

S1 / 126 (A - C)

Accn 2674

Source: Elizabeth Rummel

Place: Residence of Elizabeth Rummel - Canmore

Date: November 10, 1976

Taped by: Edward J. Hart/A.C.R.

Remarks: Experiences in the mountains. Background ~~defect~~ ~~1976~~ - early days.

(Munich)

Cassette
side A

1. Born in 1897 - lived in Germany. In 1911 Elizabeth's mother bought a ranch in Alberta. South of Calgary in the Alberta foothills. 018
2. Elizabeth, two sisters and her mother - did not know a thing about ranching of course but it was a wonderful life - had thought that they would always go back to Germany. **Two sisters and her mother.**
3. In 1914 - could not go back because the war was on. Had gone back every year to Germany previous to that - came back for the summer months. After 1914 had to make their living on the ranch (no more money from Germany). "Lucky they didn't put us in a concentration camp" 044
4. People were awfully decent. Neighbours very kind. 066
5. At first it was just a pleasure ranch - they didn't know how to work the ranch. Old John Ware ranch. Had quite a bit of land. Had to milk cows. Very very poor but very happy in their work. After the war in 1919 they went back home....Munich.... and stayed there from 1919 to 1920 and then the girls begged their mother to take them back to Canada. And so they settled in the area and have been here ever since. Both of Elizabeth's sisters married ranchers sons....from Millarville. Their mother stayed with them. 076
6. Mother had been used to a luxurious life but adapted to the ranch life very well..... girls learned to plough and hay ... look after the cattle. I never turned into a huge ranch... like most of the ranchers in Alberta are. 113
- 7.. Girls went to school in the district beginning in 1914 - had a wonderful library. Almost self taught. Had good schooling before they came out - languages and so on... Finished school at about age 16 ... had to work. 128
8. Elizabeth stayed on ranch until 1936. One sister married Paddy Rogers - had a big ranch in the Okotoks district and Jane married Joe Fisher who was son of - old timer - on Fisher Creek.... Fisher Creek is named after Jane's husbands father. 162
9. Elizabeth stayed and worked on the ranch with her mother - always took a "busman's" holiday in the mountains. (Mother died only ten years ago). Had their old saddle horses - went to the Kananaskis Lakes from the ranch. Before haying started they had this holiday for a week or ten days. That was long before Calgary Power got there. Eau Claire Lumber Camp where the Upper Lake was... some of the old log cabins are still there. Would stay at the famous campground - lovely carvings on the tree that Jack Fuller made. During the years between 1920 and 30 - Calgary Power came - so they didn't go in anymore. Their campground under 60' of water! 176
10. The Hungry Thirties! Elizabeth Rummel decided that she wanted to do something on her own. Perhaps run a guest ranch. Knew how to cook.... and knew to operate a place where there are no stores... big supplies just once or twice a year with wagon - Calgary - had no car until 1920. Even then to go to Calgary was a major operation. 218

