

PETE McCULLOUGH

March 18

Interviewer: James Clarence (Jim) Nelson – (November 8, 1949 – May 27, 2015)

JN It doesn't look much like spring out there today.

PM Not by the looks of the snow.

JN I am talking to Pete McCullough at his home here in Grovedale. We are talking the early years and we got some exhibits on the table here to how early, back to his first driver's license in 1939, and consecutive all the way up to 1986. So there has to be a lot of stories there but we are just talking about . . . well go ahead and talk, actually just what we were looking at there, the shingling . . . .

PM Well, I shingled the Pipestone Creek store. I think that was in 1935.

JN That's the one now down in the museum?

PM Yes, that's the one you see at the museum now. And the store before that. I don't know whether you want my life and my story . . .

JN That's exactly what we want.

PM but when I was eleven years old I went to the Millarston school and I stayed at a place, it was about eighty rods from the school. It was handy but in order to stay there I would have to go home at noon and just before that they handed me a milk pail at six o'clock in the morning, a guy just eleven years old. And I had to milk two cows, feed them and get to school at eight o'clock, or nine o'clock I guess it was then. I could make it in the morning but at noon I had to come back and chop the waterhole in the slough, well you know it was in the wintertime. I'd have to open the waterhole and feed the cows and the horses and make sure they all drank and then they stayed out until 4 o'clock when I got out of school. I would have to come home and clean the barns and feed the cattle and horses. It didn't work too good. When I come home at noon if I didn't get it all done I caught hell. If I was late getting back to school I caught hell.

JN Where was that school exactly?

PM At Millarston. East of where the Pipestone Creek store was.

JN Oh, across the river here in the Wembley area.

PM Yeah. So I just decided one day that I would pack up my little bag and I headed for home.

JN Where was home exactly?

PM It was down along the Wapiti here.

JN On the north side, on the Wembley side?

PM On the south side.

JN Oh

PM You see we were the first ones in here when this settlement was opened up.

JN Oh yeah. What year would that be? In the '30s I imagine

PM In '28

JN Oh, in '28

PM (chuckling) and I got as far as Pipestone and I was getting kind of cold so I stopped in the store. Old A.K. Watts, I told him what happened and why I wasn't getting along over there at Millarston so he said why don't you go trapping? I said, hell, I haven't got no traps. He said I'll give you a few. So he gave me a few traps and I didn't have a gun. So he sold me, he charged it up. He charged me for six traps and a 22 and five boxes of shells. They were worth ten cents apiece, you know, I could make good money at that. You could only get a dollar a day if you were working out. So I got this gun and these few traps and I come down home and I went down into the Big 7 that was east along the Wapiti. It burnt out I think in the '40s sometime. There was green timber there. There were lots of deer. We practically lived off of the land. At that time there were quite a bunch going down there. We all kinda camped together. We had a shelter, you know, and we got along pretty good there. But anyway I stayed two weeks and I come out with 40 squirrels. I took them over to A.K. and I had money to spare. (laughing) And since that I have been a trapper. But the last three years I can't trap, not that I ain't able too. I still hold the registered trap line but the oil companies come in with their pipelines, and the loggers and everything else and they cleaned me right out. Last year I set my traps out and I lost 23. These guys come along and they see one of these old-time traps, you know, and they say that will look good hanging on my wall.

JN You lose your traps to thieves

PM Yeah. That ain't the worst of it. The traps were worth nothing and I went to Dawson Creek and I bought a quad so I could get around in the spring of the year and I decided I was going to set a few traps so I left the quad sitting on top of the hill, you know. Then I went down looking at my traps and all of a sudden this dam truck come along and they looked at this quad, they started her up and I never seen it again. Yeah, I went to the police over it. They said if you haven't got the number of the truck that took it we can't do nothing.

JN That's too bad.

