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BUTTE HISTORY:
AN INTERVIEW WITH JIM EDWARDS
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By Jeanette Manning

This is an oral interview of Jim Edwards, at his ranch in Laurie.

Jim: Growing up in Butte, the way I looked at it, there was three cultures there; the "working man", and there were the people who had the businesses downtown, and then there were the people who worked at the Anaconda Company, they were the "big shots." The Anaconda Company people were living behind fences and they sort of had their own parties and their own culture, you might say. And then there were the people downtown, who were there to make money, they were involved in the country problems and they were the, so called, part of the relief for the Anaconda "big shots", of the Company, and then there was the "working man." The working men stayed with their own people on their own side of the tracks, being isolated from the others. Well, my cousin was one of the people's dad's who were up behind the fence, a "big shot" of the Company. Well, Billy (my cousin's name was Billy) lived kind of sheltered life and then he went to Europe to become a doctor and later on he married, and started practicing and then went to Seattle and stayed there, and had a lot kids. He would come to visit and I'd start talking about Butte, and he'd said "Well, Jimmer (he would call me Jimmer) I didn't know about that, tell me about that" Then I'd start to tell him about it, and he wouldn't believe me because he had never heard of it and he didn't want to believe all of the stuff I was telling him, because of it was kind of vicious stuff, in a lot of ways. One time he said, "Would you write up all of this good stuff you are telling me, all of these lies,....
Jeanette: Laughs softly
Jim: ... for posterity, so that my kids will know something about the kind of times I grew up in." So, I started a series of little essays, you might say and I called it "Dear Bill" (because it was for Billy and could go into a book) and so then I would write this stuff for him and he asked lots of questions, because he didn't know much about my life and he was interested. So, I wrote about things that I thought might be of interest to him. I didn't ever get into where it was a kind of "labor strike", I didn't talk about people, I just would talk about little incidences in my life, that I thought would be interesting, as a guy growing up in Butte. So, to start off with, I was born in Butte, in 1917, in the St. James Hospital. I only had one sister. I started working in the mines, in 1935 and I worked at the Emma Mine. Did I like the work? "No". Did you want to work then or did you have to work? I'll tell you about it now.

When a kid finished high school in Butte, in the 1930's, he had two choices. He could either get a job down the mine, or could go on the bum. Of course some had families who had businesses to fall back on, or go to work for. Such was not my case, so I chose to go on the bum and ended up in the oil fields, in northern Montana, running a "Mexican dragline" (a hand shovel, to you) digging up abandoned oil field pipe lines. We dug them up and sold the pipe, if it was still usable, and kept half the money for our labor. When fall rolled around and after the first frost, I decided to move to a country that had weather warm enough to fit my clothes. But, first of all I had to go visit my folks in Butte.

A summer of hard work digging ditches had knocked some sense into my head and I began to see what the real world looked like. I guess you would call it "growing up", and your perspective goes through "growing pains" also. You realize there is no "free lunch", and I decided that maybe I'd take a run at the mines, for the winter, anyway. Besides that, I had a girlfriend!

I went over to "rustle" the Emma Mine, which was the closest one to where we lived. I was lucky enough to find a foreman working with a crew who were loading 100 pound sacks of cement onto the cage, to be lowered underground. I asked about a job. He looked me over, I was kinda skinny, and said, "kid, heave a couple 'a those sacks of cement on the cage." After digging miles of ditches all summer, I could toss those sacks around pretty easy. He could see I could "cut the mustard", so he said, "Go over to the time keeper, give him your name and come out in the morning." He then asked my name, when I told him he said, "who's your Father?" After hearing it he said, "yes, I know him well, but he won't pin any medals on me for giving you a job in the mine either." He could see I was a real "greenhorn", so proceeded to tell me what kind of toed boots and other clothes to buy.

Next day I appeared arrayed in the brand new overalls and white rubber hard-toed boots. My new mine helmet gleamed out like a beacon in the dark, "greenhorn" stood out all over the place, but I was too dumb to notice or care. All I knew was that I was rubbing elbows with some real honest to God "Hardrock Miners" People I had been around all of my life, but never knew of their world, other than listening to their conversations.

While waiting to be lowered underground for the shift, I was surprised to see many old friends of the family. They had a different appearance in their "diggin" clothes, almost like being in a world of their own. It made me feel pretty important to have them come over, slap me on the back, call me by my first name, and engage in mining conversation. One kid, who was an ex-boyfriend of my sister's, was working there. He hailed the Shift Boss that I was assigned to, and said, "Jim can work with me." Here I was with a new pardner already, and my new home would be on the 1300 level of the Emma Mine.

