



Raymond Yowell

Great Basin Indian Archive

GBIA 007B



Oral History Interview by

**Norm Cavanaugh
August 17, 2007
Elko, NV**



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Y: My name is Raymond Yowell. I was born here in Elko on September the 23rd, 1929. I was born over at the hospital that's now torn down. Not there no more. My father was Ray Yowell. And his lineage is into the Bill family. That's the Bill family that's around here. And then, on my mother's side, her lineage is into the Mary Hall lineage. And that goes down into, now, into what's know as the Dann family. But that's my immediate lineage. In childhood, I never really knew much about my mother. I guess my mother and father were together just a short while. And I knew very, very little about her. And I really didn't know my father at all, as a child. I guess I was kind of taken care of by other Indian ladies. Because when I was in my teens, these Indian ladies used to come along and tell me that they took care of me when I was a baby. Of course, I don't remember nothing about that. But I ended up with my maternal grandmother. Sometime, maybe when I was about two and a half, maybe three years old—I don't remember. And she had a half-sister that was down in Smoky Valley. And she made arrangements with her half-sister and her husband—their name was Frank and Annie Charley—to take me down there. Now, apparently, they didn't have any kids, and they wanted to raise a child, and they were willing to take me. So this arrangement had been made, I guess, for several months. And my grandmother prepared me well for that. She said that, "You're going to be living with them, that's where you're going to grow up at." And Granny really prepared me, because I remember when her and her husband took me down there, and of course they stayed overnight, and of course, when Annie, when I first met her, she was just like—it's hard to explain, the feeling you get from somebody who really likes you. And that's what it was, she really liked me. And of course, I liked her instantly. And then

the next day, when my grandmother left there, I didn't cry. I was practically at home. So my early years were spent in Smoky Valley. And got to know **Eva** Charley, and **Elma** Charley, and **Herbert** Charley, and **Doug McCann**. And those were Shoshone kids that was kind of around down there. And when I got to be of school age, I started school there in Kingston. They had a school there, like an old country school. Used to be first to the eighth grade. And I started school there, when I was probably six. Six or seven, something like that. And it came about—I don't know what happened, Frank and Annie talked a lot about peyote. They were afraid of peyote. But I don't know whether they were sick, or they weren't feeling good, but they tried to go in to the doctor, Indian doctor. And then, we did come up here a couple of times. There was a Indian doctor here by the name of, I guess his name was **Dacey. Dyson**. He's related into the Coochum family, the Coochum family that's here now. But he was Indian doctor around here, and one time we came up here, and he doctored the—and I can't remember who he doctored. Most of the times, he just doctored one or the other. I'm not really sure. And then we went back to Smoky Valley. And then we came up another time, might've been a year later, I can't remember. And Frank had a sister here that lived on Elko Colony. And her name was Mamie. She was married into the Dixon family. Mamie Dixon was her name. And we stayed at her place. And we'd been there, I think, just one night—one or two nights, I can't remember. There was a rodeo going on at the time across the river over here, across the Humboldt River right there. And coming over, I seen the rodeo grounds, and there was a rodeo there. And we went over there to watch the rodeo, watch the activities. But I can't remember whether it was the first night, second night, that we were there, Frank's sister, early in the morning, about sunrise, this nice-looking man came in.

And he had a puppy. Little puppy. And he talked with Annie, and for some reason I liked him right away. [Laughter] I don't know why, I just, just liked him, he was a nice-looking man. And then, I was still in bed on the floor—I slept on the floor there, I was still under the covers—he came over, he talked to me. And I can't remember all he said, but he said, “Do you want this puppy?” I remember that. I said, “Yeah, I want the puppy,” you know? So he gave me a puppy. And shortly thereafter, he left. He sat and talked there with my grandma, and he left. And so I was asking, “Who is that? Who is that man? Who is he?” And she wouldn't tell me. And of course, we went back to Smoky Valley, and over the period of the next few weeks, I kept asking, “Who was that man who gave me this puppy? Who was it? Who was it?” And finally, she says, “Well, that was your father.” [Laughter] Boy, he knew he was my father, you know? And that was quite a thing. Now that I think back, quite a thing. But anyway, like I said, they talked with that Indian doctor, the nice Indian doctor, and they talked about peyote, they were afraid of the peyote. But for some reason, they went to Fallon, and there was a doctor over there. And I went with them, and this man doctored them. And there was a certain point in the doctoring, and he gave them, as I recall, a white substance to eat. As I remember, kind of slender, maybe the size of your little finger. And it was white, I remember. And he gave this to them, and said, “Eat this.” And so they did. And I was kind of flabbergasted, because I heard them talk, and how they said they didn't want to eat any peyote. I thought that was peyote. I don't know if it was or not. But anyway, they ate it. And so the doctor told them—I remember just a one-night deal. Anyway, he told them, he said, “Don't do anything. When you get back, rest. You know, don't do anything hard, physical, just take it easy.” And I don't know whether he gave them a length of time or not. I don't

