

An Interview with  
JOHN & PANSY  
WEEKS

An Oral History conducted and edited by Robert D. McCracken  
Nye County Town History Project

Nye County Town History Project  
Nye County, Nevada

Tonopah  
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John and Pansy Weeks  
1990

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## 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. Mains, 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.

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--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 remains 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 Gabbs, Round Mountain, Manhattan, Beatty, Amargosa Valley, and Pahrump. Gabbs's only newspaper was published intermittently between 1974 and 1976. Round 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. The 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 then 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 NM' will remain for the use and enjoyment of all.

—R.D.M.



Robert McCracken talking to John and Pansy Weeks at their home in Fallon, Nevada, April 26, 1990.

## CHAPTER ONE

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

JW: Well, it's John J. Weeks.

RM: And when and where were you born?

JW: I was born up in Cloverdale Canyon - out in the mountains, on a hilltop, on September the 5th, 1908.

RM: And what was your father's name?

JW: My father's name was John Samuel Weeks.

RM: And where was he from?

JW: I don't know. He was from around lone and that country.

RM: Was he a Shoshone Indian?

JW: Yes.

RN: And what was your mother's name?

JW: My mother's maiden name was Dana Mary Bell.

RN: Was she also Shoshone Indian?

JW: Yes.

RM: And what area was she from?

JW: She was from around the same place - lone, and that country.

RM: How do people refer to it? Would that be called the Reese River area?

JW: Yes.

RM: Where did you live when you were a little tiny kid?

JW: I lived around Golden, and we had a little ranch about 3 miles from Golden up Cloverdale Canyon. In fact, we still have it.

PW: It's what they call a homestead ranch.

RM: So your father had a homestead? How many acres did he have there?

JW: It was 36 acres. It was just down in the canyon there.

RM: Did he grow, things there?

JW: Oh, yes. He had potatoes and onions and carrots and cabbage and things like that.

RM: Did he raise any stock?

JW: We used to, but the Forest Service ran us out.

RM: When was that?

JW: That was along in the '30s, I guess.

RM: Did your parents practice the old Shoshone culture very-much, or had they pretty much given up a lot of it?

PW: They practice it.

RW: Pansy, why don't you tell me your name as it reads on your birth certificate?

PW: Well, in the first place, I haven't got a birth certificate. My maiden name is Pansy Owens. I was born in Smoky Valley at what now is Carver's Station. They always kid me about, Which Part? The saloon or the cafe?"

I tell them, "Right at the corner."

RM: [laughs] When were you born?

PW: I was born September 11th, 1913.

RM: And what was your father's name?

PW: My father's name was Steve Owens, but I didn't know him too well.

RM: How about your mother? What was her name?

PW: My mother's maiden name was Maude Crowell. Her father used to live in Austin; he was a stagecoach driver. He was a white man, so that made my mother half . . .

RM: Were both of your parents Shoshone?

PW: My mother was Shoshone and my father was white.

RM: Johnny, how long did you live at the ranch there at Cloverdale Canyon?

JW: Well, we lived up there till 1930, when my mother came into Fallon, here.

RM: Did you go to school in those years?

JW: I didn't go to school till I was 11 years old. Then I went to Stewart [Indian School] for about 4 years, and then my dad opened up a school at Cloverdale Canyon.

RM: Could you describe some of what it was like at Stewart Indian School? Also, did you go home in the summers?

JW: Yes, my father came and got me.

RM: Did you like it at Stewart?

JW: Oh, I didn't like it very much. [chuckles]

RM: I've heard some stories about it. Why don't you tell me about why you didn't like it?

JW: Well, a lot of kids, all the time, would call you names and I'd get in a fight and all that stuff; it was hard to get along.

RM: Were they mean to the children there?

JW: If you didn't mind, they'd give you a licking with a big old . . .

PW: Bullwhip

RM: Is that right?

JW: The tug was that thick, you know. And the man who took care of the kids looked like a giant, to me. [laughter] He was some kind of an Indian. He was a big fellow. His shoulders were about that wide, I guess.

RM: About 3-1/2 feet wide.

JW: Yes. When he came down with that strap, boy, you'd feel it.

RM: Oh!

PW: He said he got punished a lot, but I'm not going to tell you what for. [laughter] He was up to no good, I guess.

JW: You remember that as long as you live, I guess.

RM: What other things do you remember about the school?

JW: All the time I was over there we were just cutting paper and things like that.

RM: Oh - they didn't teach you anything?

JW: Not very much. They'd teach you how to cut paper and draw pictures with a crayon and stuff like that. For 4 years I did that over there.

RM: Is that right - they didn't teach you reading and writing and things like that?

JW: Very little.

RM: Why do you think that was?

JW: I don't know. There were a lot of kids there - about 300 altogether, girls and boys.

RM: Was it lonely for you?

JW: No, it wasn't too lonely. There were a lot of kids there - some of them good ones, some bad ones, but all kinds of them.

RM: They were from a lot of different tribes, weren't they?

JW: Yes. There were Washoes, Paiutes and Shoshone and some others from other states.

PW: Arizona and down

JW: Yes.

RM: Pansy, did you go there?

PW: No.

RM: What did you do before you went to the school there? Were you living on the homestead with your parents?

JW: Yes.

RM: Did you have brothers and sisters?

JW: I had 2 older than I am; they're both dead, now. I've got 2 sisters left - they're down here in Fallon. One is Agnes Foster and the other one is Martha Allen.

RM: What was life like before you went to Stewart Indian School?

JW: Well, I used to work on the ranch - help my mother. cultivate, pull weeds, and things like that. And I'd go out and shoot blackbirds. [laughs]

RM: What did you shoot them with?

JW: A single-shot .22.

RM: Were there a lot of blackbirds there?

JW: Oh yes, there was all kinds of game.

RM: Were there other children in the area?

JW: Yes, there were the people who lived about a mile and a half below us - they had a little ranch down there, too.

