

This is Larry Sprunk and the following is an interview that I had with ^{Mr.} A. O. (Alfred) ~~Alf~~ Brown of Hettinger, North Dakota. The interview was held in Mr. Brown's apartment above the Hettinger Candy Company, Friday, August 9, 1974, and it began at approximately ^{1:00} ~~one o'clock~~ in the ~~after~~ afternoon.

Alfred: Before the constitution was adopted, each state had ^{their} ~~its~~ own money, you know, ² and here is the currency from six of the ~~states.~~ ^{states.} The other seven I haven't got.

Larry: And you got these from a doctor in California?

Alfred: Cleo did, my daughter-in-law, she got it from her sister that goes with this ~~wealthy~~ wealthy doctor ~~out~~ out there. The ~~currency~~ ^{and} currency ~~that~~ is payable in Spanish dollars ^{and} some of 'em are drawing interest. We don't get any interest on our money, like this here.

Larry: U. S. one dollar ~~green~~ greenback bill, series 1917, huh?

Alfred: There ain't many of those floatin' around anymore.

Larry: No, I guess not.

Alfred: There's a ^{\$20.00} ~~twenty dollar~~ bill up at the bank. They got one ~~up~~ there ~~x~~ that was sent to 'em.

Larry: Coins of the Bible. Where did you get these from? ~~x~~

Alfred: ^(laughs) Some of 'em I got from relatives and Cleo ~~p~~ picked some up for me out in California. Read this here. There it is.

Larry: Oh, is that it?

Alfred: You've ~~ve~~ just been reading about it.

Larry: Is this an original?

Alfred: I couldn't tell you. I haven't the slightest idea.

Larry: 1776~~h~~.

Alfred: Well, whatever you want to talk about.

Larry: You first saw Hettinger in 1907?

Alfred: I first saw Hettinger in ~~the~~ March, 1906.

Larry: How did it happen that you came to North Dakota?

Alfred: My father homesteaded up in McHenry County near Balfour. I was going to college at the time and I went ~~up~~ ^a there and spent ~~the~~ summer with ~~him~~. And my

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father proved it up. Later on, he sold it and ~~he~~ got a pretty good price for it. When this land was open^{ed} up for homesteads here, I was working in my hometown^{ed} at my trade as a watchmaker.

Larry: Where was that?

Alfred: Appleton, Minnesota. I was going with my wife and I would^{have} like^d to get married, but I didn't have any money. The thought occurred to me when I saw those advertisements, "Go West and Get a Free Homestead in North Dakota^{ed}" I thought I could do the same ~~thing~~ as my father did. If I went out and proved up on a claim, I could sell it and get the money and that would give me a chance to get married. That's how ~~it~~ I happened to go^d out here.

Larry: Did you come out by train then?

Alfred: Yes, four of us from my hometown. There was a landman in my hometown in Appleton. He was doing some work ~~for~~^{for} a land~~x~~ company up here at Gladstone~~ed~~ and he had ~~the~~ⁱⁿ these signs and the window^{down there} ~~(ed)~~ about the homesteads. There were four of us in my hometown^{ed}, ~~that~~^{we} came out to file. There were four of us and we were all tradesmen^{ed}. I was a jeweler, one was a barber, one was a butcher, and one was a harnessmaker.

Larry: Is that right?!

Alfred: We ~~were~~^{were} all tradesmen at home.

Larry: Were you all single^{ed}, too?

Alfred: No, ~~that~~^{The barber} I think three of us were, though. ~~Barbara~~ was married, but I think the other three of us were single.

Larry: Who were those other three, Alfred?

Alfred: ~~Their names?~~

~~Larry: Yes.~~

Alfred: Well, the barber's name was Fred Taylor. He's the ~~one who~~^{one that} really got the other ~~with~~ three of us to go. The other one was Robert Wise and he was the harnessmaker. And his brother's name was Fitz^{Wise}, and he was the butcher and myself. I was the fourth one.

Larry: You came out then in 1906?

Alfred: ~~In April 1906. We took the~~ In April, 1906, we took the train from ~~Gladstone~~^{Appleton}

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to Gladstone, North Dakota, where the Turner Land Company ~~held~~^{held} their office in the back of the bank.

Larry: Did you bring horses ~~back~~ down then?

Alfred: No. You see, we had six months time to get back after ~~we~~^{you} filed; the government gave you six months ~~time~~ to establish residence~~ed~~. Mr. Taylor, the barber, ~~X~~ had an immigrant car, and he~~re~~ brought back a team of horses and machinery, second-hand machinery, and some lumber. The rest of us, ~~the three of us~~ didn't have ~~anything~~. He shipped that out to Gladstone.

Larry: Then, you all came down in his wagon?

Alfred: No, we didn't come in his wagon. When the four ~~of~~^{of} us came to Gladstone to ~~locate~~^{file} or to ~~file~~^{locate} rather, there were ~~twenty-four~~^{the four of us} ~~in the party~~²⁴, All strangers except us four. We started out in the morning, six double rigs, horse-drawn, four in a buggy. ~~And it took us two days to get down this far from Gladstone. Now, the other two boys, myself, and Mr. Taylor, Taylor was the only one that shipped out in a immigrant car. So, when it was time to establish our residence, when I come to Gladstone I had to hire a team of horses or somebody to haul my material for my shack. I bought the material right there at Gladstone. I think the material cost thirty dollars to build a house, and I had to pay thirty dollars to have my material hauled down there. So, by the time I had my shack built I had sixty dollars invested. In the meantime, Mr. Taylor Fred Taylor with his team of horses had also established his residency and started construction on his house. Fred Taylor and his wife with his team of horses had also established their residency and started construction on their house. The other two boys never came back and proved up on those two quarters. I was the only one that came back with Mr. Taylor. The other two, I guess, they got cold feet.~~

~~Larry: They went back to Appleton?~~

~~Alfred: Ya.~~

~~Larry: Well, you did too for awhile then huh?~~

~~Alfred: Ya, after six months.~~

Larry: Then you came back in 1907?

~~Street~~
Alfred: No, in the fall of 1906. You see, when I filed it was in April, 1906, and

I think,

six months later, ~~that was~~ in September, ^{I think,} I had to come out and erect that shack and establish residence.

Larry: I see. Did you live out ~~here~~ ^{there} that winter ~~then~~ by yourself?

Alfred: Ya, but I'll tell you when I informed my employer down there that I wanted to come out and take a homestead he was quite disappointed. He said, "when do you have to go out, Alfred?" I told him six months. Well, he says, "you'll be ~~leaving~~ leaving me right ~~during~~ the busy season, Christmas trade, and it'll be pretty hard for me to break somebody ~~else~~ in." Well, I'll tell you, I says, "I'll come home at Thanksgiving and I'll spend a month here with ~~you~~ ^{you} during the Christmas sales." So I did that. After I ^{had} established my residence, I lived there for a month or so then I sneaked out and went back home for a month. Then I stayed home for another month! The government never knew it. ^(laughs) Then I came back in ~~Feb~~ February in the middle of winter of 1907. I had to catch a ride with the

mailman from Gladstone and he had the mail ~~service~~ service that went through a place called Wolf Butte. ^{//} It's north of ~~Bucyrus~~ ^{Bucyrus} about ~~twelve~~ ¹² miles. So, that was a long trip ~~straight~~ ^{clear} across. I rode out with him as ~~close~~ ^{close} as I could get to my shack. ^{But} Before I left that fall to go home to help this man, I had stored a ton of

coal in my shack so when I got back I ~~could~~ ^{could} have some fuel. When I came back there in February, ~~and~~ ^{and} went to my shack, ~~lo~~ ^{lo} and behold, my fuel was all gone! Somebody had taken it. Well, there I was in the middle of winter, no fuel! Across the road

~~somebody had built a shack plus~~ I saw somebody had built a shack plus an out-house so I thought ^{well,} I'll go ~~over~~ ^{over} and get acquainted with ~~my~~ ^{my} neighbor and see ~~who~~ ^{who} he is. So, I went across the road and rapped ^{on} at the door. Lo, and behold, who should come to the door but a man from my ^{hometown,} ~~hometown~~ Bill Smith! Well, ~~he~~ good heavens, you can't imagine how surprised ~~a man can be~~ I could be! He and I took

part in home-talent plays back in Appleton, Minnesota, and here he was in the shack adjoining me! I said, "My God, Bill, ^{on} I'm surprised to see ~~you.~~ ^{you.}" "But, you know, Bill," I said, "I left some coal in my shack when I left last ~~fall~~ ^{fall} to go back and help Mr. ~~Brown~~ ^{Brown} in his jewelry store. ^{And you know,} It's all gone, somebody took it!

You wouldn't ~~happen~~ happen to know who took it, would you Bill?" "Yes," he says, "I would. I took it. I didn't have any fuel. I didn't know whose it was but I

took it." "Oh, well, if that's the case, Bill, there's only one thing ~~to do~~. I'll have to come and live with you until we can get a load of coal." ~~Which~~ Which I did. It took us a whole month ~~we~~ ^{we} had to go ~~and~~ dig the coal ourselves in the ~~middle~~ middle of winter. So, for a whole month I had to ~~live with~~ ~~my friend~~ ~~across~~ the road.

Larry: Was he married?

Alfred: No, he was single. ~~_____~~ ^{end}

Larry: Say, Alfred, who were some of the other ~~early~~ ^{very} early settlers around here that ~~came in the same time~~ ^{when} you did in 1906? ~~around Hettinger?~~

Alfred: In the spring of 1906, there was hardly anybody ~~who'd~~ ^{who'd} come this far south ~~to farm~~ because all the locating ~~that~~ was done from Dickinson and Gladstone. ~~and~~ Each time the company would ~~go~~ ^{go} out to locate, the locater would come down just ~~so~~ ^{so} far, and he says, 'Well, now, this is open here ~~is~~ ^{is}. So, he would locate ~~is~~ ^{is}. ~~And~~ the next week another group would come and he'd move down another six miles, ~~two,~~ ^{or} three miles. They kept moving down as the homesteads were being taken. Well, ~~by~~ ^{by} the time that I came here or filed, rather, in April, ~~within~~ ^{within} six months, or fall, the people that live around Hettinger had begun filing. So, there's quite a long span there. At least six months ~~even~~ ^{even} before those people come down here. So, I didn't know anybody around here, you know, this was all open. They just filed and most of 'em hadn't even come back and put their shacks ~~up~~ ^{up}. ~~And~~ So, naturally, I didn't know anybody.

Larry: Where was your homestead from Hettinger?