remember that. But it was in the fall, I guess, like maybe September, something like that. Maybe in October. But when we got home, they had to get their winter wood in. And so we lived out there, we lived where pine trees are. And so after getting the dead pines, and when Frank would get up in the tree and shake it back and forth to make it fall, and then he'd chop it up, and then drag it to the house, and then we'd cut it up there, chop it up for wood for the winter. And of course, I didn't know, I didn't think about it, but he had told them not to work. But they did all this hard work at that time. And then, it happened that Barbara Ridley's mother and father came down. They were part of the family, they're part of the Mary Hall family. And they came down for a visit. And they'd been there about a day when Frank Charley got sick, and stayed in the bed, didn't get out of bed. And it went on several days, seem like it was about the third day, and then *Annie* got sick around that time, too. So they were both sick. And I think maybe about the fourth day, Barbara's mother, I took her and her husband outside and I told them, I said, "I think these people are getting worse. Why don't you go down the valley here, and let his relatives know?" Which is **Winston** Charley. That's the father and Cleveland, and **Dalbert**, and **Herbert**, and those guys. "Let them know that they're sick." And so, he did. He took off in his car, and went down there, and I think—I think it was the next day that all of the people arrived there. There were two cars that came up. And I think Frank Bradley, who was a Shoshone who lived down there, and I think he was raised **with Winston** Charley growing up. And I think **Winston** Charley came up. And as I understand it, **Winston** Charley was probably the nephew of Frank Charley. I'm not sure, but I think he was. And I remember the men dressed Frank, and he was crying the whole time. And the women dressed Annie, and she was crying too. And they literally drug

them to the cars. I remember then he was sliding back with his feet, and they were dragging him, forced him in the car because he didn't want to go. Annie same way; the women were dragging her. They put them in two separate cars. And by that time, my grandmother, who had taken me down there—my mother's mother had, they had come down. And so, when they left, they took them to Schurz, and of course, my mother's grandmother took me. And they entered them into the hospital over there. And the last time I saw them was on the highway, when we stopped to rest to go about nature. That's the last time I saw either one. And then, we stayed in Schurz, I think for a day or so, and then my grandmother had to get back up here, so they headed back up this way. And on the way up, they left me at Beowawe, with the family of Barbara Ridley, which is related back to Mary Hall. Because they were relatives and all. So they left me there. And of course, I didn't know them. [Laughter] They were strangers. But I was there for several months. I guess this was maybe like in October, it might've been November. I'm sure it was in the fall. And then on about January, sometime in January, this man and woman showed up. And Barbara's mother, when I came to the house, they said, "Come here, come shake hands with your grandmother." And again, I've never seen either one of them before. I'd never seen them. And her husband, which was George. George Yowell. And I didn't know either one of them. Said, "This is your grandmother. Shake hands with her." So I did. And so they picked me up, and then brought me up here. And then, that night, when [__inaudible at 12:28__], here's this nice-looking man that I'd seen before, come in. And he, in the meantime, had married another woman. My stepmother. And that's how I ended up back up here. And we were here, probably, until 1937, when South Fork was purchased as a reservation. And we were one of the first families to move to South

Fork. The first year, we wintered in a tent out there. And as I remember, the snow was like two feet. Real cold, it was like 30 below. In them years, it used to get real cold. And we used to have to get up early in the morning, and dress as quick as you could, because it was cold! I sure used to hate to get out of them blankets! [Laughter] And then we went to school out there, we started school there at South Fork. And there was just a few kids, a few white kids, and the rest were myself, and **Willard Green**, **Bennie Tom**, and **Perry Hill**, and **Floyd Hill**. And we were the ones that were going to school. And the white kids was **Bill Kane**, and then **Roy Henry**—or **Bob Henry**. There were two white kids. And then there was **Leroy Horne**, and his sister **Kate Horne**. And then **Charles Down**. But they were the school. It used to be one-room school here. All the grades were taught in one room. Had one teacher here [__inaudible at 14:02__]. You know, I mentioned the Indian doctor earlier, mainly to explain a little bit on how that was done. There was a way that you approached the doctor, which is not direct. He had a helper—he or she had a helper. But he would go and make the appointment. Then the helper would speak with the doctor, and then he would tell her, “Well okay, on this day, this place.” There was money involved, but I can’t remember maybe, no more than five dollars, probably, or three dollars. In them days, they had silver dollars. And usually that’s what they’d pay. Now, I think **Dacey**, as I remember, doctored two nights. I think he doctored two nights. And when he would start his doctoring, he would go through a process. He would sing some songs, in Shoshone, his songs—what was revealed to him. I guess the way the doctors come about is, in their youth—he or she—in their youth, they start to have dreams. Maybe like twelve, thirteen, fifteen years old, somewhere in that time. Dreams start coming to them, telling them to do certain things. And if they did those things, then

