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Russell K. Grater  
March 13, 1973

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison  
Transcribed by Bertha M. Braithwaite  
Digitized by Sara E. Forrest

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
OF  
RUSSELL K. GRATER

INTERVIEWED BY S. HERBERT EVISON  
March 13, 1973

Tape Number 177

FINAL

TYPED BY: Bertha M. Braithwaite

July 16, 1982

[START OF TAPE #177, SIDE 1]

Herbert Evison: This is Tuesday, March 13, 1973. I'm Herb Evison, and this afternoon, I am in Boulder City, in the living room of the home of Russell K. Grater, whose acquaintance I first made about 38 years ago in the desert of Southern Arizona.

Herbert Evison: Russ, to start this off with those basic facts about you - when and where were you born? And what family were you born into?

Russell K. Grater: I was born on November 16, 1907, Herb, in Indiana, on a farm. My father and mother did farming back there; in fact, that's what they had done all their lives. And so, I grew up on an Indiana farm.

Herbert Evison: I'm curious, since I used to go to Indiana often - where.

Russell K. Grater: Near Lebanon. Lebanon is midway between Indianapolis and Lafayette.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes; north of - or northwest of Indianapolis.

Russell K. Grater: Near U.S. 52.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Herbert Evison: Now were there other youngsters?

Russell K. Grater: Yes; I had three brothers and a sister.

Herbert Evison: Yes? Just the reverse of my family; I was the only son with four sisters. Where did you go to school?

Russell K. Grater: Well, I graduated from high school at Lebanon, of course, and I went to Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana. I graduated from there, and—

Herbert Evison: In what year?

Russell K. Grater: I graduated from there in 1930.

Herbert Evison: Ah, yes - a wonderful time to be graduating.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, right in the middle of a Depression.

Herbert Evison: Yes. With what degree? What had been your major?

Russell K. Grater: Well, this will surprise you, Herb, knowing of my work in the Park Service, but I had a major in psychology.

Herbert Evison: No, that doesn't surprise me. I'll bet it has been useful to you a thousand times.

Russell K. Grater: Oh, tremendously so. Yes. I had major in psychology, and I had more units in biology than I had in my major, and I had as many units in English. So, I had two minors, so to speak, as well as a major.

Herbert Evison: And you got a BA degree out of it?

Russell K. Grater: Right.

Herbert Evison: Did you do any graduate work?

Russell K. Grater: I did graduate work for one year at Yale University. I was given a fellowship there one year.

Herbert Evison: Now you didn't mention it, but did Wabash have a Phi Beta Kappa?

Russell K. Grater: Yes, but I couldn't quite cut it.

Herbert Evison: Well, you sound to me like somebody who would have.

Russell K. Grater: Well, I missed out because in my freshman year and my sophomore - well, in fact, my four years was a matter of working my way through college in those days, Herb. My freshman year I can remember opening up a restaurant every morning about 3:30 to get my food, and I ran a bowling alley at night for the YMCA in order to make a little money there, and then I worked for my board at a fraternity house.

Russell K. Grater: So, it was a matter of doing studying in a bowling alley in my freshman year - and well, I passed all right. I got a bunch of C's and a B, but the rest of the time I would have qualified, I know, because I had almost straight A's for the rest of the years there. But it was not enough.

Herbert Evison: Well, it's hardly surprising that you didn't make straight A's that freshman year. But you did take a year of graduate study at Yale, though.

Russell K. Grater: Yes. When I had been in the Park Service a little while, Herb, I didn't have enough money to go on to graduate work when I got out of college, and after I'd been with the Park Service a little while, the University of Yale was giving fellowships to the National Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Oh?

Russell K. Grater: Maybe this is new to you, but—

Herbert Evison: Yes, it is.

Russell K. Grater: Well, I was here at Lake Mead as a junior naturalist, and I thought I would apply and maybe in a few years, I could manage to get this thing, just keeping on applying every year. Well, I applied, and lo and behold, I was granted this fellowship, along with Eddie McKee, who was at Grand Canyon. That year they gave two, they screened all of them and they decided they ought to give two. So, Eddie and I were back there together, then.

Herbert Evison: Now what year would this have been?

Russell K. Grater: Let's see, that was 1938-39.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes; after I knew you.

Mrs. Grater: No, it was '39-40.

Russell K. Grater: Was it '39-40? That's right, I came in in '38, yes.

Herbert Evison: Now I took it from what you said that this graduate year at Yale had followed immediately after your getting your degree at Wabash. But it didn't.

Russell K. Grater: No, there was quite an interval.

Herbert Evison: Well, now you got out of Wabash in 1930, and before we go into your Park Service career, let's get the rest of your family history.

Herbert Evison: When did you and your wife get married?

Russell K. Grater: Well, we got married in 1933.

Herbert Evison: Boy, that was a wonderful year to get married!

Russell K. Grater: Well, we were engaged for five years, Herb, before we got married.

Herbert Evison: Yes? And her name before you married her was—

Russell K. Grater: Well, it was a very interesting name. Her name was Proffitt.

Herbert Evison: Proffitt?

Russell K. Grater: Yes, P-r-o-f-f-i-t-t.

Herbert Evison: Yes, Evelyn Proffitt?

Russell K. Grater: Right.

Herbert Evison: So, you got married in 1933. Now what had you been doing in those three years? Now, wait a minute - any children?

Russell K. Grater: Not at that time, no.

Herbert Evison: Well, what's the story?

Russell K. Grater: I have three youngsters; they're all gone, of course. The two girls and a boy; the oldest girl, Barbara, is now teaching at Fullerton High School, one of the Fullerton high schools, in California. Margaret, the next oldest, is working in educational work in Fresno; she's an instructor of teachers in methods of teaching.

Russell K. Grater: And Steve is in Walnut Creek, California, and he's been doing various jobs - security work, mostly, there.

- Herbert Evison: Now, let's get on to your career. You got out of college in 1930, and what did you do to assure yourself three meals a day?
- Russell K. Grater: Well, it's a funny thing happened, I think, from your standpoint, Herb. My senior year at Wabash College, I had the privilege of being selected as one of ten students, graduating seniors, and sent down to a state park - Turkey Run State Park in Indiana.
- Herbert Evison: Oh yes.
- Russell K. Grater: And at that time, it'd just been set up, and they were trying to get a park service started, a state park service started. I was sent down to this state park along with nine other fellows, they wanted to know what graduating seniors would do with their time if they had it - professors would come down there at night and we would have our classes and so forth, and instruction.
- Russell K. Grater: But I was down there for about two weeks or more, and in that time, of course, I got all my senior work out of the way, and I did a lot of hiking; I always liked the outdoors, anyhow; I was on the farm and all. I liked this park so very much, I decided that right then and there, while I had my degree coming up and I had my credentials coming up for teaching, and I had a good possibility of a coaching position - I decided I was going to go into park work. So I went to Indianapolis, and I interviewed, or rather, was interviewed over there, by—
- Herbert Evison: Cap Savers or Paul Brown or—
- Russell K. Grater: Liber.
- Herbert Evison: Oh, Richard Liber, the head of the department, yes.
- Russell K. Grater: And Paul Brown was there. So, Liber told me that he would give me a job at Turkey Run. They had no one down there - he would give me a job at Turkey Run if I would spend one summer in the national parks and get some idea of what the national parks were like because they were trying to pattern their program after the national parks.
- Russell K. Grater: So, he says to go out and get one summer's experience in the national parks. Well, I knew of only three at that time - I wasn't too much educated in parks; I knew of Yellowstone and Yosemite and Grand Canyon.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Russell K. Grater: So, I wrote to the director of the National Park Service as instructed, and I got back a list of 24 parks. At that time, I had never heard of them - and so I applied to these various places, and, of course, at that particular time - it wasn't a very encouraging time to apply, and—
- Herbert Evison: Oh, I know.

- Russell K. Grater: But from Yosemite, from the superintendent out there, I got a letter back saying that "We don't have a position, but we have a training school here if you'd be interested." They had the Yosemite School of Field Natural History, and they said they take 28 students from all over the United States every year.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, I thought, 28 students - I didn't have much chance of competing nationally against the competition I'd probably have - but I sent the application back anyway, and to my astonishment, I was selected. And so that year, my father couldn't help me out - he was having a tough go anyhow on the farm, so I took an old Ford that we had down on the wood lot that wouldn't run anymore, and my uncle had one that wouldn't run anymore, and I went to the junkyard and got other materials. I put all of them together, and I drove to California.
- Russell K. Grater: I attended the Yosemite School of Field Natural History all that summer, and then I went back to Indiana, and I got a job on a farm back there, Herb, for a dollar a day and my board.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah?
- Russell K. Grater: Then the next year, much to my father's chagrin, I decided to go west again - because he thought I ought to be a good farmer. I got an old car again and took off. I visited down in the southwest in early spring looking for a job.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, the upshot of that trip was that I got as far as Yellowstone, making the loop around to the northwest, snow, and all - and I had a little tent I slept in, and I got as far as Yellowstone. I thought that I should see Rocky Mountain National Park because by that time, Frank Brockman who was then at Mt. Rainier, had promised me a job there the next year as a seasonal, and this is what I started out to get.
- Russell K. Grater: Then at Glacier, they told me the same thing. So, I thought, gee, I'd be pushing my luck again. I went down to Rocky Mountain, and when I got down there, I met Dorr Yeager, and Dorr Yeager said, "Why go up to the Northwest when I can give you more here?"
- Russell K. Grater: So, I stayed around there a few days to get acquainted with the place. I had just had enough money to get home on, and I was just ready to leave when Yeager came out of the office, and he had a piece of paper, and he was waving and yelling at me. It was a telegram telling me to come up to Glacier for the summer, that they had a job for me.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, that was my first job in the Park Service - in Glacier as a seasonal naturalist in 1932.
- Herbert Evison: Under who? As chief park naturalist at that time?
- Russell K. Grater: George Ruhle.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes, Doc Ruhle. Then what?

Russell K. Grater: Then the next year, my wife and I got married on the promise of a three-month - or about a three-month - job at Glacier, you see, and so we took off to the southwest. I wanted to show her the Grand Canyon, and we went on to Yosemite, which was my first love, so to speak. While we were there, the economy had gone into a slump and I got a wire from Glacier saying that we didn't have a job, that they had to cut out positions - and I was one of the last ones to be put on.

Russell K. Grater: So that summer, we had quite a time in Yosemite. We were a little bit too proud to yell for help at home, even though we figured we couldn't get it anyway. But there we met two very fine men whom I had known, but who helped me a lot. One was Chief Ranger Townsley, and the other was Bert Harwell.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes.

Russell K. Grater: Well, they couldn't put me on the staff, but Bert Harwell kept digging up jobs that people wanted done. Harvard University wanted some stuff collected for them, and Stanford University wanted some things collected, and I got five dollars a day for doing that.

Herbert Evison: Oh?

