

NELLIE CROSSLAND

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Interviewed by Arlene Young

Transcribed by Paula Helten (06/11/2012)

[audio begins]

NC: Yes, it was all of his life. I think he came from a large family that all worked. That was the only way you could survive was by hard work.

I: Mm-hm. Tell me about plowing.

NC: Well, he got out to do the—he had to plow the gard—not the garden, but the fields to plant the grain and the alfalfa and all. It was a lot of plowing to do, but four-horse team behind a clow—plow. And spend our—all day at it, come in dead tired. And of course, at that time my oldest brother was old enough to do a lot of the chores and which he did that. But did his own butchering, his own curing of the meat and all of that. And then at haying time, even before the—even before we had the big brothers, Mother worked out in the field with Dad. He'd mow, and she'd do the raking.

I: Now would people come around to help?

NC: No.

I: No, they didn't?

NC: He did it all.

I: Mm-hm. _____ all?

NC: We all had the same chores to do.

I: Yeah.

NC: Everybody lived about the same, you know. And then Dad played for the dances. We had dances in the schoolhouses, and Dad played an accordion. He was popular, and sometimes he'd use a mout—mouth harp. He had one about that long.

I: Oh? Uh-huh.

NC: And I can remember when I was smaller sittin' on—he had—I'd be on one of his knees and his accordion on the other.

I: [laughs].

NC: Playing accordion.

I: Oh, and everybody went to the dances?

NC: Oh, yes.

I: The kids and—?

NC: They'd have quadrilles and three steps and the souviene, Virginia reels. I think there was—seemed like it was more _____.

I: Uh-huh.

NC: Foxtrot, circle two step.

I: And you've learned them all?

NC: We've done Virginia reels and circle two step—there's—up here in that K. P. Hall—

I: Oh, really?

NC: when I was in high school and later.

I: Hm. Another thing I've heard about is the box socials where you'd—?

NC: Oh, yes! They'd go up to the schoolhouses for that and have box socials.

I: And tell us what that means.

NC: [chuckles]. Well, the ladies would fix up a box and decorate it all up where it was real pretty and _____. And the men would bid on 'em, and then they'd have their lunch. And then whoever box they got, that's who they ate their lunch with. And one box social, there was one person that wasn't very

popular—one lady that wasn't very popular, and she fixed up a nice looking box. And there was one man that wanted that box, and they purposely did this, put some tough bacon in a sandwich.

I: [laughs].

NC: And he bit into it, pulled and pulled.

I: [laughs]. And everybody watched?

NC: Yeah.

I: [laughs]. Now did you worry if somebody was going to bid on your box or nobody wanted it?

NC: Well, I never fixed one.

I: You didn't do that?

NC: No, I'd seen that done when I was a kid. No, I never done that.

I: [laughs]. That'd be hard if nobody—

NC: They would play tricks, you know certain tricks for different people on different people, you know but that still goes on. Only I think today, its violent tricks—

I: Yeah.

NC: they play.

I: That is true. What about Halloween? Was that a special time?

NC: Well, we never had Halloween when I was a kid out there in the country. We didn't know anything about Halloween, and about the only thing they had we'd book then was these dances or a school function where they'd come to a Christmas party.

I: _____.

NC: And they'd have a—give gifts and have a Christmas tree with gifts on the tree, you know for the children.

I: Mm-hm. And would you put on a little play?

NC: Yes, they would have songs and little plays for the kids you know, to take part in our school.

I: How about after you came to Union? Was that a time when you celebrated Halloween?

NC: Well, there were tricks—mud—the worst thing I ever did was you'd make a tick-tack—and we called tick-tacks.

I: I remember that. [laughs].

NC: On the spool?

I: Yes.

NC: Well—

I: But tell us what it was like though

NC: Well, I'd go up to the windows, and there'd be several of us, you know traveling together. And we'd go up to the window and put this tick-tack on what the _____.

I: [laughs]. And it was a spool you cut the notches out of?

NC: Notches in the spool, and then you'd put a—like a pencil or something through that would fit through the hole in the spool. Wrap a string around the spool, then pull on it.

I: Now, I remember.

NC: With there—with the spool up against the window and it'd make an awful rattle, but that's the worst thing that I ever did. Some people would—there is some of them that do the dirty tricks, you know. It wasn't too bad. Some of 'em would put paint or do something naughty; put soap on windows. Course that was easy to wash off, but.

I: I've done that. [chuckles].

NC: [chuckles].

I: How about May Day? Did you do anything with May baskets or—?