My first trip down the shaft was an experience. We were loaded seven men to a cage, which was like an elevator. Three men on each side, facing one another. The seventh man stepped in and the cage door was slammed shut and with the help of the station tenders number twelve boot, he then latched the door, jamming us tightly together. With that the station tender said, "cut the rope" and by pulling the bell cord, gave an engineer the signal to drop us down to the proper level , which was 1200 feel below surface. As the cage dropped, from under us, by partner said, "bend your knees a little." I did as I was instructed, but didn't ask why. I had learned, by now, that when working with men who had experience, you did as you were told. Before long you'd know the reason why. As we dropped down the shaft, at breakneck speed, the different mine levels station light flashed by until we reached 1,000. All of a sudden, the cage slowed down, nearly bringing me to my knees. Stopping at such a high speed, the cable stretched and contracted, as much as ten feet, bouncing like a modern bungee cord. When it quit, we

were at our destination, the 1200 level. If anyone had been paying attention, they would have seen me swallowing rapidly to subdue a churning stomach.

With seven men in a cage, all facing one another, it is something to be avoided. The bad breath from hangovers was like breathing smoke, stale whiskey, wine, chewing tobacco, snoose, and dehorn "canned heat", all mingled together, would make you gag and your eyes water. To a fine upstanding sanitary young man, who drank very little, it was an experience you neither relished nor looked forward to. The final result, after you wised up, you stood facing the outside of the cage and watched the guides and timber go flashing by in the light of your lamp.

There was some pipe men getting ready to carry a few lengths of pipe back to the end of a drift, to bring in the compressed air and water necessary to run the air driven rock drills, hoist slushers and other machines. Water was also used in drilling to keep down the dust, because of its high quartz content, causing Silicosis, also commonly called "miners consumption", or as the miners so aptly put it "rock in the box".

We were invited to shoulder a length of pipe and help pack it in. The pipe was 22 feet long, one and one half and two inches in diameter, and very unwieldy to handle in such close quarters. We finally arrived at the face of the drift, I threw my pipe down, and the pipeman said to me, "kid you brought this pipe in wrong end first." The sleeve coupling on the pipe, used to screw the pipe's ends together, was sure enough on the wrong end. Smart-like, I said, "well then, why don't you turn it around?" So the pipeman said, "let's see you turn a 22 foot length of pipe in an eight foot tunnel of hard rock. Take it back to the station, lad, and reverse the 'bloody booger". That was the start of being sent off on many wild goose chases, to the enjoyment of those who had been there once, and gone through the same thing, providing the shift Bosses weren't around. I didn't know you could unscrew these connectors and put them on either end of the pipe. My experiences in the oil field with pipe was to dig it up. A crew came along, raised it out of the ditch, and cut it in lengths, with an acetylene torch - (Lesson number one).

When I was first working in the oil fields, I was on a truck that supplied the oil field with equipment. One of my first orders was to pick up a "case of jars." I was looking around for a case of "mason" fruit jars, but thankfully, my partner knew what we were looking for. It had nothing to do with canning fruit or vegetables. It's a tool that weighs nearly a ton and resembles chain links, that is located just on top of the drill bit. The idea being that as the bit drops, the chain links drop in a rapid sequence, thereby acting as separate hammer blows on the bit to grind it deeper into the rock. So, I knew miners would be pulling fast ones on "greenhorns", but I didn't know what to expect.

The partners were ready to timber, so one said, "go up to the guy in the stope above us and get some left handed spikes. I knew I was getting jabbed, but remembered the case of jars, so I climbed up to "bum" some left handed spikes. The miner sez "I don't have too many, but can scare up a few. How many do you want?" He got out a bunch of spikes, very carefully looked them over and over, and one by one handed me about six selected spikes, and said that was all he could spare. I was ready to leave when he sez "have you got a left handed ax to drive them with? Here, you better take mine, I'm all done with it for today, but be sure and bring it back, I'll need it for tomorrow." I

thanked him and when I returned to my work place, my pardner sez "you did O.K. kid, we never gave the left-handed ax a thought, first thing tomorrow you better take it back." Now, though I knew better, I had to act knowledgeable. After thinking about the "case of jars", I still had my doubts. Meanwhile, my partners were getting a kick out of it.

