

FRANK MILBERT

Interview Two

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Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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I. Index

FRANK MILBERT

Gold Hill; b. 1907

gold miner

3 hours

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II. Transcript

SS: This second interview with Frank Milbert was recorded on June 20, 1975 at his home at Potlatch Junction. (Idaho)

FM: He said, "You run a steam shovel?" And, I said, "Yeah, I wouldn't see why I couldn't. I have worked ^{or} around 'em plenty, and I have run 'em years ago." "But," I said, "who's got a steam shovel to run?" "Well," he said, "The Northern Pacific is going to have to use all their engineers on the engines." See, a lot of the engines during World War II were ^{still} I'm talking of the passenger and the freight engines, were steam. They've only changed to diesel since the war. Well, this old-- five yard bucket on this railroad type shovel-- and they were built totally to set on rails, that's the way they motivated themselves and everything without riggers and whatnot to support them. And he said, "Well, do you have a cranesman?" See, with a steam shovel like that, you had to have one man, you called him cranesman that sit out on the boom on a seat to operate the sticks on the shovel, to run the bucket in and out and trip it; that is lift a load out of it. And the operator, the engineer sits back in below and he swings it and hoists it, see, and then you have to have the fireman in back to keep the steam up. He's just as important as anybody on the thing, you carry about a hundred forty-five, fifty pounds of steam pressure on one of them, and he has to know his-- 'course, I'd fired on a steam shovel long years ago and knew that part well enough. And as far as the engineering of it, I didn't worry about that either because, like everything else, if you can run one you can run the other ^{or} if you know the principle of the thing. Well, the union kept-- when I told 'em, yeah, I thought I could find Charley Bovill would go with me-- he was a pretty old feller, but he was pretty skookum yet, and as far as cranesman he could set up there and handle that part of it, see. Well, it turned out that I went over there to Basin and operated for about eight weeks on that. We loaded rip-rap into the cars,

and rip-rap's great big boulders, you know, and you have to have a big machine to handle this. And the union, as I say, the union didn't know anything about it, but this gal had put down that I was a steam shovel operator, and this outfit went down there -- well, the union said, "You can't go over there-- or you can go over there and work; ^{this was a} contractor for Northern Pacific, you can go over there and work for 'em, but on your own deal." Well, the union rate was a dollar seventy-five cents an hour then. Well, the railroad ^{they} would pay the dollar seventy-five cents, they wouldn't pay overtime. And the deal was that you work eleven hours a day seven days a week. Oh, you work eight hours a day operating, but-- the way it ended up, I should say, is they gave me eleven hours a day, seven days a week til the job was over. Well, this is strictly agin the union-- well, what we were supposed to ^{be doing, we were supposed to} get time and a half for Saturday and double time if you worked Sunday. But, lining it up, we didn't do anything on Sunday, they called that repair day, and of course, there wasn't nothing to repair as far as we were concerned. And I stayed in this camp, that's how we got talking about this. I stayed in their camp and I don't know as I ever was in a camp with a bunch of men-- and I was there for two months-- that I enjoyed more than that. These fellows were sociable and all that, but, feed you!-- you're bound to have gained weight whenever you were there because they just used just anything and everything-- the only trouble that we had in all the time was to keep the cook happy. He drank all the vanilla extract and everything else that was around there, and then he didn't get enough booze, and the railroad was strictly agin that, but he didn't belong to any railroad, you know, brotherhood or anything, and he did as he pleased. And pretty near every one of them camps that they were in, the cook was the boss. I'm talking whether it was a logging camp, a railroad construction camp or what it was. He was the boss of the camp!! Anything he wanted, he got, you know. I mean the cook. Because he was al-

ways kind of a cantankerous character, you know, might quit them and leave them at any time without-- with a flunky to cook for them and Boy the guys didn't want him in the role.

SS: When was this about? When you was--

FM: This was 1941, or '42, in the spring of '42. Now, wait a minute, it was the spring of '41 exactly. 1941, the spring of 1941. See, World War -- Was it '41 that the World War II started? December of '41. It was the spring of '2, is when it was, because I was on a crane up at Kettle Falls tearing down them trestles when the war started in December. And when I come off of that, I went on over to Montana.

SS: I wanted to ask you how you got into mining.

FM: Oh, I'd been in mining before that. I always had-- I'll tell you how I really got into it, or how I got mainly interested in it, was in the early- or middle '30's, the middle '30's. When the price of gold went to thirty-five dollars an ounce, and that's when it did, in 1934, there was quite a lot of activity in gold mining in little or no time. I mean, you could find-- see the Depression was on, you could find fellows all over these hills, even around here, out in the bush with a pan and a shovel and a pick and nothing else, you understand. Just the stuff that they had with them. And a tent, of course, and grub to support them. And, anywhere you'd go along these streams that had gold in 'em, you'd find guys digging on 'em.

SS: This was new? Just because the price of gold had gone up?

FM: That's right. The hand digging didn't interest me, I was in the heavy machinery business, see, but all these old shovels and all this old stuff, you know that was sitting up there, there was guys that have a few bucks and a couple of 'em'd get together and want a shovel or this or that to take on a project that they knew they could make some money on. It was just like anything, if they could make some money, why, they would rent these-- and they would try to get it for as little as they could. Well, I'd go fix

up some old junker of a shovel for someone and they would sell it to someone down here in Dixie or down in the Seven Devils country or heaven knows where around here. Montana, a lot of places they'd been, see. And, I'd see these young guys, or, you know, I'd go out and help them work, or get this thing running-- I have moved shovels into, oh, this is down ^{below} Boise, out of Mountain Home, ship 'em to Mountain Home from Spokane, and then get on 'em and take 'em thirty-five miles across the desert. Well, I say across the desert, down on-- can't think of the name now-- Grandview, is where I took them, to a gold mine down there. And, as I say, those fellows seldom would know very much about operating or anything else or taking care of a machine, see, but they were all ^{so} much to get the gold. In this way, see, I'd got to see what they were doing and how it was done. The fact is, many a time you'd stay there for two, three days or a week to get the thing working for the fellows, and I got interested in it myself. However, I had been in a few old-timers camps, gold camps before that, that is, just-- and I got to finding out there was a lot of old fellows around, you know that had hung on from years before, from-- well, all their life had probably been gold miners. And they were always an interesting breed to talk to, find out what they--how they-- just like up here on Gold Creek, I had had my shovel, I had an outfit by that time, by the time I come up here which was '36-'37, '36, I guess when I first come up here. I had an outfit down on Salmon River, a shovel and wash plant, and I'd run it that winter and on up into the spring and I had a lot of excavation work to do in Spokane with it, and I had it hauled back to Spokane, see. But before I took it back for any winter of mining anywhere-- You understand you could mine on Salmon River in the winter-- you can't up here. But Curly Darrow come walking into the shop where I kept my-- I had a shop in Spokane-- he come walking in there and he says, "I understand you got a shovel in here interested in mining." And, I said,

"Yeah," I said, "but," I said, "right now it's pretty busy on digging basements and excavation work." "Well," he said, "I got some placer ground down there on Gold Creek," he said, and we got to talking about it. He and his brother were together. His brother lived in Spokane, see, and I said, "Well, sometime I'll drop down to see you." And we just left it like that. So, one time I was down through the-- I don't remember where, but somewhere in here and I come up through this way, and I know about along after lunchtime I inquired how to find my way out to Gold Creek, and got up part way out there and had to walk part of the way, the road was impassable, it was early spring, you know, ^{or before} and I went up to see Curly. And, of course, I was impressed with it. Not so much the value, he showed me some gold that he'd collected. See, he had a gate up there that was working, and he showed me some of the gold; he had four-five ounces that he ^{had} showed me.

SS: What so impressed you?

FM: Well, the place, it's beautiful up there to look at. I'm talking of the timber-- and the friendliness-- while I was there one of the other old miners come in, you know, and we visit. It was along late, the wife was with me at the time, it was along late in the evening when we left there, that is, almost dark and I had the car stuck in a mudhole down there to get it out, 'course that wasn't no problem, but-- And all that summer, everytime I'd get a day or two that I could sneak away, I'd drop down there and test the ground, visit with them. I got to know everybody along the creek that way, and there was then a dozen fellows working in there, different places. And, you'd always have-- "Oh, don't bother bringing down anything to eat." You could stay right with them. "Bring your bunk along." Well, I'd take an army cot and a bedroll, you know, or blanket. Them days we didn't have these here bedrolls, like you have here now. And their usual fare was eggs and fried potatoes; raw fried potatoes, was always a standard with a miner, you know. You just take 'em and peel 'em and slice 'em in the pan, you know, with a

little onion, hog lard, you know, and fry them; steam them, ^{kind of} you know, in a pan with a lid on it, a skillet, you know. And they didn't have a lot to live on, but they made a living at that. You see, they would possibly get ten-twelve ounces of gold ⁱⁿ a year, with their hard work like that. Well, that would-- they would be frugal enough to make that do for the whole year. And, if they run out, wood was always plentiful up there, you could cut wood, and in the summer the road would be good enough-- there was a Guernsey down here had a store, and he would-- if they would get out so much cord wood, or something like ^{or} posts, cedar posts, why, they would trade that for groceries along whenever they were out of money. And, they didn't all do that, but some of them did.

SS: Did these guys stay over winter?

FM: Oh, yea^h, all of them stayed there year around. That was their occupation totally. But, as I say, if they got short-cornered for money, they would cut wood or posts and this Guernsey had a store here ^{On}away, would give them-- if they would cut it and set it up there, he would have a fellow come in and haul it out and store it in his yard. And I've seen many thousands of fence posts and cords of wood, that the-- not necessarily the miners, but everybody in the country did that. But that's what the miners ^{would} do up there if they run short of money. They would cut wood and posts. And, I'll never forget one time old Curly Darrow told me he had an accident. He'd went up to the Peerless Dentists in Spokane and got a set of false teeth, you know, and I guess they didn't fit him and they annoyed him when he was working so much, that he took the lower plate out after he was ^{working,} cutting some cedar posts and laid the lower plate on a stump, you know, of a tree that he'd sawed off, and darned if he didn't fall another tree right down over it and break them. Well, he said for one good thing they were guaranteed (Chuckles) this here Peerless ^{up here'll} guarantee 'em, you know, and that, I think, would be about as rare an accident as you could have happen to your false teeth.

SS: Did most of the guys just come to start mining there in the '30's, or where many of the guys there in the '20's, on the creek?

FM: Curly told me that he had been in and out of that creek from 1910 on. And this was one of his-- but he was a miner, let's say, in Butte. He mined in Butte and up in the Coeur d'Alenes. He was a miner from the start, you understand. But he came in there and quit mining in the big mines, the copper mines and the silver mines, up here. He quit that already, and went to live on Gold Creek, by himself in 1929 or '30, '29 I think he told me. He was for a while in Bellflower, California mining. You know, you say mining, you cover a lot of things. You can be working in a mine up in the Coeur d'Alenes and you're mining, too, you see, or you can be mining, placermining, like these fellows are, on your own or even hardrock mining on your own. They were mining, these miners out here on their own. Curly, I think he told me, come up here ^{to stay} in 1929, or '30, one of the two. Roy Wilkins was in there earlier than that, about '26 or '27. Park Shattuck went in there in 1925. Brown told me he was in there before Carrico went out. So that would have been before 1925, Charlie Brown. Joe Hougen told me he went in there before the turn of the century to mine, which would have been before 1900. Art Gillam^s told me that he was in there before the turn of the century. His dad took him in, he was a small boy then, Art is still living today. He's in the home over here, he's not very good, but he's still living. He's about shoving ninety, pretty close. And, oh, there ^{was} -- pretty near all of them at that time had been in before the price of gold ever went up. Up in the Hoodoos there was old Pete Daufner and Grant R. Smith, and oh just a whole lot of them around there in that area, I don't recall the names even ^{of a lot of them}.

SS: But more came in and they were more steady when the price of gold went up?

