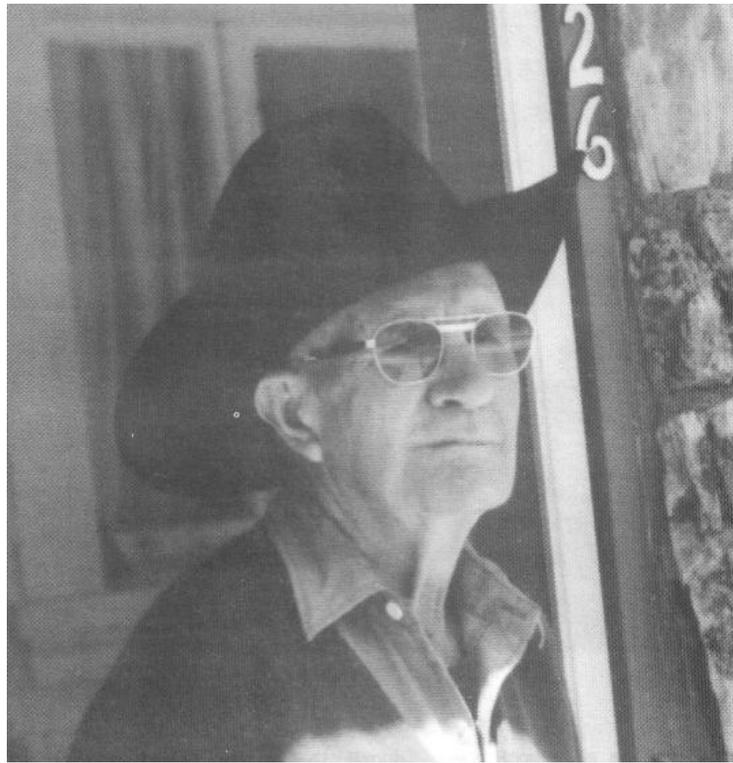


An Interview with
PETE ROGERS

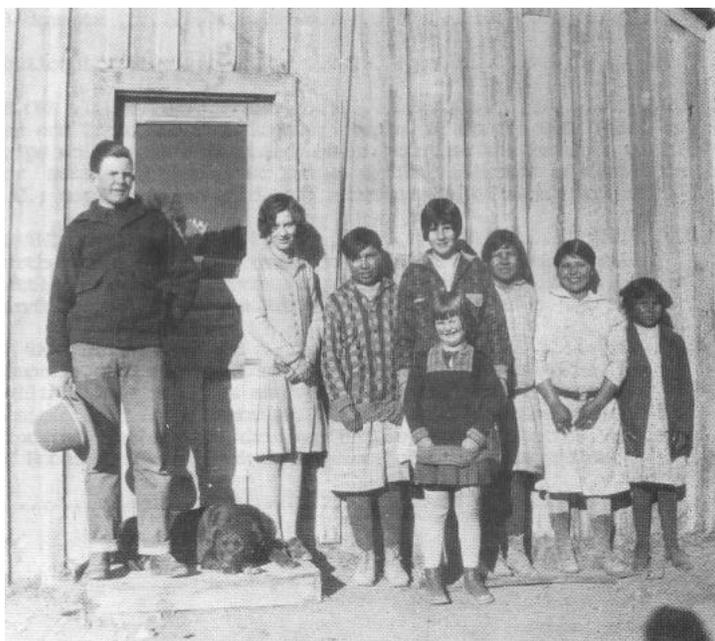
An Oral History conducted and edited by
Robert D. McCracken

Nye County Town History Project
Nye County, Nevada
Tonopah
1990

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Tonopah, Nevada
89049



Pete Rogers
1990



Students at the school on the R.O. Ranch. Pete Rogers is at far left; his sister, Irene "Rene"
Rogers Berg Zaval, is fourth from left.
c. 1920

CONTENTS

Preface

Acknowledgments

Introduction

CHAPTER ONE

Ben and Grace Anderson Rogers; growing up on the R.O. Ranch and trips to Tonopah as a child; helping out on the ranch; searching for cattle on the summer range; different breeds of cattle on the R.O.; sagebrush and wild hay; a discussion of ranch food.

CHAPTER TWO

Further discussion of ranch food; cattle drives, and selling cattle; structures on the R.O. Ranch; moving to the Wine Glass Ranch; schooling on the R.O.; Indians who lived on the ranch.

CHAPTER THREE

Memories of a mine in South Twin Canyon; the Wine Glass Ranch; selling the Wine Glass and working at various civil service positions; further memories of the Wine Glass; the merits of trucking, rather than driving, cattle; working horses; memories of Round Mountain; work for various government agencies.

INDEX

PREFACE

The Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP) engages in interviewing people who can provide firsthand descriptions of the individuals, events, and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interviews are not history. However, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiography as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the NCTHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the NCTHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts, and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often largely unreadable and therefore a waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the NCTHP will, in preparing a text:

- a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often sprinkled;
- b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;
- c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context;
- d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered but have been added to render the text intelligible; and
- e. make every effort to correctly spell the names of all individuals and places, recognizing that an occasional word may be misspelled because no authoritative source on its correct spelling was found.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As project director, I would like to express my deep appreciation to those who participated in the Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP). It was an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to obtain oral histories from so many wonderful individuals. I was welcomed into many homes--in many cases as a stranger--and was allowed to share in the recollection of local history. In a number of cases I had the opportunity to interview Nye County residents whom I have known and admired since I was a teenager; these experiences were especially gratifying. I thank the residents throughout Nye County and Nevada--too numerous to mention by name--who provided assistance, information, and photographs. They helped make the successful completion of this project possible.

Appreciation goes to Chairman Joe S. Garcia, Jr., Robert N. "Bobby" Revert, and Patricia S. Mankins, the Nye County commissioners who initiated this project. Mr. Garcia and Mr. Revert, in particular, showed deep interest and unyielding support for the project from its inception. Thanks also go to current commissioners Richard L Carver and Barbara J. Raper, who have since joined Mr. Revert on the board and who have continued the project with enthusiastic support. Stephen T. Bradhurst, Jr., planning consultant for Nye County, gave unwavering support and advocacy of the project within Nye County and before the State of Nevada Nuclear Waste Project Office and the United States Department of Energy; both entities provided funds for this project. Thanks are also extended to Mr. Bradhurst for his advice and input regarding the conduct of the research and for constantly serving as a sounding board when methodological problems were worked out. This project would never have become a reality without the enthusiastic support of the Nye County commissioners and Mr. Bradhurst.

Jean Charney served as administrative assistant, editor, indexer, and typist throughout the project; her services have been indispensable. Louise Terrell provided considerable assistance in transcribing many of the oral histories; Barbara Douglass also transcribed a number of interviews. Transcribing, typing, editing, and indexing were provided at various times by Jodie Hanson, Alice Levine, Mike Green, Cynthia Tremblay, and Jean Stoess. Jared Charney contributed essential word processing skills. Maire Hayes, Michelle Starika, Anita Coryell, Jodie Hanson, Michelle Welsh, Lindsay Schumacher, and Shena Salzmann shouldered the herculean task of proofreading the oral histories. Gretchen Loeffler and Bambi McCracken assisted in numerous secretarial and clerical duties. Phillip Earl of the Nevada Historical Society contributed valuable support and criticism throughout the project, and Tam King at the Oral History Program of the University of Nevada at Reno served as a consulting oral historian. Much deserved thanks are extended to all these persons.