RM: Were they Indian?

JW: Yes - the Farringtons.

RM: Did you get together much with the Farrington?

JW: They'd come up sometimes and visit.

RM: Was your father there all the time, or did he have to go out?

JW: He had to go out and work all the time. He'd go to work down at Reese River, and then over at Peavine and all over. He mostly worked with cattle. He was a pretty good cowboy.

RM: What kind of a house did you live in up Cloverdale?

JW: It was a part log and a part lumber house.

RM: Had your dad built that house, or was it already there?

JW: No, they built it. Two guys came and helped him build it. They were white fellows - one carpenter, and another one.

RM: Do you remember that?

JW: Yes.

RM: Where did you live before they built your home?

JW: We used to live right there in a tent in the summertime. In the wintertime, we'd go to Golden, where I was born. Golden was a little mining camp.

RM: Were there people living there then? I'm not familiar with Golden, Johnny.

JW: It's way out there, 60 miles north of Tonopah. It's right in Cloverdale Canyon. On this side is Golden, and on that side, West Golden - over the hill.

RM: Oh. What kind of mines did they have there?

JW: Gold.

RM: Were they good ones?

JW: They were not in large quantity - they were little ones in your hangings - they were dry washes and things like that.

RM: When would this have been - about 1915 or 1918?

JW: Well, earlier than that, I guess.

RM: Were they mining when you were there?

JW: No - they were shut down a little bit when . . . they had a mill there one time, and they took it away.

RM: When you were born, who attended your mother? Was it an Indian woman, or . . . ?

JW: Yes - my grandmother.

PW: Shall I tell him what happened when you was born? He always calls himself a mountain man. [chuckles] Well, his mother, I guess, started labor that morning, and his grandmother told

her not to go anywhere, but she went for a walk. And this lady, Jenny, told her, "Be sure and tell me which way you're going." (She knew she was going to get in trouble.) Nobody showed up for an hour or two so she went and checked. She went up that trail and found the mama and her son under a little rabbit brush. His mother had delivered him.

RM: Is that right - so you're the mountain man, then? [laughter] That's a good story.

PW: I guess the mother checked her daughter and thought she was all right. You know, they used to wear a lot of those skirts. She took one of her skirts off and wrapped her son in it. And I'm just guessing - she probably cut the cord, because she had no other way . . .

RM: That's interesting. What kind of clothes did the Indian women wear then, Pansy?

PW: Cotton clothes. The more modern type Indians were just like the white people - they didn't like to wear a lot of underskirts and all that.

RM: So the ranch was your summer place, and then in the winter you'd go down to Golden.

JW: Yes. It's warmer down there, and we had a better house. We lived in a white fellow's house there. Up at the ranch we lived in tents till they built the log cabin I was talking about. They built that in 1917.

RM: Is the property still in your family?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: Did your father do much hunting or anything?

JW: Well, we'd hunt in the fall of the year - deer.

RM: He didn't hunt rabbits and things like that?

JW: No. My mother and I used to go get the rabbits.

PW: She was a sharp shooter, too.

RM: What kind of food did you eat most of the time?

JW: It was the same as the food you eat today.

RM: You didn't eat the traditional Indian foods that much, then?

PW: Well, pine nuts once in a while.

JW: Pine nuts and some berries - we'd make jam out of them and things like that.

RM: What kind of berries?

PW: Wild currant berries and wild mushroom . .

JW: Well, wild currant and chokecherry and elderberry . . . all that.

RM: And you knew where all those berries were?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: Do you still know where they are, and do you still go after them?

JW: Oh, yes - if they come. The last 3 years, we didn't get any berries - it freezes.

PW: It's way up in the mountains.

JW: So this year we might get some.

RM: Are they up in the Toiyabes?

PW: Yes - they're up in the mountains.

JW: Yes, up in the Toiyabe - all the canyons have some . . .

RM: Why did you go to Stewart for 4 years?

JW: My father opened up school in Cloverdale Canyon.

RM: At your ranch?

JW: It was right between Farrington and our ranch - right in the middle.

RM: How many children went there?

JW: There were about . . . 10, wasn't it?

PW: More than . . . let's see, there were 3 of the Farrington girls, 3 of the Pete girls . . . they're all Shoshones. And then the Weeks family.

JW: There were 5 of us.

PW: Julia, Johnny, Agnes and Martha all went.



JW: That was the whole school.

RM: Who was the teacher?

PW: A white

RM: Where was she from?

JW: She came from around Yerington someplace, I guess. She was from this part of the country.

RM: Did she teach well?

JW: Oh, yes. She didn't do much of that coloring work, or stuff like that. She taught us writing and spelling and things like that. And we had a man teacher from Tonopah, later.

RM: Where did the teachers live?

JW: They had their own cabin right at the schoolhouse.

RM: What did the schoolhouse look like?

JW: It was a log cabin. They cut the logs this way and then they lay them on top like that.

RM: OK, it was like a Lincoln log cabin.

JW: Yes. They cut a notch in here and put it down like that, and the other one comes on top like this, and they fill in the cracks with mud or cement or lime and gravel or sand.

RM: Where did they get the logs?

JW: There are a lot of pine trees up there. It's a lot of work; you have to get the pines and knock them and make them kind of square.

RM: Is that log schoolhouse still there?

JW: No.

RM: What happened to it?

JW: After they quit the school, Farrington got the teacher's house and we got the schoolhouse. We tore it down and burned the logs [for firewood].

RM: How long did the man teacher stay there?

JW: One year. The [very] first woman that came was a rancher in Reese River - she opened up the school. She only taught about 3 or 4 months, something like that, in the schoolhouse. Then we got another woman teacher. Her name was Grace Limb, from Tonopah. Then the man teacher came, and then another woman teacher . . .

RM: Do you remember his name?

JW: No, I don't remember his name.

RM: What year would this have been, Johnny?

JW: They opened the school up in '23, I think, and it lasted 4 years.

