

ARTHUR SUNDBERG

First Interview

Interviewed by:

Sam Schragger

Oral History Project

Latah County Museum Society

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ARTHUR SUNDBERG

Potlatch; b. 1899

maintenance foreman and lead man at Potlatch mill.

2 hrs.

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with Sam Schrager
July 10, 1975

II. Transcript

ARTHUR SUNDBERG

INTERVIEWER: SAM SCHRAGER

This first interview with Arthur Sundberg was recorded at his home in Potlatch, Idaho on July 11, 1975.

SAM SCHRAGER: What was it your parents heard about this mill coming in here and decided to come over here themselves?

ARTHUR SUNDBERG: Well, where we lived in Wisconsin-- we lived way up in the northeast corner of Wisconsin-- just a few miles from Michigan, and of course, that was lumbering area, and the big economy in that whole part of the country was lumbering, you know, years ago. But it began to peter out, because, you know, well, when they logged, they logged. They just cut everything, and of course the stuff didn't grow back as fast. It isn't like what they do now-a-days, this selective logging.

SS: They were just cutting out? Just cutting out and not replanting?

AS: That's right. And then, of course, the bigger outfits, they began to move West because, oh, years before, why, as the railroads moved out-- the railroads were granted every other section on both sides of the track all the way across the country, and the railroads had an awful lot of timber land, you know. And, of course, that was a big inducement for some of these lumbering people too to start moving out this way, and they come out and ^{they} invested in timber land and they got it for, just imagine-- practically ^{say} for a song-- because, you know values were way low those days. So they accumulated quite a scope of timber. Well, then, of course, when they started to build this plant

there was several men that worked in this lumber mill in the town where we come from, where my dad worked, they moved out here and ^{they} worked on construction work and then they went back and they was telling others about the big money out here, you know. Well, at the time we moved out here in the spring of 1909-- back in that area where we lived in Wisconsin, men that piled green lumber in a lumberyard for ten hours a day got a dollar and sixty-five cents for ten hours work piling green lumber. And then, of course, the word come back here that out here they were paying two dollars and a quarter an hour for common labor. Just any common labor, you know, two dollars and a quarter-- a day, I meant, not an hour. That is for a ten hour day. Well, that was quite a thing. My dad he was a lumber grader back there and he got, as I say, lumber pilers got a dollar and sixty-five cents a day-- my dad got two dollars and a quarter a day for grading lumber, ten hours. But then when he come out he got three dollars and a half a day. That was quite a boost, you see. And that's what brought people out ^{and of course} There wasn't any lumber people that were native to this part of the country, you know. They all had to come from back in the Midwest or in the East, you see. And, of course, the Midwest-- oh, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota was the three principal logging areas of the United States at that time. 'Course they had lots of it down south. It really wasn't recognized as a logging area, that Southern pine. So that's how it come that people migrated out this way. Well, of course, when they come out here they ^{re} was-- they built up-- they had five sawmills in Coeur d'Alene. And then there was sawmills in Harrison on the Lake and at Springston, and then, of course, up north of Coeur d'Alene there was sawmills at Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry and Laclede and sawmills all over the country, you see. And all these people that-- operating these sawmills-- they migrated out here from the Midwest.

SS: Did they all start out at the turn of the century?

AS: Yeah, uh-huh.

SS: Did your family have very deep roots in the Midwest logging?

AS: Oh, no. Well, my parents, they immigrated here from Sweden in along about 1890, you see, and, of course, my dad had worked at that kind of work over in Sweden, because that's quite a logging area over there, you know. And so, of course, when they come over here, ^{why} they just naturally moved into the logging and lumbering work, you see.

SS: I just can't help but to take you back a little farther here and ask you *if you* knew why they decided to leave Sweden and come to America.

AS: Well, it was strictly economic, because-- well, at that time, you know the boatloads of immigrants-- they were unloading them at the docks in New York. Just as fast as they could unload one ship they'd move another one in and unload that. That's as fast as the immigrants were coming into this country from Europe, ⁱⁿ particular see. Because-- now, of course, I wasn't there but then I know the story and of course all these immigrants they come over and they'd have a big tag fastened to their jacket, 'cause none of 'em could speak any English, there'd be ^{their} a destination printed on there, you know, so these officials could shunt 'em this way or that way. These labor contractors, they would meet these boats in New York and they would try to induce these people that was coming off 'n the boat to hire out to them, see. And, of course they got paid so much a head for signing 'em up, you know. And you can imagine all the miles and miles of ditches that had to be dug in New York and Philadelphia and Boston and all the cities, you know. It was all done by hand labor, you know, for all the water pipes and all the ^{ir} sewer systems and that was all done by hand labor so it took a tremendous amount of people. And, ^{As I say,} they tried to induce these people to sign up for them because every time they did they'd make fifty cents a head, or whatever it was they paid at that time. And they made big money on them. But then there was these other people that-- like telling about my folks come from-- 'course my folks were married

in this country, they didn't know each other there. But they had a destination in mind when they left, because they knew exactly where they were going. And they was heading right straight for Menominee, Michigan.

SS: Relatives? Friends?

AS: No, it was friends, you know they'd corresponded and they had friends there. And, well, my mother, she had two brothers that settled in that part of the country, and oh, they were around the Chicago area. But they didn't work in the logging and lumbering industry, they were both carpenters and builders. They were just construction people. But then that's the reason they had a destination in mind when they come over, and then, of course, after they get here it's just a matter of just kinda joining in with the rest of 'em. And, of course,-- it's a funny thing about the people that emigrated over in-- back ^{in about} the turn of the century. Now the town that we come from-- Dunbar, Wisconsin, and it was just a small town, had one lumber mill. But all the Swedes lived in a little group in one corner of this little town. And all the French Canadians, they lived in this other little group; and all the Finns from Finland, they lived in another group; and all the Poles, they lived in this other group. And, you know, it's a funny thing but you take the -- oh the women in particular, they could live here for-- well, I know some of 'em lived here fifty years or ~~more~~ and never did learn to speak English. Because they lived in this little community where they spoke their native tongue, see. Of course the men, they had to go out and work, they had to learn some English, you know. But that's just the way the people were that immigrated over here.