All material for the NCTHP was prepared with the support of the U.S. Department of Energy, Grant No. DE-FG08-89NV10820. However, any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of DOE.

--Robert D. McCracken
Tonopah, Nevada
1990

INTRODUCTION

Historians generally consider the year 1890 as the end of the American frontier. By then, most of the western United States had been settled, ranches and farms developed, communities established, and roads and railroads constructed. The mining boomtowns, based on the lure of overnight riches from newly developed lodes, were but a memory.

Although Nevada was granted statehood in 1864, examination of any map of the state from the late 1800s shows that while much of the state was mapped and its geographical features named, a vast region--stretching from Belmont south to the Las Vegas meadows, comprising most of Nye County-- remained largely unsettled and unmapped. In 1890 most of southcentral Nevada remained very much a frontier, and it continued to be for at least another twenty years.

The great mining booms at Tonopah (1900) , Goldfield (1902) , and Rhyolite (1904) represent the last major flowering of what might be called the Old West in the United States. Consequently, southcentral Nevada, notably Nye County, remains close to the American frontier; closer, perhaps, than any other region of the American West. In a real sense, a significant part of the frontier can still be found in southcentral Nevada It exists in the attitudes, values, lifestyles, and memories of area residents. The frontier-like character of the area also is visible in the relatively undisturbed quality of the natural environment, most of it essentially untouched by human hands.

A survey of written sources on southcentral Nevada's history reveals some material from the boomtown period from 1900 to about 1915, but very little on the area after around 1920. The volume of available sources varies from town to town: A fair amount of literature, for instance, can be found covering Tonopah's first two decades of existence, and the town has had a newspaper continuously since its first year. In contrast, relatively little is known about the early days of Gabe, Round Mountain, Manhattan, Beatty, Amargosa Valley, and Pahrump. Gabbs's only newspaper was published intermittently between 1974 and 1976. Hound Mountain's only newspaper, the Round Mountain Nugget, was published between 1906 and 1910. Manhattan had newspaper coverage for most of the years between 1906 and 1922. Amargosa Valley has never had a newspaper; Beatty's independent paper folded in 1912. Pahrump's first newspaper did not appear until 1971. All six communities received only spotty coverage in the newspapers of other communities after their own papers folded, although Beatty was served by the Beatty Bulletin, which was published as a supplement to the Goldfield News between 1947 and 1956. Consequently, most information on the history of southcentral Nevada after 1920 is stored in the memories of individuals who are still living.

Aware of Nye County's close ties to our nation's frontier past, and recognizing that few written sources on local history are available, especially after about 1920, the Nye County Commissioners initiated the Nye County Town History Project (NCTHP). The NCTHP represents an effort to systematically collect and preserve information on the history of Nye County. 1 centerpiece of the NCTHP is a large set of interviews conducted with individuals who had knowledge of local history. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and than edited lightly to preserve the language and speech patterns of those interviewed. All oral history interviews have been printed on acid-free paper and bound and archived in Nye County libraries, Special

Collections in the James R. Dickinson Library at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and at other archival sites located throughout Nevada. The interviews vary in length and detail, but together they form a never-before-available composite picture of each community's life and development. The collection of interviews for each community can be compared to a bouquet: Each flower in the bouquet is unique--some are large, others are small--yet each adds to the total image. In sum, the interviews provide a composite view of community and county history, revealing the flow of life and events for a part of Nevada that has heretofore been largely neglected by historians.

Collection of the oral histories has been accompanied, by the assembling of a set of photographs depicting each community's history. These pictures have been obtained from participants in the oral history interviews and other present and past Nye County residents. In all, more than 1,000 photos have been collected and carefully identified. Complete sets of the photographs have been archived along with the oral histories.

On the basis of the oral interviews as well as existing written sources, histories have been prepared for the major communities in Nye County. These histories also have been archived.

The town history project is one component of a Nye County program to determine the socioeconomic impacts of a federal proposal to build and operate a nuclear waste repository in southcentral Nye County. The repository, which would be located inside a mountain (Yucca Mountain), would be the nation's first, and possibly only, permanent disposal site for high-level radioactive waste. The Nye County Board of County Commissioners initiated the NCTHP in 1987 in order to collect information on the origin, history, traditions, and quality of life of Nye County communities that may be impacted by a repository. If the repository is constructed, it will remain a source of interest for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years to come, and future generations will likely want to know more about the people who once resided near the site. In the event that government policy changes and a high-level nuclear waste repository is not constructed in Nye County, material compiled by the NCTHP will remain for the use and enjoyment of all.

—R.D.M.

This is Robert McCracken talking to Pete Rogers at his home in Fallon, Nevada, April 26, 1990.

CHAPTER ONE

RM: Pete, why don't we start by you telling me your name as it reads on your birth certificate?

PR: It's Benjamin W. Rogers.

RM: How did you get the name "Pete"?

PR: Oh, my dad gave me that name when I was just a little kid. His name was Ben and he didn't like the name Ben; he wanted to name me Pete but my mother wouldn't stand for it. She said, "His name's going to be Ben, like yours."

He said, "Well, all right. You give him that name but I'm going to call him 'Pete'." He always liked that name. That's why he did that.

RM: Could you state your birthdate and where you were born?

PR: You know, I was born on the ranch but my birth certificate said Manhattan. I was born on September 17, 1912, in Smoky Valley on the R.O. Ranch.

RM: And could you state your father's name?

PR: Benjamin Franklin Rogers.

RM: Do you know where he was born and about when?

PR: I don't remember, but I guess my father was probably born right there on the ranch, he and the other relatives. My mother was born over at Moores Creek.

RM: And what was her maiden name?

PR: She was an Anderson - Grace Anderson.

RM: I talked to [your sister] Rene [Zaval] a little bit about the history of the family, so let's pick up on life on the R.O. What was it like there growing up on a ranch in Smoky Valley as a kid?

PR: It was nice. We really enjoyed it - we had some good times. We didn't go much of anywhere - outside of going into Tonopah to get groceries when we were just kids. And that was only about 2 times a year, I suppose, because the roads were bad - rough. We had an old car that wasn't in very good shape and it took us all day to get there - 60 miles. The roads were rough and we had this old car and we had to take 2 or 3, 5-gallon cans of water along. And it would have a flat tire every few miles. So we didn't go in very much.

RM: You didn't go to Austin as opposed to Tonopah?

PR: Well, we went to Austin once in a while but we did our shopping in Tonopah because it was cheaper.

RM: I'll be darned. I wonder if that was because of the railroad in Tonopah?

PR: I think so. They finally put a narrow gauge railroad in Austin but that was in later days. But they're still cheaper than Austin after all these years.

RM: Was it a big deal for a kid - going into Tonopah?

