

SELWAY TALES
BY

Charles J. Johnson

PREFACE

Selway Tales are stories of life on a homestead in a wilderness area. A homestead is a parcel of land granted by the Government to an individual or family. In order to gain title to it, certain improvements had to be made within a three-year period. Some homesteads proved very successful and others, where the tillable land was limited, were not. In these limited areas the homestead or ranch could not produce a living for the family.

As told the tales are in somewhat chronological order and depict the life of a family living in a primitive wilderness area. Most of the waking hours were spent on necessities to exist. Hunting and fishing was the equivalent of going to the butcher shop. Vegetables were grown for eating the year around--some could be stored in root cellars, others were dried or canned.

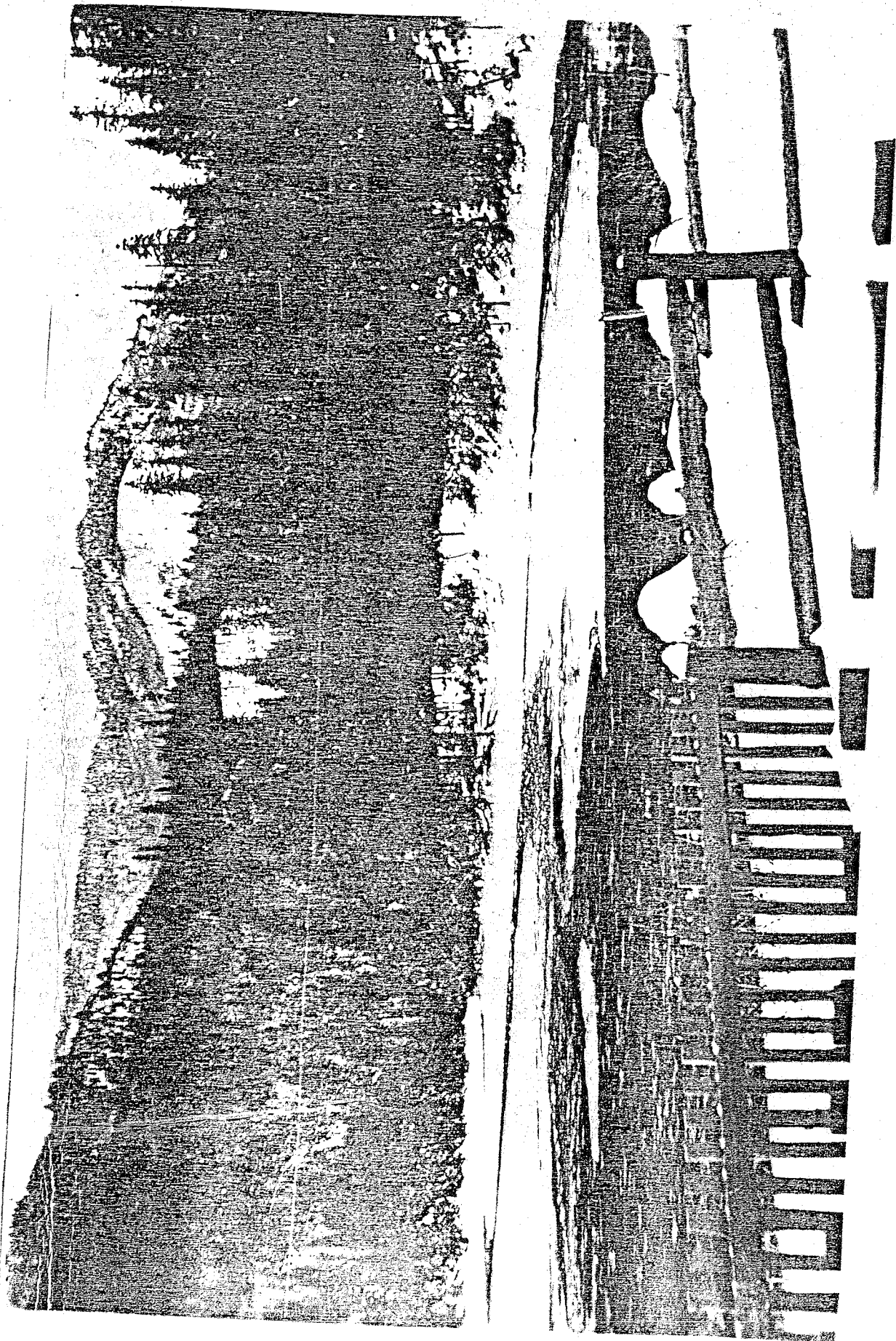
The father of the family had to work out most of the time in order to earn money for clothes and food and other necessities that could not be grown on the ranch, caught, or shot. When the father was gone, it was up to the son to "run" the ranch. Thus, the stories told in Selway Tales are from this son's memory and viewpoint.

"Running" the ranch meant doing whatever was required such as feeding and caring for livestock including milking cows, cutting wood, seeing that the waterpails were full, gardening, and, of course, providing meat for the table mainly in form of fish, grouse, and venison. Game was plentiful; people lived off the land, and everyone only killed what they needed.

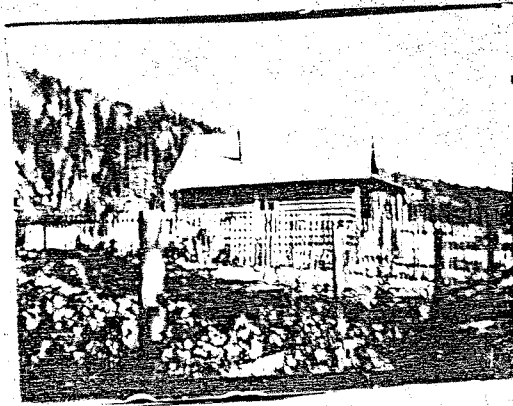
There were no stores within thirty miles of wagon road and trail. So supplies procured from town had to be in such quantities to last for long

periods of time. Going to the store was at least a four-or five-day trip with pack mules.

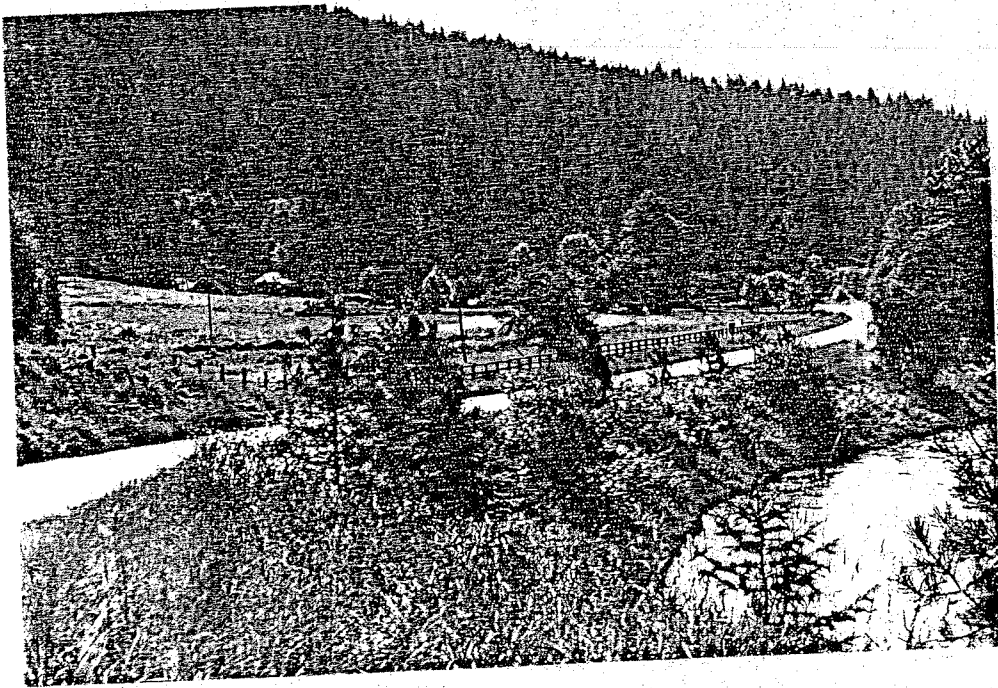
While the stories told seem to jump from one subject to another and sometimes back again, that is what was happening; and they describe life in all aspects as events took place.



Winter time taken from the front porch of our Cabin
The Selway makes a big "S" curve to the lower end of the Ranch



Our Cabin as we found it upon arrival in 1912
The Cabin was probably built in 1910



As the place looks today (1981) No trace left of our buildings fences or garden spot. White spot in center of picture, back of fence is approximate location of where Cabin existed.

SELWAY TALES

Probably the best way to start any story is to start with the why's and wherefore's. My father, mother, both my sisters, and myself were all born in Missouri near St. Louis. Dad's health broke, and the doctors advised him to forgo his printing trade and get outside. His father, mother, and brother had moved to Kooskia, Idaho, where his brother had acquired a homestead in a poker game. The homestead was on the Selway River five miles from Lowell, Idaho. It was decided that we would take over the homestead.

This being 1912, the method of travel was by train. I don't remember much detail about the trip from Missouri to Kooskia, except that it seemed to take forever. My sister, Helen, was a year old and was sick most of the trip. I also remember that we had a big food hamper with lots of sandwiches and things. The best part of the trip was when it ended. Maybe that is why I have never liked to ride in trains; that one trip was enough.

We arrived in Kooskia early in April and started getting the things together that we would need at the ranch. This was very exciting. My imagination was going in high daydreaming about bears, cougars, deer, and whatever else I'd been told about. The day we took off I was more excited than at any Christmas I remember.

In those days the Middle Fork of the Clearwater was crossed at Kooskia by way of a ferry boat, then there was twelve miles of wagon roads up to Syringa. From there travel was by trail and pack horse to wherever you were going. At Lowell there was another ferry that was used when the water was too high to ford the Locksaw. These old ferries

were run on a cable and by turning the "slips" in the water, like an underwater sail, they managed to cross without too much trouble. Like all things in a primitive area, they got the job done and were accepted. From Lowell to the homestead there were five more miles of trail. As the old roads and trails were made with the least possible effort, they wandered over bluffs and down canyons. As a result the distance from Kooskia to our homestead was twelve miles of road and eighteen miles of trail.

The trip from Kooskia to the ranch took two days. The first day we traveled the twelve miles by wagon to Syringa. There all our things had to be arranged for packing and had to be checked out to see that everything was ready for an early start the next morning.

Eighteen miles of mountain trail with pack horses and three kids was not an easy task for one day. None of us kids had learned to ride alone, so we had to double up with the older people. Helen, being only one year old, had to be held. Jeanette was three and could ride in front of another person and hang on by herself. I was six and was put behind the saddle of whoever was caring for me. The trip went well and nothing exciting happened. As I remember I was wide-eyed and taking it all in step by step.

Upon our arrival we found that we had things pretty good. There was a one-room cabin with a ladder going upstairs to a floored attic where Mom and the girls could sleep. In back of the cabin was a shed that served as a bunk house (except in real cold weather), wood shed, and tool room. Then there was an open shed and the outhouse was beyond it at a discreet distance from normal traffic. We had running water (in the river); plenty of wood—all we had to do was cut it; good soil for growing a

garden; and plenty of fish, deer, and grouse for meat.

Everybody had chores and work to do. The girls being approximately three and one were not chosen for much duty, but since I was at the well-developed age of six, I was immediately designated to the wood pile, water buckets, and to a certain degree of feeding livestock. The first thing Dad taught me was how to use an ax and also very emphatically how to sharpen it and to keep it sharp. A sharp ax is a lot safer than a dull ax because it isn't apt to glance off and fly into a foot or a leg.

We soon learned a great deal about raising a garden. The deer would jump the fence at night and eat everything that grew. The ground squirrels and blue jays got into the act and added to the problem of raising anything but for their benefit. We acquired a dog to bark at the deer, and Dad got me a 22 rifle (it was called a target rifle in those days). He gave me very specific lessons that guns were for killing and were never to be pointed at anybody or anything that you didn't want to kill. He did a good job; it was a lesson I have always remembered. Anyway, it was my job to eliminate as many ground squirrels and blue jays as possible. Small and light as the rifle was, it was still too heavy for me to shoot without a rest. This presented a problem to find a proper rest and still get a safe and accurate shot. I was to get ten cents for every squirrel tail I produced so that made it a very serious matter because those dimes meant that I could buy more ammunition, overalls, etc. Well, I produced so many squirrel tails that somehow the rules got changed.

Sometime shortly after we arrived on the ranch, Grandpa died. I only remember being told he was gone. Dad may have gone to Kooskia for the funeral, but it was too much of a task to take the rest of us down

and back. Thus, my memories of him consisted of when we visited him on the farm in Missouri. He always said he was glad I came because he had a lot of things to do, and I could be a big help to him if I could carry some chips in and fill Grandma's chip basket. I always was glad to do this because I just knew I was really helping Grandpa. Grandpa was glad too, because this kept me out of mischief. I have always remembered this and used this method with my kids and grandkids—it works great.

In due time we had a barn, two root cellars to store food in for the winter, a milk cow, some horses, and some chickens.

The chickens didn't last very long. There were a pair of bald eagles that had a nest in the huge pine tree on the lower end of the ranch. The eagles took a fancy to the chickens. In fact, one day the big old male landed right in the yard near Mom, screamed at her, picked up a chicken, and flew back to the nest. That was enough of that; Mom said we would eat the chickens instead of letting the eagles eat them. Besides, the male might decide to pick up one of the girls or me.

Now would be a good time to talk about the eagles. We would watch them flying around—they would dive into the river near the cabin and come out with a large salmon and fly back to the nest to feed the young. Our first near contact happened one day when we were walking down the trail on the ranch. I was running up ahead, Dad was carrying Helen, Mom and Jeanette were following. Dad saw this eagle set his wings in a dive, talons extended, and coming down fast. Dad started running and yelling and the eagle took off. But before the eagle changed his mind, he was coming right for me and was about ten or fifteen feet from contact. I got out of that one very lucky! Every spring the eagles would raise their young. We could see them sitting on the edge of the nest and they

were as black as crows. They aren't born with a white or "bald" head.

One day Dad and I were working in the lower field when we heard a loud crack. We looked up and saw the eagle with a very large cedar limb in his talons which he carried back to the nest, and his mate helped him work it into the nest. We watched to see if he would do it again, and sure enough, he took a power dive at another limb and snapped it off like it was hit with an ax, regained his balance in the air, and took off for home. We sure were impressed with the strength of the big bird, and could easily understand how they can carry off a fawn, lamb, or a small calf.

One spring some hunter shot the female eagle. The old male flew around and screamed a lot for a few days, then we saw him take off up the river. We thought he was gone for good and we would miss him. But in about ten days he came back with a new mate. They raised a batch that year and each year after that as long as we lived on the ranch. On my first trip back to the Selway after being gone 43 years, I went to look for the old yellow pine. It was gone—in fact, I couldn't even find the stump. Things do change.

All of us I'm sure have had some experience in early life that we never forget. This experience happened the first fall we were there. It was our first encounter with Indians, and it will always remain vivid in my memory. Dad was away working at the time, and a whole band of Indians appeared. They stopped in a clear spot just beyond the corral fence. Mom, being from the middle west and having heard all these tales about wild Indians, was really scared. She got my little sisters and me in the cabin and closed the door, for what good that would do, I don't know. About that time a very large Indian in a stiff brim hat and chokebore britches and boots came up and knocked on the door. Mom was afraid to open it and more afraid not to, so she did. The man doffed his hat and introduced himself as Mr. Corbett and asked if we would mind if his family and relatives camped on our place. It had been the site of one of their camp grounds on their fall hunt for many generations.

Well, Mom was pretty nervous, and she was somewhat awed by Mr. Corbett's perfect manners and English. I'm sure he sensed this and asked Mom if she were not a Methodist. When Mom said she was, Mr. Corbett said that he was sure she would rest a lot easier if she knew that he was an ordained Methodist minister. That created quite a shock wave, but Mom recovered awfully quick and thanked him for coming to the cabin. She also said that he and his family were most welcome to use our place for camping.

That was the start of a very fine friendship between the Corbett's and the Johnson's. They were well-educated and as fine people as I have ever known. Some of the older people hadn't bothered to learn English. One old lady in particular would trade us a pair of moccasins or gloves

for a deer hide. We always had plenty of deer hides so whenever the Corbetts visited us we would always come up with enough hides for moccasins or gloves, mainly for my sisters and me. We were always amused at the way she would go about getting our sizes. She would take either a foot or a hand and examine it very carefully, turning it over and around until she had it clearly in her mind what she wanted. All this time she was grunting sort of an understanding message, then she would place the hand or foot on a piece of paper and cut out a chunk that seemed to us unrelated to anything. However, when the articles she made were sent to us, they were always a perfect fit.

The Corbetts had a couple of boys about my age and as the years went by we became very good friends. We would ride, hunt, and fish together. Those kids were really good. I don't remember ever doing anything as good or better than they could. It was sure fun to be with them. Sometimes the Corbetts would stay a day or two at our ranch. Their boys and I would always find something to do. Sometimes we'd ride our horses by the river and like all kids want to do, we would go as fast as the horses could run trying to get nowhere fast. We would go fishing, and they seemed to think like a fish. I thought I was a good fisherman, but those kids knew a trick or two that I never did as they always seemed to get more fish. Other times we took off in the hills. They were very good at stalking game, and we all liked to sneak up on deer. They could do it in great fashion.

When I first returned to visit the area in 1963, the first thing I did when we got to Kooskia was to look up the Corbetts. Mrs. Corbett was the only one left. Her husband had died, and the boys were both killed in accidents. She was living alone in Kooskia and was as well-read and

as full of life as anyone I have ever known. We had breakfast together, and we invited her to go up the river with us. She said she was sorry, but she was so busy she couldn't make it. She had to get her hair fixed, get things together, and go to Walla Walla for a meeting; and, it seemed to me, take care of about a dozen other things all at once. She told me that after she was left alone, "she'd be damned if she was going to vegetate", so she got involved with Indian offices and whatever to keep her active. She was well-read, refined, and a great lady, and I'll never forget her.

