John Gowan / 1

Oct. 30, 1980

- 1920, ranched - kept careful books, saw no future in it.
  Hel J-R, forest ranger exams
- passed written exams (1918, Mont St C grad) in old fed bldg.
- "wait patiently"; spring of '21, got word to report main office, Helena Nat Forest
- Radersburg - Crow Creek Dist; bumped by seniority, put on Benton Gulch dist on east side of Big Belts with
- April or May, went on horse, reported to ranger Ray Kingsley (who had bumped up to R'burg). K & K & around dist, introd him; with or 10 days, K "gave me his final blessing" & left.
- 1st of regs "24 thinks you had to get a gd understdg of"
- ranger sta: 2-story frame bldg, 1½ mi from Watson ranch
- yr-round

Benton Gulch was: Shoestring: Baldy m. to Rock Creek, w. of Dry R (& inc. Dry Range) over

- Dry TR: 4 springs; check bld'd c NP land grant

Helena Nat'l Forest - forest vis' map

Gowan/2

- winter "we like bein' to · N Pole". Snow 5-6' some yrs, often 2'.
- Watson post office, 3 times/wk delivery Star Rte; mail carrier and deliver groceries to front gate. Got groceries at WSS; in winter, drove · front bob of sled – 2-day and trip; some winters, snowshoe from 77 Logan c mail
  - Root ~~c~~ cellar for canned gds, spuds, & vegetables, & flour (learned this in · Basin)
  - paid for own ld; expens acct when away
  - ranchers wd-' take pay; "tried to tell 'em · Uncle ~~would~~ wd pay for it"
  - $1440/yr salary: provdid c tools, but furnish own horse & saddle (spare horse, for · inspectors from Hd office)
    govt

6 may/5

- on. n. end, take pack horse - most of a week trip
- 40'-50' lariat, tied into halter: pack h 8-10' behind saddle
- picket 1 horse, other one wd stay:
  - snub lariat and saddl horn
  "homing instinct" & you'd have to picket
- picket rope: cut a stake of green wd so it wd break, or use a short log as drag
- Brownie & Paint: 1st 2 horses
- most horses wd ride or pack
- (9 mules & bell mare on pirepgtty pack strings)
- Sawbuck pack saddle; alpines or aparajo side packs
  - top pack, c diamond hitch across - . diamond exactly on top
  - bedroll across . sawbuck; also "teepee tent" -
    Throw rope over tree limb, tie into loop or ring at peak 1 tent.

Gman/4

- gd weather, sleep in open, heavy coat for pillow
- carried 30-30 1/2 magazine (held 3 cartridges; mag came out to · forestock; longer barrel, by 4-6", than carbine; 1894 model
- .45 Colt Army auto in shoulder holster
- wore 4-peaked ranger hat; later, creased in middle & dented on sides
- wore badge, "US Forest Svce"; pine tree in middle. Ranger wore on left hand pocket
- ~~it~~ wore forest boots, hi topped "sporting type" (to just below knee)
  - had riding boots on hand, when rndg up stock
- on fire duty, "White loggers" boots c corks, heavy built (had to have your own) - necessity ("had to be very particular abt that") on fire crew

Guard's

- pants: heavy duck pants
- later: forest green uniform regrd
  - oyster-gray shirt

Tasks:
- inspect ranges;
- watch for trespass stock
- " " insect infestns & timber diseases (lodgepole & D. fir &; aspen)

cattle & sheep o eql amts then: Manger, Lingshire, Watson, Ed Teagle, Bons Eile
Cat 3mo time, had to move camp once a wk or so)
- many herders were Romanians
- cattle were turned loose, checked on occ'ly
- ranchers "always willing to grab a little extra grass"

G mar/6

- used salt to handle range utilizn: placed away from water - (if put in same place, cattle wd stay ten of average age)
  - loose salt in wdn troughs; or block salt; put salt on rocky ridge, wh there'd be less trampling.
  - "damn cattle were fond of/ walkin' betn salt & water" was orignl rancher (permittee) view; "missionary" work to convert them that range was utilzd better other way; ranchers originly used to turning cattle loose.
- G on B Gulch intermtly 10 yrs. R resigned after 3 yrs to take up a grazing homstd of 640 a. "in 1 of my weaker moments" & became summer employee. When G went back, ditts consold, & he worked out of Tensed office. Laid off for 4 yrs during Depn, worked for Dry Creek Stock Ass'n.

Gmar/7

— USFS reqd permittee to have a rider to tend · cattle; G's herd'g lower part of B is Belts; wo reds c · ass'n when pltns were on Grassy; allotmts rode by side.

- Ass'n: Pete Doig wos; T+d ranchers, Miller & Port & Chris Bliler, John Walters — 8-12 ranchers altogether. (A. D. Mitchell had 400 cattle not on forest, but in fenced pasture on J. C. Stewart) (B ranch'd boys not ass'n members, but G kept track of the cattle)

— $150/mo as · ass'n rider (Dg Ck also had ass'n rider)
— ranchers paid mo'ly assessm't to support rider, p'haps $2.50 – $3/mo per head of cattle

Cruan/8

- as asst ranger, also: ~~deputy~~

-per-diem (dye-em) forest gd
. deputy st game warden
- " " fire "
- " " stock inspector

("more titles than Carnegie" - "enuf to make a man stoop-shouldered")

- 1935, back to FS
- asst ranger on Trnd Dist: 16 Mile Ck, n. to Canyon Ferry, pens all. Elkhorn Mtns w. of Trnd)
- worked as dispatcher, kpg track of Trail crews, by shortwave radio

Turner/9

- short-wave cd-1 reach. ("dead area") Head of Rock Ck: trail crews had to come out to Boss Gile ranch, to Duck Ck, for contact
- alternate ("mate") ranger: same duties as ~~asst~~ dist ranger, until Oct '42.
- in Tnd, picked up Pl Harbor news on radio
- lived in Tnd
- horse racks on 3/4 ton, 4-whl dr. trucks then: racks of pipe bracing & wood, back up to a cutbank to unload; carry 1 horse, "2 in a pinch" — gov't horses by then (cavalry standard)

Gman/10

— ssb wave: used voice instd ~~—~~ of morse code — "in a pinch"
& cd use code. "pretty gd range — just /or. hell of it, & if get on the at night & pick up steamers o/l."

— radio size of TV set; had dials; Pac Coast
— c storage batteries on-o/l; vol; freq'cy
— field crews wd carry — call letters for crews & fire sitns,
on. FS freq'cy; usually
3-letter combos

G man/11

– G was on B'rt – Selway fires. Friday Pass fire, 4 days to get in, 250 men & pack strings, cooks; unloaded at Powell Rgr Stn; at hd of Lochsa R.; strung rope across it, & everybody waded hanging onto rope, current wd have take us feet. until snow came.