11. Elizabeth decided to go to Banff. Got to Banff through Mrs. Nancy Lyall - got to know her. She was the hostess at the Alpine Club. She advised Elizabeth to go to the McLeods - Jim McLeod at the Rocky Mountain Tours. They were a lovely family. Elizabeth stayed there from February 1936 met Margaret Orr (Lorne Orr's daughter) had a little store.. Margaret Orr suggested Erling Strom who arrived in Banff every June and operated the Assiniboine Lodge.... she showed Elizabeth pictures and she fell in love with it right there..... 238
12. Elizabeth went to see Erling Strom when arrived about a job and he said - "Yes, come on out." There was a cook (a Chinese cook called Ping), Jim Bagley head guide. The first time Elizabeth rode out was with Jim Bagley and the cook. Just somehow it just clicked - Elizabeth loved the work - she was chambermaid, waitress, hostess, guide, got to know the country really well. 279
13. Erling's place - the same as it is now - except for the new lodge. The old lodge was there... and all the cabins were there... he bought it from the C.P.R. Elizabeth would guide people up the Nubs - not climbing - Erling climbed Assiniboine with people... whenever she had the time free she would go ...very interested in learning to climb. Had always climbed when they had gone in to the Kananaskis - not dangerous climbs. Got very very interested in the flowers. Guest from Victoria - President of The Rock Gardens Society - started Elizabeth making collections of her own. Has quite a nice collection of pressed flowers. 298
14. Erling's business was very small at that time. He didn't make any money then... At that time he ran Stowe, Vermont - had a lodge there for the winter. The first year - after the season - he said, "Well Elizabeth I have paid all my bills and I've got fifty cents left to home and you will have to wait for next year." Elizabeth was paid fifty dollars a month. Did own washing - Chinaman was wonderful..334
15. Elizabeth was there in the summer and then went home on the ranch for the winter. With Erling for four years.... to '41 or '42. It was '42 that Elizabeth was first at Skoki. 334
16. Erling would come and run the lodge in the winter - but Elizabeth didn't work for him then - he would get other people - Jim Bagley was always with him. Jim Bagley was his guide for 10 years. Strom invited Elizabeth in for spring skiing in '37.... that was first trip on skis into Assiniboine.... "and I couldn't ski for sour apples." Started from Banff. Had been up and learned on Mt. Norquay with McLeods and learned a little bit. 362
17. Erling was sports director at Lake Placid - finished there in March and he brought out a group of people - that spring the famous Smith Johansson came - the famous old skier. The one that made all the trails in the Laurentians..."Jack Rabbit Johansson" ... a Norwegian a great friend of Erlings. Was in his sixties then. He was 100 years old this year. The Norwegian government invited him to come to Norway - spent his birthday in Norway. 384

18. Jack Rabbit Johansson came out as a guest of Erlings - Elizabeth has photographs of Jack Rabbit, Erling and herself skiing. He taught them how to ski properly - cross-country - touring skis. Erling and he did telemark turns. "Telemark" is the oldest turn in skiing used in Norway just introducing it to Canada.
19. Spring of 1937 - Elizabeth really learning to ski. Fell more and more in love with Assiniboine.... mountain, lakes, alpine flowers, meadows, just at timberline, 7,200 feet.... just limitless where you could go to... no bushwacking like in B.C. Elizabeth alway walked, Erling would ride... They would take their horses packed with frying pans, whole lunces, bread etc. and the poeple would fish and they would fry the fish right there. Elizabeth would have to rush back home - to get the table ready for supper... 441
20. Just went out once for the spring skiing. 479
21. Elizabeth wanted to get on her own. Heard about Skoki Lodge..... went to Lake Louise and stayed with Mrs. Asling at the Mountain Inn... that is a story all by itself... A fantastic place... she was a widow... had three girls... 14, 15.... They akied always up the Lake... Swiss Guides were looking after the Hotel... shovelled the snow off the roofs... and Mrs. Boyle (Mary Boyle) and her husband Stan (he was the stationmaster at Lake Louise). Very hospitable people! Daughter Eleanor - became famous Canadian champion skier. The Mountain Inn was right across from the railway station. Elizabeth heard about Skoki from Mrs. Asling. Jim Boyce ran Skoki then. Skoki was actually owned by the Ski Club of the Canadian Rockies.... Sir Norman's outfit. Sir Norman Watson and some Calgary people as well. Cliff White was in it too. Cliff White Sr. Jim Boyce discontented - decided it would be his last winter. Elizabeth had skied in twice just to have a look. Same altitude as Assiniboine. 7,200' Large and open country. Lots of lakes too. When Jim Boyce left - Elizabeth tackled Sir Norman... by that time the war had started. He couldn't get anybody. No money in it. No road open. Only train service.... the road from Banff to Lake Louise was never ploughed out in the winter. Even Sunshine was closed. All the lodges in the States were closed. So Skoki was the only one that was open. Not making any money though. Elizabeth took it. In 1939 Temple was being built.... and Elizabeth met Cliff White. At the beginning when Temple was opened - Elizabeth was there... in the winter.... and then in the spring she moved on to Skoki. 485
22. Elizabeth needed an outfitter... had her experience with Strom... had to pack everything in from Banff... two day trip... Skoki was only 17 miles from Lake Louise.... and there was the Half-way Hut and Temple where people could stay. She got in touch with Ray Legace who was the outfitter at Lake Louise. Became great friends.... was Elizabeth's outfitter for the 8 years that she was at Skoki. 567
23. Elizabeth rented the Skoki Lodge from Sir Norman - \$1.00 per year! The summer of 1942 was the first summer that Elizabeth ran Skoki. Had a lot of hikers the first summer.... the Rushworths, Vallances, and a lot of the young pilots, fliers.... from Claresholm,,, by train to Lake Louise then skied in to Skoki - the 17 miles... British boys... would stay over night.