Russell K. Grater: That was good money. Then we both applied for a job with the Yosemite Park company as dishwashers. We'll always remember being out and coming back at the end of the day after being with some people that we were showing around the park and finding that they had been down looking for the two of us and didn't find us, and they left a note on our tent saying that they'd put our name back on and we could work to the top of the list again.

Russell K. Grater: Well, that evening we were feeling pretty glum and along came Chief Ranger Townsley. He was always encouraging us and telling us to stick it out and so on, and he came on that evening and wanted to know if I had a uniform. I told him that I did, and he said that they had a seasonal ranger quit that day running the control on the top of the big Oak Flat grade, and if I wanted it, to be up there the next morning.

Russell K. Grater: Well, we both packed that night and went up that night. So that was my first real break there. I worked there in the summer, all that summer, and then we went back to Indiana again that winter, and again, worked at whatever we could get.

Russell K. Grater: The next spring I got a letter from Mr. Tillotson from Grand Canyon, and he said he remembered I had been there two years before looking for a job, and now he had one.

Russell K. Grater: So, because they were giving more time than any others, we went down to Grand Canyon, and went a month early. I had enough of this business of

going into a park I didn't know and suddenly be shoved right out before the people - which is what happened in Glacier.

Russell K. Grater: So, we went down a month early and that's where I met Jim Brooks, and Eddie McKee. Jim Brooks was chief ranger, and Eddie McKee was the chief naturalist. The second day I was there, Jim Brooks came around and said get on your uniform, we need some help. Thus, I went on a month early there. I worked as a ranger. I worked with Eddie McKee in the summer, for the summer-time program, and then in the fall I went back on Brooks' staff again as a ranger, and did patrol during the hunting season, running check stations and doing all sorts of things. Then Eddie McKee was called back to Washington on an assignment, and so Evelyn and I lived in his house one winter and took his job.

Russell K. Grater: And then about five days before he was to report back in the spring, I got a wire from George Wright - do you know George Wright?

Herbert Evison: Yes, you bet - and loved him.

Russell K. Grater: A great man. Well, George sent me a wire and said he'd like to have me join his wildlife division.

Russell K. Grater: So, the day that I quit as a naturalist, I went on with the wildlife staff, and I was with them then for five years, working out of Grand Canyon for part of that time and out of the Denver office for much of the time. And then about the time that - well, about the time that I wondered about that job continuing, these were all seasonal jobs, you know, temporary jobs - I got my first permanent appointment, which was as a junior naturalist at Lake Mead.

Russell K. Grater: This was rather interesting because the superintendent of Grand Teton at that time was ready to retire. Yet he was transferred down here, and he was a superintendent here when I was sent down here as a junior naturalist.

Herbert Evison: That would have been Guy Edwards, huh?

Russell K. Grater: Guy Edwards, you bet. And I came down here with some hesitation, but I never worked under a better superintendent. He was the first superintendent that I ever knew in my career up to that time that said, in effect, "Russ, this is your job - you do it and I'll back you." And so, this was great.

Herbert Evison: Now, you've been traveling kind of fast here. I'm interested in this Grand Canyon assignment. I am pretty sure that back in 1935, when I was in Grand Canyon, I met Eddie McKee. That was pre-Louis Schellbach days. I don't remember him at all, somehow or another, he is a great name in my Park Service history.

Russell K. Grater: This was a tragedy when the Park Service lost him, Herb.

- Herbert Evison: Yes, I know.
- Russell K. Grater: Because he was one of the best men personally that I have ever met, and he was one of the best equipped academically of any man I ever met. And a geologist deluxe. He was a really good naturalist, a real sharp naturalist; liked people, worked well with them and all that, but he had difficulties with one of the staff members there, an assistant superintendent, and so the end result was that he was finally, literally forced out. He went down to the Museum of Northern Arizona and got a job under Dr. Colton down there, as the curator of geology and I don't know what else.
- Russell K. Grater: Then he went to the University of Arizona, on their staff, their geological staff, and the USGS picked him up in a hurry once they found out he was loose. And the last - let's see - Eddie, I think, is now, or at least he's been in charge of all the USGS work in the Pacific areas, so he's a top-flight man.
- Herbert Evison: I'm glad he came into the conversation because certainly somebody should tape him sometime; it won't be me, but somebody should.
- Russell K. Grater: He is an excellent man.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, I've never heard anything but the warmest praise of Eddie McKee.
- Russell K. Grater: Eddie McKee taught me things the likes of which I never saw before or after. Eddie was a good scientist, and the one thing that Eddie taught me above all other things, well, there were two things, really - was patience, and I got impatient a lot of times in my career - but always remembered that. And the second one was the meticulous detail, in which he made sure of everything before he said, "this is so." I got to go out on field work with Eddie, and he taught me geology. I'd never had geology up to that time, but he taught me field geology and he was a crackerjack at it. Then, of course, later on, in graduate work, I took geology. But I always will remember Eddie McKee as giving me the most fundamental foundation that you could ask for, for naturalist work.
- Herbert Evison: Well now, back at some point, you mentioned having been picked out by Dorr Yeager, and I'd love to have something on the tape about Dorr Yeager and any experience you had with him. Because he was a pioneer in the museum work.
- Russell K. Grater: Yes, Dorr I met at Rocky Mountain, and, of course, I didn't go back there the next year. I went to Grand Canyon instead. I knew Dorr, mostly in the Western Regional Office. He was the regional chief of interpretation when I went in there as the regional naturalist.
- Herbert Evison: Oh yes. A long time after.
- Russell K. Grater: Yes, a long time after. I knew Dorr intermittently in between, of course, and had occasion to see him and talk to him, but never had the chance to work under him until I got to the Western Regional Office.

- Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, we'll hear more of him later, then, I'm sure. Let's see, where did we leave you last?
- Russell K. Grater: Grand Canyon we were talking about.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Herbert Evison: Do you remember anything out of the ordinary except the joy of working with Eddie McKee and others there, about your stay at Grand Canyon?
- Russell K. Grater: Well, of course, you always remember places you saw and some of the things that happen, such as knowing Ed Law. I don't know whether you ever knew Ed Law - he was an old- time ranger there. Ed Law was from southern Utah, and he knew that canyon like a book and I went with Ed Law down into the Thunder River country one time.
- Herbert Evison: Where's that?
- Russell K. Grater: Thunder River is on the north side of the river, and considerably west of the headquarters area. You reach it by going down through the Powell Saddle. Between the Powell Plateau, so called, and the main plateau, there's a saddle in there and there's an old trail that goes down through there, which is the country Zane Grey made famous, you know, with his Riders of the Purple Sage.
- Russell K. Grater: And his stories, you know, about this valley in there that was walled in and so forth - that's where it is. There's a graben, a geological graben; there's a beautiful valley down in there, and it's right in the middle of the Grand Canyon, so to speak, and has tremendous waterfalls that just burst like water mains right out of the cliffs. And Thunder River comes from there.
- Russell K. Grater: I always, of course, remember that, and Ed Law. Ed Law was a man that you would have appreciated because he didn't have a lot to say, but what he did have to say was really worth listening to. He could teach you more about how to take care of yourself in that country than anyone I ever knew.
- Russell K. Grater: I can remember going down there, and he had pack mules going down, but it would get so steep that you didn't dare ride a mule. So, you'd turn the mules loose and walk and use your hands and feet both to get down, and those mules would come down through there, and how they'd do it, I'll never know.
- Russell K. Grater: So, I always remember that, and I remember at the Grand Canyon, too, of working with other men. When I first was with the wildlife division, we did a lot of scouting the country of the Grand Canyon itself. I was working with a bunch of what they called "type mappers" - did you ever hear of them?
- Herbert Evison: Oh yes, sure. Mostly a forester's job.

- Russell K. Grater: Right. And so, my job was to go with them when they'd run into certain parts at the canyon, and not only would we check the plant growth there and types and everything, but the wildlife business was my job, you see, to check what kind of wildlife we had - we got into all kinds of country; way out in the eastern end, out toward the western end, way down there anywhere almost, and the side canyons were investigated.
- Russell K. Grater: And as far as people were concerned, I will always remember Jim Brooks the chief ranger I mentioned. He wasn't a dynamic sort of an individual, but he was a very reliable solid sort of an individual, and a man who, when he put you out, expected you to do the job, and held leave you alone and let you do it. I was much impressed with Jim Brooks.
- Herbert Evison: Did you have any particular contacts with the guy who had invited you to the job by the name of Tillotson?
- Russell K. Grater: Oh yes, I knew him quite well. As a matter of fact, he came from right near where I lived, you know. And, of course, he and I had differences once-in-awhile, but with the wildlife division. Let me tell you one, with no reflection on the man, but it just happened.
- Herbert Evison: Go ahead.
- Russell K. Grater: I was making studies of wildlife in Clear Creek, which is right next to Bright Angel; and at that time, the Harvey Company wanted to put in another camp in Clear Creek like they have in Bright Angel. They would bring parties down to Bright Angel, around to Clear Creek, and then on Park Service Trail to Cape Royal. There they'd be met by busses and taken to the north rim and bring them back down to Phantom Ranch, making a loop.
- Russell K. Grater: Sounded very good - except that, well, I had no particular objections to that. I didn't like the idea too well, because what they wanted to do was to go into Clear Creek and build a couple of fences completely across Clear Creek and have it be a big holding corral for their mules - and there were bighorn down in that country.
- Russell K. Grater: I objected on the basis of wildlife because I said that they should not fence that canyon, and furthermore, if they wanted these mules in there, let them take their own food in there for them, and keep them in a side canyon. I suggested a side canyon close to where they wanted to build their accommodations; that was the place to do it.
- Russell K. Grater: Gee, when that report hit the desk, it blew the top off something because Tillie called me in and he pulled out this report and told me that before this report goes in, "you will change your recommendation."
- Russell K. Grater: I told him that I wouldn't change my recommendation because that was the way I saw it. And that I was being paid to give my professional opinion on something, so that was what it was.

Herbert Evison: Right.

Russell K. Grater: Well, right then and there, he hit the ceiling. So, the report went on into the Director's office, and the Director upheld me. Well, that ended it for a long time with Tillie. He had nothing to do with me after that.

Herbert Evison: Did you finally make up and become friends?

Russell K. Grater: Finally made up, yes. I got an order to go over to Grand Canyon National Monument, and to accompany the superintendent. Up to that time, we'd had nothing to say to each other for months. So, when we started over there, he wanted me to drive. And we hadn't gone very far when he turned to me and he said, "You know, I think this is a lot of damn foolishness." I told him that I agreed.

Russell K. Grater: So, from that time on, we got on real well. But I suppose Tillie was under pressure to probably put that thing in, and to have some upstart come in there, you know, and throw a monkey wrench into it, I can imagine he had his opinions of that.

Herbert Evison: Now all this time in Grand Canyon, you were actually a Washington office employee, huh? Part of George Wright's division.