RM: Where were the other Reese River Indians living at that time?

JW: They were all over. There was no reservation there then. The reservation only in '42.

RM: So the Indians were just living anywhere . . .

PW: They worked for the ranchers around - that's how they made their living. They weren't too particular, like they are now. You could go out and pitch a tent and stay there for a while, but now you can't.

RM: What kind of pay did they receive - do you know?

PW: Like a rancher's pay - it wasn't very much.

JW: I raked hay for 4 bits a day.

RM: How old were you?

JW: I was about 14.

RM: How many hours a day?

JW: Nine hours.

RM: Where did you rake hay?

JW: At Reese River. And you'd get 3 meals a day. Fifty cents and 3 meals. [chuckles] Well, 50 cents was a lot of money in those days, you know. If you had \$100 in your pocket, you were a millionaire. But nowadays, \$100 goes nowhere.

RM: How often did they pay you?

JW: They'd pay when you got through haying. At the ranch where we used to work it would take about 18 or 20 days, something like that.

RM: Oh - so they'd pay you when the job was done? What would you do with your money then?

JW: Well, you'd go in and buy some clothes and candy and stuff. [chuckles] There wasn't much of anything [When] you'd go in the store in those days - not like today. You didn't see the big chocolate bars and all. You'd get hard candy; that's all.

RM: Did you have your own horse or anything?

JW: Oh, yes - a horse and a wagon is all we had.

RM: Do either one of you recall stories that your parents and grandparents would tell about the old days - of the Indian way of life, or experiences that they might have had?

PW: I had some, I can't remember too much of them. Grandmother told me. It wasn't much of a life. They all lived out in the valley in the summertime in what they call wickiups made of sagebrush. They'd live in there and work for the ranchers. My grandfather, George, was a stagecoach driver from Austin. And my mother worked on the ranch, too.

RM: Did you ever knew your grandfather - the stagecoach driver?

PW: No, I didn't. I knew my stepgrandpa - Jim.

RM: She married another man after him?

PW: Afterwards, yes. My mother's and my 2 aunts' father went and got married to a white woman.

RM: How did the Indians feel about that? Did they feel that that was wrong?

PW: You bet they did. When my Grandfather George was on his deathbed he was wondering why his daughters wouldn't come and see him. You know what the daughters said?

RM: What?

PW: "He forgot about us," so . . . I still have one aunt left.

RM: His daughter?

PW: His daughter; yes.

RM: Where does she live?

PW: She lives around the Battle Mountain area, but she's a very old lady now

RM: How old would she be?

PW: She'd be around in her late 80s, I would think. My mother would've been 98 - almost 100 - now.

RM: How did the Indians feel about Indian women marrying white man? I understand that Jim Butler was married to an Indian lady - I didn't know that until somebody just told me, recently.

PW: That's all our [information] is - hearsay. I mean, my grandmother's cousin used to say something about Jim Butler being married to an Indian, but who, I don't know. That's just a story.

RM: What did. you do after they closed the school, Johnny?

JW: I went to work an a ranch up at Reese River.

## CHAPTER TWO

RM: Could you tell me a little bit about Reese River? Wm many ranches were there in those days, going up the valley?

JW: Well, first there was the Bell Ranch, then the Keough Ranch, and then Schmallings', then Derringers'. And way up top on the hill, there was the Worthington' ranch. And then the Forest Service had a place on down. And below, that was the Welches' ranch.

RM: Now, this is going from south to north, right?

JW: Yes - going north. Then you come into O'Tooles' . And from O'Tooles, going that way, there was a Heath Ranch. Then you'd go way down there and then there was another O'Toole Ranch - Billy O'Toole's ranch - way on this side. Then you'd go down to another Welch ranch.

RM: Did each one of these ranches have Indian workers?

JW: Oh, yes. At least part of the (workers were Indian].

RM: Did the some families always work for the same rancher, or did they switch around?

JW: Well, in haying time they did - guys came in haying, you know. And the steady man was there all the time. Pat Welch talked Indian just as well as any Indian. He would tell them what to do in Indian

RM: Did the other ranchers speak Indian?

JW: No.

RM: How did they communicate with the Indians?

JW: Well, they'd just tell them. All the Indians understood the white very well, so they'd just tell them. And the nearest town they had was Austin. They'd go there to get their groceries.

RM: The ranchers, or the Indians?

JW: The Indians. They'd go to get groceries, and then they'd get drunk, you see. That's the biggest part of it - the drinking.

PW: Drinking "firewater."

RM: Did they go to Austin very often?

JW: Well, whenever they'd get a payday, I guess.

RM: Did the payday come regularly, or what?

JW: Well, most of the time, if you wanted money, you'd just go ask your boss and he'd write you a check.

RM: I see. How did you get to Austin?

JW: You'd go horseback, or in a wagon.

RM: It must've taken a couple of days.

JW: No, it wasn't very far from Austin - about a day, I think.

RM: Did you just camp out when you were at Austin?

JW: I never did go to Austin when I was a kid.

RM: Did the others camp out when they went to Austin?

JW: I think so - yes.

RM: What was the Bell Ranch like, when you were a kid? JW: That was a big cattle ranch - the Bell Ranch. That's all they raised - cattle.

RM: Was it the biggest of the ranches in the Reese River?

JW: It was pretty good-sized. The Welches' ranch was a big ranch - way down on this side of Austin. The Bell Ranch was 2 ranches, you see - one above and one down below - with about a mile between them.

RM: Had the ranchers been there a long time?

JW: Yes.

RM: Did you know the ranchers?

JW: Oh, yes. I knew them all.

RM: Could you talk about each one of the ranchers that you knew, starting from the south and moving up?

JW: Well, the first ranch would be Indian Valley. That belonged to the Keoughs. They used it for pasture.

RM: Was there a house there?

JW: Yes, but nobody lived there. They'd just go there in the fall of the year when they were gathering the cattle. They lived on the home ranch down there below the Hell Ranch - between the Bell and Schmalling ranches.