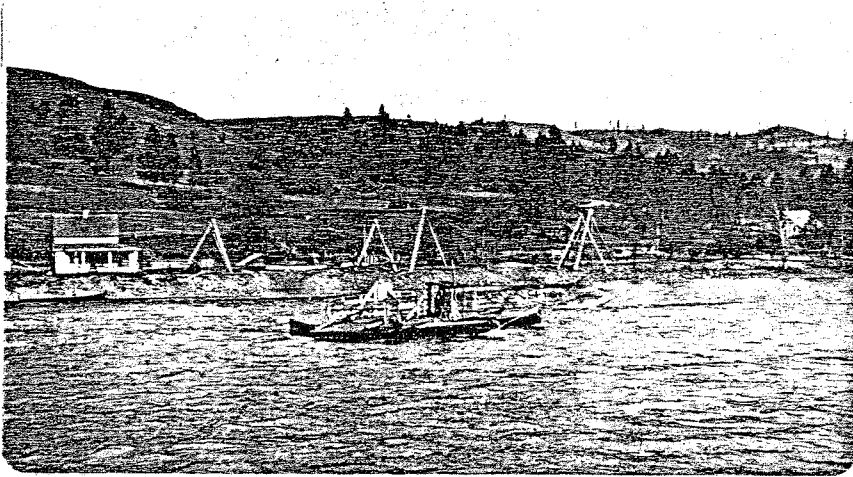
Probably the most personal experience that I had with Indians was with Tom Hill, which was his English name. He was the chief of the Nez Pierce tribe. I have long since forgotten his Indian name. Because he was the chief, he hunted alone, and he used to come up in the springtime. For some reason he took a liking to me and would show me how to track, stalk game, and to fish. Then he would tell people, "He good white boy, he know how to hunt and fish." Well, why not? I had the world's best coach! He was also concerned about my safety and would tell me, "You see chipmunk? When chipmunk come out, bear come out. For little boy, chipmunk, he OK, but bear no good. You watch out for bear." His lessons stick pretty good. Even now when I go into the woods, I'm always reading tracks, looking and listening for animals. Also being able to "read the water" always seems to produce trout even on a strange stream.

The second fall we were on the ranch my family decided to send me to Kooskia to go to school. I was to live with my uncle and grandmother. Like every situation in life there were problems to overcome. The number one problem was my grandmother. She believed that a boy should get a whopping two or three times a week because he probably had been up to some mischief and needed it anyway.

Well, as it turned out, my Uncle Blondy was pretty sweet on my teacher, Ethel, and it seemed there was another guy sort of hanging around her too; so my uncle gave me a quarter a week to keep him posted on what was happening. Ethel found out about this so she gave me a quarter a week not to tell. Actually it wasn't too hard to sort of keep things even, so I was getting a quarter for telling and a quarter for not telling. Now, four bits a week was quite a bit of money for a kid in those days, so it sort of gave me something for investment.

The first problem to solve was the whoppings. For a nickle I could get a sack of home-made taffy candy, and I always arranged to have a big piece on top. Then I'd head for home. Grandma liked candy and being of the greedy sort, I knew she'd go for the big piece quick-like and forget about the whopping stick, which, I might add, was always handy. She'd start chewing on this hunk of taffy and pretty soon she had her "uppers and lowers" all stuck together with taffy. By the time she got that mess straightened out, she had forgotten all about the whoppings.

One of my favorite pastimes in town was to hang around the blacksmith's shop. The blacksmith showed me how to heat up old horse shoes and straighten them out or bend them to fit. I guess I never did really learn



Crossing the Middle-fork of the Clearwater River on the "Slip" ferry was the first step in the trip up to our Ranch.
The White House is where Jeff Hendron and his Cowboy friends lived.

to do it very well, but I sure had a lot of fun trying. There were always some cowboys, horsemen, and ranchers in there too, and we all got pretty well acquainted.

One old cowpoke by the name of Jeff Hendron lived across the Middle Fork close to the ferry boat (where the bridge is now). Several times I would visit him on Sundays. There always were several cowpokes around and they would tell some very tall tales. Jeff had a peg leg, and one day I asked him how he lost his leg. "Well son," he told me, "One summer when I was herding cattle in Wyoming, I got off my horse to open a gate and before I knew it, a big old rattlesnake came up and bit my damned leg right off." Now as that sort of fit in with other things I'd been hearing and Jeff being a pretty straight-shooter type, I believed him. Those guys decided I needed some riding equipment, so they gave me a pair of spurs, a bridle, and a saddle. All I needed was a horse, and they figured that was up to Dad.

Along toward spring the blacksmith made me a baseball bat. Maybe he did that as much to get me out of his place as anything else. Anyway I was real proud of that bat. My uncle was a good ball player and he showed me how to swing and something about hitting. It wasn't long after that that I decided to do a little practice swinging on the front porch. I started to take a big swing like I was going to hit a home run or something, when bam, crash, I'd broken the big front window. Grandma got irate about that, but seeing it had to do with baseball, she let Uncle Blondy handle the matter. When my uncle came home he asked me what happened. I knew there was no way out so I just told him I was practicing just like he'd showed me, and I was taking a swing like hitting a home run, and "wham" went the window, and I was sorry. Blondy knew I was

trying hard to practice like he told me and when I didn't try to back out of it, he said, "OK, Buck, that's OK this time, but try to practice where you'll have more room." That taught me a good lesson. When you make a mistake, don't try and back out of it; just admit the truth and everybody comes out better. Also I found in later years that whenever I got into a mess, I could always go to Uncle Blondy; and he would not only try to help me out of that one but show me where I went wrong, so I wouldn't do the same stupid thing again.

During the year in town there were, of course, a lot of kids to play with. We had a lot of fun playing usual kid games. The Trenary family and our family were good friends and their boy, Ferrell, and I were pretty good buddies. In fact, he used to come up to the ranch in the summertime, and we would hurry up and get the work done as fast as we could and then take off fishing or hunting.

During the winter when the deep snow crusted over, all the kids would go sledding. Ferrell and I (among others) would take our sleds up high on the ridge and take off down through the pine trees like a bat out of hell. Like all kids, we had to see who could get down first. Dodging trees made the runs really exciting, and how we all got through without getting busted up was just plain luck. In those days nobody around there had skis so sledding took its place.

The school year finally ended, Blondy and Ethel got married, Grandma moved away too, and I realized that my source of income was gone, so I was very happy to go back to the ranch.

My sisters were becoming school age, and we had no plan to stay in town. Mom, who had taught school in Missouri, got permission to teach us kids at home. From then on through the eighth grade, Mom taught me at

home. She was pretty strict, too. Lessons always came first. Later when I started running a trapline, I just knew that I should run the trapline early in the morning and go to school afterward. Mom decided to compromise on this a little. She said that when I had finished my lessons and done them right I could run the trapline. That was how it worked—school first, trapline second.

Dad decided that with all the running around I was doing in the woods that I should have a dog. He got one from the Indians that was a cross-breed between a collie and a coyote. Such breedings were supposed to have happened and from the way my dog acted and fought, he certainly had some wolf background. We named him Jack, and he and I were together all the time. In fact, Dad said he was sure glad Jack had hair on his face so he could tell us apart. We would go fishing and Jack would watch the fly and when a fish bit it he would get more excited than I did. When I went out to get a grouse or two he learned where the alder patches were, so I would send him out in whatever direction I wanted; and he would "tree" the grouse (sometimes several) and start barking. I would go to him and shoot the lower bird. As long as the lower bird was shot, the rest would just sit there. Generally all I needed was one or two so I'd kill those and let the rest go until next time.

The rifle I used was a 25 Stevens Rim Fire Single Shot. One day when we were after grouse, Jack stirred up quite a commotion, and it was getting louder so I knew whatever it was, it was coming my way. I figured it must be a bear. I was smart enough not to tackle a bear on the ground with that small rifle, so I climbed up on top of a high cedar stump, put a shell in the barrel, and laid the other two shells out handy (I only had three rounds because that was enough for two grouse with one to spare), and waited for my bear to show up. As things were happening pretty fast, I knew he was almost there, and I figured I could hit him in the head at close range. By the time he got mad and started up the stump after me I could load the rifle, shove the muzzle in his mouth and really let him

have it. Just about that time down the old trail past me came a stray steer. I was so disappointed that I almost shot the steer. I really thought that I was going to get me a bear.

One thing I always liked to do whenever time permitted was to take off in the hills. I would put a piece of jerky in my shirt pocket, take my 30-30 and away Jack and I would go. I would sort of pussy-foot along quiet like—just like Tom Hill had taught me. We would walk up on grouse and deer; it was fun to find a doe and fawn. We would be the first human and dog that the fawn had seen, and it would be pretty curious as to what kind of critters we were. The mama of course would get pretty nervous and stomp around and try to get the fawn to follow her. Well, I'd talk real soft and quiet-like and the fawn would prance around ears out and curious. By this time Mama would realize that we meant no harm so she would settle down a bit. Soon the fawn would have enough of us and away it would go. Mama would sort of wag her tail, as much to say thanks, and trot off after her crazy offspring.

Whenever I'd get hungry I'd find a spring, clear out a place to drink, whittle off some jerky, chew it up and have a drink of water. That would sort of swell up the jerky so I felt like I'd had a good meal, and then we'd go some more. As for the rifle—that was just for protection in case we ran into an old she-bear with cubs. Luckily I never did, though we did see a lot of bear at a proper distance.

One of my duties was to go to Lowell once a week or so and get the mail and whatever supplies we had ordered. Sometimes I'd need a horse for packing the stuff, but most times Jack and I would hike. I always had a rifle—nobody went anywhere without a gun in those days. I would generally take the 25 Stevens because Jack would put up a grouse or two,

and I would take them to Mrs. Cleveland if I shot any on the way to Lowell, or bring one home if I shot it on the way back.

One time I got to fooling around and it got real dark before I got home, and I hadn't brought a palouser with me. We didn't have flashlights, just homemade lights we called palousers. These were made by taking a bucket, generally a five-pound lard bucket; cutting a cross in the side; bending the points up so they would hold a candle; and then taking the bail and fastening it front and back for a handle. The candle would burn fairly good and the reflection from the pail would give a good enough light to see the trail. Well, this night I didn't have any, and home was the closest place, so I kept on going. About the time I got about half-way through our ranch, Jack bristled up and started growling. I knew something was following us so I listened. Sure enough, I could hear it. I knew it was a cougar because I could hear the tail hitting the brush just like a cat will swish its tail when stalking a bird. First it would be left, then back, then it came up on the right and then back again. All the time the tail would keep pace to my walking. I was as scared as I have ever been in my life. I didn't want to shoot because I only had a single-shot rifle, and I figured I'd better save that if the cougar tried to attack. I just kept on walking at an even pace. Jack was growling but staying at my side. The cougar was still beating a regular beat with his tail. I had about a quarter of a mile of this before I would come out into the clearing near our cabin. It probably didn't take over seven or eight minutes, but to me it seemed like seven or eight hours. When I got to the clearing I was only about a hundred yards from home and so I lit out. I knew the cougar wouldn't come out in the open, and I wanted to get home fast. The next morning I took Jack back down there, and sure enough, we

found cougar tracks—it was a big tom. That taught me a good lesson. From then on I was always home before dark.

There were lots of cougars in the Selway country in those days. Very rarely did they ever attack humans because they had plenty of deer to kill for food. Sometimes at night they would come down the hill close to the house and barn and would scream and scare the hell out of the stock. Their scream is a very eerie sound and ends like a woman who is being choked. The sound is pretty scary to anyone and especially to animals who realize they would be attacked, so they really panic. Sometimes we would have to take a light out to the barn and calm the cows and horses down to keep them from hurting themselves in their panic.

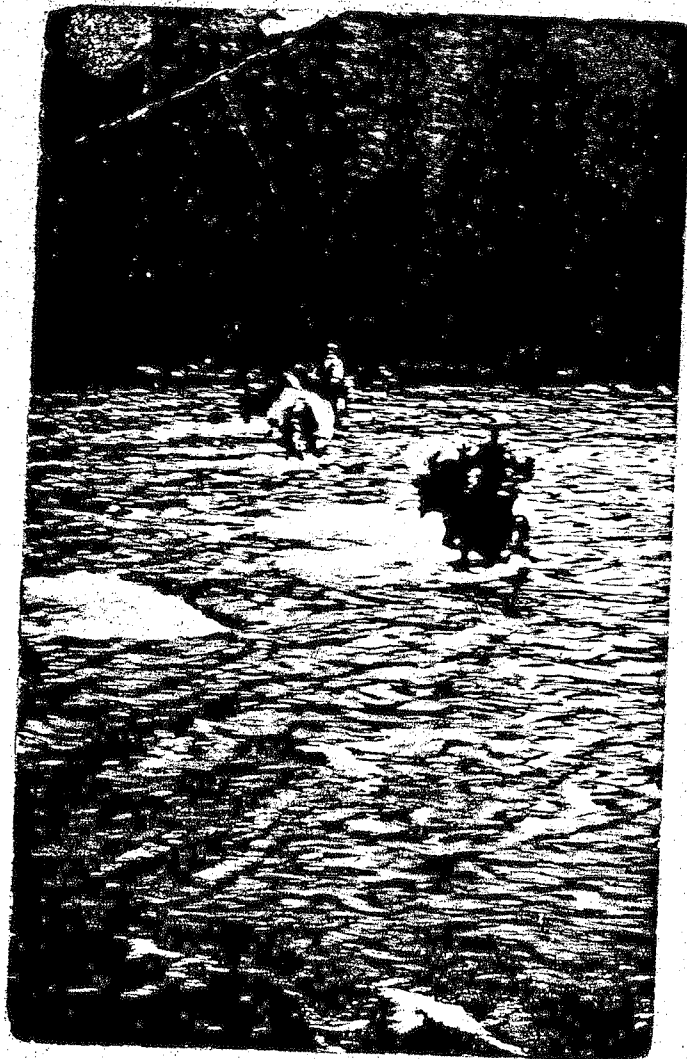
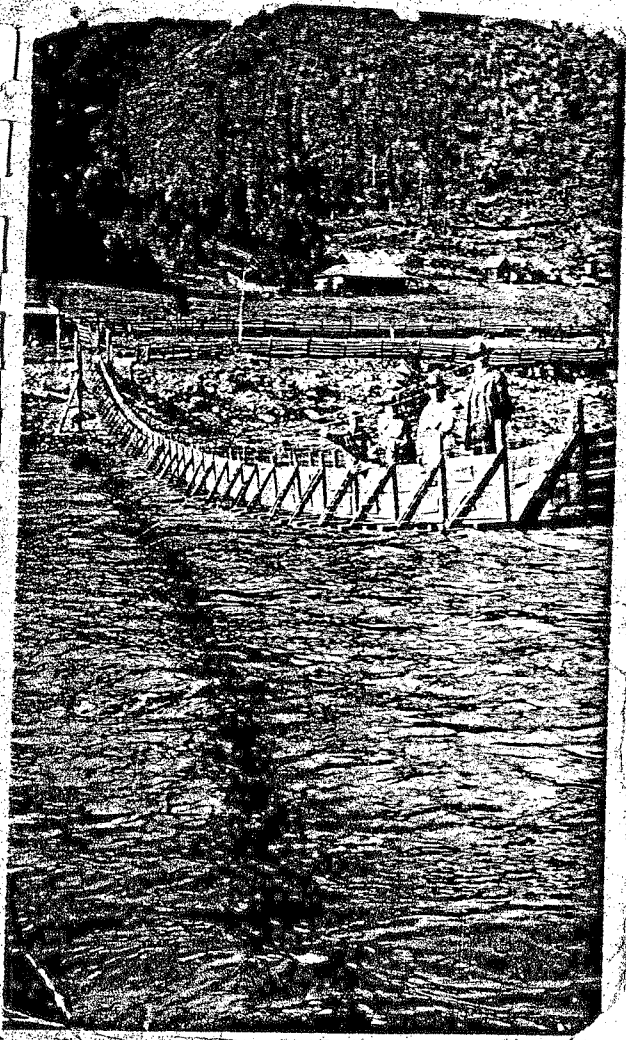
Cougars, like all predators, will kill at any opportunity; and in the wintertime when the snow would crust over, the sharp-hoofed deer would break through the crust and the cougar could travel on top. It was just plain murder—we would find deer killed all over the place.

It would not only be cougars, but the coyotes would kill all the deer they could find. Actually coyotes are the worst of all predators. Just ask any western rancher. These people that want to protect coyotes because they think they are cute and think they only eat mice and ground squirrels just don't know what they're talking about. Coyotes, like all carnivores, will get food the easy way and if anyone thinks they will stop to dig out a mouse or ground squirrel when there are fawns, lambs or calves available, just haven't learned anything about coyotes. First, they adjust to new environment and will thrive in well-developed agricultural areas, even near large population centers as long as there are domestic animals to kill and eat. They will gang up on a small steer or heifer until one can slash it and cut a ham string and get the critter down.

Coyotes have been cunning murderers for centuries. All Indian legends are based on the mysterious coyote. He is credited for his cunning and killing and sometimes for his creation of tribes. So for centuries he has maintained his ability to adjust to environment and to thrive on animals with the least possible effort.

Jack being part coyote used to howl back at them, so they would set a trap for him. They would send a female in heat down the hill to woo him off. We would hear all this and Jack would take off. Sometimes the fight would take place near enough to hear it, and Jack being larger than the coyotes and well-fed and strong, would fight his way out of the mess. He would come back all chewed up but we knew there were two or three dying coyotes not too far away. Once he was gone for two or three days. I was feeling pretty bad because I was sure they had gotten him, but then he showed up with very sore feet and a lot of cuts and bruises. It took several days for him to heel up over that episode. As I remember it, that was the last time he took off after coyotes. I guess he found out those lady coyotes weren't worth the trouble he would get into.