Russell K. Grater: Well, I had been there one year when I worked with Brooks and with McKee.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: There I was under George Wright. And I worked out of there, and there were several interesting assignments. There's a game refuge out here, for example, and I was on the initial survey of that thing.

Herbert Evison: Oh?

Russell K. Grater: There was a man by the name of Sans - S-a-n-s, I believe was the way he spelled it. He was the chief of the Reno office of the old Biological Survey. He and I and Evelyn went up at the north end of Nevada and ran a survey up there, and I was representing the Park Service. We made an investigation of a proposed enlargement for the Charles Sheldon Antelope Refuge up there, and then we came down and checked this other one out down here. We also checked one at Winnemucca Lake and various other places.

Russell K. Grater: But we checked this big refuge down here and proposed it. And, of course, while I was on that assignment was when I first ran into you on this trip down to Organ Pipe.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes. Well, there are lots of things about that trip that I remember, and I would like to get on here some of the things that you remember about that trip. The conditions under which it was made—

Russell K. Grater: The conditions were gosh, awful, as you remember. I remember being on the inside of that U-shaped hotel, in July, where we stayed at Ajo.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes.

Russell K. Grater: Hotter than a firecracker. I remember going out for an evening, and everybody in town, I think, sat on the lawn in that park to keep cool in the evening.

Russell K. Grater: But I always will remember the astonishment that everybody experienced when we found that monument on the hillside up there, indicating we were in old Mexico.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes.

Russell K. Grater: And the trouble we had getting to that point in the first place, and the negative reaction at the idea of turning around and going back. We had to continue on the same route.

Russell K. Grater: And I always will remember the liquid diplomacy that took place down there at this little town at Sonoita after we had found our way over to that seven miles to Sonoita by twenty-one miles of road. Remember that Indian at Quitobaquito?

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: He didn't know where that town was, but he knew that road would lead you to it somewhere. It was just a little cowtown. But one more thing, before I get away from it - the Grand Canyon is the place where I first met Natt Dodge.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes, that's where I first met him, too.

Russell K. Grater: And Natt, to my way of thinking, is one of the really greats in the Park Service. I got to know Natt so well - he and his wife and it's been a relationship that we've kept up through the years. I'm very fond of him.

Herbert Evison: Me, too.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, I'm very fond of that man and his wife.

Herbert Evison: I remember on that trip to Organ Pipe, the roads that we followed, I don't know whether you were in the new Pontiac or not, but I know that I was, with Carroll Wegeman, you remember?

Russell K. Grater: Oh yes, I do.

Herbert Evison: And time and again, going down one of those washes and having the bumper guard scrape on the road in back of us - it was just that - just like that, and, of course, that was part of the reason why we didn't want to turn back from Quitobaquito.

Herbert Evison: But I loved that - your reference to the ending of our trip there at Sonoita, because you remember, we couldn't make our story understood by the Mexicans, so some hanger-on went across to the Alamo bar and brought the bartender over there to interpret for us, which he did quite successfully, and then we all went back and patronized the bar - it was my first experience of Mexican beer, which is good beer.

Russell K. Grater: I know; it was Mexican beer that sort of floated us out of there.

Herbert Evison: Yes, it was - and then you remember on that same trip, we went up in to the Kofa Mountains.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, and I remember Wegeman. We were running late, you know, and we didn't know what happened to him, and he was about out of water when he got back.

Herbert Evison: Yes, we all were about run out of water. Do you remember that tepid stuff that we got from a water tank when we finally had our thirst relieved?

Russell K. Grater: Oh, I surely do, and I remember up in Palm Canyon there, in the Kofas, where I was astonished at what I saw there, and the great numbers of bighorn that especially interested me around that region, and things of that nature. That was an area Evelyn and I visited not too long ago. We went back up there to take a look at it.

Herbert Evison: Palm Canyon?

Russell K. Grater: Yes, Palm Canyon.

Herbert Evison: I remember across from us in the side canyon was kind of a shallow overhang where the sheep apparently took their rest.

Russell K. Grater: Right. Now that was a good wildlife area, and, of course, that interested me because I was working with wildlife.

Russell K. Grater: I also remember I guess you weren't along, but Chuck Richey was - and we investigated the country immediately after that in southwestern Colorado, over there in the San Juans.

Herbert Evison: No, I wasn't along on that.

Russell K. Grater: But there was Ben Thompson, and, of course, Wegeman, and Chuck Richey and myself, and who were some of the others - I don't recall right now.

Russell K. Grater: But we investigated the San Juan Mountains as a proposed park, and that was quite an experience.

Herbert Evison: You bet - that's wonderful country. Good rough country to wander over.

Herbert Evison: Now, all this - in all this reconnaissance or exploration or whatever you want to call it, you were still acting as a member of George Wright's outfit, right?

Russell K. Grater: Yes.

Herbert Evison: How long did that continue?

Russell K. Grater: I was with George's outfit from 1935 to about, to—

Herbert Evison: Well now, wait a minute, George died in February 1936. But you're talking about the outfit that he headed there during that period.

Russell K. Grater: That's right.

Russell K. Grater: I will always remember George Wright. Do you know how I met him?

Herbert Evison: No.

Russell K. Grater: I had never seen George Wright, you know, and I went back to a wildlife conference in Washington, DC.

Herbert Evison: When would this have been?

Russell K. Grater: In '38. Or '37.

Herbert Evison: Well - no, he was dead before then.

Russell K. Grater: Well, this was before he died.

Mrs. Grater: It was '35.

Russell K. Grater: Thirty-five - '35? My wife remembers dates better than I do.

Herbert Evison: Yes, yes.

Russell K. Grater: Well, in any event, I saw him back there, and I went into the Washington office to look him up, and the place was still having people coming in from all over, and I didn't know what he looked like, but I had no sooner walked in the door, really, than this very fine looking fellow walked in there and he says, "I bet your name is Russ Grater" and I told him, "Yes, and I'll bet your name is George Wright?" and he said, it was, and that was it.

Herbert Evison: Oh?

Russell K. Grater: But he didn't know me, and I didn't know him, but I think I would have picked him out of a crowd. He had a personality that was just tremendous.

Herbert Evison: One of the finest and one of the most lovable individuals I ever knew.

Russell K. Grater: Yes. He and Joe Dixon. Did you know Joe Dixon?

Herbert Evison: No, I never knew Dixon. No.

Russell K. Grater: Dixon was another one of these men who was awfully well versed in his field and extremely capable, a rather quiet individual, awfully well liked, seemed to get along real well, and he was very unruffled.

Herbert Evison: Yes?

Russell K. Grater: And he's another fellow you could learn a lot from, you know?

Herbert Evison: Yeah. I'm sure that there are other things that ought to go on this tape, that you remember from your years as a part of that wildlife division. Of course, you had other chiefs in there, I think Carl Russell headed it at one time; I'm sure Earl Trager headed it for some time.

Herbert Evison: Who were your other bosses in there, if any?

Russell K. Grater: Well, let's see, in the field, oh - what was his name in Omaha? Murie, Adolph.

Herbert Evison: Adolph Murie? Oh yes. Tell me something about your association with Ade?

Russell K. Grater: Well, while I worked under Adolph Murie, I didn't have what I called direct supervision under him. He just gave me a territory to cover, and I covered it. Then I would go to Omaha where he was stationed, and we would talk over things.

Russell K. Grater: But as far as working directly under him in the same office or something, I didn't. I was in Denver, and he was in Omaha.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes.

Russell K. Grater: And he would send me assignments to cover, things like that. But I never really knew him as a supervisor, especially, I knew him more as a person.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: And also, of course, I met him again, was with him again when I was in the Western Regional Office. I went up to Alaska, and he was at Mount McKinley at that time, and I went out with him up there. So, my association with him was rather sketchy in many respects. I knew him more as a person than as a supervisor, a thing like that.

Herbert Evison: Well, I take it that the relationship was a pleasant one.

Russell K. Grater: Oh yes. Of course, at that particular time, he was having his problems in Yellowstone.

Herbert Evison: Yes, the ecology of the coyote.

Russell K. Grater: Yes. And so, I kind of caught it as a result, coming in there.

Russell K. Grater: The first time I ever went into Yellowstone, Herb, and you'd find it interesting maybe - the superintendent who was—

Herbert Evison: Was it Toll?

Russell K. Grater: Roger Toll.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

- Russell K. Grater: I went into his office, and everything was dead quiet, and he didn't look up or anything, he just waited. This went on for several minutes, and finally he looked up and he said, "Well, what did you find wrong with the park now?" Here I was a CCC technician, you know, coming in and I'll always remember that. I said, "Well, I haven't found anything wrong with it yet, but give me six months and maybe I will!" And I always remember, he just grinned, and he said, "Well, I think we'll get along fine!"
- Mrs. Grater: His name was Rogers, dear.
- Russell K. Grater: Rogers, excuse me. Rogers. I didn't think it sounded like Toll. Rogers.
- Herbert Evison: Edmund Rogers? Oh, yes. This would have been after Toll - his successor.
- Russell K. Grater: But I always will remember that comment he made, that I think you and I are going to get along. I always will remember at that time, I'd been warned when I went in that there had been a little friction between the CCC personnel and the Park Service personnel, and the superintendent was getting a little bit touchy about it with the CCC personnel and the Park Service personnel, and the superintendent was getting a little bit touchy about it with the CCC boys telling them what they thought ought to be done around the park, and so that was my introduction into Yellowstone and to him.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, now I hadn't realized before that at that period you were on the CCC rolls.
- Russell K. Grater: Yes.
- Herbert Evison: When did you start as a CCC employee?
- Russell K. Grater: Actually, I was paid out of CCC funds when it went under George Wright.
- Herbert Evison: Oh yes.
- Russell K. Grater: And I stayed on CCC funds then until I actually took a permanent job here at Lake Mead as a junior naturalist.
- Herbert Evison: Well, you're one more former CCC employee who stayed on with the Park Service and made a career out of it, and I take it from the way you talk about things that you don't regret it.
- Russell K. Grater: Oh, not at all. I had a chance or two to leave the Park Service had I wanted to. When I was in Denver and the Wildlife Division, you see, was disbanded literally—
- Herbert Evison: Well, it was turned over to the Fish and Wildlife Service, wasn't it?
- Russell K. Grater: Yes, they only retained Vic Caholana and two or three others, I guess - Murie and Lowell Sumner - and the rest of us had to go. Well, at that time they offered me this job down here. At the same time, the old Biological survey then offered me a job running a water fowl refuge, down in

Louisiana or up in the Dakotas, either one. And I could have gone either way with them. I could have gone there, or I could have gone to the Park Service. So, I stayed with the Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Of course, if I remember rightly, you did leave the Park Service at one time and then came back again.

Russell K. Grater: Yes.

Herbert Evison: I don't know what other things to ask you about the period that you were part of the wildlife division, but if you can think of anything else, let's get it on.

Russell K. Grater: Oh, there were interesting studies made, of course, you got into interesting territory. I had Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana and the two Dakotas and Kansas and Nebraska.