23. cont'd. No reservations because Elizabeth didn't get mail. Took them as they came. There were never so many that they couldn't be accommodated. Could handle from 12 - 15 at one time. Charged about \$9.00 per night and meals. Would hardly break even after paying packer and supplies. Sugar, tea, and coffee rationing. All these fliers had skied in Switzerland.... Excellent skiers. The first year that Elizabeth operated she had John Monod working with her. He had a guide's license. Elizabeth had license 20 mile radius... lovely trips..... Douglas Glacier, Merlin Ridge, 580
24. Most of the skiing - Skoki Mountain, Fossil Mountain, Deception Pass The Kingmans of Minneapolis, Russell Bennett..... from the early thirties. Came out during the war as well. Wonderful people. 656
25. It got so that Elizabeth was there eight months of the year. She would only go home at the end of October. Ray would always bring in a big load of potatoes, batteries for the lights, a good cellar which didn't freeze - so it was possible to have quite a few supplies. After that Elizabeth would leave and come back in February... and then the back-packing started. All the staples would already be in. Jack Chisholm guide and packer for about 3 years. Generally one man would assist during the season. Ken Jones would bring friends in from Golden and all the wood was cut. Raoul Chevette (?) helped one season as guide. Ken Jones helped a lot. 678
26. Story re: Paley skiing beside Elizabeth in a storm (had been killed the year before Elizabeth came). Half-way Hut..... everybody still very conscious of the accident. Elizabeth had to go alone so often - Cliff was very good. He would bring Elizabeth's stuff from the station.... to Temple (he was running Temple at the time). Elizabeth had learned a lot about avalanches from the years that she had skied at Assiniboine. Erling operated his place for thirty years and never had an accident.... summer or winter. They were expert on snow. Flags were used as markers in the winter.... Ptarmigan Lake "and I remember when it was really blowing and you knew where in the right direction because that side of your face - the left hand side was just about frozenyou stood at one flag until you could see the other and then you quickly made for the other." 714
27. Elizabeth was never in any real trouble. She would personally pack about 30 or 40 pounds. Noel Gardner used to pack for Elizabeth as well. Came one February. They packed for 27 days - more people - it was going better. Were in wonderful condition. It was joy to do the trip when in good shape. When Kingman and Bennett were in - they didn't need guides... they knew the country better than anybody. Would come and stay a week, ten days, two weeks.... 773
28. Elizabeth would always go back to the ranch for the four months. 803
29. Stayed at Skoki until 1949. Ran Temple and Lake Louise in '49 but Elizabeth found it wasn't her type of work. Too involved. 817

30. The whole time Elizabeth was at Skoki - Sir Norman Watson never came. Just stayed at Temple whenever he was in the area.

821

31. In the summer of 1949 Elizabeth went to Europe.... back to Germany to visit her relations. Came back in October. Met Pat Brewster in front of the Mt. Royal and he said "Would you like to buy Sunburst Lake?"

830

32. Elizabeth hadn't seen it for over 10 years. Pat had to go to Victoria to get it all straightened out (just squatting there). Wherever you go and there is a lovely spot - it is usually an old-timer that has picked it. Not only for beauties sake but also for utilities, always water, which is very important. Temple was very difficult - there was no water there.... had to bring it down from the mountain.

847

33. Finally Elizabeth got the papers and she got a yearly Park Use permit. That worked very well because unless you violated the regulations you were completely safe. Payed about \$40.00 per year. Paid Pat Brewster \$4,000.00. Elizabeth sold her life-insurance to get the \$4,000.00.

