

Interview with  
Norma Pocaterra  
by  
Tom Gooden

Interview with Norma Pocaterra by Tom Gooden on Tuesday, January 17, 1978.

Tape: RCT-207

Topic of Interview

Speed: 3 3/4

The first Dude Ranch in Canada: "Buffalo Head" operated by George Pocaterra, 1905-1933.

Tape

Footage: Side I: 000-702

Side I

Subject

0013

Alan Seymour came to George and Gorth Weite and asked them to set up a dude ranch. Alan was from the C.P.R. Tourist Dept. so he was able to suggest to George that he would provide all the dudes.

0026

The first dude ranch was set up sometime before 1929. Norma met George in 1934.

0041

George met many interesting people. One was Harper Sibley, who had a cattle ranch east of High River, who came to the dude ranch in the summer time with his family.

0051

George conducted hunting parties into the Kananaskis.

0056

He also hunted with the Indians. During the terrible winter of 1906 and 1907, George was out with the Indians all winter looking for animals, but the snow was so deep that they were all found under the snow.

0070

George became the adopted son of Three Buffalo Bills (sometimes Norma called him "Bills")

George was a Blood brother to Spotted Wolf who was the natural son of Three Buffalo Bills.

0077

George grew up with Spotted Wolf and Johnny Bearspaw - son of Moses Bearspaw. Norma says they were all fine men.

0093

Norma says she is sorry that she has forgotten so many of the stories that George told her.

<u>Tape Footage</u>	<u>Subject</u>
0097	George first came to Manitoba but wanted to be in the mountains. - Travelled to east of High River where he worked on a farm.
0102	- Then he rode a horse all along the foothills by the Old Man River hunting for the very place he wanted to settle.
0107	- He found a beautiful place on the Highwood (River).
0108	- He met his first Indians while cutting timber for a barn across the river from his house.
0128	Paul Amos, his very good friend. - Government wanted George to give Indian names to the mountains.
0151	- Talked about Paul Amos bringing his friends of the Stony tribe down to the Kananaskis to work: cutting and building fences and also making roads into coal mines. - George had started looking for coal mines before the first World War. - The coal was very good but too hard to mine so had never been touched. - Area called the Pocaterra mines was only mine not owned by the C.P.R. Norma is not sure where the mines are located but they are high up in the mountains near Pocaterra Creek.
0230	
0253	- Sometime in the 1940's, George protested the raising of the Upper Lakes in the Kananaskis. - Calgary Power was against him.
0342	- George and Norma came back from Italy in 1940.  - They settled in a cabin across the river from his original ranch and lived off George's hunting and fishing.
0388	- Stayed one year, had a very mild winter.

<u>Tape</u> <u>Footage</u>	<u>Subject</u>
0400	- Norma located the Buffalo Head Ranch fronting on the Highwood River with Flat Creek to the west and Sullivan Creek to the east.
0431	- During summer of 1941 they took the Sibley boys and friends up the mountains to a cabin on Pocaterra Creek. - One Indian came along, 2 saddle horses and 4 pack horses; the Sibley boys had their own horses.
0460	- Norma tells a story of one horse named Tom who was very lazy but yet beat them to the camp. - This amazed her as there were no trails cut yet the horse knew his way to the camp site where there was a good pasture.
0489	- George would take Norma fishing. - Always gave her the best spot but she has never caught a fish. - The fish would be smoked by George and eaten all winter.
0524	- Spoke of Donald Rider who is presently living on the Morley reserve and is the grandson of Spotted Wolf who was Paul Amos.
0557	- Interviewer discusses with Norma his next assignments in regards to the history of the Kananaskis.
0702	- It was two years before George knew that a Creek was named after him.

End of Interview.