

# GEORGE ANNAND

Oral History Project  
June 16, 1995

Interviewer: Leslie Robertson

Waterton Lakes National Park  
in conjunction with:  
Waterton Park Community Association  
Alberta Historical Resources Foundation



**George Annand of Lethbridge,  
Alberta**

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**Interviewed by Leslie Robertson**

Leslie: It's the 16th of June, I'm sitting here in the warden office with George Annand and we are going to begin an interview now. Mr. Annand maybe you'd like to start with some of your family's history in the park here.

George: Well, when we first came in it was about 1920, I believe. We came in just in the summer. We had a farm out here oh, around fifteen miles or so north of Mountain View. We grew vegetables. We used to bring in fresh vegetables in the summertime. We'd come in oh half a dozen times a year with lettuce, radishes, all fresh stuff. And in the fall we'd supply the cookhouses open then. At that time they opened all winter, we'd supply them with potatoes and turnips and things like that. And in 1922 we came in and we had a dairy situated at the campground out at Pass Creek. Is that what they call it now, still Pass Creek? O.K.

It's Pass Creek. And at that time the bridge, the original bridge took off right at the bottom of the Red Rock where it goes up the hill. The road came in there, the big bend, and there was a log bridge across there made of lodgepole pine with a plank deck. That was the first original bridge across Pass Creek. But when we moved there they had another bridge built because the road went through, right over the bridge and through the campground.

They built another bridge just upstream about ten feet from the original existing bridge and so we had room to pitch our tents there. Our low corral, we had our cows, and our living tent and our milk tent. We bottled the milk, separated the cream and so forth. And we did that for two summers. We'd come out from May 'til September and move back to the farm. But in 1924 we come out and stayed. Dad built the house and the barn, so we stayed from then on, that was we stayed permanently in Waterton. That was 1924.

Leslie: And how old were you then?

George: I was nine in that fall of 1924. I went to school there that year in that house next to the Kilmorey. It's still there, been added on since then and that's where my sister and I, only eight or nine pupils I think, went to school there. And, I don't know, do you want me to keep on going ...with school stuff?

Leslie: I could ask you a question here...what was it like for you to move into the park after having been...?

George: Oh it was great 'cause I was isolated. I was more or less a loner cause my sister was gone away to school and I was left alone pretty well, but coming in here you

know I had kids to play with my own age and it was pretty nice. Thought that was great. It was quite a change (laughs). But like I say we lived down, you remember where we lived, down by the end of the [Middle] lake where Andy Russell used to live.

Leslie: On the old stables site?

George: The old stables, yeah. Dave Simpson bought it eventually from Andy Russell, I believe. He had it, oh, I think he had it last. Anyway, that's where we lived and we had a dairy there one year that was '24 and '25. In the spring of '26 we sold the dairy and my dad went to work on the hotel, Prince of Wales Hotel construction in the summer of '26.

I went to school, of course walked back and forth, I guess it was about a mile and a quarter up [to] the town site that was one way. So that's where I lived and went to school here all the rest of the years. Right until 1932, I guess. I think I quit school in '32.

Leslie: Must have been pretty exciting, the building of the Prince of Wales.

George: Oh, it was great 'cause there was a lot of families in...I don't know how many families were in here. A lot of kids that year and we had school in the beer parlour that year (laughs) because the original school wasn't built then. There was one school in the beer parlour and the other school on the back street, the high school.

Leslie: Whose beer parlour was it?

George: That was the Waterton Lakes Hotel we called it then. Don't know who owned it. Kuschel I believe owned it at that time, it was Leigh Kuschel that owned it, and Greenway. [Kuschel owned this hotel but considerably later than the time period George is referring to. Greenway did not have anything to do with this operation.] Anyway we went to school there. They closed the beer parlour early in September '26 and we went up there until the following, I think we had to leave in May, I'm not sure, before the school term was out.

And then we moved oh, various places around the park, scattered all over. Then I think they built the first half of the school in 1928 and the lower grades went there, but we still went to various places around the park. One place we went was a big two storey white house on the back street, it's still there, and we went to school in the bottom half of that. And the following year in 1929 we moved into the regular school as you see it now. The other half was built, so it would accommodate all the students, grade one through eleven. And of course from then on that's where we went to school. I don't know whether I've showed you that school picture, I should have brought it I guess, it's 1931.

Leslie: No.

George: I have it at home. I was going to bring it and I forgot it. Shows all grades in 1931. Anyway I've got it at home if you'd like to see it sometime I'll bring it up.

Leslie: Uh-huh

George: O.K. Well, from then on I just worked around the park and went to tech in Calgary three summers. When the war broke out in '39 away I went. And I came back in 1945. I was gone just over five years I guess from the west here.

Leslie: Did you see big changes after the war?

George: Quite a few, yeah. Well not really so many here. Yeah, there was some, I guess, not that many though right away. But things changed quite rapidly after the end of World War II. It did change quite fast.

Leslie: What sort of things?

George: Well, the administration and the influx of tourists, businesses, so on, so forth. Was quite a rapid change from then on.

Leslie: There was a boom?

George: A boom more or less, that's right, at that time. It just rapidly increased and increased. Of course park staff increased as well over the years. Administration, warden service, and so forth. Big increase.

Leslie: You must have seen quite a few changes in park's philosophy.

George: Quite a few, yeah. There were a lot of changes, I don't know just how to express them, but there were a lot of changes all right.

Leslie: You saw the wardens go from their district system into town?

George: To town, that's right. Instead of being out in the outlying districts, of course, they moved everybody into town. Houses, too, included of course as you know. Red Rock, Belly River, they're in town now, both houses. And then they built the one where Mac [lived], out at the Waterton bridge [George may be referring to Leslie Stewart "Mac" McAllister]. That took the place of the Waterton cabin. And then of course the fish hatchery had been going for years and years and years. The building is still there. But the fish hatchery was a very important link in this part of the park. In fact, they used to import fish to Banff, I think, from here, from the hatchery. And of course the biggest thing I noticed, Leslie, 'cause I've always been a fisherman, all my life, and I've been to every lake up here and stayed two or three days. Every lake, all over the place. All of them.

Except Lineham, we didn't stay overnight, but I've been up there a half a dozen times. The only place I haven't been up is Ruby Lake, you know up Red Rock, this little lake over to the left? Well I haven't ever been up that lake. All the rest I have. And they used to stock, very, very religiously stock all these lakes and just keep them stocked until eventually of course, there was natural reproduction. And they were a hybrid, cross between a cutthroat and a brook trout I believe, 'cause they figure they were better adapted to the higher elevations. And that's what they used to plant in the upper lakes, except Bertha, they had rainbow in there, straight rainbow. All the rest of the lakes were these hybrids. And they grow a couple or three pounds or so. But, I don't know whether there's any of them left or not. I haven't been up fishing the lakes for many, many years so I don't know what the stockings like, what the fish are like or anything.

Leslie: Do you remember bull trout?

George: Oh, yeah. Caught lots of bull trout in the river.

Leslie: Which river were you fishing in?

George: Waterton. And Pass Creek. There's a hole up by the Church Camp, you know where the United Church Camp is?

Leslie: Up by Crandell Campground?

George: Yeah, yeah. Just west of Crandell I guess it would be. There was a hole up there a few hundred yards. There was good bull trout fishing in there. And on the Waterton River of course. Lots of them. That's why they become extinct, they were so easy to catch, I guess. I understand they're almost disappeared now.

Leslie: Yeah, that's right.

George: But, I've caught quite a few. You know, they'd average maybe three, four pounds. They weren't big, 'cause they do grow pretty big. That was about the average. Anyway, I haven't caught a bull trout for many, many years. So, I guess that's the reason they were so easy to catch they become extinct it seems. But I used to enjoy fishing. I spent many, many, many hours on the river. Whitefish mostly, Rocky Mountain whitefish. There's a difference between them and the Lake whitefish, of course. And I spent many hours catching these whitefish, and stuff. Bull trout mostly, and a few rainbows.

But, I came back from the war and in 1946 I started work for the department as a mechanic up here. And eventually I got to be shop foreman after a while. I worked 'til 1967, I think. '46 to '67. And then I decided to retire was a better way to live and went golfing, and more fishing and I moved to Lethbridge. And I've been in there since 1969, so I guess that's about it so far as...

Leslie: Family history?

George: ...family history goes, yeah. My dad worked as a “stores-keeper” for 23 years here. After we sold the dairy and he quit working on the hotel, he started in 1929 for the parks department and he retired in 1952, I believe, or '51 I guess it was. So, that's about it for the... I spent a winter over here on the road camp building the Chief Mountain Highway, I was on their survey crew.

Leslie: When was that?

George: That was after I quit school and I was about eighteen years old I guess. That would be '33 I guess. Fifteen and eighteen, yeah that's '33.