PM The next winter I was over here on the Iroquois Creek and I had left my toboggan sitting on the side of the road. I had just bought it a couple of months before that. I hadn't got it paid for either but I knew Stojan in Sexsmith (laughing) so if I go there, you know, whether I got money or not, if I need something, you know, I knew, I don't know whether it was his dad or his brother, and we got along real good together and I dealt with them for years and if I found something I needed he would tell me to just take it.

JN (laughing) I guess that's the way it used to be, aye.

PM They got used to me.

JN That's how you got into business in the first place. So your home was just down here on this side of the Wapiti

PM Yeah

JN How did you and Henry . . . can you remember the first time you got into the high country?

PM Well the first time was in 1937, I went with Bert Osborne as a wrangler. He took a bunch of students from Wembley to Mount Robson.

JN Really!

PM I think it was in '37 and I was on as a wrangler and he took these college students they took them through and then we came back a different way like. We took them through the high country to go down and what a trip that was.

JN Packed right out of Wembley?

PM Packed right out of Wembley,

JN Or the Wapiti?

PM Yeah right out of the Wapiti. Yeah we had to ford the river to start with (chuckling). Of course it was low then . . .

JN All the way to Mount Robson?

PM Yeah. You talk about a wrangler trying to find a god damn mountain sticking up with a bunch of other mountains, we had to climb at night to see where the hell it was, you know. None of us knew where in the hell we were going. You don't see Mount Robson very often less it is covered with clouds. And we got down there anyway we got to the railroad on the other side and we decided we was coming back and old Perky was down in Jasper and he got seven or eight more students to come back with us. We come back through what's Grande Cache now. And I never looked down a prettier valley than the Smoky Valley from about what they call Hell's Gate now that's west of the road and chutes there, yeah. The chutes we come in somewhere in there and we come over the north side there. And we come down that valley and that was the most beautiful valley I had ever seen in the mountains and we got back. Then in '38 I think it was we got two hunters that wanted moose and we got down around Sherman's up here.

JN Was this with Osborne again?

PM Oh no. There was Henry and I together and he called it Sherman's, it's not Sherman's. Sherman Flats is on the north side of the river up on the hill there. That is the old Gunderson Flats where they put the airstrip.

JN Who were some of the Gundersons?

PM Well, Gunderson was an old hermit who lived out there.

JN And he lived where the airstrip is now?

PM No, he lived at Two Lakes most of the time but he had a cabin at – well it's about half way up where the airstrip is now.

JN I see.

PM He was a guy you never walked behind him. We went into Two Lakes and he had a bunch of hay, just piles out in the meadow and old Adam Kenney and I, he didn't like our horses you know. He thought they might eat the dry hay, well they were more for the green stuff. But anyway Adam and I went over and helped him. We got two long poles about that far apart and we'd go and run them under those hay piles and then we would take them to the next hay pile and we could move five of them little piles he had. But it was good for what we used now. And we packed them over beside where he had his little bench where he was stacking . . .

JN Was that on the lake there?

PM Yeah.

JN Where, on the east side of it, where the cabins are now?

PM His cabin was right where the Forestry cabin is.

JN Right.

PM And they dozed it out.

JN That was Gunderson? That was Gunderson.

PM He had a lot of cabins around. He must have been in there quite a while but anyway after we got done piling this hay up he walked up to us and we had them all piled there so he could just put them in a pile the way he wanted to you know, he reached in his shirt pocket and he pulled out two twenty dollar bills and he gave one to Adam and he one to me.

JN (laughing)

PM There was these big buggers. Great big bills, you know, and he must have had them for a long time because I took mine into old Bob Krantz at Wembley and he was so happy to get that one. But we was only there about two hours, you know. He paid good.

JN Back then they would be worth a thousand dollars.

PM By god, yeah.

JN Why did you say he didn't walk behind him or ahead of him whatever you said?

PM He always faced you. If you were going to go past him, you would only go past him on the front side. And the pistol, you never could see anyone who could handle one like him, (chuckling) and he always had it on him.

JN I wonder where he came from.

PM I don't know.

JN He just shows up in that country one day.

