation facilities. Glenn Smith and I spent considerable time looking over ranch units near Plains, Hot Springs, Dixon, Arlee, Superior and other places. Early in May, Charley Simpson informed me that a rancher, Jack Ray of Huson, had informed him it might be possible for us to lease the old Allen Ranch on the Ninemile. It was owned by Ralph Scheffer of Huson, and he was agreeable to a long-term lease, and we could have immediate possession. The ranch consisted of a full section--640 acres; and there was considerable amount of open range, of a sort, adjacent to it. It was fenced, there were some useable buildings, and it could produce about 100 tons of hay. After several surveys, conferences, and discussions the location on the Ninemile was approved. We rented the ranch effective July 1, 1930, and actually took possession on June 10 on behalf of the Forest Service. For the next 5 years or until I was transferred from Operation to Engineering in 1936, I was responsible for the Remount operation.

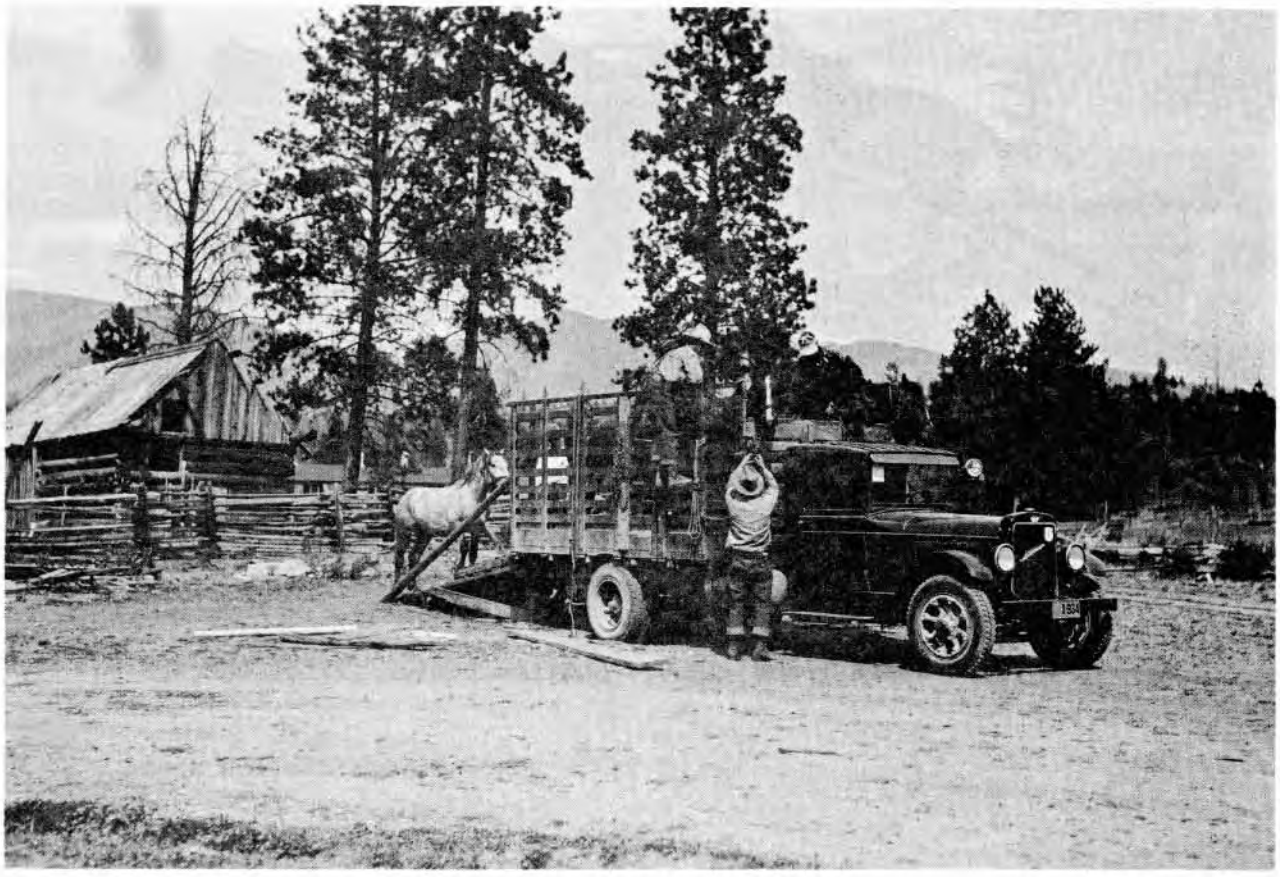
The Remount Depot, for the first couple years, was started and carried on under the constant supervision and close observation of Regional Forester Evan W. Kelly who really wanted it to function as planned. No one else in the RO wanted to have much to do with it because they were afraid they would get their fingers burned. After we made it prove its worth, then everybody wanted to get in on the act. At first I fought for every penny to be spent on the project, and requests for competent personnel were ignored. I had to work with independent and incompetent personnel who were indifferent to consistent effort. There appeared to be some more or less concealed effort to sabotage the project. It was necessary to take over an old ranch property with all improvements in badly rundown condition.