Leslie: What was life like in those relief camps?

George: Oh, not bad. At every camp I was...Camp One was down near the Maskinonge, you know where that is, and Camp One-A was, you know as you're going up Chief Mountain [Highway] you cross a little creek with a bridge? Well on the right, that was Camp 1-A. That was all on canvas. That's where I first started. And then up farther, you know where Crooked Creek starts? Well on your left going up, on Crooked Creek was Camp 3. And by the Belly River bridge, where that little service station is now, just across the road from that was Camp Four. And up just off Belly River Campground below the Customs was Camp Five. And that was the layout of the camps. And they'd accommodate about sixty men in each bunkhouse in the winter time, and the cookhouse. And so, I stayed there for about a year working for twenty cents a day and your clothes and board.

Leslie: Where did the men come from?

George: Oh, they came from all over, Leslie. Mostly from the Lethbridge district. That's where most of them came. And they had another camp up towards Cameron.

Think you'll notice as you go towards Cameron on the right there is a slash cut out there, it's pretty well grown up now. See the original plan was to build a highway through the Kishinena over into Glacier Park.

Leslie: Right.

George: Down, you know. That was the original plan. That was in 1933 and '34 they cut that slash. But of course it never materialized. It fell by the wayside, which I thought was unfortunate, because if they had, they'd have made a circle, you see, through Waterton. It wouldn't have been a dead end. But it never materialized. Something to do with the B.C. government, I guess. They wouldn't pass it or something. Anyway, that was the intention originally.

Leslie: So what kind of tools were they using?

George: Oh, they were quite basic ...axes, cross-cut saws, that's about it. You know the timber wasn't that big really anywhere in the park. It's not that big, it's mostly Jack pine, so, the tools, you know, just basic stuff. We surveyed. When I first started they'd built about a mile from the "Y" up [toward] Chief Mountain. It's 14.7 miles or something total from the "Y" up to the boundary.

Leslie: In how long? How long did that take?

George: Oh, you mean to complete the highway? Oh, goodness, let me see. I think it was completed in 1935. I think it wasn't gravelled in 1936, I think it was completed with the gravel. But they were travelling it before then, before it was fully gravelled. It was graded. But, I drove a gravel truck on that, I think it was 1936 it was really completed. And it was paved in 1940, they paved it all the way.

'Course it's been rebuilt since then, at least once, maybe twice, curves taken out and this sort of stuff. Anyway, that was my adventure on the road crew (laughs). I was on the survey crew.

Leslie: And you were telling me when they were building the Akamina Highway they made a bit of a find.

George: Yeah, that was behind what is now the bottom of the Hump, still called the Bear's Hump I guess. At the bottom of that, the road goes right along just up from the gate, maybe 100 yards from where the barrier is now, they found this cave. When they were grading, they graded the material off and they found this cave with this skull in it, a human skull, and all these small animal bones. But, strangely enough they didn't find any more human bones, just the skull and maybe a few little minor bones, maybe a leg or so, I don't know. But it wasn't all there, the skeleton.

So, they figured that maybe this guy either got killed or he died and a bear went in and drug half of him away or whatever. But the whole skeleton wasn't there. But the skull was and the small animal bones. So they deduced it could have been a trapper. Native, it was a native skull. And he could have been killed and eventually the rocks came down. I don't know if they ever determined what had happened. I'm not sure whether they did or not, but it must have been a long time ago. But whoever he was, he was certainly probably the first man in the park anyway, you know it was so long ago.

Leslie: Did you ever come across any other sites? Archaeological sites ...in the park?

George: Let me see...hmmm. Gee I don't know Leslie, I can't remember. Seems to me I did, but...I can't remember. No, I don't think so. I don't think I ever did. I can't remember if I did or not. Seems to me like I did, but I just can't remember where it would be now or what it was. I don't remember what it was. 'Cause there used to be a dig at the Narrows. I don't know whether you ever knew about that or not. Dr. Barney Reeves uncovered...



Leslie: Fishing camp there?

George: They got some quite interesting artifacts from there. Apparently there was a native camp there. You know, they found, whatever. I'm not sure what they found there, but they found evidence that there'd been people camped there. And I suppose they were fishing, 'cause naturally that would be the logical place to fish, put their nets across or whatever, I guess.

Leslie: Yeah.

George: So, anyway, that was I don't know how long ago. You probably have a record of it here in the office ...all that stuff.

Leslie: Yeah, we do.

George: When he was digging. But I don't remember any other place. I've been pretty well all over the park. Have you ever been up Sampson Valley? At the head of this little creek across the Dardanelles.

Leslie: Sampson Valley, towards Sofa there?

George: Yeah, that's the head of this little, what's the name, what do they call it...

Leslie: So out this way, George?

George: Yeah, it's the little...

Leslie: Stoney cabin?

George: Stoney Creek, that's it. That's what I'm trying to think of. Where's the...

Leslie: There's Stoney cabin.

George: Oh, there's Stoney cabin there.

Leslie: This must be Stoney Creek. Do you think?

George: Where are we at here, this is north? [Looking at a map]

Leslie: There's town, yep. So, here's the Maskinonge.

George: Oh yeah, I see. Yeah, this is it. The basin is up...where would the basin be? Of Sofa?

Leslie: Here's Sofa Mountain here.

George: Oh yeah.

Leslie: So here's the Dardanelles.

George: There's the Dardanelles. Oh this is Stoney, where's Stoney Creek? I saw it, isn't it marked?

Leslie: I'm not sure if it's marked on here.

George: Oh, let me see, let me see. We got up here, we're into the...we gotta go between here...Maybe they call it Sofa Creek. There's Stoney cabin. Doesn't show the creek there.

Leslie: That's why I'm wondering if it's this one that's been named here.

George: I think it must be. Oh, and it runs into here somewhere, before it goes into the Lower Lake.

Leslie: Maybe it is Sofa Creek then.

George: It looks like it could be, yeah. I guess that's what they call it now apparently, because that's the only good size creek there is.

Leslie: This is an old map, actually, so maybe it's an old name.

George: Well, that's roughly where it goes in so I guess they call it Sofa Creek. We used to call it Stoney Creek. They must of changed it I guess. I don't know what these little red...

Leslie: Think that's the telephone line...out to the cabin there.

George: Oh yeah, out to the...we're going out the Belly River here. Well there's a cabin up on Chief Mountain [Highway] summit here. It used to be a...this cabin used to have a phone in it. That's where Camp 2 was, right here. Right where that cabin is.

Leslie: Right.

George: So it was a half way between Belly River over here, and Waterton, roughly half way. That's where they had their telephone.

Leslie: Right.

George: For the warden from...here's the Belly River Station here, the original, right on the river you see.

Leslie: Where was your original homestead on the Belly? It wasn't on the Belly.

George: Oh, it wasn't? I thought...

Leslie: No. Oh, yeah, yeah, wait a minute, I'm way down here, here we are... There's Caldwell. Have you got the reserve line here, or does that show the reserve?

George: No, it's not on this map.

Leslie: Oh, it doesn't go far enough north.

George: I think, yeah, there's Mountain View. Yeah, we need one that goes further north. Yeah, it was north of Caldwell, it doesn't show it.

Leslie: We're still quite a ways up, then?

George: We're still quite a ways, yeah. Our north boundary was the reserve, the Indian reserve. We had 160 acres, but it doesn't show it on there, but it's close.

Leslie: Did you have many interactions with the Bloods when you lived there?

George: Yeah, quite a few. I used to play with the Scout kids. They were about oh, a couple miles from where we lived. They were about my age - two boys and a girl and I used to play with them all the time. Best friends I ever had (laughs). Real good, lots of fun, lots of fun. They were pure Bloods.

Leslie: Was there trading?

George: Yeah...Well, they would pick berries, they grew vegetables themselves. They would pick Saskatoons and bring them over and trade them for vegetables to us. Mother used to put up Saskatoons for the syrup. And bring Saskatoons and trade them for vegetables, whatever. That's about all the trading. We used to run our cows on the reserve. I think dad leased it. Think we had about eighteen cows or so, twenty. And I think he used to pay them a certain amount to graze these cattle on the reserve, what they call a lease. Must of, because that was the only pasture we had, we didn't have any ourselves. Had to graze them on the reserve.

Like I say, north boundary was the reserve, so I guess he must have paid them so much a head over the year to graze his cows there. But in those days, of course, things were a lot easier than they are now. They were a lot more open. A lot more of the reserve was leased. So I guess that's about that part of it.

Leslie: So, did you hunt at all growing up?

George: I hunted once. I got a deer. Got [the head] in the basement. 1937, I believe. I got a mule deer buck. Out here at Wellman's, which is the only time I think I was ever hunting.

Leslie: Do you remember some of the old trappers or hunters in the area?