RM: Oh, OK. What were the Keoughs like?

JW: They ran cattle, too.

RM: Had they been there a long time?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: What was the next ranch, then?

JW: That was Schmalling's ranch. They were there a long time, too. Schmalling had a few head of cattle - maybe about 300 head.

RM: How many did the Keoughs have?

JW: They had about 700.

PW: John was their buckaroo.

RM: You were buckaroo for the Keoughs? So you knew that country pretty well, didn't you?

JW: Oh, yes. I know it like a book. I've been over almost every inch of that Reese River country. In the fall of the year, we'd go and gather the cattle in and put them in the fields. And then we'd take them to the desert this side of Tonopah after we got them through weaning the calves.

RM: Oh - you'd take them down there on that flat?

JW: Yes - on that flat - and leave them there for the winter. And they stayed there till about the middle of May. Then we'd drive them back up into the mountains again.

RM: Were they hard to round up?

JW: No, they weren't bad.

RM: Are there many Indian ruins up in that area that you covered - that Reese River area?

JW: Well, they didn't live up the mountain, so I didn't see any up there.

PW: The people in the olden days were nomadic people - they had no stationary place.

RM: Where would the Indians camp back then?

JW: They have camps later on - they just lived where they worked. They'd have a little cabin back by their bosses. The ranch house would be here, and they'd be over here somewhere, you see.

RM OK, we talked about the Keough Ranch and then the Schmalling Ranch. And then, what was the next one going up?

JW: That was up on the hill - the Worthingtons. He had about 350 head of cattle, easily.

RM: Who were the Worthingtons?

JW: Worthington had 2 children, I think - a boy and a girl. He's buried down here - Sam Worthington, his name was.

RM: What was Keough's name?

JW: George Keough, and his son was Charlie Keough. And they had a daughter, Inez Keough.

RM: And Schmallings - what were their names?

JW: Well, there was John Schmalling and Fannie Schmalling, and John, his boy, was a junior - John Schmalling, [Jr].

RM: Are the ranches still there?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: Do the some families have them?

JW: No, they made a reservation there - the Yomba Reservation. The government bought that [area] and made a reservation out of it.

RM: Which ranches did the government buy?

JW: They bought the Bell ranches and the Worthington Ranch, and they went down and bought the John Bowler ranch way down there, and they bought the Derringer Ranch, too. You see, the Bell Ranch connects to the Keough Ranch here. That belongs to . . . I don't know who's got them, now - it's been sold 2 or 3 times since then. And then the Schmalling Ranch belongs to a



white man. Then the reservation comes in there. Then they've got the Forest Service forest station there, and then way down there, the Welch Ranch. Then the reservation - the Bowler Ranch - comes in down there.

RM: When did they start the reservation?

JW: In '42, I think.

RM: How did that work? Could any Indian could move on there, or what was the process?

JW: Well, whoever signed up for it. I was signed up for it, and I didn't want it.

RM: Why didn't you want it?

JW: You know how a young man is - he doesn't want to be tied down anyplace. I was just running around, you see.

RM: Yes. Did they give each person who signed up a portion of land?

JW: Well, it's assignment land.

RM: How much land did they assign?

JW: I don't know what they got. Forty acres, I guess, apiece.

RM: Oh - so they expected you to ranch - was that it?

JW: Yes.

RM: You couldn't raise cattle, could you?

JW: Well, you can raise cattle on it. You can't ranch very much - it freezes in July sometimes up there.

RM: So you can't grow many crops there?

JW: No - it's pretty cold up there.

RM: OK. Where did we leave off - with the Worthington Ranch?

JW: The Worthington. Then it comes down to . . . I can't think of the name now. It's where they've got that gymnasium and all that.

RM: Well, anyway, there's another ranch in there. How many cattle do you think they had?

JW: They had about 400 head, I guess. Then you go down to the Welch Ranch - I don't know how many . . . they ran quite a few. About the same amount, I guess.

RM: What were the Welches' names?

JW: There was Joe Welch, I think.

RM: Where did the ranchers' children go to school?

JW: Well, Austin, the biggest part of them.

RM: Even as little children?

JW: Yes.

RM: They didn't have schools on the ranch?

JW: I don't think so.

RM: OK, what was the next ranch going up, then, after the Welch?

JW: The Bowler Ranch comes in then. It's on the reservation now.

RM: About how many cattle did they have?

JW: Well, they had about 10 miles, I guess - about 300 or 400 head.

RM: And then what was the next one?

JW: The Whooley Ranch. They had about the same amount of cattle, I guess.

RM: And what were their names?

JW: Well, there was Will Whooley. I forgot the old man's name. He was a stonemason, that old Whooley. He'd make the walls of the ranch houses and things like that.

RM: Is that right. Which ranch is that great big beautiful brick here on?

JW: That's the one I forget the name of . . .

RM: I see. I was wondering when they built that house.

JW: Gee, a long time ago. The Bells' ranch has one of these brick buildings on it, too.

RM: It does? But the Bell Ranch is on the south end, isn't it?

JW: Yes.

RM: What were the Bells' names?

JW: Let's see - I forgot old Bell's name - the old dad of them all. There were about 5 Bell boys.

RM: OK, let's move on north, then. Where did we leave off?

JW: On the Whooley Ranch.

RM: OK, what's the next one?

JW: Then the next one was the Welch Ranch - Bartley O'Toole's living there now.

RM: Did he get it from Welch?

JW: I don't know how - he bought it, I guess, or something like that.

RM: What was the next ranch, then?

JW: The Whooley Ranch, and then . . .

RM: The Whooley - well, we said that one.

JW: On this side you had the Heath Ranch.

RM: The Heath Ranch. And what were their names?

JW: Those names were Irene, and the old mother Heath - I forgot her name. I know the daughter was Irene. There was a woman and her daughter over there, that's all. They ran the ranch.