G on no fire 6 wks, fire wd run b'c slag rock coated c needles, "crawl right along, then it wd surface & crown & take right off again."

"That was 17 most disgusting." Lightin'g set off 34 fires.

Much of crew taken off fit trains to Missla – "drafted" if they had ½ way decent clothes & shoes – "you're called for fire duty."

G man/12

– blot in Pac pumpers: suction pump & screened hose, push water up hill some 100s of ft. Evenrude boosters, pushg it on up mtn via intermdte canvas tanks & siege of bathtub (wood frame, like tub, covered & canvas). Had ~1000 men, 2-3 mile camps. Got it contained on a patrol basis, 150 or so men, it finally ringed & then snowed 6" 1 — that night sleeping bags "like portable bathtubs" by morn, came out in 1-day forced march to Powell Stn.

G – resigned for FS in '44, to be ~~in "Sec Srvc" (not really)~~ a security agent

Gman/13

— wore bat wing chaps he made himself: got elk tanned leather, sewed them onto "shotgun" chaps (pulled on like pants); ~~of~~ cut open · ~~at~~ shtguns, laced ~~sewed~~ on elk "wings" c rawhide laces to · thigh "; ~~elk~~ elk light buff colors; 4 wings, c snaps, along inside of leg

(Jake Mitchell still has these chaps)

"take · gospel to him"

"if you hung a shirt on a sagebrush, he'd ride around it in circles all damn day."

FHS from Eng Crk "Forest Service" filecd category

Clyde ~~Fixxx~~ Fickes memoir--DETAILS

7--fishing: cut 10-12 ft willow, unwind fishline would around your hat band (royal coachman already tied on), and catch grasshoppers

10--going horseback thru 5-wire fence: pull staples on 2 posts, let wires down, throw coat over the wires, lead horse thru, put wires back in place.

A.O. Waha memoir

28--thick canned milk gravy

from Eng Crk "Forest Service" filed category
UMont--Fickes pics

#74-31--Fickes on horseback, 1908-9:

--pyramid hat, crimped 4 ways to a peak

--vest, with badge aligned with 3d shirt button (on left side)

--gloves with gauntlets almost halfway up arms

#74-27--Fickes and Carl Willis packing shakes nr Kalispell, 1908-9

--F. wears high-water work pants, cuffs at tops of shoes, well above ankles; W. has overall cuffs tucked into top of high-lace boots. Possible use: friction between 2 over differing styles of pantlegs.

Dec. 12-82

Hi, Joan.

Long time no seeum you. No heardum from you. Hope all is going well with you.

Know you are a very busy man but drop me a few lines and let me know how the world is treating you and how you are treating the world.

Have a very Merry X mas and Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Your old Buddy,

John Grear





July 24-80

Dear Ivan,

Very pleased to get your letter and am enclosing a lot of stuff from memory which I hope will help you in your research.

I have quite a bit of spare time and being naturally full of Bull like to reminisce about old times.

So old St Helens blew her top again. We did not get any souvenirs from her this time. I hate to be a crape hanger and say this but she may do this over and over for years to come. We hope not but Hood and some of the other peaks in the Cascades may follow her

example. Only time will tell. Gelogically speaking the Cascade Range is much younger than the Rockies and some of the other Mountain Ranges which have had their day at that sort of thing.

This old ball of dirt we call earth may not be the stable speed ship we are inclined to believe it is. Oh well why worry it is all part of a life time Keep producing the Good Books and to hell with the rest.

May your name rest in the Hall of Literary Fame

Best wish to both of you

John Gruar

To be a God Forest Ranger.
You must be all of the following;
Lover of Nature and Outdoor life.
Fearless of all things both Great
and Small. Be a Botinist, Zobligist
or ~~ornitholigst~~ and Geoligist.
Know Animal Husbandry and
Agriculture and Dendorology also an
Entimoligist.
It helps to be a detective and
diplomat; You must know the
laws of the U.S. and the States
~~where~~ in which You are Working.
The large Book of Rules issued to
you by the Forest Service.
You also are a Deputy Game
Warden and State Fire Marshall.
Also you are expected to be a Lawyer,
arbitrator to disputes among the
permitees on your District, Father
confessor to poor lost Souls, Advisor
on how to raise children. Health

over

and Sanatation adviser, Give the Housewives a clue to the latest Paris Fashons and Current Gossip, Along with your knowledge of First Aid. Added to the foregoing you had to be a good camp Cook and Housekeper Mechanical and Civil Engineer and most any other occupation to be found in the dictionary, Besides trying to act like a Humanbeing and Keep your SANITY through it all So the Squirrels would Not be Chasing after you when you went out in the timber. All the above is my recolections of what a Forest Rangers job consisted of half a centuary ago, Not to Mention all the forest fires you had to contend with in Summer. Now things are a bit more modern and Streamlined and many more men who are specialists are employed to do the work handled by one God forsaken Ranger in those days

As to your desire for more knowledge about running Sheep on the Forest I could get a tape recorder and talk into it for half a day on that subject and still not cover it fully.

In the beginning the Mountain ranges of Montana were covered by lush bunchgrass grass used only by deer and elk. In the eighties and Nineties of the last Centuary many Sheep were brought into Montana mostly by large Companys to feast on this bounty of Natural. At that time log Corrals were built and in some cases Cabins. The sheep were corraled every night to protect them from Coyotes & Wolves. When an area had been well grazed they were moved to a new location. This went on until the National Forests were created in 1905. Then they took charge of the Grazing of

National Forest lands and came up with many does and donts to be followed by the permittees as the users of Forest lands were called. Sheep, Cattle, and horses were all grazed under permit and were alloted certain grazing area's to supply their needs for grazing a certain amount of the designated kind of livestock. It goes without saying that there was much weeping and wailing and nashing of teeth among the Stockmen who had enjoyed free wheeling and do as you damn well pleased for all those former years. They now had to pay grazing fees and listen to the advice of strange Government employs who were just about as popular with the old Westerners as one would be wearing a General Sherman button at a Georgia Picnic. As new faces came into the picture everyone became more reconciled to the change and

as Rangers carried the Gospel into the back country and people saw they did not have Thorns & hoofs things became tranquil. I could go on and on but before you get thru reading and interpreting this hen scratching I call writing you will likely be near the point of exaustion.