George: I remember, oh let me see. Levi Ashman, of course. He was quite well known.

He was a trapper just across from the divide from Cameron Lake. Gloyn's Camp down the Kishinena, that was his trap line down there. And I knew him well. I never did see Joe [Cosley]. C-A-W-S-L-E-Y or something, Cosley I think his name was. I never knew him. He was before my time.

Leslie: You heard stories of him.

George: I heard stories of him, yeah. There was another trapper, I can't remember his name now. He used to trap with Levi. And then there was Frenchy Riviere with his dog team. He used to go and hunt quite often in the winter time, go over into B.C. He had a permit. That was before Levi Ashman's time. This was way back in the early '20s. He used to go and hunt, I think he would hunt wolves mostly, far as I remember, and otter and marten. Possibly marten and the odd beaver, whatever was over there at that time, marten anyway.

And like I think I told you before, he had a full blood wolf team. All wolves that he had raised from pups. And he had seven of them. And he used to go over, and he'd stay here at headquarters here overnight either on his way in or his way back. He'd stay with Jack Gladstone, the barn boss. I think Gladstone was distantly related to him somehow. Anyway, he'd stay overnight with him. The thing I remember, of course is seeing his dogs. They had them tied up in the trees back here and like I say they were pure wolves. 'Course he had other dogs too that were crosses between huskies and wolves, but this one team was the real thing. He raised them from pups, of course.

And, well, I didn't know him very well. I knew who he was 'cause I was pretty young then. Like I say, when I worked at the hotel he worked there too. That was in 19...when the hotel first opened in 1927. He was hired by the hotel manager to tell all these western stories, you know. Guess he was pretty good at it too. You've probably read about him, all his history, he was well educated, and he was nobility, or whatever. Very sophisticated for the life he led. Well educated, of course. Straight as an arrow, about six foot two or three. Beautiful buckskins he would wear. He had a big sash. What do you call them, "courier de bois" or whatever they call them. He had the big red sash around his waist, along with all this fancy beaded buckskin and moccasins and so on. He would tell the people of the local history, early history of the area, because he was here, you know, pretty early on. Before this part of the country was really settled, I guess. So anyway, that's what he did.

Leslie: How did people feel about wolves in those days?

George: You mean...well, you never heard anything about them. In fact, I never saw a wolf around. I saw tracks here way back in the middle '60s, saw a pair of tracks up Red Rock once when I was going up to the [unintelligible] plant. But I never saw a wolf around. They were here, but very, very few. But you never heard people talk about wolves. I've heard the ranchers in Mountain View talk about

wolves over in Poll Haven, whatever they call it. That's the first people I ever heard talk about wolves. There's supposed to be a pack over in there.

Leslie: When was that?

George: Way, way back in the '20s, early '20s that would be. Whether they are still there or not I don't know. But that's the only area that I've ever heard of them being in, with the exception of British Columbia. Now whether they worked their way over or not, I don't know whether there's any wolves in the park now? I've never heard of any if there are.

Leslie: There was a pack that re-established itself last summer in the Belly River area, but...

George: In Belly River? Oh I see. Up the valley, like?

Leslie: Yeah, I guess. I don't know how well they're doing this year, though.

George: I don't know. I never heard of them being up there. And in the days when we worked over there we never heard them, never seen them, never heard them. There were elk over there, which was the first place the elk was ever in this area, Belly River. It was the original herd up there. And then it slowly spread out into the Oil Basin and over into Stoney Flats. Think that's three main herds now, far as I know. We used to hear them bugle, never actually seen one. That was 1933, in the fall, when I was up there. Stayed there for about six weeks. See when they surveyed the line [at the site of Chief Mountain Highway], Leslie, the Americans missed the Canadians by about a hundred and fifty feet. See the Americans were down towards the river and we came in about a hundred and fifty feet too high.

So, we had to resurvey about a mile and a half so we could connect up with the Americans. So, that's what I was doing in the fall. Frank Goble and I were on the survey crew. There was just four of us staying at that camp. There was the cook and Frank and I and the surveyor. It was Camp Five, just been built, and we were the first ones to stay there, in the fall of 1933 it would be, towards the end of September, I guess. And that's when of course, as you know, the elk start to rut and you can hear them. You could hear them for miles up the valley. First elk I ever heard. It's nice, beautiful valley there in the fall as you know, you probably seen it, you know all the colours and everything. And you could hear them. We'd never see them, they'd never come that far down.

Course, later in the winter I guess they'd come out, but you could hear them in the fall. Beautiful over there. Always remember that for the elk bugling in the fall, it was nice. Course the Belly River Campground wasn't there then, there was nothing there. But there was a road up there, that they'd go in by horses usually, pack horses they would take. There'd been a cabin in there for years. There used to be a permanent ranger up there, years and years ago. And they built a cabin and a barn. He used to stay there all year round. How far up it is I don't know.

Could be five, seven miles, something like that, up to Cosley, no, Lake Elizabeth, I believe. Maybe it's on the map, I don't know. There's two lakes and they had names for them, I believe. Don't know whether it shows it there or not. Where are we here...oh, we're way up here. No, doesn't show it.

Leslie: No. Need something further south then?

George: Wait a minute, maybe not. Where's the boundary here? The international boundary?

Leslie: Yeah, doesn't show it, does it? No. I think it's on here, it should be....

George: Oh, right here? Let me see, let me see... Oh, here we are, this is it here. Where's the Belly River, here? Are we right here?

Leslie: There's the Belly River, yeah. Here's the station, the old cabin there, I think. The Belly River Station.

George: That's right. And this is where the North Fork comes in here, and the campground is right about here. Doesn't show it on this map, of course, but it's right about here, just below the customs. No, it doesn't go far enough, Leslie. See, it's beyond here, the head of Belly River. I don't know how far it is.

Leslie: So, would this have been the route, do you think? The old wagon trail?

George: Yeah, this is the route to the ranger station at the head of Belly River. Right. I don't know whether they took cars in there at that time or not. I doubt it, 'cause it would be too early. I guess they shipped them in by, you know, hauled them in by horses or wagons. Whatever material to build the cabins. So, I think it'd be too early for...you know, be no four-wheelers in those days, so I don't think you could get.... Probably horses to haul all the stuff. I don't know how they'd haul it over. They'd have to haul it from this side, 'Cause they couldn't come over the Divide with it, so they'd have to haul it around by Cardston, Carway, haul the material up there. I guess, built of logs probably, I don't know, but it's still there, anyway. There's a ranger in the summer, of course.

Leslie: So, would most of the materials for the park have come in through Cardston?

George: For the hotel [construction] yes. All the material come through Cardston.

Leslie: And in a more general sense for the town?

George: Well, do you mean in the early '20s? Late 1900s? Well I expect, I don't know. A lot of people in Lethbridge had cottages here. I expect maybe it was hauled from Lethbridge, I don't know. Although Cardston would be the closest place in that early time, or Pincher Creek. There were some cottages built by people from Pincher too. I don't know, I expect the majority of it to be from Cardston or

Pincher, you know, the material for the frame houses. 'Course for the log houses it was rafted down the lake. They had a permit in those days to cut logs at the head of the lake. They'd be fair diameter building logs, and they would raft them down the lake. That's where we got the logs for our original house here. They were rafted down the lake by the Morris brothers, [who] built our house and barn. And there was a lot of buildings built with those logs that was rafted down the lake. The park used to have a mill up Red Rock, you know where Goat Lake takes off? Well at the bottom of Goat Lake the park had a mill set up. Course there was pretty good timber there...now where are we [George looks at map]...

Leslie: Here's Goat Lake.

George: Well, it would be right around this area here there used to be a mill. They had it there for quite a few years. And originally in the '30s they had a mill over here...where's the summit of the Chief Mountain [highway]?

Leslie: Chief Mountain?

George: Where's Chief Mountain, where are we, up here? There's Chief Mountain, round here.

Leslie: Here we are up here, yeah. Where's the summit on the Chief Mountain [highway]? ...should be about...here's Belly River Station. Should be here somewhere, what they call "the summit", you know, the lookout", where you look over the...

The Three Flags?

George: Yeah. Well the mill was down in this area here, Leslie. It was roughly, say, around here, this area here. There was quite a stand of timber there. And that's where the government had a mill, too.

Leslie: And that was in the '30s?

George: In the '30s, yeah. And later on, it moved up to this site to cut their lumber. It was all rough, you know. There was two by fours for rafters. I don't know exactly what they milled, but mostly building studs and rafters. All the sheeting, I guess they brought it in. Originally the cookhouse was built of logs. All the original buildings here were built of logs that were floated down the lake. Like the barn, wardens warehouse, storehouse, the garage, cookhouse, all that stuff was built of logs rafted down the lake. I mean, they was built before my time, or just about when I was born, I guess. I was born in '15. That was about when they started to build their garage and their storehouse and their barn. Somewhere between '19 ...oh, roughly the end of the first world war was '18 ...between '18 and '21 they built all the headquarters here and the wardens cabins. There was quite a spurt of building, it went very fast after the First World War. Built very fast, all these

buildings. And of course the roads were improved, bridges put in and all that stuff.