SS: What kind of relations were there between or among the different groups? Hostility?

SA: It was. Relations wasn't too good. I know from what I'd seen myself. We had a few Irish and the Irish were kind of cocky, overbearing sort of men, you know. And they always wanted to flex their muscles. And, of course,

there was a ^{awful} lot of drinking of alcoholic beverages them days. And they'd always want to pick a fight. But in that little community where we lived, they generally came out on the short end. ^{Because} If they tangled with a Finn, they'd get cut from one end to the other because a Finn was never known to ever-- I think he even slept with his knives-- they carried knives all the time, you know. And they used 'em, too. And I don't think that you-- Very seldom that you could ^{ever} see a Finn but what he had scars all over himself you know, where they'd fight among themselves. And, so, they always come out on the short end if they tangled with them, you know, in a drunken brawl. And we had lots of 'em. ^{There were sure} Lots of drunken brawls, every weekend, you know, you could see 'em out in the street there just really going at it.

SS: What would usually start fights like that? Liquor?

AS: Yeah. It's the same thing today. You take people that go into these taverns and bars, some of 'em that can't hold it, you know, they get quarrelsome and then they want to pick a fight, and maybe some big guy that's trying to show how big he is, and then some little guy'll crack him and really lay it to him. You know, that's the way it works out. Some little guy'll generally just really work that big fellow over.

SS: *But for it to get from that to a brawl in a move or two...*

AS: Well, yeah. There's lots of little funny things that goes on. I can recall one Sunday back there in Wisconsin. They had-- it was quite swampy around there--there was quite a few of them big bull snakes around there, you know, and I don't know-- there was one kind there that people there called 'em a pine snake-- but they were just a big bull snake, had big spots all over 'em, you know. But, anyway this-- there was a Frenchman there and he had a-- raising quite a few hogs, and he had some land that was in this swampy area and ^{he} had his hogs around there, and so he killed one of them darn big bull snakes ^{there} one Saturday. And these Finns they got out there Sunday morning in the street and they were fighting among themselves, and they were

really laying it to 'em, you know. So this Frenchman, he thought he'd break up this brawl, you know, so he had that big bull snake by the tail and he come a dragging it behind him, and he got down there right in the middle of that bunch and he raised it up and shook it in the air, and it looked like it was alive. You know, they took after him and he threwed his snake down and he run for home as hard as he could go and he just barely got in the house and he grabbed a rifle and stood 'em off, because they was gonna kill him, sure. And that's one way to start one.

SS: Were there any guys back there that were known for being really tough men? That had a reputation.

AS: Well, they had a reputation locally, but ^{then} it didn't go out very far. Probably people in the next town didn't know about it, you know. But in that little area there, there was a few that were known to be sort of trouble makers and so on, and, of course, most of the people kind of shied away from 'em, you know, to just keep from getting into trouble. But then that's just the life of the lumbering industry, ^{that's} part of the lumbering industry, part of it's growing up. And, these loggers, the ones that worked in the woods, they all wore corked (caulked) boots and, you know, they'd never take 'em off; they'd probably take 'em off when they went to bed and I doubt that too sometimes. But, anyway, if they come in the house or went anywhere Sunday or any other day they had them corked boots, ^{because} that was an emblem of their trade. Any time that you seen a man with corked boots you knew he was a logger, see. And, of course, they were ^{pretty} proud of that distinction, too. They was supposed to be tough. But then, this little town where we lived, they wouldn't allow any saloons in that town, but ^{Penbine} was just ten miles from there, and was right on the Sioux Line railroad and the passenger train used to run-- it was just right so that after work in the evening when they got through work, they could get on the train and ride up to ^{Penbine} and get off and drink until midnight and then catch a train back again. Well, by the time

they was ready to come back, or possibly ^{maybe} they'd stay overnight and come back on Sunday, why-- on this railroad platform they'd be pretty well gowed up with booze. And, of course, most of 'em'd have a suitcase with 'em full of booze, but an awful lot of the times they'd get into a big brawl right on the platform there and they'd really go at 'er you know.

SS: I've heard that when a guy was down that he could figure on being spiked with the corked boots.

AS: Oh, that's one reason they wore 'em all the time. There was nothing fair about fighting. If they could knock 'em down, then they'd go at 'em with their boots and they'd just cut 'em from one end to the other, they didn't care whether it was his face ^{of his} arms ^{of} legs or any place. The blood'd be running in every direction. They were tough.

SS: You know, I've heard, along this line, that after a fight like that, that the guys who were fighting wouldn't really hold it against each other, once they sobered up. It was something that was forgotten.

AS: Chances are when they sobered up the next day, why, they couldn't remember they'd been in a fight! They was all cut up, ^{they'd wonder} "Where'd I get this?" But you know as far as the people migrating out this way from the lumber industry back there, there was-- the big majority of the people that come out here to work in the lumber industry were Scandivanian descent. There was a few Poles that come out here but they didn't stay long. Most of 'em just out here a short while and ^{then} they went back again. And, I don't know of any of the French Canadian that ever come out here. They all stayed back there and-- oh, whenever they would leave our area back there they would probably go back up into Quebec or up in that country, see. But those that come out here were mostly Scandivanians.

SS: I've got one more question. You were just saying about the saloon being ten miles away-- even though it was ten miles away, there was still brawling in the town, itself?

AS: No. In this town where the saloons were, you see, they'd be on the depot platform waiting to catch the train to go home, and while they was waiting ^{why then} they have--- 'course when they were sober they got along pretty good.

SS: There wasn't actually too much going on in the little town where you grew up?

AS: There was lots of booze there, but they didn't have any saloons, see. Now then, they shipped in beer on the railroad, in fact of matter, there was just about a half a mile from our house, there was a spot in the woods there, that they called a beer garden. And, you know they had some beautiful trees back in that country. There was oak and maple and ash and hickory and everything you can think of, we had back there, you know, trees with leaves on 'em, and there was an area there ^{where} these men had laid some logs around where they could sit around, quite an open space in between, and it was probably forty-fifty yards in diameter, in this circle, and there was all trees around there, and that's what everybody in the area around there designated as a beer garden. Well, every Monday morning us kids'd go up there and we'd gather up the beer bottles and we'd take 'em down to the depot, you know, and I think we got ten cents a case for the bottles, and of course that's a big thing for us kids, because it was about the only way we could get any money. And them beer kegs, you know, we'd go up there and roll them empty beer kegs down. We got a dime for each one of them. And there was lots of 'em up there every Monday morning, because they'd ship it in and they'd start in as soon as they got through work Saturday night. And even men with families, they wouldn't even think about going home, they just stayed right there and soaked it up until Monday morning, and then they'd shake their head and go back to work!