PR: Oh sure. We used to enjoy going in there. We'd go to the picture show and eat good meals at the cafe and have ice cream cones and candy -whatever we wanted, our folks got it for us.

RM: Did the whole family go?

PR: Yes, Dad and Mother and Rene and I. It took us all day to get in there and then we'd stay for 4 or 5 days. (They liked to get away.) We'd stay at the old hotel behind the Mizpah. It isn't there anymore. It was an old-time hotel that had great big old basins and the slop jars, the fancy ones, and all that stuff. Mrs. MacNamara used to own it. Later on we'd go in and stay at the Mizpah Hotel. Mrs. MacNamara owned the other hotel first and then Mrs. Tena Clifford owned it after that. But I don't think the name was ever changed.

RM: Was there any particular time of the year that you went?

PR: Well, mostly in the summer and the spring. We didn't go anywhere much in the wintertime. We'd get enough groceries to last us during the year.

RM: Your car would really be weighted down, I suppose.

PR: Oh yes. The first one I remember was an old Hupmobile - what they called the touring car. It was a big old car and we had a box deal built on back to put the groceries in and then, of course, we carried some in the back seat and we all would ride in the front seat - we had room enough.

RM: What were some of the things you did in Tonopah?

PR: Well, as I say, we went to the show and the ice cream parlor and we'd go in a pool hall that an old colored man ran. He was a real nice old man and he'd always have candy for us kids. Well, he sold candy there anyway, but he saved the choice candy for us.

RM: Is that right? Was it Charlie Stewart?

PR: Yes.

RM: You had a school on the R.O., didn't you?

PR: Yes, we went to school there on the ranch - my sister and I and several Indian kids. And my Uncle Alvie (Anderson) was there for a while. He used to stay with us because my grandmother had so many children to take care of. He liked to be there during the summer, especially. He and I would get out and ride horses and all this and that.

RM: Do you remember much about when you were a little kid, Pete? I was wondering what the little kids did to occupy their time out on the ranch. PR: One of the things that Rene and Alvie and I used to do was climb the big old cottonwood trees that were right down below there. We'd have to do that on the sly, because the folks didn't want us up there. But we got so we'd climb way up to the top. It was a wonder we didn't fall out.

We used to do a lot of horseback riding, too. Rene had her horse, I had mine and Alvie had one. Of course, part of the time Alvie wasn't even there. But we rode all over the Mitchell field down below there. We like to go down there and around the pond and watch the ducks and so forth. And we'd ride up to the different canyons up above the ranch when we got a little older. I spent most of my time on a horse when I was a kid.

RM: Did you have your own horse?

PR: Oh yes. I had my own, Rene had hers and there was one of ours at the ranch that Alvie used to ride.

RM: Were you responsible for taking care of your horse and everything?

PR: Oh yes. When you'd come home you had to be sure he had plenty of water and feed and curry him good and all that.

RM: At what age did you start getting into helping your dad with the cattle and so on?

PR: Well, I was very young. I used to ride with the cattle when I was 10 years old. I wasn't able to go on the long rides, but we would go the shorter rides. I always went with them. And another thing I did was help with feeding the cattle. I used to drive the team when I was just a little kid. I'd sit up on a load of hay and drive while my dad would pitch the hay off to the cattle. I learned to handle a team and the saddle horses when I was very young.

RM: Did you have many horses on the ranch?

PR: Yes, we had quite a few horses. And we just kept a few with the cattle around there. When it was a bad winter we fed them, but in the summertime they were out on the range.

RM: Where was your range area?

PR: When I was at the R.O. we had range up in South Twin and North Twin and part of the head of Reese River. I guess you'd say it was more like the Twin River.

RM: How did you find the cattle when they were up there, Pete?

PR: We'd have to find the tracks and track them. They'd get up there in those trees and it was hard to see them. They'd hide out if they didn't want to come out of there. At a certain time of year, in the fall, they wanted to leave for the winter and they were easy to get out. You'd just go up there and make a little noise and they'd come down the canyon. RM: But if they didn't want to leave they'd hide?

PR: Oh yes, they'd hide. You'd have to ride all over and look for tracks and track them down. I learned to track when I was a very young boy.

PM: Are there any secrets to tracking them or any techniques that you recall?

PR: Well, if there's any grass or anything . . . you've got to see if the grass is bent down and all this - there are some little knick-knack things like that.

RM: But you could see it when the grass was bent over?

PR: Yes. That is, if you were not too far behind them.

RM: Did you look for broken twigs and things like that?

PR: Yes - they'd knock the twigs off of the trees.

Mary Rogers: You could follow the cow manure, too.

RM: Were the cows ever mean?

PR: Oh yes. You'd get them cornered, and they would get mean. Some of them, not all of them. The younger ones weren't bad, but the old cows got pretty mean - especially if they had calves. [They had] to protect the calves.

RM: Would they ever try to gore your horse?

PR: Oh yes.

RM: What did you do then?

PR: Well, you just had to watch them very closely. Most all of them had horns in those days - they didn't take the horns off.

RM: What would you do if one tried to gore your horse?

PR: You just had to watch and get out of there quick as you possibly could, because they'd just rip the side of your horse.

RM: Would they ever try to take you when you were on foot?

PR: Yes, they would. Especially when you were branding. You'd be on foot and you'd turn the calf loose . . . when you had the calf, boy, the cow would come right up there. You had to be sure a man was on horseback there to keep them back.

RM: Did anybody ever get hurt by a cow like that?

PR: Not very badly. We had one man who got hurt, but he got tangled up in the rope. He had this wild, mean cow and he got tangled up in his rope and got confused. He knew how to handle a rope well, but he got confused and got tangled up and it tipped his horse over. He got a horn scratch running down his arm before we could get there and get the cow away.

RM: Did you tend to eliminate mean cows?

PR: Yes. Some that were mean would get out in the mountains and try to hide out and stay there. If they got really difficult to find, we'd pick them out and get rid of them.

RM: I've heard stories of moss-back caws that stayed up there for years. Did that really happen?

PR: Oh, they used to, yes. Some of them would get away . . . we had one immense steer with long horns. We had an awful time getting him out of there. He'd get away from us up in those trees - he'd find someplace we couldn't go through and he just would duck down underneath and we couldn't go through on the horses and he'd get away. I don't know how many years we tried to get him out. We finally did. We had 2 ropes on him. I roped him and my Uncle Willy (Rogers) roped him and we threw him down and then we put hobbles on him and then we tied him to a gentle cow. That got him started, then finally we had to bring him out. We took the hobbles off because he was tied to that big cow.

RM: And the cow would pull him down?

PR: Yes. And then we'd just drive him in then.

PM: Did you have to do that kind of thing very often?

PR: Not very often - just once in a while.

RM: What kind of cattle were you running?

PR: Years ago we used to run Galloway cattle. They were black with long hair on them. They were a breed from England, I think. They were small cattle - they never did get very large - and the cattle buyers didn't want them because there was not enough meat on them. So then we got the black Angus. They were big cattle and we had them for quite a few years. And then we finally decided to get Hereford, and those were the ones we had from there on out, with a few Durhame mixed in.

