HIGHLIGHTS:

- Describes a cougar hunt that he was on. There is no material in this document which requires indexing.

Imbert:   You said you followed the...

Martin:   Yeah, we followed Harry's tracks. And I says, "Harry has to pass this cougar," you know, "and if it's two days old he'll follow it a little ways and then go on about his business." Alex says, "Well," he says, "you're pretty smart in the hills. We'll try that." So we followed the cougar up to the main highway where Harry was going to go by and sure enough Harry followed them about ten, twelve steps and then went on about his business. Alex says, "Yeah, he followed it. Seen
the track all right, two days old. And anyway, I said to Alex now, "It's two o'clock. You go on back to camp and get supper ready and I'll follow the cougar up a ways and see if he goes our way. If he goes our way we'll cut up in the morning straight across and try and pick up his tracks." But I said, "If he goes north," I says, "I'll follow him a little ways." He says, "I'll bet you get him before, just because I ain't there." I says, "Well," I says, "we got to get the cougar. The main thing is getting the animal." Well, I started up the... dogs started barking and barking and calling me, and I wasn't very anxious to go, you know. About that much snow, you know, I was wading through that much snow.

Imbert: How many feet?

Martin: Oh, about three, four. And I had my snowshoe on my back and the snow was just too soft, you know. You put the snowshoe, you sink too deep, you know, and tiresome. I just followed the dog and the cougar and started up a ways and they kept barking and calling me, and I kept a going. I crossed the creek, went down and crossed the creek and straight up, you know, and I heard them over there barking. Oh, they were just roaring, you know. Well, the cougar was in the cave, you know. They kill the game just before a storm and fill up, you know. Get in a cave and sleep it off there; three, four days before they come out, you know. Well, he was in the cave. When the dog went by I heard them almost squealing, like, you know, like a squeal, you know, barking scared. Must have got scared, you know, it must have jumped at him. And so I went on up and sure enough everything was fresh. And the dog was behind trying to keep up with the cougar in that much snow, you know. Logs, great big logs, you know, he'd have to paw, like catch a hold of them and throw them over, you know. He'd go on up and finally got the cougar right at the last tree on the timberline. I heard him barking steady, you know. Gee I was glad, you know. The sun was down, just about down, you know, and I had about ten miles to go. I got up there and I seen the old cougar way up on the limb, you know. And I took full heart -- that's a good place to shoot, you know. I shot for the heart and he just made a jump down the mountain. And he got under that snow and went way down fifteen, twenty feet before he stuck, you see. Because when I got there the dog wanted to run after and bite him, you know, and I didn't want the dog to get chewed up or clawed up, you know. That's poison, you know, claw -- you claw them any place they get poisoned, you know. He got clawed on the cheek bone years afterwards and that bone decayed there and he couldn't eat. He had to starve to death that poor dog. I had to shoot him, you know -- it was shooting my own brother.

Anyway, when I got there the dog run in and dug a hole and pulled him out, you know; he was dead. He got him out of there and so I dragged him to a snowslide and jumped on him and I went down and left the dog, you know. Poor old dog couldn't keep up but I went down just sliding, you know. Got way down, quite a ways down, you know, over the cliffs and what have you,
you know. Sometimes I'd think it was a big cliff, you know, going over, you know. I'd stop and look first. And got down to the bottom and I got into the wind falls, wind falls just about like that, you know. So I put my snowshoes on and I'd step from log to log, you know. First I skinned him -- took the skin off him -- put it on my pack board and put my snowshoes on and I got, oh, an awful time getting over them wind falls, you know. I finally got out, got back to my track and I put the gun up against the tree and dug a hole in the snow and put the hide away deep. And I buried the hide so it wouldn't freeze, you know, snow. And down I goes, you know. I had to go down and go up the hill that I'd come down on the other side. I left my overalls there with all the matches in it. And the clothes get wet, you see, and I took it off -- it got too heavy -- and I took my overalls off, you know, and hung it up, you know. Well, try and find that pants that night, you know.

Imbert: It was dark by now, eh?

Martin: Yeah. Dark by now and I couldn't find it. I got back up on the hill on the other side. I was dry -- I should have taken a drink of water, you know, but I was always told by my dad or any of them, "Don't ever drink. Whatever you do, don't ever drink when you're tired. You just drop, you'll be worse." So I didn't drink. I used to chew snow sometimes, you know, just chew the snow, you know, and wet my tongue and spit it out. And I didn't drink. But the dog would dig a hole in the snow alongside of me and lay down, as much as to tell me, "Come on, you old fool, and do the same," you know. But I didn't have no hair. He'd dig a hole under a log and lay down, you know. He was that tired himself, you know. But I just kept on going. And when I got back to the trail, the main trail -- there was a snowshoe trail there, you know, the working men used, you know, surveyors. I hit their trail and I was all right, but I'd go about, oh, ten steps, you know, and I'd have to sit down, you know. I was all in, no matches. I got to a cabin, an old horse barn there, you know. So I was all through the house to see if I could find a bottle of matches, you know. Couldn't find nothing. Plenty slabs piles, you know, all I'd have to do is light a slab pile and dry my clothes, you know. That's the main thing, dry your clothes. But I kept going. I'd go about ten steps and sit down, and, you know, you don't want to worry. You worry, that's got you, you know, you worry you're finished. I'd sit down rest a few minutes and get up and walk another ten, twelve steps and sit down. Pretty soon I seen sparks on the level ground down below; I seen sparkes going up, chimney, you know. That was the game warden waiting for me, you know. After one o'clock at night, you know. And I come in, laces all froze on my rubbers and my tongue was about that thick from wanting water, you know. I couldn't, he talked to me and I just shook my head, you know, I couldn't talk back, you know, I couldn't answer
him. My tongue was that thick, you know.