To get back to your questions will say you already have a good idea from your father about what it is all about. To refresh your memory will say that The Sheepwagon was mostly a supply center and refuge in very Stormy weather. According to Regulations the sheep were supposed to be bedded in a new place each night, preferably on high barren ground so that their body waste would help fertilize it There their guardian the herder pitched his tepee. The idea

was to graze the sheep much as the wild animals graze their habatat and not trample and break up the natural sod as would happen if they were driven to the same camping ground every night. A large band of sheep are rather destructive to to native sod if driven en masse over it to the same spot every day for a period of time. All domestic animals are alloted a certain territory with well marked boundries, for a certain number of days for a certain number of Animals. Each grazing unit is carefully gone over by well trained men with at least 4 years of College behind them and many years of experience in the field. And the carrying capacity of each unit is decided by them for an average year in that particular area as sheep days or Cow days during a fixed Season of so many Months or days. The subject is so great that I would have to talk with you to explain it.

When I was stationed as District Ranger at the Watson, Benton Gulch ranger Station I had a District 50 miles in length known as the Smith River district of the Helena Forest. They called it the shoestring district being only 8 or Ten miles wide. Started my Forest Career there in 1921 in April of that year. Occasionaly I took a pack-horse along if I intended to check on high mountain country otherwise I accepted the hospitality of the natives and paid them for the accomadation if they would accept it which few of them did.
When I used a pack horse just carried a light camping outfit and fire tools during fire season. Had a saddle horse named Bronnie and another named Dan both would either ride or pack. Carried a 30-30 winchester sporting model rifle in saddle scabbard to take care of predatory animals and a 38 caliber

S. & W police positive pistol in a shoulder holster part of the time depending on where I was traveling as two Rangers before me had been scared out by some of the natives who had the idea they were hard men. I was forced to tell two of them that such notions did not contribute to a long life span after which statement we became very good friends. They had heard some place that I was one of the 10 best shots in Montana at that time and had no desire to find out if that statment was true. So we lived happily ever after.

Would have to refer you to a Forest Servic manual to tell what all my duties were. Space would not permit it here. Under the new ~~new~~ type of Forest adminsteration the Helena Forest has been consolidated into 3 large Ranger districts in place of the old orignal 8 adminstered by 8 district Rangers. The three Districts Have some

57 different Varieties of experts and near experts. In fact they are as plentiful as Fiddlers in Hell.

Just got back last Saturday night from a large Dedication Ceremony of the Removal depot at Nine mile Ranger Station West of Missoula. It is to be a National Historical Site. Had a special invitation to it as an old Forest Service Retiree was one of the oldest survivors of the old order present and received V. I. P. treatment.

I left the Forest in Oct. 1942. Was called into Special Security Services in world war two and ended up in Railrod Transportion Service. after covering a great lot of Country and having a few hair raising encounters with enemy Agents. Retired from service at Age 67 in Apr. 1965 at Pasco, Wash and like an old horse

came back to my old home range to die. Guess the Good Lord does not need me yet as I still keep perking along in good health yet cheering the old people along here at the Masonic Home. Of course I am only a kid yet compared to many of them. Just a mere 82 years.

Well guess I will quit spreading the Bull and get ready for bed.

Hope you can read at least half of this before giving up in despair.

Will be delighted to see you any time you can come this way. Will even feed you and give you a nights lodging if you care to stay.

Be glad to hear from you any time. If I can furnish you any more old stuff will be glad to try.

Work for the night is coming Work thru the Morning hours.

May the Blessings of God attend you and yours always.

Sincerely
John

P.S. This is not checked over so excuse spelling and mistakes - John

August 7, '80

Dear John--

Thanks enormously for your letter about forest rangering. There's much good material in it, of just the sort I need to accumulate toward an eventual book.

I'm going to try to get Helena in late October, when I'll be making a trip to ~~xxxxxxx~~ Billings. I'll be traveling to Billings on somebody else's money but anywhere else in Montana on my own, so that slows me down a bit, but I'll definitely try show up, with a tape recorder.

There's some details I could use about what people ate in sheep camps, and at the places where somebody would offer you a meal, and when you had to fix your own grub in the high country. If you get a chance, I'd appreciate whatever lines you can put down about this:

*slab of bacon? would you carry any eggs? any bread or biscuits?

--what kind of food you carried on the pack horse, in case you had *to camp. Any canned goods, and if so, what kind--pork and beans, tomatoes, peaches? (Those are some of the staples I seem to remember, but am kind of hazy.) Did you carry those little cans of condensed milk for your coffee--Sego, were they?--and was that usually what was on hand at the sheepwagons and ranches in the Thirties and just after World War Two? Also, what did you do about coffee: carry a pot, or just a boiling can?

--I imagine the sheepwagon grub ranged from pretty fair to pretty awful. Can you remember any particularly good (or bad) cooks among the herders, and what they specialized in? Do I remember that once in a great while there's be a herder who even would bake a little? I seem to remember that a lot of them would have a pot of mulligan on the stove, which they'd eat from several days in a row: does that square with your experience?

My wife and I are just back from Alaska--Sitka and Juneau, mostly--and had half a sunny day out of nearly two weeks. Had a good trip even so, and got some good research for the novel I'm writing now. Hope all is continuing well with you. The dedication ceremony at Nine Mile must have been a real shindig.

all the best

Helena, Mt.
Masonic Home

July 13, 1980

Dear Ivan,

It is 5:00 A.M on a quiet Sunday Morning and I just woke up a short time ago inspired with the idea by writing you which I have intended to do for some time. And Congratulate you on your literary masterpiece "This House of Sky" which I had the pleasure of ~~Reading~~ reading a short time ago. It took me back to my younger days and caused me to Review part of my journey thru life which I was in close contact with a great many of your "Kin Folks" as they would say down South. Have traveled far and been in many lands and Climes during my long

busy and adventerous life, But still have had a soft place in my heart for the people of my childhood and Youth.

Like they say of an old horse I have come back to my old Home range to die. This event may be some time in the future yet But one never knows when the final call will be given you to make "that last run" as they say on the railroad where I spent many years of my life. Will repeat a quotation I memorized.

"I have traveled the woods in the Summer and over again in the Fall and now that life's journey is ending will rest and know the end of it all" forget the author of the above, but it impressed me.

Made a trip to Townsend and W. S. Springs the last days of June, on both business and pleasure. Visited the resting places of many of those who have crossed the river of "No Return". Those of your Beloved Father, Mother and Grand Mother as well as those of my Father, Mother and Grand Parents, My Dear wife and other relatives and Friends too numerous to mention. Saw in the news papers where you had made a trip thru Montana not too long ago. Any time you are that this way again would enjoy seeing you if you can spare the time. I am living at the Masonic Home just eight miles North of the city of Helena. It is really a Haven of rest

for those who have labored
in the Quarries of Masonary.
This I will have done for
60 years at the end of 1980.
I hear over the grapevine that
you are about to come forth with
another BOOK which will even
surpass ~~This~~ House of Sky.
You may equal it but don't
tell me you can surpass it.
The only one of your "Kin Folks"
I was lucky enough to have
a visit with on my recent
trip was your Cousin Walter Doig
at Tounsend.