It was the plan the first year to hire ten strings of pack animals with packers and to assemble them at the Remount to be held in reserve for fire call, but we had to get the ranch ready for them. The house had to be renovated for occupancy by the Forest officer in charge, corrals and fences repaired, a semi-permanent camp for 20 or more men, cook house, etc., to be readied--not to mention some 200 acres of hay meadow to be irrigated.

Jack Yost was in Missoula waiting to be assigned to a Forest, so Stock told him to help me at the Remount. He was a lot of help during the 4 or 5 weeks he was there even though he had to do some chores that could hardly be considered Forest Ranger duties. Then a Ranger from Eastern Montana, Charley Butler, was assigned to be superintendent of the Remount. He was a lame duck but a nice guy without experience in handling crews of men (especially independent characters like mule

The Region's first horse truck, 1930. Charles Butler (left) watches the loading.

Forest Service photo



The Region's first horse truck, 1930.

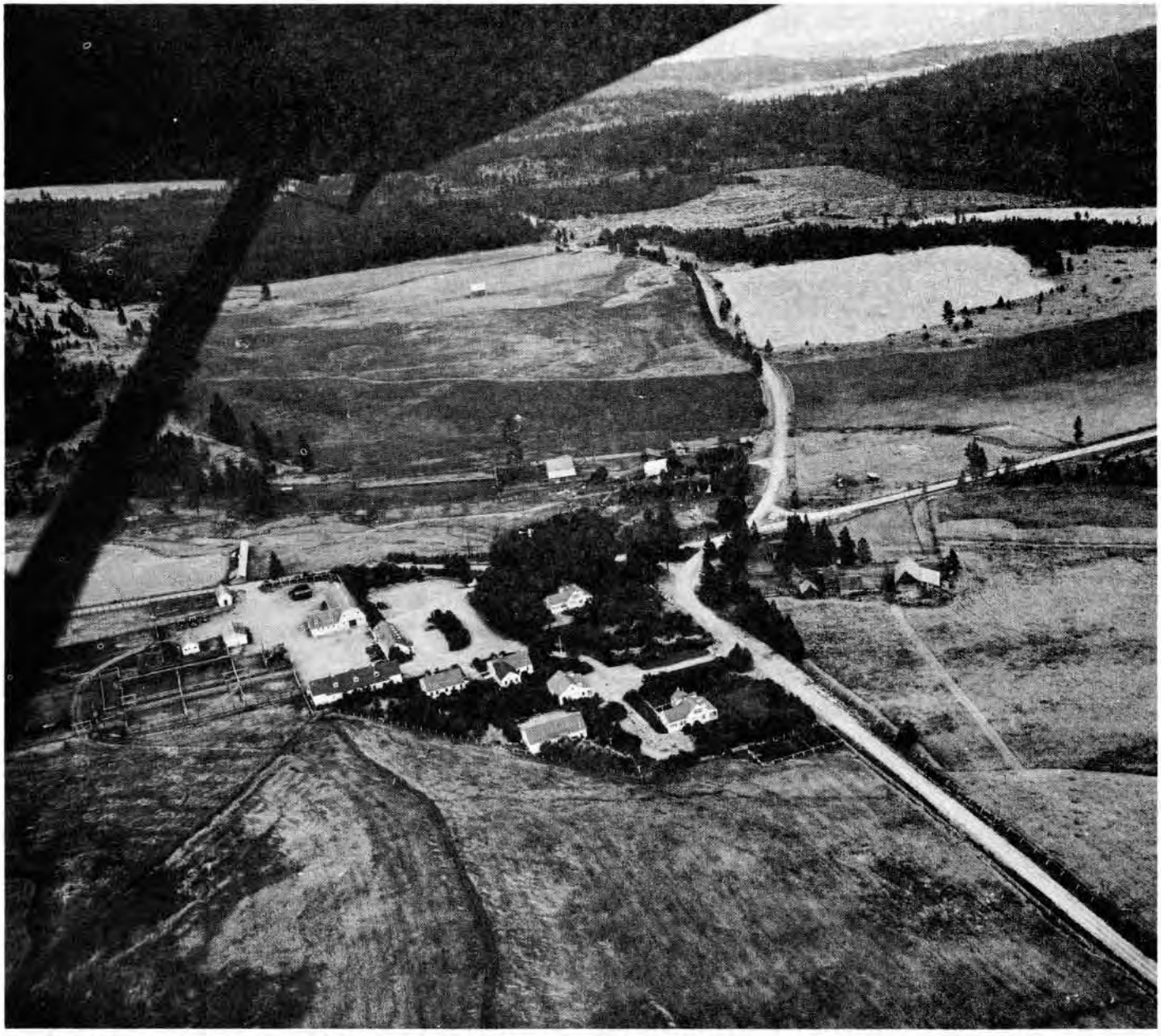
Forest Service photo

packers) and very little organizational experience. We got along after a fashion. We hired ten strings of pack animals the first of July--ten head to the string. Most of them came from up around Polson and Big Arm, and nearly all the owners and packers had worked for the Forest Service at some time or another. Ern Hoyt of Big Arm, who worked at the Remount or the Winter Range nearly ever since, had two strings and packed one himself. We bought several "rockin' chair" horses from him that year. One of them, Snap, a black saddle horse, was a standby of the Remount for years. Bill Bell was leading his show