Jack was still king on the ranch. Any stray dog that came in the yard and tried to leave his "calling card" on the wrong post went down with a slashed shoulder, and by the time he got up Jack would hit him again, and that was enough. The only dog that never fought was old King, Tom Allison's leading bear dog, and somehow they respected each other. But God help any other dog when they were together—they were the bosses, and all other dogs had better respect that position.



Lowel Idaho in the trees. The large building is the barn in the back ground the pitched roof building is the Post Office. And the other is the Cabin where the Clevelands lived. On the swinging bridge is from L to R Babe Cleveland, her Mother, my Mother, and Mr. Cleveland.

Picture about 1917

Crossing the Locksa to reach the trail up the Selway to our Ranch.

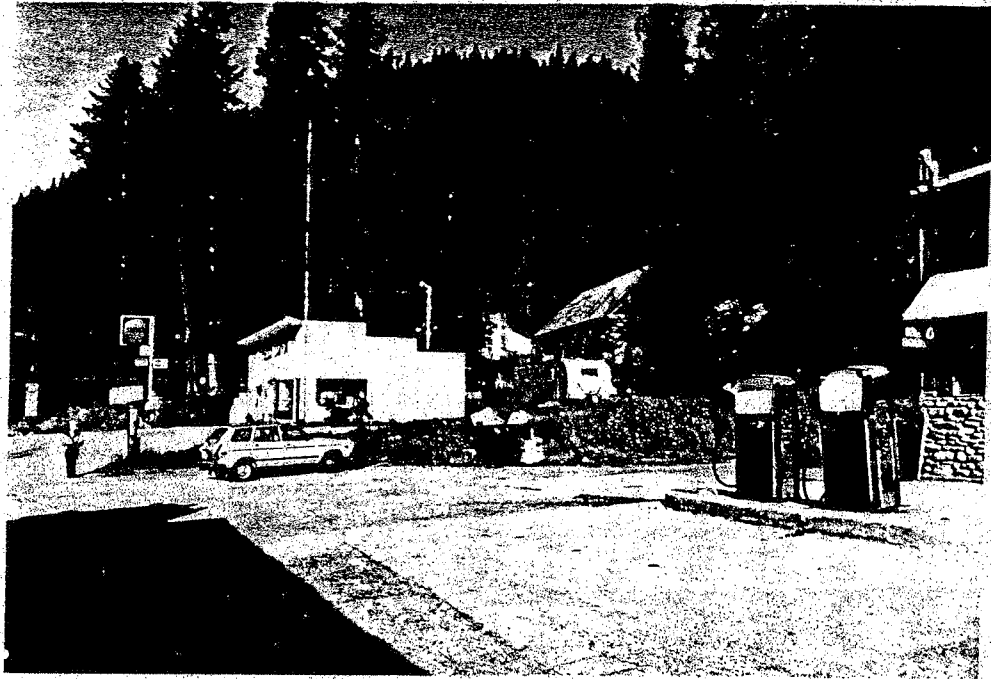


On the trail up the Selway about a mile above the Locksa.

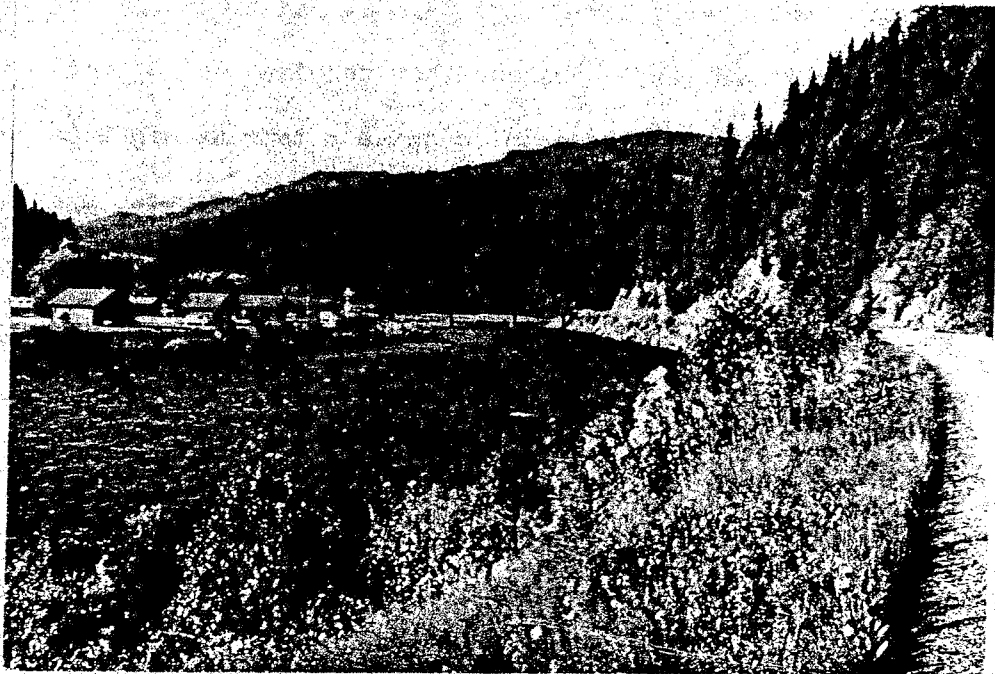
Living on a homestead required a lot of things to do that living on a well-developed ranch would not have to be done. First, of course, was clearing and developing land in order to raise food for both family and stock. Then there was planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops. There wasn't any easy way to get things done. In those days there weren't any tractors, just teams, so pulling stumps had to be done with a stump puller. It was a wench-type of rig with a long boom that the team pulled round and round. Some of the big stumps had to be blasted first then pulled out in pieces.

Plowing was either a team or a single-horse job depending on how good the ground was. As a boy on the farm it was necessary for me to learn everything there was to do, and that required doing, not just talking about it. First I had to learn to drive a team straight to get a good furrow. Holding the plow was a different matter because everytime it would hit a root or a rock, it would jump; and if you didn't hold it tight, you'd get a bang in the ribs. I wasn't big and heavy enough to hold the plow in rough ground, but Dad did let me hold it in better areas. Even then I'd get a good smacking now and then, but I was learning.

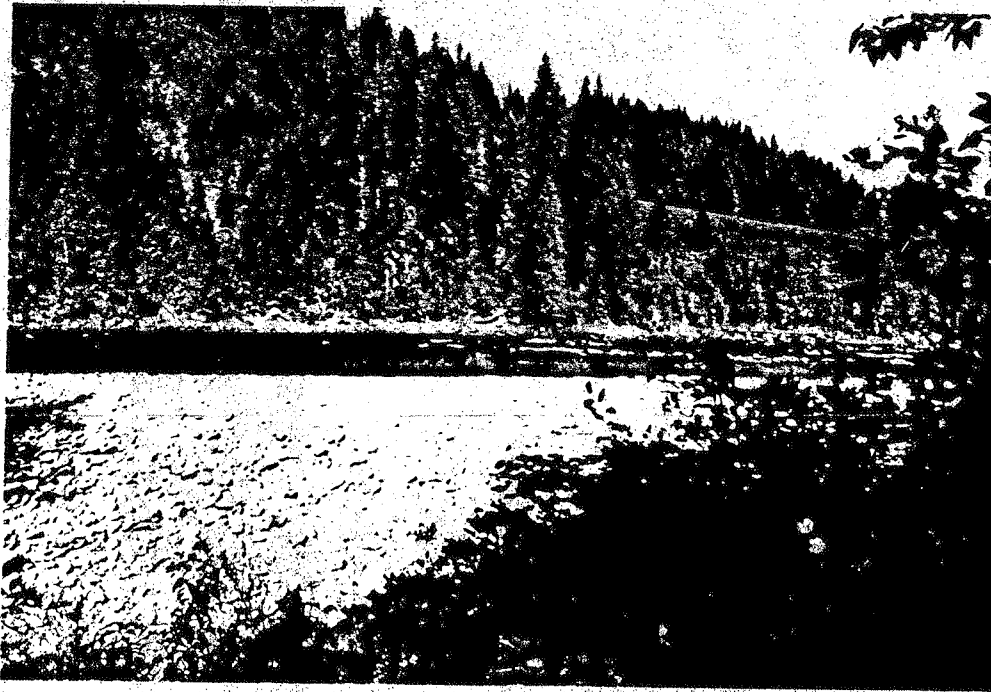
We always had a big garden because we had to raise enough to last all winter. We would raise lots of carrots for the animals and some for us together with potatoes, beans, corn, tomatoes, and other vegetables that could be canned or stored in the root house for a long time. We also raised vegetables for summer use like onions, radishes, cucumbers, melons, and lettuce. There were no stores—so whatever we needed or wanted, we raised.



Lowell Idaho Today. Stores, filling stations, and resturant.
1981



The highway Bridge is where the old ford crossing was located.
The motel on the left is very modern. 1981



Rapids at the lower end of our Ranch, a great fishing hole.
This is where I caught fish after hoeing "Spuds", also in the
Winter. Picture taken 1981



This is the sight of our old "Spud Patch"
Now a Camp ground. Taken 1981



Picture taken on the hill back of our cabin.
Buildings are temporary Forest Service called Coddard
Bar Station. The down stream point of the island in
the middle of the river was one of my favorite fishing
holes.

The Forest Service helped us dig an irrigation ditch on the hillside back of our garden area. The water came from the creek running through our ranch, so that is why we worked together on the ditch. It was our water, so to speak, and we let them have what they needed, so they helped us with the ditch.

It was my job to irrigate the garden. This was fun making the water run down the rows and changing it around, etc. Like any kid, I made a game of it and pretended I was building dams, controlling floods, and developing waterways. That made work fun. The best ground for potatoes was at the lower end of the ranch. It was light sandy soil and was low enough to be subirrigated.

Dad was there for the planting, but he had to work in order to have money for clothes and food that we couldn't produce on the ranch. There certainly was not enough income from the ranch to cover expenses. We did sell some timber and some vegetables to the Forest Service people but that was all.

Well, the cultivating and weeding was up to Mom and I. So for the spud patch, as we called it, which was about a mile away from the house; we would make a day of it. Mom would pack a picnic lunch and the girls, Mom and I would take off early for the spud patch. Mom and I would hoe weeds and hill spuds until we finished the job. The girls had plenty of places to play and it was a fun day. Sometimes, if we wanted trout for supper I would take a pole along and after the hoeing was done, I would catch some grasshoppers for bait and catch enough fish for supper. There was a fine fishing hole right by the spud patch and it was easy to get a mess of fish. They were generally good-sized so we would only need two or three for a good meal. That would be all I would catch, because we

couldn't keep any more. There was so much work to be done that there was very little time for fun, so we always tried to make some fun thing out of work like picnic lunches, etc.

Getting the hay in the barn was quite a job. At first we didn't have a mower so it had to be cut with a scythe. I tried to help Dad on this but I really wasn't much good, however, I could help rake and stack the hay. At first we rigged up a sled to haul it to the barn. As soon as we could, we got a mower that we could pull with the team, and we got an old iron-wheeled wagon for hauling. This equipment had to be taken apart so we could get it to the ranch by pack horse, then we had to put it back together. Whatever we couldn't pack in like the wagon frame, we had to make. Things got a lot easier after that. We could haul hay, wood, spuds, and whatever. The Forest Service helped build a road between our place and O'Hara Bar so we could haul things back and forth. Seems like we all had use of the equipment and there was another ranch near O'Hara that used it too. Everybody worked together to help each other.

Whatever was needed we learned to do it ourselves. If our shoes needed soles we found a piece of leather and went to work. We had two or three cobblers' lasts which would fit all sizes from kids to grownups. We sharpened our own tools, cut and split our wood. Mom did a good job of patching up clothes. I was the worst because I seemed to be ripping things up a lot going through the brush.

We did our shopping via Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward. It was always a big day when we would get a package of new clothes—never anything fancy, just things we needed. Keeping our feet dry in winter was a necessity, and we made a combination of bear grease and deer tallow to rub on our boots. This did a good job but the dogs liked it pretty well

too, so we never left our boots where the dogs could chew them up!

There was a good spring about a hundred yards up stream from our house. Dad would dig it out every spring to about four feet round and three feet deep. This was good cold water in the summertime and also provided us a place to keep milk, butter, and melons. Everyday I would carry pails of water for drinking. The girls would always come along to help. They would carry other things that were lighter. One day Helen got to fooling around too close to the spring and before I could get her away, in she went. By the time I got her pulled out she was well soaked up, scared, and crying real loud. I had a bucket of water in one hand and Helen by the other hand leading her back to the house. The trail was dusty and by the time we got home she was covered with dust turned to mud. Mom was worried about all the screaming, but when she found out what happened and that nobody was hurt she began to laugh. Well, it really was funny so we all laughed about it, and Helen learned never to get too near that spring again.

Helen was the youngest and very much a tomboy. In fact, she earned the nickname of Tommy. She always wanted to ride things, so I would chase a calf into the yard, close the gate so he couldn't run off, and get Tommy aboard. It was my job to make sure the calf didn't get too wild and get Tommy hurt. She had a sheep later on, and we tried the same thing with the sheep. We had a lot of fun and luckily Tommy never got hurt.

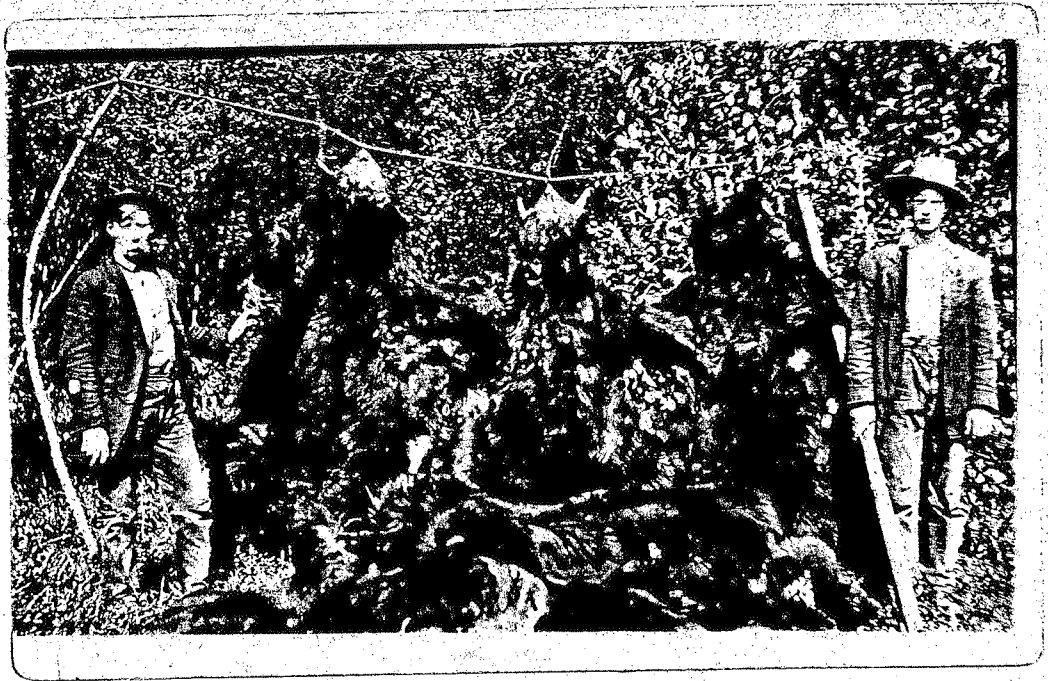
Jeanette was more an artist than a tomboy, but she liked the animals and liked to ride the horses. One day when Dad was letting the horses out to water, that is to go down to the river to drink, he put Jeanette on a good quiet saddle mare. Well, for some reason that day the old mare took a jump, and Jeanette fell off right into an old burnt stump. She was

knocked cold, and we were all good and scared. Dad carried her into the house, Mom washed her off, put a cold rag on her head, and she came to OK. After a careful examination, Mom found that she had a broken arm, otherwise she was OK. She and Dad were working to get her arm back in place and it was my job to make some splints. I got a good piece of cedar, smoothed it down, and cut two pieces to the proper size to fit her arm. I remember how careful I was to do a good job because I didn't want the splints to have any rough edges that would hurt her. Mom ripped up a flour sack into the proper-sized strips, used some to wrap her arm for padding, then wrapped the splints on real tight. That was the "cast". Well, in due time Jeanette's arm knitted back together in good shape, and she was well and healthy again.

One time Dad was chopping wood or something and the ax glanced off and about cut his big toe off. We got him in the house, got his boot off and his foot up so it wouldn't bleed so bad, and Mom wrapped it up with some clean rags and poured turpentine all over it. That smarted like fire, and Dad let out a pretty good whoop on that one, but it did the job and it wasn't long until he was well and able to work again.

I was telling some people about this accident years later and someone asked me if we weren't worried about tetanus. I told them we never worried about that because it hadn't been invented yet.

One time when I was approaching my tenth birthday, Mom got very sick. She couldn't get out of bed. I asked her what I could do for her and she said she would love some chicken soup. Well, that meant grouse soup; so I killed a grouse, cleaned it and cut it up, but that was as far as I knew about soup. Mom had me put the grouse on to boil, get some vegetables, cut them up, and add them to the pot. She told me how to season the mixture,



Tom and Willie Allison with a spring catch
of bear. 14 as i remember.



Tom bringing a Cougar he killed on
the hill in back of our ranch.



Jeanette, Helen, ole Phoebe and her pups.

stir and keep it from sticking. It was also necessary for me to make some biscuits, as we didn't have enough bread already baked. These, of course, had to be made from scratch. There were no mixes available in those days. Making baking powder biscuits wasn't too hard with Mom's supervision. In any event, we all had something to eat, and Mom recovered. After that experience she decided that I should learn to cook because out of necessity someone besides herself had to know how to prepare meals. As a result I learned how, and that was OK with me because I liked to cook. I still do.

Tom Allison was a hunter, trapper, and sometimes prospector. He was part Scotch, Irish, and Cherokee, which is quite a mixture. He and his son, Willie, hunted and trapped in our area and sort of made our place their headquarters. Tom taught me how to trap, how to build "pens" for various types of game, where and how to place the bait, and where to place the trap and how to cover it.

