

W IS: When they were building the railroad they brought everything on by boat because they was no road down there, in fact, there's no road where this grade was anyway. So the history was that there was an old guy working down there on the relocation. He's gone over the hill, and got plastered and ~~g~~ came back and died of pneumonia. No one knew him or knew anything about the history, but that was just something that somebody had said. So Mr. Langerquist, the previous manager of the Camas Prairie RR was going down the river with John Rudolfelt and he stopped there and he said, John put a marker up there at that grave and put a little fence around that grave. John said, what shall I name shall I use? Mr. L. said, oh, "Pat Ryan", so they put that on there. When they relocated, the Army Corp of Engineers naturally didn't want to want to disturb this grave, so they inquired of the UP, because that was a section of the UP. See, the Camas Prairie is composed of the UP, so they inquired around and there was a John Ryan, who was a freight agent. They wrote him and he wrote back and said it might have been a distant cousin. He said if there is any legacy just send it to him and he'd be glad to take care of it. Anyway, I have that picture. I was down there on a motor car one ~~XX~~ time and I took this picture.

*photo caption CHS*

*found photo + Quote*

HAL: Located where? IS: I'm not sure exactly, about 15 miles this side of Riperia. It's flooded in now, probably got 100 feet of water over it. IS: Shows Hal a picture and says, you probably have this picture. This was when they were building the Lawyer Canyon bridge. That bridge is 1600 feet ~~XXXXXX~~ long and 290 feet high. That was taken 6 years ~~ago~~ ~~when it was being built~~ before I was born--when the bridge was being built. ~~XXX~~ HAL: You were born in 1912? IS: yes.

*photo caption bridge construction*

IS: Anyway, there's a little story about that. There a fellow name Boyd Gribble--he's dead now--he was doing some work way up there at the top, and the road comes pretty close; if you were going the road to Grangeville you could look up there and see this bridge--you're within a stone's throw of it. There were some tourists down there. This lady hollered up there and said, how high are you? He says 290 feet. She yelled back, you damned liar, why don't you make it 300?

HAL: I've gotten this book. Seems to me it was the other way around.

IS: That's probably correct, because I think that's probably from the Lewiston side and they would be building this from the Lewiston side, they couldn't very well build it from the Grangeville ~~XXXX~~ side--there was no road in there. So, I think this is from the Lewiston side.

IS: Here's some pictures of the train stuck in the snow up by Fenn. Years ago they used to have quite a bit of snow up there and they'd send a couple of engines with a snow plow--they had an old Russell snow plow. This Russell would get stuck in the snowbank. What would happen is it would go thru and makd an alleyway and the next time they'd push the snow to the side and pretty soon the snow was up to the top of the engine at the crest there and then there was no place to push the snow. The Russell could hardly throw it, it could just push it aside. Then they'd get stuck in there. When I was working for the bridge crew they'd holler for us to go up and dig these things out. One time up there they'd broken the old Russell up, so the next time they took a big Gondola and filled it full of rock and the improvised a plow out of it. I don't know whether a train was stuck up there, but anyway they were rolling right along into Grangeville, doing fine, the snow was almost gone, and they hit a switch up there in one of those lumber ~~XX~~ yards, and they went ass over with 5 engines. Ron Jones, incidentally, has a picture of this wreck, taken from an airplane. There was one man, the fireman, and when the smoke cleared they couldn't find him. When they lifted one of the engines they found him underneath. HAL: What year was this? IS: I wish I knew. Ron will know.

*?*

*Snaky*

IS: There was so much noise, so much steam, so much commotion that some of the bridge men -- well one of them, had an involuntary evacuation. Pretty soon the story got out and everyone had a big laugh about it. That wreck was at the first lumberyard coming into Grangeville, west of Grangeville. And the date will be on that photograph.

((Shows another photo)) Here's a wreck at bridge 20 which, coming down that mountain, has a lot of curves. HAL: That's a GOOD photo. This is much better than those other two snow wrecks. Where did this happen?

IS: That bridge is gone now. It was the mouth of tunnel #1, between Culdesac and Rupins. There was a bridge there with a high trestle on it. It was a 16 degree curve coming all the way thru tunnel 1. They used that photo in several newspapers and magazines in the West.

HAL: For the tape recorder, let me just say somethings here. This is about a photo that Irwin letting me use. Right at ridge 20.

IS: Right at the west mouth of tunnel 1, between Culdesac and Rubins. The thing about this wreck is that it was caused by the engineer putting the air on the train at the wrong time. When they come down that mountain they have to very carefully handle the air. Lucky it didn't occur in the tunnel because that tunnel must be 1600 feet long.

HAL: This is interesting. It shows the old Lackwanna RR before they merged with Erie. I used to ride that. Sure messed the bridge up, didn't it?

