

LETTERS FROM  
PIONEER EMMIT  
ROUTSON TO DAN

LEVAN - 1997 - Emmitt was  
90 years old.

EMMIT EUGENE ROUTSON  
Oct.22,1906 Sept 27,1997

Emmit E Routson was born in Weiser Idaho on October 22, 1906. His Parents were John And Lettie Routson, early pioneers of Idaho's wilderness.

Emmit and his family moved to the back country of Idaho in 1909. His family farmed and worked in mines, and the family carried mail on contract back there. Emmit himself carried mail until he was 12 years old. At age 12 in 1918

Emmit stayed in Weiser and started the 6th grade that fall. Although he never attended school before that it didn't take him long to catch up with the rest of the class. He graduated from Weiser High School in 1925. His mother was a teacher who gave him his home schooling, education in his younger years.

Shortly after graduating from high school he began his career with the Idaho National Forest. Beginning as a seasonal lookout, he finally attained the position as assistant ranger for Dan LeVan. He was assistant in charge of the Cold Meadows District. During the winter he worked in nearby mines close to the family home.

Emmit's career spanned 35 years with the Government of the Untied States with the Forest Service,U.S. Army, and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

Emmit married Nina Stover in the spring of 1935. then the couple moved from Weiser to take a job with the Idaho State Forestry Dept. in Clear Water County, Idaho where he superintended a C.C.C. crew of 200 men. In autumn when the C.C.C. camp closed Emmit got his first assignment with the U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service.

This assignment took the Routsons to Genesse, Idaho on the upper plateau above the Snake and Clearwater Rivers, the heart of the a rich wheat farming area. The area needed conservation problems solved to halt the increasing erosion of the land by water, wind, overgrazing, and lack of water.

Emmit and the SCS personnel were instrumental in alleviating the problem they built detention dams, sod-waterways,and brush rip-raps in all damaged areas. Educational programs were set in motion to instruct farmers on proper methods to avoid erosion.

After a brief tour in Moro, Oregon, Emmit returned to Genesse, and remained there until 1938. It was there that their first and only child, Janet was born.

One of Emmit's proudest accomplishments was having had a part in building The Sage Hen Dam in Boise, Idaho.

In 1944, at the age of 38, Emmit entered the Army, and received basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington. Emmit served with a Combat engineer unit in both European and South Pacific theaters.

After the war Emmit tried farming for a year but an injury sustained during the war prevented him from farming.

Emmit returned to the Soil Conservation Service at the Walla Walla River District in Washington state, then was later transferred to the Salinas, and Russian River Units in California. Emmit received a permanent assignment to Corning, California where he served 18 years.

After moving to Corning the Routsons started going to Hat Creek to cool off and fish. The love of fishing and the love of the area helped Hat Creek become their place to go for 46 years.

It was there he taught his 2 year old Grandson how to fish. He taught his family his love for the mountains, and the skills of fishing.

Emmit was better known to his family as "Poppy"

Emmit taught his grandson Dale the love of the outdoors, He taught his grand daughter Susan how shop, and through the years talked to his youngest grandson Loren about engineering.

Emmit moved to Avel in 1988 but he returned to Idaho almost every year to fish, and do a little prospecting. His last trip was made when he was 88 years old

Emmit knew no strangers. His kindness and generosity will be remembered by all the people he touched over the years.

"Poppy", never thought bad about anyone. He had heart enough for everyone that needed it. The love he spread to everyone he met makes it harder to say good-bye, but as we all know, if "Poppy" could say anything he would say '

"OH CUT THAT OUT AND DON'T CRY" We will all miss him.

This material has been copied from a family obituary sent to me Dan LeVan by his daughter Janet Vinson.