FM: True, real true. A lot of them would-- well, you'll find the same

thing yet today. If you go out here along these old woods roads and what not you will find young kids and those fellows that think they can make a go of it on cutting posts or cutting firewood or something and living out there without any other source of income. They'll generally get a start by having worked somewhere and then have unemployment for a short time, you know, and then they can get started out there in the woods. You'll find 'em around here yet, once in a while. I was over here at the White Cross Mine on Moscow Mountain last summer and there was a bunch, two or three up in there; two, I believe, that had a tent or a cabin or something and that they were staying in. And, ohhh, they were going to stay all winter. Well, that's a pretty rough deal.

SS: Well, did you figure that you would be able to help the mining operation along quite a bit by bring^Aing in some bigger equipment to help these guys?

FM: Oh definitely. That's what I was doing, looking it over from a mining angle for machinery. To take their word that we could operate-- if you had a shovel where you could move stuff in a hurry with, or dirt at a greater rate and it would pay, it's all wrong because from a machine man's angle you have to look at what it costs you to operate the machine. What limitations a machine has, see. They don't understand any part of the limitations. They might understand-- well, you say, if it goes-- it has to go so much a yard to make a paying proposition. This may stand out to someone that you say-- "It'll have to pay-- work out at twenty cents a yard, I have to have that much to operate." But that would be figured on the machine's capacity to operate all day long, see. Well, maybe a dollar a yard isn't going to pay to operate, simply because you are not going to move enough yards due to the condition-- it's not machine ground. Your machine is not adapted to the ground. Today I have ground I back away from that has good pay under it; deep, sixteen to twenty-two feet deep, take that all off there before you can get down to the pay. Lay flat, the water won't

carry away from it. Say two feet of fall in a couple of hundred, why that don't-- that's a dredge's job, see, where you're working under water without draining it, see. Well, with my outfit you have to have drainage below it, ^{the way it is today,} JA

SS: Well, did you decide to come in here and start working pretty quick?

FM: Yeah, 1938, I first started to work in ⁺here. I fooled around a couple of-- two summers that I tested in ⁺here, off and on, and that way I got to know everybody in there long before I moved in there, moved ^{there} machinery in. JA

SS: What kind of sharing would you do on something like that? Would you have like split the profits?

FM: Either you give 'em a flat percentage for helping you, usually he'd help me on it. I'd give 'em, say, one fifth of the takeout, whatever we took out, one fifth of the gross. But sometimes you would pay a royalty on it. If I was off on somebody else's ^{and} the old fellow wasn't able to help you or anything, and a lot of them were of very little use to you around machinery, you know. However, some of 'em were real good, and especially if you put them at a job where it didn't call for too much skill, feeding the machine or something like that, most of 'em could do that if they wanted to. While you load it into the hopper it still has to have a certain amount of-- someone to guage the speed with which it goes through it, see. The machine I have today operates the same, you still have someone to -- I generally operate it totally myself, but I built it as a one man operation, see. It's electric automated all over, and if anything goes haywire on it, it automatically kicks itself out and you know that there's something wrong with it. It's got a regular three phase industrial type electric power plant on it.

SS: It changes--

FM: Well, you see, due to the cost-- when I built that machine, gold was still thirty-five dollars an ounce, which is only five years ago. Well, you can readily see that you have to have ⁺as economically operating as possible. With today's price and everything. When I first went into Gold Creek to mine,

gasoline^{up there} would cost you thirteen cents a gallon by the time you get your tax back, you see, you get your tax back when you're not using it for highway use. You can't get diesel fuel for twice that today. Most of my rigs now are diesel not all of them, but some of them, washplant's still gas, one bulldozer is ~~but~~ the rest are diesel. But five years ago when I first started and put them diesel rigs in there, sixteen, seventeen cents, now forty-two, forty-three.

SS: What is the price of gold now?

FM: Well, last night it showed a hundred and sixty-three dollars an ounce.

'Course that's a considerable raise over thirty-five, but everything^{else} is considerably raised over that period. But, as I say, when I built it I built it for thirty-five dollar stuff. I ~~took them,~~ ^{had faith} I ^{to say} enough then in gold, "Oh, no, someday it'll be up." And my prediction was that when the American people could buy gold bars, you understand, you could buy them raw gold anytime, but not gold bars, that it would go to two hundred dollars an ounce. It went to one hundred and ninety-six dollars, didn't quite make the two hundred, last December. Just before--January first was, I believe^{that} when you could buy it-- and it got to a hundred and ninety-six dollars an ounce.

SS: I wanted to ask you about these old time miners who were there when you first came in. Were they much like the old-time lumberjacks? Were they the kind of guys that would-- let's say like a lumberjack-- the stories you always hear that they save up their money and work real hard for a long time and then they go to Spokane and blow it?

FM: No, no they weren't. Not the ones that I knew. They were more frugal living and they appeared to be unlike the lumberjacks. They were loners, pretty near every one of 'em. Even tho^{ugh} they would neighbor with each other along the creek, each had his own cabin and had his ^{own} everything, and they were pretty fussy about anybody. I well remember one old fellow by the name of Ed Turner that came in and he'd been an old North Dakota, or a Black Hills

miner, you know. There was lots of them drifting around. There was Ireland, was another that had come up from down in the Seven Devils country,-- and oh, I can't think of the names of some of them-- there's still more.

SS: Did this guy from the Black Hills--?

FM: They would drop in, this Turner from the Black Hills dropped in there and he stayed with Darrow for, oh, for roughly a year or more, maybe a year and a half, and ~~it~~^{with} little or no time, I knew Darrow real well, and would drop in quite often on him there, and he got awfully irritable with him around there. You know, they grated on each other, they snapped back and forth at each other. They were the loner type, they wanted to be alone. Go out there and dig and talk to themselves while they were digging and whatnot. Then another thing that I found-- a great lot of them were-- they liked to get a prognostication arrangement, you know, some willow stick or a pendulum or something and get out here and get out here and douse the ground. Just about all of them would do that. (End of Side A)

SS: The idea of witching for water, but not for--

FM: Yeah, they did a lot of witching for gold. Them particular fellows, them loners did. This Gillam that I spoke of a while ago, he thought he had a special power witching for gold, and he used to tell me some of the queerest stories about it that you ever heard. He had a little pouch about, oh, possibly an inch and a half or so in diameter, a little rag bag with a copper wire on it, tied shut. And he said, "You know, I have about nine hundred different things in that bag." He said, "I found they all hurt the action of my pendulum." He would take a-- what was in it, I don't know-- but ~~it~~ was another little sack with a string on it, or a little piece of rag with a string on it, and it would have something in there and he would walk along, and that would be aswinging back and forward and back and forward, you know, and then when it would come over a ledge or some gold or something it would stop. And this would locate where it was at. And one day I'm digging with a bulldozer

up there and I said,-- he come by and he said, asked what I was looking for and I said was looking for a tungsten ledge. I'd found tungsten in the creek and I was bulldozing trying to locate this outcrop of it, see. Up here it's nothing to have anywheres from eight to fourteen or twenty feet of overburden on the stuff and it's awful hard to locate the-- you'd find the source in the creek-- or the ore in the creek, but where is the source of it, see. And he said, "Did you ever have anyone douse it for you?" He didn't say it that way, he said, "I can locate that for you." is really what he said. "Well," I said, "What do you need?" "Well, he said, "you got a piece of the rock around that's the ledge?" And, I said, "Yeah." He grabbed that and he tied a little string around this piece of rock and walked around there, up and down over the hill, you know. And pretty soon-- we'd been digging in this place and I hadn't been able to locate the vein, see. And he said, "Oh, it isn't any wonder," he said, "the vein only comes up to here and turns around in a circle and quits." I didn't quite believe that, but that's what he said. Incidentally, I didn't find the vein there above it, I don't know whether it quit or not, but we didn't find it that day. I did find it eventually, but not the way he said it was. These here 'bugs' as he called 'em in this one sack, he'd put that in his pocket or he'd hold that in the other hand, that was to keep these 'bugs' from getting into this pendulum while he was trying to locate stuff, it would affect it, you see.

SS: Did he---?

FM: I never saw Hougen do any witching^{for it}, but I saw Darrow do it.

SS: Did he use the same method as Gillam did?

FM: Not always. No, each one had his own pet idea about it. I remember one that could detect it at a long range. And he had a wire, a bent piece of wire that he would hold in his hand and it would point in the direction. And he said that he picked that draw for that gold up already when he was coming up the road here somewhere in around Onaway, that it pointed over there and

that's how he got there. I never seen the guy before, but he was one of them from down on Salmon River. And that's how he got in there. George-- do you remember George's name?

LM: Big George is all I know.

FM: Big George, he was a great big fellow. And he had picked that up-- he had picked that up way down somewhere, it pointed up this way, this here wire did.

SS: Did they use a forked stick like-----?

FM: Some would, but the most of them had a pendulum or a bag with something in it. And generally claimed to be ^{having} something special in there that-- Most of the ones I seen up on the creek used a pendulum, but Lonny Wilkins used a willow switch. He did quite a little placer mining up on Reservoir Gulch. That was the area where Bockmeier had a lot of diggings in there. And there's no question, there is gold in the creek. I've trenched across it. I looked at it one time for a machine operation, see, but the draw was too narrow, and you know, you had no room to work in it. And the creek was rich enough as far as for the amount ^{of dirt} you could've moved, but you didn't have room to move it in there with machinery. There's one claim that I know that a fellow gets a little gold off yet up in there.

SS: I was just wondering did they douse often, or just once in a while when you were looking for something new.

FM: They usually had it in their pocket all the time, and any time there was any question of why they didn't find this or that or something, why, they'd pull it out and go to dousing. It wasn't very far away as a rule. They would be cleaning up their placer, generally, as I say, those fellows that were in there all the time would have a gate, a ~~sluice~~ gate, I explained that to you some time ago, and while they were cleaning up the sloughs gate they would use this thing to see if-- and they hit a crevice or a

crack in the rocks, and see if they ought to dig it out, see if there was anything down in it. And to claim that they didn't know, I don't know, but I'd see them-- "No, that ain't clean there," get down in there and keep scratching maybe with a spoon or something else to get down into the bottom of it, or a pointed rod or something and come up with a pretty nice little nugget, they'd scratched out of the hole, so, to say they didn't, I don't know, I never tried it, but they did.

SS: Did they just feel that there was some kind of magnetic attraction being exercised between the gold and the---

FM: Not necessarily magnetic. Electric attraction is the way they said. Magnetic would mean ^{but} there was some--- I never heard any of them explain it, but I have heard other-- I'm talking of these miners explain it, but I have heard other people explain it, and the best explanation ever got from it was a--- I read it one time. ^{let's say} And it said that your subconscious mind was capable of knowing or picking up where these things were, and if you could get some indication from the subconscious, if you concentrated your mind on what you were looking for, your subconscious'd give you the nudge to do it, and if you will try it yourself you'll find that you can take a pendulum and hold it steady and you just look at it and then all at once in your mind you see it waving one way or another, or going in a circle, and it will do it. Well that indicates that you were making it do it, and yet you are not consciously doing that. So--

SS: That's a pretty reasonable explanation.

FM: That was the most reasonable explanation and I have tried that part of it out. But they claim that you could totally concentrate on, let's say a rock-type of formation that had gold in it that you never saw before, how could you keep your mind on that particular type of thing? That's why I think that water dousers are so much more successful than the metal ones, because water is easier to concentrate on. Everybody knows what water looks

like, you can see water flowing, you can see it flowing in the cracks in the rock and things like that. And for this reason you can probably keep your mental concentration on it much easier. That's the only explanation that I would accept.

SS: Do you have any idea of the kind of things that they put in the pendulum, for the attraction?

FM: **Those are** mostly figments of the imagination that they would do any good. From that article, ~~and~~ my checking into it, most anything at all that would give you an indication -- would be one thing as good as another, **see, you understand,** if you're getting the nudge from your subconscious to tell you where it is, or give you this information, most assuredly wouldn't make much difference what you used to get it, get, what I mean--

SS: Yeah.

FM: It is not an attraction to the article but an attraction from your mental-- ~~to~~ your subconscious'd create this indication.

SS: Yes, I was curious what would a guy would think would help him, see.