RM And they were running about the same amount of cattle?

JW: Yes.

RM: What was the next ranch going up, then?

JW: The next ranch was the Welches' ranch way down there, again.

RM: Oh, OK. And what were their names, again?

JW: The old man's name was Will - Will Welch. That's the one I was talking about who spoke Indian, you know.

RM: OK. And then what's the next one?

JW: The next one - I don't know from there on down that way.

RM: Are we across the Nye County line yet?

PW: We're into Lander County.

RM: At what ranch did we get into Lander?

JW: Right below the Heath Ranch - that's where Lander comes in.

RM: What kind of life did those ranchers lead, there? It seems like there's this huge valley with little ranches going . . . it 'must be really isolated.

JW: Yes. They'd go to Austin and to Lone - there was a store there, too.

RM: What else was there at Lone at that time?

JW: It was a mining camp.

PW: And the county seat, too.

RM: OK. That'd be a long time ago, though.

JW: Yes, that was the first county seat, and then they moved to Belmont, then to Tonopah.

RM: Were there many people living at Lone when you were a kid?

JW: Oh, there were 20 or 30 people there - families, you know.

RM: Did they have a school there?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: Where did people get their gasoline?

PW: His father, I know, used to own a Model-T Ford.

JW: There were a lot of those Model Ts in those days here. You could buy a Model-T for \$700.  
[chuckles]

RM That was a lot of money, then.

JW: Hell, yes.

RM: Were the Model-Ts reliable out in those remote areas?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: A man wasn't afraid to go out to Reese River in his Model-T?

JW: No.

PW: No, as long as they had baling wire in their car. [laughter] That's what they used to say.

RM: [laughs] Just fix it right on the spot, would they?

JW: Yes.

PW: His father was killed in a Model-T.

RM Your father was killed in a Model-T? Where?

JW: Reese River.

RM: What happened?

JW: Just drinking.

RM: Drinking and turned over?

JW: Yes - right in the river valley. He came off the mountain, from lone.

PW: It's a nasty drop - it just comes down like this. I guess he was really coming. And there weren't very many travelers in those days. I guess the Worthingtons from up across the valley saw the dust Nobody was on that road for 2 or 3 days, and he laid under that car for 3 days.

RM: [gasps] Oh, my God!

PW: He was still alive when they got to him, and when they lifted the car up, that's when he died. Because the gangrene moved up and I guess whatever it was - 3 days . . . And he died right there, they said. In those days, you know, you couldn't do anything [for gangrene].

RM: For 3 days he lay there!

PW Yes. Nobody traveled that road.

RM: How terrible. When you got out of school, you went to work for Keoughs. How long did you work for them?

JW: Up until 1942.

RM: You worked there a long time, then, didn't you?

JW: Yes. Then I went to work for John Casey from here - he bought the Keough ranches. I worked for him till 1950.

RM: What did you do then?

JW: 'then I went to work at the Tonopah courthouse.

RM: Oh, you did?

JW: Yes - I was janitor there for 30 years, until 1980. I got my retirement from them.

RM: And then you moved up here?

PW: No, not right away.

RM: When did you move up to Fallon?

PW: About '85.

RM: So you lived in Tonopah a long time. When you were working for Keough, how much were you paid?

JW: Well, \$45 a month.

RM: Tell me about what your job consisted of.

JW: Well, tend the cattle in summertime, help hay and all that stuff, you know.

RM: What did you do in the winter?

JW: Feed the cattle.

RM: You took them off the range in the winter?

JW: Yes.

RM: Do you have to take the cattle off the range in the Reese River in the winter?

JW: Yes, a lot of snow acmes - it's 3 or 4 feet high, sometimes.

RM: Do all the ranchers feed their cattle in the winter in Reese River?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: They don't leave them on the range?

JW: Well, they wean the calves off, and then they take them to the winter range. But you have to leave the cows and calves at the ranch and feed them.

RM: Oh, OK. And they feed them hay that they've grown?

JW: Yes.

RM: Do farmers in the Reese River have gardens?

JW: Oh, yes. They raise potatoes and carrots and onions and things like that. You can't raise corn or watermelon - they'll freeze on you.

RM: How about fruit trees?

PW: If you're lucky, you can get some apples.

RM: Is that right?

PW: I think another thing you should be interested in is how they moved to sell their cows.

RM: OK - that'd be the cattle drive?

JW: Well, we used to drive them to here.

RM: To Fallon?

JW: Yes.

RM: Woo !

JW: It would take about 5 days to come with the cattle.

RM: What route would you take?

JW: Well, we started in Reese River and went to Lone and then came over Buffalo Canyon - Eastgate. Then to Eastgate, Frenchie's Station (Frenchman's Station, you know). Then you'd come to Salt Wells. Then the next day you'd bring them in here [to Fallon].

RM: How far would you go the first day from Reese River?

JW: The first day, you'd come into Burnt Cabin Summit, I think. Then from there to Eastgate, and from Eastgate to Frenchie's Station. And from there you'd come into Salt Wells and then to the ranch down here at Fallon.

RM: Did the cows lose a lot of weight on a trip like that?

JW: Not too much.

PW: They didn't rush them.

RM: How many cows would you have in a drive?

JW: Well, that depends on how many the buyer buys. The buyer goes from [Fallon to the ranch] and buys the cattle.

RM: Would he buy them from just one rancher, or from a lot of ranchers?

JW: Oh, all the ranchers would sell them.

RM: And then it would be all of the ranchers' herd coming this way. And each cow would have his brand, wouldn't it?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: And if a rancher's cow died on the way, that was just tough luck, wasn't it?

JW: Yes, that's all. [chuckles] They never died, though.

RM: Which cows would they sell?

JW: Well, they'd sell old cows, and cows and calves, steers, heifers - anything.

RM: In your experience, did you ever experience any danger from the cows on the range? I mean, were they ever mean and did they attack you?