If I ever can clue you in
on any information of the old
days just write and ask me
& come over.

Am keeping track of your pet
Volcano, Mt. St Helens.

Believe it or not I have hunted
deer & Elk around the slopes of
the old Girl years ago. see other side

My Rugged Scotch disposition will not let me use over four sheets of paper to a letter so am using both sides of this one.
Drop me a line any time you have a minute to spare which is likely not often.
Hope you can read and dischipher these hen tracks I call writing.
Best regards to Both you and your wife.
May the blessings of God attend you always

Sincerly,

John Gruar
2010 Masonic Home Rd.
Helena Montana
59601

P. S. spelling and mistakes not checked.

17021 10th Ave. NW
Seattle, WA 98177
July 17, 1980

Dear John--

I was very pleased to get your letter, and gratified to hear that you liked House of Sky. It means much to me that people who lived through what I wrote about, such as Cliff Shearer and Jake and Eleanor Mast and you, have appreciated the book.

Mt. St. Helens' ash turned my wife and me back at Bozeman during that Montana trip of ours you read about, or you likely would have seen us. We'd intended to visit at both Townsend and Helena, then go north and home through Glacier. Instead, we pulled south for Boise, to get around the ash fallout. I got to see Walter Doig for just a few minutes when we were coming to Montana, on our way in a hell of a hurry to White Sulphur and Great Falls.

It's a good coincidence that you wrote when you did. Recently I heard from a guy about my age whose father was a ranger,--Roemer, I think the name was, and I believe he was around Ennis--suggesting I write something more about running sheep on the Forest Service. It would have to be fiction, as I put about all my own memories into House of Sky, but it's a possibility. If you would, John, I'd be happy to have you write me any details on some of these questions:

--When you used to see my dad and mother when they summered on Grassy, about how much territory (in sections, or riding miles, or whatever) did you cover? Also, do you remember how many outfits were running sheep in your district, and how many bands of sheep that amounted to? What kind of schedule did you keep, in going around to look over the camps: that is, how often did you have to get to each one? And were you to see that they weren't overgrazing the country, or what, as you went around?

--My memory is that my folks had a sheepwagon and teepeed out from it, on a schedule something like a night or two a week in the wagon, teepees the other nights. Does that sound right to you, and is that way everybody did it?

--I'm interested in what you had with you as you rode around: did you use a packhorse as well as saddlehorse, and if so, what all did you carry on him? What kind of rifle or other gun did you have? What was your usual breakfast, lunch, and supper? Did you have to be in a uniform, or did you dress as you liked? Did you carry the "use" book I've read about rangers having, and was it really any use?

--Also would be glad for any sheepherders' names you recall; names of horses you rode, too.

In October, I may get to Helena, but don't know for sure; I'll be in Billings on business, and don't know how much more travel I can fit in. I'll hope to come over, but if you feel like jotting down anything about the above questions I'd be glad to have it, at your leisure. I'm truly glad you wrote; I remember both our visit in Townsend and the one at the Doig family reunion with pleasure.

all best wishes, John.

Ivan Doig

Oct. 13, '80

Dear John--

Just a few lines, to work out how we're going to get together on Oct. 30. Thanks for the invitation, but I'm going to stay in town, as I have no idea when I'll be pulling in from Great Falls. How about if I coms out by about 8 that morning? That should give us a couple of hours of talk before I have to be at the Readers Roost, by about 10:15. Sound all right to you? Looking forward to it.

All the best

Ivan

p.s. I could use some directions how to get out there, and how to find you.

Helena Mt.
Oct. 3, 80

Dear Ivan,

Here time is slipping past and should have answered your always welcome letter sooner but guess I just don't have as much ambition as I had a half century ago. Am looking forward to seeing you this month. Unless you have other plans would be very pleased to have you stay here overnight when you come to Helena. Have nice quarters here to accomidate both you and your wife if she is with you. Just let me know if you would care to do this. Otherwise we will plan to meet here at the Home at whatever time you can suggest. The Readers Roost you mention must be the book Store in the Capital Shopping Center on the East side of Town. I pass it quite often and will likely be

in that vacinity this afternoon. It is a very nice place and has a lot of business. Whatever you suggest for a meeting will work out fine for me. We usually get in gear around here about 9 A.M.

To answer your question of who was my boss in my early days of Forest Ranger. He was Helena National Forest Supervisor, Arthur H. Abbott with headquarters in Helena. He usually made one or two inspection trips a year to each Ranger District. But we were in continual contact with the Helena Headquarters by telephone and mail even back in those days. When we were at our headquarters station. They had a network of Forest Service telephone lines to all District Ranger stations and part of our job was to keep them in repair all the time.

They were single wire grounded circuit lines and really worked good most of the time. We often talked to each other over them for both business and pleasure. A number of the most important ranches in each District were also connected to them. So you had to be careful what you said on them as you often had listeners to your conversations. Before I left the Service in 1942 radio had taken over much of the communication. Of course fire had priority and still does have first place in Forest activities.

Here I am prattling along and this will likely miss the morning mail but if it does you will still get it the first of the week.

Will always be glad to get

you have any information about the Forest and outdoors you wish to ask as I have a lot of stuff stored up in my old memory and before long it may cease to function as clear as it does now.

Hope to hear from you soon about your plans and do look forward to seeing you soon.

The following is a little verse I memorized about life.

The clock of life is wound but once
And no man has the power to tell
just when the hands will stop
At late or early hour.
Now is the only time we own.
Live, love and toil with a will.
Have no faith in Tomorrow.
For then the clock may be Still.

above Taken from the Scottish Rite magazine

Hoping to see you soon.

Sincerely

John

yourself too hard. Take time to relax and enjoy things as you go along and you will live to a ripe old age. The Scotch are a hardy race of people as I know from my own experience. If I had not been a bit rugged, would not be on hand to write this now. Hope this finds you in the best of health and look forward to seeing you this Fall.

Best regards to you both from one of the old Wall Mountain clan. May you Dae be full of pride, wae dirk and Claymore by your side. Can't remember what your clan tartan is but mine is The MacGregor.

Sincerely,
John

and will be a way of turning grain into a more profitable product easier to market, with a constant demand.

Hope you will find it will be possible for you to drop past and say, Hello! some time this Fall. Any time I can give you information about the Early part of the Century will be glad to do so. My memory seems to be quite good yet about the past even if I can't remember what I had for breakfast this morning. What part of the Country is your present book covering? Is this your third or fourth one you are now on?

Take the advice of an old man, "Who has seen many writers pass as the indians say" and don't drive

P. S. Just overlook mistakes and spelling shall not Check this over.

I am sure he could give you much more information about the Forest than I ever could. If you contact him just tell him John Grear recomended him as a source of information about the National Forests. I keep in touch with him by letter now and then. Will be glad to tell you all I can about the good old days as far as my memory will let me.