SS: Wonder how the wives accepted that kind of thing in those days.

AS: Well, I ^{just say} the majority of 'em didn't know any different. That was just part of life, that was all. It was up to the women to raise the kids and see that they got something to eat. The man, he could go and spend his money on

booze. It was a hard life.

SS: Was it a company town? Was that why there were no saloons?

AS: No, well, of course the company owned -- had the sawmill and they owned the store, but then everybody owned their own home. But I don't know, for some reason ^{or other they just would} never get any saloons started there.

SS: Sounds like they really didn't need 'em.

AS: Oh, no, no. And this town was the same way. When they started this town the company owned everything; all the buildings, houses and everything. But that's one thing that was laid down right from the beginning, there'd be no saloons. Now down here at Palouse, ten miles away, there was ten or twelve saloons there, up here at Princeton, two-three miles away, there was three saloons up there. They didn't need it, you know, they had lots of saloons around.

SS: Was that a Weyerhaeuser operation?

AS: Oh, no. That was a Wells Lumber Company.

SS: Was there a lot of broken families in that kind of a situation?

AS: No. I never heard tell of a divorce until-- gosh, I don't know, I guess I was grown up before I ever heard tell of anybody getting a divorce. ~~No~~ they just accepted that as a way of life, that's all.

SS: Well most of the people in that town, were they millers or loggers?

AS: It was all logging and lumbering. You see, the loggers was out in the woods and, of course, they had their families in town, and then, of course, all these people at the sawmill, of course, they all lived there, and so that was the main industry. ^{Except that} There was a few ^{that worked} for the railroad. There was two railroads that went through there. And, of course, that took some people to maintain these railroads, you know. Principally, it was lumbering.

SS: It sounds as though, to me, that as a kid growing up there, you must have really got to see a lot of what life was all about.

AS: Well, that's true. I think possibly you might get the same reaction from

any man of my age or older, that kids matured an awful lot quicker^{then} than they do now. You take-- oh, I think I told you when you were here the other day that they'd hire kids twelve years old to work around the mill. And they chewed tobacco and smoked and they'd drink when they could get ahold of it. They couldn't buy it but then they'd get ahold of it. And you take when the average boy was fifteen or sixteen he was just as much matured as a fellow is right now at thirty. Just the way they lived. ^{Gosh}, I knew lots of boys in the fourth grade in school that shewed tobacco just like any guy you ever seen. (END of side A)

SS: What did you think of the difference in that kind of lumber town and what you found out here?

AS: Oh, well, this here was just like coming into heaven, coming out here. There was one thing that was really impressive to us at that time. We left back there on the 20th day of April and the snow was still clear up to the eaves on the small houses, and they were still driving their sleighs right across, right over the top of fences and everything, and that was the 20th of April. 'Course that was a tough winter that year. But when we come out here, it took us four days to get here, why, the kids were all running bare-foot and stuff was green and nice and warm. And^{boy} that's quite a transition to go from, in four days time, from what we had there to what they had here. And, then, of course everything was booming here. This mill had been^{then} running for about two and a half years, I guess, a little better, and they never said "No." to anybody that had guts enough to ask for a job. They hired-- that is men-- we never heard tell of 'em hiring women-- but men or boys, if they asked for a job, if they looked like they could work, why, they'd put 'em on. And they'd fire 'em just as easy as they hired 'em. There was no unions, there was nothing; the boss he was^{the} king-pin, and what he said went. He'd hire you and he'd fire you, and he could fire you for the very least little thing, too, sometimes. But if he didn't like you, why, that was it, you've

had it!

SS: Was the town itself more attractive? Was there more to it? Did it seem like a better place to live?

AS: Yeah. Yeah. It was pretty well laid out when they built this little town. In fact, they had a board fence around every lot in town. Every lot in town had a-- oh, there was about three one-by-sixes high, horizontally, with a space in between and then a catboard on top. ^{So} It was really attractive fence, and every lot had a front gate and a back gate. And, of course, that was the way people lived those days, all over the country. You could go anywhere in the United States and you could find, everybody had a fence around their place. And everything was new and painted and the company had set out two trees in front of every house, out in the street. They were all small, ^{I think} possibly the average tree must have been eight or ten feet tall when they planted them. And they were maple trees and elm trees and you know, different kinds like that. They didn't plant any of the native trees, ^{to the country} it was all trees that had leaves on them. And, of course, the native trees here are all pine and firs and stuff like that. They really laid it out to make a nice little town out of it. And, oh, it stayed that way up until about the time of World War I, and just shortly after that, then, of course, first one and then another one would tear out this or tear out that, or something. And then, of course, they had wood sidewalks all over every street was a wood sidewalk on both sides of the street and up and down town and every which way. They made lots of lumber and they used lots of lumber, too.

SS: Did you have an easy time finding a place to stay starting in here?

AS: Oh, yeah. Right away we-- we stayed with friends for, oh, I don't know, I think about three, four days. But then there was a vacant house that we got right away. But then, of course, we didn't ship our furniture out from the East, so we had to buy new furniture. So it was I think about four days that we stayed with friends and then we moved into our own house. ^{They were pretty good about that.} And

then, of course, they had an awful lot of single people, or men that didn't have their families here. And they had a hotel, a pretty good sized hotel, and then this hotel had an annex building that was just as big as the hotel and that was just all rooms. And then they had a boardinghouse. It was a pretty big boardinghouse. And then, just about, oh, at least seventy-five percent of the families in town kept boarders. There was that many single people here, you see. And you could get room and board for, well, some of 'em got it for twelve dollars a month, and, of course, most of 'em was about eighteen dollars a month, for room and board. Three meals a day and a room.