He also left his dogs at our place from time to time when he had to go to town to sell hides or get supplies. His dogs were all males except one bitch name Phoebe. Like all bitches running with a pack of dogs, she was real mean, except to my sisters, and they could do anything with her. One time she had a litter of pups at our place, and it would be pretty hard to say who spent the most time with the pups, Phoebe or the girls.

One day in the spring when the river was at flood stage and a raging torrent, we went for a walk. The trail was only a few feet from the river just below the house, and Jeanette started out towards the river. Before anyone could say anything, Phoebe got between Jeanette and the river and gently pushed her back to the trail. Again she started toward the river and again the dog pushed her back to the trail. By that time Jeanette got

the message, but Phoebe stayed right behind her just in case. That was the most intelligent thing I have ever seen a dog do. And I have since trained and helped to train many dogs.



Sucessful start in trapping a Fox and a Weassel.



Later I was catching Coyotes. Also I quit carrying an axe and started packing a rifle.

Dad gave me an acre of ground and told me that whatever I could raise on it was mine to sell. Big red beans were the best crop because I could sell them to the Forest Service people. This made me \$42 a year which was good for an acre, but not enough to buy my clothes, ammunition, and fishing tackle. Now that I would be ten years old in another month I decided it was high time I was supporting myself. Somehow we had acquired some traps so I had enough for a good start on a trapline. So, remembering what Tom Allison had told me I set out a trapline.

Like all kids, I was doing a lot of bragging about what I was going to catch. Among other things, I bragged about trapping a bobcat. Dad's younger brother, Ben, was staying with us that winter, and one day he and Dad were listening to all this hot air I was putting out. Dad asked me how I would kill a bobcat if I caught one. I replied, "With a club", and he told me that he would give me \$2.50 if I did. Now that plus the bounty on bobcats, which was also \$2.50, meant \$5. There would also be something from the sale of the hide, and that would total a lot of money. Well, I kept on popping off, so Uncle Ben told me he would double that. Wow! That was \$10 plus the hide and in those days that meant big money. I could hardly wait.

Well, things started out real good. I caught some weasels, a red fox, Ben and a mink or two, all with pretty good pelts. One day when it was about ten or twenty degrees below zero I needed to check the traps I'd set across the river, and much to my disgust my parents wouldn't let me take the boat back across by myself. Being a kid I didn't realize they knew more than I did, so Uncle Ben said he'd help me. We got to the first trap and found a

weasel dead and frozen stiff. Uncle Ben said he'd set that trap and told me to check the other trap. I crawled around and over the snow which was about three feet deep to the other trap and, sure enough, there was a bobcat. Big as life and twice as nasty, he was really mad, snarling and spitting and acting like he wanted to claw the hell out of anything handy. Well, seeing I was the only thing around there besides him I took it sort of personal and decided to keep well out of the way. I let out a warhoop that could be heard for a mile. Uncle Ben heard the commotion and came busting through the snow to see what the fuss was all about. He saw the cat and knew what the ruckus was about quick-like. About this time I remembered all the hot air I'd been shooting off about killing the cat with a club and was really hoping Uncle Ben had forgotten it, but no such luck. He said, "Well, Buck, here's your bobcat you were going to kill with a club. I'll cut you one, just pick it out." About that time the cat let out another loud growl and he was spitting and getting madder all the time. I took a look at everything growing from ball bat size to big fir trees. Then I took a look at Uncle Ben's "38" and that looked good to me. Now, how was I going to get out of all this bragging I'd been doing? I finally came up with an idea. I told Uncle Ben that as wild as that cat was I'd probably bust his hide all up with a club and that would ruin the pelt and I'd lose a lot of money. Actually, I don't think Uncle Ben believed that one, but he let me get away with it, maybe because it was too cold to stand around and gab. Ben got on one side and told me to walk up close to the cat so it would be watching me and he could shoot it just back of his ear and not ruin any more pelt than necessary. I didn't think much of the idea, but from what I'd said before I figured I'd better do as he said. As I came up closer the cat kept on backing up to the end of the

trap chain which was about three feet long. When I got in about ten feet from the cat and before Uncle Ben could shoot, the cat let out a roar and jumped right at me. Well, I bet I set a world's record for the standing broad jump right there—snow or no snow. Uncle Ben just about split himself laughing. Now the idea was to do it over again, and I sure wasn't too happy about that—neither was the cat—so it started concentrating on me, Uncle Ben got a good shot, killed him, and my blood pressure started back down! I didn't get any bonus money, but I got a good price for the pelt. And one thing for sure, I learned to keep my big mouth shut about what I was going to do from then on.

The second or third year I was trapping, a horse got tangled up in some logs about a mile from our ranch and had to be shot. He had belonged to the Forest Service people and when I asked them if I could have the dead horse, they laughed and said, "Sure, he's all yours." This turned out to be a good deal. I set several traps around the carcass and was very careful to handle them with gloves and to cover the traps and my trail with leaves. This was a perfect coyote setup, and it worked fine and produced several coyotes that winter. Some of their pelts were excellent and brought a good price. Some were mangy and didn't bring much. I felt good about this, not only because of the money, but also I was getting rid of some coyotes.

Whenever I caught anything in my trapline it was my job to skin it clean and dry the hide. Most times this was no problem, but when I caught my first skunk, and it fumigated the area pretty good including the dogs and me, well, just say that that was one stinking mess.

The trapping income averaged around \$75 per year, and this plus my bean money provided enough to buy all my clothes, fishing gear, and

ammunition. So I was really self-supporting; that is, if you figure that the work I did took care of board and room.

We raised strawberries and raspberries and for more fruit and berries, we picked wild ones. There was a log-jam across the creek running through our ranch and this provided an excellent place for wild blackberries. Actually these were called dewberries because they had a little different vine than the big heavy thorny blackberry vine. These berries were large, well-flavored, and juicy. A person could pick a bucket-full in a few minutes. Mom always canned a lot of these besides making jam.

Coolwater Mountain, which really was the top of a hill behind our house, had great patches of huckleberries. It was a two-day job to pick these. We would start early one day, ride about fourteen miles up the trail, make camp, pick berries for a while, and then get a good rest. We were up early the next morning, picked until about noon, then packed up and came home. Generally two families would go on the trips and each family would get several gallons of berries. These were delicious for pies, jams, and also just plain eating. Mainly they were saved for winter.

There were lots of elderberries, and elderberry and apple jelly was also good. Dad also would pack in a couple of sacks of apples for sauce, apple butter, and jelly. We had plenty of fruit for winter.

Getting in the winter's wood was another big job. There was plenty of cedar, fir, and pine trees around, but we would try to cut the dead trees whenever we could. These made better wood, and they weren't any good for anything else. It was hard work to cut up the wood with cross-cut saws, axes, wedges, and mauls. Dad got me a medium double-bit ax, and by hanging a blanket over the top of the log, we could use it to cut the log. We had a one-man saw that I could use on smaller logs. At first we had to drag the logs with a team up to the wood shed; but after we got the Saturday night catch log, it was a great deal easier to get the logs in.

wagon, we could saw and split the wood near the field or road and haul it in the wagon.

Pine made good firewood, and big pine knots were saved for the heating stove for cold winter nights. Pine was easy to split by slabbing it off. We just kept taking off three- or four-inch slabs round and round. All that was needed was a good ax and the ability to hit in the right place.

Fir was different. It had to be split in half, quarters, and so on down. Cedar was pretty much the same as fir. Cedar was used mainly for kindling. It burned fast and wouldn't hold a long fire. If we came to a knot when splitting wood, we always put that in the heating stove pile and the clear wood was cut up for the cook stove.

We used cedar for fence posts and rails. Also we split cedar shakes for roofs and for the siding on the barns and sheds. The only boards we had needed to be sawn by hand. The log was rolled up on a rack about six feet off the ground. One man was on top, another was on the ground, and the log was sawn lengthwise with what we called a whip saw. This was a lot of hard work for each board, so boards were only used for floors or other special places. I never did any whip-sawing because I was too short to reach or pull the saw through the log.

In the wintertime there wasn't very much to do except take care of the stock, bring wood in the house, and keep the snow shoveled off the trails to the river, sheds, barn and outhouse. We all slept in the cabin. Mom and the girls slept upstairs because it was warmer there.

Living in a one-room cabin created a bathing problem. We solved this by hanging a blanket to screen off an area by the cook stove. The water was heated in the wash boiler, and we used the washtub for a bathtub. The Saturday night bath was quite an event, especially in the wintertime when

it was freezing outside.

I was always up first, I'd dress and get the fires going, then go out to the shed and get a venison or elk ham, bring it in and cut off enough meat for breakfast. Then I'd take the ham back and hang it up away from the dogs, go out to the barn, feed the stock, and milk the cow. By this time Mom would have breakfast ready and I was hungry and ready for steak, potatoes, biscuits, hot cakes, or whatever she fixed. After breakfast I'd get water from the river, turn the stock loose for water and exercise, clean the stalls, and bring in some wood. By that time Mom would have things cleaned up and be ready for school, and the girls and I would tie into our lessons. I knew that if I worked hard and got things done right, I could run the trapline or maybe go fishing.

The day ended by seeing the stock was in the barn and fed, the cows milked, wood boxes filled, and making sure there was enough kindling for morning. Sometimes we had reading to do for homework. Our cabin was lighted by coal oil lamps, so reading at night meant crowding around the table.

The year Uncle Ben came up, he brought us a phonograph. It was the kind that had to be cranked up. The records were cylinders, and the amplifier was a big horn-shaped deal with a picture of the Whistler's dog on it. We only had about a dozen records, but they were good music, and we always enjoyed hearing them over again. We always had something to do even when playing. The girls had a doll or two to have fun with, and I always was fixing busted tackle, cleaning guns, greasing boots, or sharpening knives or axes.

It seemed like something was always happening too. Like the winter Uncle Ben was with us. We had a big snow storm and couldn't even get to

Lowell for the mail and supplies. In the meantime we ran out of shortening and didn't have any way to bake bread or fry anything. We lived on venison stew and dumplings for almost two weeks. It was good food, but after eating that three times a day for two weeks it got pretty tiresome.

[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible due to heavy shadowing on the left side of the page. It appears to be a continuation of a narrative.]

Like any kid, I was always in a hurry to get things done and when I'd go out to get the milk cow in and get her on the trail headed for the barn, I'd tell Jack to take her. He'd run along side, let out a couple of barks, and the old cow would take off with me hanging on her tail and fairly flying. I knew it wasn't right, but it was fun and somehow I got away with it most times. I wasn't satisfied with that so one day when I had to bring the calf in, I tried grabbing his tail. I hadn't been smart enough to notice how short his tail was and on his first jump, wham, I got both hind feet right in my belly. By the time I came to and sort of limped home sore as hell, I'd somehow got the idea that being pulled by an animal's tail wasn't a very good idea.

We always had a lot of cats. The girls had their pets, and it seemed there were always eight or ten around the barn. This was good because they kept the mice, rats, and chipmunks out of the hay and grain.

Sometimes when we had some of Tom's dogs I'd catch one of the cats, take it out a ways from the barn, and then set the dogs a bit farther out. These distances depended on the size of the cat and the running conditions. Then I'd drop the cat and yell, "Sick 'em!" Away the cat would go for the barn with the dogs right after it barking up a storm. The cat generally would make the barn and the dogs would be right behind it. By this time they would scare a few more cats, scare the hell right out of the stock, wind up getting kicked, and they would be howling. That's when pandemonium was in full force. By this time I was generally sitting on the corral fence laughing at all the commotion I'd caused. About that time Mom would come sailing out of the house with a switch and I'd get my britches tanned

good and hard. I'll admit I had it coming, but I really didn't mind it because all the commotion I had caused was worth the licking I got!

We acquired a saddle mare with a mule colt. The mare was a typical hammer-headed cayuse and a good sure-footed saddle horse. Lots of times I'd ride her down to Lowell to get the mail and supplies.

The mule was a different matter. We broke her to ride, and she and I sort of broke even: One time I'd ride her, the next time she'd buck me off. I never took her out alone and only rode her when someone else was along. Sometimes that was OK and sometimes we had quite a time.

Later Dad bought a big sorrel mare and she was well bred. She was a trotter. I sure liked to ride her. I was light, and I would lay the reins loose on her neck and let her go. She loved to trot and was smooth as silk to ride.

One winter a man and his wife were stationed at Goddard Bar for the winter. He was working for the Forest Service. I have long since forgotten their names. He had a couple of quarter horses, and he liked to have me ride one just to exercise her. She was a dandy and well trained. We had four or five head of cattle that winter, and we let them graze on the Goddard Bar place where there was a lot of grass. Every night I had to herd these critters back into the corral so the cougars wouldn't get them. That is what a quarter horse is trained for. All I had to do was stay in the saddle and she would stay behind the cattle. If one broke out, right away she'd go and head it back. Between her and Jack we handled those critters like old-time cowhands.

One real cold morning the Forest Service man and I decided that to give the horses a proper workout, we should ride up to O'Hara Bar station. Maybe he had something to check out, I don't remember, but we went up and

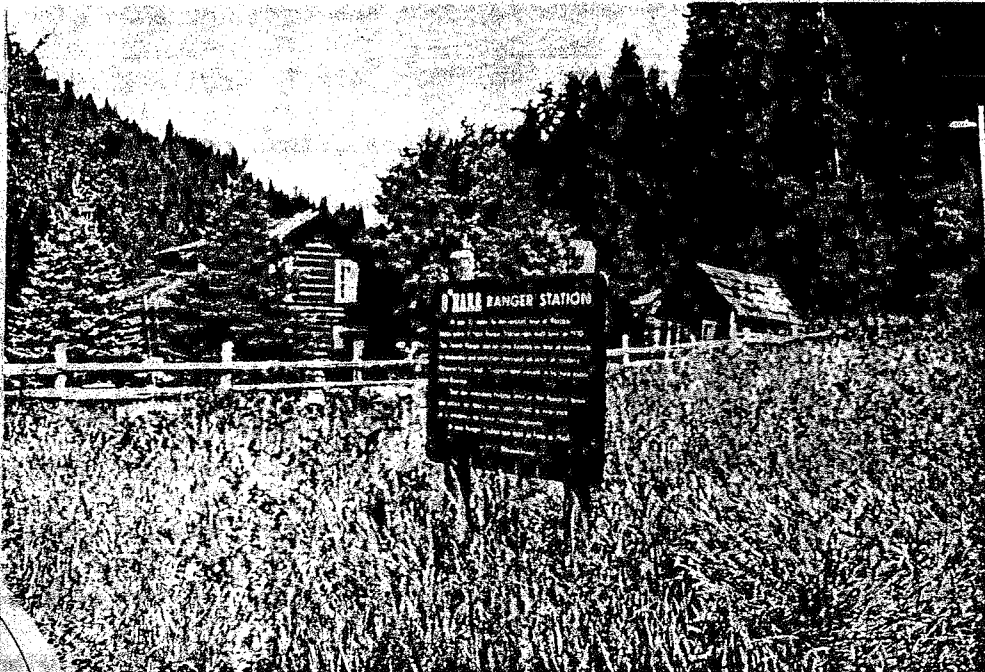
back OK. It was real nice in the crisp cold air; as I remember, it was about zero. When we came back we came to our place to leave my saddle, and I was going to ride bareback to Goddard Bar and help put the horse away. About the time I got on her she spooked at something and lit out hell for leather. I knew I couldn't stop her and I didn't want to get thrown off and get all busted up on that frozen ground, so I leaned over her neck and hung on for all I was worth. It didn't take very long to cover that 200 yards, but I was sure thankful when she decided she'd had enough and stopped without trying to jump the corral fence or something.



Dad and I took the boat across the river
and fished the mouth of Ceader Creek for
dinner.



Mom was feeding some Forest Service people
and had asked for some fish for supper, so
I took Jack my Vine maple pole (leaning
against the Cabin) and went down to the rappid
by the spud patch and caught supper.



O'Hara Bar Ranger Station built in 1910.

This was the show place of the area.

Picture taken 1981.

Most of our fishing was for food, and the limit was what we needed for the next meal or two. However, when someone would come in from Kooskia, we would really go after the fish.

O'Hara Creek was about two and one-half miles upstream from our place and across the Selway. The easiest way to cross the river was to ford it with horses. This always meant a lot of fussing around just to catch some fish, in spite of the fact the creek was full of them, so we only went over there once or twice a year and generally on special occasions. The big occasion would be when someone would come up from Kooskia and wanted a lot of fish. He would stay with us, and we would eat dinner at noon. Then we would ride up, ford the river, tie the horses up, and hike up the creek about three miles. There wasn't any real trail, but we had sort of busted out a fairly good trail, so we could go along and not fight too much brush. We would start fishing back toward the river, and between Dad and me, we'd soon have quite a few fish. We had flour sacks rigged up with a rope over our shoulder for a "creel". It wouldn't be long until I'd have too many to carry so I'd give them to Dad or the guest. Pretty soon they would be carrying a lot of fish and couldn't do much more fishing, and I would end up catching most of the fish, which, of course, I thought was quite good. We always had to get back in plenty of time to ford the river before dark, otherwise we'd be stuck out all night. After getting across the river, we'd clean the fish and put them in panners which were wooden canvas-covered boxes for packing. We'd put in a layer of grass, then a layer of fish and repeated layers until we were done. This usually meant two pretty full panners. Then we'd load up and go back to the ranch, put the fish

down by the river, cover the panners with gunny sacks, and wet them down with cold water. There were always enough dogs around to keep any bears away, so the fish were safe. Next morning we'd be up before daylight, have breakfast, get our friend loaded up, rewet the sacks, put a canvas over the top of the pack to keep things cool as possible, and head the guest back to town. The fish always kept in good condition, even if it was sometimes necessary to rewet the sacks to keep them cool.

Other times we would go over and catch maybe fifty or sixty trout and Mom would pickle the small ones, and we'd salt the others down. They would keep until we used them up.