PM Yeah.

JN He must have been one of the first down there. I think Pete Campbell trapped down there earlier than that though, I think. Did you ever hear of that? Did he ever have a cabin, a line cabin, on Two Lakes there back when he was a kid?

PM No, no. . . . Birch Creek or . . .

JN Campbell Creek (some talking I couldn't understand)

PM I thought he got down there in the early days travelling.

JN So Gunderson must have been the first at Two Lakes then?

PM Oh yeah, he was the first there. Oh well, his cabin was an old cabin but it was in good shape. God damn gooseberries grew up at the top and a half an inch across. He had gooseberries planted on the roofs that held the moisture out and it couldn't get through. Dirt roof.

JN And he had the benefit of the gooseberries.

PM Yeah, (laughing) He packed rhubarb roots in there, he had good rhubarb.

JN So from the first trip that you and Henry, so back to the hunters were they Americans?

PM Yeah.

JN How did you connect with them?

PM They came into Wembley and wanted somebody to take them out.

JN Right. So that was the start of your guiding career? Was that?

PM That was it.

JN Well, where did you go from there?

PM Well, in '39 we went up into the Monkman Pass in BC. We were packing tourists into Kinuso Falls.

JN Trail rides like, right?

PM Well, trail rides and looking around.

JN Right

PM But last summer, Richard, he flew from . . .

JN That was Richard Brooks?

PM He flew from Junction Mountain here to the eastern slope of the Rockies and he filmed it all the way to Brooks Falls and into Monkman Pass. And he had, well his dad was down there one time we went fishing below the falls.

JN That was Carl Brooks?

PM Carl Brooks yeah. And he was standing on the flat rock and he said “there’s got to be fish in here.” He said he had took 23 in there and I don’t think he was 15 minutes at it. And old Carl he jumped when he seen them come out from under the rock the damn rock broke off. I didn’t know . . . well it was fairly deep water but he caught himself before he got in the water and after that we called that Brooks Falls. (both laughing)

JN Well you got along for years and years from 1939 to 1986 with your Class A Guide license, what is the mainstay of that, where you and Henry, where was your kind of base of operation over the years with the hunting and so on?

PM Around the Kakwa Valley and Hythe you know.

JN For what did you guide? I guess everything aye?

PM Oh yes. Anything that was up there, we got our share of them.

JN Do you have any memorable hunts when you were getting going there? Were there any memorable hunters?

PM Well, there were so many of them you can’t pick out one. I go out there for a good time and I try to make the hunter have a good time too. Sometimes we blundered but then we can laugh about it, you know.

JN What was a good class blunder to you?

PM Getting right up within 50 yards of an animal and he misses it, (both laughing) but that don’t matter to me as long as he gets a shot at him.

JN What was your favourite country back there to hunt?

PM Actually, the best place was Horn Ridge country around the north side. We call it Lonesome Valley now. The caribou used to be in there quite a bit and then we used to go up east of Green Water Lake or Cecilia Lake or whatever the hell they want to call it now. (laughing)

JN But you call it Green Water Lake now?

PM Yeah. The east side there that was right up . . .

JN Let me interrupt here because I know from what we were listening to earlier there. Tell me how Dead Horse Meadows got its name.

PM Well. It was most Cache Creek and it was that way for quite a few years and Mrs. Sid Sunderman, she made bread there one time. And, of course, at the time they had to use that slow yeast, you know let it set over night. And she made the bread and that’s where she cooked it on an open fire and she made bread. How the hell she done it I don’t know. But according to her after you got to know her, she could do anything you asked her.

JN That’s why it’s called Bread Camp?

PM So then it was Bread Camp and then I don’t know just what year it was but anyway we went in there and we had four hunters from Texas on that trip. And one horse got a little scratch on his

back. I wasn't bad it was right up on his hip and it was right close to the end of the hump line so we had to come out and we had too far to go back. So we went back with the second trip but the horse was in bad shape. I didn't think twice I couldn't see an animal suffer like that so . . .