While all of this was happening, my partner was up drilling away in a stope. My job was to help he and his partner, who were both contract miners, work in a stope that was quite flat. The broken rock had to be pushed down a chute to a lower level to be hauled away in ore cars, to the shaft and hoisted. All went well, the job was easy, but very dusty, and by the end of the day I had discovered muscles I never knew I had. Eventually, the muck was gone, the holes were drilled for blasting, and my friend climbed up to the 1200 to get the powder. In a short time he returned. We heard him yell "look out below!", and a powder sack full of dynamite came crashing down into the stope within a few feet of where I was standing. When it hit, it appeared to bounce and I took off too; but you can't get very far away when there is over 1200 feet of solid rock between you and the surface, and God knows how much rock you're in the middle of. The other miner casually dumped the powder on the ground and my partner came down the manway very carefully, with a giant coil of fuse with blasting caps attached, all ready to use.

Being raised in a mining town we were taught to leave blasting caps alone. It seems like every woodshed had a box of caps somewhere, perhaps the person who took them from the mine figured they may come in handy some day. At any rate, they were mostly used with a short fuse on July 4th, under a bucket. When it went off, the bucket was a real cloud buster.

We proceeded to load holes. The dynamite sticks were slit long ways with a special miner's knife that had a blade shaped with a hook on one end, like a linoleum knife. One man loaded the holes, a stick at a time, tamping them in tightly with a wood rod. The primer was made by pushing a nail into the powder to make a hold and the cap on the fuse was pushed into it, leaving the long fuses hanging out of the tamped holes. During the dynamite cutting, my hands were handling 42% nitro glycerin. Wiping the sweat off my brow deposited some residue on my forehead. I didn't take long to cut the fuse, and was all cut to different lengths. Fuse burns at about one and one half minutes per foot, so by cutting them to proper lengths, there is some control of how the rock will break. The first shots blow a hole out of the center of the face in the form of a wedge. The rest, in sequence, blowing the rock into the hole made by the first blast. The last holes to blow were in the bottom, which lifted the whole caboodle up and out.

We soon had the sparks spitting out of the fuse ends. It was time to make tracks. I was out in the lead, but my partner and his friend leisurely picked up their lunch buckets, jumpers, water bag, and climbed up the ladder to the 1200 level. There we waited and counted the blasts to be sure they had all gone off. If one failed, it was called a "missed hole" and was reported to the timekeeper when coming off shift. This was reported on a bulletin board so the other shift would be warned and the miners took necessary precautions.

When we were waiting, my head started to ache and it wasn't long before I had the worse headache I had ever had in my life, and it kept on getting worse. Between the powder and the smoke, and rubbing the Glycerin soaked dynamite on my brow, I had a headache that put me to bed as soon as I got home. Dad knew what was up, but he kept his mouth shut. Finally, he asked me how I liked my first shift. I told him in no uncertain terms, that it wasn't bad, but it was my last. He said "well, Jimmer, you can quit if you want – everybody does, but maybe you'll feel better tomorrow", and kind of smiled.

Next morning was a bright new day and a new outlook, so Mom packed my lunch bucket and away I went. My brand new clothes and shiny helmet were well used and the mine was a whole lot deeper by the time I decided to quit again.

The Anaconda mines were institutional, for a better choice of words, but they made everything they needed, all they did was buy raw materials. Now they didn't make powder, but they made their own wire and although they didn't make iron, they made everything they needed out of the iron, between the blacksmiths and the machinists, they could build just anything. They would build anything needed in the mine, it was manufactured. One of the old guys I worked with was an Irishman, and he liked to have a hot lunch, so he hammered out a frying pan, that looked just as good as a boughten new one, and then he would cook his ham and eggs in it. But it was very interesting and I liked the blacksmithers because you could really see what you doing and you were learning something. You would learn, you know, about iron and steel, and learned how to temper and how to bend iron, so not only in making their own tools, but they did a lot of ornamental iron work for the "big shots", upon Swan Lake, so we learned to make leaves, wreaths, and all sorts of ornamental iron work, and that was a very interesting job. Of course if you could work with the mine for about a year at a time, that was pretty good pay and then they would shut down and then start up again. This was sort of interesting because the so-called "people on the street", that were the "ignorant ones", they could always tell ahead of time when the mine was going to open up or shut down, because if they started letting their stock piles or ore and repairs on equipment go to hell, you knew the mine was going to shut down. But when somebody could see all kinds of supplies being hauled in, then they knew that the mines were going to open up. So, nobody was ever surprised at anything that happened. It was a nice job, but I got laid off and that was the story of my life. The next job that I got was down at the Belmont. That was considered one of the hottest mines and I was a machinist helper. I was the "grunt" that carried around the sack of tools for the machinist. I was with a guy who was repairing different machinery down in the mine, instead of up in the shop. So we crawled into every nook and cranny, and every part of the mine, to fix the machinery; the slushers and other things. I didn't like that too good. It was dirty and greasy. We made our own soap, because you couldn't buy the soap to keep you clean. We had a little business going where we put a container in the carpenter's shop, and we kept all of this fine dust up in the top of a beam. We would bring that down and we would get about five pounds or have about five gallons of that sawdust and we would get about a gallon of granulated laundry soap and we would make this mix, like a mash, like you were going to make