SS: What was the place like, the house like, that your parents moved into?

AS: Well, it was a two bedroom; five room house. And we were a little bit crowded, but then we made-do. But it was, you know, it was practically new and painted nice on the outside and inside was all papered nice with wallpaper. 'Course it just had just one water tap inside, and it was a cold water tap. The only people that had any hot and cold water, running water, in the house were "brass", you know the management of the company, from the manager on down through the superintendents and so on. They had houses that had hot and cold running water with bathrooms, but all the rest of 'em, they just had a sink, ^{with} just a cold water tap. And, of course, they had to heat all their water on the stove and everybody burned wood them days, you know.

SS: Will you tell me about how the draining system worked?

AS: Drains?

SS: Drains on the water.

AS: Yeah, it was very simple and easy to construct. They bored a hole in the floor under this sink and they had a piece of pipe that ^{just} went down, just cleared the floor, under the house. And that was it! An, of course, people that lived in the house, if they didn't want a stink why they'd crawl under there and they'd build a wooden box and this would drain into this wooden box. Generally two one-by-six boards and two one-by-four boards, and that

would make about a four inch box, you see, and they would run that out through to where it got from underneath the house, and then it would just run in an open ditch out to find it's own way downhill, you know, and if it happened to be into the neighbors yard or into the street, why, just whichever way it went. And, of course, if the neighbor didn't like it, why, he could ditch it to make it go out into the street. That was it. Flies!!! Thicker than the dickens, you know. Of course, as far as flies were concerned that was, oh, I don't know, I don't think you could find anyplace anywhere in the United States hardly but what flies were just as thick as a cloud, you know. And everybody had screen doors; most everybody had screen doors. And of course, if you were on the outside and was gonna go in, why, this door'd be just literally covered with flies, and you'd have to shake the door a few times, shake 'em off, and then duck in, otherwise you got 'em all in the house. And if you was on the inside going out, you'd have to shake 'em a little while before you'd go out, so you wouldn't let 'em in!! Well, then they invented something real wonderful; they invented some stuff they called flypaper! (Chuckles) Gee, everybody was happy when they got that stuff. It come in sheets about ten by fourteen and they were two sheets together, you see, with the stickem in between. And, of course, they done so that you could handle 'em, you see. And you bought a sheet of flypaper or ten sheets of flypaper, whatever you wanted and then when you'd get home, you'd pull these apart and this "goeey" in between, why it--^{hey} you didn't dare touch it, because it'd hang right to you. And you'd lay one down here and you'd lay one down there and lay one over here, and you had them laying all over!! Well, in just a matter of minutes or even hours ^{until} they'd be literally covered with flies and then, of course, you'd burn that and lay out another one. And you still had lots of 'em flying in the air. Well, then, somebody improved on that and they made some that come in a little tube, about three inches long, and about an inch or so in diameter, and you'd open that up

and it was all curled up in there and you'd pull that out, you know, and then you could hang them on the ceiling, you see, and they would be just a curl hanging down, but they had this "gooey" on there. Well, that was all right until somebody was tall enough to hit one of them with his hair and then he'd get it stuck in his hair! (Chuckles)

SS: Was Potlatch-- did Moscow have the same situation with the drainage? Or did they have a sewer?

AS: They did, but then, of course, as the town started to grow, then they, of course, had to put in sewage systems. But, of course, you'd have to go back a little bit further than what I'm speaking about here to where Moscow was just like any other little town starting. It was just a few houses, a house here and a house there and scattered around and each one of them had a privy out in the backyard and each one of 'em had their own well and each one of 'em-- and fact of the matter is, most of the-- oh, you take for instance, the women used to-- had a big dishpan and they'd fill that with water and set it on the stove, and then when it got hot enough they'd put their dishes in there and wash the dishes. Well, you take the average house, I'm just speaking about ordinary working people, I'm not talking about somebody that's got ^{a lot} of finesse, ^{but} just ordinary people, well, I've seen where that dishwater, it got pretty thick before they threw it out!!! Because, you know they had to go out to the pump, you know, and pump a bucketful and pack it in. But then, when they did throw it out, they just opened the door and whissst-- out it'd go! Well, that's one reason they had all ^{them} flies hanging around the door, see. Because just outside there was all that stuff there that they'd thrown out, see.

SS: What was the outhouse arrangements in Potlatch?

AS: Well, they were very modern (Chuckles) compared with the ordinary rural living. You take rural living, used to be that they would dig a hole about two feet wide and maybe three or four feet long and then maybe six feet deep

and then they'd build a little building on top of that, you see. And then they'd generally put in a crescent or a star or something in the door to indicate what it was. But when Potlatch built, they built a double woodshed. One building served two houses, you know they built it so that the side of the building would be on the line of the lot, you see, and they had a wall partition in there so that this house had this part of the building and this house had this part of the building for woodsheds. And then on the end of the woodshed which was part of the building, was this little privy building. And it was a two-holer. But instead of having a hole in the ground it had a drawer, a wooden box there, ^{well} then they had a contractor that come around once a month and he would empty all these, you see, and cart it off and get rid of it. So you see, they were a little bit more modern than the average rural ^{person} !!! They didn't have that hole! (Chuckles)

SS: They used wooden boxes, I would imagine.

AS: Oh, yeah. Wooden boxes, and then this contractor, he always come around about midnight to make his rounds, see.

SS: What about the insulation in the houses? I've heard complaints there.

AS: There was no insulation at all. ^{In} fact of matter is, it's just in recent years, you know, when they started using insulation in houses. Up until just a very few years ago, why, it didn't make any difference whether the house was built here or in Moscow or Spokane or New York or anywhere else, they never knew anything about insulation. And, of course, if they-- if it was an all frame building, why, -- You take now, the first houses that were built in this town, the major part of the town, they used what is called a drop siding on the outside, and it was a four quarter board, usually six inches in width or some of it was eight, but then it was tongue and grooved and then it was shaped out, you know. You've seen that where they were kind of scooped out, well, that's what they call drop siding. Well, as time went on and this lumber would expand and contract from the weather, why, it devel-

oped cracks, that is, it would be gaps where this tongue here on this bottom board was supposed to go up into the groove on the upper board, you see, to make ^a seal, well, some of them would, if the lumber wasn't thoroughly dry when it was put on, it would pull apart to where there'd be just a little crack in between there where the wind could go through, and the inside of most of the houses were just one-by-twelve boards that weren't matched, and then they put on a building felt and then wallpaper. Well, as long as all that stayed tight, why, it was pretty good, but then, if that got loosened up, why then sometimes the wind'd make this old wallpaper go back and forth, like this, you know, on some of 'em.