the dreams would get more specific. And at a point, actually, the songs would be revealed to them, for them to sing. Some of them had the eagle for a doctor, that was kind of the image or whatever. Some of them had a bear. And there might've been other things that I'm not aware of. But those are the two that I know about. I don't know what **Dicey's** power was. Nobody ever said anything, you know. And these doctors, they were kind of mysterious people to me, because they never said anything about their power. They just performed what they were instructed to do, and they never talked about it. I was present when Frank and Annie would go to the doctor, and the way they do it is, he would sing some songs, and **sit a lot** with his eyes closed, and then he would sing songs again, and **sit a lot** with his eyes closed. And then, at a certain point, wherever the ailment was—it was in the chest area, or wherever the ailment was—he would just put his lips to that place, where it's at, and make like a sucking sound. [Makes a sucking sound.] Like that. And he'd do that several times, maybe in different places, not just one. He'd kind of move around. And then he'd sit back some more, and sing some more songs. And this would go on maybe until about midnight. [__inaudible at 16:54__]. That's how long it took him. And the second act was almost a repetition of the first act. And I don't know whether that was painful, but I remember it would make welts. You would see the welts where he made the sucking sound. In modern day, "monkey bites" they might call it sometimes. But that's what would show up. And sometimes, he would go outside. And I guess, maybe, you know, throw up what he had taken in. I remember, one doctor out at Lee, he had to be held outside. He couldn't walk by himself. **We would carry him** and take him in **or he wouldn't come here**. And my grandfather, George Yowell, and I think another person helped him out, outside. He went in the house there, and they helped him

outside. I guess he threw up; I didn't go [__inaudible at 17:53__]. That was his thing, you kind of stay away from that. It was that sacred thing. And then, when he came back in, then he came back in on his own power. But that's how it's done, basically, is they would put their lips to where the disease is, and suck it out. It may sound skeptical, it might sound like superstition, but those things actually worked. I've seen that work for the healers, what they had done. And just not anybody, as I say, could be an Indian doctor. It had to come through—got the language, with the Shoshone, it comes through the language. Somewhere in the language is a doctor. And sometimes, it may skip a generation, it may skip a couple generations. But someplace, it'll surface again. And if that individual listens to what his dreams tell him, then they get stronger and more is revealed to him, like when he's maybe eighteen—seventeen, eighteen, maybe nineteen, somewhere in there. Then he'll be told—in the white man's terms, he can now start to practice. [Laughter] You know, practice medicine. But they couldn't do, like, operations. They couldn't do anything that white people do. That was not their power. But they had the gift to take disease. Disease, I mean, I guess disease is actually a thing. Like, it's in you. And they had the power to be able to take that out. And like I said, it's a sacred thing. And I only knew two Indian doctors, and neither one of them talked about, you know, about their power. It's just something, I guess it's sacred. Whether they were told not to talk about it, I don't know. But they just wouldn't talk about it. Continuing on from where I left off, going to school at Lee, in [19]39, then there was a lot more people came to the reservation. A lot more families. And the Indians actually outnumbered the white kids then, from then on. A lot of Indian kids that were going to school. And we grew up there, and we helped the folks with the hay. The first few years, up until 1940, we didn't

have any cattle. And the hay was put up loose in them days. You know, buck rakes, and we'd stack it by hand. We'd pile it in a big stack. And then around 1940, we got a few cows. My dad and my grandfather got a few cows, and of course, you had to be on horseback to run cows, and so we started to mess around with horses. Started to ride horses, and by the time I was thirteen or fourteen, I was breaking colts. And that was a wonderful thing for me to do: ride, and be out there, wandering free, and riding free. It's hard to explain that feeling that you get when you're on a horse. And you're out there, and it's your thing, your world, and you have a good animal under you, and it's a wonderful feeling. So that was the way my early childhood went. Being out with the Mother Nature, what you might call. And seeing things come and go, winter, spring, summer, fall, you know. And right about the same time, I'm twelve, thirteen, fourteen, I started going with the men hunting deer. And deer was our main food. Not too much money to buy food with, mainly just, like, for sugar, flour, beans, that kind of thing. Coffee. And the rest you just kind of grew yourself or you hunted. You know, rabbits, and squirrels, and groundhogs. And the deer was the main thing. And the Shoshone deer season starts probably around—about now, up in this country, probably about the end of August. When the bucks are fat. And of course, that's the law. Bucks only. Didn't kill a doe unless you *really* had to on the way home. Come back empty-handed, then you might kill a doe. But bucks only. And I stated, about twelve, thirteen, fourteen, then we started going with my father in the mountains along with my uncles to hunt deer. And they carried down **the first just along there**, aiming at things, and helped us where they could. And then, at probably thirteen or fourteen, they start letting me fire the gun. And I think I was fourteen years old when I killed my first deer. It was a buck. Of course, that's

a great event among Shoshones. In our youth, once you first kill one, it's quite a thing.