JW: Some of them were mean; yes.

RM: What would they do?

JW: They'd try to hook you and stuff like that.

RM: They'd hook you on a horse?

JW: Some of them would.

RM: What do you do when a cow tries to do that?

JW: They generally throw him down and get the horns off the thing.

RM: Oh. [chuckles]

JW: His (the cow's) blood shoots right out.

RM: Did you ever see a cow attack a man afoot?

JW: Yes. It missed him - one went through here - the horn went up like this.

RM: Oh - he hit you in the belly with his head?

JW: No, not me - that was my partner.

RM: What happened then?

JW: Nothing. He just fell backwards and the cow jumped over him and took off. That's when they roped them, threw them down and cut their horns off. [chuckles]

PW: That was enough of that.

RM: Do they have locoweed up there?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: Is it true that a cow goes crazy if they eat locoweed?

JW: Yes.

PW: Horses too.

RM: And what do they do when they're loco?

JW: Well, they run around in a circle, and they go . . . if they think there's water in the dry sand wash, they try to drink in there.

RM: Do they die?

JW: Yes.

RM: How long does it take a cow to die from it?

JW: I don't know - probably 2 or 3 days.

### CHAPTER THREE

RM: After you stopped working for Keough, you went to work for . . . ?

JW: John Casey.

RM: What did Casey pay you?

JW: He paid the same amount - \$45 a month.

RM: When did you two get married?

PW: That's up to me, I guess [laughter] August the 14th, 1934. We eloped.

RM: So you've been married 56 years? That's incredible. Why did you elope?

PW: [chuckles] We didn't want people to know because it was terrible with the shivarees [in those days]. We didn't like that; we didn't want people to bother.

RM: Tell me how a shivaree worked in those days.

PW: They'd come to your house and drag you out of your house and get you drunk and everything else.

RM: Is that right - on your wedding night.

PW: Yes.

JW: [chuckles]

PW: We went to Tonopah and were married by the Justice of the Peace there. My brother happened to come along with us, and he stood for us. And then I had a friend up there in Tonopah - we caught her and she couldn't believe I was getting married. I said, "Yes, we are." So they stood up for us. Judge Bowler married us. He was one of the people from the Howler Ranch - one of the kids out here.

RM: But the reason you eloped was because of the shivaree?

PW: I was bound and determined not to tell any of my classmates about it. I was a graduate of Round Mountain High School, and I was bound and determined not [chuckles] . . . I wouldn't tell those kids then, because my friend told me, "If I ever catch you, we're going to fix you." And then we moved out here to get away from it.

Well, later on my uncle told them, I guess "Pansy and [Johnny] took off to Fallon."  
[chuckles]

RM: So you came to Fallon after you got married?

PW: Yes. We stayed here a few months and then we went back. [chuckles]

RM: Did everybody get a shivaree in those days?

PW: Most of them.

RM: Was it mainly Indians?

PW: No, it was a white tradition. I went to school with the white kids and they all knew me, and they were going to fix me. They didn't know him too well, but they knew me. [chuckles] You see, I was born in Smoky and went to school in Round Mountain

RM: Pansy, what did your father do?

PW: I don't know. There are just stories here and there. . . . I think he did the same thing Johnny did - he kind of buckarooed around. My friend's father and he were good friends, I guess, but that's the only story I know of him.

RM: You didn't really know him that well, then?

PW: No. Let's put it [that I was a] "love child."

RM: Oh, OK. Did your mom work?

PW: Well, as I said, she did housework for ranchers or houses in Round Mountain. For instance, she used to work in a boardinghouse washing dishes and things like that. And on the ranches, she did the same thing during the haying season.

RM: Did you live with your mother when she was working at these different places?

PW: She used to take me to the ranches. She had a picture of me sitting on the porch eating my dinner, and I had food all over myself. [chuckles]

I think she lived with her mother - my grandmother, Pauline Pablo. That was her second marriage - Jim Pablo was my stepgrandfather. We loved him better than we did our real [grandfather] . He raised us just like his own grandchildren.

RM: Did you live with your grandmother a lot?

PW: Yes, I was more with her than with my mother, because my mother was working here and there.

RM: Where did she live - in Round Mountain?

PW: Round Mountain, yes. And then she moved to Mina. She got married when she was in Mina and she'd come and see us once in a while. Then my half-brother, Henick Smith, and I were just like a real brother and sister. Grandmother took care of us. And my aunt and uncle - his father, Abe Smith - used to take us down to a ranch in Little Smoky Valley. He was on the San Antone Ranch there. We'd stay there during the summer.

RM: And then you and Johnny got married in 1934. When he was working for the ranchers, did you live with him on the ranch?

PW: No, he went out. I never saw him for 2 or 3 months at a time. I stayed next door to my aunt and uncle in Round Mountain.

RM: Did you work in Round Mountain?

PW: Oh, I used to work a little bit; not too much.

RM: How many children did you have?

PW: Two girls - Lucile Rae and Gardenia Ann. Gardenia Ann's in Indianapolis, Indiana, and this is our other daughter, here. Then I have 4 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Most of them are in Indiana; I have only one granddaughter here.

RM: Did the Smoky Valley and the Reese River Indians have much to do with the Duckwater Indians?

PW: I think the Duckwater Indians originated from Smoky Valley. When they got the ranches from Duckwater for the Indians to move on, they made a reservation out of it. Most of the Indians from Round Mountain at that time went to Duckwater. They asked us, but we said no.

RM: Why did you say no?

PW: We were mostly Smoky Valley and Reese River people - we didn't want to leave our area.

RM: Do the Smoky Valley and Reese River Shoshone think of themselves as the same people, or do they think of themselves as different from each other?

JW: About the same.

PW: Yes. The only [people] different from us were the Paiutes. The Paiutes here were our worst enemies in the olden days.

RM: How about the Walker River Indians? Did you have much to do with them?

PW: They're Paiutes.

RM: So they would be your enemy in the old days.