string with him as late as 1942. Our facilities for handling stock at the Remount were necessarily of the crudest type. We had two trucks with makeshift bodies for hauling five head of horses in each, and the loading chute was a rough slanting platform with a pole on each side to serve as a shear boom to guide the animal into the truck. In spite of the lack of equipment, all the strings were loaded out in short order when needed. Of course, most of the hauling was done by rented trucks and drivers under contract. By the first of August all the hired strings were out on fires, and we were hiring other strings right and left. The way this reads, one may get the idea that all I did that year was ramrod the Remount. On the contrary, I had the regular run of improvement projects in the Region to plan for, supervise and troubleshoot. The improvement desk carried on just as if the Remount was not aborning. In fact, most of the Remount supervision was done evenings, Sundays, and holidays.

Fast and ready transportation of the pack stock from the Remount to the fire location was another problem that had to be solved. During the 1929 season we had contracted every truck that was available to haul pack stock. In those days platform truck bodies of any kind were just coming into use, and no one had hauled any animals on a motor truck. An organized pack string consisted of one saddle horse and nine mules with one packer in charge. What we needed was a rig that could haul
haul the ten head of animals and the packer to the fire. 1930 turned out to be an easy fire season, and we got by with truck equipment that was available; but Procurement was working on the solution to the problem and came up with just what we needed eventually.