Alfred: About ~~twelve~~ ¹² miles northeast of Hettinger; about eight, ~~ten~~ ^{ten} miles straight north ~~of the~~ ^{from} ~~cemetery~~ ^{corner of}. There's a big road going straight ~~north~~ there. You go up about eight or ~~ten~~ ¹⁰ miles and then you turn east ~~about ten~~ ^{two} miles and that's where my homestead ~~is~~ ^{was}. I'm gonna say about ~~twelve~~ ¹² miles from town.

Larry: Alfred, was there a lot of ~~difference~~ ~~difference~~ ~~difference~~ between the country around Appleton, ^{Minnesota,} and the country around Hettinger?

Alfred: Oh!! When we got off the train at Gladstone, you never ~~say~~ ^{saw} four guys ~~so~~ so disappointed in your life as what ~~we~~ ^{we} were. We anticipated seeing some nice level ground, maybe ~~seeing~~ some trees, coming ~~from~~ ^{from} back East there where all the

farms were and the land was level. We come out here, got off the train, and this rough country here ³ hills and no trees! Why, we were so disgusted we were ready to ⁰ take the train and get on and go home again. ~~W~~ Boy, it's such a difference you know.

Larry: Looked pretty barren, huh?

Alfred: Well, ya, there wasn't a tree in sight, you know, except along the ~~crocks~~ criks and a few scrub trees, that's all.

Larry: Why did you stay? ~~Did they tell you that it was better farther south? To~~ ~~get you to stay~~ ~~Did the Turner Land Company~~ ^u Did the Turner Land Company encourage you to stay and ~~to~~ file?

Alfred: Yes, we were ready to take the ^{go back} train and go back ^{and} because it looked so bad ^{and} around there. The Turner Land Company ~~Mr. Turner says,~~ ^{well,} ~~boy,~~ now, boys, as long as ~~you're out here,~~ you're out here, why don't you go down and look at this ^{this open land.} ~~land,~~ We furnish the ^{rig.} ~~It~~ ^{It} won't cost you a cent unless you decide to file and then you pay us ~~twenty five dollars.~~ ^{\$25.00."} So, ~~then we thought~~ we weren't out anything. Well, we thought as long as we're out here this far and all the rest of the guys are ready to take that long trip, ^u well, let's go down and look at it. So, we all went together and went down there. Spent two days to get down here.

Larry: Did you change your mind while ^u you were coming down here? Did it look better?

Albert: ~~Yes,~~ by the time we got down to where my homestead was, down in the ² country here, it wasn't as rough as it was around Gladstone, you ~~know.~~ ^{oh} That was so terrible rough around there! So, there ~~were~~ ^{was} these areas of nice land ~~although~~ you have these hills around here ^{but} there ~~is~~ there was always alot of nice land like you see today. ^{So, actually,} So, ⁰ got ^{down} done here where it looked ² pretty decent. Now, that quarter I had was a real nice quarter, almost as level as this table ⁰ and a crik to run across ^{the} ~~the~~ corner of it so I even had some water. So, it was a real nice quarter.

Larry: You guys had a real good pick then? You were one of the first ones down here ⁰

Alfred: This far south, ya. That day! The next week the gang would be a mile or

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two ~~to the south of~~ ^{further} ~~westward~~ the south of us because they could locate ^{better} there. You could pick out any quarter you wanted. Well, ^{when} we made our choice and went up to Dickinson and filed, that ate up that mile or two, see. Then the next gang came down, course, they had to go a couple of miles ~~south again~~ further south again. So, it just kept ~~going on~~ going going down every day or every week that these locaters bring the people out here. ^{But, it took at least six months before this part of} ~~But~~ If I had waited until fall, I probably ^{of} ~~of~~ ^{settling} ~~settling~~ would have had a homestead right along the railroad track here. ^{was settled}

Larry: Were there any trails in the prairies when you came ~~from~~ from Gladstone?

Albert: Yes, there was a trail from Gladstone to the ~~store~~ post office and a store and a overnight stopping place called "Horseville" and that's located north of Regent about two ~~to~~ three miles. There was a big butte there. I think ~~it's~~ it's called "Black Butte" or something like that and there's where Horseville Post Office was and that's where we spent the first night. It took us that long to drive from Gladstone to Horseville. Then we stayed overnight there. ^{and it took us all day then to get} Then the next morning we started out again to what we called the Tom Stevens Ranch. That's another day's drive and there we spent the next night. We're ~~twenty~~ ²⁴ ~~four~~ in a party and ~~two~~ ^{two} women and we drop in on that poor Tom Stevens and his wife, who had two three children ^{ren} too. You can imagine that was some ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ position. Mrs. Stevens made a ~~bed~~ ^{bed} on the floor for the two women, but us men folks had to go out in the haystack and sleep. But she made supper for us and made breakfast for us the next morning. Now, when we got ready to start, we started straight east of this ranch.

I'd say ^{probably} ~~about~~ about five or six miles ~~when~~ ^{or} when we came to a ~~ranch~~ ranch operated by a fellow ~~named~~ ^{er} named Pendogast. And this locater of ours, a great big fellow ^{and they called} named Hank, ~~I don't remember the last name~~ ~~He~~ went out to ~~corral~~ the corral and a red barn there and he said, "Now, here's the cornerstone." "Now," he says, "we'll tie a rag around the wagonwheel and we want one or two of you there to count the revolutions of that wagonwheel ~~go~~ ^{around} around." And I forget how many it was, but whatever the number was that would be pretty close to a quarter of a mile. Then, we had to stop there and ~~get~~ get out of the car and all go around and look for that ^{There it} ~~cornerstone~~ ^{township} ~~which we could locate.~~ ~~Then~~ he gave us the description, the ~~range~~ ^{on} ~~and the~~ ^{when} ~~range~~ ^{when} ~~chiseled~~ ^{somebody'd} ~~pick~~ ^{pick} those two quarters ^{along} ~~side~~ ^{each} side ^{each}

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of the road, we'd move along another half a mile, ^{Then} we'd stop again, all get out, dig around lookin' for that stone again, ~~And~~ And kept on going straight east along the section line and along township line. And one of the guys says "I'll take this quarter on the north side of the road; "I'll take this one on the south side;" And we moved along a quarter of a mile and a guy says ~~I'll~~ "I'll take this one and another guy says, "I'll take this one." And that's the way we kept on until we ²⁴ ~~twenty four~~ of us had picked our choices and ^{them} ~~put~~ had them in our pockets.

Larry: Did you like yours right away Alfred?

Alfred: Ya, I had two choices. This fellow told us it ^{would} ~~would~~ be a good idea to make two choices ~~in case~~ ^{what} ~~we got up there to the land office~~ somebody might have filed ahead of us, you know, the day before. So, we instructed to do that, ^{were} so I had two descriptions in my pocket and I picked out the one that I liked the best. And it just happened so it was open so I filed on it.

Larry: Were there buffalo bones on the prairie then Alfred?

Albert:--Oh,--yes

Alfred: Oh, yes, there were some buffalo bones. There still, well, I wouldn't say now there isn't/ but, ya, there's some still around. I know down south there's a place ~~a fellow raises 'em~~ where there's buffalo. A fellow raises 'em. Ya, there was.

Larry: Then you went back to Appleton for six months, ~~then you came back here from September to November, then you went back to Appleton for two months, and then~~ ^{until} ~~then you came back here and stayed.~~ Then you came back here and stayed.

Alfred: Ya, ⁱⁿ February, 1907.

Larry: Had alot of people come in while you were gone, Alfred?

Alfred: Well, I suppose so, ^{but} but I wouldn't know. When I came back here and had to live ^{with} ~~my~~ Bill, my neighbor there, well, we knew a few neighbors within a mile or two and that's all. We were afoot; we couldn't go anywhere.

Larry: Did you know about a town called Hettinger then?

Alfred: No.

Larry: You didn't. What ^{year} was the first year you saw Hettinger? — Street

Alfred: In March, 1907.

~~_____~~

Alfred: In 1907, see, I'd been here^{then} for two, three months, I'd come back^{after}. Mr. Fred Taylor, this barber^{er}, had this team of horses he'd shipped out and that immigrant car. ^{And} he needed a load of hay. And somebody had told him that there was a ranch down south, some six, eight miles, by the name of "Riley's Ranch" where he could buy a load of hay. So, Fred Taylor asked me then if I'd like to go with him and we'd go down and get this load of hay. So, we started out in the morning then driving. I don't know if there was any trail or not. It was just across ~~country~~ the country but we came on down at about six, seven, eight miles here. And then we just started coming across where Hettinger is now, and as we came across this particular spot we noticed ~~there was~~ a shack had been built. A frame shack, brand new, nobody living in it. It aroused our curiosity, so, we stopped the horses and we got out and walked over to "inspect" this shack. ^{But} ~~there was there~~ ^{was} nothing in it. It had just been finished. I suppose ^{probably} it was ~~fourteen by sixteen~~ ^{14 x 16} something like that. the Adams County Record. By the way, it was the first house of ~~General Adams and his wife.~~ ^{of}

Larry: Oh, is that right?

Alfred: Ya, it was built ^{for} the Adams County Record, but ~~General Adams and his wife~~ ^{found} we didn't know it. Well, this ranch ~~where~~ ^{where} we could get this load a hay was about two miles straight ~~north of town here.~~ northwest of town here. You go out by the airport and then you go north a mile or two up in those hills. We finally got to this place and loaded up this load of hay. So while we were there visiting with 'em we happened to mention that it's kinda funny to see that shack over there on the prairie and there was alot of stakes stickin' up from the grass all over the prairie there. These ~~pine sticks~~ ^{pine sticks} ~~(?)~~ stakes. So, we inquired about what it was. Oh, ~~he says, there gonna have a town there~~ ^{they're} Oh, ~~there~~ gonna have a town there, he says. I don't know ^{whether} he used the name Hettinger or not, but ~~he~~ he might of. Anyway, he told that this was gonna be a town here and this shack was being built for somebody that was going to be a settler here. Well, then on our way back we stopped again at this shack and again we got out. And just for the hell of it we ~~wrote~~ ^{wrote} our pencil and ~~wrote~~ wrote our names on the outside walls, you know.

Larry: Ya.

Alfred: That's a ~~doozie~~ ^{doozie} to tell you about. Now, that's my first entrance to

Hettinger.

end

Larry: It's amazing what ~~sixty, six or~~ ⁷⁰ ~~seventy~~ years can do, huh?

Alfred: We can see all these sticks in there, though, see. The survey had just been completed, I don't suppose, probably only a week or two before we got there. And, naturally, we wondered what all those damn sticks were for.

Larry: When did you come back again? Was it a few ~~weeks before~~ months before you got back to Hettinger?