FM: Well, Gillam would have such things as bits-- he would have a little gold in it, see, and copper and whatnot. Now, you could hardly believe what he would have in the-- 'bugs' to get rid, of the bugs ~~are~~ the things that destroyed its usefulness, see. But arsenic, and you name it, everything he had in there. You understand that when a man tells you he had pretty near nine hundred things in there, elements-- 'course I judge that was an exaggeration, --

SS: This was supposed to stop the--

FM: Keep it from being inaccurate. He called 'em 'bugs', is what he called 'em. He had taken that, no doubt, from, the English has a book somewhere on it. I picked up one time and read. The English had a method when they was dousing, these English dousers. They used something to prevent these stray currents from influencing the pendulum. Talking about dousing in mining, there's an old woodcut, or carving, if you ever run into it sometime,

that shows them dousing and mining and whatnot in this woodcut. I've seen it several times ^{and} published in magazines. I'd like to get ahold of it-- a picture of it someday. ~~And~~ it dates back to about the sixteenth or seventeenth century. I'm pretty near sure it was France, it might have been Germany that the thing originated in.

SS: Do you think that the miners believed in-- that it was luck more than skill that determined if a guy would do pretty well?

FM: They depended an awful lot on skill. But you understand they were not unhappy if luck looked their way. Yes, they believed a lot in luck, too, don't you think they didn't. And I do some myself!! Because I have known fellows that were just lucky enough to go out here and pick something up and didn't have a bit of skill about them. The biggest nugget-- now you understand I'm not talking about the one that Carrico said he had-- but the biggest nugget that they told me about that was ever found on there, was found by a guy that was part Indian, and I don't think he had, I know him well enough to know that he had no particular mining skill, and he was up in there during the Depression, Al Swatman was his name, and he picked up over a seven ounce nugget right in one of these fellow's diggings. He got permission of them to dig in there and he found this seven ounce nugget, and of course, Joe Hougen's is where he was digging on, and Joe run him out after that. But he went down somewhere else and started the thing and in just little or no time was getting gold right along. I cornered Al, Al is dead now, too, quite a few years, and got the date on this nugget and so forth, and he told me all about it. Now, I saw a four ounce one that Joe Hougen got in or near the same place. That size of nugget was rare ~~on~~ on Gold Creek. A half-ounce one wasn't even very popular, but anything from a half-ounce down wasn't, you know, too ^{rare}. But Joe got two in one season, got two four ounce ones. I didn't see the one, he had spent the one for booze before I got at him. And he was the kind that would go get his supplies and stuff and a couple of bottles

of whiskey, and maybe a bottle of rum, that hundred and thirty-five proof rum, and he'd take them up to the cabin and he'd get a 'cold'. He'd take that to keep from catching cold or to take care of a cold if he got it!! 'Course he'd drink it all, usually, last about two days and decide right in the middle of it he was going to go out with the car and get some more, he was running short. He'd get down the road a ways and the first thing the car'd be in behind a tree or hooked on a stump or something, not necessarily wrecked but run off the road, you know. And I well remember one time he come down walking, I was with Curly Darrow at the time, and he said, "I don't know what's wrong with that car," he said, "it just runned off the road, just got off the road up here," he said, "come up and help me get it out." 'Course I had machinery and stuff, it was no problem to get it out of there. We went up there and Joe said, "I don't know what was wrong that I got in there, run off the road like that," he said, "I wasn't drunk." "No," Curly said, "you weren't drunk, the car was!" (Chuckles) But he was headed out to get some more. And he'd do that, oh, two, three times a year. But he wouldn't spend all his money, he'd buy what he needed and then he'd buy the booze and go on a toot and drink it up, and then he'd probably make some enemies while he was at it among the rest of them, just like you was saying.

SS: Make some enemies because he'd get pretty cantankerous?

FM: No, Joe was--

SS: Well, how would he make these enemies then?

FM: Well, go down and visit with someone, one of the other miners, you know, and they'd make supper at suppertime, and he wouldn't eat when he was doing the drinking like that, then. And he'd sit around til nine, ten o'clock, and then he'd say, "I'm hungry, how about making me something to eat?" And then, of course-- you know Old Curly said one time he was down there, and he said, "I wasn't going to get him anything to eat," he said, "he refused to eat^t when^u I had it on the-- made it." And, he said, "Well, make it yourself, then,"

I told him. So he said he got up and he got ahold of some pancake flour and he said he had the whole place daubed over with batter from the pancakes- he was trying to make 'em, you know. He'd started up a fire, and ^{he said,} while he was doing that I crawled in bed and he built such a hell of a fire in there he said it got so hot I couldn't stay in bed any more!!" He said finally, "You better go home!"

SS: What was it you were telling me about when Joe first came into the country- Joe Hougen; were you saying that he had to stand up to Carrico?

FM: That's when he first went into Gold Creek, yeah. Well, you see, Joe liked to prospect. He had a little ranch out here, you know, his wife took care of that for him, and the fact is, all the miners on Gold Creek that I knew, that seemed to be standard with them old-timers, they had deserted a wife somewhere for the mining. Gold was more important. Darrow had a-- he was divorced from here, but he had a wife and a bunch of kids-- that soon as he could get rid of them, why, he was up there, see. Brown'd leave his wife in Spokane and come down here for six weeks at a time, maybe only make one trip back there, one day, one Sunday and be back down. Hougen would go ^{here for} out, maybe once in two weeks or three, and if it was mining water season, it would be once in whatever the season was: six weeks or so. And Lon Wilkins, he had divorced his wife, that was too much trouble for him, he'd rather sit up there, you know. So, I claimed--

LM: Same with Gillam.

FM: Gillam was the same way. I claimed that they had one thing in common, they all had deserted their wife and kids somewhere! (Chuckles) After they'd get them big enough so they's done for, they didn't have nothing to do with them.

SS: Well, was that true of Hougen too? You said he had a wife.

FM: He didn't have any children, that I know of.

LM: Neither did Park.

FM: Neither did Park have.

FM: Park was two years in Alaska and come back and got married for two years, and back there for six years, ^{and} left his wife here. So he wasn't any better'n them. "Oh," he said, "she was the best woman in the world." But it didn't bother him, I suppose.

SS: I wonder how their wives felt?

FM: I don't know. I never talked to any of them ~~and ask them~~.

MRS. M: I don't know, sometimes I think they would be glad to be rid of them!!

(CHUCKLES)

FM: But that seemed to be standard with pretty near all of them.

SS: Well, one thing, a sailor out to sea -- nothing you could do about it.

The guy'd go out and be gone for a long time, but these miners-- just sounds like desertion.

FM: Yeah. It always seemed that way to me. I never had to operate like that. I generally would take her with me if possible. 'Course, when the kids were in school sometimes I couldn't do that, but when the summer came they were always with me, ^{always}.

MRS. M: Unless we were down here and you were up in Spokane.

FM: Yes. During the war,-- see, after about '42 that war order L208, we couldn't get anything to mine gold with. In other words, gold mining was out during the war. I had no right to gasoline or anything else during the war, you know. So, I'd just necessarily shut it down.

SS: Did these guys ever go back to their wives, when they left 'em? Once they left?

FM: Well, some of 'em hadn't really left 'em, they just deserted them, ^{let's} say. They hadn't really divorced 'em or anything like that, they just deserted them.

Mrs. M: I guess Gillam was the only one that was divorced, wasn't he? Or Lonnie Wilkins was, too.

FM: Gillam wasn't divorced. Lonnie did, though.

Mrs. M: Well, Curly and Lonnie.

FM: Curly and Lonnie were, but the rest of them weren't. The rest of them-- their wives, they talked about 'em and all.

SS: Did they send 'em any money from what they made?

FM: Well, I don't really know. Oh, I doubt whether they got very much of it. They were usually very liberal ~~to~~ the kids, though. Curly always kept himself totally, stone broke giving it to the kids. I don't think he give it to his wife, but he give it to the kids all the time. He'd say-- well, he and I were together in a number of different deals, ~~the fact is~~. The only iron mine, the iron project up here, he and I -- the state has 'em today, yet, we lease it off the state, this property, and while it isn't making any money now, it at one time did, see. Not from a mining angle, but by leasing it out, we made some money. I can well remember that he'd always say, that money or this money that he got he was going to buy one of his daughters a typewriter, she was in school, or something like that. And another one, he was going to get this or that. He had four or five daughters, see, and two sons.

SS: Were they local, most of the families?

FM: Yeah, his family was. Some of them were people from Spokane, some of them miners were from Spokane. I don't know just really where you would say Park Shattuck was from. Garfield. He had a butcher shop one time, he and his brother in Garfield, and that's where he left his brother and went off somewhere else-- he went up to the-- well, he went to Alaska. He did have a butcher shop, ~~with~~ his brother, I know in Garfield, at one time.

SS: Oh, I was asking how Hougen wound up coming into the mining country-- how he established himself there.

FM: He never told too much about his-- the original coming into the country, that I recall, but he located out here on Rock Creek with a little stump ranch, he and his wife, and he would go up there during the mining season

and mine, see, and then, of course, that's over about the time you can start planting a little in the spring, or let's say, ^{runnin' down} by the time the ground dries up the water's going down up there, see. And he would come out and he would help get the stumps out there, in other words-- and then, of course, they'd run a little cattle in that stump ground, and up there and cut poles for fences and whatnot. In the old days, you know, they didn't always use wire to fence with, not where they had lots of poles. And, he had horses and he was pretty good around machinery. He had a steam engine running a pump up there that he could operate after the water-- the big head of water'd run off, so that he could pump it with pressure. And, of course, when he had lots of water, again, he could get more pressure by running it through the pump. He had a four-inch pump and run it with a steam engine, which is a pretty good size rig, you understand. A four-inch pump would produce-- handle more water and produce it into higher pressure than, we'll say an eight or a ten inch pipe would with a fifty foot fall on it. Quite a bit more pressure. It would be quite efficient at moving dirt. And he, also, had Carrico's old hydraulic giant up there at his place. After he had run Carrico-- or after Carrico had left the country, why, Joe took this giant up to his place. It had set up there on East Fork for quite a while, and among Park's-- or Park told me it was his, that Carrico's grandson gave it to him. And among Park's effects I found a letter from this grandson, and I still have it, that showed that the grandson had given it to Park until further notice. All the hydraulic pipe, and you can go up there anywhere and find old hydraulic pipe laying today. ^{yet} So the Carricos had spent ^{Adam Carrico} quite a little money because in them days that pipe is bound to have cost money, because-- well, it was a demand item them days. Sure, today, someone'd look at it and say, "I wouldn't give you five cents for it." But that's a different story from then.

SS: Did the guy that Joe had the run-in with, was that Adam or Adam's father?

FM: No. Adams's father-- he disappeared from the scene probably before Joe-- around the time that Joe was first in there. The Old Man apparently was old, that is, ^{Old Adam} was apparently old when he come in there-- the three of them were young fellows, in other words, ~~that~~ were old enough to be quite selfsufficient.

SS: So, what was the deal on that? He didn't want anybody else-- Adam didn't want anybody else in there on Gold Creek?

FM: Not particularly. You can readily see that someone'd be above you, they'd muddy the water to a certain extent, and with that muddy water down comes, especially if they got a gate, down comes the great big old flush of gravel and small rock and stuff with the flush of water, and if you got a pond below, in little or no time that's full of that muck. You're stopping the water and collecting that.

SS: So what is it that happened? Joe was going to locate here?

FM: It was farther above him. Yes. Joe had put a ditch in around and got some water from one of the side streams to add on to it for his operation, see, and when his gate would work, why, that would go down and affect Carri-co's operation. I had the same trouble when I used a gate, when I first used a gate in there. Some fellow from Spokane put a gate in up on East Fork, and I'd pick the water up from East Fork and run it into my pond and in little or no time I'd find it was filling the pond up. So, I went up and told the fellow, I said, "You've got to stop that, I don't want that down there, you're filling my pond up." And, "What're you gonna do about it?" And, I said, "In here you can't do it, I got a water right on that creek and--" I said, "All you need to do is drop a couple of trees, cedars or something in the stream," I said, "that'll create an eddy or something that'll drag it out." And that's what he did.

SS: What did Adam do to Joe?