854

34. "In my wildest dreams I never dreamt that I would own that little cabin." "My family were horrified - my friends told me - I was fool".....Bought it in the fall.... but since Erling was already out - Elizabeth knew that she would have to wait until the spring. Got to know Al Gaetz flier,

867

35. Finally asked Muriel Gratz and Irene Reader a young teacher working under Muriel - would you like to go in for the Easter holidaysAl Gaetz flew her in and they landed on Magog Lake - put their skis on - he packed a load up - Elizabeth had some supplies - Elizabeth followed her nose to where she thought it was - Al was wonderful - took the tin off the chimney (kept there so that the snow doesn't get in). Opened the door - Pat had given Elizabeth the key - went in - a little tiny stove...one of these tin stoves that the packers have for camping trips—standing on a sand box - not a good stove for cooking - put the shutters down and on the south window there was no pane. In pretty rough shape. Elizabeth not disheartened in the least - wouldn't have given up for a million dollars. Just one big adventure! Al was fantastic! There was an old piece of carpet lying around and he nailed it over that window. It was so snowed in that it was insulated. It was time for him to go so Elizabeth went down with him again and there she stood at the lake and saw him fly off. "That was one of the biggest moments in my life."

830

36. Elizabeth put her sleeping bag on her back and skied up and made a fire melted some snow - you would drop some water on the table and it would freeze right away. She had an Arctic sleeping bag that was supposed to stand 30° below. He said that he would be back in three days to fly her out. She never took her parka the whole 3 days. She knew that she would have to get a heater. Airtight heater. She had a real good sleep that first night in her warm sleeping bag. In the daytime she would go out and get loose branches off the trees for firewood.... made many trips. There was a little bit of firewood in the cabin but not enough. Lovely weather outdoors. Al Gaetz had chopped an old tree before he left. He came back in three days.

36. cont'd. The day he came - he buzzed the cabin... so Elizabeth skied down quickly. He had brought some more stuff. Both came up and closed the cabin up - took an inventory of what would be needed. So at Easter time they went out. They skied and every day they would have to do a certain amount of wood gathering..... for firewood. Stayed the Easter holidays for the teachers. Came out again. 928
37. Elizabeth got in touch with Ray McBride and then went in on horseback. Ray was in Canmore - was running horses out to Assiniboine at that time. Ran the big school from the East every year. Summer of 1950 was Elizabeth's first year - open for business. Never advertised. Had little folders printed. Send them out to a lot of people. Friends from Skoki and all over. Never had more than seven or eight guests... Could accommodate 10. 977
38. Had tent frame cabins. That camp had been filled by the Brewsters when the Governor General had come out for fishing. Cabins had been built for that party. Each tent cabin had its own stove - two cots - and she had bought sleeping bags, blankets,everything that you would need. She slept in the main cabin and the guests were fed there. 988
39. Muriel the first guest. Elizabeth would have five and six people at a time. The season was the 1st of July to Labour Day. Just a summer operation. Strom opened on the first of July as well. They got to be awfully good neighbours. He never regarded Elizabeth as competition with her handful of people. 1004
40. Hans Gmoser came in the picture - the first winter.... Alpine Club Camp in 1953... 1952.... Hans Gmoser was out there on his own couldn't afford to stay at the camp - Elizabeth invited him to stay at one of her tents. She invited Hans to guide for her... he did. Started a limited ski operation then.... Couldn't operate the tent frames in the winter.... was very friendly with the warden people - the warden cabin is just five minutes away. They allowed Elizabeth the use of that. She could take two women in her own cabin and two or three men in the warden's cabin. People started to come. The first people that Hans Gmoser guided in from Sunshine was Colin Wyatt and his wife. 1024

1. Finally Elizabeth would have regular clientele coming back every year. 000
2. A very wonderful person that helped Elizabeth was Jean Walls... she was a McLeod ... very interested the agent in Banff....Waterhouse. That is almost a life-long friendship now. Elizabeth was at the wedding of the Waterhouse's. Elizabeth used a teepee for emergencies. Elizabeth always had a girl help her in the summer time. Muriel Gratz ran the place one summer when Elizabeth had broken her hip. Ruth Wilson helped for two years. Had to get people who loved to hike for recreation. Hans stayed only for two winters and then he worked one summer for Strom. Then he branched out. Al Gaetz always flew her people in in the winter. Brought all of her supplies so that they only had to pack up from the lake. They couldn't have a big supply in the fall because there was no place to store it. Too many grizzlies around.....