JN So that is Dead Horse Meadows?

PM Dead Horse Meadows.

JN What did you call Torrens Mountain?

PM 'Cause it is a mountain. (both laughing) You try climbing that bugger with a horse (both laughing) it got its name good. Now they call it Torrens Mountain

JN It was something everybody agreed on then.

PM Oh yeah. Everybody knew when we talked about that one, all the times we tried, and it was so damn steep and we'd get up there and a lot of times we would sleep up there overnight. That's when the animals come out to feed at the lake, you know. Out of the bush and we could spot them. One night I stayed up there and I woke up in the morning and two big rams were about two feet from where we were sleeping. The rocks come out like this and we just made our beds under the shelter of the rock. Of course the sun came out in the morning and shone right in on us and we were nice and warm in there. But the damn big rams were right there. Have you tried to get a hunter awake and try to keep him quiet. (both laughing)

JN Did you do it?

PM Yeah. We got one of them. There are too many things to talk about. I don't know, Richard and I have been trying to get them on tape and one thing and another . . .

JN Well that was a different world, a different lifestyle.

PM Yeah. You never locked your door at all. If I was going past your house and I needed a cup of tea or something I would always stop and make it. And nobody thought anything about it. (laughing)

JN Just leave some kindling in the wood box when you leave.

PM Yeah. We have another trap line too at Two Lakes. Well my sons. We tried locking that up but that didn't work. We had to put another door on it already and locks and they were tore off like it was going out of style. So we just leave it open now.

JN So you just kept trapping all along and guiding in the fall?

PM In '46 I think it was, I got married and my wife and I we threw our outfits together. She had some horses and I had horses and we threw them together and that was more or less when we went on our own. She was on her own and I was on my own.

JN Just let me check.

PM Just keep dabbling for a while so I can get another coffee.

JN Alright I'll do that.

Side B

JN You mentioned a couple of names of people who were back there in the early days like Adam Kenney.

PM Adam Kenney, Ed Stone, Dan St. Arnaud, I took my guiding from Dan St. Arnaud. I was young and he kinda took me under his wings, told me where to go, you know. I didn't know the country at that time.

JN Where was he?

PM He was down here the other side of where the dump is now. That's where he lived.

JN Where did the Indians come from like Adams and people like that? Were they originals here, or did they come out of the park? Some say they were Iroquois down at the creek. Where did they come from originally?

PM There were two settler women on buried Nose Creek, that was what we used to call the graveyard. I was back in there and it is all washed out now.

JN Where was that? Right across from the settlement there?

PM Oh, no. My wife's grandfather is right in the middle of the road going onto the bridge at Nose Creek.

JN Is that right?

PM It goes right over his grave. I know because I was working for M. B. McMillan at the time and I had an old TB18 with a bucket on the back. An old cable bucket.

JN Yeah, my dad had to carry all those cable buckets. But were they grave sites or were they spirit houses in the trees.

PM On the grave site.

JN Did they put the road over top of it?

PM Right over top of it. And they missed the other ones there just on the other side of the road. And there are still more back on the side-hill again.

JN By back, is that upstream?

PM Downstream.

JN To the left if you are going south across the bridge?

PM To the right.

JN OH, to the right. There were fox there?

PM Yeah, there is one right out in the middle of that big open flat. There is a grave there somewhere but I can never find it. Years ago I knew about where it was. You could see you know.

JN Your wife from that country obviously then. Her dad was down at the creek there? Where did her people come from originally?

PM Well that varies. Some people say from Sturgeon Lake and some people say from up north. And some say from Phillair. They still own half of that town. People bought it out but they bought from their own guys.

JN I think that happened a lot. What about Adam? I guess he travelled the mountains quite a bit?

PM Yeah. He used to work for the railroad when he was young down around MacBride, Kamloops down in there, we talk about that a lot. His dad was where Gunderson's Creek comes in to Nose Creek. His old cabin is right there.

JN Adam Kenney's dad?