SS: So you could see it.

AS: But that's just all part of life.

SS: Well, would you say the houses were well constructed for those days? Or hastily constructed?

AS: Well, they were constructed according to the-- well, you might say-- the architecture of the times for that style of a house. You know, they'd say "We're gonna build a hundred houses and and we're gonna pay two hundred and fifty dollars apiece for each one of 'em." You know, to have 'em built, ^{that} _{is} what they'll cost; material and labor and all. The house'll cost two hundred and fifty dollars or maybe make so many that'll cost three hundred dollars. But about three hundred dollars'd be about the average cost of a house at the time they were built.

SS: People could only rent at the time, they couldn't buy?

AS: That's right.

SS: Renting was pretty reasonable when you came?

AS: Oh, yeah, the rent was-- well, it was, you know, everything was prorated according to what the times were and what they'd paid for wages. ^{and all that} Everything was very reasonable. Oh the average house rented for possibly eight or ten dollars a month, you know, and that was water included. And, of course,

one thing that we were impressed with, too, when we come out here, especially as kids, --- where we lived in Wisconsin everybody used coal oil lamps, and when we come out here, every house had electricity. But there was just one drop light in each room, you know. And, of course, you could screw in whatever size bulb you wanted in there for lights. And, then, of course, they had these carbon arc street lights on all the streets, so the streets were lit up good. It looked pretty good to us.

SS: Your folks didn't have any qualms about coming to live in a real company town?

AS: Oh, no. No. As far as owning your own home or renting, why that didn't have any bearing at all, because-- fact of the matter is, you could-- up until the time that the company sold these houses, you could rent so much cheaper than you could own it that there was no comparison at all. Now you take this house here-- we rented this house for quite a few years before they sold and we paid twenty dollars a month. Well, now, we pay two hundred and twenty-five dollars a year taxes and we pay a hundred dollars a year insurance and then if it needs painting or any upkeep or anything, you pay all that. You couldn't possibly own 'em -- a house-- for what we paid rent^{for}. But there's a lot of satisfaction in knowing that you own a house, you know, that's the only thing. But as far as costs are concerned you couldn't beat it you know, when ^{you} was paying rent, because every five years, or even sooner than that if it was necessary, they would come around and they would redecorate your house on the inside and they would paint the outside. And if the sidewalks needed repair, of course they was all wooden sidewalks, why, they kept the sidewalks in real good repair all the time.

SS: Did they take care of everyday type maintenance, if you needed help?

AS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. You take-- you know they kept their own plumber and they had their own electricians and all that. If you had a faucet leaking in the kitchen sink, you just go down and tell 'em or call 'em on the telephone or something. He may not come right that instant, but then it won't be long.

He'd be up, ^{he'd} fix that drippy faucet or anything else that was needed, why, they were real good about maintaining all those things. As far as a company town is concerned, you know, just the name; company town, kind of leaves ^a kind of bad taste in everybody's mouth. Because, the fact of the matter is, that company towns, they earned a pretty bad reputation in lots of parts of the country. You take particularly in the coal fields. But as far as Potlatch Lumber Company at that time, and ^{then} afterwards, Potlatch Forests, they were real good about-- and they extended credit. Now credit is looked down on now-- days by people, but, darn it, you know, people just starting out and people just moving into the town or into the area and getting a job, and, boy, without credit, ^{it'd} be pretty tough to get along sometimes. **It'd** hard to find enough to eat on, you know, as far as that goes, until you can get a payday. Well, there was for quite a few years that payday was just once a month. But then they had a script system -- that it wasn't compulsory, it was just a matter of helping the people out that wanted it-- but they could go down to the office-- and just say for instance now that you went to work this morning and tomorrow morning your wife had to go to the store and get some groceries or anything that was within the town, ^{that was for sale} and, of course, you didn't have any money because you just started to work-- she could go down there at the office and get what they called a coupon book, that is script, you see, and she could get that in denominations of two dollars or five dollars or ten dollars or twenty dollars. They had four denominations of these script books, and ^{then} they had these little coupons you could tear off, you know, and each one of 'em was stamped on there the value. Some of 'em ^{that} was one cent value and others was five cents and others with ten cents and twenty-five cents and fifty cents. And, if you got, say, a twenty dollar coupon book, there'd be one page in there where each coupon would have a one dollar value. And, of course, -- like if you went to work this morning by tomorrow you could go down and draw one of these coupon books, you know, ^{for} up to the

amount that you had coming, and she could go to the store and buy whatever she wanted. Just the same as if you had cash. Well, a lot of people look down on that, you know. That is, people that weren't involved, but the people that lived here-- there was a lot of people that used those and it seemed like they just couldn't live without them. Then, of course, ^(End of side B) those that would establish credit, then ^{of course they} would then, of course, would buy and buy it on credit. Just charge it and then they'd pay once a month. They got paid once a month, so they'd pay the store once a month. Well, for instance, the milkman ^{of course would} be an independent, and the milkman he would accept these scripts, these coupons. And then they had an independent store over here in Onaway and they would accept these coupons, script. And, of course, they could cash 'em in down here and they'd turn 'em in for cash. This store down here done a tremendous volume of wholesale business, too, at that time. So, 'course maybe this little store over here would get a lot of their supplies from down here and they could turn that in or they could take these coupons and take 'em right to the bank and deposit 'em in the bank just the same as they would any other form of money.

SS: Was their a loss of value; service charge?

AS: No. It was ^{used} strictly as an accommodation to the people. And, then, of course, it was a big help to any independent merchant, too, because he didn't have to give credit. See, he could take these coupons every day and put 'em in an envelope and take 'em down and deposit them in the bank just the same as he'd deposit cash money.

SS: These coupons were given to people based on how much the husband had earned? So if he'd worked for three days then the family could get three days worth of coupons.