RM: When were you running the Galloways? Were you a little kid?

PR: Yes, I was about 11 or 12 or 13 years old.

RM: So it was in the '20s.

PR: Oh, it was a long time ago. But that was just for a short time. We got rid of them then.

RM: Do you remember what you were using before the Galloway?

PR: No, I don't know. That was the first breed that I remember.

RIM: And then you went to the . . . ?

PR: We went to the Angus. They were a big black cattle - they call them the pole Angus. They didn't have horns.

RM: The Galloway had horns, didn't it?

PR: Yes. They had short horns.

RM: Were the Angus short legged?

PR: Yes. They were sort of a blocky animal. Another reason that we changed from the Angus to the Herefords was that the Angus were a lazy cattle. They'd get up there in the canyons and they didn't want to get out of the, canyon - they'd want to lie around. There's a lot of feed up on the hills all over there. You'd have to go up and drive them up and everything. We got a few Herefords and boy, they worked out well. They'd go way up and all over the mountain and they turned out to be better so we got rid of the Angus then.

RM: So the Angus was too lazy to go up to the good feed?

PR: Oh yes. They were a heavy cattle, but they were very lazy. They just didn't want to get up there.

RM: Could you talk a little bit about the feed that the cattle eat at the various levels when they're pasturing?

PR: Well, there's a lot of the sudan grass and bunch grass and different types like that. I don't remember much about it.

RM: Did they eat the sagebrush?

PR: When they were out on the range they ate the sagebrush and they ate the black sage - that's a big old sagebrush.

RM: Is there a white sage, too?

PR: Button sage . . . well, there was a white sage. We had some of that but not such. We had the most white sage down in the valley. There was a stretch of white sage down below Round Mountain and we used to run the cattle down there. It was a black sage mostly up there and [there was also] what they called button sage. It was short and grew close to the ground and it had little button-like things on the leaves. (That's the reason it was called that.) They liked the button sage when it was green, before it started to dry up. When it started to dry up they didn't like it as well as the others, but it was the first to come out in the spring. „As soon as the other feed, the sudan grass and all that, started to come out they wouldn't touch the button sage. But they liked the regular old black sage and white sage very well.

RM: And then you grew hay, didn't you?

PR: Oh yes. We had the meadows out there. That had some kind of grass in it, and later on we planted the alsike clover and also timothy and red top grass there.

RM: You didn't plant alfalfa?

PR: We had a small patch of alfalfa for the milk cows and that was all.

RM: Why was that?

PR: Well, we used our horses to do a lot of work with the cattle and that alfalfa didn't work with them very well. They sweated so much when they ate the alfalfa.

RM: You mean a horse sweats a lot if he eats alfalfa?

PR: Ours did. They weren't used to it, and my dad didn't like alfalfa anyway. They liked what they called wild hay.

RM: That was the natural grasses, wasn't it?

PR: Yes. Our horses were used to it and the cattle were used to it and we got one large crop a year and that was all you had to put up. We didn't have to be fooling with the 3 crops. And the alfalfa would die after a while if you didn't have the right amount of moisture. But that grass hay would live through some very rough going winters.

RM: I'll be darned. Did you get a good yield from the natural grass?

PR: Yes, we did. Then later on, we planted this other grass - the alsike clover and that other stuff.

RM: Did that work out well - the clover and the other grass?

PR: Yes, it was good feed. (There were 2 other types besides the alsike clover.)

RM: What kind of milk cows did you have, Pete?

PR: Well, for a long time when I was just a little kid we had range cows for milk. We'd get in one that looked like it would be a good milker and was not as wild as the others. Of course, we'd have to tame her. Later on my dad bought some Jersey cows. We didn't have many of them - just mostly the others. We also had Holstein cows.

RM: What did you use for a bull on the milk cows?

PR: We finally got a dairy bull. We raised some of the heifers for milk cows, and they turned out well.

RM: Were you milking quite a few cows then?

PR: Just about 8 or 10.

RM: What would you do with all that milk?

PR: We had pigs that we'd give it to. Of course, we used it ourselves, too. And we had a separator where we'd separate the cream before we'd give it to the pigs.

RM: Did you sell the cream or anything?

PR: No. We had use for all of it.

RM: What did you do with all that cream?

PR: My mother would make all kinds of different puddings and cakes and all that stuff - and butter. She was quite a cook.

RM: What were some of the things that she cooked when you were a young kid?

PR: We used to have a lot of meat; of course, we raised it there. RM: How did she prepare it?

PR: We'd have roast beef and she'd boil some of it and make soup from the boiled meat. And of course we had steaks. My dad wanted steaks every morning for breakfast - he wanted steak and eggs and potatoes and hot cakes all at the same time - one breakfast. He was a big eater in the morning. And then he didn't want any more - even if we'd go riding and be gone after cattle all day long, he wouldn't take a lunch. He had another good meal in the evening when we'd come back.

CHAPTER TWO

RM: Did you kids eat the same breakfast he did?

PR: We ate the same breakfast but not nearly as much as he did. We had good appetites in those days because we did a lot of work. Rene had to do her work, too, in the house. But we sure didn't eat like he did.

RM: What did you kids eat for lunch?

PR: Oh, we'd just have a light lunch. Sometimes all we'd have is cookies and milk and sometimes some cereal.

MR: And sandwiches.

PR: Oh yes, we used to have some sandwiches, too.

RM: Your mom made her own bread, didn't she?

PR: Yes.

RM: Did the women made their own yeast?

PR: Yes.

RM: What was the typical evening meal that your father preferred?

PR: He wanted plenty of meat. He always had boiled meat or a roast whichever my mother had - and sometimes he'd have boiled potatoes and we always had vegetables in the garden like carrots and all that. And that was about it.

RM: Were you able to store vegetables in the winter?

PR: Yes. We had a good cellar there and we'd store carrots and things like that that we'd bring in from the garden - we'd have a sort of a bin built there and it was full of sand and we'd bury the carrots and things in that sand.

RM: Did you cut their tops off?

PR: Yes, we cut the tops off and just buried them right in the sand and then when we wanted some for lunch, why, if I was there, I'd go up and dig them out.

RM: What other vegetables did you store in your cellar?

PR: We had always potatoes. We raised a lot of potatoes and things like that.

RM: How about beets and turnips and rutabagas and things like that?

PR: We weren't much for beets but we had turnips and rutabagas and parsnips and a few things like that.

RM: Did your mother do a lot of canning?

PR: She did quite a lot of canning, yes. In those days, most everyone out there canned. We put up a lot of different things. She used to make sauerkraut too, and all that.

RM: Did you have fruit trees?

PR: Not right there, but we did have a small orchard up at the mouth of Summit Canyon. That was above the R.O. Ranch. We used to have quite a few apple trees.

RM: Did she can a lot of apples?

PR: Oh yes.

RM: How do you store apples in a cellar?

PR: Well, we didn't have enough of them on hand to store. We'd eat them as fast as we needed them.

RM: Then you always had chickens, didn't you?

PR: Yes, we had chickens and eggs. We had quite a few chickens.