Much, much more will be added to Emmit's story from a collection of other papers November 21 1997

#### 90 YEAR OLD EMMIT ROUTSON'S LETTERS

After more than fifty years of non-communication with this old family friend it would seem that there would be nothing to talk about. Nothing but memories

I received Emmit's address from Peter Preston who had recently had the good fortune to interview Emmit and collect three hours of taped conversation about the by-gone days. Peter said that Emmit was 90 years old but sharper than a tack and had a love for talking.

Last year in early 1997 I wrote to Emmit, and during the year I received three letters from Emmit before he passed away in September.

I am going to copy parts of my letters to Emmit as a lead in for copying his letters. This is being done on computer for permanent record.

18 February 1997

Dear Emmit,

I have been thinking about You, Noel, and your entire family often in the past few years. Some of the occasions come by way of Peter Preston's questions, and discussions, some from reading accounts in the book "History of Warren", but mostly the thoughts come from jogged memories of the Big Creek country.

Noel and I had been writing back and forth for over ten years. It was hard to have him leave us even though we knew it was to happen.

[2]

A couple of weeks ago my aunt Noma sent a few photos to me that I have copied and, am sending to you. They are from her Big Creek days. Of course you recognize the two strapping young husky mountain men at the Werdnoff mine.  
How old were you and Noel then?

Aunt Noma and I talk about you all when we get together. I am trying to write her memories, and I am writing my memories of Mom, and Dad, and Dad's biography, trying to help Peter Preston all I can.

It has been an interesting couple of years, and I am really getting homesick for the backcountry.

Do you remember a few tales or yarns about Mom or Dad that I might use for stories.

I am signing this letter with love, because the Routson ,Levan connection has been one of love  
Love To All Of You

Dateless

Dear Dan and Family:

You don't know how I felt when I got your letter yesterday, [sic] and happy! I got to thinking that I had been forgotten. Yes! I think of the back country in good old Idaho all of the time and all the wonderful people that lived there in the early days.

There isn't many people left that can be called old timers of that country outside of My sister Edna, Brother Bob and myself. We are all that I can name, and we are actually second generation old timers..

The old timers that I remember when I was a kid were Dave Lewis [legendary cavalry scout and Cougar hunter]. The three Caswell brothers who discovered several mines back there. Kid Gardener, and Aauty, Joe Elliot and his brothers, Bill Mitchell, The Jensen brothers, Jake and Eric who owned the mines on crooked Creek, Matty Mann on Ramey Ridge, Clerence Scott, The Edwards family who had several mines and established Edwardsburg, Tony Lardrick, Jess Root and his father explorers and settlers there, Earl Norcroft, Bert Stump, Shorty Yardley, Ed James owner of a small ranch who was a packer for your Dad for several years, and Bill Yates. Then over in Thunder Mountain country were the Dan McCrey family, The Taylors on Monumental Creek, and The Stonebreakers of Crooked Creek and Chamberlin.

You see Dan, my Dad came to Big Creek in 1909 and in 1910 the family followed. I was 3\* old, Edna was 5, and Noel was 1 and a half years old. We first settled on the Caswell ranch, and later moved up Big Creek and lived on the Shorty Yardley Ranch. Dads bought the ranch from Shorty in 1912 and we lived there until 1918 when I came out to Weiser to go to school.

Now Dan I want to tell you that your Dad was a wonderful person, and also your Mother. Dan, your father and I had lots of time together riding the Districts, and on fires.

One time we were called out on a fire over on the breaks of the Middle Fork, and the main Salmon river. Now that is rough country and after you get there you don't come out ever day. There was you dad, Warren Boles, Ed Applegate, Alvin Pottenger and myself.

We were camped above the bluffs, and there was only one place we could get to the river for water. [it was a two mile walk down ]

The fire was a bad one and kept burning, and burning.

We were there about two weeks, and the last ten days we lived off of the country as we had ran out of any thing to eat, so we caught fish from the river, and killed grouse with rocks. All we had was fish and grouse those last days.

We would broil fish with water as we had no lard. The grouse were baked over our camp fire. Wasn't bad when you were hungry.