AS: Yeah. They would probably withhold, say, if they were living in the town and renting, they'd see to it that there was enough withheld to pay the rent for that house, because ^{that was} the rent for the house was always taken out

of your pay envelope on payday. You didn't have that to bother with at all. All you had to do was live there and you didn't have to bother about paying any rent or anything because they took care of all of that for you. And, you know, that was a help in itself. You know, they didn't have to bother with that.

SS: You had mentioned that to me before, about the store doing a large wholesale business. Can you describe that to me? How it happened that they did such a big trade here?

AS: Well, of course, their wholesale business was, you might say, inter-company. Because now the company had just ever so many logging camps for instance, and everything was supplied from this store down here. They were the wholesaler and then, of course, these camps, they would put their orders in here and then they would furnish them with meat or loggers' boots or woolen underwear or wool shirts or overalls or wool pants or timothy hay or oats or horse collars or harness or doubletrees or singletrees or neckyokes, you name it. They handled it right from here, see. And everything they bought here, say for instances now that they-- in season, say that they ~~was gonna buy some canned~~ peaches, they'd buy a carload. I'm ^{not} talking about ^{a carload, I'm talking about} railroad cars, you see. And they would probably buy maybe two or three carloads of peaches. Maybe they'd buy that many carloads of pears, and potatoes, they'd buy from the farmers. They would probably buy, oh, maybe, ten thousand or maybe twenty thousand hundred pound sacks. And they had their own potato warehouse and they sorted 'em and graded 'em and sold 'em. They could sell 'em to Palouse or Moscow or anywhere else. And they had-- there was for, oh, clear up into about the time of the Depression in the '30's-- up until about the '30's they had, you might say, all the farm implement business was right here for all the area clear as far as Rosalia, Oakesdale, Colfax, Uniontown, Genesee, Moscow, Deary. Well, then after that they just let it go and now then they've got all this farm implement business scattered all over the country. Of

course them days ^{that} I'm speaking of, why, farm implements was all horse drawn stuff, you know. Horse drawn plows, or walking plows, gangplows, harrows, binders, mowers, rakes and all that stuff. It wasn't any of that big stuff like they got now. But, nevertheless they did have a tremendous amount of business here.

SS: Did you say they were probably the biggest wholesaler in the county here, in those early days.

AS: They were the biggest wholesaler this side of Spokane.

SS: I really don't know whether places in Moscow like David's which had a grocery department as well as the clothing and all that, whether or not they did much wholesale or not.

AS: No, I think David's was strictly a retail business.

SS: And Williamsons'.

AS: Well, you see ^{Williamsons'} ~~Williamsons'~~ they were in Moscow for years before they opened up that store in Palouse. Old Nat Williamson, he was the founder-- and the fact of the matter is, I think Williamson, he had most of the business in Moscow and that whole Moscow-Troy-Genesee area, because he was a merchant that-- well, he was just a peoples' merchant, you know. He talked the peoples' language, and all the farmers and all the logging industry over in that part of the country, they all went to Williamsons'. My wife's folks, they lived over in that Troy area, 'round Troy and around Joel and I've heard my father-in-law tell so many times about, they done their business with Williamson, you know, because he was the kind of a merchant that they liked to go to, you know. It's a funny thing about people, now you take even today, of course it isn't as prevalent today as it was a few years back, but it still prevails to some extent right now, you take the average person that's just ordinary working person, well, they're going down the street, they're going shopping, well, you go over here at Moscow and David's has got a big display window there you know, ^{it's} all fixed up nice, and all that,

but David's has got a reputation that goes way, way back, kind of a snooty place, so I pass that up, I don't go in there. And ^{Myklebust's} I don't go in there because somebody told me that their stuff was awful expensive. And I walk past Creighton's and I pass that up because I've been told, too, that they, you know, you've got to have lots of money to shop in there. So where do I go? I go over to J. C. Penney's, see. Well, I know, but that's the way people are, you see. And that's the way it was with Williamson when he had a store over there in Moscow, was that you'd go in there and you could probably buy the same kind of overalls over at David's but farmers'd come to town, they had their old dungy shoes on and ^{their} dirty overalls and stuff so they went over to Williamsons and he met 'em at the door and shook their hand and tickled to death to do business with them and they were tickled to death to do business with him.

SS: Do you think his prices were better for the same thing? Did he have cheaper lines?

AS: I don't know about that but ^{then} it's just that, oh, people feel more comfortable in one place than they will in another, you see. Now right to this day, as far as I'm concerned, I have been in David's a few times, but it's very few times that I go in there. And you can probably buy in there as cheap as anywhere else, but I just don't like the place, that's all.

SS: What about the Potlatch store? Were prices good for the local people?

AS: Yeah. Some people said that they were higher, and they probably were in some respects. But a lot of people thought that they might take advantage of you because you didn't have transportation to go someplace else where there was competition. But ^{you take} ^{of sometimes} outside they'd compare the prices with the Sears-Roebuck catalogue and they'd say, "well, it's higher here than it is in the catalogue." Well, of course it's bound to be higher than it is in a catalogue. A catalogue house is run differently. But down here they had a real good meat department and they had a big grocery department. They

had an extremely large shoe department. You know, there's very few stores anywhere around the country at that time that had as big a shoe department as they had here. They had a big candy and tobacco department. They had a men's furnishings department, they had a women's furnishing department. They had a hardware department and they had house furnishing department: furniture. Besides, in another building they had implements. And then they had a jewelry department. That was privately run. The jeweler had his own private business, but he had it in the store. But they had people hired that were all experts that had a lot of experience in their particular line of merchandise that they were handling, you see. Now, they had men, say for instance in the men's furnishings department that were just as good as you'd find anywhere in the city, you know, as far as knowing men's furnishings, were concerned, and the same with the women's department and all of them. It was pretty well laid out and pretty well organized. Now, I worked here, I think I told you the other time here about working on the railroad and I handled all the freight and baggage going in and going out and, of course, them days everything moved by railroad. There was nothing was moved at all by automobile. And they had a sample room down here in the store where there'd be as high as possibly forty or fifty of these big sample trunks ^{would be in there} at one time. And these sample trunks, each one of 'em would be about at least three times as big as a real good sized trunk, and they were all filled with samples that these salesmen carried with them. They'd probably be-- maybe one salesman would have as high as ten or twelve of these big sample trunks and maybe the next one he'd have two or three and maybe another one had four or five and so on, but there'd be that many salesmen would converge here at a time, and they'd open up these sample trunks and lay out their samples and they bought all their stuff from them, just the same as you would if you went to New York City to buy your stuff, see.