Leslie: So how about local folks, for fuel? Where did they get their wood from?

George: Oh, the wood was quite plentiful. Oil City, usually, 'cause it was burned over in the early '20s and there was lots of Jack pine. That's where they got our firewood. They had a wood yard right at Oil City. Where the site is now, that's where the wood yard was. And there'd be Jack pine about so big around, and they'd saw it up into stove lengths and that's where they got all our firewood.

Until 1935 and then they hauled it from up the lake, all our firewood. They'd raft it down and there was a wood yard set up right across the lake here. You know where the Catholic Church camp is, well it was on the shore just out from the camp there. That's where the wood yard was from the stuff that was rafted down the lake. And that's what people burnt of course in those days, and coal until propane became popular, and then people used propane for fuel. Now I don't know when the gas came in, I'm not sure.

Leslie: Where did the coal come from?

George: Lethbridge. Well, Cardston, I should say Cardston. It was shipped to Cardston because all the residents in Waterton, all the staff, the administration staff had coal furnaces at the office. And the three buildings along Cameron Creek there, and the Superintendent, they all had coal furnaces so they would burn coal. And a certain amount of wood, of course, too. Used coal, yeah, that was the fuel brought in from Cardston on trucks. And we'd burn coal too, down in our house when we lived down here, 'til we got prosperous and put in a propane furnace. But up until that time we burned wood and coal. Shipped it from Cardston. And, well I don't know, what else would you like to know?

Leslie: Maybe since we are still kind of close to talking about the wildlife, are there any other big changes in wildlife that you've seen here?

George: In wildlife, oh yeah, the sheep, of course. I never saw a sheep. The only sheep that I knew of until, uh I don't know when, after the war quite a ways. Well in the '50s we used to see sheep come along here out of the Red Rock valley. But the only sheep I ever saw was way back in the middle, late '20s, was over across on what they used to call Vimy Ridge, just across from the International dock. You know that little ridge that runs up from the Narrows? Well there's a little lake over there, at least there used to be, and there was about seven or eight head of sheep there. And that's the first sheep I ever seen in Waterton. Now of course, I don't know what year they became or why they became so plentiful, but they seem to have just come all of a sudden. Like I say, when we lived down here we used to see them once in a while come up and along the ridge here.



(TAPE TURNED TO SIDE TWO)

That's possible, maybe that's why they never came into the park, I don't know. 'Course they've got natural licks throughout the mountains, I don't know where they are but, yeah, they used to put out salt for them. At Red Rock and Cameron and up here, think up on the pasture. Maybe that attracted them. I don't know, could be. In any event, like I say, in the early '20s, middle '20s I never saw a sheep except that one place. And the deer, of course, they seem to be just as plentiful now as they ever were as far as I can see. I don't see any difference in the deer. 'Course the elk are a lot more numerous. Like I say in the '30s the only place that I knew there was elk was up the Belly River valley. 'Course, then, there again they came in. Now why they should come in I don't know. Why they never come in before? Because the pastures were here.

Whether they just multiplied to the extent that they spread into different herds and just gradually drifted out on the badlands, I guess off towards Yarrow and Oil Basin. Whether they were here before I don't know. I don't know. I can't figure out why they wouldn't be here before. You know it took them from 19...I don't know, during the war or after the war I guess to establish these herds over on Stoney Creek Flats and in the Oil Basin. As well as Belly River, of course. Why it took them so long to come out, I don't know. Don't know what reason it could be.

Leslie: How about moose?

George: Moose? Well, they used to be quite common at Cameron. Was a very, very common sight to see a moose at Cameron with the young ones. Same at Red Rock. There again they had salt, you see. They don't put out salt anymore. Isn't that right? I don't think they do.

Leslie: No.

George: So that's the reason, maybe, I don't see moose. I don't know. Their habitat is here. I mean there's just as much marsh or whatever as there always was. I haven't saw a moose around here for I don't know how long. 'Course I'm only in here and up Cameron occasionally so maybe they're up there, I don't know, if there are I never seen them. It was quite a common sight to see moose back in the '50s and '60s at Cameron every year, as well as Red Rock. Now whether they are there now, have you seen any recently?

Leslie: I haven't seen them recently. Last fall I saw some at Maskinonge area there.

George: Oh yeah. Well, that means...that's some place I never seen them. Means that maybe they're moving out, you see. I never seen them down there in all the years I was here.

Leslie: Do you think there has been a change in the relationship between humans and

animals?

George: Animals? Yeah, well there has gotta be, there's so many more tourists. You mean per capita sort of thing, I suppose.

Leslie: No just in attitudes, attitude wise. How did people live off the land here? What was their feeling about the wilderness?

George: Well, they respected it certainly. I think they respected their...possibly a lot more than they do nowadays. For the simple reason they didn't have four wheel drives to go ripping up the country or all these wild hunters coming in and blasting away with their guns and so on. Hunters that did hunt were genuine, they hunted for food and they were gentlemen hunters, sportsmen. Now, they respected animals and they got along quite well with them. Then later on as the ranchers were established they made one big mistake. They put out this '10-80' to poison coyotes which is a very, very big mistake. Of course the result was that they poisoned their own animals and they poisoned a lot of other animals, you see. This of course is outlawed now. But that's one big mistake they made.

But before that people got along good. For instance, we lived down here. The cookhouse, it's gone now, but they had the garbage bins, they were covered. But you would see bears anytime from August right through 'til they hibernate in this area. Bears with their cubs. And of course the dump, there was an open dump down there. I don't know whether you know where it used to be or not. You know, you go by the riding stable, there's a road that goes way down? Oh about a quarter of a mile and that used to be the dump down there. And it was open of course. We were on the main path and the bears would go from here down to the dump and back again. We were on the main path. And we'd look out the window and say "well there's a bear" just like you'd look out and say "well there's a cow" or something you know. There's a bear, so what (laughs). They were that common.

Never had any problem with them. Oh they used to bash our garbage cans around a little when I had cans down there chained to the garage. But we got along alright with them, no problem. Raised four kids, never got hurt. Bears could wander down through the yard down to the dump. Never had any problem, never thought about it really 'cause you would see them every day. Now why there wasn't a problem, I don't know. I have no idea. Though used to have to shoot the odd one, that's true, you know. They start robbing tents and someone would get a little over-anxious about the garbage or something. They might have to trap them, take them out. They were so numerous. I don't know whether they're that numerous here now or not in the fall. I don't know. I never seen any, I don't think I've seen a bear around here for a long time. Course I'm not up here that often to see one. Of course it all depends on the berry crop, too. Saskatoons, choke cherries and all that. They got to put on layers of fat to hibernate, so I guess that would depend on the berry crop too, how aggressive they are.

Leslie: Did you have favourite berry patches in the park?

George: Yeah. Our favourite was up Red Rock, and uh...where's Pass Creek here [looking at the map]. It goes...they call it Blakiston...oh, we were way down here. Here we go, where are we going across Pass Creek here?

Leslie: Here's Pass Creek here.

George: Oh yeah. And here's the Red Rock Trail, up here? Okay. Now we're going and going and going...! Don't know exactly where we are here. The Pass Creek Cabin...what's this fork?

Leslie: This is the Red Rock cabin, here. Church Camp is here.

George: It would be roughly in here somewhere, Pass Creek Cabin, right about in that area, I believe. You go down, there's a swamp here, and you go down across...yeah right about here. That used to be a favourite berry patch in that area there. [Pass Creek Cabin was located along the north bank of Blakiston Creek just beyond Bellevue Prairie Trail.]

Leslie: What kind of berries were they? Saskatoons?

George: Saskatoon. Hmm-hmm. That was one. Then there was other patches up farther here and to the right of the road going up. There was a lot of berries in there, in that area, Saskatoons. And then as you go up Pass Creek in the grade, you know steep where you first start up? There was choke cherries lined the side of the road. Maybe they still do, I don't know. They grew up high, you know, ten, twelve feet. But that was real heavy with choke cherries in that area. And there was other places around the park you could go out in the Badlands as they call it. I guess they still call it Badlands, do they?

Leslie: That's up here right? Up just...or up here is it?

George: Up here. This is the Buffalo Paddock. We used to call this area here between the road and across from the foot of the mountain here, all of this was the Badlands, all that area there.

Leslie: There was a road that came through there originally wasn't there? [Oil City Road past Crandell Lake]

George: Yeah. There was a road, goodness, don't know where it was. Think it took off just about where the park...where's the Pincher Creek entrance, park entrance? There's the Buffalo Paddock.