Oh yes I forgot Slim Vasser, he was one of us. Slim and I were the only two with fish line which we always carried wound around our hat bands. We slipped away each day and went down through the bluffs to the river and got the fish which was no trouble. It was really not fun at all carrying enough fish back up the hill to feed all of us. For ten days fish and grouse, but at least it was food.

One thing I remember about your mother was her beautiful voice. During the evenings, whenever we were not out on fires we would get on the phone lines and sing songs back and forth. Your mother always took the prize.

I remember you kids, You and Wanda when ever I came to Big Creek. You kids would always come a running to meet me when I was coming down the road. Always had a wonderful meal at your house when we came in.

Another time, Tom Coski, (a pulling the mule string) and I pulled into Big Creek, your aunt Noma came running down to meet us wearing a billowey white dress. Well those mules had never seen a girl in a white dress, so mules spooked and went ever where. It took us an hour to round up the mules, and get things all settled down.

Yes, Dan you get me talk'in about the back country I can't stop.

I remember ever thing that happened in there when I was a kid, and also the fine people that lived up there.

Things have changed with the Forest Service people, and they aren't the same kind of people as when your Dad was head ranger for so many years. Your Dad was one of the(people) of back there and he was always helping.

If you see your aunt Noma tell her that I think of her often, and have always wondered how she was, and where she was all of these years. Where is your sister Wanda?

Now the time Dan and I were covering the District starting at Thunder Mountain we went to Two Point Peak lookout, then took the old General Bernard trail from there to the Dave Lewis ranch. That trail came down through the bluffs, and we had to keep moving the packs back on the mules so they wouldn't slide over the mules heads. I tell you, that trail was straight up and down.

It would be nice to see you people and we could have quite a visit.

Dan, I'm 90 years old, but still love the Back country and still remember ever thing back there.

With My love and best wishes.

Emmit Routson

P.S. One time your Dad roped a bear at the mouth of Hungry Creek on our way to Grass Mountain. We couldn't get the rope off the bear, so he got away with your Dad's rope. Your Dad was a real cowboy

5 March 1997

Dear Emmit:

I am equally happy to receive a letter from you, and I am so glad that you are still attached to the hills and rivers along with all of the history that emerged from all of the goings on back there.

It was a time, and a world that is slowly becoming an evening shadow of a fantastic day. It was a way of life created by the kinds of people that felt and appreciated the closeness of family, and the power of frindship that were bonds, for a common feeling that desired [demanded] the best for the pure honest ways of nature back there.

Gee I'm glad you are here to write to. I will probably drive you crazy with questions.

[4]

*Have Jim  
show me  
where  
this  
is  
Yes to  
Pioneer  
Creek -  
add to  
descript*

Dad was always extremely proud of you men that worked with him. He had a lot of fun with that old bunch of young men. He felt that a lot of you who started with him were like brothers to him. Why didn't tape reorders exist when you all sat around swapping lies around the camp fires?

I enjoyed your tale of, the fire on the Middle Fork and having to live off the wild game that you were forced to work so hard at getting.

The pictures I am enclosing are some that Noma sent to me. She had quite a few pictures of that year 1931 when she spent the summer with us and helped cook for the big fire crews coming through on their to the many fires that year.

Aunt Noma had a crush on you, I know that for sure.

Were You at Big Creek Hq. when Dave Lewis came in just before he died? I can remember seeing him come riding into the Ranger Station. He had ridden the gray horse up the trail from his place 30 miles away. He mentioned to Dad that he fell off of the horse several times and old horse just stood there beside him waiting for him to climb back on by grabbing a stirrup and pulling himself up 'til he could reach the saddle horn. I can remember seeing him lying on the old army cot next to the east wall of the main office in the commissary He told dad and I to take good care of his ole' horse and dog.