FM: He told him that he wasn't going to mine up there. First he told him it

was his ground, and he said, "You haven't got any claim on it." And Joe said, "You haven't got any claim on it, I'm going to mine it." And Adam said, "You're not. My shotgun says you're not gonna mine it." And, he says, "My pistol says, I am going to mine it." And they stood and worked it out right there. One or the other was gonna--- and he said he backed him down on it. He said he never trusted ^{him} afterwards, totally, but he said they never had any fuss about it after that. He said he used to ride through on horseback, ride past the Carrico's place, and he said he always had (End of Side B)

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And when he said anything, he meant it generally. As near as I can recall, from everyone's description, I didn't know Adam Carrico, I only ever knew Elmer-- I only ever met Elmer-- and that was a good many years after he'd been up here. He was watchman at the Chewelah Copper Company Mine, and I was doing some shovel repair work up there, some shovel work up in there, at Chewelah, Washington, and he ^{was} watchman at that mine. And we got to talking a little bit; I possibly talked ten minutes with him, and he told me that he mined down here on Gold Creek. And that's about the total, I couldn't tell you very much that he told about it. Elmer. I never knew Adam.

SS: Well, their reputation has come down. Other people remember them too as being quite a bunch.

FM: Yeah. Yeah, they had that reputation. However, few people realized that they were-- when Adam was mining he was very efficient at it. Now, you realize that the average person that would praise the Carricos, would say, they would look only at how socially they behaved. But I looked it mainly at how they handled the mining part of it, because this is my interest, and therefore I would be interested in how they handled that. And Adam Carrico was an efficient miner. He was an outstanding miner in his day, because what he had to work with, the type of equipment he had to work with and so forth, he did

quite a lot more than the average fellow did. He developed all them ditches; got all that water together so that he had plenty of water to work in a place where, you know, that stream dries up in the middle of the summer. Well, he'd have water enough to run all summer long, ^{to} clean up and so forth, not the hydraulic, but ~~to~~ clean up. When the stream dries up altogether, you can't even clean up your hydraulic sluicing and your splash gate work and so forth. You understand those boxes call for a certain amount of water to throw the bedrock in and get it cleaned up. In a mining operation like he operad, he would be busy year 'round practically on it. They had horses and there's parts of old plows scattered around up there, if you know what they are-- pieces of machinery and stuff that they have in there still scattered around that hill. Well, when you consider that-- the source of machinery and stuff that's way off-- Portland-- had to be shipped by rail into Palouse, by the time he said he could afford to do it, and freighted from Palouse up to the mine, you find twelve inch and fifteen inch hydraulic pipe-- not just a few feet of it-- but long stretches of it. Lots of eight inch-- six inch is the smallest you find scattered around the hills. Where he had a good giant, which cost quite a little money in them days-- and he had that mill that he'd put in up on Gold Creek- that ~~was it~~ mill. Taken all the way through, he not only was a good miner, he was very efficient at it. He knew how to get something out of whatever he had.

SS: Did you ever hear how he got his background in mining?

FM: The Old Man and them fellows, when they come in there-- you can see-- as near as I know he was a man in his sixties' somewhere when he died--

SS: Old Man Carrico?

FM: No, the Old Man was older than that when he died, but-- and he died somewhere shortly after '25. So this'd put him, oh, say, a man of twenty years in 1870, see. I'm just using this together. So, he come up here somewhere after 1870, or around after 1870, the first of 1870. And it's said that he

the Old Man and the boys had been in some of these other mining in California. And there is a bunch of them over here in Washington, the Carricos still today. Some relative of 'em. So, he's got a pretty good view of mining, let's say, of how bigger mining was done in California. And he apparently, I'm not talking of just running around here like gold rushers, he got the idea of creating or making a big mine. He always had that notion. That was his hard rock idea. But his placer operations was sizeable. In other words, he had a very efficient and profitable placer operation, and the records prove it. I showed you ^{other day} ~~the~~ here that the records show that he had a more or less profitable thing, because when he lost his eyesight, the thing went from two hundred and thirty ounces down to thirty ounces-- he must have been producing the most of the two hundred ounces. Well, gold, unlike what that there fellow said in there-- it was thirty-five dollars an ounce-- it was twenty dollars and sixty-four cents an ounce, when they mined it. And when he said they--this Burke, I think it was, said he was up in there in Swamp Creek. Gold was never thirty-five dollars an ounce til 1934.

SS: I'll have to correct that.

FM: Yeah, you correct that because that's wrong in there.

Twenty dollars and sixty-four cents.

And before that it was sixteen dollars an ounce. However, it would vary with one place and another, you would never get over the top for it, because there'd be so much dirt in it. But, you'll have to correct that, it's incorrect.

LM: Well, Frank did you tell him about the time that he saved your ditch from wearing down, and letting 'em shovel dirt?

FM: He read that out of my---

LM: Oh,--

SS: What is the story on it? What is it that happened?

FM: It was during the days when they were placer mining up there, you know.

They also told another--- I'm talking ^{of} whenever they were mining with hydraulic, with hydraulic giants.

SS: What I was wondering, what would cause that situation?

FM: Oh, oh, you mean that the ditch would break?

SS: Yeah.

FM: Well, let's look at it this way. You build a ditch along the hillside and the water soaks into the ground slowly, you see, and the first thing you know part of it will give way. You know, the ground'll soften and it might be days til it does it, but finally it'll soften and slide down the hill. Well that's a break in the ditch. And there's only one thing you can do is to reditch across that place, in other words the low side of the ditch went away from you. Lot of them were in Priest, they ^{kept the run} so that they kept the grade. A couple of inches in a hundred feet, just so the water would flow slowly through them.

SS: What did Adam Do? He jumped into the ditch?

FM: No, he'd lay longways where the break was, on the low side, you understand and they'd throw dirt and stuff on the upper side, usually put brush and dirt both in there first, then dirt to seal it. By him holding it up there, laying down, he could hold so much greater an area; the weight of himself agin it. Joe Hougen told me that that was a fact that he would do that, someone told on him for doing it. You understand, he had help generally, the brothers as well as -- he hired them Chinamen to help him, too, building ditches and so on. A new ditch is always a lot of trouble til it, you know, until it's firmly-- 'til you've got all the bugs out of it, in other words. Til you've got all these soft places and--

SS: Well, what did the miners think of-- the other miners think of their social-- The Carricos' social---?

FM: They didn't leave other miners around 'em, if they could help it. That's the way they worked it. Art Gillam told me that, and he knew Carrico person-

ally, that he would claim that these guys'd come in looking for placer ground or somewhere to mine and he'd say, "Yeah." Then he'd check the wind and he'd say, "You go on over here!" In the direction that the wind was blowing "And find some little creek, there's gold on that one." And then they said after, he would head that way, why, throw a match in the brush and get a fire going, and he said, "That'll keep 'em over there, too!" (Chuckles) However, Carrico claimed-- now this is what the old miners told me-- that Carrico's Claim when he come in here, that you could ride anywhere on horseback over that hill and no brush, that it was always burned off! Well, you see, if you burn it off, the ground, or the woods, or let the electric storms burn it off, it don't hurt the trees at all, it just burns--they claim once in seven years it'll burn off with an electric storm. And this is true, because the electric storms start all kind of fires up there and they put 'em out now, and the mat is a foot deep and if that ever gets aburning and all that small brush ^{that's} going in the bottom-- but Carrico claimed it was all open, he could ride anywhere on horseback over the hills without any brush bothering you, ^{pretty near} except in the draws.

SS: Did they claim that it was lightning and not Indians that did it?

FM: Lightning did it, lightning'd start it. Well, just look today, you read in the paper where lightning started twenty-one fires. ~~Who~~, do you suppose the Indians put them out in the old days? The Indians didn't worry a bit about it. All they did, was get on the right side of the fire and let it burn.

SS: Well, some say the Indians set fires. The Indians set fires, see.

FM: Curly told me that the settlers would set fire in here to the woods. They would come a real hot time and they was afraid it would hurt the harvest, you know, would hurt the growing grain, and they'd go up there and set the woods, they'd set it on fire so as to create a haze over it, so it wouldn't be -- so the sun wouldn't be so direct on the stuff. Now, that's what he claimed,

I don't know whether ~~that's~~ so or not. But, you could have considerable area burning around as long it wasn't a raging forest fire that hadn't burned over an area for forty or fifty or a hundred years, that's a different story, you're going to ruin the timber, but suppose it had burned through every seven years like nature has it planned. I see now the Forest Service admits that fires are standard in the woods. That's funny that they found that out after a hundred-- well, since 1910 or so. After sixty or seventy years they found out that fire is native in the woods. A lot of these bugs and stuff they're fighting today is just simply they didn't let fire-- didn't let nature take care of it. Fire in the woods. But, possibly they have ^{to} play to the public's wishes; ^{they see} the whole woods is burning up, so get the Forest Service on it and put it out, where it would have been sharper to let it burn many years ago. Sure, you'd have to control burn it no end now, if you wanted to burn it. But, the tops of those ridges and mountains-- it ain't unusual for it to catch fire out there and there's lots of places you can look at now, where three, four acres have burned that they've put out, you understand. It don't start as a blazing fire right away. Most of the time the rain, but it ^{hits} some old snag that-- lightning struck the old snag and it's burning up inside that snag and you let that snag go there for another month burning, or two weeks, and the ground is all dried out and everything's dried out around it, and you'll get a fire going pretty soon. It won't start ^{up} right away. Well, you see smoke right away, that's the time to go get it out. It might only be a-- but nature didn't go put it out. Joe Hougen, one time, he had Carrico's old compressor and steam engine running it, see Ed Carrico had a steam engine running a compressor on a shaft he dug up on the side of Gold Hill there-- well, as I say, they gathered up all the Carricos' stuff when they went out, and they had among them, Hougen had the giant and this air compressor, and he put a steam engine on it and run a shaft on a vein that he had found up there, and the shed that he had this compressor in was off to

the side of this vein, you know, and I don't know whether he was trying to clean up, or what, but anyhow he turned around and had a fire going there, and it was burning in an old snag laying on the ground, the snag was, and I said to Joe, "Don't you think"--^{we left} that morning I was down working with Joe doing some prospecting we were together, and I said, "Joe, don't you think we ought to put that fire out?" It had been burning for a week or more in this-- "Oh, no," he said, "let it go that ain't gonna hurt anything." And I says, "It's getting pretty dry, maybe we better put it out." "Oh," he says "hell with it." So we went down and started to work, I got in the car and ~~w~~ went down about a mile and a half down the creek, I think, and we were working not far off from the creek, and along in the afternoon I see this rig and that rig of the Forest Service going up by, you know, and they never stopped and said a thing, and Joe said, "They must have had a fire up there somewhere." Along about-- a couple of hours later they come on down by, and one of them stopped and said, "Is that your diggin's up there that we had the fire on?" And, we said, "What fire?" He said, "Well, it burned that shed down that that compressor was in". And, he said, "There's about a half acre patch there that had burned." He said, "We put it out." And that was that same morning I had told him we ought to get that fire out, but he didn't bother about it. He come to me later, and Joe said, "You know, they said I'm going to have to pay for putting that fire out." "Well," he said, "I'm not going to pay for it," he said, "they'll just have to put me in jail!" But he paid for it, I think it cost him thirty or forty bucks to get that out.

SS: Not too bad, really.

FM: It wasn't too bad, no. I think it was thirty-eight dollars he paid 'em.

SS: I was going to ask you how you figure that mining really started things going in this country?

FM: In this country?

SS: Yes.

FM: Well, that isn't very hard to decipher. Gold was the thing that got them in here. There was no settlers in here until they started digging for gold. The earliest settlers that I can find; the homesteaders, they homesteaded later, they squatted first in here, that's for sure, was along about 1870, well the miners were in here before that. And they catered to the miners, so what good would grain be here, why you had to pack it by wagon for-- to Portland, or something. You couldn't do it. It was only worth thirty cents a bushel at the best. So, necessarily, the mining started the country up. The gold was here, it was free, and ^{was} in demand, and the farm produce was not. So there was no reason. The same goes for timber. There was lots of timber everywhere. There was lots of timber where they could get it. Sure, the big influx, the big money and whatnot was the timber, the agriculture, but the first thing was the mining. It was money regardless of how you took it, because the gold was worth money, and it was laying there for the taking. And you could put enough gold in one pocket to buy three farms or ten farms with, them days, especially back here in the bushes, you could have bought ten of them.