NC: Yeah, they used to have May baskets, and we'd put—some of the girls that _____— well, we used to call it sweet on the boys. For the older people would say it. And they'd fix up a May basket and go hang it on a doorknob and then run.

I: Now, I can remember that.

NC: Yes.

I: Uh-huh. And what happened if the boy would catch you?

NC: [chuckles]. They—one never did catch me! [laughs].

I: [laughs]. I thought they were supposed to kiss you.

NC: They thought they would. [chuckles].

I: Oh, you were too fast. [chuckles].

NC: Well, there was one boy there, name was Lyle Castor. [chuckles]. In fact, I did go with him later in high school.

I: Uh-huh. Those were the fun times, weren't they?

NC: Oh, yes. We seemed to have more fun then than they do now.

I: Uh-huh, uh-huh, _____.

NC: They've got to get in the car and go get some drinks and get drunk and kill themselves sometimes.

I: Yeah, it's um—it's odd the simple things that satisfied us back then.

NC: I'm still an old-fashioned one.

I: I think a lot of us are.

NC: Well, I know I already told you about Good _____ Lake.

I: Yeah, you've done a marvelous job of thinking of things that are interesting and that—that we don't know that much. And—and I think that's really great. You know that's gonna be a help to a lot of people then having them more understanding.

NC: Oh, Gracie Tarter heard me telling some of these things when I was young, and I've taken some of these pictures down there and showed her.

I: Oh? Uh-huh.

NC: When I've—I've worked and picked apples and pears down here at Gale's. Now, Miskell Gale died at a hundred and five—

I: Yeah, mm-hm.

NC: worked down there in the orchards. Ride down there on the youngest daughter's bicycle, take a lunch and work down there all day. And I've picked up potatoes, picked prunes, picked up prunes. They finally got so they didn't pick 'em off of the trees. They shook 'em.

I: Oh?

NC: And they'd pick 'em up off the ground.

I: Oh? Mm-hm.

NC: And they'd have a man come and shake the trees, and then the pickers would pick 'em—pick 'em up. And oh, I've worked out in the fields some, shocking grain from _____ shocks you know, to pick it up later.

I: And you just lean 'em out? You don't triad?

NC: No, you just lean one against the other. I think there was either three or four shocks to a pile. We all—you know we all had to work. They were all _____. She had to work. And after my first husband died, I married a man that was quite a bit older than I. And he laid—he was a state policeman, and he—we were married forty years. But in his later years, he wasn't able to work. I went

to work and worked for twenty years before Lloyd and I were married. But I worked with Lloyd. Gee, we used to go out and build fence all day.

I: Oh, really?

NC: Yes. Okay, a body worked for his—after he quit—see, he had two heart attacks and had to sell his place. And he moved here, and then after we were married, why, in the spring, he'd work for his brother. He had a place up Catherine Creek here, and he would need the—his fence—all of his fences gone over to see if they needed new wires, new poles—

I: Sure.

NC: and all of that. So, I went with him. I worked right along with him and straighten up fence, put in sometimes new wire. There's a stretch of fence up—as you leave go past and over the LDS Lodge is.

I: Yeah, mm-hm. Up above—

NC: Up above that we built a new fence. I think it was a quarter of a mile. Either a quarter or a half, I don't recall. But that fence is still standing—

I: Oh?

NC: and good. And Lloyd and I built that from scratch, put in the steel posts. And it had a big, ole, long—I think I told you about before.

I: I don't think so.

NC: Uh, it was uphill! We went from the road. Started, and go up a steep bank, and then go right up the steep hill, and had a big, roll of the barbwire. Put the steel posts in first so far apart. As you build a lot of 'em, you know how. And then this roll of barbwire, a new, big, roll, we put a big, heavy, crowbar through that. Me on one end of it and him on the other, attached that wire to the post there at the bottom right at what we started and go right up that hill.

I: On the sides.

NC: String it clear up to the top. I think it was a quarter of a mile. And fasten it at the other end and then come down the hill with the—

I: Ohh.

NC: with the second wire. Attach it and go back up and deal with this third strand of wire.

I: Hmm. Would be a three strand or string?

NC: Three strand and go like this.

I: Okay.

NC: Well, after get so you attach 'em and get it as tight as you can, but then wire stretches. So, after we'd get the wire on, then we'd have to catch ahold of that wire and pull as hard as we could, both of us. To pull it out to stretch it and then reattach it; that'd take the stretch out and attach it and do all of that. And then after he got it stretched and attached as tight as we could get it, he would have a—a stretcher.

I: Oh?

NC: At the end before it was on where you put—and then turn this thing and that would pull it tight—

I: Around _____ ?