whiskey and you would put a steam pipe in it and the steam pipe would put the soap into the wood and then you everybody would come in and use it. We had a tough time keeping it, because the miners and everybody would come in a "bum" you for the soap. Of course in that way we had the edge on a lot of people too, because if you wanted some powder, you would give the guy the soap and say, I need a stick of powder, he's say "O.K.!" (I shouldn't say this, but I will, because this is history). They had a mine dump, down at the Belmont, and that was where you could rescue the powder that was dumped because they didn't use it, along with old rock We would haul a lot of wood out there and we would dump it and a lot of people would be scrounging the wood. Well, one of the things that was, if people needed spikes, or they needed, plumbing, pipe fittings, wire, just about anything that you could lift, you'd get out of the north park. But the only way you could get anything out of the fence was to dump it over the fence, and then they would have a guy there ready to grab it. "ha, ha, ha".... You know that is one of the reasons I think I might be cutting my throat....
Jeanette: Laughing...
Jim: You know I don't think there is a house, in town, that isn't plumbed and wired with ACM parts.
Jeanette: Good for them....good for them...
Jim: Are you getting all of this?
Jeanette: I am, I am.
Jim: O.K., O.K. They will say that I'm lying about it anyway.
Jeanette: Yes, they will. What did you make as a blacksmith? What kind of wage did you make.
Jim: Oh, I started out at $3.25 a day.
Jeanette: And that was above ground?
Jim: Well, I worked down in the mine. And I know what the miners made, because there was a contract that they made five bucks ($5.00). Then, later on, I think I was making $4.25, in the Belmont.
Jeanette: As a Machinist helper?
Jim: Yes.
Jeanette: Who owned the Belmont, where you worked.
Jim: It was the Anaconda Company. And the blacksmith shop was at the Anaconda Company. They called them crafts, that's where they had the blacksmiths, machinists, and where they made the ornaments. But, down in the Belmont we were on the run all of the time and it was interesting work and where you would have to go. Sometimes it wasn't very nice, to get in where there wasn't much air and it was pretty gassy, but a fan would be broken and you would have to fix that fan. Anyway, when I was at the Belmont, they had a "safety fist" campaign going on and they had "safety first" posters. They would pay $5.00 if you made a poster and they used it. They did have a "safety first" man who did that all of the time. I guess in order to get people interested, they had that. I drew a poster and they liked it, so the first thing you know I was given a job in the geological department, on the fifth floor of the Hennesy Building. So I was right up there with the top guys...lawyers, all of the engineers, and I became a geological guy. That

was really a good job. You had to wear a white shirt and a tie, and that's when you really started learning a lot about mining. That is when I had to study, because I had to know what I was doing. Drafting is drawing pictures of the underground ore shoots and veins. The miners would bring up geologist and engineers and we would go down into the mine and survey it, draw a picture of what the mine looked like, and mostly just the direction of where they were going and where they were mining. And all it amounted to was two mines that represented them all, but they were going in two different directions. Each week you would post the new work that had been done the week before, so these mine maps were an ongoing thing. But you also had to go down and map the ore that was mined out, by looking at the logs and the face of the drift and the back, which was the ceiling and getting a look at the ore. The sampler would be down there everyday, sampling the ore, and that was the samples for the sampling department, and then they would grade the ore and figure out what the kind of money they were going to make on it. From those pictures of these drifts of the tunnels, you could project where you thought this ore was going to go. If you found another tunnel, that was closer you could crosscut in, and hit the tunnel you were working on and they you wouldn't have so far to haul it. This is mostly what the geologist did and the reason I drew all of these underground mine pictures and this became very monotonous, because it was just posting these maps. You'd have to take out eight or ten great big books and then the total number of inches of ink which you'd spread might be three inches on the whole works, because they were all in scale.