Herbert Evison: Hardly any country.

Russell K. Grater: No country. Right! So, any time there was some kind of a puzzle come along, I usually got roped in on it.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: I suppose the most drastic one was the time when they had this bubonic plague scare in Yellowstone, and somebody - they had found an infected ground squirrel at Mammoth, and it was carrying plague. They had it checked, and the Public Health Service got all stirred up about it and wanted to exterminate an enormous amount of wildlife in the region and along all the roads and trails and I don't know what all.

Russell K. Grater: So, I was sent up there to see what I could find out about it, and Joe Dixon had been up there to make a review of it, which I did, also. Then I went back to Denver and spent the better part of a month around the library - the medical library there in Denver - studying about fleas and finding out all about fleas. I learned everything imaginable about fleas and how long they could live when they got off a host, and how long they could live without moisture and so on.

Russell K. Grater: The upshot of it was that the wildlife division recommended then to the powers that be, that they go into Mammoth and use cyanide guns and cyanide everything around the Mammoth area.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: Which we did.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: And we had no more problem - that ended it. But I got in on the problems with the deer and the elk and the infected mountain sheep problems, and—

Herbert Evison: What was the infected mountain sheep problem?

Russell K. Grater: They were getting diseases from domestic sheep; the ranges overlapped, you see, and domestic sheep diseases would affect them, too. So, we had that kind of a problem. There was a condition that the mountain sheep would acquire and would get and that - it's like pneumonia.

Herbert Evison: Is it septicemia?

Russell K. Grater: Yes, that's it.

Herbert Evison: Well now, isn't that also what affects the buffalo in Yellowstone, or is that something different?

Russell K. Grater: I don't know whether it does or not. There is a Bangs disease there that affects the buffalo.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I know. I guess that's what I was thinking of. It has a more scientific name than that, though, doesn't it?

Russell K. Grater: Yes, but I can't quote it for you right now - it's been too many years.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, you were thus concerned with diseased wildlife in various places of various kinds.

Russell K. Grater: Part of my job was to run surveys and arrange surveys and things like that; find out what the carrying capacities were and so on, and that stood me in good stead later on, because I actually used it in later assignments.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, let's get you placed in time. How long were you a part of the wildlife division? Do you remember?

Russell K. Grater: Up until 1938.

Herbert Evison: That long?

Russell K. Grater: '38.

Herbert Evison: Yes? Well, where did you move on to then?

Russell K. Grater: I came here. As a junior naturalist at Lake Mead.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes. Who was the senior naturalist, or were you it?

Russell K. Grater: Bob Rose was the senior naturalist, and you'll never believe it, but we had five permanent naturalists on the staff at that time.

Herbert Evison: By 1938?

Russell K. Grater: Yes.

Herbert Evison: And the place had only been set up about a year before, I think.

Russell K. Grater: Yes.

Herbert Evison: Well, of course, I remember that Bob Rose was one of the people with us on that expedition into the Organ Pipe cactus.

Russell K. Grater: Yes.

Herbert Evison: Tell me something about the Lake Mead experience. The lake wasn't anywhere near up by that time, was it?

Russell K. Grater: Right. I got to make the studies on this lake while it was rising. There had been no particular studies made of the wildlife conditions here - what was actually here. The Biological Survey had a little office up at Overton, and they were more interested in the lake as a wildlife refuge because it had been so designated, you know.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes.

Russell K. Grater: So, when the lake was coming up, I had a chance to watch the invasion of the lowlands by the water, and I had wonderful experiences visiting these islands out here as they formed, and taking wildlife off of them, because you got a cross-section of what was in an area just by visiting a little island.

Russell K. Grater: So, all the small mammals, all the reptiles and things like that - I had a good chance, then, to make those studies, and the superintendent here was very agreeable to that. So, I spent quite a lot of my time as a naturalist at that time, just making biological studies on the lake and fishery studies on the lake and one of those led to a rather interesting thing. At that time, Herb, they were going to put in a big development up here at Pearce's Ferry. A CCC fly camp was up there. They fixed up the beach and I don't know what all; they were getting ready to put in a pretty good establishment there from the standpoint of a resort type of thing.

Russell K. Grater: And a man by the name of Ed Schenk, who was a geologist, a CCC geologist here, he and I went up in the lower Grand Canyon by boat. He was going to study the geology up there and I was checking up on mountain sheep at that time trying to find out where they were all located and so on and how many we had and what have you. On that trip, also, I was checking conditions for fishes - bass, and I had a turbidity outfit with me, and I could check turbidity and the pH content in the water.

Russell K. Grater: We got up to the lower Grand Canyon a little ways, and it was a hot day in the middle of June or July, somewhere in there. We didn't have good drinking water along, so we figured if the laws of physics meant anything, we ought to be able to lower a five-gallon milk can we had overboard and when it got down into cold water, the cold water would replace the warm water in the milk can.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: So, we lowered it away on my line that I used for turbidity testing, and it didn't much more than get out of sight until it stopped. So, we pulled it back up and it was full of mud.

- Russell K. Grater: No one at that time realized that there was a delta forming down in there out of sight, and so we spent one day and part of another just crossing that canyon back and forth and taking depth samples and outlining that delta.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, Schenk then turned in his report, you know, in which he pointed out that there would soon be no Pearce's Ferry, it would be blocked off by mud and silt. This really created a storm, to say the least, because they were just getting ready to build a big building down there. So, they never built the building.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Russell K. Grater: So, Pearce's Ferry was never developed because we had discovered this delta as we went up in the canyon that time.
- Herbert Evison: And yet, Pearce's Ferry is quite a place of resort now, I understand, for Kingman people.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, they may go in there, but it's isolated, you see, from the lake now. They can get close to it. There's a place that's over at Gregg Basin which is near Pearce's Ferry where most of them go now to launch boats and do one thing and another. They couldn't launch a boat at Pearce's Ferry, I don't think it would be possible. Pearce's Ferry is just such an isolated area, up there away from the lake.
- Herbert Evison: I've never been over there; I've flown over it, but—
- Russell K. Grater: Oh, beautiful country.
- Herbert Evison: George Bagglely flew me over years ago.
- Russell K. Grater: Oh yes. George was my superintendent here when I came back here for my second assignment.
- Herbert Evison: Yes? Well, how long were you in on your first assignment here?
- Russell K. Grater: I was here in 1938. In '39 and '40, I got this scholarship at Yale, came back and was on duty here only for a brief period of time and was transferred to Zion as the naturalist, chief naturalist of Zion, if you want to call it that - at the time. It was an assistant rating. I had a junior rating here. Well, then I was in Zion for quite a while, and until the war broke out. Then, after the war broke, I was sent to Yosemite, and I worked there especially with sailors and people on submarine duty. Trying to break them out of the claustrophobia that some of them had and the feeling of being confined and working with them in other ways.
- Russell K. Grater: Then that position was discontinued, and about the time it was about to be discontinued, I went down to San Francisco to see what I could line up in the way of teaching, maybe. I was offered a teaching job at Marin Jr. College, teaching geology. When I came back to San Francisco, or Berkeley, that night - I was staying at Berkeley - was ready to take a job as an instructor in geology.

- Russell K. Grater: There was a call there on my desk in the room telling me that the Air Service Command in Sacramento had called and wanted me to come up there and see them.
- Russell K. Grater: So, I went up there, and the upshot of that was I wound up as an instructor under the Air Service Command there at the Sacramento Air Depot, instructing supervisors in personnel management and job management, the art of instruction, and personnel relations, this sort of thing.
- Russell K. Grater: And then from there I was sent to Patterson Field, Dayton, Ohio. There I received a month's training in these particular fields and then came back and was given a job as director of the Post Schools Division of the Supervisory Training Department.
- Herbert Evison: Well now, were you in uniform then?
- Russell K. Grater: No, not with this job.
- Herbert Evison: Civilian employee, then.
- Russell K. Grater: Civilian employee, yes. Still under Civil Service, but civilian employee. We had at that time in Sacramento, about well, there were over 18,000 employees in the field, and about 3500 civilian supervisors to be trained, and about 800 military.
- Russell K. Grater: This was an interesting assignment because I enjoyed it, and I had quite a staff of my own there to do instruction. My job was so interesting, and I got to know so many supervisors around there. If something new came in on the field, - I've always said that's the best place for a spy in the world - if something came in on the field or if some supervisor were to call me and say, "Russ, I have something interesting - you ought to come over and look at it" - you go and look at something like the night fighters when they first developed, and the use of radar when it first came in, and you see all those things.
- Russell K. Grater: So, I was there until the war was just about over, and I remember very well two episodes I'll tell you about. One was the colonel in charge of our department - we always had a military man as well as a civilian supervisor - this colonel called me in one day and he said, "Russ, this war isn't going to last much longer." I wondered how he knew that, and he said, "Well, I just know" and he said, "You were with the National Park Service before you came in here, weren't you?" I told him yes, and he said, "Well, would you like to go back with them?" I told him "Yes," and he said, "You better get back, because you're a civilian and when this thing is over, the uniformed men will have preference over you."
- Russell K. Grater: So, I said, "I can't get out of this thing. It took a lot of working around security to get the job in the first place" as I had access to so many things out in the field. And he said, "Well, you get the offer of the job and I'll get you out."

- Russell K. Grater: So, I sent a letter to Washington and the director wrote back and said we have a position available for you as chief naturalist in Rocky Mountain National Park. I could take it as soon as I could leave there. Well, I took this letter in and showed it to this colonel, and in twenty-four hours, he had my clearance off that field, and I will never know how he got it so fast. But he did.
- Herbert Evison: Oh boy!
- Russell K. Grater: The second thing was - and it always struck my sense of humor a lot - that we had a crusty old general there on this field that decided that all of his officers should have this personnel training course - personnel relations and management and all these other things.
- Russell K. Grater: So, we had to give it to them. Well, we never gave any of them examinations, of course; you give them the training and that's it. But the old general wanted the examination given to all of these men, and so we cooked up - or my instructors and I cooked up - what we thought was an examination any five-year-old kid could pass - you know, true-false sort of thing - and to our astonishment, there were five officers who flunked it.
- Russell K. Grater: And I'll always remember, Herb, I got a letter from a colonel, and it started out with paragraph one - he the undersigned had, been informed by the commanding general that he was to take such and such a course on such and such a date.
- Russell K. Grater: Paragraph two - and I can quote it - he said, "This is to inform you that there is no damn civilian who can flunk a colonel!" And then in paragraph three - I can quote, too - he said, "You will take the necessary steps to correct same." One of the funniest things I ever did see.
- Herbert Evison: Do you still have that?
- Russell K. Grater: No, I bundled it up and sent it to the commanding general. I said I thought he could handle that one better than I could.
- Herbert Evison: Oh, that's marvelous!
- Russell K. Grater: Oh, it was really something. Well, after that, I went to Rocky Mountain National Park, and I was there when the war was over, I was there just a few weeks until Japan was bombed, and that was it.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Russell K. Grater: And then they got the idea, you know, of sending everybody back to where they were when the war broke. So back to Zion I went, and I had no more than got back to Zion, really, until the Director's Office sent me a letter saying we had a little puzzle up in Mount Rainier and that we'd like for you to go up and work that one over. I couldn't see any advantage to that as I had Zion and Bryce and five national monuments under me.
- Herbert Evison: Yes?