During the winter of 1930-31, the new project came in for a lot of planning. Everybody in the Regional Office from the Regional Forester down had ideas and how. We were going to put all foresters on saddle horses so we needed a lot of <u>good saddle horses</u>. During the winter Butler was relieved of the assignment to the Remount, and Jesse L. Williams (Jake) was transferred from the Nezperce to assist me with the project. This was about the best break the outfit could get. Jake knew packing and packers from ears to hocks. He turned out to be, in spite of some personal weaknesses, just the man for the job.

A strong right arm of the Remount Depot organization was Boyd Thompson of Niarada and Polson. When we started the saddle horse breeding project in 1932, I looked around for a competent and experienced horseman to supervise the actual handling of the breeding stock. Boyd was



Aerial view of Remount Station, 1941.

Photo by W. J. Mean (CCC photographer)

born on his father's homestead on Flathead Lake near Dayton, and from the time he was big enough to lead a horse to water he worked with saddle and pack horses as well as work animals. He owned a small cow ranch near Niarada and a small herd of horses. He was a natural for the job, and when I approached him he agreed to come to the Remount as foreman of the breeding project. As time went on, he became the right arm of the superintendent of the Remount Depot. Without his experience and ability the breeding project could have been a lost cause. It seems fitting and proper to state that without the experienced capability and loyal support of many men like Boyd Thompson, Gifford Pinchot's Forest Preservation Project might have been a tragic failure.

Along about this time the idea of having a central place for wintering all the stock in the Region came into the picture. There were several reasons for this plan. It would serve as a distributing place for assigning new animals to the Forests. It would lower the average-per-head cost for the season by concentrating all the stock in one place and simplify distribution of replacement stock. The Flathead, Blackfeet and Kootenai had been wintering with Bud Bruns in the Big Draw for several years. The Remount now took over this contract, and the management of the wintering since the Remount stock were to be wintered there also. At the time we were looking for a site for the Remount Depot, considerable time had been spent looking over the ranches located in Ferry Basin near Perma, Montana. It was Glenn's and my conclusion that this was the ideal area for our project, but at the time it seemed impossible to put it together in a satisfactory manner. The area had long been the favorite wintering ground for the Indians' stock, and several old timers told us that it was a natural because of the uniformly easy winter conditions. In view of the work that was done at Ninemile by the Civilian Conservation Corps, it is to be regretted that we could not have done this development work where the winter range was later set up.

In the spring of 1931, it was decided that the Region would buy a considerable number of good saddle horses, and I made a trip to Miles City to scout the possible availability of the kind of stock we wanted. I also visited the Army Remount at Fort Robinson, Nebraska to discuss saddle horse availabilities with Colonel Williams, the Commanding Officer, and others of his staff. For some reason, unknown to me, Alva Simpson, Supervisor of the Custer, was authorized to go ahead and make the purchase. We received 87 head of horses at Polson early in the spring, and I helped unload them; and we drove them to the Bruns Ranch in the Big Draw. The herd was a good demonstration of what not to buy. Over 20 head were absolutely unuseable--either old, crippled or rodeo bucking stock. The Remount got a real black eye over that deal, and Fickes had to bear the brunt of the criticism from the Forests; and Jake Williams arrived just in time to help sort out the mess. I had purchased quite a number of saddle horses and several carloads of mules without having been stung even once--not that I was much of an expert in judging animals. But I did have enough common sense to secure the cooperation of good horsemen since I was spending