RM: Do you remember what kind of chickens you had?

PR: Well, we had leghorns at first. They were good layers but they were so small. If you went to use them for food they were really small. Then we got some of the Rhode Island reds. And then we had those gray ones -Plymouth Rocks.

RM: Did you raise chickens to eat or mainly for eggs?

PR: Well, mainly for eggs. We ate chicken now and then but most of the time we had beef. Then, of course, in the winter we used to have pork. We'd get some pigs and butcher them in the wintertime. My dad liked pork.

RM: Why in the winter, Pete?

PR: I don't know. It seemed that the only way it would agree with us was in the cold weather. In hot weather we just didn't eat pork at all.

RM: How did you keep your neat?

PR: In the cellar. We had a large cellar and if we'd butcher a beef, we'd hang the neat out at night in a tree - when there were no flies or anything. Then in the morning, first thing, we'd bring it in and put it on the floor and roll it all up tight in a tarp; it kept good that way for a long time, but you'd have to take it out at night and let the air get to it.

RM: You'd have to do that every day?

PR: Yes.

RM: That was a big chore, wasn't it?

PR: Oh yes. Another thing we did was to exchange beef. Sometimes it got real hot and then we'd butcher one and then the neighbor would butcher the next one and we'd just trade off.

RM: How about sheep - mutton?

PR: My dad didn't want any sheep on the ranch. He didn't like them and he couldn't eat them at all - didn't like the meat. He said, "I'm a cattle man, not a sheep man." I don't like lamb at all, myself. I like pork and beef, venison, all that, but not lamb.

RM: What kind of pigs did you keep?

PR: I don't know actually what kind they were. We'd just buy some little pigs and raise them up ourselves. There were black ones and I don't know anything about the breed of the pig. They had the spotted ones, too.

RM: And you just used them for your own consumption?

PR: That's all. We'd butcher them, use them and that's all.

RM: Your cash was gained from the cattle, wasn't it?

PR: Yes. Every fall we'd sell the cattle - the ones we had for sale.

RM: Which ones would you sell?

PR: The ones that were starting to get old, and the ones that would get wild up in the mountains and the ones that got mean. And cows just wouldn't have a calf, so we sold them.

RM: How did you sell the steers?

PR: Years ago we used to sell big steers - about 3- and 4-year-olds - big steers.

RM: Oh, you keep them that long.

PR: In those days that's what they did.

RM: What was the thinking for keeping them that long?

PR: I don't know. When you'd go to sell them, the buyers wanted the big steers. I guess they figured they got more meat that way. Then later on they went back the other way.

RM: They weren't tough?

PR: No, they were in good shape. If we were going to eat one of them we'd put it in and feed it good for a couple of months.

RM: What would you feed them?

PR: Well, we'd feed them hay and then sometimes we'd feed them mash and grain.

RM: Did you raise grain on the ranch?

PR: We raised some, but not very much. We raised barley, some wheat and oats - that's about it.

RM: You didn't raise corn to feed any of the animals?

PR: No, we didn't use that for feed.

RM: When a buyer bought cattle from you did he feed them before he marketed them or did they go straight to the slaughterhouse?

PR: Most of them went right to the slaughterhouse, I think, because they were in pretty good shape. The man who has the sale yard in Fallon, Nevada, had one of those big sale yards in Los Angeles. We sold our cattle to a buyer at the ranch and he trucked them to Los Angeles.

RM: When they slaughtered the cattle in those days, they weren't as fat as they are now, were they? They were muscular and filled out but they didn't have all that marbling and layers of fat on them, did they?

PR: That's right - they were more of a lean cattle.

RM: Did your mother save fat?

PR: Yes, she used to save fat - render it out. We used to save fat and they made soap out of it and things like that.

RM: Did she do anything else besides make soap with it?

PR: I don't remember. I didn't have much to do with that part of it.

RM: Did she have a washing machine?

PR: Oh, no. Just big old tubs and then the washboard. She'd heat water outside on the grate or else in the kitchen.

RM: You lived on the ranch with your grandparents, didn't you?

PR: Yes, our grandparents were there; we were in separate houses.

RM: Pete, about how many head of cattle were you running when you were a kid?

PR: Oh, all together . . . there were several of us in on that when I was a kid - an aunt and uncle and [the folks] - and there was close to 1000 head.

RM: So it was a big job keeping track of them.

PR: Oh yes.

RM: Where did you market them?

PR: Buyers would come out there a lot of the time, so we'd drive them to the railroad and then they'd take them from there on the train.

RM: So you'd drive them into Tonopah?

PR: Well yes, several different places. We used to drive them to Tonopah and then we drove them to Mina.

RM: You drove them clear to Mina? That must have been a long drive.

PR: Yes, it was quite a ways.

RM: How long would it take to drive them into Tonopah?

PR: About 4 days.

RM: Did you do that once a year or did you do it twice?

PR: Mostly once a year, but sometimes we'd miss some of the cattle that we didn't have before. But most all the time there was just the one drive, in the fall of the year - about November.

RM So it was cold.

PR: Oh yes, it got pretty chilly then. Some mornings you'd wake up and there'd be snow on the ground. We didn't even have tents.

RM: You slept out in the open?

PR: Yes, with just the big old tarps to put over us.

RM: So your bedroll would be covered with snow sometimes. Or if it was raining . . .

PR: Yes. A person wanted to make sure his clothes and boots were under [the tarp] so they wouldn't fill up with water.

RM What did you do when it rained? Did you put your head under the tarp or what?

PR: Yes, we had a big deal that you just pulled right back over.

RM: Did each guy have his own tarp?

PR: Yes, each one had their own.

RM: Did your bedroll ever get wet?

PR: A time or two it got wet - water seeped in around the edge. But, I don't know, we were used to that. It didn't make much difference. That's when we were young and tough.

RM: Your dad was in on it too though, wasn't he?

PR: Oh yes, he and my uncle used to go on the drives.

RM: What was your uncle's name?

PR: Willy is what they called him - he was a Rogers.

RM: So he was your dad's brother? Was he married?

PR: No, he never married.

RM: So that ranch basically supported several families, didn't it?

PR: Yes. And my aunt was there on the ranch - Emma. I guess Rene told you about her.

RM: A little bit. Do you want to tell me some more?

PR: No, I just wanted to mention her. She stayed there on the ranch - she never married either.

RM Why don't you describe the house that you lived in? It's gone now, isn't it?

PR: Yes. We moved the one that we lived in . . . well, we used to live all together in that big house - a brick house - and it's there now. Then we bought our own house and set it up there and lived in that house - it was just a plain limber house. When we left there we took the house with us down to the other ranch.

RM: Did you have a bunkhouse for the hands?

PR: Yes, we had a bunkhouse.

RM: But the hands ate at your table, didn't they?

PR: Sure.

RM: How many hands would you typically have?

PR: We didn't have very many outside of haying time. The rest of the time we did most of the work ourselves.

RM: You didn't bale the hay, did you?

PR: No, it was stacked. For years we used the Jackson fork wagons to haul it in and then later we got buckrakes and used a buck on the net and stacked it.