Noel, and Dad and others counted eight ticks imbedded in him, along with other bad spots like wounds. When the ambulance came in from Cascade they started working on Dave, and the ambulance pulled out right away. He died on the way to Cascade, and Boise. There are several different versions of his death depending who told the story. One thing we know is that the newspaper stories were not all correct. I guess news papers haven't changed much, have they?

Noel once told me that he thought You and brother John had worked on all of the landing fields that exist back there. Do you know when they were built? Were there any unusual things, or interesting stories concerning any of them?

I will always remember your Dad coming to the house, and asking Mom, "Where's the cribbage board"? They always played running score games, playing three games a session. They enjoyed the challenge and each other very much. After the game there was always a chunk of pie or cake, and a cup of coffee before your dad took off for home, the Werdenoff Mine. One fond memory of mine is stopping off at the Werdenoff on our way up the road to pick Huckle Berries.

We were always greeted lovingly by your Mom. We always looked forward to those visits. Life was such fun in those days.

I have a copy of your sister Adelia's book which I have read and re-read many times. I have read several times your brother Noel's manuscript "Memories of an Old Prospector". I think it was 1986 when Noel first showed me the manuscript.

By the way Emmitt, [Where is Your book?] I have copies of and read both of John Carrey's books, and I have a copy of, and read Ed James's book "Hanging and Ratteling" So far my favorite book is "The History of Warren Idaho 1862--1942." It has so many stories, and so much information. Soon the gates will all be closed and we will have no more wilderness raised people, because now all must live outside of the designated Wilderness that is why it is so important to collect, and record all of the personal recollections that we can.

So Long for Now  
Dan

Letter # 2

*Need to put in bibliography also*  
*yes did*  
*chapter 9 till abt Shortey p. 188 done + copied on disk*

Dear Dan and Pat;

Got your nice long letter, and was glad to hear from You. Now to start things off, I will tell you how "Dave Lewis" got that little gray horse, "Shorty". It was back in the early spring of 1924 and my brother John was transferred from the Salmon National Forest where he was a ranger, over to the Idaho National Forest. to be the ranger at Thunder Mountain.

Brother John crossed the Middle Fork at the Old Easter place, and took the trail up over Burnt Creek summit. John got too high and missed the trail. He was traveling under the high bluffs where there was still lots of snow on the steep slopes. John had three head of horses, two were pack horses, and one was his [sic] saddle horse. They were all three tied together, and John was walking and leading them. All at once the feet went out from under the saddle horse, and down the mountain they went. When John got there, it had killed the saddle horse and one of the pack horses had a broke leg. There was a big gash in the hind quarter of the little gray horse. John left his outfit there and walked on to the Dave Lewis place. Later on during the summer brother Noel went back and brought the little gray horse and the other one {healed} out to Dave's place. Brother John gave Dave Lewis the little gray horse Shorty.

That little horse turned out to be one of the best horses ever. He always stayed right there on the ranch with Dave. That horse played a part when brother Noel got caught in the rock slide. On Dave's last trip up Big Creek he was on the little gray horse. When Dave left, your Dad took little Shorty and took care of him the rest of his days as far as I know.

Brother John was Ranger at Thunder Mountain the winter of 1924-1925. John and Blacky Wallace worked on two bridges on the South Fork. Then John was given the Landmark District on the Payette National, and was there two years. Blacky Wallace went back to the Cold Meadows District

There were four districts then, there was the Thunder Mountain, Cottonwood, or Cold Meadows, Chamberlin and the Big Creek. Later all four were put into one, and your Dad was Ranger over all of them.

Dan, I was not at headquarters when Dave Lewis came up the Creek, but Noel was there, and knew the story which he gave to me. Noel was Fire Dispatcher at the time, and your Dad had him call Dr. Ward of Cascade, and had him come in, and they took Dave out in an ambulance. Dave was a tough old bird who was in his 80s.

Now! talking about the stories written by Noel, Adellia, John Carrey, and Ed James. They got a lot of things mixed up. and there is just a lot that isn't right in all of the books. Noel was only seven when Bob was born, so he didn't remember ever thing as it happened. Adellia got a lot of things mixed up, why, I don't know.