SS: When the people first---

FM: They didn't feel that-- the homesteads were no particular value, you understand, other than there is people like these ones that like to live out in the bush today, ^{yet} they'd like to get away from everybody else. There are certain people, and I think I could be classed among them, that don't want where there's a lot of people living. You understand I'm not agin people, but I like to be where you can-- well, you're pretty much on your own resources. And that was the case with the miners, they were generally-- the miners were generally the people that would depend on their own abilities to do things. The homesteaders were the same. But the homesteader run to the agricultural end of it. This Mrs. Jones up here says that you'd find all these here people that was traveling along here, this was ^a kind of a-- well it was a junction

in the road, the same as it is today. But you would find all kinds of them down along the river, panning and checking to see if there was any gold along there. They weren't adverse to gold-- the homesteaders. If there was any gold they'd take it too, you know.

SS: Did these first homesteaders, did they, did most of their produce go to the miners?

FM: That was their source of money, I'd say. If you stop to consider the homestead , he don't need money very bad. The homesteader didn't. They would kill game for meat. They generally would bring something along, some critter, a cow or something, that they would eventually have their own dairy, their own dairy products, and so forth. They generally, a lot of them had ^{drove} cows on the wagon, not oxen, they weren't all oxen, you understand. They would just simply take it easy and let the cow graze part of the time, move a little bit each day, and they'd get where they wanted to go in three days, where it'd normally take someone else one. And, when they got out there there were self-sustaining. They had butter and eggs and they could shoot deer around here no end, because there was lots of them apparently. So they had meat. They could catch fish in the river. They had water. They had fuel. They had wood, lots of it, to build with, to heat with. And what did they need? Probably a little clothing. And usually if they wanted to be-- let's say modern--and have good lights, they had kerosene lamps. Five gallon of coal oil or something like that a year. And Old Park used to get ten gallon a year, he had an Aladdin lamp, you know, and it used more than the rest of them. But Park got thirty-six dollars a month from the-- after he was too old to mine-- Old Age Assistance. You know the State of Idaho had Old Age Assistance. And I helped him get that, ~~the fact,~~⁵ I went and started the thing for him, so that he would get this thing. He didn't ask for it at all, but, I said, "It's a shame," I said, "neighbors-- and that chiefly myself and a few other ones had to go up there and cut his wood and stake him to something--

groceries and so on. And, I said, "That's a shame when ^{ever} we've got Old Age Assistance, he ought to have it." I said, He Worked hard all his life and he's got as much right to it as anybody else. We pay for it." So, they begrudgingly gave him thirty-six dollars a month. They said he had no rent to pay, and he didn't have any fuel, and he didn't have this and that, and he didn't have any electric bill. Well, this is true, but I used to cut his wood for him and haul it in, ^{Ringeria} (go up and split it for him, and things like that. And at times I even hauled wood, I used to deal in it here, hauled the wood up there, so get out of having to take the time from what I was doing. And, if he wanted to come down and he asked me, I would go up and get him with the car and bring him down to the store and he'd pick out what he needed for the winter's supply, or the year's supply, believe it or not, he had a little beside. But he'd buy enough at one time, which would cost him a hundred and fifty dollars or so, and he'd have the money generally for it-- for part of it, at least. Well, I'd always see that he had the rest of it. In other words, he had what he needed. And I felt that the Old Age Assistance could at least ^{give} what they had. And that old fellow in that time was-- the most he ever got was forty-two dollars-- had saved up better than seven hundred dollars of that. Because when he died, I gave his nephew two hundred dollars that he had put in an envelope and told me that was to bury him on-- and I had five hundred dollars that he'd gave me to send to his niece in California, because his brother had give him nine hundred dollars when his wife died in the hospital in Spokane somewhere before 1925. So, in that time that he got that, and he never got over forty-two dollars a month, living up there, he had saved, I would say, over seven hundred and fifty dollars.

SS: How many years was he up there? More or less.

FM: Oh, seven or eight. At least that many. Maybe nine. So, if he would live

in these modern times, on that small an amount, you could readily see the homesteaders didn't need very much. And if he got-- traded gold, he could always buy kerosene or anything else for it, he also would trade with these Indians for furs. If the Indian had some furs, he'd give him some of his farm produce, and the furs were worth money, too. And that way he'd get the little bit of money. We're talking again of homesteaders; that way he'd get a little bit of money that he needed to operate on. They traded their produce with the ^{miner} for his gold or the Indian for his furs or something that the Indian had. The Indians liked to get ahold of deer hides and what-not. They made clothing out of them. Don't get any idea that the miner wouldn't use some of them deer hides and stuff for clothing, too. Clothing was no problem. The fact is, the deer hide made a pretty good window in the cabin. You'd scrape it down real thin and it'll let light through it, you know, and still cut the air off. At least, it'd be a bright spot in the wall, is about all it is. I've seen 'em nailed over a place, ^{supposedly} a window.

SS: And Mrs. Jones, did she talk to you much about the river drives?

FM: Some, yes.

SS: Did she actually see them, very much?

FM: Oh, definitely. Lived right here, they couldn't help but see them. Right where that house sits up there.

SS: See, that's the thing that I didn't know. I didn't know that there had been big drives, really. I knew that there had been some logs driven before the Potlatch came in, but somehow I never thought--

FM: Oh, there was many big drives went to Palouse. All the logs that were on along the river, ^{and} all the timber, mind the timber grows best down in these draws; I cut a tree down here next to the river, close to the river here, and I thought, you know, the tree would be sixty, seventy, eighty years old, -- like that across the stump, you know-- over two feet, twenty-six, twenty-

eight inches--

SS: Well, was that when they were logging along the river?

FM: I counted the rings on it and it had forty-five rings on it. That means it was forty-five years old. Well, they grow fast because they got lots of moisture down there, see. Well, you see, there was trees of all kinds along this river, of course, today there isn't too many. Sure, there's patches of trees along the river, but they grew fast. Cut 'em down and there'd be big trees twice by now. From 1870 to now? A hundred years? When you can get a tree . . . that big in diameter in forty-five years? Trees that I know definitely have grown from little six inch saplings to this in thirty years. ^{oh here} _^

SS: So you figure probably the logging that they were doing to have the river drives in those days, was mostly timber that was just thrown in.

FM: The timber that could be, let's say, either fell into the river or pulled in with a-- they usually used oxen for that. Or Big heavy bulls. Because a darn big bull could pull more than a horse. They didn't have big horses them days, they were mostly riding horses, you know. And they'd take a darn big bull, you see, or a couple of them and put 'em on a yoke and just skid them into-- along the edge of the river. And they would skid them in somewhere-- ~~where~~ when the high water would come up, they'd float off. There ain't water enough in that river to float a log nowhere now, hardly-- oh, well, there's a little now, but, you give it another couple of months and there is.

(END OF TAPE C)

It was about four weeks, is what she said they usually would be at it. Course, they'd be at it before the snow was off, soon as the water would start raising; the high water. And they would be rolling logs in and what-not along even before the high water. You understand, they'd be decked up ^{generally} and they had teams or oxen, working them into the river, you see. Generally here, it's about-- you can't depend on it-- it can be in January,

the high water: it can be in May or June. I have never seen it very high in June, but I've seen it pretty high ^{here} in May. You could float logs, you know then. But, generally, let's say, it is somewhere in February or March. So, they have to be about it pretty early. She said that they'd be out in the snow working logs into the river.

SS: People that would do the logging and the river runs, were they local farm people?

FM: No, they were a special bunch from the sawmills. They were specially for that.

SS: They were lumberjacks.

FM: Loggers. Not that the farm boys, some of them, might work on it, but the farmers themselves didn't. Because she said they were required to stay with that and they generally would have their cattle and whatnot to take care of, you know at home. She said that Joe, her husband Joe-- or her dad, Joe Miller wouldn't go on it, but he generally would have ~~h~~--he was a carpenter and he had a lot of carpenter work among the homesteaders to do. He would lay out a barn for them or-- he was a carpenter, was what he was.

SS: Did she know how this guy killed, who died on the log drive?

FM: She didn't know. Rolled under the log. Got injured when he got rolled under. This wasn't too unusual, to get dumped in the river, but he got hurt some way in a logjam that they were breaking up here somewhere. No, right here on this turn, she said. See there's a curve right down here in the river, and there was a logjam ~~had~~ formed in there, and they were working it free, and somehow he got killed in it. They picked him up just a short ways below. They saw him go in and he didn't come up, you understand. The one guy, she said, said that he thought he got hurt. You see, you break down through such a log jam-- if a log happened to just come in and catch you, that's it. That's the last one. And she said they picked him up just a short ways down below the-- see there's a-- it comes out in a rapid and

there's a flat^{down} in here, and they brought him up and asked if they could bury him. She suggested they bury him on the corner of the homestead. Well, I guess the ground hadn't been surveyed yet, but she said the section line come right through there. The homestead had to be-- you know, eventually it had to match the section line, and that was her story that it was put on the section line, or near the section line, that they buried him.

SS: I wanted to ask you about Pinnell, and the way you remember his operations. A lot of people talk about Pinnell, I'd say he's about as well remembered as the Lost Wheelbarrow is.

FM: Oh, in a way-- he operated over a longer period of time, so he's much better known than that thing. While he was not as spectacular, he didn't make as big a flush of it as the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine did; they were overnighters, you know, they were like the gold rushers, they'd get in and get out. Get in and get it and get out, would be the way to say it. Pinnell - the first I got to know Pinnell, was Curly Darrow said to me, "Let's go over, I want to see how Jessie Pinnell is doing over there. Do you want to go over and see his diggings?" And I said, "Sure." So I took the car and we went around up by Harvard and back into-- you couldn't get across the mountain, We were right up there but get back in^{by} Jerome Creek, he was on East Gulch I think it is. Anyway, they had a big log cabin up there. ^{Nice} That was where he lived and they had a big diningroom in it, or a kind of a-- ^{Same as} a lumber camp ^{would have} for a diningroom or a cookhouse-- but they lived in that same one. He had a sawmill, crushers and whatnot in there. And he-- I had met Jessie then, and he went up-- "Like to see the mine?" And I said, "Definitely, that's what I come over to see." And right away he perked up, because he thought there was somebody he could get some money out of. Curly introduced me and told him that I was over there with a shovel on the creek and so forth. So he took me up and he showed me the old-- I think that was apart of the Bishop claim, so Curly told me, an old fellow by the name of

Bishop. I met him once too, years ago. One Sunday afternoon we visited the whole bunch of them over there. And he was the one that located that located this. It was a little narrow vein about four or six inches wide and it had a little gold in it, and he had sunk a shaft on it. And Jessie and him -- somehow Jessie got it out of him, or he was still in -- had part stock in it. ^{let's say} But he formed a company out of the thing and they sunk down about a hundred -- I guess a hundred feet on this vein and it never got any better or any different, it was still just a small paying or a very low paying affair for a narrow vein, which wouldn't make a mining project. Let's say, wouldn't make a mine. And Jesse ~~Perry~~, as I say, he was a real promoter -- he'd go around and get someone to put up some money and tell 'em, now, "If we would sink on there, instead of sinking it, we would drift into it, then you got something that you can take the ore out." Understand me, it's not these little shafts that you dig for prospecting holes, they're not much good to take ore out, if you found it. Where a small tunnel can be enlarged, is one way, but ^{it} also, you could bring out a lot of ore, because you could ~~stope~~ it down, you see, ^{you can} use gravity to bring it down and load it and bring it out. So he put one in at the three hundred foot level, see this shaft had been down a hundred foot, he went in at three hundred feet and he drilled through the hill for about three hundred feet to get to it. In other words, here's the shaft going down and the drift going in. It intersected the vein but it still was the same type of vein; six or eight inches wide. It was carrying a little gold. And to make things so that it wasn't too expensive for Jessie, he would interest such fellows as old Darrow, or ~~Geo.~~ R. Smith or anybody around. He knew all these old-timers that was setting around. In the winter, you see, they wouldn't have anything pushing them. Sure when the water come on, why, the breakup in the spring they would have to be over to their mine, but from, we'll say, September, October on, they'd have their gate and everything ready waiting for the spring water, the clean up done.