When I came back in 1963, I talked to the man stationed at O'Hara Bar and he told me that I'd be lucky to catch one six-inch trout in there now. There was a paved road all the way to town and a concrete bridge across the Selway where we used to have to ford. That meant about thirty minutes from town to start fishing!

...the trail past our place during the time of the eclipse. The group had ...
the trail past our place during the time of the eclipse. The group had ...
the trail past our place during the time of the eclipse. The group had ...

One dry hot summer day someone going along the trail cleaned his pipe out on an old dry stump and the hot coals of tobacco soon had the stump blazing and that spread to brush and trees. Somehow we found out about the fire before it got too big, and we got the word out to all the people in the area. I don't remember who told who, but the word "fire" was all that was necessary to get everybody in action and fast. The fire was burning some cedar timber and this was very valuable to us. I was fighting fire like everybody else—clearing out a path or fire trail, as we called them, to prevent the fire from spreading and trying to put out any small fires that burning material falling out of the trees had started. Some of these would fall on any or all of us working on the fire. In fact, my shirt caught on fire and very luckily I was near the creek so I could jump in and put it out. That was a very scary time even though we were lucky enough to get it under control during the first day. We lost some timber, but not near as much as we would have lost had there not been plenty of help close by. I have never needed to be told to be careful of fires! The burning shirt, the smoke, the heat, and the ominous roar of the fire in dry timber made a permanent impression on me that I'll never forget.

One summer, I have forgotten the exact year, but I think it was either 1916 or 1917, there was an eclipse of the sun, and it occurred at about midday. This event naturally would have been exciting enough by itself, but it so happened that some herders were moving a band of sheep past our place during the time of the eclipse. The sheep had to follow the trail past our hay field, and as we didn't have a sheep-tight fence,

it was up to Jack and me to keep the sheep out of the field in order to save our haycrop. This entailed a lot of running and chasing sheep for both Jack and myself. The day was very hot and muggy, and I was getting extremely hot and tired. About that time it started to get dark, and the sheep bedded down just like it was night. Jack and I took advantage of that and layed down in the creek to cool off. Actually that probably saved me from having heat stroke. Rest and cold water never felt as good before. Strangely enough after the eclipse had passed and daylight came again, the sheep moved out very quiet-like, and we didn't have much trouble with them after that. Bet they thought it was sure a quick night.

During the spring, salmon would come up the river to spawn. We hadn't eaten any salmon right out of salt water so we thought these salmon were good eating. Dad and other men used to spear them. The spear they used was made with three large hooks feathered to a long pole. The hooks were fastened in a slot at the end of the pole and wrapped with heavy line. This made a three-cornered type spear, and the idea was to strike the fish, have the spear pole glance off, and have one of the hooks get into the fish. This required a lot of strength to use them and more strength to get the fish in after a successful spearing.

Dad told me I just wasn't big enough to handle a salmon spear and wouldn't let me do it even when he was around. Naturally, like any other kid, I was determined to spear a salmon. First, I had to make my own spear and keep it hidden in the brush so nobody would catch me. One day when I thought the time was right, I took my spear out of hiding and sneaked down to a gravel bar just below the cabin where I knew salmon would be coming in close to shore. Sure enough in a few minutes, here came a big old salmon close to shore, and I made a stab at it and missed. I was very excited and forgot to pay attention to anything else. Long about that time Mr. Cleveland came riding up the trail and saw me. He rode right up behind me, leaned over and got me by the collar, and lifted me right up in his saddle. He informed me that just 'cause my Dad wasn't there to watch me, I couldn't get away with what I knew better than to try to do. After he finished his lecture, he said, "Now suppose you and I go fishing the way a boy should fish." I realized later on that both Dad and Mr. Cleveland were right. I was awfully lucky that I didn't hook

that fish, because it would have had me in the river before I'd have sense enough to turn the spear loose.

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A man by the name of Smoky Kalwaski stayed in a shack on the lower end of our place for a while one year. He helped Dad do some logging. He also did some trapping for bear and caught one up on the hill behind our house. Shortly after that he decided to move on, and he gave me his bear trap. Now, that really got me excited. I knew how to set the trap, build the pen, place the bait, and by this time, having owned and learned how to shoot a 30-30; I just knew I could get me a bear in no time at all. My folks had different ideas and very emphatically said, "NO BEAR TRAPPING FOR YOU", period. Believe me, I was one extremely disappointed kid. My argument was that the 30-30 would shoot just as hard for me as anybody else, and that was what everyone else used, so why couldn't I? The answer was still "No". The reason was that just trapping and shooting a bear wouldn't be so bad, but that trapping a cub with mama being close by trying to help her offspring would be the problem. Handling the mother, who naturally would be in a very bad humor and ready to attack anything or anybody that happened on the scene, would take the experience of an old-time trapper like Tom Allison had found out. At about the time the trapper was concentrating on the cub, the mama would come busting out of the brush like a wild bull but twice as nasty, and the fight would be on fast as lightning. Naturally, this was no place for an inexperienced kid. The ultimate answer, like many others, was that my folks won the argument, and that is probably why I lived to tell the tale.

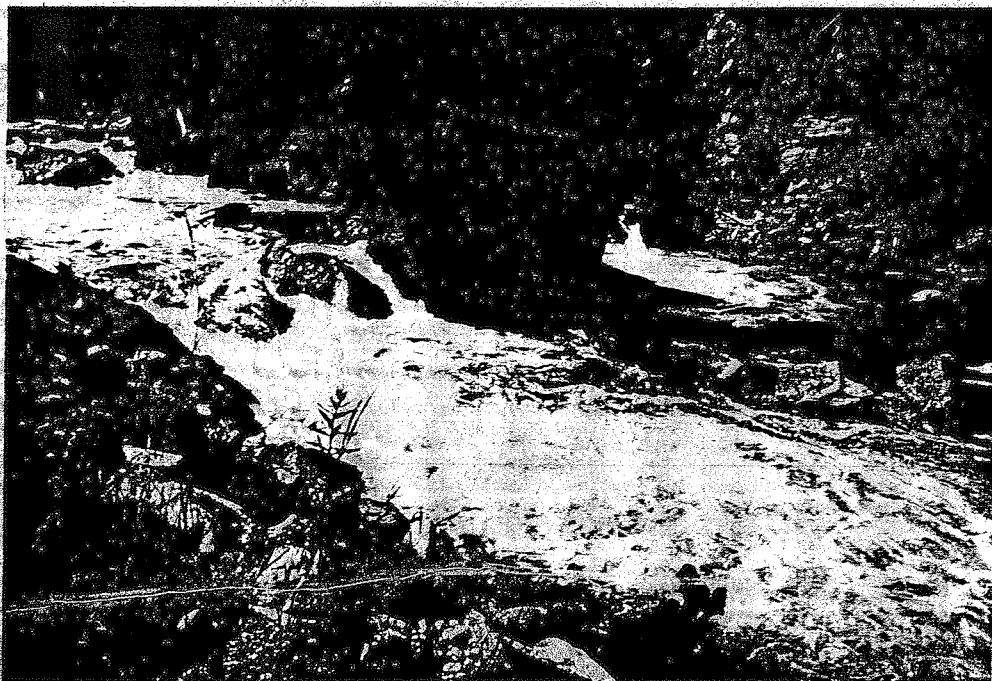
As I remember the law, such as it was in those days, a boy could not legally hunt deer until he was twelve years old. So on the evening before my twelfth birthday, which was in the middle of November, I told Mom that I'd like to celebrate by going out by myself and getting a deer. This was OK with her, so the next morning I was up at the crack of dawn, and I might add that I didn't need an alarm to get me up. Jack, my 30-30, and I took off up behind the swamp, which was about three-fourths of a mile from the house. I was sure I'd see a good deer and, sure enough, there stood a nice fat barren doe just like Dad and I always killed for eating. I killed her with one shot as I'd been taught, cleaned her, and not wanting to leave her for bears, cougars, or coyotes, I started to drag her home.

Mom knew where I'd gone, had heard the shot, and after a couple of hours got to wondering about what had happened. She came up the trail and found me trying to drag the deer, which weighed a lot more than I did. We talked the problem over and decided that she'd go back and get an old wooden sled we had to help drag the deer home. On her way back past Goddard Bar, a man who was staying there over night asked her what was going on. He had heard a shot, saw her going up the trail and coming back in a hurry. She told him what had happened and he offered to pack the deer in. She told him I was a proud kid and bull-headed too, so he should be careful with what he said or I might refuse his help. Well, that guy started out by congratulating me on being a fine hunter and that he would very much appreciate it if he could help me celebrate my birthday by helping me with the deer. By that time I was hungry and wet with sweat, and

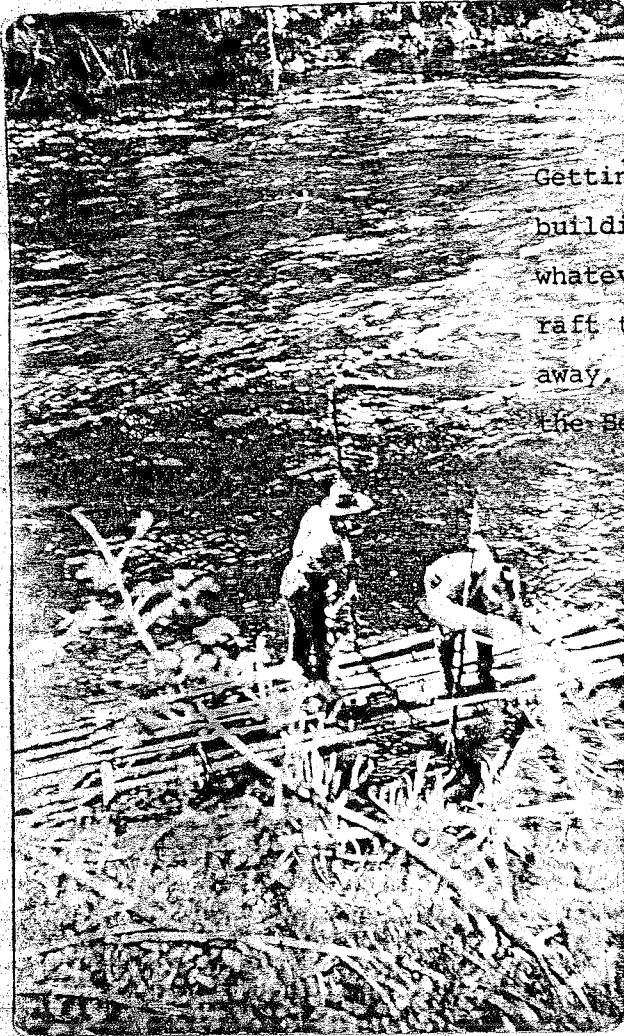
Picture taken in 1910 of the large rocks that make up
the rapid. The Selway is classified as a wild river.



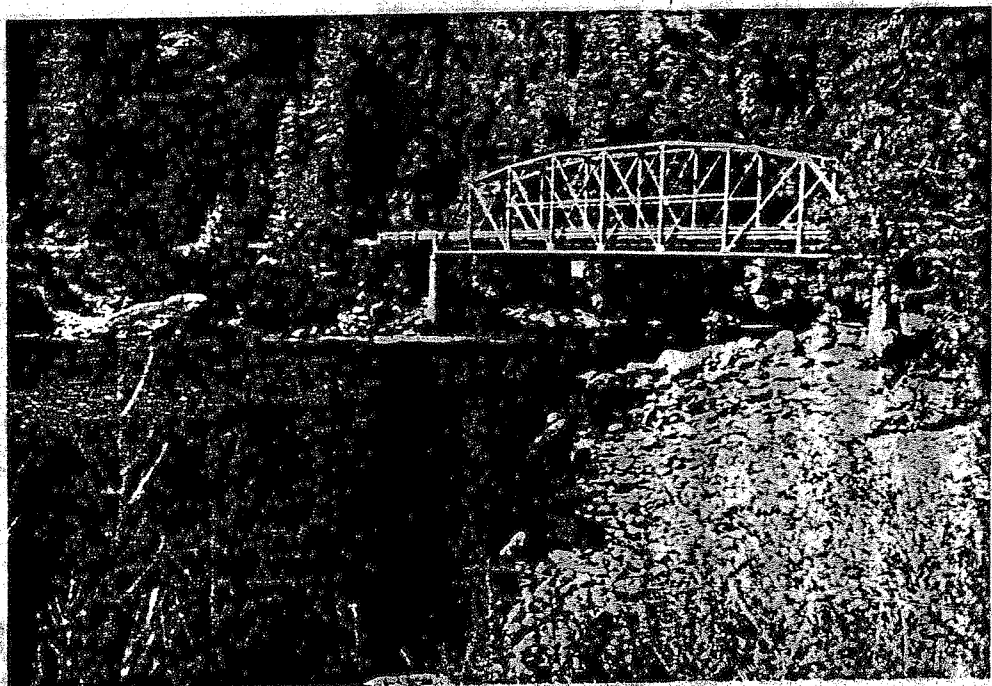
Selway River falls 14 miles above our ranch, notice the hight of the water falls on each side of the large rock in the center of the river. Just below the falls on the left was a great fishing hole. This was in the teens.



Picture taken in 1981. The large rocks that made the falls have been blasted apart. This allows fish to migrate above the falls, also enables boaters to run the rapids. The Selway is classified as a wild river.



Getting to Meadow Creek in the old days required building a raft. Also it was pretty smart to take whatever tools and materials needed to make another raft to get back in case the first one was washed away. There is a concrete and steel bridge across the Helway to Meadow Creek now.



Meadow Creek used to be 2 to 3 days from town now it is less than an hour.

I told him that as long as he wanted to help me celebrate my birthday, that I'd hate to disappoint him, so I'd be glad to let him carry the deer home for me.

When Dad got home a few days later I told him about killing the deer, where I killed it, and the trouble I'd had in getting it home. He said, "Why did you kill one so far away?" That was sort of the way things were in those days—figure how you're going to finish the job before you start.

One time Tom Allison took me on a trip up to the Selway Falls where he was camping for the winter in the log cabin just above the trail. This was in the early spring. There was not much snow down low, but it was still cold enough to keep his traps out, as the pelts were still good.

Each of us had a pack and, naturally, a rifle. We got a good start and were hiking along at a good steady pace enjoying the scenery, as there wasn't much else to do. About a mile from the falls the dogs jumped a cougar that had just killed a deer right near the trail. The big cat took off up the mountain and the dogs followed right behind it, barking up a storm. Tom and I took a look at the deer, and it was still warm. The cougar had started to get its fill, and Tom judged it was about half through eating when the dogs jumped him. We listened to the dogs, and Tom figured they would catch up with the cat down the Glover Creek Canyon and tree it close to the trail. We left our packs and lit out down the trail with Jack and Phoebe who stayed back from the chase. At Glover Creek we climbed the ridge and tried to pick up the dogs, but we didn't hear a sound. We followed along the ridge where we thought the cat and dogs had gone and then went clear back to the deer. We never found a dog nor heard a sound. Also neither Phoebe nor Jack had picked up a fresh scent. Tom figured that

the dogs had lost the cat and went on home, so we cut off quite a bit of the deer meat for the dogs, loaded up our packs, and lit out for the cabin so we could arrive before dark. When we reached the cabin the dogs were not there. Tom knew right away what had happened. We had cut underneath the dogs, and they had the cat treed farther up the mountain than he originally figured. He knew his dogs wouldn't leave that cat until he showed up, so he rigged up a palouser, got a couple of chunks of jerky, and lit out. He knew that I could cook, had a rifle and two dogs, and would be OK. He told me that I had hiked sixteen to eighteen miles already that day, and he wasn't sure how far he'd have to go. Anyway, he thought the extra trip would be too much for me. I was tired and hungry and agreed with him without any fuss. I don't remember what I cooked for myself. I was hungry and it didn't matter what I ate; I was happy as long as it was enough. The dogs were happy, too, because they had a good feed of fresh meat. By the time I was through and got things washed up, it was good and dark and time to go to bed.

No sooner had I blown the light out, the wood rats or pack rats, as they were also called, began chasing each other up on the rafters. This made quite a racket, and I really didn't like rats. Anyhow, since it looked like I wasn't going to get to shoot a cougar (Tom had promised me if we had found the cat on the ridge that I could shoot it), I decided I'd just as well get a rat or two. I lit the candle I had handy, but by the time I got my rifle up, the rats were gone. After a few tries at that I figured I'd better do real fast aiming, so I put the barrel of the rifle between my big toe and the next one, put that leg up over my other knee, cocked the rifle, lit the candle, and shot away at a rat. That was fun; I wasn't killing any rats, but I was sure shooting the hell out of the

shakes on the roof. After a while I sort of figured that I'd have so many shakes shot off that if it rained or snowed, we'd have to spend all our time fixing the roof instead of hunting, running the trapline, and other things that would be a lot more fun. So I put the rifle away, blew out the candle, and went to sleep. Tom came in some time after that carrying the cougar. It was up the mountain above where we had been and then down a ridge toward Glover Creek. After some conversation about the hunt—we were both very happy about getting the cougar—we turned in for the night.