NC: real tight, as tight as you could get it after we'd stretched as much as we could. Then, before he attached it for the final time, why, he'd stretch it with that thing. And then—and then attach it. And then we'd have to go _____ and put the—the _____ on it to the posts every so often.

I: It was work!

NC: Yeah, it was hard work. With that last time we went out, it was up that road. That fence is still standing there.

I: You should be proud of that right from the _____ showing, uh-huh.

NC: But my, we did miles and miles and miles of fencing! Take it out—we'd go out in the camper in March soon as it was warm enough and all. In fact, there once

we had to come in. We had a snow—late snow storm, and it just snowed like a hurricane.

I: [chuckles].

NC: And so we had to come in and wait for that one. And that _____ but we'd go out here where Thief Valley—

I: Yes.

NC: You know where Thief Valley is?

I: Yes.

NC: Well, there's a cabin out there that belonged to Mark Crossland. I guess it's still—there really are _____ still out there. Anyway, they camped out there for weeks at a time goin' all around that country out there where he had fences; going over all those fences out there. Makin'—Lloyd would make posts and pops, and we lived out there for two or three weeks at a time.

I: What would you take for food?

NC: Oh, we had our camper, and we'd take everything with us when we went. A lot of canned goods—go out there and camp—the powdered milk, the canned milk, and all kinds of canned soups and vegetables and fruits.

I: And just cook as you go?

NC: Uh-huh.

I: Yeah.

NC: And hotcakes and biscuits and—

I: Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? [laughs].

NC: [laughs]. And we had two rigs, the camper and a little Toyota Land Cruiser.

I: Oh? Mm-hm.

NC: Uh, because we ran all over the hills in the Land Cruiser because it would go just any place. And I always—but we'd go out. He would dry—he would have the camper and the pickup, and I would drive the Land Cruiser. So when we got through working out here at this—this particular _____. We'd been out there, I think, for three weeks, and I had the—a _____ purse. And it was a pack, and I had better than eighty dollars in that purse when we went out there. And of course I still have it. Huh. Anyway, when we got ready to come back home, it was always my—me to lock up the camper door—shut the camper door—put the steps and shut the door and lock it. And then I would get in the—and then Lloyd would come in behind me. He says, "You go first. You go ahead of me so if you have any trouble, why I will be behind you." So, I was to lock all that up and ready, and then I'd go get in the Toyota. And come—we'd head for home—him behind me. So, we got ho—we got home, and it was the next day. Shirley called me up. That's my daughter. She called me up, and she says, "The City Hall is trying to get in touch with you; said they have your purse."

I: Oh, for heaven's sake.

NC: A mistake! Oh, they couldn't have because I said I had it with me there when we were camped out. And I had it with me, so I said, "They couldn't have it." I said, "Well, they have got it." She's—I said, "Well, I know they haven't. I—I just know they haven't because I have it with me."

I: [chuckles].

NC: She says, "Well, where do you keep it when you come home?" I said, "Well, I kind of always have it in the same place." She says, "Well, go look. See if you still—see if you got it." I look, and I didn't have it.

I: [laughs]. Oh, darn. [laughs].

NC: So, I called the City Hall.

I: [laughs].

NC: I said, "Do you have a pur—[chuckles] my purse?" So then I described the purse. "Yes, we do."

I: Ohhhhh.

NC: And they said there was a man that brought it in, turned it in here. So I went up to City Hall to get it. [chuckles].

I: [laughs].

NC: And a man by the name of Johnson that lived in—his folks lived in town or his grandparents. He was here visiting his grand's. He was from California, but he had lived here previously. Maybe you know some of the Johnson's, I don't know. But anyway, he was here visiting his grandparents, and he'd gone to Thief Valley to—to fish.

I: Ohh.

NC: And there used to be a mailbox where you turn off of the main road to go in down to Thief Valley. This mailbox used to be out there. Was it there—over there when you see—?

I: I think—

NC: Was it still there?

I: so. That sounds right.

NC: Anyway, it was sittin' up on a big post, this mailbox out there. Well, this man that came out—Johnson that came—he came down there fishing. And when he came out of there, he noticed that purse sittin' right there on top of that. But he went by it, and he thought, "Well, that's strange a woman's purse sittin' out there. I wonder if it's a—some kind of a prank? I wonder if that"—cause there's rattle snakes down in around there.

I: Oh, sure.

NC: And he said, "He wondered—I wonder if somebody put a prank—put a rattlesnake in that purse?"

I: Oh, man. Uh-huh.

NC: So, he went back and picked it up and shook it—

I: [laughs].

NC: to see if it rattled. [chuckles].