3. Elizabeth worked every winter in Vancouver... three winters. One winter worked at Hollyburn.... met Ila LaCasse...two winters Elizabeth worked at Seymour.... with Earl Pletch....in 1952 and 1953. Had a lodge operating two little rope tows. Has a great big place now - seven or eight lifts. Elizabeth never got into her own place until April - the same at Skoki. Just about two months of spring skiing. 154
4. Ken Jones worked for many years with Elizabeth and Erling both.... cut all the logs for the new lodge... that where he met his wife... 191
5. Elizabeth has gone into Assiniboine by every route. When she was alone she always went by way of Sunshine. Always made it in a day. Strom came in by Bryant Creek and you stayed at the Halfway - much longer that way..... you had to ski 15 miles to Halfway and then another 15 miles from Halfway to Assiniboine. 22 miles direct from Sunshine. The other route - 16 miles up the Spray River to the Spray Lakes and at the end of that (by way of Assiniboine Pass or Wonder Pass). When Elizabeth went skiing in the winter she always flew in with Al Gaetz.... quick and easier to get supplies in. 203
6. Elizabeth thought she should build a couple of cabins - but people said no - the tents are very warm - these wonderful little stoves - you can heat up anything - people loved to hear the rain on the tent. "Roughing it de-luxe" - little coal oil lamp hanging - candles. Pails - water taken out of the lake (Sunburst). Elizabeth or the girl who was assisting would make fires for the guests before they got up. It was really the last five years that Elizabeth made any money... full all the time. 246
7. Some of her guests: Dr. and Mrs Coln from Washington - Eisenhower administration..... economist.... came every year - are both passed on now. Dr. McMillan - geologist from Toronto.... his wife and children...Mr. and Mrs. Donahue - government... Fishing in the area attracted a lot of people. Porsild - famous botanist....first year that Elizabeth was there.... with the Canadian government....chief botanist of Canada.... helped Elizabeth identify some of her flowers. 274
8. When Elizabeth first started up in the Assiniboine area - the fishing was excellent... some days Lake Magog looked as if it was boiling with fish. It didn't matter where you were - the fishing was good - cut-throat trout. Sunburst had those great big ones which were hard to catch. A man by the name of Newton from Calgary caught the largest fish (cut-throat trout) caught in the Rocky Mountains. Elizabeth was not too happy when too many fish were brought - all those years - Elizabeth never had a fishing rod. Magog, Sunburst, Cerulean, Elizabeth, and Wedgwood... lakes. Ten Calgary people that took the whole camp at Sunburst were the ones that had the lake named after Elizabeth. 325
9. Elizabeth operated the lodge 20 years - finished in 1970. It was hard sometimes but always good times. 377
10. In 1963 Elizabeth had an accident - one of her main guest was Dr. James