Imbert: How big?

Martin: About that thick. Just swelled right up from wanting water, you know. "Well," he says, "what's the matter with you?" He says, "Have a cup of tea." I shook my head. Can't drink anything hot, you know. You got to wet your tongue and everything and get it going. So I finally got some water, you know, from the water bucket and took a sip of it and worked it on my tongue, you know. My throat was dry, I couldn't say a word. And he says, "I bet you got that cougar." I shook my head yes. He said, "I know you'd get him when I ain't there." That was... He says, "What are we going to do tomorrow?"

"Well," I says, "I'm going to rest up tomorrow. We'll go down where them kittens crossed and," I says, "I'll try and get across some way and see if I can get those kittens." "Oh," he says, "that's not resting." He says, "That's five miles from here." He says, "You won't be resting." "Well," I says, "I won't be going in deep snow anyway." And I says, the next morning I says, "I'm leaving here about four, three in the morning." See, I had candles, you know. I packed candles, you know, and you just cut a hole in a can and run the candle in there and you can't blow it out, you know. And just light that, you know, and you can travel, just like a flashlight, you know. So the next morning come along I started out about three or two o'clock, or three anyway. Alex was to bring my lunch, you know. He was to meet me about two o'clock in the afternoon and I'd go up and get the hide and my snowshoe and gun. So I went back -- tracking myself -- and I finally found it, you know, in among the wind falls. Dug the hide out -- it wasn't froze. Got back down that night and come clear back here that night, you know. Got home, you know, and I got a truck, a little truck there, you know, we drove home anyway. Yeah, there's a lot in a game warden, when the good game warden was here, you know.

Imbert: Yeah. That's quite a time. As you say you just have to take it easy, don't you?

Martin: Oh yes. Don't worry if you get lost, don't. Just sit down and go to sleep if you can. Build a fire and go to sleep if you can. Cut a lot of browse and pile it up alongside of you for a bed, you know. And then if you think anybody's going to look for you, like next day, just pile that brush on the fire, you know. It gives you that smoke -- that's what they should do with all these airplaines. If anybody could live, you know, when they hit the mountain, you know. If they were wise enough somebody would build a fire, you know, and the smoke. You can see smoke a long ways, eh. You know these hunters from the States?

Imbert: Yeah.

Martin: I says, "Six centuries (?) away from me." I was standing on top of him, you know, looking glass and down below
looking around for goat. The fellow I was with says, "This is (inaudible) right here," he says. (Inaudible) and no goat, you know, and we wanted meat, you know. We were out of meat, you know. And I had my gun loaded and all ready just to pull the handle back and pull the trigger, you know. I heard something under my feet and I looked down and there was a hole about that big and there was this goat feeding under my feet on the roots, you know, on the tree. He had a hole in there and working under there, you know. So my partner was standing here -- Moses (name), you know, -- he's a guide now, standing alongside of me. And I just took the gun this way and I put it down and "BANG," I got the goat. He looked at me and he says, "What happened?" I says, "I killed a goat." He says, "I didn't see you aiming." "Well," I says, "look at this one." He looked between my feet and there was a goat; I shot it. So we pulled it out and put it on the bank and we put it in the truck and took it home, you know. We wanted the meat, you know. I told Jack McGill about it -- the game warden now -- and he was up there the first day of the season that year, you know, the next year in the fall, you know. He was there before eight o'clock and he was home by eight o'clock with a goat, you know. So that's pretty good, you know.

Imbert: What are they licking, the goats there? Why would they want to lick?

Martin: Well, they got mineral of some kind and clay, you know, clay. And they lick that clay, you know, and there's some mineral in it that they like, you know, like salt, you know. And once in a while they find gold in between their teeth, you know. And I have to show you mine.

Imbert: In between the teeth of the...

Martin: Goat. You see they eat the clay, you know, lick the clay. I'll turn on the light there.

Imbert: That's from around here, I suppose.

Martin: It's, if I could find where that come from I'd be wide enough and big enough, you know, on the wall. Right there alone about $45 worth, just about an ounce, you know, get it all out.

Imbert: So you'd try to find where it came from? Did you ask the goat?

Martin: No, no. My partner found that up around the head of Wild Horse. My father used to work there when the boom was on. Millions of dollars taken out of there. And he says they used to show him these big pans at night, you know, and he'd find a nugget and bite it, you know, and throw it in the sluice box. And when the company'd show him the pan at night he'd say, "Here's one I found." "How can you tell?" "There's my teeth mark on it." You can see the teeth mark. You can put, you can cut that, you know. Gold cuts, you know, it scratches.
Imbert: Is there any mineral around here, this part here?

Martin: Well, I got the biggest mine -- if it ever turns out -- in the valley.

Imbert: Gold?

Martin: Not gold, but silica. We keep this in here so they don't wear it out too much. Yeah. Oh, the fellow that found that he tried for two years to find that camp.

Imbert: (Inaudible)?

Martin: But he found the vein carrying about two and half to the ton of white rock, you know. He can't find where this come from. Nobody can. I think it came from Alaska myself, because all Wild Horse, they don't know where the rocks come from. It's different from any others.

Imbert: Glacial.

Martin: Yeah.

Imbert: I see.

Martin: Yeah. Well, we'll call it off the other side.

(END OF SIDE A)
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