I: [laughs].

NC: And it didn't have a rattle, so he—[chuckles]

I: [laughs]. So, it was safe enough.

NC: So he opened the purse, I suppose very carefully. But anyway, when he opened the purse, he found the—all my money and everything in there and—and the money. So, he brought it right in and turned it into the City Hall. So when I got it, I open it up. My money was still there. My checks were there, but they were all torn in two.

I: Oh, really? Hmm.

NC: So nobody could possibly use it for anything.

I: So, that was a protection really?

NC: Yes. So, I ask him. I said, “Why did you turn—why did you tear my checks in two?” He said, “I didn't. They were that way when I picked your purse up.” So, somebody else picked it up first.

I: And brought it. Ohh.

NC: So there were two people, and I never did find out who picked it up first. Never did find out.

I: But both of them honest as could be.

NC: Yes.

I: Yeah.

NC: And I wanted to reward him. He said, “No. No, I'm just glad that I could that.” He says, “I don't want any reward.” But I kept insisting, and so finally he took ten dollars.

I: Ohhh. Doesn't that make you feel good?

NC: That—that they did that so nobody else could.

I: That was pretty clever.

NC: But what happened—I know now what happened. That this camper rode very smoothly—had good springs and all. And so it didn't rock very much or roll with—and it had a good, big, bumper on it. But part of the bumper went in under the overhang of the camper.

I: Okay, mm-hm.

NC: And when I—I took my purse 'cause I had my driver's license in it. When I locked that camper door, I set the purse down on that bumper. Checked the door and all and left—

I: Left your purse.

NC: leavin' my purse set there.

I: Yep.

NC: And it finally jiggled off somewhere along the line. And somebody else picked it up, took it back there and set it up on top of that. And the other person came out and found it.

I: It's a relay. [laughs].

NC: But it was a—it was a miracle.

I: Ohhh. That's very nice, isn't it? It's very nice.

NC: And I've had that happen twice.

I: Have you? Uh-huh.

NC: This time it was up in—we were coming out from Alaska, but it was in British. I don't remember now if it was British Columbia or the Yukon. I think it was in Brit, but it doesn't matter. Anyway, we stopped at a store to buy a few groceries, and I went in and bought 'em. Lloyd just stayed in the pickup, and I

went in and bought ‘em. And I had to—it was a traveler’s check. So, I cashed that traveler’s check. And I had a—in a little folder that I got the checks in. It was a gold color folder, and it had a red—red rubber band around it.

I: It’s good to remember all of it, yeah.

NC: [chuckles]. So, I paid for the groceries. An in—an Indian woman was workin’ in that store. She sacked them up and set ‘em on top of that.

I: Oh? Mm-hm.

NC: And I walked out without it. And I didn’t realize it until—and that be—I put all my bill—my bills in there after I cashed the check—I put.

I: Sure, sure.

NC: And after I walked—we—I went out, and we got in the pickup and went on down the road a ways—and to eat. We got to pull off to the side of the road and eat. And I looked in my purse, and I didn’t have that.

I: And your heart just drops.

NC: I said, “Stop! Stop, right now!”

I: [laughs].

NC: Lloyd says, “What’s the matter?”

I: [laughs].

NC: I said, “We’ve got to go back to that store! I’ve left the money back there in that store!” He said, “Oh, you didn’t.” He says, “You—you’ve left it in your purse.” I said, “No, I didn’t. I did not.” Says, “Oh, you must have.” “No,” I said, “No, I didn’t. It isn’t in my purse.” So, we turned around and went back, and I went in the store. And the—there’s somebody else there at the check stand, and I tell ‘em. I said, “I was in here a while ago, or about a half an hour ago. And I didn’t get all my money.” I said, “I—I left it on the counter.” I told him about how much I had in it, and he says, “Well you talk to the lady over there.” So, I did. I told her who I was and what. And she says, “Do you know how much you had?” And I told her approximately how much it was, and she said, “Yes.” But I told her—I said, “It was—it was gold colored and had a

rubber—a red rubber band around it.” And she says, “Yes, it’s yours.” So, I offer to pay her, and she said, “No, I wouldn’t take any money for it at all.”

I: Ohhh. You—it restores your faith. It could have been a—

NC: _____ sound funny?

I: that way.

NC: So I lucked out.

I: Uh-huh. I think so. How many times did you go to Alaska when _____?

NC: Six times.

I: Six times? Driving all the time?

NC: Mm-hm.

I: Hmm.