Alfred: ~~To Hettinger?~~ ^{probably} To Hettinger, ya. Now, this was in March and I suppose it was March, April, May, and June, probably about three months, ~~new~~ now, that I stayed on my homestead. ~~Bill~~. Bill, this friend of mine, we didn't know anything about what was going on down here. We heard that there was a little town started. ~~there~~ Well, then in June, ~~a few~~ two or three of our prominent citizens here took upon themselves to try and organize us into a county. This was all Stark County at one time. And in order to do that you had to get signatures on the petition. Well, my homestead was within a mile of what we called the "Northwestern Ranch". It was owned by a party ^{by the name} ~~named~~ Donnelly who was a quite wealthy man from back in Indiana. And he had a fellow, an overseer, operating this ranch by the name of Fred Jackson. Well, I got quite well acquainted with Mr. Jackson. He was married and he had a nice daughter that was a good musician. I learned to know her quite well and we started playing together. She played piano and I played mandolin. So, I got quite well acquainted with Mr. Jackson. ~~And Mrs. Jackson and~~ Mrs. Jackson was a wonderful woman. She ~~thought~~ ^{men} ~~thought~~ a lot of me, of course, because I was paying attention to her daughter and was a good musician. So, when they decided to organize this county, there were three or four of the ~~men~~ ^{was} that were instigators. One of ~~them~~ ^{them} was this Mr. Jackson. So, when it required the signatures they asked me to circulate one of the petitions. Fred Jackson, of course, he contacted me, which I was only glad to do. So, I had to circulate that petition. Just go from shack to shack ~~wherever~~ wherever you see somebody living, and get them to sign their name out. It terminated with the governor designating these counties including down here ~~the~~ Adams County and Hettinger was to be the county seat. Well, ~~then~~ as soon as the county was organized or ~~after~~ shortly afterwards, it was necessary

to make an assessment. You had to go around and assess everybody for what they had with 'em and that didn't amount to a damn, but I was given ~~ten counties four counties~~ four townships, ~~rather~~ I had a team of horses and borrowed a buggy and I just drove.

Wherever I saw a shack, I'd just drive over and ask them to sign that petition.

And one day I was only out here about a couple miles from Hettinger, when driving across the prairie, damn it, I hit a rut or something and I snapped the bolt on my pole. Well, then you know what ~~then~~ ^{that} happens when your only fastened on one side!

Well, then your wheels go like this here, you know. So, I had a heck of a time.

Then, I was only a mile or two from Hettinger so then I made a beeline to get into this Hettinger. ^{And,} there was a ~~blacksmith~~ ^{blacksmith that} had started ~~there~~ ^{a blacksmith shop.} Anyway, I went

down there to get this tied up with some wire so ~~that~~ I could drive. So, that was my first return to Hettinger ^{after} I had signed my name on that wall; but, oh, ^{there} was only ~~two three-four~~ ^{shacks here at the time.} ~~actual size of its actual size at that time.~~

Larry: So, it ~~hadn't~~ ^{hadn't} changed too much?

Alfred: No, except ~~two three-four~~ ^{that there's three-four shacks here} and a couple of tents on the ground and that blacksmith shop ^{and} that was down here by the ~~creek~~ ^{creek} bottom. So, then

I didn't come back again until ~~in~~ July. In the meantime, Mr. Fred Taylor, the barber, he come to town ^{and} he built a barber shop, ^W went to Gladstone and got some lumber and come down here and hurriedly put up a shack and he'd drive back and forth from his home ~~stead~~ ^{stead}. He'd come down here and work during the day and drive back ^{at} ~~during the~~ night. Had one chair, of course. So, I had taken my jewelry and all my tools with me. I had 'em in a bench ~~in~~ in a cabinet, a little chest, that I had made. ~~I didn't know how but I thought that maybe if I could get down here I~~

~~I don't~~ ^I didn't know how ^I but I got the idea that maybe if I could get down here and set up a bench ~~down here~~ ^{down} maybe I could get some work, some watch repairing work. So, Mr. Taylor offered then that I could sit in his window. He had one window ^{in that} ~~and that~~ ~~barber shop~~. That worked out pretty good, but I didn't have any bench!

All I had was tools! But the ~~lumber yard~~ ^{lumber yard} lumberyard had hauled in its first load of lumber here, ~~the~~ fellow name of John Winkle, and I think I had enough money in my pockets ~~to~~ to go over and buy a board. ~~I don't know~~ ^P Probably six, eight, inch ^{wide} board. ~~and I took that board and I went~~ And I took that board and I went behind this store

that had started here and they had hauled in some stuff. Groceries come in some of those wooden boxes those days and I thought I'd get me some of those. I constructed a ~~home made~~ bench and set it up in this window. I got an empty cider keg to sit on and I got an empty cigar ~~box~~ that I made a little drawer ~~to~~ to keep so much of my old tools in.

~~Bar Y.~~

Alfred: And by gosh, you know, Mr. Taylor then was to look after this for me that anybody that needed any watch repairing could bring the watch and leave it with him. Then I'd come in on Saturday and I'd repair the watch. So, I'd ride in with Mr. Taylor for Saturday morning and I spent all day here. And the first week, by golly, I had two watches! Within two weeks, doggone it, if I hadn't made ~~ten dollars!~~ ^{\$10.00!} I cleaned watches; ~~I just cleaned watches.~~ ^{lem} There wasn't nelse ~~to do much but make 'em run~~ I cleaned watches, you know, see, just clean 'em. There wasn't ^{nothing} much else to do much but make 'em run. And here I earned ~~ten dollars!~~ ^{\$10.00.} You know, what I did with that ~~ten dollars?~~ ^{\$10.00?} I went and bought a pair a shoes and a meal ticket. My shoes ~~had~~ wore out. I only had a pair of these canvass shoes on. So, I bought a pair ~~of~~ shoes 'cause a store started then. Some guys come down here. A couple a Jews by the name of Buchman and Sigmund and they set up a tent. They had little stuff that they hauled down in the car, you know. That was the biggest ~~ten dollars~~ ^{\$10.00} I ever earned. Well, when I made my final proof, ~~proved up~~ the latter part of July the first part of August, ~~then I moved into~~ then I moved into town for good ^{and} I kept on working with my repair work. Finally, I got set ~~and got to~~ ^{to} use a window in one of the new stores that had ~~opened~~ opened up which was much better than sitting in that barber shop. And finally there was a fellow out in the country that had a watchmaker's bench. He used to be a watchmaker himself. I don't know how I got a hold of him, but anyway I bought it from that guy for ~~five dollars.~~ ^{\$5.00.} So, then I had a bench! I was doing pretty well then! Well, this was in the fall of 1907. I wanted to go home for Christmas to see my sweetheart. The train was in here by that time, you see. And, you know, from the time I started repairing watches after I come into town in the last part of July until I went home for Christmas, by God, I had ~~four hundred and fifty dollars.~~ ^{\$450.00.}

Larry: Is that right?

Alfred: Yes, sir! I made ~~four hundred and fifty dollars~~ ^{\$450.00} just repairing watches. Everybody had a watch, of course. There was somebody living ¹ on every quarter section. Always somebody's watch stopped and oh, gee, if a watch stopped here, you know, it was terrible. They didn't have a telephone or ~~no~~ ^{no} telegraph ~~or~~ ^{no} radio. By golly, I made ~~four hundred and fifty dollars.~~ ^{\$450.00.}

Larry: So, you were ready to get married by then?

Alfred: ~~Ya, then we set the date~~ Ya, then we finally set the date ~~the twentieth~~ ^{20th} day of April. I took the train and went home and brought my wife back on the train. ^{And it was reported} She was the first bride to arrive in Hettinger by train. Before I went down to get married ⁵ I had constructed a home. It was a little frame house, ~~twenty-four~~ ^{24 x 26,} by ~~twenty-six~~ ^{\$900.00} one story, and the total cost was about ~~nine hundred dollars.~~ But I had this house built, ~~nothing~~ in it. We got off the train, took her up to the house, and there we are. Didn't have a damn thing, no furniture, and slept on the floor! ^(laughs) It's funny when you stop to think about it. Used to live on peanutbutter sandwiches! ^(laughs)

Larry: Did she know what you were bringing her up here to, Alfred?

Alfred: I don't know whether she knew or not. ^(laughs) She knew I built this ~~house,~~ ^{shack} this ~~shack.~~ ^{house} But, you know, I didn't have enough ~~money~~ ^{money} to pay that ~~nine hundred dollars.~~ ^{\$900.00.} I'd bought the material ~~from~~ ^{at} the lumber yard here, Central Lumber Company. When I got back I hadn't been home so very long when a friend of mine, a good friend of mine, came down from the courthouse. He called me over to one side and he says "Hey, Ole, you know, the Central Lumber Company filed a lien against you for the material on your house." God, I didn't know what a ~~mechanic~~ "Mechanic Lien" was. I didn't. ^{maybe} Ya, it was about ~~five hundred dollars.~~ ^{\$500.00} Gad, gotta do something about that. I thought ^{maybe} it was maybe like a mortgage and they'd foreclose it and I'd lose my house. Somewhere, I gotta get that ~~five hundred dollars!~~ ^{\$500.00} The only thing I could do was see if I could sell my homestead. So, there was a real estate man in town here by the name of ~~Frank~~ ^{Herman} Kitzmann. I met him on the street and I says, "Herman, I wonder if you could sell my homestead for me." I says, "I gotta have some money." "How much do you want for it," he asked me. "Oh," I says, "I'll take ~~ten dollars an~~ ^{\$10.00 an} acre and I'll give you a ~~hundred dollars~~ ^{\$100.00} if you sell it." "Well," he says, "I'll see what I

can do." By God, three, four days ~~later~~ afterwards he met me on the street and he says "Well, Mr. Brown, I sold ~~you~~ ~~your~~ ~~homestead~~ your homestead for you." I got ^{\$1500.00} ~~fifteen~~ hundred dollars out of it and I went down and paid that ^{\$500.00} ~~five hundred~~ dollars off so I had my house share again.

Larry: And you had some money to furnish it. *then*

Alfred: Ya, not only that but I used that money to buy showcases and a little stock of jewelry. I had one showcase and I just had little stuff that I could sell, you know.

Larry: Were you still in ~~front~~ the front window of one of these stores then?

Alfred: Ya, in that general store.

Larry: What was the name of the store?

Alfred: ~~Oh~~. Ahlness. *↑*

~~Larry~~: ~~Is it~~ Ahlness.

~~Alfred~~: P. N. ~~Oh~~. And then there's another big store right on the main street here. It's called ~~Quickstad's~~ "Quickstad's Store". *a fellow the name of*

Larry: Oh, MP's Store?

Alfred: Ya, well, that store was built about the same time by Whipler, S. T.