But over in the area from the spring to the fall, that's the area to do your placer mining in, the time of the year, I should say. And they'd go up there and dig in the tunnels for him, and they would dig for stock in the Gold Hill Mine. That's what he called it; The Gold Hill Mining Company. And they would eat down there in this big thing, and Grant R. Smith said-- told me one time that he said, "I never minded working in there," he said, "you know, Mae was an awful good cook. And they fed good over there." Well, see, this was an out for them old boys. They could take the winter off and go up there and work in the mine, which was warm. They weren't even out in the open, you know, underground like that, it's not cold to amount to anything. And they have a good place to eat, you know, and that was a real good out for winter. And he, not only put in one at the three hundred, he put a six hundred foot level and a nine hundred foot level in there, and the nine hundred foot level was fourteen hundred feet long. And I said, "Where did you get the money?" Now, you understand, he didn't tell me all these things, how he schemed this, but I figured out later, I talked to the men and they told me how it was. And another visit later, I asked him at the time, "Where'd you get the money to put fourteen hundred feet-- all these tunnels in here?" And he said, "Well," he said, "I went down here to the college," and he said, "I showed them the project, and I got the professors down there," he said, "to put up the money." And he said, "They're the ones." And I said, "You know better than to put a hole in like that for a prospect, that long a run." "Well," he said, "I didn't do that," he said, "they wanted to do it that way." And he said, "Why would I stop them?" Well, he did pretty well. Sent his girls to college and whatnot on that. And the mine never paid a nickel. I told him one time, I said, "How can you afford to operate this?" "Well," he said, "you know I had a ranch and I put the ranch in." Well, I found out the ranch was just a stump ranch. They were pretty inexpensive them days around here. And he'd buy machinery for it, but he'd buy some old piece of junk

and ding it together, you know. He had a sawmill. There's a little two ton cat out here^{yet} that I bought off'n him. I bought a crusher and a steam engine and whatnot, when he sold the outfit out. They went bankrupt, it did, and then they sold the whole outfit out.

SS: Did these guys at the University, were they investing in it personally, or were they doing it as----?

FM: Personally. No, no. Personally.

SS: Well, give me an idea of how a guy could pull this kind of thing off, when I would imagine that even the miners or these guys from the University-- didn't they know better than that? Fourteen hundred foot tunnel----?

FM: Well, I'll give you the reason. To start with, those miners-- the miners didn't care-- the ones that dug the tunnels didn't care, because, I told you the reason-- they had a place to winter, without any cost to them. They fed good, was what Grant R. Smith said. And Pinnell[!] furnished everything that they used, and they had a nice warm place to work in the winter, and Pinnell[!] was a nice person to be around. In other words, he-- socially you could get along with him, and they'd play cards in the evening, you know, and have a jolly good time together, the whole bunch of them. And he knew how to keep men happy, you know, when they was working like that. And these fellows, when you're talking about these professors, they don't know, the practical end of it. They might know the technical end of the thing, or the book knowledge on it, but they don't understand the practical end of it. And, if you were talking of an era that was some before core drilling and that type of stuff was popular yet, see, it was known, but it wasn't done in the same method as it is today. You wouldn't think of running a drift like that when you could stick up a diamond drill outfit and prospect it, see, today. But that wasn't true then, it wasn't as popular, see. And the ordinary method was a prospect tunnel, which was a small tunnel compared to a, let's say, a

working tunnel, so you can't totally claim that they were;-- I'd just claim they were inexperienced. You would realize, if you would think that you would not-- if you had not found anything ^{at} the six hundred foot level ^{but} a narrow vein, you wouldn't go and try to get one at nine hundred feet. And if you did, I woulda took myself, if I wanted to prospect it, I woulda started with a little wee bit better shaft at the top and run a drift down, that is a sink on it all the way. It costs considerably more to sink than it does to drift, ^{that's to} run a tunnel. But the argument for the tunnel is that is that you have a working ^{and it}, or way out, to work afterwards, see, where with the shaft you have very little. It's merely prospecting ^{the shaft}. It's true in the big mines, where they dig a big shaft, put a cage down it and all this and that, but not a prospecting shaft, that's a different story. That's merely a small, narrow hole down , see. And, there are other things in favor of that. That's why you'd find the miners would favor that drift. A shaft is much more dangerous to work in. You can readily guess that suppose you run a shaft down six hundred feet-- well that shaft wasn't a three-by-three or a ^{four by} four, Curly wouldn't work in one like that, he'd have to be at least four-by-four in the open and then have a manway on the side, so that you could step off under the stairway, we'll say, that goes down there, and generally you have a stairway this way and that way, you see, you know, and work your way down on it and dig the shaft, or the opening, or shaft, is what it is, down there, we'd say, four by six feet. And use two feet of that shaft for a manway. And the other four feet is where the hoist and the bucket to run in, see. Because-- Curly dug one ^{or} a tungsten vein up there for me, I had him do it one summer, he and my boys did it, I was too busy and couldn't stay with it, and he insisted in having to be a four-by-six shaft, and that's on the inside, it's bigger than that when you blasted out, because you have to timber it. But we were doing total prospecting, and I didn't want to start and drift on something that I didn't-- we run that down about sixty feet. Well, it costs a little more,

maybe than it would to drift sixty feet. It was much cheaper than to go down there and drift for two hundred feet. So, as I say, those fellows are hardly practical, and yet, ~~Pinnell~~ knew that these miners would rather work in a drift. He knew that these other ones not being practical would spring loose for that and they figured it would cost so much a foot to drift on it, where it cost so much more a foot to sink on it, see. Sinking is when you're running a shaft, drifting is when you're putting-- So that's the total-- you can figure it out from that. ~~Pinnell~~ more or less engineered the whole thing.

SS: I'm surprised that he could make a substantial income year after year, you know, doing that.

FM: He stayed with it all these years up there.

Let's add one other thing:

His wife was a school teacher, and if they got tight run, she could always find a job teaching or something, I'm pretty sure. And he would get up there and do the cooking and whatnot. See, Mae would be there ^{for} over the weekend to cook and he'd take her out to the-- to teach somewhere, and he'd do the--

SS: But let's say you go five years with little to show for it, not bringing any gold out-- would you?

FM: You'd go out and hunt some new prospect of money. That's the way he worked.

SS: What kind of song and dance would you have to give so that you'd make 'em believe that, even though . . . If you were going to invest-- you'd have to give 'em so that he could make 'em believe.. I would think anybody'd say, "Well, what's the history of this?"

FM: You get with people that have money, and especially ones that haven't worked too hard to get it, in other words, they got it in a-- without too much effort-- they tend to paint rosy pictures of how rich they could get with things like that, themselves. And, if you have the promoter that knows how to just put a little fringe on the edge of these rosy pictures, you can get

the promoter can get the fellow to part with some of that loot that he got pretty easily. And there's nothing beats a promoter, some of the old mine promoters, being salesmen. They really were.

SS: You said to me before--

FM: Curly tells me that he was down there, and so was Park down there in around Nevada, you know, when Rilite and them places -- they were down there for short runs, you know-- and they said that's where the promoters really existed. Said they would start-- I well remember Curly telling about one-- said he would start-- this one promoter-- and he'd take and name a mine; it wasn't even a mine, yet, but a prospect, and they'd name it though just about like a producing mine, ^{in the place} just a little bit of difference, you know. And then they would take all this data from this producing mine, how rich it had been and how much money it'd made and all this and that, and they'd put all this on as this is the adjoining mine, see. And this gets the guy thinking, "Well, if that adjoining mine is rich like that, why, this here one might be." You understand, they don't promise it for dead certain. "The buyer be ware," I'm sure when you're buying into a mining thing. Yet, I would claim that I've made the mistake of not buying into the right one, myself, at times. I well remember, I was working for Clifton Applegate as master mechanic, and I could have easily afforded it, I'm sure at the time, it was the middle of the Depression, but I still had a two hundred and fifty a month job, you know, with this outfit, and he said, "Frank, you ought to put fifty or a hundred bucks in that Sunshine Mine up there." And I had another friend that was trying to get me to put that money in a gold project down here in the Oregon ^{Grand} country, see. "Oh," I said, "I don't know anything about that silver mine." And at that time, that mine ^{wasn't} wasn't making a nickel yet, and that stock was six cents a share, and I paid ten, I think, for this shares in this-- oh, Grand- something, I don't remember the name-- I've still got 'em someplace-- and I went and bought the gold mine. The gold had more attraction than the

silver. And, why even today, that Sunshine is ten or eleven dollars or twelve at least-- I know one time it was twenty, before they had that disaster a couple of years ago. But, Eichelberger is the one that started it, I knew him personally. He was a world renowned mining engineer. He isn't the one that tried to sell me stock. He was a purchasing agent for the outfit I worked for, see. I don't know how much he put in but, he said you ought at least to put a hundred dollars in that, that was when it was six cents a share.

SS: Did you just have a partiality for gold, yourself?

FM: *You remember what I wrote there. I think I always did.* I believe so, [^] Although I wouldn't turn my nose up at silver, ^{I know pretty near} any metal, especially the more popular ones. I had a tungsten project. I discovered tungsten up here, 'course, iron they knew about years ago. And there is some showing of copper up there, but I doubt if it's very big.

SS: You said to me that you thought that Pinnell was probably the sharpest one of the promoters.

FM: Well, I gauge that on the fact of how long he kept it working, and how well he did by it. Yes, and Bockmeier was one. He took the old Carrico outfit, ^{when} Carrico ^{went blind,} he got in there and he put in Carrico Mining and Milling Company, or something right here on East Fork. And they worked on one of the veins that the Carricos had, but apparently it bellied up because-- there is still a building or something-- there is nothing left of it any more. And, there are a number of others that were less popular, let's say, less noisy, that would branch out of Moscow. These things could start up without any showing whatever, these promotion deals. How I become aware of some of them is people would come here in the last five, six, seven years-- a woman come along with her brother, he lived down here, down the country ^{here} somewhere, and she was from Boston, I believe, or somewhere in Massachusetts, and she had a couple of stock certificates which was written by an outfit here in Moscow, so it said, from back about 1908 or '09, and these certificates-- she had a

location on them, showed where this was up there, and I guess she'd inquired at the courthouse, and they told them to see me, and I've had that happen many times, that I'd know more likely where it was than they would, you understand. And I told her, "Yeah, I know about where it was." The fact is, I knew by the description, I knew exactly what was there, and I said, "There is no mine there." That at most there might be an old caved in prospect, you know. Well, she found this when her aunt died or someone, she had ^{stock in this,} these stock certificates. I had never heard of the thing. I inquired of anybody that was around here then, and Art Gillam, then you could talk to him, he was still living, and I don't remember of any of the other old-timers were left then.

SS: Do you think that a guy like Pinnell, from what you knew of him, would have an especially good personality for promoting?

FM: Yes. Let's look at it this way, and I think this is the reason for their-- they actually believe in it themselves. They are so churned up and stirred up to the fact that they might strike something rich if they just could get over the hill again. And for this reason, they can do the same thing to somebody else, if they've got the personality to transmit or show off that enthusiasm they have for the project, they will shake it off on somebody else. At least this is-- I was gonna say, all the promoters I ever run up ^{again,} they had that deep down enthusiasm for the thing. And if you, or like myself, ^{that you} believe in the thing and don't use-- I claim to use pretty good reasoning with it-- I always say, when you get my money for you to play with I'm gonna be right along the side and see how it's played with. I take my money and invest it in things, in mining ventures when I know that there's not going to be anybody but my effort produce it, or least, I'll have total control of it. When somebody else has control of it, out, I only ^{ever} lost once or twice, that's enough, see. I remember an old German told me years ago when I was a kid, he said, "If a man beats you once, that's your fault,

not your fault-- but if he beats you twice, that is your fault." Well, that's the same thing, if you beat yourself more than twice it happens because you used poor judgement, that's your fault, not anybody else's. I don't care whether he's a sharp promoter or who he is. Much better to say, "Well, I could have been rich if I'd a got that," than to have to say, "Well, that's what put me on the rocks." And that's the kind of logic you gotta use with them fellows, because they totally believe in it themselves, and they manage to get it on the side where they get yours along with it. They might believe in it, at least-- When I looked at Pinnell's rock and stuff, and you understand we went back in the tunnel and we looked it all over, I looked the thing over thoroughly, like I was going to buy into it, and I said, "Just why would you dig that fourteen hundred feet of hole to try and intersect a little ^{old} vein like that, that has no more value in it than that?" "Well," he said, "them fellows down there wanted to do it.", down at the college wanted to do it. 'Cause I knew that he knew better than that. He knew better than to back off and run a fourteen hundred foot hole on a little six-inch lead. It wasn't six inches, it was only four inches down there, it pinched out worse ^{yet}.