NC: We took a ferry from—drove all the way to British Columbia to Prince Rupert, and we took a Prin—a ferry from Prince Rupert to what they call Haines on the Inland Passage. Went up to, oh, Ketchikan, Juneau, Petersburg, all through there and got off at Haines. And then we had to take another ferry. Where did we board it? Huh, I know we came out at—oh, from _____ to Seward.

I: Ohhh.

NC: No, _____. Yeah, it was Seward. It was Seward.

I: You went just because [phone rings] it was so beautiful?

NC: Oh, we went up there to hunt.

I: Oh!

[phone rings – audio clicks – no delay]

I: So, when you were in Alaska you’d go hunting and fishing?

NC: Oh, yes. It's—and—'cause there's so many pretty places to see and different, you know—was so different than it is down here. First year we went up there, course we were real greenhorns, didn't know anything about what it—to expect. Let me tell you, they got good, healthy, mosquitos up there.

I: [laughs]. And flies?

NC: There's a little fly that's called, No—well, they have the No-See-Um's. But there's another, and it's called, White Sock, and it's a little, teeny, thing. I don't know where they get the “socks”—the thing after socks. [chuckles].

I: [chuckles].

NC: But, oh, they'd like me. And they poisoned me so bad. But anyway, we had these real—it was real interesting on that ferry going up when you see the glaciers and where they calve—it _____ calve fall down. The big chunks of ice falling down there splashing, and on the way up there—and the seals on these ice floats around there that's—that was—it's very interesting. Well, course you went up there primarily to fish for salmon and hunt moose. So, the first year we were there, stopped at a place called Glennallen. There was a guide. There's a lot of guides up there, but this guide stopped there and made arrangements with him to take him out hunting. So we went out and hunted for—well, it wasn't time to hunt moose then right then. But we made the arrangements then. Then we went on down to—through Anchorage and down to a place that's called, Deep Creek. And that is about, forty—fifty miles from Anchorage. I go down and went salmon fishing down there. This from—we didn't have a boat, just fish from the deck. But there was this river that comes in the Cook—around Cook Inlet, and the—then the tide would come in, why the salmon would come in and go up this Deep Creek to spawn.

I: I see.

NC: So, this was the silver salmon. They were running then.

I: Did you catch one?

NC: Yes, I caught a fifteen pound one!

I: Alright! [chuckles].

NC: And I had quite a time landing it—

I: [laughs]. That's a big fish!

NC: 'cause where we were—you know there at Deep Creek along there—along the edges, there's seams of coal.

I: Oh?

NC: Course this, uh—what do I want to say? Is a lot higher—there's banks you know high as a ceiling or higher. And up there was this seam of coal, and they break off. It comes down—

I: Ohhh.

NC: break off and fall down in the edge of the ocean—

I: I see.

NC: of this inlet. And then there's a pipe comes in, and of course all sand and it washes it out. Takes really big chunks out there so you get snagged on them—

I: _____.

NC: very easy, see.

I: Yeah.

NC: They go a long ways out in tide because that's washed for I don't know how many years. But anyway, I was fishing. Not the first year we were up there, but this was the second year. Anyway, we were allowed three salmon the first time we went up there. You were allowed three salmon. Well, Lloyd had catch his—I didn't fish the first year. He'd catch his limit, but he still wanted to fish.

I: [chuckles].

NC: So, we'd go back to camp he'd ask, "Would you like to have a salmon?"
[chuckles].

I: [laughs].

NC: Somebody that had nothing, “Would you like to have a salmon?” He’d give ‘em away, and then he could fish. He’d go again.

I: [laughs].

NC: It never was checked or the warden. But anyway, that was—it was just great that we had—had blueberries everywhere and ground cranberries.

I: Ohhh.

NC: They just grow on the ground. They just look like little jewels.

I: Ohhh. It must have been beautiful.

NC: The ground would be covered, but then they’re just exactly like our other cranberries we found.

I: Oh?

NC: They’re smaller, but they taste and look the same only they’re smaller. So, there was—he went out. He went moose hunting, and he got a moose. Well, we—we brought it—we took it with the—when we went he had a two-wheel. He fixed up a two-wheel trailer that had a big box. A two-wheeler and this, oh gosh, I don’t know. Probably—probably six foot long, double and we put a deep freeze in it.

I: [chuckles]. How creative, mm-hm.

NC: And so it’s—bone it out. Brought a _____ and bone it out, and we bring that home with our frozen meat. We plug it in and get it all frozen good and solid, and then fill it up with the meat and fish and sometimes berries. Bring it home, a chest-type freezer.

I: Yeah, yeah. And it would last till you got home?