SS: And people from the different departments would come in and buy what they

wanted.

AS: That's right. And, chances are that they would lay out their samples here but merchants in Palouse and maybe some of the merchants in Moscow would come over here and look at their stuff, see. But here's where they had 'em.

SS: So that makes me think that probably there was a great deal of new merchandise flowing in and out of the store. I mean, they probably had current lines of goods.

AS: Oh, yeah. They did sell a lot of stuff and, of course, you take, oh, the people then were just the same as they are right now, and maybe not as extensive, but everybody, I don't care who it is, they've always got a desire to better themselves, you know, in the way of clothing or jewelry or something. Everybody takes a lot of pride in themselves. So, you take, whenever a man thought he could afford it, he'd go in and he'd buy him a new pair of shoes -- that's another thing they had here, was a separate department-- well, I told you they had a big shoe department. But, anyway, either a pair of shoes, or maybe he'd go in and buy a new suit or a new shirt or tie or a new hat, pair of gloves. And the same with the women, whenever they could afford it, they'd like to buy some goods to make 'em a dress or buy one that was already made, or a pair of shoes or some stockings. And, you know, there was very little money that was saved, as far as savings was concerned, because-- fact of the matter is, if you earn sixty dollars in a month-- and then, of course, ^{you had} your living expenses wasn't an awful lot, to save on that, you know. But that would be about an average income, would be, well, about ^{maybe} sixty to ninety dollars a month, you know.

SS: I want to ask you before we get off the subject of the store about these big sales that you mentioned to me before. You said they were quite an affair.

AS: Well, this Mc Donald was the manager of the store. He was a typical P. T. Barnum. He was ^{I think} of Scotch descent. He was a real handsome man. A big man

man with a big mustache and he was full of blarney from one end to the other. Boy, I'll tell you, any time that you'd brush up close to him, why, he would-- it would just run off'n your chin!! He was really good. Well, you know, about twice a year, sometimes more often than that, about on an average I think of twice a year, he'd advertise a big sale. And he advertised it clear from Spokane to Lewiston and all over the country, you know, and, maybe one time he'd say he had free haircuts or maybe the next time it'd be-- pretty near every time it'd be free coffee and donuts and maybe free candy for the kids or something, you know. Well, in his farm implement business he done an awful lot of trading, you know, he had horses and cattle and secondhand plows and secondhand mowing machines and he had more darn stuff, you know, gathered up in the six month's period-- well, when the sale day come here'd come the people and actually they'd come as far away as Rosalia with horses and buggies and wagons and maybe some of 'em'd take two-three days for the trip. And they come from Oakesdale and Garfield and clear down as far as Colfax and Uniontown, you know that's quite a little ways off, lots of 'em come clear from Uniontown, Genesee. The hillside, over here on the north side of town, you know, where the Forest Ranger station is? Up there? Well, from there clear over-- almost over to Onaway over there, that hillside'd be just ^{thick, just} full of wagons and teams, tied out there. And, of course, the town was just full of 'em. And the streets down there-- you couldn't drive through, you know, for traffic, for people and teams and stuff. And Old Mac he'd stand there and his belly'd bounce up and down and he'd laugh and he'd talk and he'd trade and he'd trade. He'd swindle some of them people ^{just} something terrible, and oh, they liked it, they just really soaked it up. There was nobody in the world like Mac!!

SS: What was his style? How did he come at you?

AS: Oh, well, he was just jovial. Just any other thing-- just pat you on the back, "Well, gosh, come on over here and have a cigar!" And, oh, well,

gosh, you know, he was a showman, that fellow!! And he sold a lot of stuff on that sale day, too. They hauled a lot of stuff out of here. Both new and used, you know. He'd get rid of, oh-- He'd have the veterinary to doctor up some of these old "geed" up horses that he'd traded for and gosh, they had lots of spirit on sale day!! But some of 'em didn't even make it home!
(Chuckles) It was a lot of fun.

SS: Would he be selling these big carload lots at big discounts, too? On the sales?

AS: Well, I don't think he sold anything in carload lots.

SS: I mean would he get in some items for the sale, that he'd buy in big quantities? Mark 'em down?

AS: Oh, yes. Yeah, you know. He knew pretty much about what would move. And he'd probably have a big supply of horse collars and collar pads and new harness. You know, if a farmer had a real good year and really was gonna splurge, why, he'd come to town and he'd buy a new set of harness, you know for his team. And maybe he'd buy more than one set. And, boy, he'd be pretty proud, you know, when he got that new harness on that team!! And, maybe he'd buy a new wagon. Nice yellow wheels, you know! Maybe one that's got-- wheels had red stripes in 'em or something, you know. Just all kinds of gimmicks. You know a person ^{pretty} near has to live during the period in order to appreciate how people felt about some of those things, because, you know oh, for instance- a kid getting a new pair of overalls, a pair that was starched up good and wasn't faded out from washing-- boy, that kid was just as proud as a peacock, you know; a new pair of overalls, you know. And now-a-days, you can go out and buy a kid a five thousand dollar automobile-- make him happy for a day or ^{two} \$, anyway! But, back there when the economy wasn't what it is now, why, it didn't take too much to make people happy.

SS: Was it a big socializing occasion when people would come in?

AS: Oh, yeah. Well, of course, people were much more sociable year around than they are now-a-days, I think. In a simple way, you know. It was always something that didn't involve a lot of money. But, oh, it wasn't-- just every little while, now you take in the summertime in particular, they'd have these ice cream socials, you've probably heard of an ice cream social? Well, that was their main attraction, was this homemade ice cream, and maybe it was boughten ice cream, but then for the most part of it, they made it themselves. And they'd have cake and ice cream and the people got together and they'd just visit, have a good time and it was what they called a social. And, they'd wear their very best, and women had ribbons in their hair and great big combs and they really dolled up.

