

Transcript of J.K. Williamson Field Diary for the 1915 Season.

[J.K. "Kim" Williamson, Darby, MT started work with the Forest Service on June 14, 1915. His ranger diary was in the possession of his daughter, Margaret Hill of Dayton, MT as of July 8, 1992. A typed transcript is in the Bitterroot NF Heritage program archive file. Williamson had married Ellen, the daughter of James D. and Ellen Kerlee. Margaret was also the niece of Bessie K. Monroe and Eva Overturf. Margaret sent the transcript to Mario Locatelli in 1992. The cover letter is filed with the copy of the transcript in the BNF Heritage Archive, Ranger Diaries File.]

6/14/1915 – J. K. Williamson began work with the Forest Service. "Went from Darby to Allen Station – stayed all night." (J.K. Williamson Ranger Diary [hereafter JKW])

6/15/1915 – J.K. Williamson moved from Allen Station to Nez Perce Pass and camped about 4 p.m. (JKW)

6/16/1915 – J.K. Williamson "Went out on trail. Cut trail to Indian graves after supper. Ray Winter and I went up on the divide and I took pictures Castle Rock – played joke on James Vance." (JKW)

6/17/1915 – "Worked on trail with N. E. Wilkerson. Wind blew in the evening. Took walk on trail east of camp with N. E. Wilkerson and J. D. Vance." (JKW)

6/18/1915 – "N.E.W. [Nathaniel E. "Than" Wilkerson] went to Darby. Worked on trail with N. E. W., Roy Winter [Witter], Al H. [Hamilton], Geo. Scofield – saw 2 nice deer coming back to camp in the evening." (JKW)

6/19/1915 – "Snowed til 10 o'clock. Had breakfast at 9 o'clock, worked on grub cabin til noon – worked on trail a little while then came back to camp – easy day." (JKW)

6/20/1915 – "Sunday. Went from camp over top of Castle Rock and down to chalk licks. Saw 13 deer and 4 sheep. – took pictures." (JKW)

6/21/1915 – "Roy Witter and I went over to Nez Perce Peak and found a fresh spring. Eat dinner, then cut a trail back – saw an old grouse with some little ones. Got back to camp at 5. Stranger in camp on his way to Elk City." (JKW)

6/22/1915 – "Work on Nez Perce Trail to foot of Nez Perce Peak. Got through – walked eight miles." (JKW)

6/23/1915 – "Worked on new trail – Deep Creek and Salmon Mountain. Lloy [Lloyd] Thompson new cook." (JKW) [Lloyd Thompson is one of three brothers for whom Thompson Flat is named. He wrote two stories published in "Hunter, Trader and Trapper" magazine, later "Outdoor Life," and he appeared on the cover. One of his mounted cougars reportedly was later exhibited in the National Museum in Washington, D.C.]

6/24/1915 – “Moved camp down to Deep Creek to Groff Bros. Mining Camp Office. Al Hamilton, myself and Wilkerson cut out new trail. Than rolled his horse down hill with saddle on and our lunch. – no damage. I rolled log down hill over Al Hamilton – lots of excitement today. Al Hamilton went to Darby.” (JKW)

6/25/1915 – “Rained all day – stayed in camp and helped Lloyd, Geo and Than looked for the horses – did not find them.” (JKW)

6/26/1915 – “George Waldo, Hamilton, Roy Monroe, Roy Witter and myself went out on trail at 9 o’clock. Rained – went into camp at 3 o’clock. Got wood until supper time. Than and Lee went to Allens camp after supplies.” (JKW)

6/27/1915 – “Geo Waldo went out to look out after his horses. Hamilton, Thompson and myself washed our clothes. Roy Witter went out to take some pictures. Waldo came in at 4 o’clock. Got horses. Lee and Than in from Allens Station at 4:30 with supplies.” (JKW)

6/28/1915 – “Worked on Deep Creek and Salmon Mtn. trail. Eat lunch on trail. Took pictures of camp – All boys at supper table.” (JKW)

6/29/1915 – “Worked on trail. Geo Scofield came in from Darby.” (JKW)

6/30/1915 – “Repaired trail from Mining Camp down to Kit Carson’s old camp. W. B. McLaughlin came along on trail, and caught up with us on a steep hillside. One of his burrows got over balanced and rolled over the bank and down into the river with pack on. In the party was W. B. McLaughlin, his girl and his niece Eva Rauphpsk, and his son. Got in camp and made a fine bed – got fixed up fine. Hamilton also in creek.” (JKW)

7/1/1915 – “Worked on trail all day. McLaughlins moved to our camp.” (JKW)

7/2/1915 – “Went home, came back July 9th.” (JKW)

7/9/1915 – “Went up to Soda Springs – built corral and hitching rack at station. Vanced went to Darby – rained nearly all day.” (JKW)