PM Yeah. And then he went blind and he moved out to the Wapiti again.

JN That would be going back some years.

PM Yeah.

JN I met Adam on different occasions. He was quite a man, I guess he was/had a lot of respect amongst the Indian people. He was a medicine man.

PM Yeah. He respected the other people. You are getting too far away here.

JN Yeah. I don't want to do that. People will think you are tiring out.

PM Nose Creek, they call that Shuttler Flats. It's not Shuttler Flats, Shuttler Flats is on Pinto Creek. It's up from the bridge about eight or ten miles. Where old Pete Shuttler used to live. That's where Shuttler Flats is.

JN When did the Nose Creek settlement get started then?

PM Well it started out – there wasn't too many there. You know they would camp there and then they would go back.

JN For different seasons.

PM Yeah. It was a great camping ground there. Paul Wanyandi, he was my father-in-law, my wife's dad. He, (how the hell am I going to tell this?) His dad was at Nose Creek and somehow he had cattle and sold a cow, and he sold his cattle to old Wapiti Brown and old Wapiti Brown come in here across the meadow. There are some big meadows in there and that's where he kept them. It's kinda hard to believe but . . .

JN What years was that?

PM before my time. Before I came into this area.

JN So maybe in the '20s or back in the . . .

PM Yeah. I knew old Wapiti Brown. I used to pack in the mountains quite a bit too. We all knew each other, Kelly Sutherland, Sid Sunderland, Bert Dalglish, all them guys. They told me that he sold his cows for \$4.75 apiece.

JN Prices have sure gone up.

PM (laughing) Yeah. But then old Wapiti Brown kept them out here and as far as I could figure out he never sold any, and he had a hell of a herd of cattle out there.

JN What was his story? Where did he come from? I never heard of Wapiti Brown.

PM Well, that's what we called him. I knew him, but he was pretty well, you know, much up in years, pretty well out of it, outfitting and stuff.

JN So, speaking from the outfitting gang you were saying that in about the mid-forties, you and your wife then, sort of threw things together and started guiding on your own.

PM Yeah.

JN And was that strictly just hunting in the fall or was that . . .

PM Yeah, and packing rocks for the geologists in the mountains. Helicopters run us guys out of business.

JN Is that right?

PM We made big money on that. We'd go out with a bunch of horses and we would go to a certain mountain and we would get samples of rocks and that's what they would send back to Calgary to get analyzed. We packed them, hell, and sometimes I had as high as 30 head of pack horses just packed with rocks (both laughing)

JN That was a serious pack train.

PM The way we would work there would be more than one of us out there. There would be Cameron, Johnny Cameron and I, we grew up pretty close in age, together at Moberley Lake and Bert Dalglish and old Kelly Sutherland. We would pack in the summertime out there before hunting season would come. A couple of us would take these rocks and we'd bring them out. Well that trip we would do it and the next trip a couple of the other guys would do it. So we always knew where everybody else was. No radios at that time, we just knew where they were going to be. (laughing)

JN And you packed those rocks right out to here or where was the closest places that you could off-load them?

PM Wembley. And we would load them on a freight car and ship them out.

JN How long did it take you to come back, say from the Torrens area back to Wembley?

PM Back to Sherman's we would generally take about five days.

JN Five days from Sherman Meadows to Wembley?

PM Yeah. When we was loaded we never worked a horse over eight hours. If he had the saddle on for eight hours it came off, regardless of where we was, and that kept our horses backs good.

JN How many horses did you have back in those years?

PM My wife she ordered three cattle liners in '85 and we shipped out 115 head of horses. And that's what we finished with.

JN Yeah.

PM And I went back with 186.

JN What kind of horses were they? Were they kinda big grade horses?

PM About 1200 pounds. That herd we had some smaller horses and . . .

JN Stocky

PM Yeah. A lot of the horses they take up there now we wouldn't even look at them.

JN Why is that? You are not a big Arabian fan for packing in the mountains?