Leslie: Down here, yeah.

George: Would be out here, just the other side of the Buffalo Paddock, Leslie.

Leslie: There's the park entrance, Pincher Creek entrance?

George: There's Galwey Creek, just about there.

Leslie: Here's where the fish hatchery was.

George: It would be about there, I think. The entrance is now. There was a road, it doesn't show it, but it came over on the hill, followed the hill right along, roughly, roughly, roughly, then it came down...where's the Red Rock Road?

Leslie: Right here.

George: Here it is, yeah. Joined it, oh roughly about, you know where the trade waste pit is? Right about there, I guess. That's where it came. That was the, I suppose you'd call it the original road. That's where the Oil City equipment was brought over.

Leslie: Right. Did they have a name for that old wagon road?

George: Don't think so. I never heard it, no.

George: That's where they brought all the equipment for the Oil City oil wells across there from Pincher Creek. 'Course that was way before my time, that was 1909 or something like that.

Leslie: Do you have any idea what went on at Oil Basin?

George: I don't think I have, Leslie. I don't know why they got it. Whether there was a well drilled there originally or not I don't know, I guess there must have been. As far back as I can remember it's been called the Oil Basin. So I would assume there must have been a, long time ago, there must have been a well drilled there somewhere. I don't know. I never even found out how it got that name. Because it has no connection with Oil City that I know of.

Leslie: It's a bit of a mystery for us. We're trying to find out something about the area.

George: I have no idea how it ever got the...unless there's somebody around Pincher who would know. They'd have to be pretty old, though. Whether you'd catch them or not there, you know it's so far back. No idea how it ever got its name.

Leslie: So you knew a bunch of these early wardens here in the park?

George: Yeah, very well, very well.

Leslie: You say they were all First World War vets?

George: All of them. Jack Giddie came, I think it was about the middle '30s. He was a warden at Yoho National Park before he came to Waterton. Now, Bo Holroyd came in 1919 I believe. McAllister came about '20, '21. He had a...these two fellas had homesteads just outside the park, just west of Twin Butte.

Leslie: Holroyd and...

George: Yeah, they came out on...they were vets [of] the first World War and of course they got 160 acres or whatever from the soldier settlement they called it in those days. So, Mac and Bo were homesteaders before they came in. Mac was here about the middle '30s I guess. Yeah, it'd be late '20s, middle '30s. He owned this house down, you know this house is on the end down here? Well next to it there was a little log house that Mac lived in. He owned that at that time, he was the town warden. That would be back in the middle '20s, late '20s. Like I say, he died in 1937 when he was stationed at Red Rock. And [Bert] Barnes, I think I told you that he built that house, that pink stucco house on the back street there.

What do they call it, Waterton Avenue [Evergreen] now, don't they? Yeah, well he built that pink stucco house, and he was town warden for a while. And you interviewed his daughter, Dorothy [Johnson]. She probably told you all about living there and so on. And in fact the first place they lived, you know where the Kilmorey Lodge is, well there was a little log house there. I think it was two storeys, and it belonged to the government and they lived there for the first winter. She went to school there and he was town warden. And I don't remember when he built his house, I can't remember it, but eventually he moved over to Belly River.

I guess he was here maybe five or six years as town warden, then he moved to Belly River. He was there...when I came back from the war he was stationed down at Waterton Cabin here, I guess. After Jack Giddie retired, Barnes moved over here to Waterton. That was the cabin down here just off the entrance, where the entrance is now. There's a little meadow there. That's where Waterton Cabin used to be there, barn and the house. That was Waterton Cabin at that time. And then of course there was Yarrow Cabin. That was the end of his other line, it was over in the Oil Basin.

You know where Yarrow Creek... I don't know whether you've ever been to Yarrow Cabin? It's right on the edge of the far northwest boundary, right on the edge. That's Yarrow Cabin. And there's a road, I think you can drive over there, I think they've graded the line through there. You see it there? Yeah, that's it. I think you can drive from here, where's the road...

Leslie: Here it would be coming off here.

George: That's right. They graded this road from here, from back of the Buffalo Paddock. Yeah, they started here. You can drive up the Buffalo Paddock, and is this the boundary here? Yeah, you can drive up right up the boundary now I think in four wheel vehicles right across to Yarrow. There's the phone line there. But the road follows the boundary. I think you can drive right up there, far as I know, 'cause they graded the road to get four wheeled vehicles up there.

Leslie: So what were these men like?

George: Well, they were kind of straightforward men. Barnes was quite a character, Bert Barnes, Barnes his name was. He was slightly shell-shocked. He was a sniper in the First World War. He talked very rapid and he had something wrong with his eyes. They would blink very fast when he talked. And he got a kind of speech impediment. They called it shell-shocked in those days. Second World War they called it battle fatigue ...it's the same thing.

And McAllister, he was a very quiet fellow. Didn't say much. He was a family man. His daughter went to school the same time as I did, to the Waterton school there in the late '20s, middle '30s.

And Bo Holroyd, he was quite an outgoing fellow, he liked a good time. He was quite spry. He was a sergeant in the First World War. He was deaf though. He was quite deaf. In fact he had a pension I think from the First World War ...shells or whatever. He had five kids, got married and had five kids. He used to live down in, you know the road going down to what they call the Hay Sheds? Across Pass Creek Flats? Well there's a little road going straight north from that down on the lakeshore, Knight's Lake. They called it Cedar Cabin. Don't know whether it's shown here or not.

Yeah, there used to be a LDS Church camp, they tore the...and this camp has long since burned down. That's where Cedar Cabin used to be. The headquarters for the chief warden that was his headquarters. But I'm getting ahead of myself. First chief warden was Bert Knight. He was the first chief warden that lived there. [Bert was a chief park warden but not the first.]

Leslie: Do you remember him?

George: Oh yeah, quite well. It was in the summer he was chief warden, in the winters he was acting Superintendent for six months. And in the summer months there was a regular Superintendent came from Ottawa and they worked it that way for I don't know how long. Eight or ten years, I guess. Bert Knight was the first Chief Warden. That's why they call it Knight's Lake. For some reason, I never could figure out why Kootenai Brown hasn't even got a frog pond named for him. No, he hasn't. I could never figure that out. I don't know. Nobody else can, either. Strange, you know.

Leslie: So, you must have heard lots of stories about Kootenai Brown?

George: Oh, yeah, quite a few, I guess.

Leslie: Your father knew him?

George: Yeah, yeah, he knew him quite well. He was well-educated. Well of course that book Bill Rodney wrote gives a pretty accurate description of him and his life. You probably read it, Kootenai Brown?

Leslie: Yeah, I've had a look at it.

George: Should read it some time. I had a copy, but I leant it and I never got it back. But I know it's for sale, if you go to the Buffalo Jump or Fort Macleod. But I don't know what happened to my copy, like I say, I leant it. But I've read it about three times. It's very interesting, very accurate.

Leslie: You were telling me earlier he had three children with his first wife, Olive.

George: Leroy [Leo] was his son's name, I don't know what his daughters' names were. He had two daughters and a son by his first wife, Olive. Leah-ah-nee [Lyonnais] was her...I think it was pronounced Leah-ah-m e. She was a Métis girl from Manitoba. She died shortly after her son was born. It tells all about it in this book of Rodney's, how he used to leave her, go to Macleod on a binge and leave her all alone. And she would walk to the top of a hill, now I assume the hill would be just above his grave 'cause she could see way towards the Fort Macleod, you know, in that direction, and I guess you could see him coming across the... She used to go up there and watch for him. Their cabin, I'm not sure where it could be. I kind of thought it would be on Pass Creek somewhere, before it goes into the Waterton River. The original cabin. That's where I think it was. 'Course there's no trace of it now. Of course, his homestead was just outside the park, part way up the Chief Mountain Highway.

And then, of course this was his last house, this frame house down here [below the warden office]. He had that built himself [Kootenai purchased the house in 1913 for \$200.00 from Christian Jensen of Aetna. It had been used in the nearby area as a rough hotel.]

And of course by that time he had his second wife and his kids were, uh, I don't know whether they put them in a mission or uh... I think he put them in a mission just out of Calgary, Father Lacombe, I believe it was. Put all three of them in there and I don't know what happened to them. Well, the boy died ...died in his thirties. I don't know what happened to the girls. Even Rodney doesn't know in his book, I don't believe. Never mentions what happened to them. Course they would be old now, I mean, you know, they would be probably dead because they'd be quite old. Anyway, he never mentioned it, he lost track of them.

Leslie: But, you remember Kootenai's second wife?