IS: It's a cement and steel bridge now. That new road they build from Cudesac to Winchester, US 95, comes right underneath where that bridge was. Instead of going on the old curvy Winchester grade you go right up the canyon now.

HAL: There's one bridge across the highway, then you cross another and go right into the tunnel. That's the first of those two? IS: No, this is the second. The first is bridge 19. HAL: This would be right at the tunnel entrance. IS: Right.

IS: There's a funny little story: that first bridge, bridge 19, when they were buiding that bridge there was a contractor doing it. They had those great huge steel I-beams out there. They were lifting one of them up and it kind of damaged his crane. They'd been working up there at noon. In the evening, instead of walking to the end of the bridge and walking down that steep incline and rocky road, they just came down on one of those ropes. Well, one of those workmen didn't realize how slick that rope was--it had been raining a little bit. So he got ahold of that rope and started sliding down and ZIP! He just came down there like a bat out of hell. When he landed he broke both akkles.

HAL: What were some of the interesting experienced that you had on your job?

IS: I was a bridge man for 3 years then I was a depot agent for several years and then I was promoted to train agent and then I was chief clerk to the manager, so, I don't know, would you want to hear about some of the accidents? HAL: Things that interested you particularly.

IS: A bridge foreman, E.L. Viewen, they called him Bud Viewen. He was working on a bridge up on the Culdesac hill and he slipped and fell 30-35 feet right on his back on frozen ground. I was agent Culdesac at that time. I said I'd have a doctor here and the place warm and I'll notify Lewiston. When he brought him in we had a Dr. Marsh from Culdesac was there, and the railroad doctor and he came. Bud was wrapped up. They took him to Lewiston and you know, that man had only one bone in his wrist broken and that's all! He was the foreman and he probably didn't have corked boots on.

*Photo  
Caption  
Ch. 4*

*Snaky*

*Snaky*

IS: Another time, a kid was working on an old logger. They wore what they called "tin pants" and had these cork boots--boots with a bunch of spikes in them.

~~WHAT~~ HAL: What kind of work was being done on the bridge?

IS: They're always working on bridges. They had 3 bridge crews at that time and they did all kinds of work--replacing ties, stringers replaced, ~~XXXXX~~ posts replaced. Those huge wooden bridges deteriorate--the intermediate sills. Now they're using treated timber mostly. They did use creosoted timbers in the early days.

IS: We had another bridge man and he started to fall--he was working on the Orofino line--I'm sure the bridge we was working on was piling, so he gave himself a big shove to get clear. It happened to be his wife's birthday, and he thought too bad this happens today. It just happened the creek down below, filled with rocks, but he landed in a ~~XXXXX~~ pool that broke his fall. Didn't get much hurt at all--didn't lose any time off work.

HAL: When you were an agent, what sort of things normally happened?

IS: When I was agent I was also clerk of the school board and I was a scoutmaster and I had quite a workshop. It was during the war and people couldn't get work done. So as a public relations job I used to mend the milk cans and fix barn door hinges for free. ((Tells about spilling part of a can loaded with cream.))

HAL: That's interest--you're the first person to mention shipping cream or milk.

*funny 2*  
IS: Oh we shipped lots of cream. We used to ship a 5 gallon can<sup>s</sup> of cream from Grangeville or Culdesac and if it was warm weather the baggage man would put ice on top of it. They'd take it to Portland Seattle or Spokane for 36¢. The the empty can would come back. And the agent got 10% commission. There was one station--little station up near Ferdinand Idaho and the agent made \$10 - \$12- \$15 a month on cream commissions. That was a choice job because in those days they only made about 70¢ an hour so an extra ten bucks a month was gold.

HAL: What years would those be? IS: All the time that the passenger trains were running to Grangeville. Up until the early 50's.

The agents on the Camas Prairie, we were agents for the UP too, we rendered separate reports for the UP and the NP and the CP and separate reports for Western Union and Railway Express. We had 5 accounts. And at the end of the month you had to close all these accounts and you had all the monthly reports and get them all balanced out and everybody wanted theirs on time.

HAL: Did these people ~~XX~~ who shipped milk, could they say whether they wanted it to go by UP or ND? IS: No, we just loaded it on. If it was going to Spokane we'd ship it NP. If Portland or Seattle we'd ship it UP. Just to ~~XXX~~ Lewiston, we'd ship it Camas Prairie.

HAL: What other commodities, other than grain and lumber and cream, did you handle?