RM: Do you remember what year you moved down to the Wine Glass Ranch?

PR: It was '27 or '28 - somewhere along in there.

RM: What prompted your dad to move down there?

PR: Well, they decided to spread out. There were no hard feelings or anything, they just decided to split up. Emma and Willy kept the R.O. and we just took the other one. And of

course we had range from the ranch down there where Carl Hass is. There was range up on the other side, up in the Monitor, up Jefferson Canyon, and up that country and out.

RM: How many acres did you have when you were a kid there at the R.O.?

PR: There were 900-and-some acres, I think.

RM: And with the meadow grass, did you irrigate that at all or was it naturally watered?

PR: Oh, we irrigated it. We had water from the canyons up above that would come down if you had snow up there. If you didn't, you didn't get much water.

RM: Did you have ditches or culverts, or how did it come down?

PR: Just plain old ditches; we'd go up there and clean the ditches early in the spring and have them ready for when the water came down. And that was quite a lot of trouble. They would break out and we'd have to go up and fix them. It was quite a ways from the R.O. up to those canyons several miles.

RM: The whole thing was a lot of work, wasn't it?

PR: Oh yes. Lots of work.

RM: Were there any hands on the R.O. that stayed with you all the time?

PR: Well, yes, one old man stayed with us for years. He was there all the time. His name was Butch VanCurren. I think his name was Elmer, but they called him Butch because he used to be a butcher.

RM: Did he stay on the R.O. when you went down to the Wine Glass?

PR: Yes.

RM: So you must have been about 17 or so when you moved down to Wine Glass?

PR: Yes, that's about it.

RM: Did you go to high school?

PR: I never went to high school. I went through the eighth grade and that's as far as I went.

RM: And that's how far the school went on the ranch?

PR: Yes, they didn't have high school there at all.

RM: Did the teacher live with you?

PR: Yes, she stayed there with us.

RM: Did she dine with you?

PR: She would dine with us most of the time. We did have a little part of the house fixed up so that she could get little snacks or something like that, but she dined with us.

RM: How did it work, living with the teacher?

PR: Oh, it was fine. It didn't bother us. We got to be friends with them. We had several different teachers there - every year you'd get a different one.

RM: So they never stayed more than a year?

PR: I don't think so. We might have had one who stayed longer.

RM: How were they to get along with?

PR: We didn't have any trouble. Well, there was one there who was a bit on the ornery side, but

RM: What did she do?

PR: She was one of those who got kind of rough with us kids. She was always getting rough, but my folks put a stop to any spanking.

RM: Typically, how many students were in your school?

PR: There were about 7 or 8.

RM: And a lot of them were Indians, weren't they?

PR: Most of them were Indians. Of course the Mealman from across the valley used to come over and go to school with us.

RM: They had a ranch over there?

PR: They had a ranch there at Mores Creek - Mores Creek Ranch. They were there for years and they had an old car that they finally got fixed up and drove over there.

RM: Where did the Indians live - the families of the children who went to school there?

PR: They had a camp at our place just above the ranch.

RM: Up toward the highway?

PR: Yes. And the old man would work for us part of the time.

RM: Was it just one family or was it more than one?

PR: Well, they were caning and going. Some different ones would come and then they'd leave. But the one family there whose kids went to school with Rene and me was there for a long time. Some of the others were relatives of theirs. They'd come once in a while and go to school and then they'd leave.

RM: What did they live in?

PR: They made houses out of poles and willows and then put mud on them.

RM: Was it a one-room affair or what?

PR: They usually had 2 rooms, or the one they made up there at our place did - maybe it was 3 rooms - I don't remember.

RM: How did they heat it?

PR: With a wood stove.

RM: What was the name of that family?

PR: The Andrews - Bisk and Dora Andrews.

RM: And Bisk worked for the ranch? Were there a lot of Indians living in the valley at that time?

PR: Most every ranch had Indians on the place and the Indians worked at the ranch.

RM: Did the Indians have their own culture, their own way of life? I mean, did they have their own religion and everything or were they pretty much like the whites?

PR: Oh, they had their own religion, beliefs and things like that.

RM: Did you ever see any of their ceremonials or anything like that?

PR: We saw some - they'd sing and all that. And then they had the Indian doctor - she would come and . . . if they were in bad shape they'd take them out of the house and doctor then

outside if they thought they were going to die. Because if they ever died in the house they'd have to burn it down. That was their belief.

RM: Did you ever see any of their healing ceremonies?

PR: Well, not much of, that. They really didn't want you around when they did that.

RM: Did they go pine-nutting in the fall?

PR: Oh yes, every fall Rene and I would go with them. We'd get in the wagon and go up with old Dora and Bisk.

RM: Where did you do your pine-nutting?

PR: In several of the canyons just above us - Twin and Summit and Wisconsin and some of those.

RM: Was it pretty good pine-nutting up there?

PR: Yes, it was pretty good.

RM: Did you folks eat a lot of pine nuts or was it kind of a treat?

PR: We ate a lot. We'd get a lot of them at one time and then keep them and eat them as we wanted them.

RM: How did you prepare them?

PR: We cooked them in the stove - put water in a pan on the pine nuts and sort of boil them with salt. Some people cook them other ways. We've cooked some in the frying pan on top of the stove.

RM: How did you get them out of the shells them?

PR: Oh, you'd crack them with your teeth. You'd just crack them as you went along.

CHAPTER THREE

RM: You just mentioned that you knew Johnny Weeks. What do you remember about him?

PR: Well, he used to work for Charlie Keough. He worked for him for a long time and we ran our cattle together. We'd go down and ride south with the Keoughs and different ones. This was at a later date - not way back. We used to ride together a lot gathering cattle because we had the big roundup twice a year to Reese River and down south.

RM: Pete, you must have know the country up Twin River - up in the Toiyabes - pretty well.

PR: Oh yes. I've been all over that country.

RM: Tell me some of the things that you used to see up there, like old ruins or things that happened up there.

PR: I remember up in South Twin when they had a mine there and the only way that you could get up there was on a horse. They had a trail that would wind over the mountain. You couldn't get through the canyon on account of the water running down there, and there wasn't room enough for a trail beside it. But they had this mine and they put up a mill and then they had an old Model-A or Model-T Ford truck. They took it all apart and packed it on horses up to this mill. Then they'd haul the ore down to the trail - where you had to come up over the hill that far, they had the road all the way down the canyon. They'd get it down there and then they'd pack it over the hill to their truck up at the mouth of the canyon. I helped pack it on my horses for them several times.

RM: Do you remember the guy's name?

PR: I can't think of his name. He was from Tonopah. He came out there and found that mine.

RM: What other mines were up in there?

PR: I only remember a few prospects up there. One was by the pasture way up there. There were a few mining claims that a man used to work there part time. But this one with the mill had a waterwheel for the little mill.

RM: Do you know of any Indian ruins or things like that up there in those hills?

PR: There were old Indian buildings and things like that in different places, but I wouldn't remember where they were - just up in some of those canyons.

RM: There weren't many people up there when you were a young kid, were there?