The men that were there, it must have been Harry Tom, John Tom, [__inaudible at 22:49 __], both my parents, you know, my grandfather and them. **Andrew** was there, they all came up, and they'd kind of pat you down. You feel good, you feel good about it, this is your first kill, and now you've really become a man. It's quite an event. I remember that. And then, some of the tradition that the Shoshones have. The rule was that you don't eat your first kill; you give it away. Went through that, and—

C: So, what kind of a gun did you use to kill your first buck?

Y: The first thing they let me carry was a .22 Long Rider. And it wasn't a new one. Pretty old. And it's hard to believe now that a little bitty bullet in a .22 could kill this buck. I had shot enough squirrels by that time to know where the bullet went, and how to aim. But yeah, the little bullet killed this big buck. And it's amazing now. And the funny part, too, is—I shot him right here, and it went completely through the body, and ended up in the thigh. And when my dad was eating a steak off the thigh, he bit into the bullet! [Laughter] And I used to say, I had that bullet for quite a while. I don't know, I don't think I've got it now. But it was quite a thing, you find the bullet on your first kill, you know? I saved it. But that's quite interesting that he bit into the bullet that I shot my first deer through. And of course, later on, when I got up into the teens, and later, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, up into there, did a little work with white people and make a little money, and bought a heavier .30-30 deer gun. And I started hunting, of course, with that, and that had a little more range than the .22.

C: Raymond, you mentioned—the Shoshone way of hunting sounds like it was seasonal. So, can you elaborate on the seasonal aspects of hunting various types of animals that the Shoshone depended on for food?

Y: Certainly. As I stated, in this country here, probably late August, maybe last week in August is when the Shoshones start to hunt deer. Because that's when the bucks were fat. And it went on into probably, maybe the last week of September. And I don't think they went into October. I think it went into the last part of September, and that was it. That was the deer season, Shoshone deer season. And the way the Shoshones prepared the meat was they would dry it. They would jerk it, dry it what you'd call jerky. And they would dry it, and keep this for the winter. And that was the main meat through the winter, dried deer meat. And they'd prepare it in certain ways. Some of them boil it just as a strip, just boil that. And there was another way that they'd make kind of like a stew out of it, with a little bit of flour gravy, and then add some potatoes and a little bit of onions. That was my favorite plate. And they would cook beans with that, that was a meal. Beans, in the stew. And that was real, real good stuff. Tasted real good. And with the squirrels, the squirrels, you know, they would hibernate. Like, they hibernate in the beginning of June. They only come out for just a couple months and then they go back to sleep. And then they come back out in late February, back up in this country. In South Fork, they'd come out around late February. And the days that we were out there, we used to drown them. Drown them out with water. From the, you could see their holes in the flat. And you take water in a fifty gallon drum, and take a five-gallon bucket and drown 'em out, and catch 'em as they come out. And when they first come out, they're still fat. After they've been out maybe a week or so, ten days, they lose that fat and get

real skinny. So we would eat that first, that would probably be the first fresh meat in the spring. And then, a little later on, about the end of March, then it came time to hunt the sage hen. And again, it was the roosters. Roosters only. And at that time, the roosters were breeding—what we call “dancing”—they had a big paunch in the front, it’s like an air sac. And that was a delicacy. They would get—that’s **why they hunted** them. And they would roast that up real crunchy, and that was a real delicacy. And that, sage hen season probably only lasted about two weeks. Maybe about 10th of March in this country, ‘til maybe the 20th of March. And then that was it, they’re going. And then, after that, probably the groundhogs—what they call “rock chuck.” They’re a good-sized little animal, out in the hills, on the rocks. And that’s the next thing they would hunt. And of course, they always tried to get the males. But a lot of times, you couldn’t tell the difference. A lot of times, the male was the one they hunted. And they **were huge, sometimes**. And there was a lot of fat in them. And they hunted them right in the end of June—it varies, different places. And they’d get them there, you know, too. So that was a big staple. And fish, in South Fork, in those days they still had the cutthroat trout. The native cutthroat trout. And, oh, they were probably thirty-six inches long, end to end. And they would make their spring spawning run about this time of the year, up through the South Fork, and lay their eggs up in there and then come back. And a lot of times, they’d get in the irrigation ditches out there. You’d hear them flapping around, and you’d go and get ‘em. And that was another seasonal food during that time. And when they were plentiful, before they got disrupted by the white man’s management, Indians had their own stations out there. They used to harpoon them. Had harpoons. And this fish, as it migrates, of course, it gets tired, and seek an eddie, and rest right in this eddie. And the

Shoshones knew where these eddies were, and each family had their spot, in such-and-such a spot. And so, they would harpoon these migrating fish. And again, they'd dry that, too, and keep it for later use.