NC: Mm-hm. We thought we would have to plug in at some—some of the places we’d camp comin’ home. I mean stay overnight. We thought we’d have to plug in, but we never did have to.

I: Hmm. How many days would it take to—for you to get home?

NC: Oh, I think we'd made it in four or five days.

I: Really? The roads weren't as good earlier.

NC: Uh, it was paved most of the way until you hit—it wasn't dirt through the—through the Yukon it wasn't. But going—you know go through British Columbia, that's a long ways through there!

I: Yeah.

NC: With—go in there through, well, the first place was—can't think of the name. But Tonasket was the last town—

I: Oh, through—

NC: through Washington. But we'd go into British Columbia and go up through there. And then you go through the Yukon, and then from the Yukon you anchor up—it was called Beaver Creek. And that's the—was the line between Alaska and the Yukon.

I: Oh? Mm-hm.

NC: You go up through there. But we— 'cause I say the first year we took a ferry and didn't go all the way. But the other five trips, we—other four trips, we—no, five trips, we went road.

I: Drove.

NC: Drove all the way there and back. And he'd killed a—two caribou, but he—we didn't like them as well. Moose was much the better meat.

I: Yeah. I won't _____.

NC: Well, you know I gave them away after Lloyd passed away.

I: Oh, sure.

NC: They had—well we didn't have a head, just the horns.

I: Yeah.

NC: The antlers and that caribou. And there wasn't anything I could do with 'em, and so I gave 'em to a friend of ours.

I: Did you see bear?

NC: Oh yes, saw a lot of bear.

I: Did you?

NC: And the last time we went up there when he got the best—we'd get moose each year. And the last time we were there at the—at the guide's home where he had a place where he took others out so he had lots of places for you to camp. In fact, he had some cabins set around the lake 'cause they have float planes. Everybody has a float plane.

I: Oh, sure. Mm-hm.

NC: And he had cabins all around that float plane that he got 'em after they built their—the road up there for the—during the war with Japan.

I: Yeah, mm-hm.

NC: When they put that road up there for that, well then he got some of those cabins and make them put 'em around his lake there. But then what I started to say, well, he had the—all kinds of equipment for you to hang your—the meat.

I: Sure.

NC: And the commercial grinders and everything. So, that's what we did. We let that moose hang there until it was—it was—course it was already skinned out and everything. But just—and then while we were doing—waiting for that, he went out and killed a moo—a cow moose and a calf for their use. And then his father-in-law and his wife's brother—it was his wife's father and his wife's brother, and Lloyd and I, we cut up all of that moose cow and calf and ground every bit of it into moose burger.

I: Oh my, word. That's a lot of work.

NC: And put it in a big deep freeze that he had. Got a—didn't do it all in one day.

I: [chuckles]. No.

NC: It was about a week. Got that all done and then the night that we got finished and all in that big, deep freeze, _____ as two of ‘em, there was a light earthquake, and it shook the door open on that deep freeze. That spilled out a lot of it.

I: Ohhh! [laughs]. It didn’t spoil though?

NC: No. Course—

I: [laughs].

NC: it was all double wrapped in this heavy paper. [chuckles]. But—

I: [laughs].

NC: and so we even experienced a light earthquake.

I: There you go.

NC: In fact, it did two of ‘em. ‘Cause one time, Ivy when into a hardware store there at Glennallen to buy a—this caribou—caribou license. While we were standing there waiting to get waited on, you know they had the different tools and things hanging on a rack? You know with these pegboards?

I: Yeah, it—yeah.

NC: And all at once, that started swaying and those tools were rocking back and forth.

I: Ohhh.

NC: And the—the clerk in there said, “Earthquake.” And that—we were up there shortly after that big earthquake that the town of Valdez slid into the ocean.

I: Oh, yeah.

NC: Most of it went in the ocean. Well, we were up there right after that. It was in 1972.

I: Was it? Yeah. That was, um—that was an awful time.

NC: So they moved the town back. There's several people up there from—that live up there now from Union, quite a number of 'em.

I: Oh, really?

NC: They went up there and liked it and stayed.

I: And just lived, huh?

NC: I have a granddaughter, the one that made that album. She's been up there since 1974.

I: Oh, for heaven's sake.

NC: That lives in Anchorage.

I: You kind of have family all over the country, don't you?

NC: Oh, yeah.

I: Yeah.

NC: One experience, when you asked me about bear. That was the first year we went up there too. We were camped at a place, and it was called—was—it was called a Ba—Bear—oh, the Bear—they had different names at the different posts that you go in. And—but that was the—that was the Bear somethin'. I don't recall now the other name, but that's where we were camped. But I was just telling you about these little white sock flies.