PW: Yes. They didn't think too much of us, either. [chuckles]

JW: They used to war an awful lot - they killed one another.

RM: Johnny, tell me about the signal station on top of Arc Dome.

JW: Well, from what I've heard, they had a big looking glass up there. They'd shine it, you know. They must've had a cabin or something on the top of that hill. The top of Arc Dome is not even wider than this room on top.

RM: Not even 20..by-20.

JW: You have to go around this way, you see.

RM: Oh - you've got to circle around to get up there.

JW: The house is all gone but the floor . . .

RM: Is that right. And where did they shine the glass?

JW: I don't know. You can go on top and look every way from there -south towards Tonopah, and up this way as far as you can see. If a fellow had a good field glass and went on top, he could see way back up north someplace

RM: When were you up there?

JW: Quite a while ago.

PW: I was 14 years old when I went up there. (It was at the same time - a whole bunch of us went up on Fourth of July; my sister-in-law and . . . I was just a kid then.)

RM: Did you see the foundation there, where the house had been?

PW: Yes.

RM: When you were growing up, did they speak English or Shoshone in your home?

JW: Mostly Shoshone.

RM: So you know Shoshone?

JW: Oh, yes.

RM: How about you, Pansy?

PW: Oh, yes. I was a teacher in the Shoshone language.

RM: Where did you teach?

PW: Out here on the Stillwater Paiute-Shoshone Reservation. It was just for a little while. It didn't pan out, so we quit. That [trip to Arc Dome] was about 62 years ago - that's a long time ago.

RM: I wonder if the foundation is still there.

JW: Eddie Tomany was up there. [Maybe he could tell you.] We carved our names with a knife.

RM: In what - the rock, or the wood?

JW: Wood.

RM: I wonder if they're still there.

JW: I guess so. [chuckles] I never was back there.

PW: It was a funny feeling when you'd stand up there.

JW: Then you'd go along the canyon and see the cottonwood trees. The names were written on the cottonwood trees. I saw my father's name on them.

RM: That must have given you a strange feeling, to see your father's name there.

JW: It didn't bother me.

RM: Are there sacred sites for the Shoshone in the Toiyabes?

PW: I don't think so.

RM: When either one of you was growing up, did your parents or any of your relatives practice the use of traditional herbs for healing?

PW: There were different herbs, but no rituals or . . .

RM: Did the herbs work, in your experience?

PW: Some of them did.

RM: What were some that worked, Pansy?

PW: Sagebrush.

RM: What does it do?

PW: You boil it and you drink it if you have a high fever or a bad cold or something like that. On a [cold day] we'd drink really hot, boiling tea out of sagebrush.

RM: The leaves of the sagebrush, or the stems?

PW: The leaves. You strain it like you do tea. And boy, you'll be wringing wet. [chuckles]

RM: It'll make you sweat?

PW: Boy, I'm telling you. My cousin did that to me one time. I had bronchitis real bad and he said, "Pansy, I'll fix that." (He was staying with us.) He went out and got some fresh tea and came back and boiled that, and almost killed me. [laughs] I was up in no time after I drank that.

RM: What's another cure that you've used?

PW: Oh . . . well, is that what they call skunk root?

JW: No, that's wild carrots, they call it.

PW: I call it skunk root, because it smells like one.

RM: But you call it wild carrots?

JW: That's what the Forest Service calls it - wild carrots.

RM: And what do you do with it?

JW: Well, you can drink it for colds, or smoke it.



RM: What do you smoke - the root?

JW: Yes, the roots.

PW: You dry it first.

JW: They've got leaves just like a carrot; that's why they call them wild carrots. They've got blossoms that go way up high and white flowers on them. They grow that big, some of them.

RM: Like 3 or 4 inches in diameter?

JW: Yes. And it goes down about a foot deep.

RM: Do you know of any other herbs besides sagebrush and wild carrot?

JW: Well, there's what they call Indian tea, you know. It's supposed to thin your blood out in the spring of the year.

RM: Is that what they call Mormon tea?

JW: Yes.

RM: Have you ever used that?

JW: Oh, yes.

PW: That's Indian tea.

RM: The Indians probably gave it to the Mormons, didn't they? [laughter]

JW: Yes. It's pretty good tea - tastes pretty good.

PW: We have some here; we have some every once in a while. We get it when we go up to our cabin.

RM: Do you use it to cure illnesses?

PW: No, we just drink it. Some say it's a diuretic, but I don't think so.

RM: Well, you worked for Casey for a number of years [at the Keough home ranch], and then you went to work for Nye County as a janitor. Did you like that?

JW: Oh, yes. It didn't seem that long - that 30 years.

RM: Did you see a lot of changes in Tonopah over those 30 years?

JW: No, it didn't change much. Four judges died while I was there.

RM: Is that right? Who were they?

JW: Well, the first judge was a little skinny judge - what was his name?

PW: Judge Daniels? He died with cancer.

JW: No, that little guy.

PW: We used to take care of Judge Daniels. I was an LPN at the hospital

JW: Yes, that's what his name was. And then who was the other judge?

PW: Breen?

JW: No, before Breen. Did Breen die, too?

PW: Yes, he's dead.

JW: Breen, and then . . . what the hell was the other judge?

PW: That tall skinny guy. I can see him, but I don't know his name. Judge Breen in Reno is [that] Judge Breen's son, I think.

RM: When you two were growing up, did the Indians do much prospecting?

JW: No, Indians don't do much prospecting, I don't think. But old Jim Butler claimed that he went out there and got that silver ore and he was going to throw it at his jackass or something, you know. Instead of that, he was married to an Indian woman and she told him about that silver.

RM: Oh - the woman he was married to.

JW: Yes - she told him about it. That's what Jim Farrington told me. And Jim Butler went out there and had his burro, I guess. That woman didn't want to tell her own folks - the Indians.

RM: Why?

JW: I don't know.

RM: How did she know about it?