C: So, what did they use for harpoons? Was it made out of willow, or was it metal, or what was it?

Y: Well, with the coming of the white man, of course they've got the metal. They actually were made out of, just like a fish hook. But it was pretty big, about that size, you know. But it had a barb in it; once it went in, wouldn't come out. And there was an attachment to a hard willow—what we call *hathuunte* [30:01], that's hard willow. And then had that wrapped on the front of the thing, and that's what they harpooned with. And people, my grandmother used to laugh that—**Willie Carson** had a spot up the road—the main bridge, there, on I believe the main bridge, he had a spot up the road there. And I don't know whether he was in a precarious place or what, but when he harpooned this fish, the fish pulled him under the river! [Laughter] They used to laugh about that! But yeah, every family had their little place. And like I said, there was a lot of fish in them days. And we were—now to South Fork in the [19]30s, they were in decline already. And the county at that time planted brook trout. They had their own hatchery over there in Lee, and they planted brook trout. And it was County Game Board. And then, with the deer, they—you shoot only bucks. Bucks only. And there was a lot of deer. Lot of bucks. And lot of fish, had a lot of brook trout. And then around 1949, maybe 1950, the Nevada State law: couldn't shoot no wildlife without paying the **distance**. And the first thing they did is do away with the brook trout and add rainbows. And come to find out, the rainbow and cutthroat were inbreeding, across. And that their offspring were sterile. So around 1956,

1957, cutthroat was gone. And I don't know whether they added fish later on, but that's what they did. You hear talk now that they're going to bring cutthroat back, but if they keep trying to replant rainbow, they're not coming back. And again, that same fish was up in the lakes in the Rubies. And they were huge, something like that. And George Yowell talked about where, I guess in the [19]20s sometime, maybe in the teens, people were up there dynamiting those lakes, and killed off all the big fish, and then planted brook trouts. And I've seen pictures of, in town here, **Sarah Billings**'s documents in the [19]20s and into the [19]50s where they were catching brook trout. They were big! Maybe about that big, and about that thick. But shortly thereafter—see, a brook trout won't eat himself? It's not carnivorous, not cannibalistic. And they ate themselves out food available. And so then, from then on, you'd see fish that had a big head like that, but a little tapered body. And that's how it is now up there. Still see them like that. But the cutthroat, the cutthroat is carnivorous. It's cannibalistic. They'll eat each other. It keep itself down to what food's available. They'll eat each other to do that! [Laughter] And so, that was a natural balance, you see. But that was upset. So all the fish are going out of the Rubies. All the lakes they have up in there. And it's unfortunate when I look back and see that. You see talk they're managing game and land up there, but I don't know when to take the deer now. It's unusual to see a four-point deer. For me. I hardly ever see a four-point deer. Three-point, two-point. And some of them using bait. In my youth, when I first started hunting, they were like this. Big! Huge deer. Big deer, big bucks, you know. Of course, to a Shoshone, the bigger deer you kill, the better hunter you are. The big ones are really smart. They're really smart to be around a long time. And they never sit in a place where they can be ambushed. They're always in a place where they can look all

around. [__inaudible at 33:37__]. Bound two jumps, and they've gone out of sight. I've seen many big bucks that way, never get a shot at them. They position themselves in a place that can't be approached without him seeing you. And he's got his escape path, doesn't matter which way you're coming. A few bounds, and all you see is the horns and a little of his back, and he's gone. That's the way it used to be. You don't see that any more.

C: Raymond—

Y: That was real hunting. In them days, that was real hunting.

C: Raymond, you mentioned that the Shoshone only killed a male species, of, like the deer, and the groundhog, and the other animals they ate for food. Can you explain why they only killed the male?

Y: Yes. It's pretty simple, if you look at nature. The male, no matter what species, can breed a lot of females. And so if you kill a male, I mean, you'll be killing one. But if you kill a female, then you're killing the future production. No matter what it is, you're killing future production. So that was a law. You only take the males, and take one male, no matter what the species. Going to breed a whole bunch before winter comes up. And so, that's how come we kept the game kind of, you know, in balance. And—the other thing is, only take what you can use. Never waste any of it. Never leave a dead animal out there. Always, if you kill him, you've got to take it. Don't waste it. That was drummed into my head since—Frank and Annie Charley drummed that into my head, you know? No matter what is—if it's a plant, take only what you can use. Never waste it. Always leave some for the future. That's Shoshone law. I guess, going on from there, as I grew up, of course, the Korean War was going on. And they had the draft out. I managed to