Have to heard lately just how your cousins are progressing with their Gasahol plant at Rieglin. I think myself it is a very sound idea and will be one of the main sources of fuel in time. They will be listed as pioneers in the industry. Alchahol has many uses in the world of today

Three Large Districts, Helena Townsend and Lincoln.

Among the men who worked on the Helena in the beginning were Supervisors; Moore, Selby, who Selby Lake was named for. Bob Stuart and many more who I dont Recall, As Rangers Ben Thompson, Dave Mayott, O. C. Braden, Adolph Bucker and heaven knows how many more I have forgotten.

There is a man in Spokane, Retired now, who I worked with for several years on the Forest. His Name is Elmer E. Iver and he worked up to be public relations officer for the Forest in Region 1, with headquarters in Spokane. His address now is Elmer E. Iver, E. 2814 Mt. Vernon Ct. Spokane, Wash. 99203.

Jan 15th 81

Dear Ivan,

This will explain why you did not get a Xmas card from me. On the night of Dec. 2 was taken to St Peters hospital and after a month there and four major operations ~~operations~~ was able to return Home Jan 3.
Really had a narrow escape from the Grim Reaper. However I am gaining every day now and will soon be my old self again.
Now will have time to finish your new book. If I neglected to thank you for it will do so now like it very much. So much has taken place in the last five weeks I am hard pressed to remember what I have done

over

and what I have overlooked.
Will look forward to seeing you
next Summer. God willing I will
be on hand to greet you.
A Month ago I would have
hesitated to make such a statement.
We are having a very mild dry
winter here. Reminds me of 1919
when the mildest winter I ever
saw in Montana followed by the
dryest Summer on record.

Suppose you are busy writing
another book by Now. More
Power to you. Is your next
one going to be about the Forest
Country.

Will be glad to hear from
you any time you can spare a moment.
If I can answer any Questions
for you will be glad to do so

Sincerly John

Nov. 17-80.

Dear Ivan,

Received your Book "Winter Brothers" last Friday, Nothing could have pleased me more, Thanks a million for it. As it covers regions that I am fairly well familiar with that makes it all the more precious to me.
The Name "Gilchrist" in the James Gilchrist Swan, called to my memory that your Great Aunt Mrs D. L. Doig, had the maiden name of Mary Gilchrist so back in the family tree they might have originated from the same source. Also in Northern Alberta there is a Doig river that must have been named for some branch of your family tree. Also learned from the book that you are a Ph. D. Since Philosophy and Physocology are two subjects I am much intrested in that is good news to me. Wonder if I spelled either of the above right?

over

To save space and weight my good Scotch disposition makes me use both sides of the paper.

Am enclosing a Forest Service News bullatin which I receive regulary. Might be a thing or two in it of intrest to you. Between it and the bullatin I get of the National transportation system each month I keep fairly well informed about the two.

We have been having quite a few social events here at the Hand lately which have taken up much of my reading time lately but when the Holiday season is past will turn into a book worm again.

Best regards to you and your wife and wish you a happy and prosperous long life.

Glad to hear from you any time

Sincerely,
John T Gorman

Nov. 5, -80

Dear Ivan,

Received your card last week and was glad to hear you had arrived home safely and had a good and successful trip.

Glad to hear I could be of help to you any time I can help you on past western history just call on me and I will do my best to tell you what I remember of the old days.

Don't remember whether I impressed upon you that Fire supression and fire prevention was and still is the number one priority in the duties of a Forest Ranger among his many others.

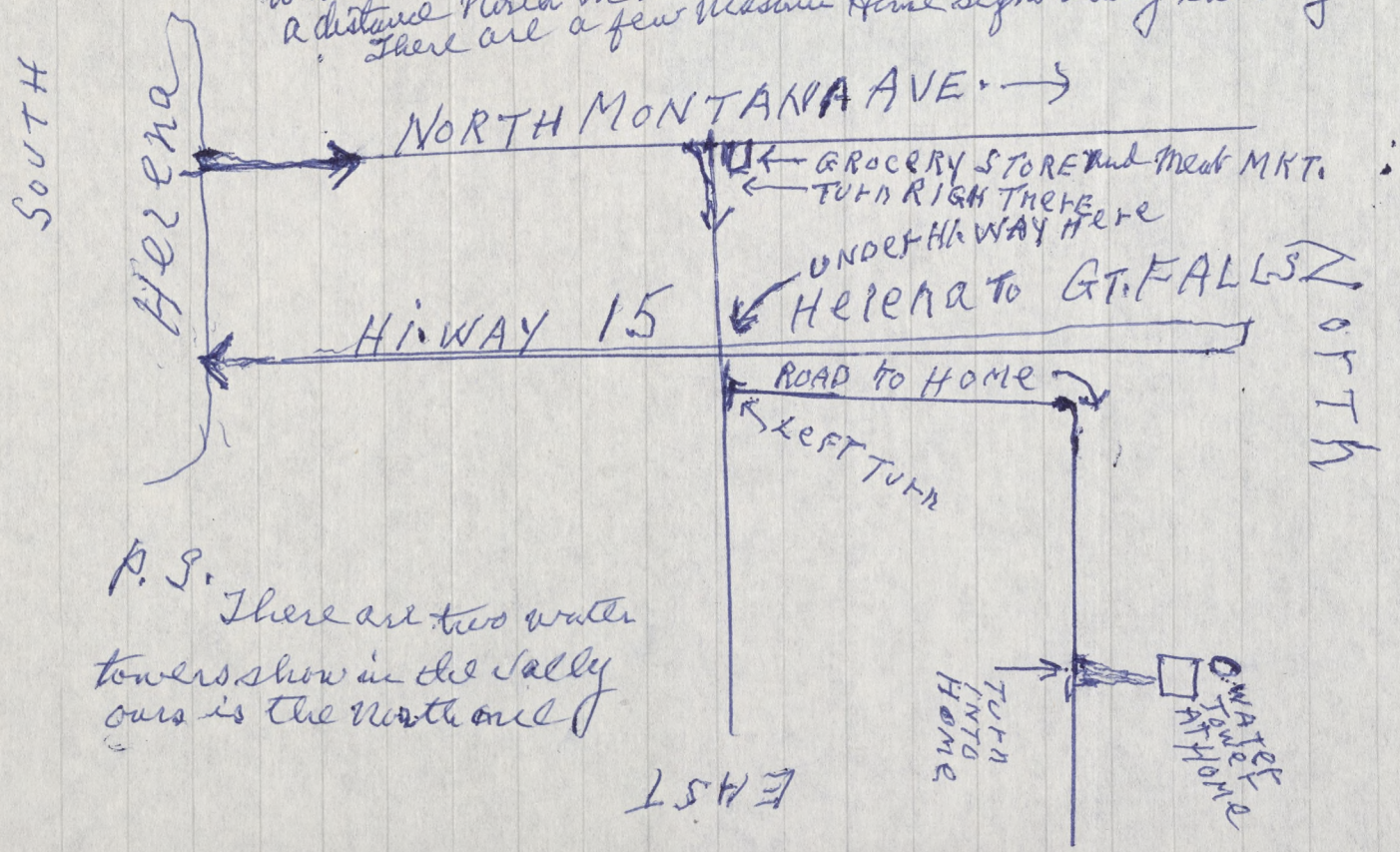
Will be delighted to have you present me with a copy of your new book, Nothing could please me more.