(?) Whipler, and I knew his brother. He was a preacher back in Appleton, Minnesota, a Norwegian-Lutheran minister. Well, one day Mr. Whipler, I suppose a little

jealous, he wanted to know if I wanted a little more room for my store. I could come over to his place and he gave me a whole one side. Gee, I ^{get an} ~~had~~ estate! I took

that up and that way I had ^{two} ~~low~~ showcases *now*, by the window, see. I kept on and was doing pretty well, you know. So, finally I got a chance to rent a building by

myself up here. It's the building where the Ben Franklin store is, ~~in~~. That had an *brick and*

old ~~brick~~ stone block that had been built by a fellow named Rott from Lemon. I rented one of those ²⁴⁻ ~~twenty four~~ foot buildings. I think it was ^{\$20.00} ~~twenty~~ dollars a month I paid for it. I think that's all they ~~charge~~ charged me.

Larry: Then you had a building all your own.

Alfred: Ya, well, the building was too big, you know, ²⁴⁻ ~~twenty four~~ foot wide. So, I made a deal with a woman to put a *partition* ~~partition~~ through it. She had a dress shop and ~~she~~ sold hats and dresses on one side and I had the other side, ^{12 foot} ~~twelve~~ foot, for my jewelry store.

Larry: What was her name?

Alfred: Mrs. Rice, R-i-c-e.

Larry: And she had a boutique, huh?

Alfred: But it wasn't ~~or~~ very long then, I don't know just ^{but} why ~~whether~~ she quit. ~~what~~ Then I took over the whole building and took the ~~partition~~ out and then I had the whole ~~I~~ store. I've got a picture up ~~that~~ there at the museum to show you. And then I sent ~~to~~ Chicago and bought ~~I~~ fixtures. I bought four beautiful ~~floorcase~~ wallcases and floorcases to match it. And, you know, when I sold out that store in 1916, I think it was, it was reported to be the nicest jewelry store this side of Aberdeen.

Larry: Is that right?

Alfred: It was a real ~~I~~ nice store. And I've got some of the pictures up here at the museum. I sold the jewelry store to a fellow named Matt Halverson and he run it then. Oh, he must of run it ~~there~~ ^{10, 12, 15} ~~fifteen~~ years and ~~until~~ one morning he ~~practically~~ dropped dead. So, his widow had the place. Then there was a guy came out here, a ~~watch ma~~ watchmaker from Black, Minnesota. He was a crook and he took this poor widow and he cleaned her out of everything she had. She had three quarters of nice land out here, too. Then he skipped the country. Then they had an auction sale and sold everything in that jewelry store and I bought these fixtures back that I bought back in 1918. So, I bought the fixtures back at the auction sale. So, I got ~~three of the wallcases back~~ two of the ~~I~~ wallcases ^{11, 10} three of 'em up there in the mu~~s~~useum that I bought back. I got my cash register that I bought and my name is on it. I got ~~back~~ my work bench and I said, of course, that I had a ~~beautiful~~ beautiful work bench and I got that up there. I bought it all back again.

Larry: Why did you get out of the jewelry business in '16?

Alfred: Well, you see, I was elected ~~C~~ Clerk of ~~C~~ourt the first election and I held that for ¹⁰ ~~ten~~ years at the same time that I had the jewelry store. In fact, I had the ~~office~~ office in the back of the jewelry store and the county ^{allowed} ~~charged~~ me ^{\$10.00} ~~ten dollars~~ a month for rent. So, it was a pret~~t~~ty good combination. Then I lost that job; a guy ~~beat~~ me. Then I got kinda discouraged about the store, too. And then a fellow had started a bank here in Hettinger by the name of Paul Brown, a different Brown, Brown Brothers Banking Company. So, one day he asked me if I'd like to go to

work ~~for~~ in the bank for him. ~~So, I started to work in the bank~~ Start to work in the bank, by God, that sounded pretty good. ^{Laughs took him up} Get to be a banker! I ~~decided to give~~ ^{on it;} I started to work for the bank. ~~Well,~~ then I had the jewelry store and hell, I sold the jewelry store. Sold it to Mr. Halverson. Lumped it off for ~~three thousand dollars.~~ ^{\$3000.00.} The damn fixtures were ~~worth~~ more than that and I started working for ~~this~~ bank. I think I worked there for some ~~more than~~ ^{over} a year when I ~~went~~ ^{on a} back to Appleton for ~~a~~ visit. While I was down there, my wife's brother was working ~~down~~ in the bank in Appleton ^{as a} bookkeeper, I think it was. He ~~had~~ taken up a ^{Commercial} course in Minneapolis and come back and he was working at the bank there. So, one ~~day~~ noon when Ed come back from ~~his~~ work, his name was Ed ^{Knutson} ~~Karstenson~~, he said, "Alfred, Mr. Krebs would like to see you when you have time. Just drop in at his bank." Well, I didn't know what he wanted ^{for}, but in due time I went down there, went in his back room and sit down with him. He said, "I was just wondering, are there any ~~small~~ ^{small} banks back in your country that are for sale that could be bought." He says, "I kinda like to get something out ~~west~~ there where we might have an outlet ^{where we could probably} go out and pick up some paper." I says, "I don't know. There's a bank in Haynes and there's one in ^{Bucyrus.} ~~Bucyrus~~. There both only about ¹⁰⁻¹² ~~ten~~ twelve miles from Hettinger, but they seem to be real ^{nice} little outfits and I don't know anything about 'em." "Well," he said, "would you be interested in buying one of those banks?" ^{Gosh} God, I said, "I don't know. I haven't been in the banking business very long." I said, ~~and~~ "I don't know too much about banking business. I've only been in it about a year or so and most of that was ^{bookwork} ~~book work~~." "Well," he said, "your brother-in-law, Ed, has worked in here. He can go out there with you." Well, "I ~~don't know~~ ^{that} ~~said,~~ ^{that} sounded pretty good too." "Well," he says, "you look it up and give me the names." So, I ^{gave} him the names of both banks. And I came back here and, by God, one day I got a letter from him and he said he had a letter from both the banks. Either one of 'em could be bought.

~~Larry: Oh, is that right.~~

Alfred: ~~So,~~ "Now," he says, "I was wondering ~~if~~ if you would like to go look at 'em and check on 'em. I'll send Ed out ^{and} and between the two of you you can check on these banks." So, he did! Well, Ed come out and first we went to Haynes, looked

over the Haynes bank, ~~talked to 'em about it~~ and talked to 'em about it. Business of course. But I didn't like it because he had so much rediscounted paper. God, I think he said ~~he said~~ ^{\$30,000.00} ~~thousand dollars~~ worth of rediscounted paper on ~~at~~ ^{Stockyards} National Bank in South St. Paul. Gee, I didn't like that too well.

You're back ^{of} ~~of that~~ that, you know, if you buy it. So, the next day we went to ~~the~~ ^{Bucyrus. Gol,} ~~the~~ ^{Bucyrus} ~~bank~~. ~~we~~ we got to ~~the~~ ^{we} and here was a nice, clean, little bank. They didn't have any rediscounts and they showed a good profit. Ya, they'd sell. A fellow name of Joe ^{Weigen} ~~Weigen~~ was cashier and a fellow name of Nelson was ^{Appraiser.} ~~appraiser~~.

Well, I wrote back to Appleton to Mr. ^{Krebs} ~~Crege~~ and told him we ^{that} looked over both ~~of~~ those banks for you and we decided that if ^{you're} interested the Bank ^{Bucyrus} of ~~the~~ would be the best buy. So, I guess, he came up and went up to there. Well, he

started dickerin' around. How much do you want for this bank? "How much do you want for your stock?" ^{They} ~~they~~ ^{wanted} ~~wanted~~ ^{\$200.00} ~~two hundred dollars~~ a share. ~~Two hundred dollars~~ ^{\$200.00} a share!

^{They were} ~~They~~ only worth ^{\$100.00} ~~a hundred~~, you know. God, we thought that was an awful profit for somebody. "Well," they said, "it's worth it." ^{Our} ~~our~~ ^{dividends,} ~~last year,~~ he says, "last year was ^{30% or 40%."} ~~thirty percent or forty percent~~. ^{40%} ~~Forty percent~~ dividend! Gee, God, that

was some dividend! Damn, if we didn't ^I ~~we~~ buy it. Well, then ^{we settled} ~~how~~ much each one had to take, you know, of stock and ^{it fell on me} ~~this fellow~~ and me to buy ⁴⁰ ~~fourty~~ shares of stock. ^{\$200.00} ~~At two hundred dollars~~ a share, ^{it} ~~was~~ ^{\$8000.00,} ~~eight thousand dollars~~, see. But I had ^{\$5000 dollar} ~~a five thousand~~ C.D. here in the ~~bank~~ C.D. in the bank here in Hettinger and I sold my house for ^{\$3000.00} ~~three thousand dollars~~ so I had the money for it.

Damn, if I ~~didn't~~ go in ~~there~~ there and buy it. This brother-in-law and I came out and ^{the two of us} ~~took~~ it over. And to start with, it worked just fine and the first year we declared a ^{40%} ~~forty percent~~ dividend. So, that was paying off that stock pretty fast.

~~Very, pretty good, huh.~~

Alfred: And then we went along fine until we started having these poor crops, drought ~~grasshoppers~~ and grasshoppers.

Larry: Was that in the '20s now, Alfred?

Alfred: Ya, that was in the '20s ~~or what was it.~~

Larry: Did the bank in ^{Bucyrus} ~~the~~ close in '29?

Alfred: ^{Yes,} ~~Yes,~~ all the banks closed in the whole county except the First

National Bank. We all went down! ~~Everybody~~^{who} had any money in the bank wanted it, you couldn't ~~get~~ get any fresh money, you couldn't collect on the notes you had, and if there ~~was~~ was a farmer owes a ~~thousand dollars~~^{\$1000.00,} you couldn't even get the damn interest. See, we couldn't collect anything so we just kept on and kept on until finally you used up ~~your~~ your resources. Just had to quit. Just had to quit.

Larry: Did you go broke yourself, Alfred?

Alfred: Sure, I lost every damn thing I had in there. I lost all my stock and I had a home there in town ~~in town~~ and I lost that. When I walked out of ~~the~~ that bank, I had a wife and four kids and that's all. ~~Except~~^{adjoining} I had a farm ~~joined~~

~~to~~ ~~Hettinger~~ here. ~~So, I moved down there to the farm, my wife and I, joined~~^{and} ~~to~~ ~~Hettinger~~ here. Well, we'd never lived on a farm and it was pretty hard for us.