- Russell K. Grater: And I told them there wasn't nearly the responsibility at Rainier that there was where I was. I didn't know why they wanted me to go up there, but they said to go and that there were things up there that they wanted to see what I could do with them.
- Russell K. Grater: And so, I went. Then at Rainier, of course, that's where I met John Preston - I'd met him before, but there I worked under John Preston, and Spud Bill - two great guys, and a fine staff. I can just talk all day about some of that staff - Lenny Volz and Bill Butler and fellows like that. It was there that my oldest daughter, Barbara, developed pneumonia. It would come and go and come and go - and finally the doctors told me in Tacoma to either get her to a dry climate or lose her. So, I wrote the Director of the Park Service and told him that I had to get into a dry climate, that I'd take any kind of a job that the Park Service had, where it was dry country - in the southwest, preferably, of course.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, I didn't hear, and I didn't hear, and I was beginning to get a little desperate, and about that time, a professor that wrote this book, two volumes on our national parks, down at the University of Southern California, he sent me a letter and he said, "Why don't you come down here and join my staff?"
- Russell K. Grater: So, I thought, well, that would solve the whole thing, and so I worked up a date to go see him. About two days before I was to leave to go down there, I got a wire from Washington saying they had a job open at Lake Mead.
- Russell K. Grater: Now, if that hadn't come, Herb, if I'd have gone down to Southern California, I'd probably have wound up down there. But just two days before I was to go there, the Mead job offer arrived.
- Russell K. Grater: So, then we bundled up and came down here, and of course, everything cleared up for these kids of mine in this desert - it did them a world of good.
- Russell K. Grater: Now I came in here as the chief naturalist.
- Herbert Evison: Now who was superintendent by that time - Baggley?
- Russell K. Grater: Baggley.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. And how long?
- Russell K. Grater: I was in here then for almost five years.
- Herbert Evison: It's a long assignment to have - long by present-day standards, anyway.
- Russell K. Grater: Oh, yes, but I enjoyed it thoroughly. I have always argued, Herb, that this is one of the best places in the whole service for a naturalist to get training for the very reason that if you can get people here in this kind of a situation interested in natural history when they come down here just to boat or fish or swim, you've got something to do.

- Russell K. Grater: You're dealing with the same people basically that go to a national park, but you don't have anything going for you, and so you have this problem of what to do with these people to really sell the place as an interpretive thing. I have always argued that if you can develop an interpretive program in a recreation area, you can do a bang-up job in any park.
- Russell K. Grater: If you can take the people who come to a recreation area and get them around to the point where they're interested, what can you do in a park when everything is going for you? They come in to see the park. So, I've always argued that this is one of the best places to come, this type of place, to get good background experience - good training.
- Herbert Evison: You were about to give me what you called a side light.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, I've had the fellows ask me about interpretation, of course, and that was my field. And there was always a reluctance on the part of so many fellows to even consider coming to Lake Mead or to a recreation area.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, the reason they always gave me was, well, there's really nothing there; that the interpretive program was not the major thing, and so forth; and that when you get there, you're on a dead end. I told them, well, yes, you really were. At that time, I was being asked, I was in the Regional Office, and I told them that I used to be down there so I'm on a dead end over here. Bob Rose was there, and he was the chief geologist in Washington. Bert Long was there, and he was the chief of the mining division for the Bureau of Mines. Don Erskine was there at that time, and Don was in charge of all their audio-visual stuff back in Washington. Wally Wallace was here, and Wally was in charge of aquatics and fisheries work, Johnny Good was here, and Johnny Good was just a superintendent, you know, and that - oh, what was the other fellow's name, he used to be park naturalist here, then he was regional naturalist down in the Northeast Region—
- Russell K. Grater: I said, yes, you're on a dead end here, all right, when you come down here. That's just kind of a side light.
- Russell K. Grater: But the thing is, Herb, that has impressed me through the years was the development of the interpretive program and the philosophy of the interpretive programs through the years. And I got to see a lot of that because I worked for I had my first experience, you see, under Doc Bryant, and his philosophy I enjoyed. I worked with some awfully good naturalists - Carl Russell, of course, and men like McKee and that particular stripe. I watched it grow from a time when you were a posey picker, a 90-day wonder, so to speak, and what have you, when there were fist fights often, between uniformed personnel, between a naturalist and a ranger. I remember Frank Brockman up at Rainier, when every time he went up to Paradise Valley, he'd practically have to have a fist fight with

somebody up there because they were always making remarks about the naturalists.

Russell K. Grater: But out of all this, I saw this program develop. In my particular case, I really got acquainted with the rangers, you might say, for the first time in Zion, when I went up there as a chief naturalist, from the interpretive standpoint.

Russell K. Grater: And Fred Fagergren, who was on the staff and who developed into the chief ranger up there, would lead hikes. He liked to lead hikes and give talks for me and all this sort of thing, and run a museum, do all sorts of things. This was new for a chief ranger to do things like that.

Russell K. Grater: And when I went to Mount Rainier, you couldn't have asked for better cooperation than I got up there. There was Bill Butler, who was willing to do anything, helped me build exhibits and all sorts of things; you had to build your own stuff, you had nobody to build it. There was a superintendent solidly in back of me, and rangers up there who actually gave programs for me at Paradise Valley and over at Yakima Park, and just went out of their way to help out.

Russell K. Grater: On the opposite side of the fence, if they needed any help and if I could work in with them, I did. I ran check stations, I ran patrols, and so on. I've done a whole lot of odds and ends of things, and I've come to the conclusion that we were missing the boat with the rangers. The rangers are so well informed and have so many pertinent experiences and some of them are darn better speakers than some of our naturalists anyhow.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Take Natt Dodge when he started; he was a park ranger.

Russell K. Grater: When I first went into Rocky Mountain National Park after this war was over, Bart Herschler was the chief ranger. I don't know what happened before, but I do know that when I went down to my office, for the first day, there was a connecting doorway between my office and Bart's, and Bart walked into that doorway and he said, "This is to let you know that this doorway will remain closed," and I about fell over, you know?

Russell K. Grater: And so, I went to work just trying to swing Bart around to my line of thinking, and every time that I was going up on Trail Ridge, I'd tell Bart that I was going. I'd just tell him I was going and ask if there was something I could do up there, any patrol work that I could do today, and pretty soon I was running ranger patrol, literally, on Trail Ridge any time I went up there.

Russell K. Grater: Well, this went on for about three or four months, and one day Bart stuck his head in the door, and he said, "I think we'll leave the door open." And from that point, you know, he led hikes, he gave talks at campfire programs, and all sorts of things, and I never had a more cooperative chief ranger.

Russell K. Grater: And I've come to the conclusion that we do miss a bit in the interpretive branch as I knew it, because too often, we didn't really bend over a little bit backwards, if necessary, to work closely with these people and take full advantage of their capabilities and give them a chance to do these things. I never worked in a park - and I say this honestly - I have never worked in a park where I had any trouble with the staff - the ranger staff. Or with the maintenance staff, and the reason why it was so with the maintenance staff, I think, was because I'd go out and help run trucks along with them, and snowgos and what have you and shovel snow. I think as the interpretive division developed, it was much closer, and a better-knit group as time went on, perhaps, than before or since.

Russell K. Grater: Now I think the programs have been kind of split apart a little, that is, it's a kind of an amalgamation here anymore. It's pretty hard to say what is an interpretive program and what isn't anymore.

Russell K. Grater: But I think there was a relationship that I am sorry to see disappearing. And I see it disappearing in the various places that I go.

Russell K. Grater: But this doesn't mean that you have any less capable men doing the two types of work. We have men in here that I think are just as capable in the ranger division, in the so-called protective division, ranger series or whatever it may be.

Russell K. Grater: I've visited several parks and several monuments since I've been out of the Park Service, and you were talking about the quality of personnel?

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: Well, frankly, I'm impressed. We've been to several places - monuments and parks and where not and talking to these fellows. First off, when I go in, I never tell them who I am and it doesn't matter - they may never have heard of me, anyhow.

Russell K. Grater: But I wanted to see what they do and how they react to a visitor and how do they treat a visitor, and do they actually go out of their way to try and help a visitor. And I'd say that 95 percent of them do. They're very congenial people. As a matter of fact, we went down to Gila Cliff Dwellings not long ago, and just as soon as the superintendent down there found out that I'd been in the Park Service, we had to come down and meet his wife and have some cookies and something or other. This is the little type of hospitality that I've always enjoyed and remembered for so many years, but that's missing in some of our places now.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I suppose.

Russell K. Grater: Because I think the Park Service has gotten bigger and because it gets bigger and bigger, there tends to be a little less personal interchange between people - and this is regrettable. Now, in here, for example, we live here. We're in a Park Service area, literally - we live here, the Park

Service is down here. I don't know anywhere near all those people. You know, they have 150-some employees. And I can't begin to meet all of them, nor all the rangers, by any means. But I try to, and I find them a very fine group.

Russell K. Grater: But I have the privilege - and I call it a privilege - of actually, you might say, sitting in on the beginning of the interpretive division, and doing my little part of it, at whatever I could work, contributing to it, and watching this thing develop and develop, and watching the techniques develop. As a matter of fact, that's why I was sent back to Harpers Ferry - to train in methods and skills and techniques of interpretation.

Russell K. Grater: And these are things which I think are very worthwhile. You were talking again about the spirit of people. Of course, I remember the seven-day week, we never thought about it at all, and I remember being up in places like Zion or Rainier, places like that; or Rocky Mountain, of being up by 7:30 in the morning, and if you got in by 11 o'clock at night, you were doing pretty well.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Russell K. Grater: And I can remember full well that when 5 o'clock rolls around, it just happens to be an hour in the day, and if the museum is full of people, you don't just throw them out of there, you announce that the museum will be closed very shortly but go ahead and take a look around. If people come in, you talk to them a minute and point out that we'll be closing in just a minute, and so on.

Russell K. Grater: But you don't try to run them out. If it means a little extra time, so what? Evelyn, for example, always expected me home when I arrived, never before. And I think it's a feeling that becomes a way of life.

Herbert Evison: Oh, no question about it.

Russell K. Grater: And I know that I've had people remark that the Park Service has a spirit and a morale and a sense of public service that you don't see very often - maybe never. And I agree. This is one thing that I was very proud of in being with the Park Service. It was an agency, and is an agency, that is concerned about the visitors, more concerned about the visitors and what they're doing in the park and what that park stands for and what that park has in it, than in the financial end of it. I came back to the Park Service when I left it that time I left from here and was gone two years.

Herbert Evison: Teaching?