Our weather continues to be mild and pleasant here. Always glad to hear from you.

Best of luck in all your ventures, John.

WEST

Here is a Rough map of how to get to the Home which lies about 5 miles North east of Helena. You go quite a distance North on Montana Ave. to the right turn shown on map. There are a few Masonic Home signs along the way.



P. S. There are two water towers show in the Rally ours is the North one

10-17-80

Dear Ivan,

your letter of 10-13-80 arrived today and glad to hear from you. Will look forward to seeing you on Oct. 30. or whenever you can get here if anything should unexpected changed your plans. yes 8 in the morning will be fine or if you get here any earlier we might have a bite of breakfast together as we eat at 8. Whatever time you get here I will be available as I start the day about 6. A.M. You will have no trouble finding me. Just ask for John and some one will be looking for me. I seem to have become a sort of fixture around here. Am enclosing a rough map of how to get here and I do mean ROUGH, for one supposed to be trained in map making. Be seeing you have a good trip.

Sincerely
John

P.S. My reason for renting you rig, Montana Ave. is there are no exits handy to here from Hi way 15. J.B.

Sept 15 - 81

Dear Ivan,

Received your letter with your Aunt Anna's address and wrote to her but have not heard from her yet. We have not seen each other for many years but I remember her well. We danced together many times in the days of our youth. Will number this as one of the nicest Falls I ever saw in Montana. Here it is the middle of September and no frost yet, with the days very warm and pleasant. Could almost count the number of Falls like this I have seen in Montana on the fingers of one hand. What the winter may be remains to be seen. One who has lived many years in Montana never tries to

predict the weather before hand. If it continues like this big game hunting will be rather poor. A deer or elk can hear you a mile away, when the woods are dry. Saw where some one from Nevada had killed a bull elk with a royal head, East of W. S. Springs with a bow and arrow as the bow season is now open. I do not approve of bow hunting as too much game is wounded by arrows and crawls off to suffer and die. The Indians were smart enough to adopt fire arms for hunting, when they were made available to them.

Have kept busy with the garden here all summer. Rather liked it as a way to pass my spare time and contribute to the menue with fresh

vegetables which are highly beneficial to the diet of elderly people.

A few days ago I made a list of names of some of the early day Forest Service members From the time it was created in 1906 until I severed my relations with it in 1942. With my perfect filing system I put it away carefully until until I would write you. Now true to form I doubt if either God or man could find it now. Your last letter went with it. The cleaning girls have a habit of rearranging my desk now and then, which I cuss them out about, but to no avail. Woman like they just have to rearrange things now and then. Any rate I can recall some of them

From memory, Major Kelly I remember well but the National Forest had been in existance a long time before he appeared on the scene. I know the men who worked on the Helena Forest best of all. Having started work with them in 1921 as a District Ranger, on the Smith River District. At that time, Arthur Abbott was supervisor, Guy Brandenburg was his deputy. Earl Welch was Ranger on Deep creek Ray Kingsley at Radersburg. Mel Meister at Ellston Bert Goodman at Duck Creek Forget who had Canyon Ferry, Nelson and Lincoln. There were eight Ranger districts then I think McClellen was the Eighth and Freeman Marlenee had that. Now it is all consolidated into three

4 March '82

Dear John--

Maybe it's getting to be spring; anyway, I'm beginning to come out from under the Alaskan novel I've been working on the last year and a half, and will start in again gathering material for the next Montana book I want to write.

I hope to make it to Helena by the end of July, earlier if I can, and will be in touch then. But I came up with a couple of questions I ought to ask before then, so I can get going on this book a bit.

The first one is about the day book, or daily diary, which rangers maintained. At least I've read that all rangers were supposed to do so, and I thought I'd better check and see if that was the case: did you keep a diary or notebook of what you did every day? If so, what use was ever made of it--did you have to write monthly reports from it or anything like that?

The other topic is pack horses and pack strings. I'd be glad to have anything you can remember about them--any particular stories about ornery horses, any details about how things had to be packed (how were canned goods handled, for instance; just put in a pack, or did they have to be positioned some certain way?), anything about how you kept the horses from wandering off overnight (did you hobble them, tie them to a drag, or what?).

Thanks for Elmer Luer's address--I'll be getting in touch with him. As I think I told you on a Christmas card, my buddy's mountain sheep permit didn't come through and so I didn't get to Montana last hunting season. Am looking forward to the trip this summer. I hope you've wintered well. It's been wall-to-wall rain out here.

all best wishes

a chance to take in the sheep hunt last Fall but things often happen that way. Sheep and Goats are among the few things I have not hunted in North America but have watched both in their habitat. There are a lot more things I can think of saying but had better finish this and get it in the mail. Did not quite get it all said yesterday and this morning my train of thought is partly derailed so will save the rest for next time. Discussing this much writing of mine is job enough for you at one time anyway.

Best of Luck and May the Lord watch over you

your old Pal,
John.

P. S. Drop me a note when you get the time.

If you have any more questions you would like to ask about the Forest do not hesitate to ask me. Likely I will not know all the answers but will do my best. We can have a big pow-wow as the indians say when you get over this way this Summer. Am not too good about getting things down on paper but can sure blatt my brains out when it comes to talking. Hope you can read my atrocious writing. The older I get the worse my writing gets which makes me doubt the saying "Practice makes perfection". Will look forward to your visit this summer.

We had a very mild winter here in this part of Montana. So bad you did not have

Those bear visits usually occured in the middle of the night and disturbed a ~~mans~~ sleep for a short time.
One animal I really showed great respect for was a maned bear with little Cubs.
I always assured her she had the right of way since arguing with a bear and her Cubs alway appeared to me to be a messy way to Commit SUICIDE. The trouble is this day and age so many people don't really know how dangerous a mother bear with Cubs is when she fears her little darlings might be molested.
When you reach here you are likely worn to a frazle trying to read this stuff. I give the name of writing.