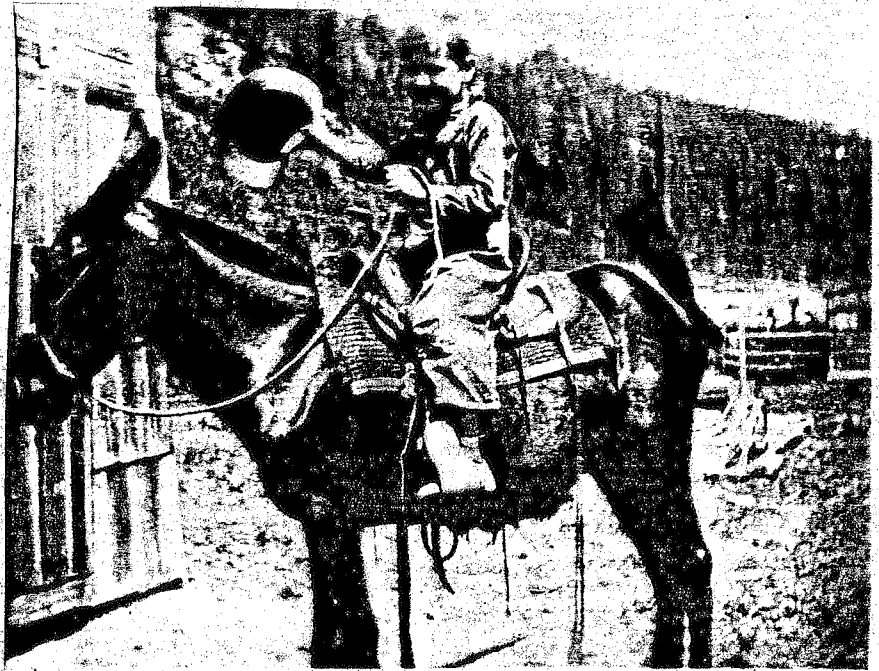
The next morning we were up at daylight. Tom told me to get the fire going, get some fresh water from the river, and he'd get breakfast. Tom was what we called a sourdough artist. He sure could make fine sourdough biscuits or hot cakes. That morning we had biscuits because we could take some for lunch and have the rest for supper when we got back to the cabin. As I remember we had venison steak, potatoes, gravy, huckleberry jam, and coffee. Even a kid could get filled up on that kind of food. As usual, I was hungry and it was good.

After breakfast Tom told me to take a pole, a hook, and a chunk of the cougar meat and go down to the big hole below the falls and catch enough fish to have for supper and to bait the trapline. The cougar meat made fine bait because it was tough. I knew I would only need a piece or two. I got a water bucket, the pole line and hook and bait and took off. In about thirty to forty minutes I was back with all the fish we needed, and they were nice big rainbows. In those days no one wasted anything, and it was considered proper to use fish to bait the traps, feed the dogs, or to eat, as all three cases pertained to making a living or eating. By the time I cleaned what fish we wanted to eat, Tom had the cougar skinned

out and the hide nailed up to cure, and we were ready to pack up and run the trapline. He had previously set traps along the river for mink and martin, and we found several traps loaded, some sprung, some with bait gone, and there were other things that needed fixing to keep the traps in producing order. His traps were all the way up to Three Lynx Creek, which was about three miles. The work on the trapline took most of the day, and by the time we got back to the cabin, it was time to cut wood, get fresh water, feed the dogs, and skin out the mink from the day's catch. Tom did the skinning and I did the chores. That was the way things worked on those trips. After everything else was done, we got a good supper going, ate well, and were soon ready for bed and a good night's sleep. The next morning we were up early and after breakfast, Tom told me to catch some fish to take home, and he'd get things ready to leave. The fishing didn't take very long as we only needed about six of those big rainbows for home. All this was done without wasting too much time. The fish were packed in some dry grass, wet down with cold water, and wrapped in a sack. We then loaded our packs and took off for home fourteen miles down the river. That was a good trip and old Tom was a great coach for me. I always learned lots of things when I was with him.



The girls and their dolls



Riding the Mule'



Dress up for 'Sunday'



Helen Riding the Calf'

One summer our milk cow got caught up in a barbed-wire fence and got a very bad cut in her left-hind teat. This teat had to be milked along with the rest, and that proved quite a job. I would tie her head up short, tie her left hind leg tight as I could to the stall bars, and start milking. Milking the first three teats went OK, but when I got to the sore one, the old cow would squirm, balk, try to kick me, and anything else she could think of to get me to stop. After milking I would put some medicine over the cut to heal the wound and to keep the flies away. All this lasted about a month, and I don't know who was the happiest, the cow or me, when that cut healed up and I could milk in a normal manner.

Most of the time spent on the ranch was for necessity of living. However, there were some nice things too. The scenery was beautiful, there were lots of wild flowers, and the girls always liked to pick them for the house. As most of the flowers grew near the house, it wasn't much of a chore to find a nice bouquet. However, the girls, Jack, and I always went together for their protection. We had a bed of Sweet Williams about four feet by eight feet that was really pretty. It was solid with flowers and had a large variety of colors. The nice part was that it lasted all summer.

We discovered an area on our ranch that apparently had been a very old campsite for Indians. We found quite a few arrowheads, flint knives, and stones that had been used to fashion and sharpen their articles. It was a nice collection, but somehow it got lost. Today it would be quite valuable.

We never played much as kids mainly, I suppose, because there were no parks with swings or slides. However, we did have fun with games and

things like that. I was the only boy in the area, and naturally, wanted to play ball. Jeanette thought it was her duty to try and play catch with me. This never worked out too well, but we did the best we could.

We never had a bicycle because there wasn't any place to ride one. The trails were too rough for that.

In the wintertime when the snow crusted over we had a lot of fun with our sleds. They were homemade, but they worked fine. We could always find a place to slide down the hill, and when we got tired of that we could pull and push each other around the field and slide down the more gentle slopes.

In the wintertime it was always cold and sometimes we had lots of snow. The snow on the trees was beautiful, but it certainly made traveling a real problem. After a heavy storm we would be confined to the house and out buildings for several days. When the new snow would settle down and crust over, we could walk on top and we could go everywhere with no brush to interfere. That was fun.

One bright sunny morning after about a foot of snow had fallen, I was going down to Lowell to get the mail and whatever supplies we had coming in. It was very quiet; there was not a sound anywhere when, kerplop, all of the snow on a small fir tree came down at once. That scared the daylights out of me—'bet I jumped ten feet. I thought something was about to get me and wheeled around with my rifle pointing in the direction of the racket all ready to blast whatever varmint that was attacking me when I realized what had happened. I sure felt foolish getting all scared over nothing.

One summer Mrs. Packer and her daughter came up to visit us. The weather was hot and we decided to go swimming in the river. There was a nice sandy beach not too far from the house. The water there was fairly quiet and was suitable for swimming. I swam out too far and got caught in an under current. I was about to go under for the third time when Mrs. Packer managed to get a long limb out to me. I grabbed it and she dragged me to shore. I remember being so tired that I just wanted to lay down, and she had a lot of trouble getting me out of the water. From that day on I was very careful about getting into deep water.

[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible due to heavy shadowing on the left side of the page. It appears to be a continuation of a narrative or a separate entry.]

...the water was very deep and I was afraid to go in. I saw a lot of fish and some of them were very large. I was very happy to see them. I was very tired and I wanted to go home. I was very happy to see them. I was very tired and I wanted to go home. I was very happy to see them. I was very tired and I wanted to go home.

There were some grizzlies left in the area, though none were very close to our ranch. They would bust into cabins and wreck the place looking for food and smash up or scatter whatever they didn't like. A sack of flour was apparently their plaything as they would rip it open, then upon not liking it, they would take it in their mouth and scatter it all over the place. Killing grizzlies always produced some tall tales, but like old Tom said, they were easy to kill in one shot but hard as hell to kill in 8.8, the number of rounds in a 30-30.

There were two grizzlies killed that proved his theory. I wasn't near either of these killings, but they were told as true by reliable people so we all believed them.

Story No. 1: There were some doctors up on Coolwater Mountain hunting grouse. All had been in the cabin having a snort or two after the morning hike when one of the doctors decided he'd go get a grouse. He took off down the hill toward a likely looking thicket and about a quarter of a mile from the cabin as he started through a huckleberry patch, a grizzly entered the same patch coming up the hill, and apparently they each saw the other at the same time. Mr. Grizzly, of course, being of a naturally bad disposition and quick temper, opened his mouth to let out a mean and fierce growl. The doctor who was armed with a 22 Special rifle, which had about the same fire power as today's 22 Long rifle, reacted quickly. He aimed and fired, hitting the grizzly right in the roof of his mouth. The bullet penetrated his brain and killed him instantly. The doctor took off for camp and upon arrival told his tale of killing a bear. The rest of the guys thought he had probably shot at a stump or something

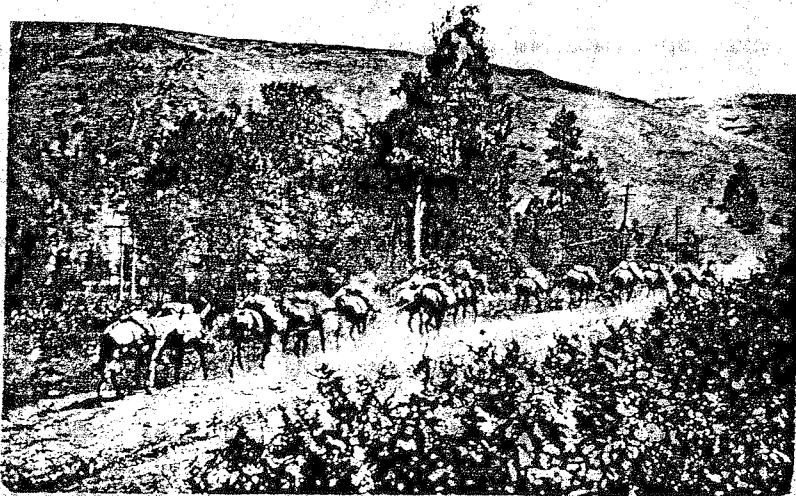
but after some persuasion, they went back to the huckleberry patch to find out for sure what had happened. By the time they found the perfectly dead grizzly which was about the size of a cow, the doctor who had killed the bear looked at his tiny rifle, looked at the size of the bear, and went into shock. Luckily his companions knew what to do, so he recovered and was the proud possessor of the hide of one of the largest grizzlies ever killed in the Selway area.

Story No. 2: The Robinette brothers had a ranch up in the Moose Creek area which was about forty-five miles from where we were. They were trying to raise cattle and found out that a grizzly had helped itself to one of their animals. They knew that if they wanted to stay in the cattle business they would have to get Mr. Grizzly before he got all their cattle, which they knew he would do. Both of these men were well-experienced in hunting. They were good shots, like all people in the wilderness areas, because their source of food and sometimes their lives depended on good shooting. They started out up a draw where they were pretty sure they would find Mr. Bear. They were both armed with 44-70 rifles which were hard-hitting rifles at short range. One of the brothers went up the bottom of the draw, the other paralleled him at about thirty yards on the side of the ridge. They hadn't gone very far when they jumped the bear. As usual the bear wasn't about to get chased out of his territory, so he started down the hill after the man at the bottom of the draw. Both men opened fire and they weren't missing. When the bear died, he was reaching over a log with his big paw about eighteen inches from his adversary's face. When the brothers skinned out the bear, they found that all sixteen rounds had hit the bear, ripped his heart and lungs out, but didn't break any bones so he could still travel. Luckily the bear died when he did or there would

have been a badly wounded or a very dead man. Like old Tom said, you had better make sure when shooting—the first shot is vital.

One fall Dad and I took a trip down to Syringa, which was the end of the road. I don't remember the details of the trip, but one thing about it I'll always remember. We had gotten up early to get our gear ready to pack on the mules and start for home. Breakfast wasn't ready yet, so I was wandering around the place and found some grapes. They were dead ripe, cool in the morning, and the best tasting things I had ever eaten at that time.

In Syringa today there is a mill, a store or two, several houses, and a very nice restaurant. The last time I was visiting the Selway, my daughter and I went there for breakfast which, I might add, was very good. I told them about the grapes, and they were pleased to think that nice things happened at Syringa over sixty-five years ago.



Bringing Supplies - Going "to the store" was an expedition. Minimum of 4 days generally 6 or 7

Fishing tackle was always a homemade affair. I would cut good vine maple poles, peel them, and nail them to the barn so they would dry straight. In the fall, winter, and spring when there wasn't any fly fishing, we would use these poles with about twenty or thirty feet of line well tied to the pole. We'd use a bear hook and no leader. Most times for a sinker we shot a 22 into a stick of wood, chopped it out, beat it down thin, and wrapped it around the line for a sinker. For bait we would use a chunk of meat or maybe a grasshopper in the fall. Meat was preferred as it would stay on the hook a lot better than a grasshopper. We would fish the deep riffles and because there was a lot of fish and very few fishermen, we would always catch what we needed.

For fly fishing we always had some old fly rods of sorts around. We used silk enameled level line, and the flies were tied to about an eight-inch leader. For creek fishing we would generally use a maple or willow pole with a short line. Some of the fly rods were telescoping metal rods, and the best reels in those days were automatics. Both the metal rods and reels required a lot of care or they would rust up and break or, in the case of the reel, just not work at all.

The rods and lines were not suitable for long casts, consequently, we had to wade in a lot of places to reach where we wanted to fish. Wading in a swift stream like the Selway was dangerous, even if we were not in deep water. My orders were not to wade. Therefore, I always had to "slip and fall in". This got me wet, and as I couldn't get any wetter, I just kept on wading. We didn't have any waders or rubber boots. We just had old boots with hob nails and holes in them to let the water out. Very seldom did we ever wade over knee deep. One time when I was fishing the

creek on our ranch, I did slip and went into a deep hole. I looked and saw my hat floating away. My concern was to get the hat, which I managed to grab, then I worked myself to shore. I sure didn't want to loose that hat.

One time we had boarded some Forest Service people, and I had helped Mom with all the extra work. She decided that as a reward she would buy me a new fly outfit because I had never had a new outfit for my own. We sent for a rod, reel, and line, and as I remember the total price was \$5.50. The outfit arrived in due time and I was one very happy and excited boy.

Dad was home, and he suggested we go fishing and get enough fish for breakfast. We were going to his favorite hole just below the ranch. The reason it was his favorite hole was because it was formed by a very large rock about twelve or thirteen feet wide and twenty feet long. Just below the rock was a perfect place for rainbows. I knew Dad would want to fish that hole so it was up to me to fish somewhere else. Just above Dad's hole was an eddy that produced fish, so I decided I'd start there with my new rod. The rod was about seven feet long and fairly stiff and wasn't exactly made for distant casting. I worked the line out about thirty feet. The fly touched the water and instantly I saw a big fish rise for it. We thought it very sporting to take the fly away if we could, so I cast again, letting out a little more line. This time Mr. Trout wasn't going to miss his dinner any longer and he hit the fly as it touched water with a vicious smack. I played the fish for about fifteen minutes, got him ashore, put my fingers in his gills, and tossed him up to Dad. Dad held him up, looked him over, and reminded me that we had come out to fish for breakfast and this was it. When we got home and

weighed him, it was an even five pounds. Boy oh boy, what a way to break in a new outfit! No one made me an offer for the outfit, but I'm sure it was not for sale.

Quitting fishing after one fish because it was enough to serve our needs was typical of the way all of the people in the Selway area believed in conserving game. There were probably seasons for deer, elk, etc., but all of us had to eat the year around. Wild game was our source of meat, and we never wasted it.

One fall a group of hunters came in from Spokane and hired a packer to take them into the Moose Creek area where there were a lot of elk. These people didn't know our code and when they found a large herd of elk, they proceeded to shoot all the bulls, which were far more than they needed or could pack out. They took all the elk teeth for souvenirs, the best antlers, and some hams. The rest was left to rot. The packers couldn't do much about it until the party started out. Then funny things began to happen. First, all the saddle horses got lost--no one could find them. Then the pack mules got to bucking along where the trail was on slippery ground above the river, and all of the food, bedding, and other belongings were lost in the river and naturally could not be recovered. Word got out by the grapevine, so to speak, of what was happening. When these hunters got to our place they asked Dad if we could feed them. Dad told them that he had a wife and three kids, that our crops had failed that year, and he didn't know how we were going to feed ourselves much less anybody else. One of the guys said that this was sure a tough country, and Dad replied that it sure as hell was, and maybe they shouldn't come back. They still had thirty miles to go to get to Kooskia, and everybody along the way was just like Dad. They never got even a crust of bread for two more days of hard travel, and they never came back either.

None of us in the area had any locks on our doors, and all of us were welcome for food and lodging at anybody's place whether the residents were home or not. The rules were to leave things as you found them. If there was water in the bucket, leave water in the bucket. The same went for wood and kindling. Sometime later you could pay back the visit with some venison, fish, or grouse. The paying back wasn't mandatory but was done as a thank you. The motto was nobody had a lock, everybody had a gun, and nobody made two mistakes.

One problem that never seemed to come to a conclusion was who won the battle between our mule and me. We got her as a colt along with her mother, and Dad sort of turned her over to me to train, break to ride, work, and behave, not necessarily in that order. As for riding we broke even. One time I'd ride her, the next time I'd get bucked off. We'd harness her up with her mother as a team for plowing, pulling the wagon, and other chores; and they got the job done. Behavior was something else. She would get into trouble in a lot of ways. She'd try to jump out of the corral and get caught on the top rail or in a guy wire on the gate. Then she would try to kick her way out and generally wound up busting the fence or gate. How she ever got out of those escapades without breaking a leg was, I guess, just plain mule luck.

One day she got in the root cellar where we had about a ton or two of carrots stored for animal food. I knew I had to get her out of there before she foundered. Jack and I got in and around her and very luckily so, I might add, because as soon as she saw us coming in, she started kicking. We had to crawl up in the bins and go over the carrots to get in front of her. Jack was barking and jumping at her, and I had a club and was smacking her in the head. Even a mule can take just so much of that treatment so she backed herself out. Then, of course, she tried to jump out of the corral and get tangled up again. We finally got her calmed down, untangled, and on her feet. By that time she must have figured she'd had enough trouble for awhile and was a very gentle mule for several days.

I'd never take her out for a ride unless Dad was along. She was

too wild for that.

One day I got to wondering if she was ticklish so I slipped in the stall beside her and jabbed my fingers in her ribs. When I came to, I was in the corner of the barn with a saddle and two harness sets on top of me. She must have been very ticklish!

One day I decided that I should teach Jeanette how to fish, so I rigged up a willow stick with a short line and a fly and took her down to the creek to a nice hole where I was sure there would be a trout. I gave her the pole and told her how to toss the fly out on the water. She did as she was told and as soon as the fly hit the water, a fish grabbed it. Jeanette let out a scream, dropped the pole, and lit out for home. After getting her quieted down, I asked her what she was afraid of and she said that she was afraid she was hurting the fish. I decided that girls just weren't made for fishing and never tried that again.