- 10.(cont'd) Gardner..... all his family, Laura and all his children - they came every year. Elizabeth's best friends. She had had an operation in 1959.... fused..... broke in 1963....the next summer Muriel Gratz looked after the lodge. Elizabeth's first ride in a helicopter.... the two Bullock brothers. At that time they were'nt sure that a helicopter could fly at such high altitudes. Dr. Gardner arranged it. Floyd Smith had a camp where the Alpine Camp used to be - one of his men - Louis - rode at midnight to Bryant Creek and in to Canmore and phoned Dr. Gardner -fortunately he was at home. Dr. Gardner phoned Bullocks - met them in a hotel near the airport and gave them instructions on how to use a hypo. Luckily, there was a wonderful nurse at Stroms - she still visits Elizabeth... Ruth Green They flew right to the camp - had trouble on lift-off - almost went into the lake. When they got to Calgary - there was Smitty (Gardner). This was the first helicopter emergency flight - landed at the General Hospital Elizabeth was inside the helicopter. Dr. Gardner did the operation. The last time Elizabeth came out of Assiniboine she walked the 14 miles. 384
11. The main reason for closing down - more and more difficulty getting packers. Also felt she was getting too old. Getting too much. Elizabeth was 73 when she finished. One of Elizabeth's happiest times was when her sisters came to visit.... every year.... and they walked.... 495
12. Elizabeth sold her camp to the B.C. government. Elizabeth bought her house in Canmore in 1966. Spent her winters between her home in Canmore and her sisters ranch in Millarville. Elizabeth started working for the Archives of the Canadian when it was in the "old Whyte house"....in the basement. Used to be the Banff Library..... Maryalice Elizabeth Rummel and Karin MacAulay.....mostly looking through old papers..... part time.... two days a week..... Maryalice worked very hard.... 515
13. Tape recording for the Archives workshop at Edmonton....two days. Learned an awful lot there..... gave a manual.... Went out to the coast to do Ernest Lamarque.... D.L.S. Elizabeth had met him in the years when she was at Hollyburn.... through Kathy McDowell....he made the maps for her books whichSir Norman hired him (Ernest Lamarque)... (Elizabeth at Skoki) ...in the 40's ...to do the first survey of Whitehorn. for a ski run.... Elizabeth carried some of his tools up for him. At the end of his book he mentions it. He made the first tracing for the ski lifts. 554
14. Opening of the Archives was wonderful! Elizabeth knew Catharine and Peter Whyte quite well - and they had talked to her long before about establishing the Foundation..... Peter had worked on it for many many years.... 593
15. Tenzing Norgay - highlight - visited July 10th 1971. Alpine Club sponsored him. Gave a wonderful show in the Margaret Greenham theatre.... The next day Bullocks - now the Bow Valley Helicopters.... Jim Davies...gave a complimentary trip to Tenzing... to Assiniboine...There was some spare room in the helicopter - so Elizabeth had the opportunity to go along. It was a perfect day.... blue sky ... 10th of July...Unfortunately Erling Strom wasn't out at Assiniboine at the time. 607

Cassette
side C

16. Elizabeth did a little bit of scrambling around in the mountains but never really seriously involved in climbing. Elizabeth never climbed Assiniboine. She climbed every mountain around it though. In the summer that Elizabeth left Skoki before she went to the 'Old Country' - she and Muriel Gratz engaged a guide, Camille Côté(?) climbed Mt. Victoria. Member of the Alpine Club since 1942. Went to all the ski camps. Lot of her guest were Alpine members. Never met A.O. Wheeler. 636
17. George Engelhardt - Skoki. Eaton Cromwell. Elizabeth made a beautiful trip with them. Poilus Glacier (Des Poilus). Allowed Elizabeth to scramble up two little peaks at the end of the Glacier.... first ascent. A long walk from Skoki - nearly 40 miles. Elizabeth was usually too busy in camp to go off very much... for a real climb. Hans came often with climbers to climb Assiniboine and Elizabeth would cook breakfast at two o'clock in the morning. They would leave with lanterns. No accidents at her camp or Erlings. 660
18. First ascent of Sunburst Peak (north face). 1953. Hans Gmoser. Written up in the Canadian Alpine Journal of 1954. 690
19. Arnold Brigden....lithographist. Became very good friends. Came to Skoki quite a lot. Did the Eaton's catalogue. Great botanist. Was an eccentric man... but Elizabeth liked him very much and Mrs. Brigden was a wonderful lady. He had a famous rock garden in Winnipeg.... Took sacks and sacks of pink shale to Winnipeg from Assiniboine. Cowboys would shake their heads when they had to pack the gravel down to the station and send it to Winnipeg. 701
20. Elizabeth believes that Hans Gmoser was one of the best climbers that she has ever known. 725
21. Elizabeth's favourite place - up on the Nub behind her cabin - you can see five lakes and on a clear day you can see Victoria, A lovely walk. 735
(Mount)
22. End of tape. 747