I had a couple of cows and I had to milk some cows and I had a few horses, you know. So, finally a friend ~~came~~^{one} of mine came along that had homesteaded here in the early days. He wanted to come back ~~to~~ to Hettinger. He was living down in South Dakota. So, I made a deal with ~~him~~^{him} to rent him this place. So, he came ~~with~~^{with} a immigrant car and his horses and I rented him the farm and I stepped off.

Larry: That was in '20 or '30?

Alfred: ~~Along~~^{Along} about '29 or '30. Well, then, I ~~had~~^{had} to have something to do and I got a place in town to live. It was an apartment that cost ~~fifteen dollars~~^{\$15.00} a month. So, I got a job ~~working~~^{working} for the Dakota Farmer.

Larry: Is that right?

Alfred: And I worked for them for ~~two or three~~^{two or three} years at least. I ~~was~~^{was} the boss, the overseer, and I had ~~two, three~~^{two, three} men working for me 'cause of the group. We'd work one ~~town~~^{town}. Maybe there'd ~~be~~^{be} three or four ~~of~~^{of} us in this group and every day they'd go out in different directions.

Larry: Sell ~~subscriptions~~^{subscriptions} you mean?

Alfred: Sell subscriptions ~~to the~~^{with} Dakota Farmer. You know, the funny part of it is the subscriptions to the Dakota Farmer ~~was~~^{was} ~~one dollar~~^{\$1.00} a year and the commission was ~~ninety cents~~^{90¢}. So, all they got was ~~ten cents~~^{10¢} out of every damn dollar.

So, if you sold a few subscriptions during the day, ~~you~~ you could make a little money. ~~But~~^{But} the hell of it was, there wasn't any money. So, we had to dicker, we had

to trade for chickens or junk, anything we could use we'd trade, then bring that back into town and resell it. You can get an idea. Then I finally got the chance to go to work for the International Harvester Company and I think I worked for them ~~in~~ ^{about} three years as collector. I worked out of Aberdeen ^a couple ^{of} years and I worked out ^{of} Fargo a couple of years. The only trouble ~~with that job is with~~ that job ~~you only worked six months.~~ was only good for six months. You worked from July ~~1st~~ ^{1st} until New Year. That's the collection season and then you're laid off for six months. But I was getting a ~~hundred and fifty dollars~~ ^{\$150.00} a month and that was damn good money in those days, so it wasn't so bad. Then, in 1933, we had those terrible duststorms. I was workin' out of Fargo ~~in~~ ^{in the southeastern} ^{corner} part of the state, ~~down there by Weimer and Wyndmere (and Egeland) and down in the east county~~ down in that country. And, you ^{know,} those duststorms came up and ruined everything. Sometimes you had to have lights on the daytime 'cause you ~~couldn't~~ ^{couldn't} see. You had to have lights on ⁱⁿ your car driving up and down the street. Finally, the International ~~Company~~ ^{people} called ~~all~~ ^{all} us collectors in and informed us they had to terminate our services on account of the duststorms and crop failure. So, then I was without a job ~~again~~.

Larry: Were you living in Fargo then?

Alfred: No, I was living here ^{here}, but I worked out of Fargo. I'd come home every so often, you know, weekend or some ^{thing}. So, I went up to Fargo ~~and checked in,~~ checked in, ~~and~~ drove my car to Bismarck, and stayed overnight in Bismarck. It just so happened that a fellow name ^(laughs) of Bill Langer ^{was} having some trouble with the law. Did you ever hear of him?

Larry: Oh, yes!

Alfred: There was a lawsuit ^{there} about something he had done. So, just for the dickens of it I went up to the courthouse to listen. While there was a recess taken, I walked out in the hallway. ~~One~~ ^{One} of the attorneys came out and started talking ^{to} me, ^{he} ~~which~~ used to be from Hettinger here ~~that~~ ^{and} I knew ^{him} real well. He was States Attorney when I was Clerk of Court, so we worked together for a long time. He says "what are you doin' here, Al?" Well, I told him, "I just lost my job." ^{"Gosh"} ~~he~~, he says, "what are you gonna do?" I says, "I don't know. I'll try and find something, I

guess. He said why don't you put an application in with the Welfare Department." They were just organizing then. "Gosh, I don't know anything about that." "Well," he says, "you know just as much about it as anyone else. ~~...he said~~ Why don't you go up and put an application in." I says, "where do you do it?" "Go up to the capitol," he says, "and go up to the welfare office. They'll give you a blank up there and you fill it out." Gee, it ~~cost~~ ^{didn't} cost anything so I went up there. A lady waited on me, the ~~personal~~ ^{personnel} director, she gave me a blank to fill out. She says, "you can bring it back in the morning if you want to." I took it home in the room where I was and filled it out. The next morning I took it up. "Well," she says, "we'll let you know, Mr. Brown, what we can do." So, of course, I went on home to Hettinger. It was only ^{two} a day or ~~so~~ afterwards I got a telephone call to ~~report~~ report to Bismarck. And I had to go to Fort Yates, ~~not~~ Fort Yates, ~~Fort~~ Fort Totten, because they were having an orientation work there for all these guys that were making an application there as a caseworker. So, sure enough, I went up there. I was the oldest man in the bunch. Most of ~~them~~ ¹ were all young kids, you know. I think I was there, oh, about ~~ten~~ ¹⁰ days or so takin' that course. I think we had to pay our own expenses. I'm sure we did because ~~we~~ ² we wasn't on the payroll. ~~So~~ ^{So} I went home then. By golly, it was only a few days afterwards and I got a telephone call to report to Minn^ewauk^aen for employment. Minn^ewauk^aen ^{is} in Benson County. So, ~~I~~ [?] I went up there and started to work as a caseworker. A fel^low by the name of Emil Lion was the Executive Secretary. I don't think I'd been there over six weeks or a couple of months when Mr. Williams, the ~~attorney~~ attorney for the State Welfare Department, called me up and he said, "Mr. Brown, we'd like to transfer you to Washburn." ~~He said,~~ "There's a woman, ^{who's} ~~the~~ secretary there, and she needs a man to help." So, I had to pack up and go to Washburn and I think that was in the fall of 1933. I reported ~~to~~ ^{for} work as a case-worker. I worked there all that winter. Then when the first July came I was offered that job as collector again with the International. Well, then I thought hell, that's better than this. The pay I was gettin' there, I think, was a ~~hundred and ten dollars~~ ^{\$110.00} a month. Now, I could make a ~~hundred and fifty~~ ^{\$150.00} and mileage too; you know, I'd get seven cents a mile. So, then I resigned and went back to work again for the International people and that lasted until the first of January ⁽¹⁹³⁴⁾

And then that terminated, so I came home and expected to spend the winter here. And I hadn't been home too long ~~when~~ ^{before} this same Attorney, Mr. Williams, called me up. He says, "Mr. Brown, we'd like to have you go back to work for us. We'd like to have you go to Ellendale and take over that office, ~~for us.~~ That's north of Aberdeen. He says, "you know, there's a school there, Ellendale Normal School ~~and you got a son there and live at home. You could take him he says he could go to school there and live at home.~~ ^{who} You could take him over to the office; it would be to your advantage." I got to thinkin' about it. O.K. I went to Ellendale and took over the job.

Larry: But your wife and family were still here?

Alfred: Still here, ya. I went there and took it over ~~and~~ ^{and} after I ~~was~~ I'd been there for a month or two, finally, my wife and my two youngest sons came and we rented a place in Ellendale. I was in Ellendale then for a little over a year and Mr. Williams called me again. He says, "Mr. Brown, we'd like to have you go back to Washburn and take over the Washburn office." They had a fellow that wasn't giving them very good satisfaction ~~named~~ ^{EKblad.} by the name of ~~Ekblad.~~ Well, Washburn was close to Bismarck and I had already been there once and had ~~a lot of friends~~ a lot of friends there, you know, and that sounded pretty good. So, by God, I quit Ellendale and went back to Washburn. And I stayed there until 1943, ~~practically~~ ¹⁰ years. On June 1, 1943, I came back to Hettinger and took over the Hettinger Candy Company. My ~~two~~ two sons had been operating this candy company, but they were both in the service in the shipyards there in San Francisco. They had turned the candy company over to a guy that had a ~~spool~~ ^{spool} hall here. And, you know, when my youngest son, Jack, ~~the~~ ³ the one that's here now, came home on a furlough ~~and~~ ^{and} came up to visit us, he started telling me about this fellow that run the candy company. He says, "you know, dad, he's sure doin' well. He's made a thousand dollars there in a couple a months." And, gee, that sounded pretty good! Maybe I should take that over. So, I wrote to the boys out there and made a deal with 'em that I'd come here and take the candy company over. So, ~~the~~ June 1, 1943, I came back to Hettinger and took over the candy company. The total inventory of the stock, I think, was ~~eight hundred dollars.~~ ^{\$800.00.} That was all the stock there was here, ~~eight~~ ^{\$800.00.} ~~hundred dollars.~~ Everything, of course, was hard to get then. You

couldn't buy any cigarettes and candy was all on a ration. So, you ~~just~~ just got so many cases of candy and you had to allocate that, ~~so many boxes to a customer,~~ so many boxes to a customer. But, you know there was good money in it. ~~I just kept my~~ My wife, she helped me, and I just kept on and kept on and we were making money, making ~~the~~ good money, the two of us. In the meantime, the ~~the~~ war threat was over and the boys came back. Well, here I was and I'd made a little money while they were gone. So, this second boy, the ~~one~~ ^{one} that's out at Anaconda, he was ^{at that time} living in Lewistown, Montana, ~~at that time~~ and he was telling us what a good town Lewistown was. ~~It's~~ ^{It's} a good little town, too, if you've ever been there.

~~Larry: I think I've been through there, it, ya.~~

~~Alfred:~~ That's a good little town, and it would be a good ~~place~~ place for a candy company to start. So, I got to talkin' to this boy of mine, The one that was the head of the candy comp~~any~~ ^{pany}. ~~I said~~ ^I "If you want to go out to Lewistown and start a new candy company, I'll let you have the ~~money, the capital, the~~ money, the capital." I had it saved then; I had money on hand. "And I'll take over the ~~candy company~~ ^{company} Hettinger Candy Company or you take over the candy company and I'll go to Anaconda." He decided he'd like to go. ~~He~~ ^{He} went to Anaconda and started the Browns Candy Company up there and I stayed here and run~~d~~ this one. Well, then in the meantime that war was over and Jack, my youngest son, ~~here he~~ ^{came} back. He was married and he didn't have a nick~~el~~ ^{el} of course. He come back and started to help me then and he's been with me ever since. This outfit up in Lewistown went haywire for some reason or other. I think he spent more ^{money} than ~~he~~ he earned. It ended up that I lost everything I'd put in up there but I still had the candy company here. So, I operated then until here about ~~ten,~~ ^{10,} ~~fifteen~~ ¹⁵ years ago, ¹⁰ years at least. I decided it was time for me to retire. So, I ~~called~~ ^{says} my son in and my nephew, Tomerson, and I ~~said~~ ^{"Boys,} if you want the candy company I'll sell it to you. Noth~~ing~~ ^{ing} down! Jack can have two-thirds and Norman, you can have one-third ^{if} they took it up.