I: Yeah.

NC: I was picking blueberries that day, that afternoon that we got at this particular post. And never thought any of—I never felt them biting me or anything. Course, I had hiking boots on about so high. Then of course, pants. And that night when I got ready to go to bed, I take my—my legs started hurting real bad. And it would just burned and hurt somethin' terrible, and when I—

I: Yeah.

NC: started to undress, I had a bloody ring right around the top of my shoes, both legs.

I: Right through your pants, _____ just chewed you up.

NC: And it was those little, old, flies that had bit me. Well, I'm a—I was in misery all night long and especially that night! I didn't know what to do. We'd been to Portage. There's another day we kind of—from—I guess it was from _____. Anyway, we spent in Portage. That's where the glacier keeps breaking off.

I: Ohhh.

NC: Then ice floes and they come in. Well, Lloyd got chunks of ice. Big chunks I put 'cause we had an icebox in the—

I: Oh, sure! Mm-hm.

NC: camper. And he got big chunks of ice to put in the icebox. So I thought well, my legs burned so badly, and I put icepacks on them. Open a plastic bag, put ice on them, and that just drove the heat in and made 'em hurt worse than ever.

I: Oh? You'd think it would help.

NC: So then, I put I—hot packs on 'em, and that didn't help. And I put soda. We'd get in the water and that didn't help.

I: Try anything.

NC: I tried everything. But anyway, thought well, I've got to go to bed sometime and Lloyd had already. Course we had our bed up overhead the—and so that's why I got ready to go to bed. I said, "Did you lock the—the cab, or the truck doors?" He said, "No, I didn't." So I took a flashlight and went out to lock the—lock up. We were driven in. Of course, right in head of our camper right at the hood was a big picnic table, so high. I went around to lock my door first, and then I go to walk around which I did. But anyway, on the way out to lock my door, as I locked it, I held the type of flashlight to go around in front of the pickup, there was a big, black, bear on the other side of that table!

I: Oh my, gosh! [laughs]. And you were very far from the door!

NC: He was about that—up—standing about that high above the table. His whole back and head above that table.

I: Yeah, yeah.

NC: Ohhh.

I: [laughs].

NC: Well, I had this flashlight, and I shined it right in his face. It was lookin' at me. And I just held that, and I backed up! I went between the pickup and the table, backed up and held that flashlight in its face. And locked the other door and I backed—

I: You're the _____!

NC: I backed clear around to the—the door to get in. [laughs].

I: And you got away.

NC: And I—Lloyd says—when I got in, I said, “I bet you don't know what I saw!”

I: [laughs]. You're a brave lady!

NC: [laughs]. I don't know whether brave or just senseless.

I: No, that was incredible. [laughs].

NC: Oh, dear!

I: Ohhh.

NC: But we'd seen a lot of bear. And in, as I was going to tell you before, just before we left the last time, that guide says, “Well, take you for a ride in the plane, and I'll take you up and show you where there's a lot of moose.” And it was a place. It was a—a depression, a big bowl up in the mountains.

I: Oh? Mm-hm.

NC: And they called it Moose Heaven up there. So, he took us up there, flew all around, and there were some moose down in there. And there was a grizzly bear.

I: Oh, boy.

NC: He said, “Now we’ll have to watch this bear.” And he dove down just not real close to the bear, but fairly close to it. Buzzed that bear, and of course, it thought something terrible was after him then. And it was running and look, and it was turned and looking up at that big bird!

I: Yeah, yeah.

NC: And running. Did you think it was gonna fall over on its side? But its hide though was just proper really.

I: You were pretty close.

NC: Uh-huh.

I: [laughs].

NC: So that was something different actually.

I: Oh, I guess so, yeah. [laughs].

NC: [chuckles].

I: You’ve had a lot of adventures.

NC: Yes, we’ve had.

I: It’s kind of fun to think about.

NC: Oh, we saw—we saw moose and caribou, lots of caribou, lots of ‘em up in Yukon! There are herds of ‘em. I’ve—
[audio ends]

[audio begins]

I: Oh—[laughs].

NC: [laughs]. That's too far away.

I: Not quite so impressive.

NC: Ohhh! [laughs]. Ohhh.

I: Did you see birds, eagles?

NC: Oh, yeah! There was one place in—in—yeah, this was in British Columbia. After we quit going to Alaska, we went up to British Columbia four years—four times.

I: Oh? Oh!

NC: At different lakes up there 'cause there are lakes all over. And there's lakes everywhere up there in Alaska. When you get up high enough where you can see, there are just lakes everywhere. And the—one interesting thing too in Dawson City, they have their old, like it was from the gold rush days—

I: Oh, yeah?