Packing canned goods and even eggs was no problem with the proper containers anything could be carried by pack. Can't say I ever did a great lot of packing myself but enough so I knew how to proceed with it. Have taken a pack horse and went out surveying routes for new trails in the back country. Many of which have been built and are still in use today. Have even had a bear visit my camp in the back country and almost cause my pack horse to break his picket line before my little dog grabbed the bear by the seat of the pants and made it understand its company was not wanted in camp.

The principal means of transportation into the back country. Especially to supply Fire fighting Crews. A pack string usually had 9 mules and a bell mare to lead them which was either led or followed the packer. As long as the bell mare was gathered at night the mules would stay near her but occassionaly a mule would wander off and had to be hunted. A time or two in my life, have known of a moose having a friendly visit with the packstring when the packer would go get them in the morning. Each mule or horse in the string had a pack on each side and one on top held by a diamond hitch.

It is a source of reference at all times for making out reports, Settling arguments, Information on legal matters that may arise and saves much wear and tear on the memory which would occur if you tried to carry all that information in your head. In a few words would say, "A daily Diary is the best friend a forest official could ~~Could~~ possess" Things have changed so much since I worked for the Forest Service that Rangers may now carry Tape-recorders with them.

There are still some pack horses used by the Forest but nothing like there were in my day. Then the pack horse or pack string was

brain work. Here I am giving you a free health lecture like I give the people here in the house. Well I want you to keep in good shape so you can turn out a lot more of those splendid books.

Heard from your Uncle Ed in Livingston a few days ago for the first in ages. Keep in touch with your Aunt Anna in Nebraska all the time.

Now to get down to business and answer your questions about Rangers diarys and pack strings.

A Rangers daily diary is the most valuable thing he can possess if kept up each day and written in detail about all events of the day.

Masonic Home
Apr. 25-82

Dear Ivan;

Am a bit slow in answering your letter of March 4, A few days after I received it had a heart attack which pretty much incapacated me for over a month. Am getting back on the beam now and carrying on pretty much as usual. Just have to slow my pace a wee bit or the Nurses are right on my neck. Swallow enough pills 4 times a day to stock a drug store. We Scotch are a rock which dont give up easily so all will work out fine.

Your occupation is really hard demanding work. Just dont forget to take plenty of physical exercise. Lack day with your writing and

notecards on John Gruar interview in Shoestring file box, under "details"

June 14-80.

Dear Ivan,

We seem to have lost contact with each other. as the old Western saying goes "Long time no see" Hope all is going well with you and you are enjoying good health and turning out a lot of your excellent writing. Guess one would say we had an overdose of moisture in this part of Montana last Month. A lot of damage was done and it will take most of the summer to get all the roads and trails back in shape, and the basements dried out in many homes. The only good feature of it all was no lives were lost.

Have no seen or heard from any of your Relatives for some time except what little news I see in papers. Take it they are all busy doing their "Thing" as I have not seen any of their obituaries.

What started out to be a dry summer here is turning out to be a year of ample rain so far altho they are a bit short of moisture in the East third of the State.

Expect my daughter here from San Clemente, Cal. to celebrate Fathers day with me.

Am putting in my spare time doing a bit of Gardening. That along with Occupational Mental Therapathy to many of the guests who live here

and doing quite a bit of assorted reading on many different subjects keeps me quite well occupied. and time passes quickly. My health has been very good since the month of cutting and carving they did last December. Actually I feel better than I have for several years.

When Old Saint Peter decides to call me to the Heavenly fold he may have to finish me off with a club to get me in shape for admittance. On second thought, after the life I have led, may end up in a much warmer place than Heaven.

Chow time is nearing so

had better tie up my bull and get ready for Xmas refreshments.

Drop me a card soon and let me know how the world is treating you as I am always interested in your welfare.

Your good old Dad was one of my best pals in the days of old.

Best regard to both of you,

And may you Jee! have Seller like your Sporn.

Sincerely
John Doran

July 28, '81

Dear John--

Good to hear from you again, and to know you're in fine fettle.

I made it briefly to Montana this summer, but missed out on my intention to see you. My wife and I were going to swing back down to Helena and Missoula after spending some time in Glacier Park--we'd been at Gt. Falls, Dupuyer and Choteau--but the weather was so rotten and I was so antsy to get home and resume writing that we headed on straight west from Glacier. There's a chance I'll be back this fall, when I have an invitation to go with a fellow who'll be hunting mountain sheep, and will try get over to see you if I do come.

What I did see of the state was terrifically green. All that moisture I guess did some damage, but it really turned on the grass, too.

I've had some news of others in the family this summer: my aunt, Anna, notified me that her husband, Joe Beetem, died at the end of June. I don't know if you were acquainted with Joe; he was a Nebraskan, and they lived back there in Sterling. About the only ones I really keep up with are Angus's sons Gordon and Jay, and they're building an alcohol plant in Ringling--will use their barley to make alcohol there and sell it for use in gasohol, is their plan. Strange to think of Ringling as any kind of a boom town, but they intend that their plant eventually will employ three dozen men or so. And, I had a letter from somebody you might remember from the Basin--Dolores Lawrence, who said she lived there from 1916 until she started high school in 1924. She sent me a picture she had of my dad; her name now is Maykuth, and she lives in Bozeman.

Not too much else to report, life is much as usual here--working to get a book finished. I should have this current one done by the end of this year, then will start on the Montana novel I've talked to you about. It's been a damp cold summer out here, not much of a season. I suppose it's the price we pay for the bright dry winter we had.

Best wishes, John. I'll keep in touch about when I may hit Helena again.

Ivan

27 August '81

Dear John--

Sorry to be slow responding with Anna Doig Beetem's address, but my wife's parents are here with us and life has been busy and hectic. Anyway, the address:

Anna Beetem
Box 177
Sterling, Nebraska 68443

Also, it occurred to me, John, that I don't think I ever talked with you about the people you were in the Forest Service with, except briefly. I think you mentioned Major Evan Kelley to me. If you'd be interested in writing them down, I'd be pleased to have any memories or stories about him, or for that matter anybody else who comes to mind from the 1920's or 30's.

Hope you're doing well; it sounds as if you are.

In haste, best regards.

Aug 14, 81

Dear Ivan,

Glad to hear from you again, None of your family tree around Townsend seemed to know how you were getting along and when I was in W.S. Springs could not get get in Cantact with Gordon and Jay as they are rushing around the country getting their new Gasahol plant ready to go into production. It should be a fine thing for that part of the State and I wish them great success with it.

At this point the thought occured to me that if it had came into existance during the time their father, Uncles and myself had been in

our prime we could have taken care of a fair share of their production if it were suitable for human consumption. Your Aunt Anna her Cousin Walter and myself are the only ones left of our generation unless your Uncle Charlie is still alive in some place. Yes I knew Joe Beeten very well and a good man he was but like all flesh he has returned to the Earth as we all will do sooner or later. Would like to have your Aunt Anna's address so I could drop her a few words after all these years have fled past since we last saw each other.