\$50,000.00.

At that time, the stock inventoried pretty close to ~~fifty thousand dol-
lars.~~

Larry: Is that right!

Alfred: I think it was ~~fourty five thousand~~ or so. Jack got ~~thirty~~
~~thousand~~ and Norman got ~~fifteen thousand~~. Well, I loaned Norman the
~~fifteen thousand~~ and Jack owed me ~~thirty thousand~~ and I donated ~~ten~~
~~thousand dollars~~ of that to him. So, they took it over and they have
operated ever since.

Larry: Alfred, you've had a full life, haven't you?

Alfred: Ya. When I come to Hettinger, I took quite an active part in
the city. I was a member of the school board for awhile; I was a mem-
ber of the city council a couple of times; I was a charter member ^{in organizing}
~~and the first secretary;~~
~~the first Secretary of~~ Hettinger Fire Department, ^{and the first secretary;} I organized that band;
I organized ~~that~~ ^{the} orchestra ^{that I} and kept ~~it~~ in force for some ~~ten~~ ¹⁰ years. I
took quite an active part in developing the Yellowstone Trail that runs
through here by furnishing music, ~~when necessary, and labor.~~ So, I've
~~been quite an interest~~ when it was necessary and labor. So, I've
taken quite ^a lot of interest. Then in 1957 when we had our ~~fifteen~~
~~thirtieth~~ ^{50th} anniversary I decided maybe I should build a sod house down
here because ^{it} would be quite a attraction to our tourist trade and
to ~~the~~ ^{the} young people that had grown up. So, I conceived the idea of
building ^{the} that sod house. That was quite a job too, you know. I had to
arrange for the sod, ~~I had to arrange~~ for hauling it in, and putting it
together, but I had a lot a help. The city helped me with some lumber.
They had a lumberyard here they tore down and they let me tear ^{down} some ~~down~~
for material. So, the carpenters ~~cut~~ ^{cut} the roof, put it up for me, and
~~they~~ didn't charge me anything. So, I built that ^(sodhouse) and it was
quite a success right off the bat. To begin with I was just ^{going} ~~going~~ to
equip it like it was in the olden days with a ~~laundry~~ ^{laundry} stove and a home-
made table so ~~that~~ it would look just like a homestead site. Well, as
time went on I started adding to it, and adding to it, buying, and a
lot of it was given to me until finally I got to ^{have} ~~having~~ quite a museum

down there which I've been operating ever since. Then when we organized this Historical Society and the Methodist people gave us their old church building that afforded us a place to not only meet but a place for accumulating items like relics, records, and pictures that we wanted to save. So, I took charge of that too and I've had that ever since.

Larry: ~~How old are you~~ Alfred, how old are you now?

Alfred: I'll be ~~ninety one~~ ⁹¹ the ~~seventh~~ ^{7th} of November.

Larry: How old would you have been then when you came to this area in 1906?

Alfred: ~~Twenty two~~ ²² You see, I was born in 1883.

Larry: Were you born in the United States?

Alfred: Yes, in Appleton, Minnesota.

Larry: ~~Your dad came over though, didn't he?~~ ^{But your dad came over.}

Alfred: My mother and father immigrated from Norway right after the Civil War. They came in a sailboat and it took them three weeks to cross the ocean.

And they homesteaded in Minnesota or did they start in Minnesota?
Larry: ~~Did they homestead in Minnesota?~~

Alfred: ~~When my father first come over to this country, he got a job working in the woods at Chippewa.~~ When my father came to this country from Norway, he first got a job in the woods at Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. My mother had some brothers ~~and they were~~ that had immigrated and they were ^{there} working. ~~and he got a job working in the woods.~~ And he got a job working in the woods. Then later on he started working for the Milwaukee Railroad when they started building this line from Red Wing, Minnesota, to Aberdeen ^{back} in 1870-something. At that time, it was called the H, D, & D, Hastings Dakotan Division, and he worked building that railroad from Hastings to Aberdeen. From what I gather, when he got as far as Appleton ^{for some reason or other, I don't why,} he gave up the job on the railroad, and he sent ~~to~~ ^{to} Eau Claire, Wisconsin, for his sweetheart to come out. They were married then at Benson, Minnesota, which is only ~~twenty two~~ ²² miles from Appleton.

Larry: Ya, I know where that is.

*Hettinger
or to*

Alfred: They started a small eating establishment feeding these homesteaders in a one-room shack. Now, this is what ~~my~~ folks ^{told} me.

Then They gradually spread out until they got a larger building and added to it and added to it. It still stands there and in that building is ~~where~~ where I was born. I was reared in that building. I have the ~~distinctive~~ distinction of being born there in Appleton, I was ~~baptized~~ baptized by the Lutheran minister in the Lutheran Church in Appleton. I attended Sunday School through my teen~~s~~ ^{years} in that same church; I was confirmed in that same church in Appleton; I was married in that same church in Appleton; and I buried my father and my ~~mother~~ mother from that same church. ~~in Appleton~~ *That same church.*

Larry: Did you tell me, Alfred, that your dad later homesteaded in McHenry County?

Alfred: Ya. Now, you see, when he came there that country ~~was~~ ^{was} all being homesteaded around Appleton, ~~but he wasn't interested in it~~ ^{but} he wasn't interested in it until this Dakota Territory was being ~~opened~~ ^{opened} for homesteads around Minot, Balfour, Drake, and Anamoose. That whole ~~country~~ ^{country} territory up there! Then he got the idea that maybe he should use his "homestead right" because several of the people from Appleton were going up there and locating ~~and~~ and filing and taking homesteads. Evidently, my father thought, why not use his right too. He didn't do it when he could ~~in~~ in the early days! ~~So~~ So, by golly, he went up there and filed on a homestead out of Balfour between Balfour and Velva. Then he rented out his hotel for a year. And he took an immigrant car, took horses, a cow, machinery, and took it all to Balfour. He built a house and a barn on the farm. Then that summer of 1900 when school left out, ~~I was going~~ ^{built} I ~~was going~~ to college, I went up there and stayed and helped him until school started in the fall. Then my brother and I had to come back to Appleton again. Then my father stayed there until he could prove up, so he had to spend eight months there. Then he proved up that, came back to Appleton, and then took over the hotel again. Then within a year or two he sold that, a neighbor wanted to buy it, and I think he sold it for ~~thirty two~~

~~\$3200.00,~~

~~\$20.00~~

~~was~~

~~hundred dollars, twenty dollars and~~ acre which ~~is~~ good money in those days. That's where I got the idea. I could do the same thing so ~~that~~ I could get married.

Larry: Say, Alfred, ~~I wanted to ask you before I forget~~ what were the nationalities around Hettinger and ~~Bucyrus?~~ ^{Bucyrus?}

Alfred: Norwegian, mostly, and Russian. This territory out ~~east of town~~ ~~northeast~~ of town here was a heavy Russian community ~~there~~ and all in that same ~~community~~ there was Sipherts, there was Schafers, and a whole bunch of 'em. Then there's Scandinavians, ~~usual~~ lot of Norwegians, I'd say, in the north part and the west part of Adams County and even in the east part. The Norwegians predominated as a nationality here.

Larry: Now, you said that ~~when you came in there were ranchers around,~~ ~~that this was all free range then,~~ and that this was all free range then.

Alfred: I don't ~~think~~ think any of 'em had ~~own~~ owned the land. I think ~~me~~ most of 'em ~~squatted~~ squatted.

~~Larry: Who were some of the big operators big ranchers when you came down in '07?~~

Larry: Who were some of the big operators or big ranchers when you came down in '07?

~~Alfred: Well, there was that Northwestern Ranch where I told you I used to visit.~~

Larry: Say, I was going to ask you before ~~you~~ you go any further, Alfred, you must have really loved your sweetheart back in Appleton if you were playing mandolin to a pretty good violin ~~there.~~

~~Alfred: Oh, I got some more to tell, Oh, sure. Oh, sure. I go~~

Alfred: ~~Oh,~~ Oh, sure ~~and~~ and I got some more to tell. There was the Northwestern Ranch ~~west~~ west of there was the ^{Prendergast} ~~Prendergast~~ Ranch ~~and~~ that's where I was telling you where we stopped to tie a rag around the wagonwheel. ~~And~~ west of there was the Tom Steven ^{here} Ranch ~~where~~ where we spent the night. Then you come down to this country ~~and there was there~~ there's the H & D Ranch and there was Calcus Ranch and oh, two or three. Jess Fields ^{son} ~~son~~

Snortlands

~~Snortlands~~, and all of 'em. These are all ranchers, but most all of 'em were ~~squatters~~. Maybe Tom Stevens might have filed on that quarter, but most of 'em ~~just~~ just come from way back East, bought themselves some cattle, settled ~~seventy five to a hundred~~ ⁷⁵⁻¹⁰⁰ miles away, and there was no taxes to pay. They just come down here and they didn't even have to buy a fence! Everything was open!

Larry: Were these ranchers pretty unhappy about ~~some~~ these home-
steaders coming in?