Russell K. Grater: In a sense, yes. I was hired by the Long Beach unified school district to run their outdoor education program. I wanted somebody to not only run their program, but to develop a teaching curriculum.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

- Russell K. Grater: And so, I developed a teaching curriculum for teaching kids in the out-of-doors. I spent two years down there. I'd been there one year when I got a call offering me the regional job in Omaha, and I told them no, I promised them at Long Beach that I would stay at least two years.
- Russell K. Grater: Just when my two years was about up, the Regional Office in San Francisco called and said, "Why don't you come up here?" So, I did. The point is that the job I had there paid more than the Park Service could offer, and I enjoyed it, I enjoyed working with these kids, and they're the future, let's face it.
- Russell K. Grater: But I couldn't get the Park Service out of my system, and so I came back to the Park Service, which I have never regretted.
- Herbert Evison: That would have been about when, Russ?
- Russell K. Grater: When I went down there?
- Herbert Evison: Yes. What were the two years that you were there?
- Russell K. Grater: I left here in 1954-55 and came back into the Park Service in '57.
- Herbert Evison: Well now, you became what? Regional naturalist in '57, and that was in – I guess that was the Western Region by that time, wasn't it? Instead of Region Four?
- Russell K. Grater: No, it was still Region Four at that time. Of course, it changed later.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. And that would still have been under Lawrence Merriam and Herb Maier, who would have been there then. Tell me about some of the people you were associated with there and what your job required of you.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, first, Mr. Merriam; let's talk about him a second. He was a man that frankly, I enjoyed working under. I've heard a lot of comments pro and con about Mr. Merriam, but he was a man that as long as you were doing your best to do your job, he was right with you.
- Russell K. Grater: I had no critical things to say about Mr. Merriam. As a matter of fact, I had an idea that I wanted to develop about underwater parks. I tried to get the Park Service interested in underwater parks from way back and couldn't get them started on it.
- Russell K. Grater: George Collins finally agreed on his seashore survey to put in a plug for underwater parks. So, Bob Sharp maybe you know Bob Sharp - well, Bob was a convert and so Bob wrote it up, and George Collins accepted it.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, Mr. Merriam actually went out of his way to see that I got opportunities to study this thing a little more.
- Russell K. Grater: As for Herb Maier, he was just lots of fun to be around, and he got things done. In fact, he got them done so well, he ran off with all my cookies in my desk every day he knew I had a little thing there that I made tea out of,

and I didn't go out for a tea break, you see, or a coffee break. Rather, I made a little tea there and I always had some cookies to go along with it. And so, if I missed them, I knew who had them. But I enjoyed Herb Maier very much. Dorr Yeager, I worked under Dorr Yeager there and later under Ben Gale. And Dorr was another one of these men who would give you a lot of free rein. Ben Gale gave you a lot of responsibilities. Ben was very much inclined to say this is your job, and now you do it. He'd give you all the support necessary, and we'd sit and talk by the hours on some of these problems that might come up. I thought Ben was very, very excellent.

Russell K. Grater: My job was as simply stated, of course, was to review and to help where possible in each of the parks and monuments with their interpretive programs.

Russell K. Grater: So if they had a program like in Yosemite, where they, maybe, were going to do something or other, build a building or propose a museum or something or other, or you name it - you'd go in and you'd study their entire program - from their talks, their guided trips, their publications, everything - and see if there could be something or other you could think of that would improve this, to help it out a bit. Not change it drastically, but just see if you can't make it a little stronger all along.

Russell K. Grater: I enjoyed that work very much; I got to know all the chief naturalists in all these areas, and I had a wholesome respect for them; I'm sure I learned a lot from them. I hope they learned a lot from some of the things that I was able to pass along that someone else had been doing that was proven successful.

Russell K. Grater: That was a good job. I was acting chief of that division for over a year when Dorr Yeager left, when they got Ben Gale, and so I had two jobs for over a year.

Herbert Evison: You spoke a minute ago about hashing over problems by the hour with Ben Gale. I'd be curious to know what kind of a problem, if you could think of any kind of a problem that involved such discussions with Ben.

Russell K. Grater: Well, it might deal directly with work, it might deal directly with the personnel involved in the interpretive field. If you had somebody that was a little reluctant, so to speak, to shift gears and get out of the kind of groove that the parks got into, interpretively speaking, a lot of discussion as to how to best approach this fellow and how best to achieve a little more viable program in that particular area.

Russell K. Grater: Or, if I came back from an area, and I had a feeling there ought to be this done, this done or something else done, I'd bounce all those ideas off of Ben and see what he thought about them. Ben was rather perceptive, and he could maybe pick flaws in it if there were some there and make some suggestions. Then, we'd lay it out. Then it was a matter of going back up

to that park one of these days and laying it down and saying, "Here's something we'd like to propose," and see what the reaction was.

Russell K. Grater: I remember a good case in point. Yosemite had a flood, and—

Herbert Evison: Yes, a bad one.

Russell K. Grater: And Camp Seven down there, which was where they held their programs, you know, got washed out. Well, they had to replace their amphitheater and their screen, and I had been trying for a long time - I'd seen this happen for some time before, but the Park Service wasn't doing any of it - to get rear screen projection, using automatic projectors.

Russell K. Grater: Well, I tried to sell the Park Service on the thing and didn't get very far. I did on the automatic projectors when I had been here because George Baggley actually sent me to Santa Fe to demonstrate an automatic projector, a selector-slide, and show them that this is what we ought to use.

Russell K. Grater: Well, anyhow, when I was in the Regional Office, I tried to get something like that started through the region and was having some difficulties. Doug Hubbard, who was in Yosemite as chief naturalist, had been in there for a number of years. Doug got thoroughly sold on the idea, too.

Russell K. Grater: So, when they had this flood, it wiped out everything; we had to start all over again, and we couldn't get the Park Service to come around to actually come up with the money to do what we wanted to do there. There was some lady that gave the Park Service \$10,000 to help rebuild that thing.

Russell K. Grater: Well, you see, it didn't have to - it wasn't Park Service money, it was her money, and she gave it. I don't know whether it was through the Natural History Association or maybe direct to the parks, I don't know how she did it.

Russell K. Grater: But at any rate, Doug called me, and he said, "Come up and let's plan this thing" because he said, "This is the chance to put in all this stuff because we're not dealing with government funds." So out of all this came the present amphitheater at Camp Seven and the rear screen we put in. We built one; we never had had one before, we built one. And built housing for it and the whole blooming business.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: And I'll always remember, when we went down to dedicate this thing, John Preston, who was superintendent there at that time, came along and he was kidding Doug and me and he said, "If this thing doesn't work, you know what's gonna happen to you two guys?"

Russell K. Grater: That's the first-time crowds had ever seen anything like that, and we spent more time in the evening trying to explain to the people how the thing

worked, than about the talks themselves. We had to demonstrate, you know, that by pushing a button you could get all sorts of activity out of that screen.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: Well, that was one case in point. The original idea, I suspect, had proven out to be a failure somewhere, but I hadn't heard about it. But even in something like this, Ben Gale was very willing to go along, if I felt this was it and wanted to assume the responsibility, to go right ahead. So, I enjoyed working with Ben.

Herbert Evison: Now did you go from there to Harpers Ferry?

Russell K. Grater: Yes. I arrived there in a rather interesting fashion or got orders to go there. I was over at the Devil's Postpile looking over the interpretive possibilities in that country. Right out in the middle of the sticks, on the little telephone that goes out in the country, I got a call from the Director. He said, "Now, I remember you've been fussing for several years about a training program, how we ought to train naturalists and so forth." He said, "Now we've acquired this old school, this historic college at Harpers Ferry," and he said, "Now you've been yelling about this, so you come back and run it."

Russell K. Grater: So, I begged off long enough to see my family at least, before I made a decision, and then we did. We went back there.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, how long were you on that job?

Russell K. Grater: Three years.

Herbert Evison: Three years. Now, I remember being over there reminded you of the lunch that I had with you and your wife, and you and I had a long discussion about the philosophy with which you were approaching this job.

Herbert Evison: See if I remember correctly - as I think back on it, I think you said there wasn't going to - I mean, you didn't use these words, but you didn't propose that there be very much eclecticism about methods; that you felt that you and the others who were going to do the instructing, had had enough experience to tell them how to do it.

Herbert Evison: Now, did you - you were there for three years - I'm curious to know what extent, if any, your ideas about the basic procedures in that job changed.

Russell K. Grater: Not very much. Naturally, you learn as you experience these things and as they develop. We refined the program as we went along (at least I believe we did); we added some things and took out some things, but we never got away from some basic premises. That if you are aware of good methods, you can probably do a pretty good job. That by studying interpretive devices and interpretive philosophies, you should be able to go into a park and come up with a sound approach for people.

Russell K. Grater: Our objective there wasn't to teach them something academic; our objective was to teach them how to handle this visitor coming into the park, and what methods have been tested and found true, and what methods had their good points and what had their bad points, and what are they; and what are some of the good points and bad points about various devices that you might use; self-guidance and museums and all this sort of thing.

Russell K. Grater: But basically, it was all woven around this central figure of the visitor. How effective is this going to be for the visitor and where can it be used; and you can't always use, let's say, in a desert park what you can in a high mountain park or in a recreation area what you can use, say, in a monument and so on.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: Trying to put across to these fellows and expose them to all the various things we know about interpretation, all the methods we can show them, the good points about them and the bad points about them and how people will react to these various things - then it was up to them. They'd have to go back to their areas and make an analysis of their areas and say, "This should work here, and this probably won't work here," and so on.

Russell K. Grater: And thus, we felt that in so doing, not only do you have a man who is more capable of defining and developing a sound public relations program, an interpretive program for the public, but you had a fellow that would have a feeling that he wasn't really missing out on something, that the other fellows were doing something he never heard of and he didn't know, because now he had been exposed to everything they knew.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: I had a great experience there because I met so many fellows who were in the interpretive field and non-interpretive fields, that took this training.

Herbert Evison: You had some who came in from other agencies, too, if I remember rightly.

Russell K. Grater: Quite a bit of them nowadays, I guess.

Herbert Evison: Yes. And, of course, I'm wondering how much you have kept in touch since those three years with what has developed in the way of expanding the use of those facilities there beyond the interpretive training.

Russell K. Grater: Well, they've sent me information about what's been built and some of the things that are being carried on there.

Russell K. Grater: I was a little disappointed in the de-emphasizing the interpretive training; it had been there originally.

Russell K. Grater: I still feel that all these people who deal with the public, especially in an interpretive way in any degree, should have a very sound bit of training in

that field so that they know all the best methods and all the best devices that we know anything about or that anybody else seems to know anything about - and that we shouldn't leave it to them to, you might say, discover the hard way in the field.

Herbert Evison: Which reminds me of a publication that the Park Service got out for a while, and I think it was called the interpretive newsletter. I imagine you were familiar with that.

Russell K. Grater: Yes.