stay out of it for a while, and my cousin was gone, he was in the service. And I told the draft board that my grandfolks needed help. I was the only young guy that could help them with the ranch and stuff, and so I got out of it for a while. But then, when my cousin came back, I got orders from the service. So they drafted me. And really, I didn't think I would pass the physical. I didn't think I was physically able to serve in the armed forces. And I went and took the physical in Salt Lake. I was surprised that I passed it. A difference, really, between the army. I was really surprised that I passed that physical. And so I came back, and they were talking to Dad, and I said, "I passed the physical. I really don't want to go in the Army. How about I go in the Air Force? I don't want to be knocked in a foxhole." So I had seen enough of World War II to see what that was. So I got up to there, and went to work over there. So, I went downtown here to the recruiter's office, and enlisted, and took another physical. Passed it, you know. When they were getting ready to swear us in, the guy that came in, the officer came in there told us, "Did anyone in here take the physical for the army? You better speak up, because if you don't, we're going to come get you." I said, "Well, let 'em come get me." I didn't say nothing. And they swore us in. You know, for six months I worried in the Air Force that they were going to come get me! [Laughter] But after six months went over, I thought, "Oh, they're not going to come after me." So I spent four years in the Air Force. Started out, after basic training, ended up in what they call "turret system mechanic." And what that meant was you was only an aerial gunner. We didn't know that at the time. You get to be a turret system mechanic, that's a step up to gunnery, air gunnery. And I ended up on B-29 as a gunner. And we were ready to ship out in Korea, and the Korean War ended. We were going over the next month. And they were ready to give us our last leave, and when

we come back, we were supposed to be the crew they'd end the war with. And then, of course, everybody was in extended peacetime over there, and we ended up over here, and I got an airplane, connected them for about a year in Topeka, Kansas. Then they started the air refueling of the B-47s. B-47 was a big bomber, arm of the United States through the Cold War, you know. And ended up taking training for air refueling, and that's what I did until I got out of the Air Force. Refuel the B-47s as they made their flight from the United States to wherever they were going, over in Europe someplace. And as I gather, they refueled them twice. B-47s never landed anywhere until they got to refuel them twice. And usually, they were coming out of California. And one time, we were up in Goose Bay, Canada, refueled them there, and then ended up flying over Iceland and then they were refueling over Iceland. And I don't know where they went from there. Maybe into, down in Turkey, or wherever, different places. And that was quite an experience. It was interesting to do that kind of stuff. And of course, they encourage you to stay in the extended service. And put kind of the fear into you, "When you get out, and you don't find a job, you're going to starve. Here, you've got it easy in certain ways, every year a vacations, and [__inaudible at 30:10__] better now." And they give you a talk about two, three weeks before you're discharged, try to tell you everything to re-enlist. "I could give you a bonus," you know, seven thousand dollar bonus. That's all **they did** out there. And my crew, my aircraft commander, he tried to get me to stay in. He had a special answer, because he was married to an Indian. He says, "[__inaudible at 39:37__]." So he had kind of like a special interest in me. And he tried to get me to stay, and I said, "No." And I said, "I've had enough of this." Military life didn't agree with me. And so, when I got ready to get out, and I said my goodbyes, he said, "You'll be back. And if you come back

in three months, you go back in the same grade. Don't lose any rank. And get your **boss in**. You'll be back." I said, "Don't hold your breath." [Laughter] And when I left the service, that was it. I never even dreamed of going back, I had had enough of that. And then, the gas pipelines were the main thing going on. In Canada, and over in what is now like Saudi Arabia and those places. They're building these oil pipelines. They had a deal, you could go to work for these companies for a thousand dollars a month. And at that time, in the [19]50s, that was a lot of money! And then, you had to sign up for eighteen months. Well, you come out of there, eighteen thousand dollars was a lot of money. "Well, I ought to do that," you know? So I took my G.I. Bill, and then [__inaudible at 40:49__]. But I never did make it. Never did make it in there. Come back here to Lee, ended up back in the cowboying and the ranching business, and kind of spent most of my life doing that. The welding and the trade come in handy. Repair your own stuff and things like that. So that can come in very handy. But I often wonder, had I not come back here, and gone on those jaunts, or signed up for those tours over there, where I'd have been today. Probably been totally different. Continuing on a little bit on the, what you would call the ways of the Shoshone, going way back. Actually, they were very religious people. The white people would call us 'savages' and 'heathens' and whatever else, but really, in our own way, in our own laws, we were very religious people. And nothing was done without prayer beforehand, and then prayer afterwards. No matter what was going to be done, there was always prayer involved in it. If you were going to go to war, there was a special ceremony—a sacred ceremony—that was performed. And then, if you come back from war, **everybody would sing to you, and then** [__inaudible at 42:13__]. This was where the war dance comes from, which you see now in the