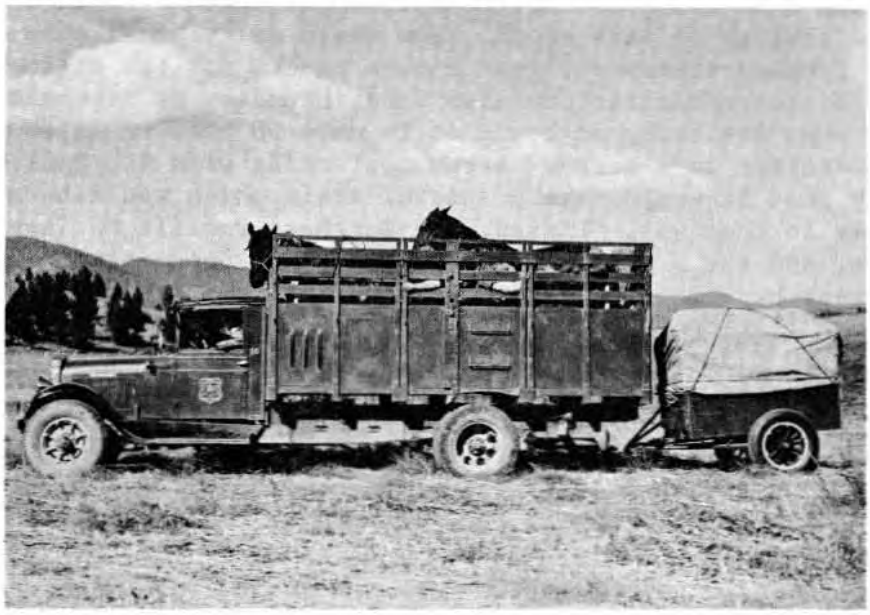
some of their tax money and would be a comeback buyer. Knowing Alva, I imagine that he thought it was a relief project of some sort.

Major Kelly was from California, and the kind of mule packing that he knew about was the Spanish or Mexican "APAREJO." He wanted us to try them out to show that they were superior to the Decker, which was in universal use among commercial packers in the Idaho country. Some of the boys over East were still using the saw buck saddle--but not many. Way back yonder in the early days, some of the Forests in the Region had acquired one or two aparejos, but no one was using them.

I called in all the aparejos from the Forests, and we gathered up 16 complete rigs. The aparejo is a complicated assembly. There are 15 separate parts to it, and the loads are mounted on the mule with a sling rope and then secured with a double diamond hitch. It requires two men to load, and the saddle is a mule "skinner" in rough country. When I was in Grangeville, I became acquainted with Mackey Williams who was an old hand at aparejo packing. I persuaded Mackey and another old hand that he dug up to come over to the Remount and be head packer of the aparejo string. The outfit went up on Cedar Creek near Superior and packed from the end of the road into the Clearwater country. They had been on the job about 2 weeks when the Major came along, looked them over, then told Mackey to take them back to the Remount and tell Clyde that we would stick to the Deckers. They were expensive pieces of equipment, compared to the cost of a Decker. Today they would be worth their weight in gold as museum pieces. When I went looking for them in 1970, I learned that the 16 rigs had been burned as surplus, useless property. I had planned to secure at least one saddle for the Historical Museum.

With several carloads of young mules to break and assign to different pack strings, and the 87 saddle horses from Miles City to try out and assign to the Forests, Jake had himself quite a job the first spring he was working with us. It was almost rodeo time all that spring at the Bruns ranch. By the time the stock was all shipped out to the Forests and ten pack strings to the Remount, we were into another fire season. Also, that was the year we started the Plow Units. These units consisted of four men, two 1,600-pound draft horses, a hillside plow and other miscellaneous equipment, all mounted in a truck just like a city fire department outfit, ready to be dispatched to a fire in a hurry. If I remember correctly, Roy Phillips pioneered the use of the "hillside", a two-way plow for scratching fireline. Hugh Redding was assigned to the Remount to ramrod this project, and they did some effective work in country where such an outfit could be used. The outfit also included a saddle horse for the project fire boss.

Early in the fire season Yellowstone National Park blew up with several big fires and called on Region 1 for help, mostly overhead. Glenn Smith was over there and was made fire boss, and right away he found that they had to have some pack stock to move supplies. The dude ranch boys with their saw buck saddles and half-broke stock just



A plow unit going to a fire - 1931.