Alfred: Oh, ya! Some of 'em didn't like it of course. Couldn't blame them for that because everthing was free. ~~you know~~. As soon as the home-
~~stead~~steaders got in there, why, of course, the homesteaders said stay off 'n my quarter and they joined. They kept on pushing on 'em so that they either had to quit or ~~else~~ else they had to buy some of those

Start lands. I have another story. In the summer of 1907 while I was on the homestead, a guy come driving through the country with ^{team of horses and} a wagon. He had a sack of oats in the wagon and a plow. He stopped at my shack and I ^{got} ~~went~~ ^{visiting} ~~out~~ to ~~visit~~ with him. He said he was looking for a homestead ~~but~~ and he couldn't find one. By that time, they had all been taken up. He was lookin' for a stray one, you know, sometimes somebody never come back. He said he couldn't find one and he didn't know what to do. "I guess I'll have to sell my outfit here," he said. "Well," I says, "how much do you want for it." "Well," he said, "I'll take ~~three hundred dol-~~ ^{\$300.00} ~~lars~~ for my team ^{of} horses, wagon, plow, and harnesses." Gad, that sounded pretty good to me. Here I was, afoot, you know. Well, finally I asked how much cash would you have to have? He said, he'd like to have a couple ^{of} hundred dollars and ~~he'd~~ he'd carry the other hundred. Well, by God, I just wondered if I could swing that deal. "I'll tell you," I said, "I'll ride ~~with~~ ^{up} with you to Gladstone and see if I can borrow ~~it~~ ^{the money} from the bank." So, I went back with him. I went into the bank; I was a stranger, and from ~~seventy five~~ ⁷⁵ miles away. Damn fool, ~~go~~ ^{to} in there and wanna borrow ~~two hundred dollars~~ ^{\$200.00!} I says I'll give you security on this outfit, on the horses. No, they wouldn't listen, ^{they said} but if you get

some ~~body~~ ^{ya.} ~~body~~ to sign a note for you. ~~See~~ ["] ~~Jeez~~ ^{Jeez,} the only man I know, ^{" I said,} in this town is Mr. Lee. He runs the lumberyard ~~here~~ here." I was pretty well acquainted with him because I bought my ~~lumber~~ lumber from him and it just ~~happen~~ ^{ed} so that he had a daughter that was a damn good muscian, too. And I had my mandolin with me in the case. This old Mr. Lee was telling ~~me~~ ^{that} his daughter was a good muscian and ~~he~~ invited me up to his house. I went up there and ~~met~~ / met the girl ~~and~~ and we started playing together, ~~playing~~ playing duets. Gee, I think we played for ~~hours~~ hours at a time.

Larry: What did she play?

Alfred: She played the piano, see, and I played the mandolin. I had music ~~with~~ with me, too. And, ~~you~~ you know, the old man ~~he~~ thought that was pretty nice. After I bought that load of lumber, ~~I~~ I met him then and got acquainted. I had to make other trips back there and every time I went back to Gladstone ^{I'd} always would have to go up to ~~Lee's~~ Lee's house and play ^{duets} with his daughter. And one time when I was up there ^{why} he says, "Mr. Brown I have to make a trip to Richardton." ~~to go~~ He had an automobile. One of these ~~open~~ open cars with no top to it. He says, "I thought maybe you and Hazel would like to go along for the ride." I says, "gee, that would be fine." So, Hazel and I got in the back seat and we took a ride with the ~~old~~ old folks in front all the way to Richardton and back again. Well, anyway ¹ when this bank said if I could get a signer, ~~You-darn-right-but-the-only-guy-I-know-in-town-is-Mr.-Lee~~ the only guy I knew in town ^{was} ~~is~~ Mr. Lee. God, I didn't want to ask him to sign a note ¹ but anyway I went over to the lumberyard. And I told Mr. Lee my story. I said, "Mr. Lee I got a chance to buy this team of horses and this outfit for ~~three hundred dollars~~ ^{\$300.00.} I wanted to borrow a couple of hundred dollars from the bank. I'm sure that I could write to my dad and that he would let me have the ~~two hundred dollars~~ ^{\$200.00,} but I'd like to borrow ~~it~~ it from the bank here in town ~~and they won't~~ and they won't let me have it unless I have somebody to sign the note for me." I said, "you wouldn't sign for me, would you, Mr. Lee?" He looked at me a minute ~~and~~

and he said, "no, Mr. ~~Lee~~ Brown. I signed a note for a guy once and I had to pay it! He says ~~that~~ I took an obligation that I would never sign a note again for anybody else." Well, that was it. I just stood there then. I suppose my head hanging down. He says, "how much did you say you had to have?" I ~~says~~ ^{said,} ~~two hundred dollars.~~ ^{"\$200.00."} "Well," he says, "I won't sign a note for you, but I'll let you have the ~~two hundred dollars.~~ ^{"\$200.00."} He turned around and wrote out a check for ~~two hundred dollars.~~ ^{\$200.00.} Can you imagine that? I said, "Mr. Lee, can I give you security for this now 'cause I'm gonna write my dad and I'm sure my dad will send me the money, but it'll take a little time, see." "No," he says, "that's all right. I'll just charge it on the books just like you bought lumber." And he charged me ~~two~~ ^{\$200.00.} ~~hundred dollars.~~ I got in the wagon and drove back home. Before I left I wrote my dad a letter and told him what happened. I said //for God's sake, dad ^{\$200.00} this man has left me have ~~two hundred dollars~~ and I told him that I thought that you would let me have the money, so please don't ~~disappoint~~ ^{\$200.00} me. Send that ~~two hundred dollars~~ to Mr. J.W. Lee in Gladstone, North Dakota!" Then I went on home to the homestead. A week had gone by, maybe more, because it takes some time ~~for~~ for the mail to go back and forth. Finally, I sat down and wrote a ~~letter~~ letter to Mr. Lee and asked him if he'd got that money from my dad. I got a letter right back ^{saying} ~~says~~ your dad sent the money. He says when you come to Gladstone be sure to come and see us. ^(laughs) By God, that's the funniest thing wasn't it? That a deal like that happened!

end
Larry: Did you ever play ^{the} mandolin for him anymore?

Alfred: ~~I did,~~ ^{As long as I was up there.} 'Course, after Hettinger got started I moved down here to repair watches. Then, of course, I never went back anymore. After I'd been in Hettinger ~~awhile,~~ awhile, I sold that team a horses to a fellow here ~~in Hettinger~~ so I didn't have any horses either. So, I never went back again. But she was a darn ~~good/looking girl~~ good-looking girl and if I hadn't had that sweetheart back in Minnesota I think I would of been making more ^(laughs) trips up there. Anyway, she married a dentist and she was living in Dickinson ^{for a number of years.} I don't know ~~if~~ ^{if} she's still alive or not. I don't

think so; I think she's dead.

Larry: And then you had your Jackson sweetheart or girl, too?!

Alfred: Ya, it paid to be a ^{musician,} ~~magician~~ didn't it? (laughs)

~~Larry: I guess it did, ya.~~

~~Alfred: Paid to be a musician.~~

Larry: Alfred, was there a freight line that ran from Hettinger to Gladstone ~~hauling lumber down for this lumberyard before~~ ^{before} the railroad came in?

Alfred: No, there wan't any transportation, but there were some ^{guys} ~~men~~ you could hire like I ~~had~~ done. There was some man that had a team of horses and you paid him so much and he'd haul the lumber down for you.

~~Larry: Oh, I see.~~

~~Alfred: But there was no transportation.~~

Larry: Well, the railroad came in anyway. ~~in 1907.~~

Alfred: It came in the fall of 1907.

Start Larry: Did Hettinger really grow after the railroad came in ~~the~~ ^{the fall of 1907?}

~~Alfred:--Oh, yes, it was growing pretty good by that time~~

Alfred: Oh, yes, of course, it was growing ~~pretty~~ good by that time.

When they had the lot sale in October, ~~that's~~ ^{AT} that's right after the train come in. They had this lot sale. Then, of course, everybody bought lots then so then all these buildings were just "squatted ~~on~~ So, then they started movin' them around to get 'em on the lots that they bought.

I stood there at the lot sale and watched the sale. Course, I couldn't buy anything. I had this team a horse ~~s~~ and the day before the fellow that had charge of it, the lot sale, come to me and wanted to know if I'd plow a furrow around these blocks so the people could see where the lots were. ~~So, the day before.~~ So, the day before that, I had the team a horse ~~s~~ and that plow, and I plowed a furrow around all these blocks around here. ~~I got ten dollars for that!~~

~~Larry: Is that right!~~

~~Alfred: And I got ten dollars for that!~~

Larry: So, you plowed the first ground turning in Hettinger?

~~Alfred: Yes, I did! That was the first ground turning in Hettinger.~~

~~Yes, sir, I got ten dollars for that.~~

Larry: Was Hettinger a pretty bustling town then?

Alfred: Oh, yes, gee, there was a lot of activity here then, of course! We had four banks here at one time. Four banks!!

Larry: When did they close? They didn't all make it to '29, did they?

Alfred: No, one little bank called ~~the~~ Bank of Hettinger ~~they~~ didn't last long. They just folded up. Then, ~~The~~ Brown Brothers Bank, the one I started working for, ~~they~~ came in and they built that building that's on Main Street there ^{where} Beaumont's Clothing Store is. That little ~~eighteen~~ ¹⁸⁻ foot building I built that ~~in~~ in connection with the bank and that was supposed to be my jewelry store, but I sold it before I ever moved into it. Then the Adams County Bank was organized. Then finally, this little bank closed first, but I think they just folded up.

Larry: That was the Hettinger Bank?

Alfred: Ya. Then ~~The~~ Adams County Bank took over The Brown Brothers Bank and the cashier of that bank was the guy that I bought out in ~~Bucyrus~~ ^{Bucyrus}. They took him down here and made a ~~cashier~~ cashier out of him.

Larry: What was his name?

Alfred: ~~Wigan~~ Weigan. ↗

~~Larry: That's right.~~

~~Alfred: J.O. ~~Weigan~~.~~ Then there was a combination of the two banks. ~~Th~~ Then that bank went down, ^{So}, then that ended everything except the First National.

Larry: Did a lot of people lose money in those bank closings?

Alfred: Oh, ya, but there wasn't a hell of a lot of money! I had maybe a couple a hundred dollars in there. Nobody had any great amount a money.

Larry: Say, Alfred, you know, I've ~~talked~~ ~~seen~~ in about ~~11~~ ¹¹ different counties now in North Dakota and I've heard some stories of some pretty unethical bankers. You know, bankers that took the money

and ran when they saw it was ^{gonna} going to close. Did anything like that ~~hap~~ happen in Adams or Hettinger County?

Alfred: Not that I know of.

Larry: The bankers were pretty good people?

Alfred: There were three banks ^{is} in Reeder at one time.

Larry: Is that right!

Alfred: I knew all three of 'em.

Larry: So, those bankers were ~~was~~ pretty square shooters? ~~was~~?

end Alfred: Oh, yes, ya. / The last bank was First ~~was~~ State Bank of Reeder. A fellow by the name of ^{Krebsbach} ~~Krebs~~ was the cashier of that. His father and his uncle had a store in Adams, Minnesota and it just happened so that my wife's father had a store in Adams, Minnesota, just across the street from each other. So, when Billy Krebsbach came out here to take over the bank and found out who I was, ~~we~~ we got to be pretty good friends because my wife was born in the same town ^{that he come from} where he was born in Adams, Minnesota. So, we were close friends/.

Larry: Alfred, how does it come that the County Seat of Adams is Hettinger and the County north of here.....

Alfred: I don't know why that was.

Larry: I couldn't figure that out.

Alfred: I can't either. It's been confusing lots of times. Hettinger County and Hettinger.

Larry: Ya, in Adams County.

Alfred: I don't know why that was. I ~~was~~ never heard.