powwows. It's become a show. But that was a sacred ceremony, to us. To us Shoshone. And I suppose to other Indian nations, too, but for sure, that's the way it was done here. If they went hunting, same thing: a prayer was offered, and safety was asked for during the hunt, that you would be successful in the hunt. And then, when you come back, you give thanks if you had a good hunt, you know. So, very religious people in our own way, from what we understand. I guess the reason the white people say that we were not religious, is because they didn't see any churches, coming across the land. In the Indian ways, it's the whole earth, the whole outdoors, is the church. There is not a part of it that isn't sacred. So you're *always* in our church. And that's a concept that I think many white people don't grasp, is you have to be in a building to be in a religious ceremony. But to the Shoshone, that was the church. And I want to make that known, because I think if you look at the history, that's not testified. The history that's taught in schools. That is not touched on, the sacredness that the Indians held *everything* in. Everything was sacred. Nothing was taken without thanksgiving, and like I said, as always, you left enough for the future. [__inaudible at 43:47 __], no matter what you were doing, no matter what you took. A little bit into the Shoshone bow. Old Billy Mose was a relation of my great-grandfather, **Elwood** Mose. And my grandfather told **told us when we was little guys**. He used to come down and visit my grandmother quite a bit. And he was probably maybe 104, 105, at that time. He was pretty spry. Had all his faculties. Hearing was good. Only thing, his eyesight was a little bit dim, you know? But he used tell me—he'd come down and visit my grandmother—he talked about a different part of his life. And as a kid, I found that interesting. I would sit and listen. I didn't take part in the conversation—I'd just sit and listen. All done in Shoshone, you know. Listen to what he had to say. And it

was amazing, as I think right now, he never repeated himself. Never told the same part of his life. Each time he came, he told a different part of his life. It was like he remembered it. But he always said—and one of the things that I found interesting was the way he described the Shoshone bow, and the way it was made. And actually, in today's terms, it's a laminated bow. And some way, they would straighten out the horn of a bighorn sheep. And that's curled, they would straighten that out. And in some way slice it, and it was the back for the bow, the wooden bow, made probably from a cedar. Cedar is that little juniper, you know, it's the main thing that they—but some way, they would join it in the middle. That's a lost art, now. But some way, they would join it in the middle. And if you think, when you bend something, they don't give the same, because you're pulling it different ways, and so on and so forth. So, some way, they still kept that power, this recall ability, that retains, even though it wouldn't bend the same. Somehow, I don't know how did that. And he talked about that that's the way the bow was made, and it was a very powerful bow. And he said, the fighting bow is short, about that long. He said the hunting bow was little longer, about like that. And they're both made the same way. And of course, arrows would be flint, flint, obsidian, or black flint or red flint, or the white chert, which is buried in the north of Battle Mountain. That was one of the favorite points. They call it *Tosawihi*. They call it "white knife." But even in trade items with another tribe, they traded that. Pretty prized piece of [__inaudible at 46:20__]. Now, the favorite wood that he talked about to make the arrow was the rosebush. The long shoot of the rosebush. Which if you've seen them, they grow very straight. And he said they would straighten them with heat, as soon as they scrape that bark off, and the spines and all that, then they would straighten them with heat. And the feather was the feather of a

sagehen. And I don't think they had three feathers; I think they probably had two feathers. And from hearing him talk about that, I think, from what little I gleaned, I think it only had two feathers. And now you see the white man add three feathers in some of them books. But I think the Indian arrows probably just had two. And they tied them on with sinew, deer sinew, the same as the arrowhead. Tied down with the deer sinew. And then they string the bow, also deer sinew. And it was a very prized item when they traded. The Indian nations traded before the coming of white men. They traded among themselves. And whatever each nation had, they would trade, and put their own value on, and actually barter portions of weapons for food, just a lot of trade. And it's said that the white chert that I mentioned north of Battle Mountain has been found as far east as St. Louis. So you can see how far that item had been traded. And he had a very interesting life. He talked about the first white man he saw coming on horseback, up there in Ruby Valley. And he said he thought the man was on fire, because smoke was coming off of him. And he went riding up there. He thought the man was on fire. Black beard, you know? And he come to find later on, the guy was smoking a pipe. But he'd never seen that before, he thought the man was on fire. [Laughter] And then, later on, he got to talking one time about the way that the Shoshones would go and, I guess you would maybe call it a "war party." But I don't think Shoshones looked at it that way. It was a way of going and proving yourself as a man, as a warrior. That **was what they meant to do with the** war party. Proving yourself as a warrior, as a man. And one story that he told, I remember it: they had gone east someplace. I don't remember what Indian nation they were in, but they wiped this village out. Killed everybody there. And of course, after that, when they had killed everybody, then comes time to divide the spoils. Well, horses