George: Oh yeah, quite well. 'Neech-e-moos', 'Blue Flash of Lightning' they called her. She was a, I think she was a full-blood Cree. Now where he met her, I don't know. It was possible he met her when he went on that, uh, you know, the Riel Rebellion? They had the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Kootenai was the guide for them. I think possibly he met her then, I don't know. Anyway, she was from Manitoba somewhere. She was a pretty hard looking woman (laughs). But anyway, she used to stay with us occasionally when we had the dairy at Pass Creek. She used to come out. And she stayed at Frenchy Riviere's, I think I mentioned that before, in the little cabin. She used to come out and Dad used to go and get her and she'd stay, you know, the day at Pass Creek 'n' take her down and visit Kootenai's grave and so on and so on. Dad went out and helped bring her body back when she died. They brought her back. Park provided transportation to bring her body back and have it buried beside Kootenai. That was 1935, I believe, when she died.

I remember I knew her, well, you know, I wasn't very old then, but when she stayed with us it would be in the early twenty's, you see, around '22, '23. Well, I was only about six, seven years old then. But she used to scare the hell out of me (laughs). But she was a very kind person, but she was pretty hard to look at, I guess. Anyway, she'd never talk...she'd understand English, she understood English quite well, but of course I never heard her speak it. I don't think she ever spoke English. But of course, she certainly understood English.

She was a very good housekeeper. A very good wife to Kootenai, she looked after him right to the bitter end I guess. He never had any problem with her. He could take off, leave her for days and she was quite self-sufficient. She did all the hunting and supplied you know, brought in the meat and the game there, whether he was there or not I guess, pretty well. So he'd just go off and leave her anytime he wanted which was quite frequently, I guess, according to what I hear anyway. But anyway, that's about all I know about Kootenai. Like I say, I never seen him 'cause I was too young. My sister saw him.

Leslie: How about some of the other characters in the area. Who do you think should be remembered from early Waterton?

George: Golly, I don't know, uh...

Leslie: You were talking about some of the remittance men earlier.

George: Oh yeah. Lord [Lionel] Brooke and Butcher. They were both remittance men. Their families, of course, were quite wealthy. They were both Englishmen. To get rid of them they'd ship them off to Canada. And they'd send them so much [money], I don't know how often it was, whether it was every three months or whatever. I think once I heard that Lord Brooke got around thirty, thirty-five



thousand bucks a year. Now that was a lot of money in those days. And Butcher was about the same, 'cause they both had big cars, they went all over the world practically. They just lived...they never really farmed, they didn't know how to farm really. They just lived there, in their homesteads. Butcher always drove a big fancy car, and he had lots of money. I don't know whether Brooke ever, I don't think Brooke could drive. But anyway, he still had lots of money. Like I said he was down in California once. He decided he wanted to come home so he hired a taxi. I don't know what part of California it was, I assume it was in northern California.

Anyway, it was in California and he hired a taxi to bring him to Pincher. That's real, that's genuine. He hired a taxi to bring him to Pincher Creek, to his homestead (laughs). And of course, he had to pay for the man to go back again. That must have cost quite a bit. Anyway, this did happen. And of course, he used to come up to the hotel and stay, too. But like I say, he was quite wealthy, he could afford to stay anywhere he wanted. I have seen him stay in the hotel and he'd stay there three or four days and then he'd get cheesed off at the people being around him so he'd go down and camp at the Narrows, by the Narrows, in his little tee-pee. He'd stay there maybe for three or four days. And he'd get drunk, and he'd have visions, and all that sort of stuff (laughs) because that's the way he lived. He'd take off and he'd hire somebody to take him up to the upper lakes, say Carthew for instance or Alderson, stay overnight or whatever. Sit around the campfire, course he always had a forty-ounce crock with him (laughs). He'd have visions and all that sort of stuff. I only saw him about once.

I never really talked to him, but I have seen him. He was very slight, and he wore a monocle all the time. Very slight build. He wore knee breeches and high boots, and he used to dress in buckskins, too, quite often. He had a beautiful set of buckskins, course he bought off the Peigan Reserve, same as Frenchy. Butcher, I have seen him around quite a bit. He was a bachelor, as was Brooke. But Brooke was more of a character. I don't think Butcher ever came to the park that I know of.

But anyway, they were both quite the characters. They were having Christmas dinner once, Butcher invited him to have Christmas dinner at his place and he put the turkey in the oven, of course, in the morning. He got it from somebody in Pincher, lady gave him this turkey, so he'd have a turkey dinner. Well, they all congregated and of course they sat down, they had quite a few drinks and he decided to put the turkey in, so put it in the oven. Three or four or five hours later he took it out, put it on the table, started to carve it and he had forgot to clean it. Cooked it with the insides in it (laughs). That's a fact. So, I don't imagine it tasted too good. Anyway, this really happened.

Butcher was a 'woman-hater' they called him, he was very... I don't know what happened. Maybe he got jilted when he was a boy or something, but it was just like a god-damned woman, leave the guts in. Anyway, this is supposed to have

happened. I'm sure it did (laughs).

Leslie: So how about women? Were there any early women that stand out in your memory?

George: I've heard of Bertha, but I never seen her. She was supposed to be... Bertha Lake was named after her. Now I've never seen her. I never heard too much about her. She was supposed to be, run a, she was at a house here in the summer, around the area of the Good Hunting China Shop I guess. It was supposed to be a restaurant, whatever. Now I don't know about this, because I was a kid. I wasn't interested in that stuff you see.

Well, there was Mrs. Gladstone, used to live down here. She was one of the early residents. They built a house here in 1922, I believe, and her husband [Jack] was the [government] barn boss here then. The [park] had horses and there was only one truck and they had about eight teams of horses. Used to pull the dump wagon and the graders. No automotive stuff, no mechanical stuff. All horses, most things.

So that's why they had the stable. She was here. She was a very nice old lady. Oh, I don't know. I don't remember many... there wasn't too many women around at that time that I really remember of.

Leslie: Were there women who did doctoring?

George: No, I don't... There were nurses. Bo Holroyd's wife [Con] was a registered nurse. Now she was the only medical person here for years and years. And people used to go to her for emergency. Like he used to live down there, like I said at Cedar Cabin, and before that at Pass Creek. When the hotel opened they had a nurse there, a permanent nurse in the summer, and people used to go to her quite often, too. She had a couple of rooms in the hotel on the third floor, I think. People used to go there, you know, emergency. Course other than that they'd go to Cardston or Pincher. Pretty near every summer there'd be a doctor here, you know staying for the summer. From Lethbridge, usually. Pretty near anytime in the summer there'd be a doctor available, in the case of emergency, you know. Otherwise we'd have to... Government had a...when I worked for them they had sort of an ambulance, and we'd take any casualties usually to Pincher. You know, if somebody cut his hand or whatever, we'd take him to Pincher in this ambulance. But there was never any permanent doctor here.

Leslie: Do you remember any accidents in the early days here?

George: Well the first drowning I knew of was Cameron Falls. There was a kid went over there in 1920's ...when I first worked at the hotel, '28, I guess, in the spring. In July, I guess. That was the first drowning I heard of in Waterton. Was a young boy about nine years old. And the next drowning was at the [Crystal] swimming pool. Now you know where the liquor store is now, there used to be a swimming

pool there. And there was a drowning in there. There was one in Lake Linnet, about 1958 I think. There was one in the Narrows. About 19... be about the middle '30s, I guess. Later on there was a kid that died up at Lineham Lakes. Fell off the mountain or something. But I don't remember of any, you know, there was no real major catastrophes or anything like that I can remember of. I don't know why, I guess we were just lucky in those days, I don't know. It certainly was around about where we could get into trouble, but we were just lucky we never did I guess.

Leslie: Do you remember some of the early fires in the park here?

George: Oh yeah. I remember we were camped down at Pass Creek in 1922. There was a fire, it came over while we were there. We could see it peeking over Crandell.

That's when a second fire burned Cameron. I think that was around '22. And then of course the next one was over in the Castle River in '34. I wasn't to that one, but you could see it. Some people went from here. That was in British Columbia, of course, it started. It was put out by rain. Was started by lightning. The one up the lake here was '35, in August. That's where those pictures were taken. They figure it was a lightning strike at the head of Boundary Creek. I don't know whether you've ever been up top of Carthew summit. If you have, you look down you see two lakes at the head of Boundary Creek. They're in Glacier Park. Wurdeman and Nooney I believe they are.

In that area, that's where the Boundary Creek fire started. They figure by lightning strike. Possibly three or four days it took to you know, blaze up, and down the valley it came. There were two hundred and seventy-odd CCC boys. Now they were civilian conservation corps. They came from Glacier Park. They took them in there first, on the International, and the government... or Les Morrow had a barge and he took them up. But in any event, they went up to fight this thing before it broke out onto the lake. But by the time they got up there about a quarter of a mile, here comes the fire. And it was coming. So, they had to drop all their equipment. They had Pulaskis, they had axes, they had saws, they had Geikie bag, you know spray things you put on your back and spray. Called them Geikie bags then, don't know what they call them now. Held about ten pounds of water. Anyway, they had all this equipment plus their food and they had to drop everything and run for it. And luckily the boats were there to pick them up, evacuate them right away.