The Ed James story is just a big bunch of B.S.! John Carrey is pretty good, but still is off in places. The two Forest Service men that put Hardrock Elliot in the ground was Emmitt Routson, and Dick Cowmen. Dick is still alive and is living in Star, Idaho. I saw him three years ago.

Now about the airfields, or strips. The big fires of 1931 started things off (by proving a need for quick or close access to more parts of the country) In 1932 we built the landing field in Cold Meadows. Tom Coski packed the drain pipe for the field in from Big Creek on the government pack string mules. John Cook, Art Francis, Walt Hinkley, and myself built that field.

The fall of 1932, Myself, John Cook, Dick Cowman, and Tom Coski built the field on Soldier Bar. That was quite a job as we had to blast so many rocks on the field. Bob Johnson was the first flyer to land on Soldier Bar when it was finished. Also that year of 1932 landing strips were built at the Crandel Ranch on the Middle Fork, at our old ranch on Big Creek, also the one at the Caswell Ranch

Emmitt continues--The first one to land at the Caswell Ranch was Bob Johnson, when he and brother John came in to get brother Noel after he was caught in the landslide. That was the first plane to fly into that country.

(Noel was hurt in the landslide on April 21st, 1931. The following words are from Noel's story from his "Memories of an Old Prospector" page 13. The second day after the accident the trail crew made a stretcher and started carrying me up Big Creek, we arrived at the just made airstrip about 4:00 pm. (Men from mines and a few others cleared a wild hay field to make a strip at Cabin Creek) Bill Gowen the pilot was already there with my brother John who came along as guide. This was the first plane to ever land in that country along lower Big Creek. Noel is the correct person. The first airstrip was this one built in 1931, the rest were 1932 and later.

Yes, talk about fires in that back country, I tell you I was on a lot of them. John Cook and I, Art Middleton and I, and lots more. John Cook and I were on a fire over on the Breaks of Middle Fork, John killed a little cub, and we lived a week on bear meat cooked over a fire on a stick.

John Cook was one of the best to be with. Wilmer Shaver was another good one. Ed Applegate was a dandy person and could take the hard knocks. Dick Martin was a little man, but was always there when it came to rough times. Dick Cowman was tops. Dick Martin and my brother Bob packed Don Park out of the big Salmon River fire. He worked so hard on so many fires he just gave out.

In 1923, when I was 17 I packed mail for Dad from Warren to Clover once a week, 120 miles. That was the year they built the power line from Elk Creek to Warren to run the dredge. The Forest Service built the trail down Big Creek. Hornburger had a road crew on Warren Summit, and Elk Summit.

I got a picture of Noma sitting on a big stump at the mouth of Smith Creek when we had that fire down there in 31. I have another one where she was coming down the road in her white dress that sat the mules agoing.

I am going to write to Noma, I don't think she will remember me after all of these years. If I had known she lived in Emmett I could have looked her up. I go through there every year on my way to the back country.

You know my brother John was a Lookout Roots Knob the year of 1917. That part of the country was Forest Service then. They had a Lookout, named Z.T. Charry on Sheepeater Mt. lookout. And a telephone line run from Sheepeater to Chamberlin Ranger station. When John spotted a fire he sent his messages to Sheepeater by heliograph, whenever the sun was shining. Sheepeater would forward the messages by phone to Chamberlin.

What ever became of Roy, Allen's twin brother? What happened to your Dads brother that lived in Washington? I went down there one time to see Noma. I think it was the spring of 1932.