Herbert Evison: And I assume that its object was primarily to swap ideas. To tell what new thing Bill Jones was developing here or how it might be applied elsewhere and so on. And then all of a sudden, there wasn't any interpretive newsletter, it was abolished - and I wondered how you felt about that and how you felt about its value while it existed.

Russell K. Grater: I think it served as a very great instrument to bring about cohesive operations throughout the Service. The fellows were always looking for this to see if there was something new coming in there that they could use; it might be anything to where you could get the best postcards, to where you could get the best projector or the best bindings for slides or the best materials; the best visuals, or somebody came up with a new method of self-guidance or a new method of exhibit, or something of this sort.

Russell K. Grater: It was always new, and it was always innovative, and I regret seems that sort of thing disappears.

Herbert Evison: Well, even as a non-interpreter and long out of the Service, I regretted it, too, because I used to get those and read them with a great deal of interest and enjoyment.

Russell K. Grater: One thing that bothered me a bit, Herb, is the effort made to play down the men in uniform and play up the equipment. I've always argued there is no substitute for the man in uniform, and there has been in the last several years - maybe it's been necessary, I can't argue, I don't know all the details of it but there has been a great tendency to place more and more reliance upon electronics and upon just displays and this sort of thing.

Russell K. Grater: And less emphasis on the men who meet those people.

Russell K. Grater: And I - maybe this is necessary - and there is always a place for it, there's no argument about that - there are a lot of places where a machine can do a better job than a man, but there's also a lot of places a man can do a better job than a machine.

Russell K. Grater: I can't visualize a machine being posted at the foot of the Sherman Tree and telling people about the Sherman Tree. To me that would sacrilegious.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: So, I've seen this happen. Then I kind of got amused and a little exasperated to hear a year ago that in Yosemite, they brought in a bunch of young people and turned them loose and what did the young people do? Went right back to the type of programs we used to do when I was in Yosemite to start on. And this was supposed to be innovative.

Russell K. Grater: The reason why it distressed me was because we had been frozen out of those things as the years went by; they wouldn't let us do it, and now suddenly it's innovative, it's something new. The Park Service is now learning about interpretation. We're in full cycle, you might say.

Herbert Evison: Yes, the more things change, the more they're the same.

Russell K. Grater: The more they remain the same, yes. And so, I wrote a letter to this Park Service newsletter, you know, and I told them that I was delighted to see these things because we used to do them.

Herbert Evison: I read the letter.

Russell K. Grater: I couldn't help it, Herb; maybe that was kind of a snide way of doing things, but I couldn't help but chide them a little bit. Actually, it did bother me that there isn't enough memory in our Park Service to realize that many of the activities which these young people developed and I said, "Lord, love them," I was in favor of it - we don't have enough memory in the Park Service to realize that this was done a long time ago.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: And that it actually got so very successful, some of these things. They're going to take people out on a walk of Yosemite Valley and discuss the geology and what not - do you realize that when I conducted hikes - do you realize that the conducted hike up through the ledge trail got so popular that we had to cut it out? I can remember taking a group of people up the ledge trail when we had almost 400 people on the hike, and you couldn't begin to do anything for them, because all you could do was stay ahead of them and set a pace, because it would string out a half mile below you.

Russell K. Grater: And the bird walks got so popular that we had to curtail them because you'd take so many people along you couldn't see any birds. And things like that. It isn't that these are new at all; it's simply that at one time, they were so blooming popular that they defeated their own purpose. But I'm delighted to see them coming back to some of those activities because as an interpreter - and that has been my field - I feel we've been shortchanging the public for quite some few years now.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, now, you were there for three years and then you went back to your real love, which was getting out in the field and interpreting.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, I had been there about two years, I guess, and I was called in and they said, here they had a job opening in Sequoia National Park and would

you like to go back there, because I made an agreement with the Director that when this Harpers Ferry thing got running reasonably well, I could go back west again. So, I told them, well, I didn't have the thing up to the point where I wanted to leave it. Then the superintendent came in from Sequoia, who was at that time, John Davis. John Davis came in and they said we had this position out there, and why don't you take it. Well, that was a great temptation because in my Park Service career, I had tried for at least fifteen years to get into Sequoia, and finally gave it up as a bad job. So here was this thing offered to me on a platter, so to speak, and it was a tremendous temptation, but I said, no, I didn't feel that I had gotten this thing going where I wanted it to go.

Russell K. Grater: Well, then time went on - and finally, when I was in the Washington office again, I was approached with this thing, saying, "They're going to fill that position one of these days," as it'd been open for about a year, "and if you want it, you better take it."

Russell K. Grater: I was asked, "Do you think Harpers Ferry would fold up if you left tomorrow?" and I told them, "No," that I had a staff in there that could take over the whole operation no problem there, and I could depend on any of those guys to do the job. But there were just some programs that I'd like to do a little more study of them and so forth.

Russell K. Grater: Well, the upshot of it was I just finally decided what the heck, they were right, that it'll run. I was confident of that, all right. So, I accepted this job in Sequoia.

Herbert Evison: Now that would have been about when?

Russell K. Grater: In 1968. No, '65.

Herbert Evison: I was thinking it was longer ago than that.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, 1965. I had to stop and think back. It was May of 1965 when I went in there. Then I left there in March of 1969.

Herbert Evison: You were there for four years or thereabouts.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, four years.

Herbert Evison: Well, looking back over all the places you'd been, would that have been your favorite?

Russell K. Grater: It'd come awfully close, although I would have to confess that my favorite spot was Zion.

Herbert Evison: Really?

Russell K. Grater: Yes. Zion National Park to me is one of the most beautiful places in the world, and it has an atmosphere; it has four nice seasons; it's very livable. I enjoyed my assignment there. It isn't the most beautiful park in my

estimation - the most beautiful park is Mount Rainier in my book. But it's not very livable and you're always fighting the weather.

Russell K. Grater: But Sequoia had a little bit of everything going for it, I think. Sequoia would rival Zion as a livable place, and as a point of interest. Sequoia had everything that I'd always felt it would have, and I enjoyed it tremendously, and it was with some reluctance that I left there, because I felt that it was what I'd always wanted.

Russell K. Grater: Yet, in the same breath, Herb, I felt that time was fleeting and one of these days I wasn't going to get to do some of the other things I wanted to do, too.

Herbert Evison: You mean outside of the Park Service?

Russell K. Grater: Yes, that's right.

Herbert Evison: Well, tell me - I'm sure that those were eventful years, but sometimes even eventful years, nothing particular sticks out. But how about in those four years?

Russell K. Grater: Well, I got to see a program operating pretty much the way I wanted to operate one. For four years, I had superintendents there that were willing to give me a free hand; I had John Davis; he did - and certainly Kowski did. Kowski's one of these topflight guys as far as I'm concerned. He was a gem to work with. And I was awfully sorry to see him leave. But, of course, the present John McLaughlin, he's another topflight man as far as I'm concerned. As a matter of fact, I was blessed with three excellent superintendents during those four years that I was there. It was a kind of a shame that they were kind of bounced in and out - but they were awfully good men, and they gave me all the support in the world, and I had a chance to run my own programs the way I wanted to run them; I had a good staff, a good seasonal staff, and I had a good permanent staff, and men who were also dedicated.

Herbert Evison: Oh yes. Now was it during the time that you were there that Cedar Grove, and that other part was added to the park, or were they already in by the time you got there?

Russell K. Grater: No, they were already a part of Kings Canyon, if that's what you mean.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: They were already a part of that.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Now, of course, that's a park with pretty magnificent distances in it for anybody to operate in.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, it's a park that is largely back country, really, and it's pretty rugged back country at that. I don't suppose there's any - well, I'm sure that there is no place in the Sierra-Nevadas as rugged and as wild as the back country of Kings.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: That takes in the Whitney area, too, of Sequoia, but Kings Canyon, I think has the ultimate in Sierra back country. The thing I could never understand, after being around Kings, and seeing what it has, is why it didn't draw more people than it does, because I always had a feeling that if people knew what was in there, they'd swarm through the place. In a sense, it was a blessing that they didn't know. Because we didn't have the facilities there to really take care of them.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: But those two parks in combination that way were surely hard to beat.

Russell K. Grater: Now I had no really bad experiences there at all. There were two or three things that I advocated there that sometime I'd like to see them go through.

Herbert Evison: Like what?

Russell K. Grater: Well, I was a very strong advocate of keeping traffic out of the Giant Forest.

Herbert Evison: Yes, you and me both.

Russell K. Grater: And I argued that they should - this road that goes out to Crescent Meadow - they should, in spite of some peoples' opinions and maybe yours, too, I would loop that right back through a very short-cut back to the village area so that you could have a loop drive and not have to widen that road, not have to worry about traffic. You could have a loop drive and run these little elephant trains on that loop drive so that people who liked to hike could drop off here and could be picked up over there and so forth. They have over fifty miles of good trails right there in Giant Forest, and most people never see them because they have to come back to where they started from, you see.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: But if they could start, we'll say, at Sherman Tree somewhere and wind up over at Crescent Meadow and be picked up over there by a conveyance of some sort, which I have always visualized, I always called it an 'elephant train,' you know what I mean?

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: People would actually see more of that park and get out on the trails more and really see that Giant Forest country.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: A second thing, in connection with that, I wanted to see them do something which they had never been able to do in Sequoia and Kings. That is, the second greatest story and maybe it's equal - but the second

greatest story in Sequoia following that of the story of the Sequoia themselves - is the story of the geology of the Sierra.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: There's no place they can tell that. You go into Lodgepole, and you really can't tell the story there, you're boxed in. You never see it. You go into Kings, you can't tell the story there, you're boxed in, you never see it.

Herbert Evison: You need something like at Yavapai Point.

Russell K. Grater: Yes, and that's what I proposed. Out there on the rim of the canyon, not far from Moro Rock as you go up the canyon, I picked them a spot where if you put a view-point type of development out there, near the main highway, groups can loop in there, drop off and see all these things, and you have about, oh, a better than a 200-degree view. You look right into the Western Divide and all the glacial story back in there and you look at all this great drainage of the Kaweah and look into this story of the granites and so on - water sheds, you name it - you can see it all from there, and you can look from there clear into the San Joaquin Valley.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: And I felt that here was the place to tell the great story of the Sierra. You don't have to go to Yosemite to get it, it should be told right there in these two parks somewhere. I took Kawski out there, he was all for it: every one of them was taken out there, and they were all for it - but yet I never heard any more about it.

Russell K. Grater: And I would hope that sometime they would do that because in so doing, it will introduce the visitor to a phase of that story that he does not yet comprehend, even if he does get parts of it, because he can't see it. And yet, do it in such a way that the building out there would be even more difficult to see from anywhere else than Yavapai is, because it's tucked out there on a point which is almost hidden from anywhere else within sight of the place. And yet, from there is this tremendous view, and, of course, the country just drops off in front of you there, and it's really something.

Herbert Evison: I'll say it does.