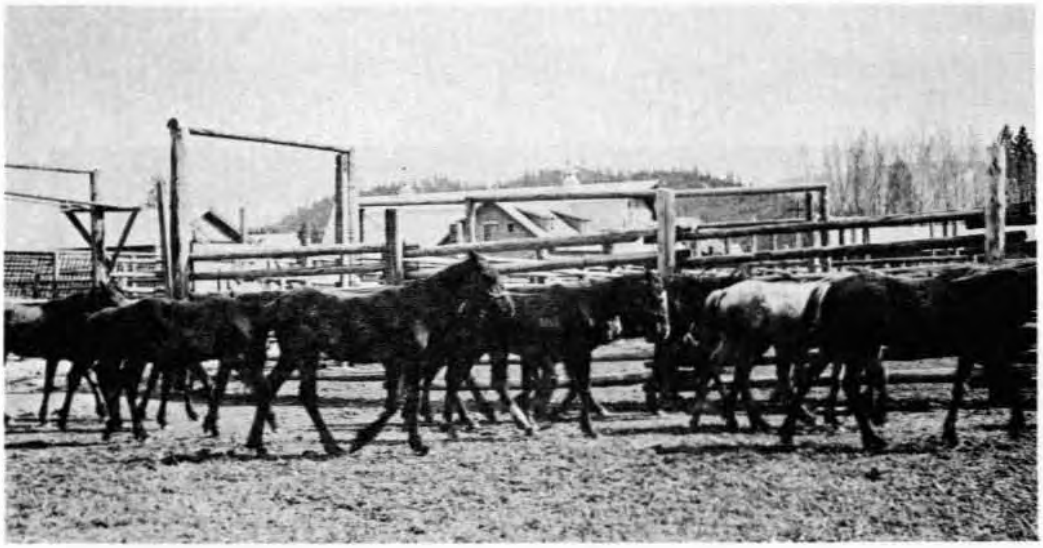
October 1930 - Kelly and Fickes watch packers' contest.

couldn't do the job. So, he called the Regional Office and asked for five strings of pack stock. How would we get them over there with our limited transport, just enough trucks for two strings? I called the Northern Pacific Division Superintendent at Missoula and asked him what the railroad could do to move 50 head of mules and six men to Gardiner in a hurry. After conferring with St. Paul he called back that it would take a special train which would be expensive. My reply to that was, "Listen, the Northern Pacific National Park is on fire, and the N.P. had better think about doing something about it. We must have those mules in Gardiner by tomorrow morning."

In a few minutes he called back. "We'll put them on Number 2 Passenger at 6:20 this evening." They spotted three baggage cars for the mules and a day coach for the packers at Huson, the boys loaded them out and they were in Gardiner early the next morning. The men and mules we sent over did an excellent job, and the dude ranch packers learned a few things about packing too. The mules had to come home in ordinary stock cars.

In the fall of 1930 we held a meeting of packers and Rangers from all the Forests for the purpose of an exchange of experiences and ideas which resulted in creating a much improved attitude in favor of the Remount Depot operation. It had long been evident that most of the packers in the Region were self-educated, and each had his own way of cargoing and hanging loads on the saddle. The field day was well attended, and much good came about through the exchange of ideas. Everyone present learned something new. The field season of 1931 wound up with the holding of another packers' field day at the Remount, and this one was even more successful than the 1930 event. Many details of the Decker saddle were discussed and settled. Methods of packing various kinds of loads were demonstrated and photographed for future use for training purposes. The field day lasted from Thursday morning until Saturday evening and wound up with a rodeo that was a real good event. A crowd of several hundred people gathered on Saturday to see the finals of the packers' contest and the rodeo. A brief history of the Decker saddle, its development and use, amply illustrated, was prepared for future use.