In the fall of 32 John Hand, Alvin Pottenger and Myself built the lookout house on Lookout Mt. We got snowed on for about 10 days. Later that fall Alvin Pottenger and I started building the house on Cottonwood Butte, but Alvin rammed an ax in left foot, and was taken outside. (to a Doctors care) Billie Morris, Delbert Picket and myself almost got the house finished, but heavy snows stopped the work, and we finished the house next spring. During the summer of 30 Dad Short, Myself and a Finnish boy from Long Valley built the house on Roots Knob. The spring of 1934

Dick Cowman and Myself built the house on Acorn Butte. That was the spring that Hardrock Elliot passed away. The summer of 34 I helped erect the steel tower on Cold Mt. I had packed that steel tower up to Cold Mt. on two little mules. I had twenty foot lengths of steel.

John Cook, Wilmer Shaver, Dick Cowman and I wintered down on Big Creek across the river from the Dave Lewis place. We had three tents logged up. We built telephone line from our old ranch heading down river, but didn't get the job finished before spring. We had a big gray horse with us that none of us could ride. so your Dad topped him off for us. Got a picture of your Dad on that horse down Big Creek

Now you people take care of your selves, and I hope I hear from you again.  
With my best wishes and lov

Emmit E Routson.



Guess I didn't see you

When You waved that last goodbye. Pat was driving.

I am glad that your memory is good, because the information you have been sending me is very interesting and so very important to me. "Thank You Sir"!

I will not notice, nor will I say a word about your mis-spelled words if you won't notice mine, agreed? O.K.

Dad's brother Jim from Prescott, Washington died of a heart attack in the 1940's. He was superintendent of a grain storage company.

Edward was Allen's twin brother who died after all of the others, yet he was in ill health more often than the others. Roy was the youngest of the boys. A prince of a guy who died of a heart attack in Walla Walla Washington after 1956. Allen died after Dad in in 1967. He was full of fun and B.S. all of his days. He had a good time pulling jokes, and pranks on people, and having them pulled on him.

Dad and Allen were each others favorite target much of the time. Allen pulled a few good ones on me, darn his ornery hide.

I write to the Cowmans at Christmas time. Sophie is the one who writes back. She has become quite a good painter. "A beautiful Lady doing beautiful work"

Thank you for the landing field stories and their dates of construction. I have always been interested in the various fields since I have had occasions to be flown into or out of most of them. All I can say about the fields is "You Boys Shor Done Good Work."

You certainly have done a lot of things, and covered a lot of ground back there. All over the country back there can be heard the silent foot steps of you men. They are now only echo's of what was.

I was a husky guy and a hard worker, and held my own when it came my turn, but I believe that I would have hated to try to keep up with you Mountain Goats.

Your letter are treasures, Thank You very much

Love from the LeVans

Dan

Letter # 3

Dateless

Dear Dan, and Family:

Got your letter yesterday, so will try and answer it back today as I never like to let the grass grow under my feet when it comes to answering questions of the past.

It was early spring, and fire season hadn't started yet. There were four of us. John Cook, Wilmer Shaver, Dick Cowman and Myself maintaining trails and telephone lines from Cold Meadows to Coyote Springs, Cottonwood Butte, and Black Butte. We had finished up and got there early in the day, so we decided to drop everything and go fishing in Big Creek. We took all the horses and outfits with us and headed for the Caswell Ranch at the Mouth of Cow Creek. We got down to Cow Creek in about two hours and set up camp, Turned all of the stock out to graze except our saddle horses then headed for Big Creek about two miles away. We fished a while and got all of the fish we wanted and headed back for camp.

When we got back to camp, there was Dan LeVan. He had a fire going, standing over the fire with a big frying pan in one hand and a can of Sardines in the other.

Dan said "I didn't think you fellows could catch a mess of fish, so to be sure we had fish for supper I brought this can of Sardines along just in case." I never knew how Dan knew we would be camped there, but he did. The Sardenes was just a joke! Just like Dan to try to joke on us. We did have fish for supper and breakfast. We did take a dip in Big Creek while we were there to wash off about three weeks of grime. Sure felt better after that dip.