About the end of World War I, Dad got to be deputy assessor for Idaho County. His main duty in the summertime was to ride the range and assess the sheep and cattle that were grazing in our part of the county. He would take me on these trips whenever things at the ranch were in such conditions that we could leave Mom and the girls alone. We would be gone from ten to fourteen days at a time.

The area we were in most of the time was known as the Lolo Pass Country. That was where the squaw Lolo guided the Lewis and Clark expedition across the Bitterroot Mountains on their way to the Columbia River. There wasn't even a trail up the Locksaw River. To reach the area, we had to go upstream from Lowell about a mile or so and take the trail up the hill until we reached the top. The hills were sort of rolling at the top rather than real steep like they were coming out of the river canyon. Dad would have a map showing about where the various herds were grazing, and we would take off in that general direction. Keeping oriented, or perhaps one could call it ground navigation, was an absolute must while traveling in wilderness areas. Orientation is something I learned very young; remembering general directions by the sun, keying in on a certain mountain or peak, remembering on which side of a ridge you were traveling. For example, going up a ridge with ground on the left and daylight on the right meant that we were traveling on the right side of the ridge; daylight on both sides meant we were on the top of the ridge; and daylight on the left and ground on the right meant we were on the left side of the ridge.

We would key on a mountain or peak then go to a place where the key

spot would be, say either ninety degrees left or right, instead of slightly left or right. Then we checked the map and saw if this was the general location we were planning to reach. After finding our destination, in this case the herd of sheep, we would have to remember all the keys in reverse when we returned.

In 1963, when I was flying over the area with Claude Trenary, I pointed out certain spots and told him what they were: Wetus Meadows, Rye Patch, Canyon Creek, or whatever. He asked me how I could remember that, and I told him that if all these places hadn't been well engraved in my mind I might not have been here today. The same was true when I took my daughter up the Selway in 1981. I would tell her what creek we were approaching long before we reached it by road. The trees were all different, but the ridges and peaks were the same and they were my keys.

Our outfit would consist of two pack mules and a saddle horse for each of us. My job was to shoot grouse, catch fish, pick huckleberries, and do the camp cooking. Sometimes we would be alone and sometimes we would be with government pack trains. When we camped alone, we would pick out a spot near a creek and where there was good grass for our stock. The creek would always have plenty of trout if we needed them, and I would cut a willow pole, tie some line on it, tie on a fly, and sneak up to a hole, drop the fly on the water, and whambo, I'd have a nice trout. I'd never take very long to catch enough for a meal. We would always stop early enough to make camp before dark. First thing to do would be to unpack and unsaddle the horses and mules. We put a hobble and a bell on one so she wouldn't wander off, and the others would stay with her. Next we would make our bed with tree branches, bear grass, or both depending on what was handy. The branches had to be small and laid

straight with the small ones on top to make the bed soft. Bear grass is a very tough sharp-edged grass and has to be cut with a knife. Trying to pull it off by hand would result in some very deep gashes in fingers and palms. After getting a good mattress laid down smooth, we would unroll our bedding. There weren't any sleeping bags then, so we had a heavy canvas that was big enough for underneath and on top too. In the canvas we would have several blankets. We were camping in altitudes of 6,000 to 8,000 feet, and even in the summertime it would get cold at night.

Next after the bed, came the campfire for cooking. The first thing to do was to clear out an area of all burnable material so we wouldn't start a forest fire. We could generally find some rocks that we could use to rest the cooking utensils on while we were cooking. We would have a coffee pot, frying pans, and one or two stew pots. Our meals would be simple, generally potatoes, grouse or fish, and a kind of bread which we called dough gods. It was made of biscuit dough and was cooked in one piece in the frying pan. For dessert we would have huckleberries or rice and raisins and sometimes canned fruit. After the meal was finished we would scour the pots and pans with sand and water in the creek, then rinse them out with hot water. By the time all of this was done and the gear stowed away so the chipmunks wouldn't ruin the food and dirty up other things, it would be time to go to bed. We put our boots under our heads for a pillow, and that also would keep them warm so they wouldn't be all frosty when we pulled them back on in the morning. Sleep in that cold mountain air was sure nice. Sometimes we would just lie there and try to count the stars. Somehow I never seemed to get very far doing that because I'm sure I was dead asleep before I got to very many stars.

Thursday, June 14

We got up at daylight, washed our faces and hands in the creek and that would certainly get us going fast because that water was always cold. Next we'd get the fire going and start breakfast. By the time breakfast was ready Dad would have the horses and mules saddled, the beds rolled up and everything ready to pack. As soon as we ate and cleaned the dishes and packed the dishes and food, things were ready to load. Dad would pack the mules and I would make sure that the fire was out, the ground all around it well soaked, and that we didn't leave any debris that would be messy. By that time we would be ready to travel.

Sometimes we would have a good trail to follow, and other times we'd just take off through the forest. The trees were mostly pine, and there was very little brush, so the going was fairly good even without a trail. We would travel to the area where the sheep were supposed to be, then we would follow the signs until we found the herd and camp.

When we reached a sheep herd we would always stay at the shepherders' camp. There the meals would be lamb stew and some of the best bread that I have ever eaten. The herders all seemed to be Portugese, and they had learned to cook in the Old Country. They made bread in a large iron kettle and baked it in coals covering the bottom, sides, and top. The bread was fairly heavy textured like whole wheat and had a great taste. Wish I'd been smart enough to get the recipe.

Other times we would be in Forest Service camps. One time we arrived at one of these camps on Thursday. The fellow who did the cooking at that camp made coffee every Monday morning in a five-gallon can. He would dump in a whole can of coffee, generally a three-pound can, fill the can with water, set it on the fire and each day just add some more water. By Thursday, the day we arrived, the coffee was a kind of a blue color and

strong enough, as the saying goes, to float a wedge. He fixed supper that night, and the rest of the food was about like the coffee. Anyway, Dad got to telling all the fellows (there were eight or ten packers in camp) what a good cook I was, and they decided that I should cook breakfast. The bacon, coffee, and potatoes were OK; but I decided to get fancy, so I mixed my biscuit dough with canned milk, put some sugar in it, put the dough in a big fry pan, and set it on the fire. When it was done, it was all brown and very pretty to look at, but it was so damned heavy we just about had to hook a mule up to get it off the fire. Boy oh boy, did I get chewed out about that. Dad told me that the next time he had me cook something, just do what I knew how and don't get any bright ideas.

When we would be in a Forest Service camp we would generally travel with the pack trains. This would mean that we would be with five or more packers with about ten mules each besides our own mules and horses. I was always told that being a kid, I should learn about pack trains. The best way to do that was to ride behind and watch the packs and if I saw any packs slipping, I should ride up fast and tell the packer so he could repack that animal. What they didn't tell me was that I would get all the dust, and there sure was plenty of that.

There were a lot of yellow-jackets in that country and it seemed they liked to build their nests near trails. That was the worst part of a big pack train. Some mule would hit the nest or step on one as most of them were in the ground, and the yellow-jackets would go wild and start stinging mules, packers, or whatever was handy. In a matter of minutes all hell would break loose. Mules would get to bucking and kicking. Packers would get stung and bucked off. Packs would bust off and stuff was scattered

all over the place. By this time the dust would be so thick, nobody could see anything. The thing to do, of course, was to get away from the nest, let things quiet down, find all the packs and gear, get loaded up again, and get going. The first time or two this happened I would get into the thick of the mess. Generally I would get stung and sometimes get bucked off if my horse got stung too. After that I decided to get smart, and as soon as I'd hear the commotion starting, I'd wait way back, generally find a berry patch, and eat some huckleberries. When things quieted down and sounded OK, I'd ride up and ask what had happened. The greeting was generally, "Where the hell have you been?" My answer was, "Picking berries, what else!"

These trips were a lot of work but that was all part of the fun. We saw lots of country, got acquainted with new people and told a lot of stories. It was always nice to get back home again. The first thing we would do when we got home would be to heat up some water, fill the washtub, and take a bath. I always felt like I was covered with about a fourth-inch of dirt, and I'm sure Dad always felt the same.

When I was back there in 1963, Claud Trenary, who was a good brush pilot, flew me up the North Fork of the Clearwater to Cayouse Creek. We set down on a landing strip and caught a mess of fish from the creek. We had to wait until the air cooled down so we could lift off and get out of the canyon. We flew back to Kooskia over the country where Dad and I had ridden and camped. We fooled around going back, saluted a lookout man Claud knew, saw a big bull elk at a lake so we flew down and took a look at him, then we sort of coasted along in his Piper Cub looking at the scenery. It took us forty-five minutes to fly back from Cayouse Creek to Kooskia including all the flying around we did. I got to figuring how

long it would have taken Dad and I to make the trip with our pack mules. As near as I could estimate, if we rode long and hard and didn't have any bad luck; we could have made the trip in five days. It's hard to believe that a long hard day's travel could be very easily accomplished in nine minutes. As far as going places is concerned, that is progress.

One time Dad and I had to take some stock and things up to a sheep camp on Fog Mountain which was on the east side of the Selway above the falls. I rode the sheep herder's horse going up, and we took my riding mule for me to ride home along with a pack mule with supplies in case we had to camp out. The trip was fourteen miles of easy trail up the Selway and then five or six miles on a steep winding trail up the hill. We got to the sheep camp late in the afternoon, and the shepherd was waiting for us. After taking care of the stock, we had the usual supper of lamb stew and bread. There was only one bed, and it was barely big enough for Dad and the shepherd. Somehow or another I was sleeping on the ground with the saddle blankets for bedding. We were above 7,000 feet and by the time it got dark, it really got cold. I was cold so I got Jack in the blankets with me. When things would start to warm up and the blankets smelled so bad I couldn't stand it, I'd stick my head out from under the blankets to get some good fresh air, and then I'd get cold again. This went on all night and I was not in a very good humor, so when daylight came and I heard Dad and the shepherd snoring away happy and peaceful like, that did it. I got up, started the fire and made all the noise I could so they couldn't sleep. After the coffee pot got going, we warmed up the lamb stew and had the usual sheep-camp meal. Early on a cold morning high on a mountain, one is not particular about the menu. As long as there is plenty and it's hot, nothing else seems to matter—the

inner body is replenished with fuel and ready for the day's events.

After breakfast we got the animals saddled and the mule packed. Dad had his saddle horse and for me, it was the mule. We started out down the hill through an old burn where there was lots of feed for sheep, but travel in and around old snags was treacherous. We hadn't gone very far when we were in the middle of the herd of sheep. This should have not caused trouble except for some reason or other, the pack mule got spooked and started running and bucking. Dad tried to get him to stop before he bucked our stuff all over the mountainside. About this time my mule decided she'd cut loose too and started down that mountain as fast as she could run. I had a good bridle on her, but I needed both hands to make it work hard enough to stop her and about the time I started to pull on the bridle, I'd have to dodge a limb, so I'd grab leather and duck low in the saddle to keep from getting busted off the mule. This kept up for a mile or so before we got to a huckleberry patch that was big enough for me to go to work on the bridle. I came back with both hands as hard as I could and just about upset that damned mule. Anyway she stopped and I piled off. Dad came along with the pack mule in due time and wanted to know if I was alright. I told him I was OK, but that mule was crazy today and I wasn't going to ride her until she settled down. He agreed that might be a good idea, so I just followed along. We had just started out again when my mule made a big sashay by a flag rock and went end over end down the mountain. I ran up to Dad and started to pull the rifle out of the scabbard. He wanted to know what I was up to, and I told him I couldn't stand to see an animal suffer, so I was going to shoot the mule. He put a stop to that until we could find out how badly she was hurt. About that time the mule got up, shook herself, and wasn't

even scratched. Then I was mad, because I'd hoped she'd broken her neck or something just to pay her back for that wild ride she had taken me on down the hill. I still didn't want to ride her yet, but it would have been OK because she was one gentle mule from then on for the rest of the day.

It hadn't taken very long to get to the river and Dad decided that we ought to take some fish home for supper. We had a rod in our pack which he got out for me. He told me to catch some grasshoppers and go down to the big hole by the falls and catch some fish while he unsaddled the horses and let them rest. It didn't take long to get the hoppers, and Jack and I went down to the falls and started to fish. I put on a grasshopper, let down twenty feet or so of line in the crystal clear water, and about a dozen big rainbows came swimming up to take a look at the hopper and then they went away. It was so clear they might have gotten spooked at the line. Dad came down pretty quick to see what was going on and when I showed him, he told me to quit wasting time there, put a fly on the line, and go down to the rapids and fish there. He said he would saddle up because we had wasted enough time already. By the time he got saddled up, I was still fishing so he came down to see what luck I'd been having this time. By the time he got to me I had caught five nice big rainbows, eighteen to twenty inches long. He said that was plenty and get them cleaned, pack them in grass and leaves, wet them down good in cold water, and wrap them in the sack he brought for that purpose. That is the way we could keep fish while traveling. By the time I'd done all this with the fish and got back up to the trail, he was ready to travel. I climbed on my mule, and having all the trouble she needed for one day, she proved herself a good saddle animal all the way home. The trail being good and

downgrade, we made it home in about three hours. This was another trip that I'll always remember.

After the 1918-19 winter trapping season was over, Tom and Willie Allison stopped at our place to divide up their belongings. The winter had been bad for them. They didn't have a good year and worst of all, Tom had lost his dogs. King had gotten killed, and various things had happened to the rest. This was a very serious matter because a good string of dogs is an absolute must if one is to have any success in hunting. Besides all this, Tom was getting too old for the hard life he was leading and maybe Willie couldn't see any future in it either.

The morning they were going over their belongings I had to go to Lowell or someplace and when I returned, Mom was in the house with the girls and was really scared. She told me that Tom got his Scotch, Irish, and Cherokee blood boiling about something and started after Willie with a butcher knife. Willie was young and as strong as a bull, and he had little trouble getting the knife away from Tom. He didn't want to hurt his dad so I guess he popped him a good one to put him out for a while and he took off. As he passed the house he told Mom what had happened and kept on going. By this time Tom came to and was looking for Willie. He asked Mom where Willie had gone. She told him she didn't know, that Willie had just said he was leaving. Tom thought Mom was lying. He told her that he was going after Willie and if he didn't find him, he was coming back to kill her. We figured Tom was off his rocker and maybe boozed up. We were all scared and even if Tom had been our very good friend for years, we knew that if he was boozed up or something, he might be very dangerous. I told Mom and the girls to stay in the house and not to go outside unless I was handy. I kept a rifle with me, old Jack nearby, and was certainly on the watch. Neither Tom nor Willie showed. We didn't expect to see

Willie because he was a good mountain man and would keep in the brush and trees up on the hill, or he could have crossed the river and gone down the other side, or there were several other ways he could have found his way out of the country without letting anyone see him. The one we were worried about was Tom. That night Mom and the girls slept upstairs in the cabin, and in order to stay awake, I stayed on the ladder all night with a rifle. I knew that if I went to sleep I'd fall off and that would wake me up. Tom never showed up, for which I was very glad, because if he came in wild-eyed, I knew I'd have to kill him. I certainly wasn't going to let him kill my Mom or my sisters. It was a relief when morning came and Tom hadn't come. He had been a friend and taught me many things, and I was very glad that he never came back. In fact, he had taken a backpack load with him, and never returned for anything else. We never saw or heard from him again. Years later someone in Kooskia sent us a clipping of his death. Willie never showed up again either and many years after Tom's death, the Trenarys told us that an old man by the name of Allison was found dead, had been killed or something, and that could have been Willie.

The summer of 1919 was a real disaster for all of us in the area. The whole country seemed to be burning up. The ridge behind our house hit the crowns one night and we watched the flames go up the ridge just like watching an airliner taking off from an airport. Rangers said that it must have been going a hundred miles an hour. We agreed. When a fire hits the crowns in the forest, it feeds on itself and as the heat increases so does the speed of the flames and the wind it generates. The roar can be heard for miles as thousands of trees are burning at once. In fact, the fire and wind created is so strong that burning pieces of limbs will

be carried for a mile or two ahead of the main fire and they start a new one. We had someone on watch around all our buildings for two or three weeks and we had to put out several fires started from burning limbs dropped in or on our buildings. We had plenty of buckets of water handy, long poles, and wet sacks. We put the fires out, but it was always touch and go. We had a raft tied up in the river and some boxes of necessities like food ready to load. We had other boxes with some of our keepsakes, etc. ready to be buried in holes already dug, so that if we lost the house or other major buildings, we would just load up the raft and take off down the river. Luckily this wasn't necessary. The smoke hung in the valley for about six weeks, and it was so thick that no one could tell a man from a horse one hundred feet away. Our eyes were all smarting and red, but all we could do was to keep them washed out as best we could. The weather was hot and humid, and everything got loused up. Crops didn't grow, and the hay that we did cut just mildewed in the field.

Fighting fires was done entirely by hand. Men would cut fire lines, others had pack sprays that would put some water on the fires. The main problem with the water sprays was to find water handy. The creek on our ranch almost ran dry and others did the same. The Forest Service had hundreds of men on the line and they did the best they could. All of their supplies including food, tools, and clothing had to be brought in by pack trains. I don't know how many pack mules were in that country that summer, but I'm sure it was several hundred.

About the time the fire had passed our ranch, things started to clear up. Dad got word that the railroad had hauled some stock cars up to Kooskia for a herd of sheep that were on the east side of Coolwater Mountain. Dad and I were the only people around that could get word to

the shepherd so it was up to us to hike up the mountain and deliver the message. We had gotten word that morning and prepared to leave as soon as possible. We ate a good meal at home, equipped ourselves with an ax, a canvas water sack, bandanas for our faces, and I had a rifle. We went up the river to O'Hara Bar, then took the trail up the hill. The Cool-water Lookout Station was some twelve miles up the hill. We kept about 150 feet apart so if a tree fell it wouldn't catch us both, and that way one of us would be able to save the other. Small trees were on fire, some were standing, some were on the ground, and the ashes were hot. We had to work our way in and around the real hot spots, and that didn't help our progress in any way. After a mile or two of this, we came out of the burning area into the main crown fire area. I have never seen such devastation in my life. Everywhere tall stately trees were now reduced to burned out snags. Trees that had fallen were completely burned up—the heat was so intense. It seemed like death was everywhere. There was not a bird or animal, not a sound, not even a wind; just ashes and ghosts of the trees—complete death. We just stood there and looked for a while, then walked on up the hill in silence. We were overawed and didn't want to talk.