PR: No, very few.

RM: Mainly just this miner and maybe a few people up there getting pine nuts?

PR: Yes, and people prospecting up there. They'd pan a little gold out and stay up there part time. Of course, this was not in the winter, it was just the summer-months.

RM: People didn't go up in the winter, did they?

PR: No, there was just too much snow.

RM: Let's discuss the Wine Glass Ranch now. What did you think when your dad told you, you were going to move down there?

PR: Oh, that was fine with me.

RM: You planned to stay with him? You weren't going to leave and go somewhere else or anything?

PR: Oh no. So we moved down there and took that ranch over. The Mores had the ranch. Dad bought it from the Moore family.

RM: Do you remember what he paid for it?

PR: I don't remember. It wasn't very much, compared to nowadays.

RM: How many acres did your dad have there?

PR: Seven hundred and sixty acres.

RM: And then did he have a pasture and a hay field, too?

PR: Yes, there was a large hay field - 200 acres of hay land - and a large pasture to turn the cattle out in.

RM: How many cattle were your family running there after you got going?

PR: Oh, 700 head, something like that.

RM: How did you manage all those cows with just you and your dad?

PR: They'd hire some help once in a while - an Indian. Of course at haying time we hired more men.

RM: How long did you stay on the Wine Glass then?

PR: I sold the ranch in 1955.

RM: So you took it over from your father?

PR: Oh yes.

RM: When did your father pass away, Pete?

PR: I think it was '31.

RM: So he didn't live that long after he took it over.

PR: No, he had a ruptured appendix.

RM: So you took it over after he passed on and kept it from '31 to '55?

PR: Yes.

RM: What made you sell it?

PR: The business was all right, but I wanted to get out of there and work for civil service and build up some time so I could retire. Rene was in on the ranch, of course, and she was willing to sell because she had her ranch down there.

RM: The Berg ranch?

PR: Yes. She'd married a Berg - Dan Berg. We just decided to sell, so we did.

RM: So you went to work for civil service?

PR: Yes. I worked for several different outfits - the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and the navy. I retired from the navy base at Hawthorne.

RM: What made you want to go from ranching to civil service, Pete?

PR: Oh, we got kind of tired of it. It's such a struggle - so much work to do. I was just getting tired of it and I wanted to build up some time. So we moved then.

RM: How did you get your start with cattle on the Wine Glass?

PR: We had our cattle up [at the R.O.] separately - they had a different brand on them. my dad's personal brand when he was up there was the Wine Glass, so we just moved the cattle down there.

RM: That had been his brand before he went there?

PR: Yes. The Moores had another brand - Quarter Circle 8 - but we dropped that.

RM: What was your grandfather's brand up on the R.O.?

PR: It just was R.O.

RM: OK. So you moved your cattle down to the Wine Glass?

PR: Yes. We sold our part of it there and then just moved down and bought the other from the Moore family. They wanted to get out of there.

RM: And your grandfather stayed on at the R.O.?

PR: No, he was dead long before that. It was my uncle and aunt.

RM: What kind of challenges did you face building up the Wine Glass?

PR: We had a lot of work to do there. It was pretty well run down . . . it wasn't too much of a job though, really. We just went right on and had a pretty nice house there.

RM: Where did you get your water for irrigation for the hay at the Wine Glass?

PR: We had some water from Broad Canyon - that's that canyon up above there - and then we had several springs on the ranch, which we didn't have at the R.O. They didn't have all those springs. They had a spring or two but we had quite a few.

RM: What kind of cattle were you running on the Wine Glass when you first went down there?

PR: The Herefords.

RM: Did you stay with the Hereford all the time then?

PR: Yes, we had the Herefords from there on out.

RM: Is there any rule of thumb in the cattle business about how many cows per bull or anything like that?

PR: Well, yes. For the permits for the Forest Service and everything, you had to have so many and different things like that. Actually, though, it was up to the person himself. You have to have more bulls than you would in the field because they're scattered so much out on the range. We used to have about 7 or 8, or sometimes less. We'd sell them down and then buy some more.

RM: How did the cattle business change between the time you took over the Wine Glass and the time you sold it?

PR: It didn't change very much, I don't think.

RM: So basically you were still pasturing your cattle and rounding them up and selling them?

PR: Yes. The buyers would come there and buy the cattle if they met our price. Several buyers would come in and buy them and we were still driving them to the railroad then. That was quite a while back. After that, the trucks came in.

RM: That's when you started trucking them out?

PR: Yes, the trucks would come in from Los Angeles and pick them up. The buyers would hire the trucks to come haul them.

RM: Was it a big help when they started trucking them out and you didn't have to drive them?

PR: It was a big help, all right. They didn't lose the weight like they did on a drive, where they'd lose quite a lot of weight.

RM: How much would a cow lose driving them to Tonopah?

PR: We figured it out, but I just don't remember anymore. But it made quite a difference.

RM: And then if you had to drive them to Mina, that was . . .

PR: Yes, that was quite a drive. We went through from Peavine and then over to Cloverdale and from there we went over Cedar Summit and we dropped down to Mina, so that wasn't much different than to . . . Then we drove them to Millers and shipped them out from there a time or two and once, I remember, [we went to] Tonopah.

RM: And you had stops for water all along these routes, didn't you?

PR: That's right - we had water for them.

RM: How many men would be on a drive?

PR: There were usually 5 or 6 of us.

RM: What would you have, 100 or 200 head?

PR: The mast we had was about 200 - sometimes there were 100 or 150.

RM: Who did you sell the Wine Glass to, Pete?

PR: Carl Hass. And he's still out there.

RM: He bought the R.O. too, didn't he?

PR: I think he had it at one time. But he's had our ranch ever since we sold it to him.

RM: What do you see as the big problems that a cattleman faces in running an operation in that area now?

PR: The prices for everything out there - the grazing fees and that - have gone up compared to what they used to be. It's made it a little rough.

RM: When you were a kid, what was Round Mountain like?

PR: They were mining then. It was an underground mine. There were quite a few men working up there.

RM: Did you get to Round Mountain much from the R.O.?

PR: Yes, we went in every once in a while. They had a little store there with a few things, and we'd go in there because it wasn't so far. When we moved down to the Wine Glass Ranch it was closer still.

RM: Did you know the Bergs?

PR: Oh, I knew them all.

RM: Did you ever do any mining?

PR: No. One thing I never did is mine. About all I could think about was cattle and horses.

RM: What kind of horses did you like?

PR: We mostly just had the common run of horses. We had some good ones - we had some American Saddlers for a while.

RM: Did you use them with cattle?

PR: Yes.

RM: Really? Do they work out well with cattle?

PR: Oh yes. We had a couple of them, and different ones. Some of them were just plain mustang horses.

RM: What horse works out best as a cow horse in your view?

PR: The old mustang horse - the breed that was raised out there in that country. We liked them the best. For one thing, they were just easy to handle. The American Saddlers were kind of a high-lifed horse. They always wanted to race or something like that.

RM: Did you go out and catch mustangs and train them?

PR: Yes, we used to catch them. We'd round them up at different times. We used to catch them over there at Cloverdale - a lot of them run down in that area.