I seem to have inherited the title of Chief Gardener here at the Home and strange as it seems with what little

knowledge I have about it have produced a very fine garden which we are enjoying on our tables. With this and my dispensing mental therapsathy among the members here The Summer has fled past and in a short time we will be facing another Montana Winter Which does not frighten me in the least with this very comfortable home to stay in and lots of activities to pass the time.

While I was on the subject of Gardens forgot to state that I was always careful never to plant a larger Garden than my wife could take care of.

Remember Dolores Lawrance very well. She was a member of a large family who lived

in the Basin "many moons ago" as the Indians say. There were 3 brothers, her Father and two of her uncles took up homesteads in the basin about 1912 or 14, when all the wide open spaces of the west were homesteaded and free grazing range became history. How I lived to see the west go thru great changes since your ancestors and mine arrived here before the present century had commenced.
What part of the country is your present book about?
Hope I am still able to sit up and take nourishment, when you get to work on the Montana Novel, next year. The way I feel now I should still be up and about by then, But one never knows what the wheel of fortune brings on the next turn.

Hope you get back this Fall to go on the mountain Sheep hunt with your friend and that he downs a good ram with a perfect head with a full curl to its horns as these are rather rare and belong on the Boone & Crockett record list. Then drop past here and tell me about the hunt.

Would call this about an average year in the west half of the State but dry in the East half. That flood we had sure wrecked a lot of the mountain roads and trails in this part of the State.

Here I go prattling along and wonder if you will be able to read my very atrocious writing and Grammer!

Today the visitability is very poor here. Large brush fires from Northern Canada are sending their smoke down here on North East winds. After all the years I worked for the Forest am no stranger to smoke. Some of the big fires I worked on years ago were hotter than the bifurcated hinges of Hell.

Always glad to hear from you, when you pause from your daily writing to catch your breath. Do you work on a fix schedule when you write or just as the inspiration takes hold of you?

Keep up the good work and may Old Lady Luck always keep her hand on your shoulder.

With my blessing I remain

Your Pal, John

P.S. Hope I don't have to send an interpreter to Seattle to discipher this scrawl for you.

Sept. 12, 1980

Dear John--

Thanks very much for the letter. It helped a lot.

It looks as if I'm going to make it to Helena in October. I'm supposed to sign books at Readers Roost on Oct. 30. I know you're an early riser, and so am I; do you suppose we could get together for an hour or two that morning and talk about forest rangering? I think I'll have a rented car, and could come out to the Masonic Home if that's simplest. But I'd happily buy you breakfast any place in Helena, if you'd prefer. Let me know which way sounds best to you, and we'll do it. I think my available time will be about 6:30 or 7 until maybe 9, when I have to get ready for the bookstore and to go on to Bozeman that night.

Something I meant to ask you last time, and forgot. When you were the ranger on the Shoestring, who was your boss--that is, what was his title? Would he come out to your district very often, or were you pretty much on your own out there all the time? Also, how often would you see any other rangers? Did it take something like a fire to get you together, or was there fairly regular visiting or business which kept you in touch?

Looking forward to seeing you in October.

all the best

Helena Mt.

Aug 29, 80

Dear Ivan,

Am a bit slow in answering your last letter but will just take time by the forelock and get at it today. May not get it all done until tomorrow, But am of the persistant type and finish everything I start sooner or later.

To begin with the story, there is a great mystery attached to that letter, It was first out in my file of letters to be answered and as I usually do reached in to get it and it was gone. Searched thru the files but no luck finding it. This is not unusual here as there are a few nosy old heafers living here who let curiosity get the best of them. It will likely show up again in a few days as other things have in the past.

Only wanted it to check on some of the questions you asked.
Remember you asked about what kind of grub we took on our trips away from headquarters. We travelled light mostly and only took mostly canned goods of various kinds in individual sized cans, fruits soups and meats, even canned bread. and of course plenty of coffee and a can to boil it in. If late in the day we should pass a back country stream or lake, Trout would likely be on the menue that evening either fried in bacon grease or canned butter. There was a joke among us that if we ever lost a can opener on a trip we would face starvation. There were usually a few emergency type rations in the pack in case you had to stay out longer than expected due to fire suppression or other troubles. During the summer fire season you always carried fire fighting

tools in addition to your other equipment which consisted of a sleeping bag or heavey blankets a teepe tent if bad weather was expected before your return. On some Ranger Districts you went far back into virgin wilderness beyond where sheep and cattle grazed. It would take a book to tell all the duties that fell to a Ranger in the old days. Besides stock grazing you had timber sales, insect infestations, tree diseases, finding access trails to back country in case of fire, prospecting activities, wild game and predator management, presence of trespassing stock and during the Summer and Fall, Fire control and suppression of fire was ahead of everything also maintaing pleasant relations with all the Mountain men which you came in contact. There back to your headquarters to make

a report on your weeks work.
All this is only a small sketch
of the things that came to your
attention. It was not uncommon
for a bear to pay your camp of the
night an uninvited visit or a
Mountain lion to sing you some opera
from a nearby Hill. In the case
of the bear visit, the first thing
to do is request him to leave before
he scares your horses and leaves
you stranded afoot with a lot of
luggage on your hands. To prevent
~~this~~ this I had a dog who was
half bull dog and half buzz saw.
He dearly loved to gnaw on the
hind quarters of a bear and
strange as it might seem a bear
is afraid of a rough spoken dog.
a lion is the same way.
Many of those tragedies you hear
on the news of people being
mauled or killed around National
Parks is their own fault. They take
candy or food into their sleeping bags

with them which attracts the bears. The only bear I treat with respect and give the right of way too is a She bear with Small Cubs with her. They are really bad medicine. Well I could go on and on here blatting my brains out but it would be better if you just dropped in here and let me answer your questions as this is a big field of stuff to cover by putting pen to paper.

Hope you are getting along fine and working on your next book which I am patiently waiting for to appear. If possible when you make your trip in October, drop in and throw the bull with me for a while. I am feeling fine and seem to keep busy with one social event after another. Have not heard much about any of your Clan lately. Guess they are all able to carry on as usual.

like everything else old Father time is gradually thining them out. Not very many left of my generation now.

"The Clock of life is wound but once. And no Man has the power to tell just when the hands will stop at late or early hour:
Now is the only time you own;
Live, Love, toil with a will.
Place No faith in "Tomorrow" for The Clock may then be still."

The above is pretty much the philosophy of life I operate under.

It appears like Mt. St. Helens might be active for some time yet. She may be acting as a safety valve for the other Cascade peaks altho Geologist say such is not the case. Time will tell.

Throw me a line any time, always glad to hear from you.

May God watch over you and yours.

Very Sincerely,
John Grear