SS: What about miners that work down, you know, like your friends, Curly Darrow and guys like that? Did they ever consider ^{trying} to promote the work that they were doing?

FM: ^{They} ^{would} promote ^{it} but they didn't have the personality to promote it like Pinnell had. No, I told you that Curly come up-- and he promoted his diggins so that I would get enough interest in it to come down and look at it. And ^(End of Side D) that's promoting it, I guess. [^] If he could make a living with a sluice gate and a little bit of ground he could work in a season with a shovel that you could move a lot of dirt, he oughta could make a fortune. Or, let's say, make a good deal ^{cut} of it, see. Irregardless, he didn't understand that machinery takes a certain procedure over what ^{his} hand work did. It takes space, it takes--

you know, just a lot of things. Beside, the water flowed for free and that wasn't true of the gasoline or anything else that you put in a machine. But, as I say, they were promoters, all of them. Every one of them, I was always welcome because I had machinery in their place. I used to go to the upper Palouse, and the mines here and there, I would ^{come in and have, sit down and} have a cup of coffee, you know, with them and a bite to eat or anything else, stay overnight anytime ^{you} wanted to with **any of** them. I've slept in every one of their cabins ^{I believe} at one time or another, you know, from Mountain Gulch to Gold Creek, everywhere there was one, pretty near. Most of the time I didn't want to, but if I was caught at night, I always was welcome. Mainly, because I had that same idea, they could maybe promote that I would work **on** their ground.

SS: Is that a good part of what your interest was? To see what they had to say, to see--'

FM: To see whether it was worth working; yes. I learned a long time ago, that you don't go by wishful thinking, wishful thinking will never get you anywhere working that kind of stuff. It's either you have to say, it's either good or it's bad; I can work it or I can't work it. You generally have enough difficulties that you haven't reasoned out or thought out, that you'd better be sure before you start that you're gonna come out. There's always this or that or something that turns up, see, Let's say, sour the milk,

SS: Did your coming in and helping, you know, going shares with these guys, did it really increase a great deal what they did-- or much what they did get out of it if they were working it by themselves?

FM: ^{Generally} Yea, sure. We'll use this only as an example. We'll suppose that they were taking out twenty ounces in a year, and you went in there and took out two hundred ounces, they got, we'll say, one-fifth of that, they would think that they would have more regardless, but generally-- I never made a deal whereby the cost of operation didn't come out of it first, and I still hold that that's

necessary. I'm talking of the cost of repairs, fuel, transportation, whatever is necessary to the operation, and you have to have the rest for depreciation and investment in your machinery. This is easily understood. You might just as well keep your money and not invest it in that type of stuff if you can't get a return on it. And you're gambling whether you're gonna get a return in the first place, so you're not gonna make a deal whereby, after you did get something that you're gonna give, the fellow who'd only put his labor of his hands in on it and happened to own the ground, you understand, he happened to have a claim on the ground, you're not gonna give him that without he takes his share of the cost load. That's the way I always made a deal, and I never had any trouble with any one of them. I always paid the thing, whatever it was, and weighed it out, and he got his share after costs. The cost was above board, he could see that it took so much to do this and so much cost cost to do that. And the repairs, other than ordinary wear and tear, the repairs were strictly what had to be done to it while it was-- to put it into shape to start with-- it was in shape, see, and to put it into the same shape as when you started. I don't mean to rebuild the machine or anything like that. But as you go along machines need certain repairs, that's normal. Especially earth moving. Let's look at it this way-- on a shovel, you'll need a set of dipper teeth or something like that or they'll have to be rebuilt or something, you see. Well, sounds like a small item. You put in two, three, four setsⁱⁿ a season at fifty bucks a tooth. You gonna buy them? You can rebuild 'em for less but you can't buy them for less. Four of them sticking on the end of the bucket, that's two hundred dollars. Well, you have to make money or you can't do that. And they wear, they're bound to wear there, when you're biting them boulders and that hard bedrock, digging as hard as you can on that.

SS: I wanted to ask you about one of the rockledge stories -----

Did you tell me that there was a doctor who was out looking for one?

FM: Oh, that's the Lost Wheelbarrow-- Oh, you're talking of old Doctor Dart.

^{Yeah,}
 But he was hardly a miner. He was just a, let's say, a vacationer-- he liked to be out in the bush when he was off his-- I don't know, I believe he was a medical doctor, I'm not dead sure. I believe the records of Palouse would show, surely. I have heard other people that know him. I talked to people even recently that knew him alright. But few of them knew very much about him. But he used to keep a horse out here on Crane Creek. I think it was with Burden that he kept him, on the Burden place. And he would get that horse and then he could ride right across there ^{where Fisk lives} and come up on the creek, you see, and he'd come up to this place we called a dark gulch, that is, Darrow and the miners in there called it Dark Gulch. And it's said that he would always look for this ledge he had lost or where this rock come from that he had laid on the mantel of the cabin one time. It was his recreational cabin you understand. It wasn't really a miner's cabin. And this was just a hobby of his to pick up rocks whenever he seen 'em, especially if they were quartz rocks, you know, with quartz in 'em: white quartz. And this here one was supposedly one that had white quartz-- was mainly white quartz. And a lot of them shows up here and there when you're going around the trails on the hill here, that you'll find places where there's white quartz rocks laying. And he'd pick these up and he layed them on the mantel above the fireplace. And when the cabin burned down they find these rocks laying there and some one of them, one or two of them showed gold in the rock. Which isn't an unusual thing, because it takes that much heat to burn the arsenides and the sulfides off the gold that will surround 'em-- the gold'll be free and showed

after that's burned off with heat. And this was the normal thing, whenever we found a rock, we always throwed it in the fire and heat it. Oh, yeah, that was standard around when I prospected a good many days with the fellows up there. We never picked up a rock we didn't-- generally you'd build a fire

to make ~~to~~ heat the coffee for lunch or something, or cook, if we cooked anything. You'd always throw the rocks in the fire that you'd picked up and rake 'em out, let 'em cool off afterwards, or leave them in til the fire died and look at 'em in the evening see whether any gold showed in 'em. And this old Doc Dart as long as he lived was always hoping to find that ledge where-- and he knew about the area where he had this cabin where he'd ride, you know, he'd ride several miles from the cabin in a ^{MAYBE O-} day's time.

SS: Did he have a special pick?

FM: I can show you the pick. He had some blacksmith in Palouse make this pick for him, so that he could be on horseback, you see, and reach down and dig and peck on stuff without-- one end has got a hammer on it and the other has got a pick about eight inches long. It's got a handle in it roughly thirty inches or so, with a leather thong on it, see, keep that on his wrist so that he wouldn't lose it.

SS: He never found it.

FM: Never found it, no.

SS: How would those guys?

FM: He had his ashes scattered over Gold Hill, yeah with a plane. I saw the plane, I remember when he died. It was right after the war that he died, and he had-- he wanted his ashes scattered over the Gold hill and this plane took them out. I saw it. *Dumped them up there.*

SS: How would this-- these guys go about prospecting? Would they just go out, like you're talking, just throw the rocks in?

FM: How would you go about learning to prospect?

SS: Well, I'm wondering what kind of techniques those guys used back in those days when they were looking for ^{new} places to ^{mine}. Was it just an individual thing?

FM: Well, if there was nobody in-- you mean if there was nobody around and you were prospecting-- you understand if you were up on Gold Creek, the logical

thing, if you wanted to prospect would be to talk to somebody that was there. But, if I go into a-- and I have been in country there was nobody in, you understand, lots of it in fact, I spent a good many days prospecting myself. The first thing I looked for is the formation that is the most likely to have mineral in it. I wouldn't go into an area, I wouldn't bother hardly looking at an area that didn't have certain indications; a mineralized zone, see. Now I don't have any college education on geology and mineralogy and things like that, but I have read many books on it, it's true, but I have also a basic understanding of it, and I've talked with a lot of fellows that did lot of prospecting, see, and those old-timers particularly, and there is, let's say, a rough check of an area right away along with your technical or geological understanding of it. And, I would claim this, if I went into an area and there was none in the creek, I couldn't find a bunch of colored rocks, different colors, there ain't no use looking. You're out of the area. You see, each stream would guarantee that. Now you could pan in any stream, you can pan right in this river down here and find gold, fine gold, in it. But you know definitely that you are a long ways from it because it's awful fine, and it always follows on down the stream. But when you go up and start looking which stream you get out of the basalt area, this streambed has been filled with basalt, you're into a different geological area, ^{when} you get up into these little side streams and find that you're above the basalt layer, see. If that side stream don't show varied colored rocks in the wash-- forget it!! Then, of course, being able to identify something in there-- I mean besides gold, how about tungsten? How about-- there's three or four kinds of that: ^Wseleite, (t) wolframite, eugramonite, ferberite (these maybe variations of elements as listed in the element table of the dictionary) There's four kinds of it. There are not any one of them identically the same. Today prospecting involves ^a quite a lot of quick analysis of things. When I'm prospecting and looking for tungsten, I've got my blacklight along. I can check for things, see

Several others fluoresce

if it fluoresces. I've quite a case full of assaying outfits that goes along, field assay kit . All the geophysical and anything else that I can find that's of any advantage, including the metal detector, mineral detector and things like that. Earth potential meters. Actually if you're a prospector today, you're quite an instrument man already. Then add to it, even photography has some use in it.

SS: Did guys like Park and Hougen, did they continue to prospect very much while they were working?

FM: Definitely. That was always the pastime, was to prospect, you understand when you weren't mining. Looking for something different. I told you that they would go up there and work in Pinnell's diggings in the winter, but if they didn't, why, they'd have some hole somewhere they were digging in, a prospect, possibly a ledge, "I want to dig that out". I can well remember when Curly'd-- that was the first thing, especially if it was in a wet place, why, when the water went down, now is the time to go looking for this or that or something else. "There was too much water ^{in there} last spring when I was in there working." finish that hole or finish another prospect. No, that was standard practice to continue prospecting. Gold Hill is just full of prospect holes, all over it. And you'll find that in any area where they mined. The old-timers, the early miners did the same thing and the last one will do it, and I still do it. Of course, when I go out I use a backhoe generally or a bucket loader on ~~my~~ claim, I darsn't do it off my claim. Used to be I could, but no more. This environmental setup, why, you have to get permits from the Forest Service to dig anywhere. That is, on Forest Service land, you do.

SS: The differences between guys like Park Shattuck and Joe Hougen and Curly Darrow, were they each one---? I'm wondering about how they were alike and how they were different, you know, from each other? I would guess as old-time miners they all had a lot----.

FM: They had something in common, that's real true. But they were no more alike personally, let's say, than you and I would be. You understand, you're probably interested in hearing the old things than I am interested maybe enough to tell you what I know about them. But beyond that, you're background and mine would be no ways near the same. And that was the same with them. Some of them-- Curly was a miner from way back. Joe Hougen was a prospector more than anything else. Not that he wasn't a miner whenever he went to it, you understand, but he started off with, let's say, less mining experience than Curly did, even though he was in there much earlier than Curly. He was out of there much before him, too, as far as that goes. But, the point is, they were not alike personally, that is, character wise.

SS: What about Park? Where did he fit in? Was he a miner or a prospector or--?

FM: He was a very shrewd miner, ^{prospector.} But he had that one feature until he got old, that I read about Downey down there in California, you know, in that '49 gold rush, 1849, you know. He was lamenting, I don't know whether you've ever read or seen his book, "LOOKING FOR GOLD", I believe that is; it's quite a book. And he would claim that he was getting fifteen hundred dollars a day with a pan down there, and that's right in ^{where} Downeyville, California is today, and someone come along and told him about something off somewhere and he just left it and when he come back ^{of course,} someone had the claim.

SS: Park Shattuck was like that, too?