IS: ~~XXXX~~ Cream always went on a passenger train. Lot of times the stock that we loaded went on a passenger train. At Culdesac they would have what they called hog trains. There would be one Saturday a month--sometimes they had enough hogs to ship two cars a month. The passenger train would roll in and hitch up the stock car and take it to Lewiston; from Lewiston I didn't know where it went. We always endeavored to get what they called a 36 hour release. That permitted the railroad company to keep that stock in the car for 36 hours--and the railroad had to feed them on the way. It was kinda funny. One day they grabbed ahold of a

stock care with hogs at Culdesac onto the passenger train. And the passenger train used to make some pretty fast time from Culdesac to Lewiston because it was level and good track. They were rattling down there by Jack's spur which is half way between Culdesac and Lampway LAPNA and the brakeman, he stepped out on the step and he looked back to check and make sure that the care was all right. Somebody had sealed that car but they hand't sealed it through the glass. Well going down, that door opened and he looked back there just as one of these hogs rolled out of the car. He were going down about 60 miles an hour. They stopped the train and latched the door. The shipper went and found that hog and it wasn't hurt a bit!

IS: There was another funny story abouta hog. No connection with the railroad ((so I'm skipping it-fs))

HAL: Were you involved at all with the Nez Perse railroad?

ME IS: No, but the engine at Craigmont was, he made the interchange.

HAL: What's happening with that right now?

IS: I think they're just storing box cars. HAL: Those are gone.

IS: I don't know what's going on now. You could make a call up there.

IS: There's some history in the Camas Prairie railroad. Did you hear that that was started by a Johnson ~~KXXXXXX~~ who started from NezPerce, built the Craigmont and also started from Lewiston. HAL: Yeah, but he didn't go very far.

HAL: I know some about the NezPerce. I'd like to know more.

HAL: You said you were originally B&B and then you were agent and then you were chief clerk?

IS: Then I was claim agent.

HAL: Any sort of strange, interesting claims that you got?

IS: Well, quite a few. X At the time this occurred, I had just been promotøed to chief clerk to the manager. I guess the claim agent who had succeeded me was out of town, so the claim agent for the NP came down from Spokane and I went up to Orofino and helped him. It had happened that there was an empty logging train going out of Orofino and they were pulling empty gondolas. There was akid there, he'd go through one of those gondolas and then he'd stæp up on the end. He'd hop over to the next one, while the train was moving. I wouldn't do that for a million dollars. Well, he slipped and fell and the train ran over his legs. We rushed him to the hospital and he's still alive and still around here. His name is Adair.

HAL: Was there a claim against the railroad?

IS: Well, you know, I was chief clerk to the manager when that occurred and what kind of settlement was ever made, I don't know. But the RR wasn't at fault.

HAL: I'm curious about how things like that might turn out, because it's absolutely illegal to be on those trains.

HAL: Ever get any funny claims?

IS: Well, had one. This occurred in Feb or March. There had been a couple of warm days and I was told there was a fire up at Orofino--grass fire. I said, "A grass fire this time of year?" Yes, there is. So I went up there and I guess this little bit of grass had started burning. Didn't do any damage. I surveyed the scene and talked to one of the farmers who owned the land. The farmer had a big claim for the damage. I told him, the RR company and the farmers are neighbors. If we can help neighbors at any time we expect to and if the farmers adjoining the RR can help us, we always expect a little help from them. For instance, when we remove ties from the tracks the section foreman has orders to deliver this ties to the adjacent farmer if he wants them. And I said, this is an exhorbitant claim where no damage has been done. I said, if you want to figure out a claim that's fair, I'll entertain it. You know, I never heard another word from him!

IS: But some of these fellows think they'll just put in a big claim--the RR company has lots of money--they'll pay it. I had one claim, a friend of mine, a X young fellow, slid down a bridge--he didn't fall very far--this was up near Orofino. This man still lives in Orofino. They took him to the hospital and kept him there for awhile. They found he had two broken wrists. They released him to go to Missoula, the NP Hospital there. We hired a private plane to take him up there and I was going to go along with him. We just got a few miles out of the mountain and the fog was coming in and I told this pilot, my gosh man, you going over that mountain with all this fog? He said, well if it doesn't clear up pretty soon. It didn't and he got as chicken as I was and turned around and came back. Couple days later it cleared up and we went over. When they got him over there they found out he had two broken ~~XXX~~ ankles also! And they'd let him walk out of that hospital at Orofino on two broken ankles!

HAL: As claim agent, you were really busy all the time with claims?

IS: Well no, not always with claims. A claim agent on the Camas Prairie RR he was station supervisor and he was supply agent and he was claim agent and in the meantime he did anything else that management wanted. For instance, one time we had a fire up above Culdesac--quite a big fire--and the asst maintenance supervisor was on it and they got it quelled, and about 2 days later it broke loose again. So I organized a fire fighting crew and took them up there. During the first fire, I'd been delivering train crews back and forth. So that's just another way they used the claim agent. If they had a wreck, they'd say, bring your camera down, we want a picture. We were busy most of the time. Then of course we had a big file of tariffs and a steady stream of supplements came in and you had to file them uptodate, because about every 6 months they sent in an inspector and if you didn't have the latest supplement filed, you got a letter of reprimand. And on the Camas Prairie the claim agent had to issue the tariffs too.