Then it was decided that we should do something about raising our own saddle stock. A saddle horse breeding project was authorized at the Remount, provided it did not cost any money to carry it on. So I rustled a free stallion from the Army; and we started to gather up all the mares owned by the Forests, which had been used as bell mares with each pack string. In the fall we secured the transfer from a rancher at Kalispell of the Morgan stallion Rosin. By the spring of 1932, we had 25 or 30 mares collected for a harem for Rosin. These mares were bred in the spring of '32; and in 1933, 26 mares foaled 24 colts which was considered a very good breeding record. The record will show that practically every half-bred Morgan colt foaled at the Remount eventually went to work as a saddle horse on some Forest in the Region, and a few were sold to other Regions of the Forest Service. The record of

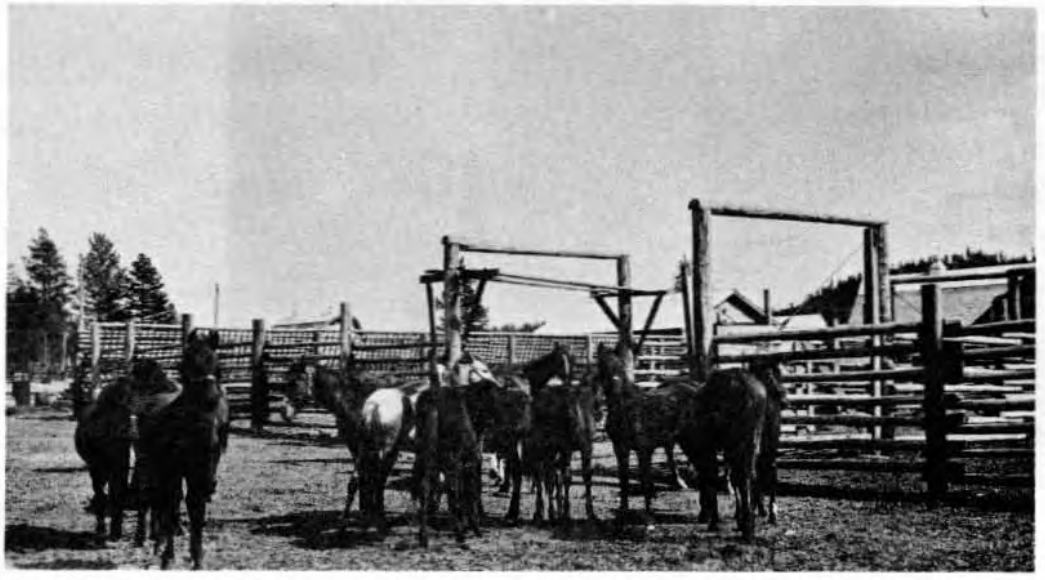


Some Morgan colts, out of Coldblood mares--and their daddy below.

USFS photo by author

Rosin, Morgan stallion.

1934 mares and foals on Remount pasture.



Part of 1934 colt crop.

the ill-advised switch to the American Bred Saddle Horse breed started with the purchase of a $7,500 stallion. The results of this change of breed can show no comparable record.

In the fall of 1932, Jake Williams and I went over to Miles City and arranged to buy some saddle horses from the Miles City Experiment Station. These horses were all colts raised by the Station in connection with a range breeding experiment that they had been carrying on for some time with Morgan stallions. We bought a carload at $65 each, all 3 year olds.

When the car was unloaded, we had a pleasant surprise. The Station presented us with a 6-year-old saddle horse named Admiration as a bonus and was suggested for my personal use. I had ridden Ad while at the Station buying the colts and had expressed my satisfaction and pleasure in riding a good horse. He was gentle as any horse could be but with one serious fault. Ad had been used as a stallion for 2 years and had run free on the range with his mares, then for some reason or other it had been decided to alter the horse. The fault was that he could not be ridden behind any other horse on the trail. If he was used to round up other horses, it did not matter how rough the ground was--Ad was going to head those horses. The first time I rode him, at the winter range rounding up some mules in the roughest part of the range, I really got a good scare. So, we did not use him much for that kind of riding. I rode him over 1,500 miles on trails, and I never rode a more satisfactory mount--not even Nancy. Other men rode him when I did not need him. We all learned that a good curb bit must be used. It was understood by all at the Remount, for obvious reasons, Ad must not be issued to any Forest.