Dan LeVan and I had traveled most of the west part of his district, we covered the Big Creek, Thunder Mountain, and Cold Meadows sectors. We had been out for

about two weeks, camping out ever night. We would always get in camp, or make camp early enough to go fishing, our principal diet was fish and camp bread. We had other grub with us, but it was easy to fry a pan of fish, and make some camp fry bread. Anyway it was fish for breakfast , fish for lunch and lots of fish for supper. We liked fish. Anyway we were coming up lower Big Creek one morning and Dan pulled up, got off his horse and was just standing there sort of humped over. I asked what was the matter. He said he had a bad belly ache.

The Sarvest berries were all good and ripe, and Dan was standing under a big Sarvest berry bush. I said, "Dan eat a hand full of those berries", which he did and in a few minutes his belly ache started going away. Too many fish and no acid was the trouble. I didn't have the belly ache but I sat and had a few berries myself. From then on we would add a little fruit to our diet even if we only had Sarvest berries.

Once the crew was camped on a flat on lower Big Creek working trail, and building telephone line. There was Wilmer Shaver, Dick Cowman, Frank Lobar, John Cook, John Reader, Dan LeVan and Myself. One of the crew had a gray horse that put up a good buck when we tried to ride him, and we all took turns trying to stay on him. One Saturday morning we were all in camp, and Dan said "Put my saddle on that horse, and I will show You fellas how to ride him". So we did just that. Dan got up in that saddle and that horse started to buck. "Now Dan LeVan, (your dad) worked that horse over, and rode that horse. I have a picture of that ride. Anyway that horse turned out to be a good saddle horse do to Dan topping him off.

Dan I guess you know this, but Dan, (your dad), and Wilmer Shaver were cowboys for Sam Ross over in Jordan Valley, Oregon country before they came to work for the Forest Service. Also Bob Rentile was a cowboy with them. Bob Rentile pulled the lift string ( supply packstring) into Chamberlin for a couple of years when we built the bridge. in 1925.

Your Dad and Hubert Knipe wintered at Big Creek the winter of 1925-1926 and finished the ranger station house. Hubert was transferred to the Salmon National Forest in the spring of 1926, he was a ranger.

Now this next story may not be of interest to you, but I will tell it anyway.

Dan, and I were going from lookout, to lookout trying to locate water closer to the lookouts so that the Lookout wouldn't have to walk so far to get water. We pulled into Black Butte about 10:00 am and thought it was a good time to rest the horses and get a bite to eat. We pulled the packs and saddles off the stock and let them forge. We were there about an hour then decided to go on over to the Gardener Ranch to camp. We got all of the horses gathered except Dan's saddle horse, and do you think we could catch him? NO! We chased, begged, and done ever thing but catch the horse. We started off down the mountain without the horse, but he followed. Dan and I rode double. We put Dan's saddle on one of the packs.

We went on to the Gardener Ranch, made camp, and stayed all night. Next morning Dan went out and caught his old horse without any trouble. The rest of the trip went along good, and that horse had a changed attitude. Never did figure out what made that horse so contrary that day.

With My Love and Good Wishes

Emmit E Routson

401 N. A Ave.Avernal Calif. 93204

This letter was the last one I received from Emmit, who passed away much too soon..

I did receive one of the Mt. LeVan request forms that Emmit had filled out. I copied it then sent it to the Government Committee for Geographic Names.

I have copied his reply on the computer to be printed with the rest of this letter  
Dan H LeVan Jr. 12 December 1997

U.S. Board of Geographic Names  
Dear Sirs:

There is no one now alive that knew Dan LeVan like I did or ever did. I worked for Dan a good many years, and was his Assistant Ranger over the Cold Meadows, and Thunder Mountain Districts for five years.

Dan and I fought fires together, built trails together, hung telephone lines together, hunted elk together, went fishing together, and traveled our districts together.

I want you to know there was no finer person then Dan LeVan, and I wish Forest Service had more men like him today  
5/28/97

Emmit Routson