I'll say one thing for the Anaconda Company, they treated me good because I guess they liked 0the way I was studying because any job that came along, they thought I would like, and they would give it to me. And so I would study more. I got to do all kinds of nice things. If there was any fancy work to be done, like for instance, they wanted to have a development, and they had to go through the boys at the 26 Broadway, they called that because that was the address of the Anaconda Company. So these people came out to determine whether they thought this development was feasible. They would have to draw maps that were very fancy, they were almost like an embroidered napkin, with fancy curlee-ques on the lettering, and so I got to do all of that and did a lot of photos. Another way that they would get the development, was to make a mine model. The model would be the reverse of what a mine would look like, if you could look at a mine, from any angle, and erase all of the dirt, then you would have the mine working solid, and that is what you did. You actually made the mine in little pieces of wood and then you could see right through it, then they could really see where the development was, because it would be in three dimensions. We made that out of wood and then later on when plastic came out, we made it with plastic. Of course, the plastic would be cut to the thickness of the drifts, which would be in scale. Then when you made a surface map you would…(maybe I had better not give you that, that would be too much to cover). What else should I tell you about? Oh, Con Kelly, he was the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Jeanette: So you knew Con?

Jim: He had a place in Long Island, I think it was, and he had a nice home and had built a new addition and he had this Montana Room, with a big niche in the wall; (I never seen it, I was just told), but he wanted a big relief map of the State of Montana. Well, nobody knew how to make a relief map (that would be a contour map) but there wasn't any experts, so they hired a man by the name of Earl Hika, who was an artist, one of the first western sculpturists in the country. Did you ever hear of him?
Jeanette: No.
Jim: No? He was a good one. And so they got Earl to come over and he was supposed to build this map. Well, I was cheap help, so they sent me down to help him and of course it was my job to see that when you built the map, the distance and angles, of Kalispell and all the cities were right. What we did was to (and this is interesting) take a contour map, of the whole state and we took sections and for every contour level we used, I think, maybe every 200 feet, for contour levels. We would take, like a square block, which would be say ¼, maybe an 1/8th, of the state of Montana, starting over the black country and working west. We would draw the contour line on a piece of paper, and then we would get these apple boxes, no orange crates, because they were just the right thickness, through what would be the distance between the contour lines, according the scale that we were using. Then we would cut this contour line out and then for the second contour line we would cut them and lay them on top of the first, and we had a hole in the center, so we would be centered. And we had the whole state of Montana in wood, made out of orange crate wood, and it looked like stairsteps, like the great pyramid. So then we put in every little creek and cranny, everything, just exactly. Anyway, it was about six or seven feet in length, or something like that – I forget, but it was according to scale. Then we took clay and pushed the clay into the stairsteps, so that just the edges of the wood were showing, and we had the mountains and we had the canyons, we had the creeks. So then, rubber mold came out, that is liquid rubber that you can paint over or anything you want to do. Like if you were going to a mold of your hand, you could dip your hand in this rubber, two or three times, so that if fits like a glove, and then you cut the glove away, through your fingers, and then put the two pieces together and you would fill that in with whatever you were going to mold. Well, we didn't know what to buy, so we bought a barrel of it. As I remember it was red rubber latax, and if it got onto anything it would really stick, so we had to figure out how to grease these molds, so you could separate it. But...we ended up with this big mess. And then I got fired from the job, and so Earl had to paint it, so he used the contour lines, saying that above 7,000 to 5,000 feet would be green, under 5,000 was tan, and then below 5,000 would be another color. So you could look at the map and know the elevations. But in the meantime, we had covered it with this rubber and then we couldn't lift it out, so when we closed the mold, we had to saw it in half, and then figure a way to get it together again. That wasn't in our map book. I think they had to do that back in New York, in the big niche on the wall.
Jeanette: So, when you worked for the Company, was it part of your goal to become a rancher, investing for that.