RM: What would you do, drive them into a trap?

PR: Yes, we'd just drive them in and then we'd rope some of them and tie them to another horse and bring them in.

RM: Did you rope them from horseback?

PR: Oh yes. After the cattle, we'd round up a few horses. We raised quite a few of our own there on the ranch.

RM: You'd get them as colts, wouldn't you?

PR: Yes. We didn't get the old horses at all.

RM: But would you get an adult?

PR: Yes.

RM: How could you tell if a horse was going to make a good cow horse?

PR: You couldn't tell very well. Looks are one thing, but it was hard to tell. You just had to take a chance.

RM: Was there any horse that you'd stay with, like if they had a big old Roman nose or anything like that?

PR: Oh yes. We wouldn't pick them up at all. But then we knew this fellow who was on the Berg ranch - Rene knew him, too. [Fulton Little] Kelsay, his name was. He used to raise horses out there and we used to get some of his horses. They were the American Saddle [breeds like that]. We'd get colts from them and we had a stallion out there on the ranch. That was in the later days at the R.O.

RM: What kind was your stallion?

PR: He was a Clydesdale. He was a big horse. But we had the smaller mares and it turned out well that way.

RM: And you'd use him for a cow horse?

PR: Of course, he was broke to team - to the wagon. We used his colts for cow horses.

RM: What kind of horses did you use in your teams? Did you use mustangs for that?

PR: Oh yes. Whatever kind we could get hold of.

RM: Is that right? The mustangs were big enough to use in a team? PR: Oh yes. They were just the regular old run of horse. They were bigger and they were fine.

RM: Were there a lot of mustangs in those days, Pete?

PR: Years ago there were a lot of them all over the country. Of course there are a lot of them now. They're not mustangs anymore, but . . .

RM: The wild horses are not mustangs now? You wouldn't call them that?

PR: Well, not really.

RM: In your view, what is a mustang?

PR: I guess they're the ones that were raised out in the country and have been running out there all the time. Some of these that they have now belong to people. They've gotten away from them or they ran them out on purpose.

RM: Round Mountain went through its ups and downs in the years since you were a child, didn't it?

PR: It went up and down several times. They'd do well, one company would take it over and then couldn't make it and someone else would take it and then they closed the mine down for a while and then they'd start up again.

RM: Were you ever tempted to try and get some of that gold yourself?

PR: No. I didn't want to have anything to do with it. Some of them got away with gold up there - I suppose you've heard of that.

RM: I've heard some of those stories, yes.

PR: I never wanted to try that.

RM: Did you know Blackjack Raymond?

PR: Oh yes. I remember him from when I was a kid. He was a miner up there at Round Mountain. He and my dad were good friends and used to play poker together.

RM: He bought a lot of gold, didn't he?

PR: Yes, he bought gold. He was a nice old fellow. I liked him.

RM: Did he have a family?

PR: He had a wife and a couple of boys, if I remember right.

RM: Did you know Lou Gordon?

PR: Oh yes. I remember him when he had the mine.

RM: What kind of a man was he?

PR: Oh, he was all right as a man, as far as I know.

RM: Was it hard to find a buyer when you decided to sell the Wine Glass?

PR: No. Carl'd been wanting to buy it for quite a while, and there were other buyers, too. We decided to sell to him.

RM: So you sold the ranch and then went to work for civil service - was it for the U.S. government?

PR: I went to work for the state highway [department] at first, over there at Peterson Station.

RM: Where's that?

PR: It's out in Lander County, this side of Austin a ways on Highway 50. I went to work out there for a year and I didn't like that highway work at all.

RM: Were you driving a truck and that kind of thing?

PR: Yes. And putting up signs and taking them down and loading them and moving them. The U.S. Forest Service is more my type of work.

RM: What did you do for them?

PR: Well, I went with the Fish and Wildlife Service before that, and that was back to the road work - graveling roads and things like that. I didn't stay with them long; I then went to work for the Forest Service.

RM: What did you do for them?

PR: Oh, we had to take care of the fences, ride them and count the cattle when they'd put them in the mountains and fill out permits and different things like that. It was good work; I liked it. I just was saying that I couldn't take the winters out there any longer. It was too cold, so we moved in and went to work over at the Hawthorne base.

RM: And what year did you go to Hawthorne?

PR: Sixty-seven or '68.

RM: And what did you do there?

PR: All kinds of different jobs. I did a little truck driving and then ran some equipment and pruned trees and all that; mowed all those parks and lawns in there. I did the golf course and all that.

RM: Did you like that?

PR: Oh, I liked it.

RM: Did you live in Hawthorne?

PR: No, I drove back and forth from Fallon. There were several of us who were working over there and traveled together.

RM: That's a long commute, isn't it?

PR: Yes. I put in 6 years of that.

RM: Did you retire out of that, then?

PR: Yes, I retired in '74.

RM: Pete, a lot of the ranchers and miners I've talked to have a lot of displeasure with the Forest Service and so on. What is your view on the role of the Forest Service and its relationship with Nevadans?

PR: Well, I didn't like it very well. There were some things I didn't like about the Forest Service.

RM: How do you see their role? Do you think they play their hand too strongly or do you see their role, as they have it now, as being necessary?

PR: No, I don't think some of those things are necessary at all.

INDEX

alfalfa
Anderson, Alvin,
Anderson, Catherine,
Andrews, Bisk & Dora
Angus cattle
Austin, NV
automobiles
Berg, Dan
Berg family,
Berg ranch,
Broad Canyon, NV,
cattle
cattle (dairy),
cattle drive
chickens
childhood activities,
Clifford, 'Pena
Cloverdale, NV,
crops
Durham cattle
Fallon, NV,
food,
fruit
Galloway cattle
gardens
Gordon, Lou,
Hass, Carl
Hawthorne Naval Base
hay
haying,
Hereford cattle
hired hands
Holstein cattle,
horses
horses (wild),
hotels
household chores
Indians,
irrigation,
Jefferson Canyon, NV
Jersey cattle

Kelsay, Fulton Little,
Keough, Charlie,
Lander County, NV,
Los Angeles, CA,
MacNamara, Mrs.
Mealman family
Millers, NV,
Mina, NV, 17,
Mizpah Hotel,
Monitor Valley, NV,
Moore family,
Moores Creek, NV,
Moores Creek Ranch
Nevada Highway Dept
North Twin River, NV
pasturing
Peterson Station,
pigs,
pine nuts
prospecting,
R.O. Ranch
railroad
Raymond, Jack "Blackjack
Raymond family,
Reese River, NV,
roads
Rogers, Benjamin Franklin
Rogers, Catherine,
Rogers, Emma,
Rogers, Grace Anderson
Rogers, Williams
Rogers, Willy
Round Mountain, NV,
sagebrush
schools
shopping
Smoky Valley, NV
soap,
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service,
U.S. Navy,
VanCurren, Elmer "Butch,"
water,
Weeks, Johnny,

Wine Glass Ranch,
Wisconsin Canyon, NV,
Zaval, Irene "Rene" Rogers Berg,