Russell K. Grater: So, yeah, there are things that I never got to see through in Sequoia and Kings. In Kings Canyon National Park, the last I heard, there had been a plan to build a visitor center at the junction of - if you've been down in there, you know there's a road that branches off the main road and goes down to the concessioner's operation and so forth there, on the campgrounds.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: Well, they had planned at one time to make a visitor center right in that junction. Well, actually, I drew a line from the center line on this road to

the center line on the main road, and go right through the building, and you didn't have enough space to park cars on either side; and I could just imagine traffic buzzing along on both sides of that building. It was on a high hill anyhow; it was on an old glacial hill.

Russell K. Grater: I wanted to put it so you could operate in a shaded area, a quiet area along the stream, but high enough that the river flooding wouldn't bother it. I showed them where I would put a campground down there so they could use their present parking that's there now for their campground, for their campfire parking. And the whole thing would be compact.

Russell K. Grater: And that old cabin that's down there which the Forest Service had a long time ago could be used for the telling of its history. I don't know what will ever happen to that. These were all turned in as detailed proposals - write-ups - a report in detail as I would normally do all these things. Sometime I'd like to see the Park Service do it.

Herbert Evison: Yes. I'd like to ask your opinion of one thing that's far distant from this, in the Great Smokies. I was interested several years ago in receiving the prospectus that they put out for the designation of wilderness in there, and one of the things that I noticed was that there was already installed in there what they called the "Motor Nature Trail" and that involved a 'gore' of five to 6,000 acres; nothing inside of it, of course, was going to be included in the wilderness.

Herbert Evison: But I noticed also on that same map, there were at least four other places where they were proposing to put in similar, one-way motor nature trails, each of which would have involved the exclusion of anywhere from four or five to 10,000 acres of very fine actual wilderness from inclusion in the designated wilderness.

Herbert Evison: All of this leads up to the question of what do you think of the Motor Nature Trail?

Russell K. Grater: In its place, perhaps it has value. I don't question perhaps that there are places where it could be very effective. But basically, if you have to develop them somewhere and open up country to do it, then I don't well, it all depends. It would require study, Herb, in my estimation. Maybe I'm a little different, but before I would like to pass judgment on that, I would like to see where it is and what the heck it's going to do, because in some places I think the Motor Nature Trail has its value and in other places, I'm sure that it does not.

Russell K. Grater: So - and as far as boxing those areas out and not letting them be called wilderness, to me, this is rather silly.

Herbert Evison: Oh?

Russell K. Grater: Because I can take people and from my knowledge now of ecology - and that's been my field in the last several years - ecological impact and so

forth - a road has very little impact, really, unless you have heavy traffic, and in wild areas this way.

Russell K. Grater: So, if you box in 5,000 acres and there's a road that surrounds it, I can't see why that 5,000 acres cannot be considered as wild country because you find the fauna and flora in there is pretty normal. And when they say that, well, an automobile goes by and scares the heck out of everything, and they'll never come back. I can only point to the AEC test sites out here where bighorn sheep roam the hills up there where they have these blasts and pay no attention to them.

Russell K. Grater: This was an order. Well, to me, this is ridiculous. If the thing was merited - if you had the facilities there, or a type of primitive road that people use now that could be converted into a self-guided trail, and make a loop out of it some way, that's one thing. But just to say, well, go out and develop some to me this was ridiculous because any time you put in a self-guiding facility, whether it be a motor trail or a foot trail or whatever it is, you better be able to spend a lot of time and see just what it is you're trying to do in there, and what your best methods are. It may not be motor at all, it may not even be a foot trail at all, and maybe you don't want anything in the place, but to just say "Put one here!" is to me, nothing short of stupid.

Herbert Evison: I'm glad I asked that question, because I think it opened up a fairly interesting statement from you.

Russell K. Grater: Well, I think that anything that is proposed in a park, Herb, we shouldn't go off halfcocked and say somebody has a brainchild and so let's look at it, like that. No, I think that - let's make these changes in time if they are merited. If studies show that this is a desirable thing to do, we have to consider it from the standpoint of the park and its fauna and flora and the visitor, and what he needs and what he does. Then if you can - if you see something that you can work out compatibly between the two, then you're doing what Congress had us do, to make available and still protect.

Russell K. Grater: But I can't see this business of getting a bright idea and suddenly saying, well, let's get funds in from here and there, and shove them in here - let's do something. I'm a lot like Freeman Tilden - I'll always remember a statement he made one time that I think is still appropriate. He pointed out that you can always put things in, but you can't always take them out.

Herbert Evison: Yes, right.

Russell K. Grater: And I'm in favor of thinking it through anyhow before you take a step. I'm not as impetuous as I was once upon a time, I guess.

Russell K. Grater: But if I'm asked about the desirability - like in Rainier, they said, now we want to put in a visitor center, and here's where we want to put it, and so on. Well, my feeling as the park naturalist there was, I wanted to see what would be the possible impact of that visitor center on that area. What are you doing to it if you put it in there. Is there a real need for it? Do enough

people come there to justify an expensive visitor center? Can you do it just as effectively by having men there to do the job - and a lot more efficiently really - than an exhibit? Or can you use exhibits in place, or can you use self-guidance, or can you use a lot of other things without a building? Or is a building the answer?

Russell K. Grater: I was very much opposed to seeing anything go in there until we actually made a very careful study of the proposal. I feel that way whether it be a road or a trail or a building or a program or whatever; it should be very carefully thought out. It's so easy to get something started and then find out it should never have been started.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Another thing I want very much to ask you about. I am somewhat of a heretic in feeling that the Statement of Purpose in the 1916 Act is too limited, that it might be even a good idea to revise the very enabling act of the Park Service, to recognize at least one use of the parks that is not envisioned in there at all.

Herbert Evison: You may know that in the Belgian Congo - at least until it became independent - their national parks, with one exception, were not open to the public. They were open to the serious scientist who wanted to come in there and study. And I've had a feeling for a long time that the values - one of the basic great values - of the National Park system of the United States is exactly that same thing. They offer what is actually a diminishing resource in relatively unspoiled and unmodified natural areas.

Herbert Evison: And that it might even be a good idea to designate on a pretty liberal scale in, we'll say a park like Kings Canyon or a part of Yellowstone or a part of Mount Rainier, areas where you really had to have good credentials in order to go in. Would you go along with an idea like that?

Russell K. Grater: Oh, definitely. I know we talked a lot about that back in Harpers Ferry, about pushing, you might say, this phase of the park which isn't given much emphasis, and that is you have a natural outdoor laboratory there, and you'll never have a better one, that's for sure.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Russell K. Grater: And what do we know that we may be destroying and never have a chance to learn because we have destroyed something, or have now utilized it in some way? I'm convinced that, all too often, we go into an area, and we put something in, we do something there that has destroyed knowledge or something which could have been beneficial maybe to mankind in the future.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Like in an archeological area.

Russell K. Grater: Yes. That's right. No, I fought a long time when I was in the region, and I preached it back at Harpers Ferry, that we need a well-coordinated, an extremely well-coordinated research program in our parks. Well, now it

seems to me that they're trying to get it, with Bob Lynn. Of course, I had a fallout with him there. Their idea of research is some fellow with a doctorate or something or other, coming in here and working four or five years on one phase. That is research. No argument about that. But there are a multitude of small projects that even seasonals can carry out.

Russell K. Grater: This keeps their interest high and their knowledge high and keeps contributing all these little bits of information, and it's the accumulation of all these little facts which gives you the picture - not one great study of one particular animal or plant or relationship that's in there.

Russell K. Grater: And I feel that the Park Service has been or is missing the boat when they do not recognize that we have people on our staffs in the summer that can make a great contribution. They probably would have hanged me in Sequoia because I gave time off for some of my seasonal men to work on projects. I felt that this not only made them stronger and better naturalists - but better with the public and contributed so much information to the park.

Russell K. Grater: The Washington office said that is not research, and so you were to discontinue that sort of thing.

Russell K. Grater: Well, I didn't discontinue it, anyhow. To me, the prohibition is wrong. The idea of research being something that is highly complicated and requiring a lot of technical skill and so forth in order to accomplish something as the one way, to me is wrong. I admit this is very valuable; in fact, it's necessary, and it brings up what you have in mind; that there ought to be places where field research could be carried on and not disturbed by people or anything else.

Russell K. Grater: But there's also the place for the fellow who comes in as a teacher; places where he comes in on the seasonal staff, just like one of the fellows that I had by the name of Wright there in Kings Canyon. He was interested in mountain beaver. Well, we didn't know anything about mountain beaver. Very few people knew anything about mountain beaver. I gave him time, and he studied the mountain beaver of that area, located the colonies here and there - and they're not very common - and studied them, got pictures of them and all sorts of things, and we could have asked the Washington office for that information for the next 100 years and we would never have gotten it. Because they would never have sent somebody out there just to study the mountain beaver. That it's not a significant animal, as far as they were concerned. If it'd been the deer, maybe yes - but not a mountain beaver, and it's the same thing with one who was studying the ecology of the mountain meadow out there, and he made his study of the relationship that existed to the mice the deer and everything else in this one area. We'd never have gotten anybody to come in there to do that. But the Washington office could not agree that that was research.

Herbert Evison: Yes. It probably wasn't big enough for them to set their sights on.

- Russell K. Grater: Right, they said that wasn't research, that's just a local observation. But that is research in the real sense. It isn't on a magnificent scale, that's all.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. we were talking about research. I have felt that the Park Service might get a lot more of it that was useful to it at relatively low cost if they made more specific facilities available in the parks where researchers could use them - like even a cubbyhole for a desk and a place to put a typewriter and maybe a two-drawer file cabinet. What's your idea about that?
- Russell K. Grater: I agree there. As a matter of fact, I turned over part of the museum there in Mount Rainier to scientists just for that purpose. And they did a good job - and we gained because they let us have everything they knew, everything they found out. We tried to develop that in Sequoia - and maybe you're not aware of that. There had been a cabin out on Redwood Mountain that we wanted to make into a research center, and we proposed that to the Park Service and to the Western Regional Office, and I don't know what they're going to do about it.
- Russell K. Grater: And I proposed this one time when I was in the Western Region, if we could get Santa Cruz Island, which we were trying to get - the Channel Islands - and we could get the benches out there and convert it into a research center. Long Beach State and several of the colleges, the University of California - were all interested in working into that if they could get it.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Russell K. Grater: Yes, I think this has very real merit.
- Herbert Evison: Yes? Well, I'm afraid in looking at this tape that there is a danger of running it off in the middle of a sentence, and I'm not going to run that risk. But I'm going to use a little bit of it to say that this has been one of the most stimulating tapes that I think I've ever made. I've enjoyed listening to you every minute of it.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, thank you, Herb.
- Herbert Evison: So, with those last few words, I'm going to call it a day for us, and a very profitable one.
- Russell K. Grater: Well, thank you.

[END OF TAPE #177]

[END OF INTERVIEW]