was a big thing. But that's what they usually nabbed, was horses. And they say that these two warriors, Shoshone warriors—the rule was that if you came up to a horse and hit him, that was yours. Undisputed, that's your horse. Nobody would challenge it. And so these two warriors came to the same horse at the same time, and neither one of them would relinquish his claim. And they argued for a little bit there, and then they actually backed off and were going to shoot each other over that horse! And the leader of the party, the leader of that group, ran up and shot the horse. And neither wins the argument. [Laughter] I remember him saying that just like he said it yesterday. And then he said those two guys, they looked at each other kind of ashamed, and probably very emotional. And that was interesting that that happened, that that warrior, that leader had that kind of a sense to gain way in the argument without doing anything else. And it did end the argument. There was no argument. [Laughter] He talked about hunting buffalo. And I thought that was interesting, from here. When I guess into probably eastern Wyoming, and western Nebraska, he talked about where there's no mountains. The amazing part to me was that the Wind River Shoshone—of course, at that time, they were not in Wind River, they were all over. Not been put on the reservation yet. And he called them people by name! I was amazed that from here, that he knew those people over there by name! That was an amazing thing that I remember. And then he described hunting the buffalo itself. And he said that this one gentleman was calling the names that the—and he said, “Your horse one day will be good here in this hunt.” He says, “I'll give you one of mine.” And he told him, he said, “Now, when we start this hunt here”—I guess they would run the buffalo, they would start the buffalo maybe to naturally stampeding. When they saw the horsemen there, the buffalo would run so that you could come alongside of it, and

when you shoot the arrow, you shoot the arrow into up here, because there's no bones in the pouch, and it ended up in the chest. "And when that happens, when you do that," he said, "when you do that, this horse will leave that buffalo and go to the next one. So you don't have to worry about it. And you just take care of your arrows and your shooting, and don't worry about the horse." And so he said they started things, got going up, and he was in the last, because everybody rode off but him. And he said that he come around this buck, well, he shot him with his arrow, and he says, "Sure enough, as soon as that horse heard the twang of that bow, ran right alongside the next one, just right here. Right here quick. Just had to lean over, and stick that arrow into his chest cavity. And of course, buffalo would run away, bleed to death, and soon as they got done with all of them, they're on the road. And then, all of the people from the village would all come out and help butcher it up. And of course, they dried it, and kept the hide for tanning and for blankets and that. That was a favorite winter item, was that buffalo robe. **Called buffalo robe in place.** I'm told now that the buffalo has 40,000 hairs per square inch. And that's how thick that hair is. You tan that, I guess it's one of the warmest things there is. And he talked about that. From Ruby Valley to that far away. It amazed me, the distances that they could cover, just on horseback and that. It was very interesting, I would say those are the two things that stand out. One other thing I'd like to mention is, in those days, the Shoshones had runners. That's how they kept village to village informed, throughout the whole nation. They had runners. And from my best estimation today, I would guess they would run 100 miles a day. From the distance they covered in one day. And the reason I come up with that figure is, my grandmother's brother, my maternal grandmother's brother, was one of those kind of people. And I don't know whether it was a gift, like the

Indian doctor, or whether they were trained from childhood to be able to do that, I don't know. But she talked one time—and she wasn't talking to me, she was talking to someone else, and I was sitting there listening—where they were camped around where Brigham City is now. They had been away hunting, on the way back on a wagon. And they might've had a saddle horse or two. The family was camped there, and the middle brother, I guess, got mad at her. And he took off for Ruby Valley on foot. Wanted to go home, and [__inaudible at 53:50__], and he left. And so they came back through, back through, come to Salt Lake, and probably about six, seven days later, you know, **as a team**. And he was there. He was there. So they asked the people, they says, "How long have you been here?" "Oh, we've been here about four days." So, during that time, I figure he did about a hundred miles a day. It took him about a day and a half. And that was it. And another story is, that he could go from Ruby Valley to what they call *Tonammutsa*, which is Battle Mountain, in one day. And you have to think, the way he went, all mountain ranges. All mountain ranges. And he'd do that in one day. So, those people were very gifted. Very gifted people. Like I said, I don't know how—again, this might have been a power that given to them, from the *Ape*, from God; or whether they were trained from childhood. I don't know. But Shoshones had those sort of people. And like I said, they probably run a hundred miles a day, or pretty close to that, maybe a few miles one way or the other. And again, that's something that we don't have today, because—I guess because of the influence of the white culture. We've got automobiles now. Maybe that, there's no more need for that. But that's some of the old things that I remember. I listened to the old folks talk. And I found that very interesting, to listen to the old guys talk. In my childhood, what I got to remember, maybe 1934, 1935, in

through there, what I can remember real good, the guys are alive at that time were probably born about 1850, 1860. They were about in their seventies and eighties at that time. And that kind of pre-white settlement in this part of the country, pre-white settlement. And I don't remember *all* the things I used to hear. Only some of the main things I used to hear about that. And unfortunately, we didn't have no modern devices like today to be able to record that, because that would have been priceless to be able to record that part of our culture and our history, the sacred part being talked about. It's unfortunate.

[End of recording]