JW: Maybe somebody told her. Jim Butler had a daughter with her.

RM: What ever happened to the girl?

JW: I don't know what happened to her.

RM: And then I understand Jim Butler killed Belle Butler's husband.

JW: [chuckles] I don't know anything about that.

RM: A white man. And he married Belle and left his Indian wife. Do you know the Indian wife's name?

PW: No, I don't know that name. It was so long ago. And then a distant relative of his found Goldfield. What was his name - Fisherman?

JW: Tom Fisherman. He was my great-grandfather. He found Goldfield.

RM: Did you know him at all?

JW: Oh, yes. He used to live way over there in Hawes Canyon.

RM: In the Kawich Mountains?

JW: Yes. That's where he lived, right below the ranch.

RM: Was that when O. K. Reed had it?

JW: This was way before O. K.

RM: Who had that ranch before Reed?

JW: I don't know.

PW: We're not acquainted with the people out that way.

RM: And your ancestor was involved in Goldfield?

JW: Yes. He told some guy about the gold in Goldfield.

PW: There's quite a story on that, too - how he used to mooch money from white people. He'd tell them, "If you grubstake me, I'll do this for you." And they'd just gave him the money and tell

him to go out and buy grub, trusting that he'd take them to it. But instead he went and got drunk on it. He showed them the raw gold. Then they got wise to him, so they took him.

That's how Goldfield was discovered. They said it was somebody else; that was what really burns me up. We knew some of these old Indians . . .

RM: But the whites get the credit.

PW: Yes. It's the same as Round Mountain

RM: Oh, really?

PW: My grandmother's cousin, I think, lived with a white man also. And she used to tell us, "I should've kept my mouth shut about the gold up in " She'd show us where they used to go.

RM: Is that right? On Round Mountain?

PW: Yes. They called it the Stebbins . . .

RM: Who did she tell about it, then?

PW: I think Jack Stebbins. That's why it's known [as] Jack Stebbins' hill - that little short hill that used to sit on top of Round Mountain.

RM: Well, they'd been here a long time, and they knew the country. What was her name?

PW: Maggie Jack. You don't read that in any history. anywhere.

RM: No, you don't, do you?

PW: That's why it really burned= up, when somebody stole my book, Gold in Them Thar Hills. I used to read about those things and compare them with what I knew. They do mention Fisherman. I think that book was more honest about how these different places were discovered.

RM: I haven't read it, but I know the title.

PW: Why it hurts so bad is, I stole that book, too. [chuckles] I didn't actually steal it. John Casey was selling the ranch and I was looking through the library and saw Gold in Them Thar Hills and I it in my suitcase. He didn't care.

RM: What ranch was he selling?

PW: Keough's home ranch. My aunt and uncle worked for him, too, on the ranch. And Johnny buckarooed for him.

RM: Johnny, what kind of horse makes the best cow horse?

JW: Mustang.

RM: Why?

JW: I don't know; they're tougher. They're more used to the range; they live on old sagebrush or anything. You take these other horses, you've got to feed them grain and all that kind of stuff.

RM: They can't make it on sagebrush?

JW: I don't think so. Mustangs are tough. They're easy to break, too. They get gentled quick, and you can break them then.

RM: How do you break a mustang?

JW: Just tie him up and pet him up a little bit, you know. Some of the [thoroughbreds] are pretty hard to break. The mustangs aren't mean, either.

RM: You mean, they won't kick you and things like that?

JW: Oh, they'll kick, but these [thoroughbreds] are mean.

RM: Did you use a lot of mustangs in your ranch operation?

JW: Yes, the buckaroos used a lot of horses. There used to be a lot of mustangs, but they're all gone, now. There used to be a lot of them up Lone Valley, and all over the valleys in there and the hills over here.

RM: When you're going to catch a mustang, how do you pick out the best one?

JW: Oh, you look for stallions - look for a young one, maybe 3 years old or something like that.

RM: And then you geld them?

JW: Oh, yes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

JW: These big old thoroughbreds aren't much good.

RM: They're too delicate, aren't they?

JW: Yes. [chuckles] You can break mustangs in 4 or 5 days.

RM: You can break them in 4 or 5 days?

JW: Oh, you can ride them around a little bit, you know.

RM: Did you know Little Kelsay?

PW: Yes.

RM: Was he pretty good with horses?

JW: Oh, yes. He had a lot of horses.

PW: I didn't know him. I knew of him, but

JW: A lot of his horses got locoed one time. Loco [weed] grew in Smoky Valley, and they lost a lot of horses in those times from loco.

RM: Why do some animals eat locoweed while others don't?

JW: I don't know. Cows eat them, horses eat them . . . I even saw a man - a white guy - out east of Tonopah, who was picking them along the road. was driving along the road one day and I saw him. I was wondering what in the hell he was picking and I came to find out he was picking locoweed. They were ripe then.

RM: Is that right. Why?

JW: Maybe he smoked it - I don't know. [laughter]

PW: Something to get dizzy on.

RM: What would happen if you smoked locoweed?

JW: Well, it'd work like marijuana, I think. It'll affect your brain, you see.

RM: It couldn't be good for you.

JW: No.

RM: Did you know Jack Longstreet at all?

JW: Oh, they told me about him. He used to steal horses, you know. The cowboys caught him and cut his ear off. He wore long hair, then, to cover his hole in his head. [chuckles] He used to run race horses - he used to go to Tonopah and run races there.

RM: Did you ever see any of the races?

JW: I was too small, then, to pay any attention, but I know I saw him lots of times. He was a tall guy.

RM: He was also husky, wasn't he?

JW: Yes.

RM: You never buckarooed for O. K. Reed or any of them, did you?

JW: No. But a lot of the guys who rode for him were Indians. He had more Indian buckaroos than white men.

RM: Did the Indians make as good of buckaroos, or better, than the whites?

JW: Some of them did. That's what Welches had, was Indian buckaroos.

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