And shortly after that, of course, the fire broke out on the lakeshore and down the lake it came, down the lakeshore. And the only thing that stopped it, it stopped the other side of Bertha Creek where it comes into the lake. You probably know where Bertha Creek comes in. There's a little stand of green poplar, and the timber runs out. It's pretty sparse anyway there. Plus the fact that somehow the wind changed. It blew from the northeast, and of course it blew against the fire. And the combination of those three things stopped the fire at Bertha Creek. And of course, we spent four or five days putting out spot fires. We had a main

pumper on the shore and then you could pump up the lake side of the mountain about five units with canvas bags, relay tanks. We would put out spot fires, you see. We [put out] quite a few of them, for about five days I guess 'til we were sure it was out.

Leslie: How many men do you think worked on that fire?

George: Oh golly, I don't know Leslie. There were lots of men came in, but there wasn't a damn thing you could do. All they had to do was turn around and go home again 'cause they couldn't do a thing. There was nothing you could do 'til it burned itself out. And then afterwards there wasn't too many, there was only a few of us. But I'd hazard a guess there'd be between four hundred fifty and five hundred men originally called up. Because what they did, the Mounties walked into the dance hall and they said "you, you, you, and you, come fight fire". And they were up there with their suits and oxfords, honest to God. That's what they said "you, you, and you, let's go fight fire". And away they went. Now that was a lot of men.

Plus a hundred and fifty members of the Blood tribe came in, too. That was before they couldn't do anything. All they could do was wait. This side of Bertha Creek and around Cameron Bay was where the main camp was set up to feed all the firefighters, at Cameron Bay. And then they'd truck them up the lake with the barges and boats and stuff. Cause that's the only safe place they could be, was Cameron Bay down here. You know where Cameron Creek comes in? Well that's where the main thing was set up. Frank Goble was cooking then. Had a great big washtub full of stew, was a huge thing. And bread and staple stuff, you know, coffee. That's what they had to feed all these men. But there were lots of them. But these other boys from Glacier Park, I don't think they stayed very long. I think they went out the same day they came in, headed back. They came from West Glacier and East Glacier. They didn't stay very long.

Leslie: Is that because it was heading north?

George: That's right. So, they said they got the hell out while they could I guess. Well they couldn't do anything anyway so, so had to just pull out. I suppose if it broke across Bertha Creek I don't think it would ever of been stopped. I don't know how they could stop it. I really don't. 'Cause they didn't have the facilities in those days that they do now, of course. You know, water bombers and helicopters with buckets and all that stuff. They didn't have those in those days. See if they had had spotters in those days, Leslie, they could have spotted this thing and it would have been no problem. They could of put it out before it broke loose. No problem. But they didn't have anything like that, you see. How it was, once it got started, well it was too late, couldn't stop it. We were lucky cause if it ever broke across Bertha Creek it would come right down the back street. Certainly wiped out the back street 'cause there was no way on God's green earth

we'd ever stop it. Even at Cameron Falls it would just jump across there.

Leslie: Must be something to see that.

George: It is, it's quite a sight. Now with that smoke, you see, we didn't know where [the fire] was. You see, you can see, this is looking up main street. Well you don't know where that fire is looking there, do ya? You have no idea how close it is. We didn't know that it was the other side of Bertha Creek at that time. We thought it was just, you know, coming right into town, you see, 'cause you don't know. How are you going to tell? This other, well it's the same. This was taken, I don't know whether I told you, this was taken off the...this is number thirteen green on the golf course. I don't know whether you can see it or not. No, maybe you can't see it. This is the lookout up here I believe. It wasn't there then. You know that little turnout, going up Red Rock? And you look across here and you see number thirteen green on the golf course? I don't know whether you can see it there or not, I doubt if you can.

Leslie: There's a wee little patch there you can see.

George: Yeah, I think that's twelve there, but I don't... There's the hotel. I don't know whether you can see... you can see it if you go up Red Rock from this little lookout. You can see number thirteen green right across there. That gives you an idea. This was taken I think when she was standing where that pullout is now. Like I say, it wasn't there then, but that's where she was standing when it was taken. Its got that, you know, point of interest there? Well I think that's where she was standing. You see they have this shot, this is the town site right here, you see. Well there it looks like it's right in the town. You see because there's Vimy and there's the ridge I guess going up there. And there's the ridge going up, Bertha Trail goes up right here somewhere. Looks like it's right into town almost, but it wasn't. So that's where it was in those days. Now on here it's the same way. See this is taken right on main street as you can see. There's the Tourist Cafe, and there's the dance hall you see. This is the Grizzly Bear now. You're standing right about the middle of main street, you see, and there's the police barracks. By that, you see, you don't know. You'd think it was right into town almost. But it's a lot farther away than it looks. That was taken, I believe, August the eighteenth. Within a, I think I'm quite accurate within a day or two maybe. Maybe Frank would know, I don't know. I forgot to ask him.

Leslie: Do you remember when the dance hall burned down?

George: I was working in Cardston at that time. I wasn't here. I think it was 1938.

[Part 3 of interview - the following was not in the original 1995 transcription – this section of the transcription was done by Transcript Heroes December 2016 with minor edits by Edwin Knox and Chris Morrison, Waterton Lakes National Park]

Leslie: Okay, so you were describing the dance hall.

George: Yeah. In the middle was a pillar, and all those heads mounted. I don't know where they got the animals from, but they were big moose, deer, sheep. And on this pillar, and all around the sides, were these heads mounted. I don't know how many they had, but they had a lot of stuff. And it was Ernie Haug and [Pat] MacLean. Well, I don't think- no, let me see, it wasn't Ernie, it was just MacLean himself that had this built and ran and operated this dance hall, Pat's brother, the guy that used to operate the one that's there now, the one that was The Grizzly Saloon, or whatever you call it.

[the preceding paragraph is not entirely accurate re: names and businesses]

Leslie: Thirsty Bear.

George: Thirsty Bear, or whatever [laughs]. Yeah, that's the second building, the second dance hall. But this original one had a balcony around it, all around, three sides. And you could go upstairs, and your family could go up and sit and listen to music, you know, if you had kids. And dad and mother would go down to dance, and the kids would stay up on the balcony or whatever. So it was a family affair. There was jitney dances - dime apiece or three for 25 cents. They had an orchestra, of course [unintelligible] and Mart Kenny he was the main and the latest one who played there. There was bands before him, but he was the main one.

Leslie: What is jitney?

George: Oh, I don't know how to describe it. It has something to do with horse-and-buggy, but I'm not sure. I don't know how it originated. I did know, I've forgotten now. Something to do with horse-and-buggy days anyway, whatever. Anyway, that's what they call 'em, jitney dancing.

Leslie: So you would meet people at these dances from all over?

George: Oh, yeah. And of course, the hotel was going strong, and kids from the hotel would go down and dance, and they'd go. They'd probably dance until one or two o'clock in the morning, it depends on the crowd. Of course, on Saturday they had to shut her down at 12 o'clock, I don't know if they had to do that now or not, I'm not sure, but they had to in those days. So, in order to beat that we would get on the International to go up to the head of the lakes. Of course, the American side of everything was wide open. They had beer. And they used to play on the International, this Mart Kenny would get his band. The boat would leave the dock by nine o'clock and they would get up there, oh possibly ... oh, whatever it takes to get up to the lake, hour and a half or so. And we'd dance up there for a while, and then we'd get back here at midnight, and just ready to start dancing down here [laughs], because it was Monday morning by then. But that happened

all one summer, in fact I think it was two summers.

[the preceding paragraph is not entirely accurate]

Leslie: Do you remember what summers those were?

George: Oh, that would be '20 ... '28 and '29. Possibly '30, along in there.  
[not entirely accurate]

Leslie: When was prohibition over?

George: Oh, man, I don't know. I don't know Leslie. I know when we first moved in here there was bootleggers, it was the main business in here, a guy from Lethbridge. He was quite a prominent bootlegger, MacMillan I think his name was, and he made a fortune bootlegging here. And now that was of course in the early '20s, and now I ... I don't know when prohibition was ended here. Was it maybe the late '20s? I don't know. I can't remember.

Leslie: I know that Waterton was later because it was Federal land.

George: That's right, yeah. Waited a long, long time before we had a liquor store. They had a beer parlour here. Oh, gosh, I don't know. Let me see, when was the beer ... Oh, gosh, it must have been in the late '20s. I don't know when it was. Had the beer parlour over here. I have no idea. Gosh. But I guess you could find out pretty easy when prohibition was. Because I know it was ... did the states have prohibition before we did, or was it vice versa? I forget now.