After passing through this devastation, which seemed to take forever (actually it was probably two or three miles), we came to more pleasant surroundings. We were now above the fire and there was life again. Trees appeared, also some birds, shrubs, and grass. We hadn't gone very far when a big grouse flew up and landed on a limb in a tall fir. Dad told me to kill him as that would be our supper. It was a long shot, so I tried to hit him in the body. Wham, and down he came, but about halfway to the ground he set his wings like a glider and sailed off down the hill.

After about two or three hundred yards of sailing, he folded up and went down in a heap of underbrush. We knew we could never find him and as it was almost dark, we also knew that we would never get out of that canyon before dark, so we kissed supper good-bye and started out once more. By the time we got out of the timber and into sparse pine country, it was dark and we didn't have a light of any kind. We stumbled along not being able to tell the difference between a bunch of grass and a hole. This was very tiring. We kept looking for a downed pine and when we found one, we chopped off a good knot that was full of pitch. This made a good torch and we could see where we were going; that was certainly a great help. We reached the final climb to the Lookout which was a very steep, rocky and poor trail. We still had a quarter of a mile to go, and we were just crawling up that mountain by that time. We reached the top and found the glass house open, but there was no food that we could cook that evening and there was no bedding. We did find a can of apricots, and that was supper. Apricots have never tasted so good. We took the canvas wrappings off the fire finding instruments and used them for blankets. It was too cold to take off our clothes; in fact, we put our jackets on, wrapped up in the canvas and went to sleep. We were up at daylight, mainly because we were too cold to sleep, and we were also very hungry. We did find some flour and things to make bread. There was some canned meat, vegetables, coffee, and other things for breakfast. Dad helped to get things going, told me to do the cooking, and he would go down the hill to get some fresh water. By the time he got back I had breakfast ready and we were certainly ready to eat. After breakfast I washed the dishes, and Dad wrapped the canvas around the fire finding equipment so we would be ready to leave. I opened the door to throw the dish water out and got

hit in the face with a bunch of snowflakes. It was about a one-minute snow storm, but I guess I looked so startled that Dad busted out laughing.

We closed the place up and started out over the hill to find the sheep. We hadn't gone but a short distance when luckily for us, we found the sheep and the herder headed our way. He had a feeling the cars would be in and was moving his sheep as close as he could to give them feed and to be ready to get down the mountain.

We talked about the best way to get out, and we all decided that going down the east side of the ridge would be the safest. After we told him about the fire and what we had been through, he knew that he wouldn't have any sheep left if he took the route that we had taken.

We left the sheep and went on down the trail. We were stiff and sore after the hard hike we had had the day before, and we wanted to get an early start and take it easy going back. We were lucky the fire hadn't burned the trail area out and it was easy going. We came out on the Locksa just above Lowell, and there was only about six more miles to home. This had been the long way, but it turned out to be the easiest.

We reached home OK but were very tired and stiff. Mom had a good supper for us which certainly tasted good.

The next day we just loafed around and got the kinks out. One thing for sure, after the bad summer on the ranch and after the fires that summer, I never wanted to see or be near another forest fire again. Dad and I talked about the death-like area we had been through. We had a hard time shaking the awesome feeling it created for both of us.

That summer was the turning point for us on the ranch. We had poor crops, not enough hay to winter the animals, and no money to buy hay outside to pack in. Actually Dad and Mom knew by this time that we would

never make it on the ranch. There wasn't enough tillable land to raise hay for many animals, and we couldn't sell much produce even if we did raise such crops. Dad had to work out most of the time in order to have money for necessities, and we were just breaking even. Mom was killing herself with all the work she had to do, and there certainly was no future for the girls. That left me, and I was about ready for high school. It was either move out where I could go to high school or forget it and just be a ranch hand, trapper or prospector and wind up like Tom and Willie Allison. At that time in my life I would have stayed on the ranch because it was all that I knew, and I loved the freedom. I didn't realize the value of more education and the better life I would have if I did go to school and learn how to live in a civilized area.

We decided to move to Kooskia that fall. We talked about coming back and doing a lot of things with the ranch, but I'm sure it was all based on hope, not fact.

For some reason we never got started moving out until December. There were a lot of things we had to do. We needed to get rid of what animals we had, find a place to stay in Kooskia, and do all the things necessary in order to leave the ranch in a secure state so things wouldn't deteriorate.

About the first of December Dad took most of our possessions out to town and planned on coming back to get us in three or four days. We had plenty of food and other supplies to last twice that long. The day after Dad started out the weather got nasty, and it started to snow. For seventy-two hours it snowed three-fourths of an inch per hour and piled up a total of fifty-four inches. Then the weather turned cold and went to thirty-five degrees below zero. No one could travel under those conditions,

and we were stranded. Mom and I realized the fix we were in and started to ration out food. I tried to find a deer to kill, but they were up in the trees, and I couldn't travel any more than anybody else. One night a flock of geese landed on the ice just above our house and across the river. By this time we were down to some potatoes and about a half a slab of bacon, which makes a very poor diet for thirty-five below weather. I was up before daylight that morning and told Mom I was going to try to kill a goose. She wondered how I would get it if I did kill one. I told her I'd figure something out. I put on all the clothes I owned, took my 30-30, and started out. I only had about a hundred yards to go, and I figured that I could work my way through the snow up through the field, then crawl out towards the river and hopefully get a shot before the geese saw me.

This worked out fine until right at the last minute. Jack came with me as usual; besides I thought that if I hit a goose he might be just crazy enough to swim over and retrieve it. Just about the time I was getting in position to shoot, Jack spotted the geese and started jumping and barking. That spooked the geese and they took off. I tried to get one on the wing, but they were quite a ways out and I wasn't that lucky. Jack will never know how close he came to becoming dog stew. I sure thought about it but decided that he would be the last resort for food.

Within a day or so after the geese episode, Dad and all the people he had helping him arrived and, naturally, they brought plenty of food. That night we got everything packed up and ready to travel for the next morning. We were up early, ate a big breakfast, and got loaded up. One of the girls rode with Dad and one with Mom. They were all wrapped up in blankets so they wouldn't freeze. There wasn't a horse for me, so I had

to walk. That was OK with me as I figured it would be a lot warmer walking than riding. I put on heavy winter underwear, both pair of overalls, and my boots. Then I wrapped my feet in gunny sacks for insulation. We had a fair trail through the snow and as Jack and I were following, it wasn't bad going. When we got to the Locksaw River, Mr. Cleveland was there to take Mom and the girls and I across in a scow. Some other people were helping Dad get the horses across on the ferry boat. That was dangerous due to all the ice flowing in the river. I was in the bow of the scow shoving ice away with a long pole, and Mr. Cleveland was rowing. When we reached the ice on the far side, he told me to get out and pull the scow up on the ice. I grabbed the gunnel, went over the side, hit the ice, and kept on going. I'm sure I set a world's record getting back in that scow. Mr. Cleveland shoved the scow farther on the ice, and the second time I made it without any trouble. Mom and the girls got out, and we packed what things we had with us, mainly blankets, up to an old windowless cabin by the trail. We went inside the cabin and it seemed warmer inside than out. Guess maybe we were out of the wind and that helped. Everybody was worried about me and thought my legs would freeze. Actually I was warmer than before because my outside overalls were so cold that they just quick-froze, and the ice shut out the wind better than the dry overalls did.

We hadn't been there very long before Dad came with the horses. We loaded up and took off down the trail. We still had seven miles to go. That year the road was being built from Syringa to Lowell, and the road's end was some six miles closer to our ranch. The going was steady but slow, and we didn't arrive at the road camp until dark. They knew we were coming and had things prepared for us. By the time we reached the road camp, the

sacks around my feet were about eight inches wide with ice, and they were heavy as lead. I had picked them up and put them down all day, and I was dog tired. I found an ax and started to chop the ice away so I could take the damned things off. Some guy saw me and apparently thought I was trying to cut my feet off and tried to stop me. I wasn't in a very good humor for trying to explain anything, and we had some hot words. Apparently I won the argument because he helped me get the frozen sacks off my feet.

For supper we had roast beef, mashed potatoes, gravy, and a lot of other things. I know I ate enough for two people. It had been a long time since breakfast. We had only traveled twelve miles, but it had taken all day and it was hard work.

The next day we had eighteen more miles to travel, but this was by sled. We loaded the sled, put Mom and the girls in the middle all wrapped up together where their bodies would keep each other warm. I got bundled up somehow in the rear and Dad drove. We had two horses left. I don't remember what happened to the rest that we had the day before; maybe they belonged to the people that were helping us. Jack was running along side of the sled and having a great time. After we had gone several miles, Dad noticed that I had become very quiet. He asked me something, and I told him I was real warm and sleepy and wanted to go to sleep. He got me out of the sled right then and made me run along behind. It wasn't long before I wasn't sleepy anymore and felt a lot better. Actually I was about frozen to death and didn't realize it. That is the way people freeze to death; they get very cold then have the feeling they are nice and warm and sleepy. Soon they go to sleep and never wake up. For the rest of the trip into Kooskia I was sure I was wide awake and didn't mind being cold. I sure I pestered Mom and the girls all the way to make sure they were

not warm and sleepy too.

When we arrived in Kooskia we went to the Trenary's house. They had room for us and for some reason or other, the house we were to live in wasn't ready for us. Maybe because it was still thirty or more degrees below and our house could have been all frozen up.

We spent Christmas with the Trenarys, and Ferral and I were delegated to kill the turkey for Christmas dinner. Mr. Trenary had bought a huge tom turkey and was keeping it in the woodshed until we needed it for Christmas dinner. Neither Ferral nor I had ever killed a turkey and didn't know exactly how to do it. Someone told us it was just like killing a chicken—just chop the head off. We proceeded to get the turkey out of the pen, wrestle him around until one of us got his feet and wings held down, the the other grabbed his head, got it across the chopping block, and cut it off. We found out real quick that a turkey was about ten times stronger than a chicken and when that turkey quit flopping, we were both covered with blood and the wood shed was a mess. Maybe the guy that said never send a kid to do a man's work knew what he was talking about.

After Christmas we moved into our house and all of us started in Kooskia schools. Somehow I knew that the life I used to know was over and that things were going to be different. Jack wasn't a town dog. He was too mean for that. He was always in trouble. It wasn't long before he disappeared, and I was told he had just run away with the coyotes. I knew better than that and always figured somebody had shot him and didn't want me to know.

After school was out Dad and I went back to the ranch to check things out. The strawberries were ripe and we made a big strawberry shortcake. That is the last meal I ever had on our ranch. We came back to Kooskia.

In the meantime Blondy and Ethel had moved to Portland, Oregon, and the family decided we should follow them there. Dad could get a job with the Oregonian, and we would integrate into civilization.

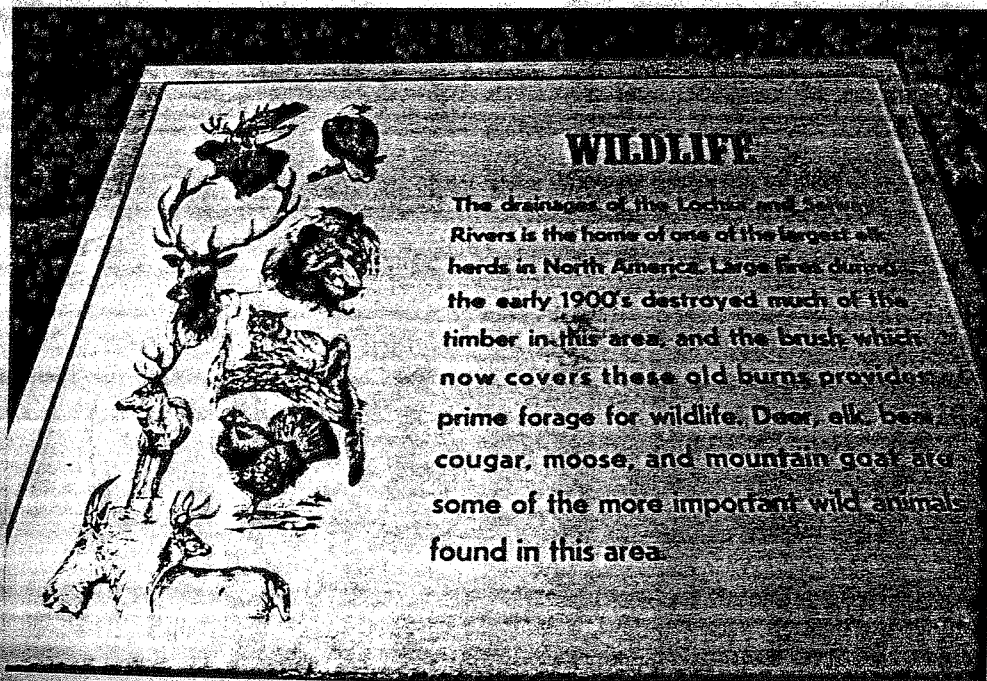
By this time in spite of what we were saying about some day we would go back to the ranch, I knew that would never be. The pioneer life I had lived was over, and it was up to me to adjust to a new way of life. This, of course, I had to do, but I'm grateful for my pioneer experience. I learned many things that I hope I will never forget. To name a few things: Self-reliance and respect for other people and their property. Also I learned that one should not be afraid to work for what he needs and wants. I truly believe this is what America is all about.

Selway Country today as described by these Placques on display at Fenn Ranger Station located on our ranch site.



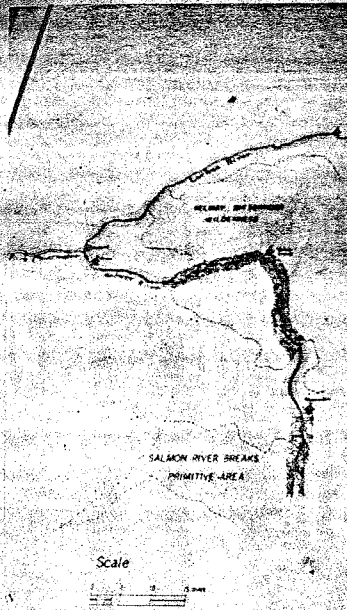
WATER

Originating over eighty miles away in the Bitterroot Mountains, the Selway River carries past this point daily, enough water to supply an average city of 10,000 people for 6½ years. The river flows through nearly seventy miles of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness and past nationally known wildlife ranges. It serves as an important part of the Clearwater, Snake and Columbia River systems.



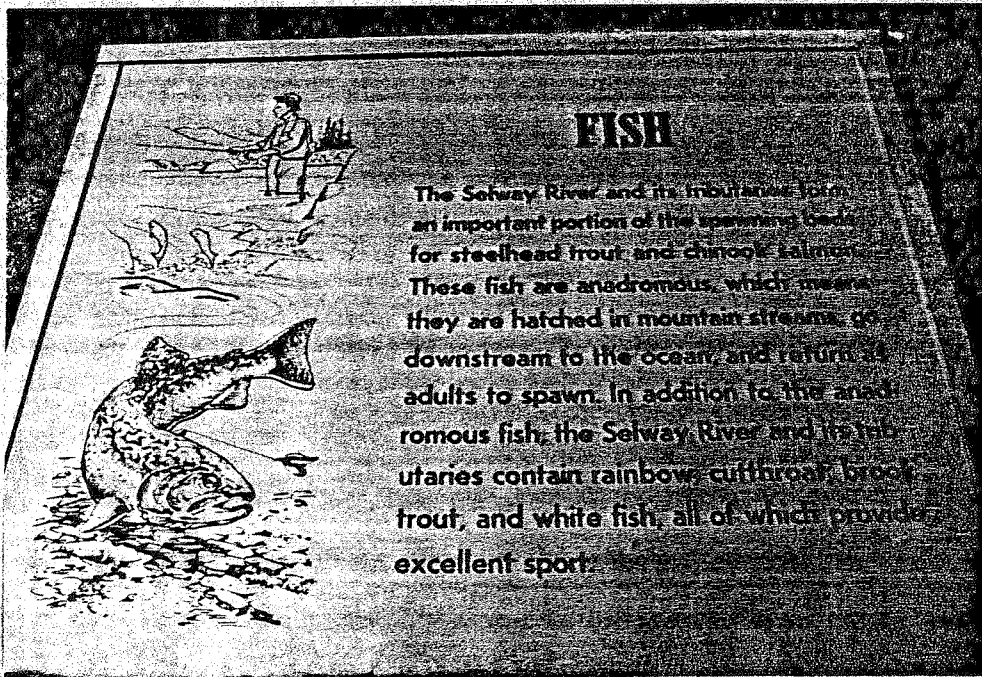
WILDLIFE

The drainages of the Loch and Selway Rivers is the home of one of the largest elk herds in North America. Large fires during the early 1900's destroyed much of the timber in this area, and the brush which now covers these old burns provides prime forage for wildlife. Deer, elk, bear, cougar, moose, and mountain goat are some of the more important wild animals found in this area.



Wild and Scenic RIVERS

The Selway, Lochsa and Middle Fork of the Clearwater River is an important segment of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. These three rivers possess outstanding scenic and recreation quality that will be preserved and protected for present and future generations. These picturesque rivers will remain as prime examples of our free-flowing white water wild rivers heritage of pioneer days.



FISH

The Selway River and its tributaries form an important portion of the spawning beds for steelhead trout and chinook salmon. These fish are anadromous, which means they are hatched in mountain streams, go downstream to the ocean, and return as adults to spawn. In addition to the anadromous fish, the Selway River and its tributaries contain rainbow cutthroat brook trout, and white fish, all of which provide excellent sport.