Larry: Let me ask you a question now, about people in Hettinger. ~~When you think back over the years~~ what families or what businessmen ~~besides yourself and Mr. Quickstad~~ were responsible for helping organize Hettinger? ~~you know, and getting it business like?~~

Alfred: Well, I'd say Austed. His son, Carlton Austed, has the oil distribution point here. ~~His dad was very active~~ and his dad was very active. Newman in ~~the bank was active~~ The First National Bank was active; O.B. Severson was the County Treasurer for a long time and ^{he was} ~~near~~

^{that}
officer in ~~the~~ Adams County Bank; Doctor Johns was the President of that bank and he was a very active promoter here. Then, there was the Tanni Tannis Brothers. They had a store right across ~~from Quickstads~~ ^{the street from Quickstads} here.

The building is empty there now. Oh, there were some of the ~~attorneys~~ attorneys in town here. One time we had ~~thirteen~~ ¹³ attorneys ^{here in} ~~in town~~ here, when I was Clerk of Court! ~~How in the hell~~ Thirteen of 'em! How in the hell they ever made a living I don't know! ~~Thirteen~~ Thirteen of 'em!

~~Larry: Ya, I would wonder too.~~

Alfred: I'd love to get some of those pictures, but I have no contact. I ~~don't~~ don't know where to write to any of the family or where they live or whether they're alive. Otherwise, I would surely love to. I've got a few of 'em but I'd like to get some more of 'em. It's hard to do it ~~though.~~

Larry: Were there bad ~~fire~~ prairie fires here?

Alfred: Oh, yes! Yes, there were. Every once in awhile we had a prairie fire. ^{we had} ~~one~~ fellow, ~~he~~ was pretty badly burned down south here. ~~He was badly burned.~~ His face was burned and his hands were burned. Oh, God, he looked terrible afterwards! He lived, but ~~...~~

Larry: Was he in a shack or did he fight the fire and get burned?

Alfred: I ^{suppose} ~~suppose~~ he was. I don't know.

Larry: Were most of ~~all~~ those fires started by the locomotives on the railroad?

Alfred: No, most of those were close by here, but those big fires were caused by carelessness. Someone probably throwing a cigarette butt.

Larry: The early settlers that came here they all burned coal ~~in their homes~~ didn't they? ^{didn't they in their homes?}

Alfred: Lignite, ya.

Larry: What were the big mines? ~~Did every farmer have a spot on his land where he could~~ ~~dig coal?~~

Alfred: There were quite a few places in the county here where you could go and ~~dig your own~~ dig your own coal like I did. Some of these

coal banks were along the ~~criks~~ "criks" and you could see the coal cropping out. ~~There~~ There were some places where the coal was close to the surface and they ~~uncover~~ ^{ed} it with a scraper. Then whoever had that mine would sell that coal. Oh, ^{maybe} for a dollar and a half or two dollars a ton.

Larry: And the people would dig it themselves?

~~Alfred: No, not when they bought it but when they dug it themselves~~

Alfred: No, not when they bought it, ^b But when they dug it themselves I don't think they paid for it. ~~I dug my own coal, I just went to a~~

~~bank and dug it~~ I dug my own coal. I just went to a bank and dug it!

Larry: How many years did you do that?

Alfred: Just that one winter when I came back and my coal was gone.

Larry: Did some of these farmers ~~for~~ ^{that} do ~~that~~ for a long time? ~~for~~
~~many years?~~

~~Alfred: You mean dig your own coal?~~

~~Larry: Ya.~~

Alfred: A good many of them did. If they could afford it, they'd buy it because it was so cheap.

Larry: Were there any big commercial coal companies in Adams County?

Alfred: Not to start with ^{until} ~~the~~ finally the state of South Dakota bought a tract of land and developed ~~a~~ a coal mine here, north of Haynes, and they had run a ~~spur~~ spur out there. That was an underground mine but I guess it didn't pay ~~because~~-or something because it folded up. Then, of course, ~~of~~ of late we have those mines like this one over here now ^{in Gascoyne.} ~~There's~~ There's ~~two~~ two, three of those big pit mines over there, ^{but} ~~but~~ ^{they're} ~~but~~ owned by corporations now, you know.

Larry: Alfred, ^{who} as a person ~~has~~ has seen a lot of North Dakota, what do you think of stripmining and coal gasification and ~~all of the things~~ ~~that these people are doing for industry~~ industry in North Dakota? What are your personal feelings?

Alfred: According to the information, ^{there's} there's a certain amount of coal available for a certain number of years ^{but} ~~but~~ what are you going to do at the

end of that ~~time~~ when its all used up? All of this coal that we're talking about now is in a certain area and eventually that's going to be used up. Now, of course, ~~there~~ ^{they're} passing laws that mean that you got to put the dirt back again. You have to refill it; otherwise, they have these terrible landscapes. Oh, we got some around here ~~at~~ at Haynes! Oh, just t^o terrible, you know, just ruins it! Now, these companies g~~otta~~ g~~otta~~.....~~What do you call it? re.....~~ What do you call it? They ~~Larry g~~otta~~~~.

Larry: Reclaim it?

Alfred: Ya. I suppose the Lord put that there to be used and ~~that's~~ maybe that's what it's for. The thing that is so funny is when and how did this lignite coal come into existence. We know that its from vegetation. We know that we can go to one of these mines and ^{you can} see the trees right in there. But WHEN and HOW? At one time, this ^{whole} country must have been one solid forest, ^{and} then something must have taken place, some upheaval of the ground, and just took and covered it all up again, ² And it developed into the coal. But what about the oil? For God's sake, where did all that oil come from?

~~Larry: I've thought about that, too, Alfred.~~

~~Alfred:~~ Who put that oil down in there and left it all-1-1 these millions of years for a few of us poor guys to come along and dig a hole down and tap it?

~~Larry: Ya, don't know it~~

~~Alfred:~~ Now, they claim that's from vegetation too, animal vegetation. But, my God, how many animals would have to be covered up to make all of the billions of tons of fuel. When you stop to think of it this creation is ~~even~~ something.

Larry: It's ~~amazing~~ amazing.

Alfred: Amazing. What divided this earth here into these different areas? How did South America get separated from ~~N~~outh America with just that little strip in ~~between~~ there?

Larry: Well, as long as we're talking about things that are kinda spiri-
spiritual, Alfred, let me ask you this. Do you think ⁷ that people when
~~you came here and when Hettinger was growing in Adams County was being~~
~~settled do you think that people~~ then were more fundamentally religious
than they are now?

Alfred: Yes, I do. I really do.

Larry: A lot of old people tell me that, you know.

Alfred: Ya, I still think so. My folks here, ^{I'd} ~~I would~~ say, were quite
religious. All that I ever knew I learned from my mother and to start
with it had to be in Norwegian. I learned my Sunday School lessons all
in Norwegian out of what we call a Counti Chistmus.^(?) I guess there's
one of those Germans that has the same name, doesn't it? A little book-
let. Then there's another one they call the Foreclori, all in
Norwegian! In fact, I don't think I talked English until I was about
five, ~~years old~~ six years old! My folks just talked Norwegian, ~~to me~~ ^{It}
was the most natural thing for them to do.

Larry: Do you think this country has grown away from a belief in God ~~me~~
~~to~~ belief in themselves and an ignoring of God?

Alfred: No, I don't. I think the average person believes in ~~the~~
Supreme Being.

Larry: But we don't always live that way.

Alfred: ~~No, otherwise, how could it happen~~ No, otherwise, how could it
happen. Otherwise, how could it happen? When I go up to the hospital a
and see some of these ~~babies~~ newborn babies laying in the crib there, it
comes to my mind my, gosh, what happened. Just think what happened! A
sperm from a male human being meets one from the woman and immediatedly
starts building a child, and everything inside of it. It's the most
~~wonderful thing and that's true of anything else!~~ WONDERFUL thing and
~~that's true of anything else!~~

Larry: It's a miracle every day!

Alfred: ~~Miracle~~ Miracles! There mir-racles! Why every flower and every
tree that you see grow up is a miracle! Every ~~one and every~~ living thing is a mira-

cle. I see these trees, beautiful trees, out here just barely on out. Pretty soon cold weather come along and they start sheddin' all the leaves and they fly all over. There they stand all winter long. Pretty soon warm weather comes and spring and pretty soon here's the buds. ~~and pretty soon the leaves come out and here~~ ^{And p} pretty soon the leaves come out and here you have a great big tree again for another year.

Larry: Ya, rebirth.

Alfred: ~~Rebir-rth~~ Rebir-rth! Isn't it funny? I tell you it's funny. Ya, lots of times I thought you take a watermelon seed and put that in the ground and see what happens. Pretty soon a little stem comes out, ^{then} starts growing away, growing a little further and a little further out, and some leaves on it. ~~The~~ ^{First} First thing you know here's a little watermelon starts with a little flower. Pretty soon here's one that big and ~~weights~~ ^{15, 20} weights fifteen, ~~twenty~~ pounds and started from that little seed down here. It's remarkable ain't it?

Larry: Ya, ~~it's~~ it's pretty hard to be bored with life when you look at what's going on.

Alfred: Yes, sir.

Larry: Is that why you lived so long, Alfred, because ~~you're~~ you're continually renewed by living?

Alfred: I don't know, but I have my question. I question about heaven and hell.

Larry: Oh, I do too.

Alfred: I don't believe ~~there~~ ^{where} there is such a place as hell and I don't know ~~that~~ there is such a place as heaven. I can't conceive that ~~there's~~ there's ~~someplace~~ somewhere up in the universe or somewhere up in the sky that there's a place they call heaven and they got a gate up there, like they were talkin' when we were kids, with ~~St.~~ St. Peter standin' on the outside and he says you come in, you can't.

Larry: No, I can't. No.

Alfred: ~~No,~~ I can't go that ~~call~~ ^{pass away} ~~call~~ ^{happened} ~~call~~ all. I don't know ~~what~~ [?] what happens to us when we die but what ~~happened~~ ^{happened} ~~to us~~ when we came.

Larry: Well, I think, Alfred, when you're born here you die somewhere else and when you die here you're born somewhere else.

Alfred: Ya, it's just so much and that's....it's a reversal ~~that~~ and that's all.

Larry: Right, it's all a process.

Alfred: Ya, it's a process.

Larry: Ya. You know, what bothers me, Alfred, and I was talking about that with D. J. last night, you know, before we came over here; I don't like to see a Catholic Church and a Lutheran Church and a Church of Latter Day Saints and a Baptist Church.....I think we can all worship the same God, ~~can't~~ can't we.

Alfred: Why, I think so.

Larry: I don't think....we got enough reasons to divide each other. We don't have to divide each other when we worship.

End