Jim: Yes. I went to Butte High School and of course everybody was a miner and the miners didn't like anybody that was in agriculture. The reason for that was that the Company, although they thought that controlled the politics in the State, it would sometimes backfire on them, and everybody that went to the legislature was supposed to where copper color, but this time the Eastern part of the State out-voted them. It was on a tax bill where the State wanted to tax the copper, as it was mined. I ain't ever never figured out that it was called a "copper tax". But as a result they closed the mines down and all of the miners hated anybody that wore a cowboy hat. And if you were uptown and Hanson Packing Company was killing horses for meat, (which is a good story by itself), some guys, one or two, would walk up town wearing a cowboy hat, and one of the miners would holler "walk around that shit", and the stuff would hit the fan. So they didn't come uptown very much. But anyway, this hatred, I guess you would call it, was pretty prevalent. I always wanted to be a cowboy, but I never said anything, you know. I also wanted to be an artist, but that was all "girls stuff", and so if you took art you had to be either a good fighter or good runner, one or the other. So my future looked pretty bad, because I couldn't fight or run either. But finally it worked out, because we bought a place called Alder Gulch, and we fixed it up real nice and lived out there for, I guess, about ten years. And then there was some ground that was next to me, we paid a thousand dollars for this house and it is made of cut stone, it was an old road house, had one inch floors of maple. The partitions were about a foot thick, because they were made of stone. Anyway, with the help of the Anaconda Company and my friends, we fixed it up real nice. And then there were 400 acres and it belonged to an old fellow in Butte, and I remember when I told him I'd like to buy it, he said "have you got any money?" and I said, "ya", and he said, "what are you going to give me for it?" and I said, "I'm going to give you a dollar an acre." He said, "no, your not going to give me $320.00, you are going to give me $400.00, and I want it now" (he was trying to get rid of me). So I said, "well, I'll have to get a check made, but I'll be back." (We had the money, cause we paid for it.) So that was the reason that we ended up with the 400 acres, then I had to fence it. Then I got in the pony business, raising Shetland ponies, cause they were very popular, that's when the POA of America started and so then I decided...that was about the time that the cattle business boomed and a 450 lb. calf was 38 cents a pound. I was making $160.00 per month, say $2,000 per year and having five cows was about what I earned, so I said "to hell with that, I'm going to get a ranch", so we decided to get a ranch. And then when we got the ranch, I still like to do art, so I could do that. Then ever since we've had a ranch and cattle. Then we moved over to the Ruby and we have been here ever since, moving here in 1969.

Jeanette: Right here where we are at?

Jim: Well we had a different place and sold it, and then I bought this little place, then I kept part of the plains, that we had, I still have that, but I like this little place. And it's a pain in the butt.

Jeanette: Laughs

Jim: Really. I'm too old to run it and I've had to lease it . You know these people who lease it, they are the dumbest people in the whole world. I love them, I don't know what I'd do without them. How long have we been talking now?
Jeanette: Quite a good lot.
Jim: I've said the most important part. I raised horses. During World War II, they wanted about 20,000 soldiers and they couldn't come up with near that many horses, and so as a result, after World War I, (I don't know whether I said World War I or II, but it was World War I), they still had a horse cavalry and they couldn't get these horses, so after the war they got all the horses they could beg, borrow, or steal, and they would get the people like myself, who had mares, and they would give you the studs and you would raise horses, and then they had the first pick of the geldings, if you wanted to sell them. Well, I had heard about that, and so I wrote them a letter, this was in 1947, and said that I would like to get a horse, so they sent me a horse that was supposed to be a thoroughbred and had arthritis in the knee and I said, I don't want that, I want something that I can ride. They said, "what do you want", I said, "I don't care, just so he is pretty." So I stayed in pretty close contact with the colonel, in Nebraska, so he wrote me and said, "we are getting some horses from Europe, that are coming out of the war, and they are supposed to be good ones, and if you are not raising running horses, I think these would be just the ones, they are from Hungry. So I said, "O.K., pick me a pretty one". And he did. It was a beautiful horse. So then, all of a sudden (I wasn't good in school because I hated it and I didn't know where the hell Hungry was, I had no idea where it was), so anyway, I got the horse and I became interested in Geography and started reading about the Hungarian horses, then I found out all about the Tartars and Mongolians, and Mongols, Ghenghis Khan, and learned all about the Serbs and their horses (Serbian in those days), and down in Montenegro, and then you get into the Arabs, the Turks, and Moroccos, the Moors, and all of a sudden, I'm learning history. Because when Hitler went through Poland he went in their first and then went through Hungry, then he captured part of France, and then went into the Baltic Countries, Chechoslovokia. Anyway, you never hear about this, but it is a fact, he was going to raise supermen and superhorses, and he would match up those he thought were perfect specimens and he was also going to do this with his horses. So he had all of these good horses in Germany. Well, Patton came through there and he said, "well, we just as well take these horses, we need them." Of course, the people in the United States didn't need them, but they took them anyway. Then they had to give them back, but they didn't give them all back. Well, my horse was one of them and his name was IV. Well, when we moved, of course I took the horse with me and then as a result of that, there was an old guy in Butte, who went by the name of Marcus Daly and he had two daughters. One of the daughters went grouse hunting in Scotland, and a Hungarian Duke, married the daughter. So they were living in Hungry and he was into race horses (that's a different story), but anyway his granddaughter had to go to the stock farms and worked under the iron curtain to get all of these people from Hungry out and they would stay at the stock farms where they would learn to speak English and get a little acclimated. She had seven mares from Hungry, but didn't have a stallion, and the only stallion in the country that wasn't a relative was from her herd of horses, so she