7/10/1915 – “Went to Kit Carson camp with Pack Train and supplies.” (JKW)

7/11/1915 – “Lee and I went afishing and got 42 fish.” (JKW)

7/12/1915 – “Worked on trail southwest of camp. Old prospector come to camp from Shoup, Idaho going to North Washington.” (JKW)

7/13/1915 – “Worked on Cayuse Creek Trail. Lloyd, Ray Witter and myself saw three fine deer coming. I fell bottom side up in the creek – fell off a foot log and did not have a dry stitch on me. I felt fine after and changed my clothes, as I figured on taking a bath

anyway. Lee [Shelton], George [Waldo] and Al [Hamilton] went over the Selway to build cache.” (JKW)

7/14/1915 – “Worked on Cayuse trail – rained in the evening. Geo Scofield came in from Darby. Got letter from home.” (JKW)

7/15/1915 – “Worked on Cayuse trail, ½ day. Thompson went out to station – sent letter home, also check. Rained in the morning, so worked after dinner.” (JKW)

7/16/1915 – “Went to work on Cayuse Trail, finished at 5 p.m. Lloyd went to Darby. (JKW)

7/17/1915 – “Went on Cayuse Creek to cut some logs. Rained hard so came back to camp.” (JKW)

7/18/1915 – “Sunday. Waldo and Shelton and Hamilton come in from Selway R. where they built a cache.” (JKW)

7/19/1915 – “Worked on Nez Perce trail west of Cayuse Creek.” (JKW)

7/20/1915 – “Worked on cabin at Kit Carson camp. Loyd went to base camp to work on Phone line.” (JKW)

7/21/1915 – “Cutting and hauling logs for cabin. N. E. Wilkerson came in from Darby. **Gave orders for Witter, Hamilton and myself to go to Salmon, Mountain as fire guards.** Waldo and Shelton to pack us in. (JKW)

7/22/1915 – “Packed up and started for Salmon Mt. – Got to Selway R.” (JKW)

7/23/1915 – “Went on to Salmon Mt. cabin – got in 5:15, and stayed all night. Place don’t look good to us fellows. At 11 o'clock that night, I saw something out in the yard, so I cut loose with my 30.30 and down he came. So we lit a candle, and went out there and you can guess What It Was.” (JKW)

7/24/1915 – “Moved up on top of Salmon to our new camp for the summer.” (JKW)

7/25/1915 – “Sunday. Went down to cabin – decided to move phone up to new camp.” (JKW)

7/26/1915 – “Repaired phone line from camp to on top of Mt. In afternoon built fence for horses.” (JKW)

7/27/1915 – “Moved the phone up to new camp and installed it in tent. Afternoon went out on the old McGruder Mt. to look over the country.” (JKW)

7/28/1915 – “Went on Salmon Mt. Lookout – no fire in sight so went down to lake to take a picture of lake and went out on another peak south of Salmon Mt. with Hamilton and Witter.” (JKW)

7/29/1915 – “Went on top Mt. – no fires – rain and very cool day – stayed in camp.” (JKW)

7/30/1915 – “Went on top of Mt. – no fire-thunderstorm in night – rained and snowed 2 inches – very cold. Wrote letter home. Talked to Burnt Knob station man, had quite a visit with him.” (JKW)

7/31/1915 – “Hamilton and I went up on Lookout – no fire in site – stayed up here about 2 hrs. Roy Witter took horses and went to Kit Carson for supplies and to take our reports out to N. E. Wilkerson – cold and some rain.” (JKW)

8/1/1915 – “Sunday. Hamilton and I went over to one of the lakes and took a bath. Came around by another lake – got to camp about 4 p.m.” (JKW)

8/2/1915 – “Washed in morning – went up on lookout afternoon with Hamilton – no fire, so we rolled rocks down the mountain into the lake. Went back to camp, shaved and read books rest of day. It is a good job but a long way from home to go to work.” (JKW)

8/3/1915 – “Went up to look out – hazy, but no fire. Hamilton and I went north on McGruder trail about 4 ½ miles and back by way of Flag Lilly Lake. Got some nice flag lillys – went to camp 3 p.m. turned in for the day. Burnt Knob called up. I talked quite a while.” (JKW)

8/4/1915 – “Went up on lookout three times and went over on Shoup Trail. Hamilton and myself cleared out the trail. N.E. W. cam in camp 4 p.m. Got letter from Burnt Knob – called up Wilkerson, talked to Langton at Red River. Witter went to Squar Peak [Squaw Peak?].” (JKW)

8/5/1915 – “Wilkerson, Hamilton, self went over to Burnt Knob, repaired trail and telephone line on way over – 7 hours going over 16 miles. Stayed alnight.” (JKW)