FM: They're plain, and if you read his book he went to British Columbia and he went to South America looking for them Atex (Aztec) gold, you know, Atex, or whatever them, no, them ones that buried it with the guy when he died.

SS: You mean Aztecs?

FM: Aztecs, that's it. Yeah, down there and dig them graves, the Panama Canal, ^{that} area, ^{I think it} ^{was} ^{was}. As I say, they're true argonauts, them kind, and Park was one of 'em. You see, he was over here on Swamp Creek and they were doing pretty good; off to Alaska. See, there's a big difference between that fellow

and the one that--- now when Park got older he quit that. Well he couldn't do it any more, is the way to say it. I don't mean that he couldn't travel at all, but financially he couldn't do it, and furthermore, as you grow older it's ^{it's} normal you're going ^{to}, let's say, get more growed to one place. Most people do.

SS: Curly Darrow, he worked in a place-- he'd work it hard as -- he'd mine mostly and wasn't so interested in finding new places?

FM: True, he was much less like that. He had tried a few places, but he'd been down there in Bellflower, California mining, he and another fellow, small project, you know, but he headed right back here where he'd been before. He'd been here before mining, you know. He had run-- I think that was 1925 or '26, he had this hydraulic-- that much wanted giant-- of Carrico's, you understand, soon's he could get ahold of it, why then he hydraulicked quite a part of Reservoir Gulch with it. Well, then whenever he went off to California Hougen grabbed that, took it up to his diggings. And, I don't recall, but I believe it is 1936 that I have this-- I have the letter ^{yet} that Park got-- the Carricos granted it to Park that--

SS: Would Joe Hougen-- would he range the hills out here and did a lot more looking as a-- ?

FM: He did a lot of it ^{yeah}. He did, not only here but over into Moscow Mountain. He would prospect an awful lot, but prospecting and mining go together. You understand, if you've got -- if you have a claim in a placer mine that you can get enough out to keep you the rest of the year, that's ideal, see, and that's actually what they were doing. You see that would leave them to prospect and wander around as they wished in the off season. And the richer it was the more off season they had, is the way they say it. That's the best background I can give you on them fellows. They wanted to be out there alone, and make it alone, not have any help. Park resisted highly when I told him that he should get Old Age Assistance. He didn't want that. He didn't need

that he said. I said, "Park, you've gotta exist here if you're going to stay here." Well, he'd write to some friend he had ^{some} here, maybe he'd struck it rich. Pathetic, is what I claimed it was.

SS: Would you tell me that story again about Park on a ^{rage} when he saw that guy being buried?

FM: Oh, that was, that was when he started out. See, he told me his grandmother raised him. He never knew his parents, and he was raised in Boston, Massachusetts, or in a suburb of Boston. And his grandmother thought he was too young to go out West to go on a cattle drive. You see at that time, the cattle buyers would take their cowboys with them, you understand, young fellows, to drive the cattle out of Texas, and he drove up to Abilene, Kansas, he said, mostly, although he'd been in Wichita and other Kansas towns ^{but} to the railhead was what they'd drive. He said that they left him-- er, she thought that since his brother George was going along, why, she would let him go. He was only fourteen. And he said on one of the drives, I don't believe it was the first one, he said that they--there had come a big storm, and one of the cowboys ^{got} killed a night herder, somehow got killed in the stampede, or somehow with the horses or the cattle, and in the morning why the drover said, "Well, we can't take him along with us, where we're at here"-- they was out in the middle of nowhere-- he said we'll just have to bury him here. So, he said, "You fellows dig a grave and wrap him up in his blankets and we'll just bury him here." So they got the grave dug and got him ready for it and he come over and he said, "Any of you fellows got a Bible?" and nobody had a Bible. "Do any of you know any of the words?" No, none of them knew any of the words. "Well," he said, "the only words that I know is the last part of it," and, he said, "and that is the body shall be lowered into the grave." He said, "Put him in." And he said they stood there and looked at him like is ^{that} that all you're gonna say?" He said, "What the hell you waiting on? Throw him in and let's get on down the trail!" He said, they didn't have time for anything more.

SS: Do you think Park-- you learned a lot from Park?

FM: Oh, yeah. Why wouldn't you? He was quite a guy to keep pictures of anything that he had. 'Course pictures were not easy to come by in them days. And he would get them pictures out, you know, and we'd sit and he'd show me the picture and we'd read it. ^{I've} Got some big framed pictures of his mine in Alaska. He told me, I marked it down that there was four main photographers in Alaska and one of them main ones, I marked it down, whichever one he told me-- Hague was one of them, but that isn't the one that took the picture of the mine-- one of the other ones that he told me, I don't recall their names ^{just} now, but I could dig it out. And just like when he was on Swamp Creek, he said this fellow was new at it, a young fellow, ^{at it} and he wondered if they'd care if he went along with them, he wanted to take pictures all the way up there. There must be pictures, if they were any good that he took, of Trumbulls and all them places. Because he said that ^{is} whenever they put that hydraulic system-- it wasn't a giant, but you understand he used a canvas hose off of a flume-- actually the ditch come out on the ridge and then they had a flume coming from there out to where they wanted to use the water, see, and they hooked the hose in the end of the flume and they'd get the drop, you understand if you have an elevated flume put up on a scaffolding, the drop ^{will} give you, ^{is} what you want, you get the speed on the water. And I can show you the picture, there's two that he had of 'em. I showed you them the other day. ^{some of 'em.} The one is when the packer-- they got all this stuff unloaded and he was ready to go, he took a picture of the cabin, and he also took a picture of this set-up that they had. The old man told me about it years ago. 'Course that's before 1950. ^{already} That's the same, when he's telling about these cowboy incidents-- he told me oodles of stories of Alaska. 'Cause, naturally, that was his big experience in his lifetime. And he told a lot of his experiences whenever the rest of them'd be around, the other miners, you know. I told you, we'd hold kind of an informal miners' meeting, we'd always ^{have} his radio turned on, and

have the Death Valley Days on it, and then after that was over we'd talk about -- something about mining. Or someone'd say, "Park, tell us about the time you did so-and-so in Alaska, see? How did you thaw the ground up there? You understand they had to thaw the ground. "Where did you get the cord wood ^{the wood} to thaw the ground with?" Mind, the ground was froze solid all the way down as far as they went.

SS: How did they thaw the ground?

FM: They built a fire on top of it, even down in the hole, they built a fire and thaw it out. And that'll thaw so much and you'd get so much-- they had three shafts on that; the picture shows that they had three shafts that they worked on, and you understand every night they'd fire them and every day they'd muck one out after another, and they took out a hundred and thirty thousand dollars in one winter, so it must have been pretty rich, ~~down~~, in there. And after they got down to the bedrock they had to thaw yet, it was frozen right to bedrock, frozen solid. 'Course, that isn't unusual in Alaska, you know. There's lots of area up there today-- so long as the moss and stuff is on, the ground would stay froze indefinitely, it would freeze solid, and it will not thaw out. But if you keep the moss off of it, they claim, in time that it'll thaw out. I didn't know that either, but there was an old priest that was a missionary visited me here a couple of years ago and told me that. He said that he was trying to build a church up there, and of course, he said he knew that if you keep the moss off it, why, that'll thaw through in several years.

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SS: When a guy gets to want to hunt gold, do you think it's-- would you call it a bug? Is it the kind of thing that somebody gets addicted to like smoking cigarettes? And that's it; is it a lifelong---

FM: No, I wrote down one time and told you that it's a virus that bites you,

you don't ever get away from it, if it ever gets you. And you've got it like you would have malaria or something like that, it'll pop out any time on you!

(Chuckles) Isn't that right?

MRS. M: I'll say, 'Amen'. (Laughter)

FM: You have sane or reasonable times in your life, but most of the time, let's say, the other times you have gold in your mind. You have times when you're reasonable, ^{and sane} and you have to blend the two together to be successful with it. Because, if you let the gold get the best of you, your reasoning power is hurt, totally. And, of course, if you leave your caution get the best of you, you wouldn't invest in gold in the first place. Because there's no sure bet on it. (Chuckles)

SS: Do you think the way gold miners are, has that changed a lot? Than the way they were in the early days, or is it the same kind of thing in a person?

FM: Yeah, but there's bound to be very few real gold miners left because it's-- a true gold miner will not back down from it, he will forever hold that it's reasonable and sane to pursue the subject: Gold, see. So he would invest his last dollar or his last anything, his last bit of effort or nerve energy to still try and find it.

MRS. M: Anything he could beg or borrow or steal!

FM: Not necessarily so, but that would possibly be added on to it. And you see, it was very vividly brought to mind one time when there was a determination of surface rights here, after 1955, the law come in in 1955. You had to show that the ground was more valuable for mineral, which in this case happened to be gold, than it was for the timber products and whatnot that was on it. So I tried to get everybody that I knew to get in and dig and prove that it was more valuable. In other words, open it up and show that it had gold in under the ground. Well, most of the old-timers-- and it was very cleverly worded so that they would think they weren't losing anything, -- you could hold it by the old law, you could hold the mineral rights by the old law, but you

didn't hold the surface rights, see. You could hold it by the old law and do nothing, just ignore the notice they sent you, yeah. But you lost the surface rights when you did that, see. And I tried to tell 'em, but you just couldn't make a lot of people understand that, and they didn't want to go out there and dig and prove that. I took mine and took the 'dozer and opened it up and got an area open and when the examiner come along he could gold, I didn't have to show it to him, he could dig it easily, and it was right there easily got to. Well, he wasn't gonna dig down there six feet in the dirt to see if there was any gold under it, that wasn't his-- you were supposed to have it----- that he ~~could~~ inspect it, see. And this is normal. Just a great lot of them didn't succeed, they just simply lost the thing. And generally it ended up as-- if you contested ^{any} at all, ended up as a court trial. The Bureau of Land Management held it in there-- the Forest Service. And at this particular court trial that I-- you understand this is not defending myself, but I was a witness for one of these other fellows-- I was trying to help him, you know. And he asked me if I'd be a witness and I said, "Yeah," and this is relative to that dredge again, and it was a mining claim above where the dredge had worked, see, just at the end where it had stopped working, going up the stream. So, come my turn on the witness stand and I was asked about it and I said, "Yeah, the mining claim necessarily was pretty good. He hadn't done any work to prove it, but," I said, "I know it is." ~~Where~~ to base that. "Well," I said, "the base is this, that the dredge, when it was working up there, turned around just at the end of that claim and started back down because they weren't going to have water enough to get back to White Pine Creek, if they didn't turn around and start down stream again. Because it was summer, you understand, and we got the dredge in a month or six weeks too late, in moving it in there," and I said, "for this reason, they just moved away from it and left that." And I said, "They were on Ernie Northrup's ground when they turned around, and

Bill Burris told me himself he hated to turn around because the ground was very good, but he knew that he would be stuck sitting there for six months or eight without water if he didn't." You understand, the machine would be simply grounded, til they got enough water to move again. So he turned around and moved out of there. And, I said, "For that reason, this ground--" I said, "there's no reason to think that the gold shut off all at once, there," I said, "there's bound to be." And he had showed some little value, but not very much on his diggings, see, this defendant in this court case. So the next thing that the judge asked was whether I would be willing to spend time and money on that claim. See. He had asked every one of the witnesses this, and they all said, "Well, no." And, I said, "Yeah, you give me a favorable lease and I'll spend time and money on it." Well, that's the answer between who's the gold miner and who isn't.

SS: Did he get to keep the---?

FM: No, he lost it. He wouldn't spend time and money on it, see. And believe it or not, that is the standard gauge of it, that if you believe in a thing, you'll spend your time and money on it. You understand, if I'd a thought it wasn't worth it, I wouldn't have done it, that's for sure. One witness was a geology graduate from the college down here, and he wouldn't spend his time and money on it, he said. (Chuckles) Well, I had a basis whereby I could see-- where I **knew** that it would be worth spending some time and money to find out how good it is. And I know that Bill Burris-- he told me he wished he wouldn't a had to-- he said the ground was awful good up there. Lots of coarse gold on it. Down below, the farther you get down the finer the gold is, and the more scattered out it is, see. So your richer concentrations don't mean that they're down the river, they're always up towards the headwaters, or the source of it, more likely. The source of it leaves it beat up and scattered out all over the wide bottom, see.