looked me up and I leased her my horse. And then, I used to go over there to look after them, to see if she was taking care of him, so I became acquainted with the history of that stock farm and that opened up a whole new world. Then through that I got acquainted with a man in Nebraska and he had some Hungarian mares and he needed a stallion, so I said that I would give him the pick of the studs I had.

Anyway the girl's name was Seegray and her dad was a Count and her mom was a Countess and they ended up in one of the concentration camps. She finally got them out of there, but there was all of these people that were all from Hungry and that is when I got acquainted with the Hungarian people and their customs. They were really good company.

Anyway, I was talking about the fellow in Nebraska, I said he could have the pick of the colts and to come up and make his pick, and I'll take it out in horses, because I had been raising a few right along, you know you couldn't hardly sell horses. I didn't have no time ranching, you don't have time to fool with them, so I wasn't doing much with them. So, anyway, I got some awful good horses out of this mare. And I'll just add this, as far as Seegray, married a fellow who was a Baron, so she was a Countess, and when married the Baron she dropped down a notch or two. He was an Ambassador from Hungry to Spain and spent some time in England, and we used to get a kick out of asking him questions, because we'd try to get the goods on him and nail him, as he could talk his way out of anything. He could talk all day and you'd wonder what he was talking about. But anyway, that is where, on account of that horse, that was one of the turning points in my life, because all of a sudden there was another world. Before that it was just ranching, in Montana and now I was making these trips. If you were to ask the question, although you haven't, but I know you would if you had thought about it, what was the turning point, I believe that was it.

Jeanette: Now you had started to say that you had asked her for a colt. Did she tell you that you could have the pick of the colts?

Jim: Yes, but you couldn't have any of the fillies, the girl colts, cause she said, "I'm going to keep them, because I have to increase my herd." She said, "you can breed any when I start crossing and getting other stallions", because she figured on importing them and boarding some stallions, and someday I could use any of the stallions that I wanted to, on any of the horses. But that was a very interesting part of my life and I could talk the whole time on that on the stock, that it came up another year of two. The riches that Marcus Daly had, the money that he had. He had a paten leather harness, well he didn't, but his daughter in Hungry did, with golden buckles and paten leather. Old Marcus had this big barn, U-Shaped, that you could hook up your carriages inside. The barn had some interesting blocks of quartz. I didn't know it, but horses won't slip on it. So that was interesting and I used to go up and root around in the top of the barn and he did have trotting and pacing horses. He had these old surreys that you see in a Currier and Ives print. They had wheels about six feet high and iron and each horse had a box, like a leather bound trunk, with all the horses' equipment and horse jewelry, and each horse had his own box.

Jeanette: He loved his horses, he did.
Jim: Then I would go through and they had the racing colors that were copper and green and whips with silver handles. Of course, it is all gone now. When she died she had 350 head of horses and I don't know if hardly any of them are here. She had them all over the country, they won all kinds of prizes for endurance, because the Hungarian people, they call Hungry the "horse capital of the world", and everybody bought their horses, cause they were bred strictly for endurance and they could carry a heavy load. The old guy in Nebraska is still alive and sells horses. Between the three of us and another old lady, who is lives in Colestrip, we had to start a pedigree in this country and state, because they didn't have any, so we got in on that (and that is another story in itself).

…End…