NC: where they dwell on that, you know. And they have a—an old, uh, ship up there—boat. And they have movies of it.

I: Oh? Uh-huh.

NC: And then that—what do they call it that trail that went up there to the—where they first discovered the—?

I: Yeah.

NC: But they have the Klondike, and the bawdy houses and all.

I: Yeah, yeah, pretty, young, people.

NC: And the wooden sidewalks, and a lot of clothes around the area. And we took a look—we took a ride on the Yukon River up where there was a schoolhouse—Moosehead!

I: Oh?

NC: Moosehead, it was called.

I: Okay.

NC: And there was a schoolhouse still up there. It wasn't being used, but it was one that had been abandoned that still had an organ in it and the desks and some of the books and all.

I: Well.

NC: And that was interesting.

I: It would be, uh-huh. Hmm.

NC: Just things to look back on and.

I: Ruminates, remember.

NC: In fact, I took—every night I would write in a—

I: Oh, boy.

NC: diary book—

I: Yes.

NC: the places we'd been and what things cost. That would be quite—some people have said, "Why don't you write a story?"

I: Sure, sure.

NC: They could take from that. But I said, "I don't know how to write. I'm not a writer."

I: Well, but you've probably done it. You know you've written it, but it'd have to be_____.

NC: A lot of its still up here.

I: Sure. You could outdo it.

NC: Because we thought the prices was atrocious when we got up to Alaska! Now they're nothing compared to what it is now. [chuckles].

I: [chuckles]. Were they count as much as they'd be down here?

NC: Yes. It was when we got up there. We thought, oh, the loaf of bread was terrible and eggs too. How do you afford to live up there? [chuckles].

I: Yeah, and of course the wages were more too, and so at times it works. Doesn't it so?

NC: Oh, I've got albums a lot of play—where a place is now that someplace there in the Yukon. You know we've always lived there in Dawson City too. I've always explored cemeteries.

I: Oh? Mm-hm, mm-hm.

NC: And we went to a cemetery up there in Dawson City. Old, old, graves and you know the permafrost, I don't—they couldn't have buried 'em then in the winter time. There's no way they could have buried them. And then probably—well, like I've been told that they could build a fire like then when it got warm enough or snow gone to melt frost—melt it down deep enough where they could put a—put a—a casket. And then that it would gradually sink. But you know some of them had their wrought iron railings around them.

I: Oh?

NC: And they had fallen in, you know where it had sunk down. And the railings would fall down in on them.

I: Hmm, hmm. Be interesting to see.

NC: And then at another place there in the—in the Yukon, it was an Indian cemetery. No, it was Dawson City! In Dawson City there they had a—who was—who was the writer? Kerwood? Know the Kerwood?

I: Me? I don't know.

NC: Oliver Kerwood wrote books up there. And his cabin that he lived in was still there.

I: Oh?

NC: Had a rocking chair in it and a trunk. And it was just like when he lived there, but it was left, just a little, old, cabin.

I: Hmm. That's nice that you hear those things, isn't it? Yeah.

NC: And then, the Indian cemeteries, they built little houses.

I: Oh!

NC: Now that was in the Yukon where they build their little houses. I've got pictures of 'em.

I: Hmm. Well, and I thought they just left people out like now?

NC: I—I can't tell you. And then the ones that didn't—couldn't afford to build a house, they'd have their possessions—some of their possessions. These little houses would have a—a window in 'em.

I: Oh? Uh-huh.

NC: And some of 'em would have a—a trunk. They had some of their belongings, and others, maybe just a few things that was theirs that they put in there with 'em. They would be buried, but the house would be on top of it. And then there was others that didn't have a house, they would have stakes at each end of it and stretch a can—and then a canvass like a tent, of a little, low, tent over it.

I: Hmm, hmm. Interesting things we do. Yeah, I don't—I don't know about that

NC: Then we had a lot of experiences down on the Baja.

I: Then you've gone both directions?

NC: Yes.

I: [laughs].

NC: We've been down on the Baja twice.

I: Oh, have you?

NC: Clear to the end of it down at Cabo San Lucas.

I: Did you drive?

NC: Yes.

I: Really?

NC: With a camper. The first year we went down there, there weren't any roads.

I: Really?

NC: In places there were no roads. You just pick a place and go—just sand and sagebrush.

I: Hmm. [chuckles]. Now you're such an adventurous person.

NC: I've got a lot of drama pictures of that too.

I: Uh-huh, uh-huh, of all you did. Um—
[audio ends]