PM Well they got so god damn spindly little legs on them. The way I talk on this thing, I talk my language.

JN Yeah. (both laughing, that's why I'm here.)

PM I should watch my language a little bit, but

JN Speaking of geologists back there, were there any rumours of gold back in that there country.

PM I know where there is a seam of quartz back there.

JN Yeah.

PM You know that where there is quartz there is gold.

JN Yeah, usually.

PM I was going to walk up there again. It is damn near at the top of a mountain. You watch on TV these gold trails and ghost towns in southern BC. It would get me thinking.

JN Well did you ever do any panning? Did you ever see any colours in the creeks below or anything?

PM Oh yes. There is gold in the Wapiti.

JN But probably not what you could make wages ...

PM No, but there is some place. But Peggy Giroux married a guy from southern BC and he used to go up the Wapiti in a boat, in a row boat, you know, and he stayed up there two or three months and he made good wages. That was back in the '30s and she was my first cousin.

JN Really!

PM He used to tell us a lot, but he never would tell us which creeks he went up.

JN (both laughing) He wouldn't tell you that much.

PM But there is gold in the Wapiti right here and if you can pan you can get it. The color, it's quite gold.

JN What are your other points of interest? Like major fossils or are there other burial sites out there that are important?

PM There is a lot. And there is a women from Moberley Lake she wants me to go with her. And she wants to go by the pipeline that's going by Two Lakes and she said not to do anything until June or July because she wanted to work with me.

JN Do you want to go back there and find it?

PM Yeah. Yeah and they pay good too.

JN That's good.

PM They wanted to know where the Buffalo Head Camps was. Well I took them out there last fall and told them where it was.

JN Buffalo Head Camps, what was that?

PM That's beside the hot springs out there. (both laughing) Now I've got you going.

JN Yeah.

PM There are hot springs at Two Lakes.

JN Is that right?

PM Yeah. It ain't real hot or anything but it don't freeze all winter.

JN I was thinking the spring its sulfur but it's cold on the trail there from the fall.

PM There is a lot of Ice gets on them too. But it's where Gunderson Creek you can cross it right at the bottom of the hill.

JN When you are coming into the first lake?

PM When you are going down to the first lake. Yeah. It runs under ground . . .

JN Yeah.

PM and it comes out down in that swamp down there and that's where, back in the early days, I seen a lot of buffalo skulls there but in these days they are gone . . .

JN Yeah

PM and we always called it Buffalo Head Camps. Well she wanted to know where that was because of history. She is a native woman and her ancestors had told her about this.

JN Right.

PM And the buffalo used to come down there and drink in the winter time . . .

JN Right

PM and they had that big campsite up there and old Adam Kenney he told me about he used to go to them where the creek comes back out so he could hunt buffalo. His dad had told him that.

JN Is that right?

PM I knew his dad too. I hunted him a good many porcupines down and he could eat a porcupine

JN Was that your favourite?

PM Oh, yeah. Actually porcupine is good. I would eat it.

JN I haven't but they say it is just like pork almost.

PM It can be a little difficult. You burn the quills off and then you skin them.

JN That would make it easier.

PM That burn on them quills sets the flavour into the meat.

JN Is that right?

PM I like it really.

JN Do you gut them first or . . .

PM No, you cook them, you burn them just when you kill them. In the early days old Sam Wilson, he used to go around the muskeg quite a bit, and he used to get trees that moss is hanging on it. He would set them on fire and the porcupine would be up the tree and by the time he fell out of the tree he was pretty well scorched off and he would put him in a sack and pack him. (both laughing) He would set a fire and it would just go up the tree. It's a moss that hangs on the trees. You've seen it.

JN Yeah. Some call it witches hair or whatever.

PM Yeah, exactly.

JN I guess that's terrible food, aye?

PM It's the best eye medicine you can get.

JN Is that right? What do you do make a tea out of it for eye medicine?

PM Just boil it and put the patches right on your eyes.

JN There are a lot of medicines out there isn't there?