8/6/1915 – “We all went up on Burnt Knob with the guard, Mr. Prettyman, and looked over the country. Could see Elk City, Red River Hot Springs, Boston Mt., Bufflow Hump and several other Mts. Went back to cabin. Started for Salmon Mt – arrived there at 5PM.” (JKW)

8/7/1915 – “We all went down McGruder Ridge to where McGruder was killed took picture of sign on tree where he was killed. Eat dinner. Started for camp. Got Back 6 p.m. and I [just?] was about nearly all in, and in fact, we all was just about the same way. The trip was about 20 miles to much Hike in one day I think.” (JKW)

8/8/1915 – “Sunday. Than, Roy, Al and myself went up on look out and put up Map board. Layed around rest of day.” (JKW)

8/9/1915 – “Than, Al & Roy left for Squaw Mt. I went up on top of Mt., located a fire on Horse Creek East of Squaw Mt. Went on top three times today – talked to Burnt Knob in the evening. Stayed in camp alone, wrote letter home. Saw a big Buck Deer.” (JKW)

8/10/1915 – “Went on Lookout – pretty hazy and Hot. Wilkerson, Witter and Hamilton returned from Squaw Mt. 1:40 PM. Than left at 2PM for Selway R., I went over to Big Hill and fixed the gate to our Horse Pasture.” (JKW)

8/11/1915 – “Went on look out at 9 AM & put up flag pole. While digging a hole in the rock pile, I found a bottle with a note in it that Lew Overturf, Chas McWhirk [Overturf and McWhirk appear in the 1897 USGS survey party photo] and Greg Seversyn put in it, telling of killing 4 goats, Sept. 21, 1897, and they put a brass knob on top of Salmon Mt. – 18 years ago 21st of next month. I wrote down a copy of it.” (JKW)

8/12/1915 – “Went on top 3 times – once in morning, then in afternoon, with Pete Burgaybem [maybe Burgoyne?], A. B. Silvia [Silva] and Clyse [Cloyce] Vance and Clarence McCort [McCart], N. E. Wilkerson and J. D. Vance went by our camp on way to Horse Creek fire. Roy Monroe, Ray Schofield and 2 strangers. Silvia and Pete B., Clyse, Clarence McCort. I stayed alone.” (JKW)

8/13/1915 – “Went on Lookout – very smokey. Saw a big buck to top this morning. Lloyd Thompson came in camp 2:30 PM, stayed almight with me. He said he saw Mr. Kerlee and the boys at Deep Creek. Dad had a letter for me but did not give it to him J. D. Vance said Dad had a letter for me but did not give it to him. I don’t know why he didn’t – forgot I guess.” (JKW)

8/14/1915 – “Went on Look Out this morning – no smoke on Horse Creek. Thompson left for Horse Creek. He met Wilkerson around Arrow Camp and Quit the job. Came back with Than and stayed all night with me. Rain in east over Selway R. Very cool in evening. Burnt Knob called.” (JKW)

8/15/1915 – “Sunday. Than and Loyd left for Darby at 7:40 AM. Went up on Lookout, the day beginning very clear – warm at noon, thundershowers in afternoon. Read mostly alday, what time I didn’t sleep. I was cutting wood for supper and a stick flew up and hit me on the nose – I saw stars in day light. Stayed alone tonight or will.” (JKW)

8/16/1915 – “Went on Lookout in morning – very cold and clear – no smoke in site. Very heavy rain over Squaw Mtn. and Selway R. and over Horse Creek. Albert Geesa came in camp from Burnt Knob about 5 PM in route for Shoupe. Stayed alnight. I was glad to have him stay for company as it was getting lonesome to stay alone. Rained in evening.” (JKW)

8/17/1915 – “Went on lookout in morning, saw 2 fires, one on Salmon River and one on Runnings Creek. Roy Monroe, J. D. Vance and party came in from Horse Creek fire, and camped here. Roy Monroe and I started for Selway fire that night, 7:50 PM to report fire, and got about 2 ½ miles from camp, and found a fire just started. So I rode to camp and got shovels and water bags. Went back and we put it out, and went back to camp at 10:30. Waited til morning to go to Selway R.” (JKW)

8/18/1915 – “Roy Monroe and I started for Selway at 7:15 AM, arrived there at 12:15 PM. Telephoned home. Started back for Salmon Mt. at 2:30 PM arrived at camp at 8:30 PM.” (JKW)

8/19/1915 – “Went on Lookout, came back, took a picture of a deer in camp. Went out and got horses back to camp. Roy and Vance moved down to Halfway camp. Called Longton camp. Left Salmon Mt. 10 AM.” (JKW)

8/20/1915 – “Went on Lookout – very smokey. Hamilton and I went south of Salmon Mt. A.B. Silvia went North on McGruder Ridge, discovered fire. Put it out with hands – a hot, small fire. I fell down two times today, the first time for four days and doing well. White [Wilfred W. White, BNF Forest Supervisor] called up from telephone camp.” (JKW)