Leslie: I kind of think the States set it first, but I'm not sure.

George: I think so, because I think they used to take and run these old MacLaughlin sixes - they called them whiskey sixes - in the early '20s, and they used to run them across the line. So yeah, the states was on prohibition before we were, yeah. That's the way it worked. But I don't know when we- I can't remember when it was over here.

Leslie: What was the Depression like for people here?

George: Oh, it was very good, hardly knew it was ... I guess for the reason everybody had employment. See, we never got the droughts like they did on the prairies, the weather was always very nice. We were never affected by dust storms, so very nice and easy living. And I don't remember anybody ever being, you know, in dire straits or anything like that. It was very easy going. Because of the fact that practically everybody worked for the government department in one way or another. Office, maintenance, whatever, warden service. And then the businesses, of course it didn't affect them that much, it didn't seem to anyway. But it didn't affect us at all, really. Like compared, you know, to the Lethbridge

area, or around the prairie somewhere where they depended on growing stuff, because we didn't depend on it. We just – like I say – we always had employment from the government, our parents. Never suffered any (laughs). So it was quite nice, quite easy, in the '30s, quite easy. The reason I went- I didn't have to go to the camps, I could have, but my dad wanted me to go to school and I quit. So that's the reason I wound up in road camp, I didn't have to go, I just thought I was doing a good thing, the right thing, of course I wasn't. That's it.

Leslie: Would that have been the time that a lot of the homesteaders moved off their land outside the park?

George: Oh, yeah. Well, that's not so much here as in Saskatchewan. I went down to Saskatchewan and got my mother, she was over from Scotland, and it was the spring of May, 1938. I went down to Regina, and my sister and I went down to pick her up, just meet her on the train, we drove through the states and back. And there was nothing but dust there at that time. That was 1938. It had been like that for I don't know how long, six, seven, eight years, I guess. Dust all over, I couldn't believe it.

Leslie: Big drought, huh?

George: Yeah. There was fences. Drifted over and there'd be fences on top of them, that's a fact. Where the road would be down below. Of course there was no paved highways in those days, it was all gravel.

Leslie: Was this around Saskatchewan, or --?

George: Uh-huh. Well, yeah, and around there – Moose Jaw, Swift Current same highway number 3 goes down there now. It follows the same route then, practically. But you wouldn't believe it, it was terrible. Not so much in Alberta though I noticed, although in southern Alberta it was pretty grim all right, around the Lethbridge area there was a lot of drought all right, but there was nothing like in Saskatchewan. And of course here – like I said – it didn't affect us at all.

Leslie: So when do you think most of these homesteaders moved off? Apparently there was at one point in time, it was like every quarter section outside here had a family on it.

George: Yeah, there was. But I suppose, well, people bought these places up. You know, people that can afford them. And I guess the farmers, they said "what's the use". Their kids wouldn't take up the farms, they wouldn't stay in them, all those people moved off them. Sold their 160 acres or whatever to these people who moved in and built there. Mostly just gentlemen farmers there now. I guess there's more cattlemen than there are farms now throughout the area, between here and Pincher [Creek] anyway, you know, and beyond. More cattle raising than there is farming and grain. But I think that's the reason because the kids



never stayed, they just- away they went. Moved to the cities or whatever. People grew old or they just sold off, and they subdivided the land. I guess that it must be legal because there's a lot of that done, subdivisions, building homes on an acre or three or four or whatever. Like Rod Kretz for instance, I don't know, I think he has got four acres. Originally his land was 160 acres and then they subdivided, and he bought a house there, and he has four or five acres or whatever. I mean, he's just one example of why they all moved away.

Leslie: So you were talking about the Soldiers' Settlement [Act].

George: Yeah.

Leslie: Was that a pretty common way for a lot of people to get land, or were there also North West Mounted Policemen?

George: Yeah, it was quite a common way after the First World War, I guess. Well, from what I read, ex-Mounties could get land - 160 acres. That's what you read in books. I read that. I don't know if that's true or not. You can read all these books about the early RCMP ...Mounties comin' to Macleod. Hugh Dempsey writes a good book. You ever read any of his books?

Leslie: Yeah, I've read quite a few actually.

George: Yeah, well he's very descriptive of the area here and how they were ex-Mounties who took up a lot of this land. I myself, I got an allowance to build this house down here, they called it the Veterans' Land [Act]. But it was different, they called it different from the First World War. Soldiers' Settlement [Act] they called it after the First World War. They called it, I don't know, veterans' allowance or something. But that's how I started my house down here, from the veterans' allowance. And these fellows got what they called a soldiers' settlement, well they probably had 160 acres given to them. And of course, they had to prove up on it. My dad had 160 acres in 1916 or '17. For \$10 [laughs], for 160 acres. That was the patent if he proved up on it, which is build a house, maybe he had a cow or chickens, and you got your patent for 10 bucks. [laughs] That sounds not very much for what 160 acres is worth now, is it? But that's the way it was in those days. That was out here in the Twin Butte area ... back in those days. And I expect a lot of people bought those, you know, for 10 bucks. If they could raise 10 bucks somehow they'd get their 160 acres.

Leslie: Must have been quite a lot for a lot of them.

George: It was rough. It was very rough. I think we only stuck it out... I was only about two years old then. Maybe, yeah, I was about two. It would be around 1918, I guess. I can't remember. I think mother stuck it out for about a year and a half and then she gave up [laughs], and moved back down to the little place on Belly River. We didn't stay too long. My sister went to the school out there - at

Drywood. It's gone now, of course. She was about eight, nine years old then. She went to school. But we didn't stay long anyway. But that's how people got their acreage – Homestead Act. And that applied all over I guess. Especially, you know, in the north, and all over the place, I guess, in the early days. Our land was thrown open by these people, all across Canada, that would apply, I imagine. Soldiers' Settlement Act.

[there is confusion in the preceding re: the various acts and settlement programs]

Leslie: Do you remember when Waterton became a Peace Park?

George: 1931, I believe, or was it '32? I'm not exactly- I don't- I'm not sure of the year.  
[June 18, 1932]

Leslie: Were there celebrations in the park?

George: Yeah, there were celebrations. Canon Middleton was here then and John Diefenbaker the ... I think so.

[George is confusing two events: International Peace Park celebration in Waterton at the Prince of Wales Hotel in July 1936 and a visit by John Diefenbaker visit to Beebee Flats in 1960 which had nothing to do with the Peace Park – 5 paragraphs have been omitted from the transcription]

Leslie: Well, I guess I just have a couple more questions, and they're sort of fun questions.

George: [laughs] Fun questions.

Leslie: One is, what do national parks mean to you? What do you think national parks are for?

George: What are they for?

Leslie: Uh-huh.

George: Well, they certainly preserve our wildlife as we know it today, as we used to know it. And they're the main function that we have our wildlife, that we can see it in a natural state. They're very important in that respect. And of course, people have a chance that never saw the mountains. Like myself, I've always seen the mountains, and I don't think I appreciate what they look like to somebody coming off the prairie and never been in them before. I can't imagine what that would be like because I've always seen them, I don't know any different. But I imagine that looking at these mountains is quite a sight to people that have never been in the area, to see mountains and mountain lakes, and so on and so on and so on. So, I don't know because I've always been here, I don't know any different [laughs]. But I imagine that's what it would be like if I had never seen

mountains, or mountain lakes, or wildlife, a deer, or a sheep, or a bear, or whatever. I'd be very, very impressed. And I think that's what they mean ...we have to have them to preserve that, both the animal life, nature as a whole. And seeing animals and so on, you know, like in their natural state. And I hope they'll always be here, and I think they will. So, all of this will be preserved for people that have never seen it before. I can't imagine what it would look like myself, but I imagine it's pretty impressive. It means a lot to me. Quite a bit.

See I had a bit of fortune to be shot down in The Second World War and I was behind the wire for a year and a half. Now, I was away from here for about five years, and when I came back I had the advantage of knowing how fortunate I was to live in this place. And I could see ... it impressed me how fortunate I was to live here, because I had seen so much over in Europe you see, the horror of war. Now, here it was peaceful. Altogether different, you see. Very, very fortunate. It's too bad that more people couldn't have that experience. And that applied to the whole country, especially in this area as far as I am concerned. How fortunate we are to have this ...to be able to be free - to walk in it ...see it ....and look at it. Walking by the water, fish the rivers, and so on and so on. Very fortunate. It's hard to explain. Four of my crew are still layin' over there yet ...over 50 years. I was lucky. I got back. Yeah. [emotional and reflective voice thinking about his experience with the Royal Canadian Air Force in World War Two]

Leslie: Well, thanks very much for your time, George. We sure appreciate it.

George: Okay, Leslie. Well, I don't know- I probably could do better, but some other time, with more time [laughing].

[End of recorded material]