While I was on the Guayule Project in 1942, Ad was sent to the Kootenai Forest at the request of the Supervisor. As I heard the story afterward, there was some kind of a training meeting being held at the Warland Ranger Station; and on Sunday several of the young men at the meeting decided to go for a ride up Warland Creek. The Ranger Station is on the north side of the river and the Great Northern Railroad. Coming home, someone in the group started a race to the Station. Ad was being ridden with a snaffle bit which was useless for managing the horse. As soon as the horse started to sweat, nothing could hold him. There was a freight train on the railroad crossing. Blindly, Ad ran into the moving train. The young man was crippled for life, and the horse had to be killed. The person responsible was the man who just thought he knew horses and how to handle them. What an ending for a gallant member of the equine race.

We had another Supervisor who was attached to the RO for awhile. He was going on a trail inspection trip over in the Selway-Clearwater. Jake always issued a good saddle horse in outstanding shape for such a trip. The man saw a good-looking 3-year-old colt in the corral and insisted on being issued the young horse, which was just being

broke. The colt played out under the rider in the middle of his trip and had to be shot. The man blamed the Remount for issuing him a green colt--so we got another demerit. We lived through it in spite of such incidents.

In 1933 and 1934 we secured more colts from Miles City and also the Morgan stallion Monterey who was used at the Remount for several years. Also, in 1933 it was decided to put a CCC winter camp at the Remount. We had to make plans for keeping them occupied; as there were to be 600 men in the camp, the planning job was no small chore. Ed Mackay was to be in charge of the camp. They were busy with the Butler Creek irrigation ditch so we could raise more hay, the fencing of several pastures on Stony Creek, and some work on the Lolo National Forest. In July 1934, it was decided to purchase the Scheffer ranch which was under lease, and then go ahead with the construction of a complete set of new buildings. In May 1935, the supervision of the Remount was turned over to Procurement and Supply; and my active interest in the project ceased.

During the Depression of the 1930's, there came into operation, by Congressional action, at least two emergency relief appropriations. They made it possible for the Forest Service to construct much-needed improvements of all kinds, including roads, trails, telephone lines, Ranger Station buildings, water supply and sewage disposal systems and recreation campgrounds. For years the Forest Service had been forced to build badly-needed cabins and other structures with limited appropriations and the use of what was called "contributed time." And for years, by law, the maximum appropriation that could be spent by the Forest Service on any one building was $600. We were able to supplement this amount by the use of "contributed time." Let's say we wanted to build a two-room log cabin at a Ranger Station. The $600 would just about purchase the necessary lumber, millwork (doors and windows), hardware, etc. Then when winter came, three or four Rangers would get together at the building site and proceed to construct the cabin with "contributed time," which was the Rangers' salaries while engaged on the cabin job.

In the early days we were paid from the so-called Statutory Role. For the operation of the Forest Service for the fiscal year 1910 (July 1, 1909 to June 30, 1910), Congress would appropriate so many Ranger positions at $900 per year or $1,000 per year, and so on. Each Forest was assigned so many positions: one Supervisor at $1,800, one Deputy Supervisor at $1,500, a clerk at $900, one Forest Ranger at $1,200, two Assistant Forest Rangers at $1,000, and four Deputy Forest Rangers at $900. The Forest was allotted so many positions at fixed salaries, and if the Forest only hired three Rangers at $900, the fourth $900 remained in the Treasury. If the Forest Supervisor wanted to build a telephone line, he received enough money to buy the wire and insulators; and then two or three Rangers would get together and build the telephone line with "contributed time." Naturally, under those conditions, it took a lot of planning by all concerned in order to put roofs over our heads and to build trails to ride or walk over.