PM I know a lot of them.

JN I bet you do.

PM Old Paul he was a medicine man.

JN Paul?

PM Paul Wanyandi

JN Oh, yeah.

PM and old Adam Kenney was too, he told me a lot.

JN Did Adam learn it from his dad or how did he learn it? Or did he just find he had a gift that way or ...

PM I don't know. There is a lot of them now that say they are a medicine man but they ain't nothing like the old timers.

JN Well. They had that special respect among people.

PM Yeah, I know.

JN What about the caribou. You said you seen herds out there in the early days. What kind of numbers. What do you think there was for caribou back there if you add them up – at a round up for the whole south Wapiti.

PM Holy Christ, where would a person put them.

JN (laughing)

PM There was nothing to see of a herd of one hundred. And helicopters come in and they see a herd of caribou, they hovered down low over top of them, and same with the goats, hovered down close to them and they would all come down into the timber.

JN Right.

PM And the timber wolves got them. Now you be down outside on our trap line out there, there is a herd, I don't know how many is there, you can see six/seven at a time you know. They were getting so weak when you drive past them in the toboggans and they wouldn't run. But now they are logging it all out. They might just and well go kill them off as that is what happens.

JN Yeah.

PM They got nothing left. Just the same as my trap line, I have nothing left.

JN Exactly where is your trap line? The south . . .?

PM Right here.

JN Well, I mean, I thought you said "down south."

PM We got one at two lakes but this trap line here I can't set a trap on it, overnight it's gone. When we were talking before, when I lost that quad, somebody stole it. They got carried away and I had my toboggan out there and a guy jumped on it and away he went and I never seen it again. The one I just paid \$3300 for it. It's just gone.

JN It's sad. Like you say it used to be a country where everybody was taking care of each other.

PM Well, yeah. But there are 76 oil wells on my trap line. I don't know, the logging companies every place I used to have a line set, they've logged it out, 'round Bald Hill down here.

JN What were the best years you had for trapping? Prices and so on?

PM Lena and I, we wanted to go to Edmonton. We wanted to go to the Army and Navy Store in Edmonton. They had some very good buys and some stuff that we could use. We said we would trap for about a month and then we would go. They took 168 little pelts and they averaged \$18.00 a piece for them.

JN Wow!

PM And then, prices went up to seven or eight hundred dollars. But at that time there was not much activity on our trap lines that they chased them all out. They are mostly north now. North of the Peace River and east.

JN Well, the beaver seems to be coming back. I don't know why. It was down on the bottomland, just there hasn't been a market for them or something.

PM I made the most out of beaver than I have for quite a few years. Prices are down to nothing.

JN Is that right?

PM I sold six beaver and I got \$65.00 for them last spring. I only took five, I only took eleven beavers last spring and that's all I am going to take this spring. There is one colony close to the road that is going to cause trouble. They might flood the road out. Take *[indistinguishable]* there and kinda slow them down. But there is no use, I don't kill them. When I got this trap line there were two beaver colonies on it. The other guys would get permits to get five or six beavers. I didn't, I let them multiply.

JN (laughing)

PM I've been at it since 1946

JN On the whole would you say it was a pretty good way to live?

PM Well, the way I look at it, if you go and kill them off, you ain't gonna have any.

JN There is a certain amount of logic in that.

PM But when you go to a beaver dam you take one or two. If you take the one you might as well take the other one too, one male and one female. But if you take two out of a beaver dam, but don't take the big one. You will see the old guy come out. He'll be the dominator of that colony. You always leave him. Unless he gets in the *[indistinguishable]* then you can't help it.

JN He's got the blue prints aye.

PM Yeah, he's the engineer of the outfit. (laughing)

JN Well is there anything I haven't asked you that sticks out about the country or people or . . .

PM Well there ain't much. There is a lot of things to talk about but when I get started on something I don't know when to quit. Richard and I had... there's a lot of good stories on that coming up.

JN We are just on the tail end of that, you see its stopping.

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