8/21/1915 – “Went on Lookout. Very cool. Ray Witter came in from Waugh Mt. for supplies. Also, Mr. Brown and Sutton came in from Horse Creek, Idaho. Forest men looking over country. Mr. W. W. White called up from telephone camp. Very cold in afternoon, nearly froze on top of Mt.” (JKW)

8/22/1915 – “Went on Lookout – very hazy. Went out on the Tin Cup Mt. in the afternoon. Little rain in the evening.” (JKW)

8/23/1915 – “Went on Lookout in morning with White and Silvia – no fires. Went out on ride about one mile – talked to Roy in telephone camp in evening.” (JKW)

8/24/1915 – “White, Silvia and myself went out mapping. Afternoon, went up on Lookout. J.D. Vance came in with grub and wire. Helped unpack, and got their dinner and Jim and Cloyce started back to Selway R. at 3:20PM. White and Silvia started for Waugh Mt. at 2:30PM. Talked to Ella and Bert at 8 PM. Could not hear very well. Talked to Roy, also.” (JKW)

8/25/1915 – “Went on Lookout 9:30 A. Got up at 8 AM – did not feel very good. Deer in camp at 10 AM. Took Tom phone off of Mt, and put it up at camp as it was a better phone. Talked to Roy – getting chilly every night.” (JKW)

8/26/1915 – “Went on Lookout in morning. Al and I done some work on trail. I got dinner – had J. D. Vance and Cloyce for dinner. They brot up some supplies from Selway R. Al H and I went South of Salmon Mt. and tacked up some trail signs. Talked to Ella and the children in evening – could hear them very plain. Talked to Burnt Knob,

also. Five big bucks come into camp last night. Saw one nice buck this afternoon.”
(JKW)

8/27/1915 – “Went on Lookout. Vance came in camp at 1:30 PM – moving telephone camp. Seen Buss [Russ?] and Roy. They moved about 2 ½ miles from our camp. We will see them tomorrow.” (JKW)

8/28/1915 – “Went North about 2 miles, back by noon. Went on Lookout after dinner. Went down to telephone line and worked with buss til 5 PM. Talked to home at 7:30 PM. Silvia came in from Salmon R. Vance here for dinner. Cloyse, Buss and Roy got telephone line in from Selway R.” (JKW)

8/29/1915 – “Sunday. Went on Lookout in morning. Jim Vance and Cloyse went to Selway R. after grub and wire. Al and Silvia done washing. I shaved and made a chair for telephone so we could sit down to talk. Talked to Maud Vogt – said George was getting better. Talked to Mrs. Blake, also, about fire in French Basin. Talked to home in the evening – talked to Margaret – she said she was going to school in the morning. Strong wind in the south most all day.” (JKW)

8/30/1915 – “Mr. White and Silvia left for Burnt Knob at 7:45 AM. Cool in morning. Went on lookout at 6:15AM. Vance came in camp from Selway R. with supplies and wire. Saw Pete about 10:30 AM working on the telephone line – saw 2 nice bucks in the lake today. I spilt a pot of beans – Silvia dropped the pan of bread. Al upset the pan of dishes. Bad day for trouble around here – we should worry – it all belongs to U.S. I got fassend in the spring 15 feet deep, but got out tho. White got up at 4:30 to go to the toilet and got lost, but he finally wandered back to camp.” (JKW)

8/31/1915 – “Went on Lookout – clear and turning cold. Mr. Prettyman came over from Burnt Knob about 4:30 PM – stayed all night – had a good visit, learned more about the country. Hamilton baking – some cook on pies and biscuits. Saw two deer in the lake and lots of chickens – easy day.” (JKW)

9/1/1915 – “Wednesday. Went on Lookout, also Mr. Prettyman. Saw 8 chickens – got 2. Started to rain, so beat it for camp – got a little wet. Hamilton went down to McGruder Mt. to meet White and Silvia to take their mail, Vance brought in as they were not coming back this way. Prettyman left for his station at 10:45 AM – began raining again at 12 and rained until 3 PM. Put my chickens onto boil – some dinner we will have. Began raining again at 6 PM and turning cold, think it will turn to snow. Talked to Ella and Bert in the rain. Began snowing in the night sometime.” (JKW)

9/2/1915 – “Woke at 5 AM with 2” of snow and still snowing – grate weather for the Indians – some camped on the Little Clear Water. I think this will be a day in the tent. I got up at 9:30 this morning, froze out or would not of got up then. Well, this is 11 AM, Hamilton mending sox and singing.” (JKW) [Margaret Hill’s note: “Job must have closed up, and returned home – last entry in book. – MH”]