SS: Great big combs? In the style that they wore their hair in?

AS: Well, yeah. You take, well, the women used to wear their hair up, you know. Well, just about all the women had these ^{it would be} either celluloid or tortoise shell combs, you know, that they'd put back here, you know, and the comb'd probably have teeth in it about two or three inches long. But then this part up above here would probably be up as high as six inches wide and all decorated, you know. And they had one on each side here, you know, and ^{then} a nice great big ribbon, a big bow, that big, you know, in the back here. They'd get ribbon, you know, about six inches wide and make a nice great big bow and put in their hair. They really dolled up, you know.

SS: Where would they have ice cream socials here?

AS: Well, they would-- here or any other town, every town was the same thing they'd-- if they had a gathering place, a community hall or a church or anyplace, you know where they had room enough for the people to gather, 'cause usually it was public, you know, it was advertised for the

public to come. And, you know, they're starting in to have a few of 'em again. I see on the television every once in a while where they -- some of these granges and so on, advertise that they are going to have an ice cream social. Well, that's getting back to what it used to be.

SS: It was a lot more community than just family then, too.

AS: Oh, yeah. Yeah there was lots of community gatherings, the people'd get together. And you take, when you get out into the rural area, you know, they used to have a lot of fun. Oh, you take in the fall and wintertime, especially, maybe at one farmhouse they'd send the word out, "Come on over, we're going to have a dance tonight, or Saturday night." Well, they'd come over, usually they'd just have some-- (End of Side C) a whingding, you know, and they'd have lunch. And somebody would chord on the organ and somebody would fiddle and, boy, they'd have a real time!! That was community living.

SS: Do you think that Potlatch, the town here, had that same kind of a feeling, too?

AS: No, they didn't have them here in town so much, but they did have a lot of public dances, because they had a hall up here, it was in the same building that burned here, you know, it was the store and ^{the} bank and so on, then upstairs was this big hall. And they used to have quite a few dances up there. It was public, but of course you paid a few cents to come in there and dance. And they generally hire an orchestra, but it wasn't quite the same as it was out in the country. Out in the country they made their own. ^{Be always} Some guy in the neighborhood could fiddle a little bit and there'd always be somebody in the neighborhood that could chord a little on the organ and that was it, boy, they had lots of fun.

- SS: Did you go out to some of those?
- AS: Yeah, oh, yeah.
- SS: When was the fire that burned the store down?
- AS: Goodness, I don't remember what year that was.
- SS: Oh, just roughly. In the '30's, '40's?
- AS: Let's see-- it was about twelve-thirteen years ago.
- SS: Oh, that recent?
- AS: Uh-huh. Of course in the last years ^{there} when they had the store here, it wasn't run any where near like what we just been talking about, you know. It was run differently. Fact of the matter is, they didn't do any wholesale business here-- oh, I think all of that stopped about in the '30's. About the time of the Depression, well then they quit that wholesale business. And they quit most of the other business, too, and it was just strictly a retail store. But from the time it was started up until about the '30's, ^{well} then it was really a booming thing.
- SS: Was it run as a part of the lumber company?
- AS: Yeah, well, it was, you might say, a subsidiary, it was owned by the lumber company. But then, of course, the business title was Potlatch Mercantile Company.
- SS: But you, yourself feel that the objections which I have heard once or twice, that the store prices were higher because it was the only store to go to-- and it was a monopoly.
- AS: No, I wouldn't say so. No, because, you know, I think a person ought to be fair. When you try to analyze human nature, there's some people that are unhappy no matter what's done for 'em, or anything else, and there was so many people that benefitted financially and every other way, from this operation here, that I'd say that it more than offset anything that might have been a little bit objectionable, but,

after all, no matter where you are, you've got to work. No matter what your job is you've got to perform on that job or you just can't stay. And, you take there was so many people that come in here that had such a low-- well, their standard of living was so low, that when they come in here, no matter what they got, it was a big boost, a big improvement, you know. And, so personally, I can't look at it any other way, but what it was a terribly big-- just a big asset to the whole country. Now, you take, without this plant here and without the people of this town -- for a good many years, Moscow wouldn't have been anything outside of the fact that they've got the University. And the same with Palouse and the whole area around here. You take the people come here with absolutely nothing and they bought land and they built their homes and they cleared their land, but they kept on working down here and they had a steady income. They had a steady payroll every month of the year; twelve months of the year for ^{as} many years-- as many years as they stayed. And, you take that income, it's bound to reach out into the whole area, don't make any difference if it's a gasoline station or if it's a bank or store or anything else; everybody will draw some benefits from it, because when you get into a million dollar payrolls or higher, the whole area is going to benefit from that. You take like the city of Lewiston; Lewiston is one of the oldest trading centers in the whole Northwest. When they discovered gold up in the Dakotas, they outfitted here at Lewiston. And they freighted by ^{pack team,} mule team from Lewiston clear back to the Dakotas. But, from that day on-- Lewiston you see is over a hundred years old, but up until the time that Potlatch built their sawmill down there, Lewiston never grew one particle. It was the same stagnant town that it was seventy-five years before that-- it never grew at all. ^{But} when they put that mill in there,

now Lewiston takes in about four times the area that it had at that time. So you can see how the city has expanded, and it's all from that payroll, and, of course, that payroll there brings more money into the banks. They built new banks, they built new stores, they built new this and that and everything else!! But it all comes from-- that's the heart of the whole thing right ^{out} there. And that's the way it was here.

SS: Did many of the people that worked in the mill have their own little stump farms out here?

AS: Well, that was one of the nice things about it. Now, you see, Potlatch owned practically all the surrounding country, and, of course, there was a lot of farmers that had homesteaded, you know, and lived here before that Potlatch didn't own. But, most of them were out here in the prairie and so, as Potlatch logged this land off, after they took the logs off, then they sold this land for ten dollars an acre. ^{They} Sold land for four hundred dollars for forty acres. And these people that worked down here at the mill, they could buy forty acres or eighty acres or a hundred and twenty or a hundred and sixty, whatever amount that they wanted to buy, and all it took was one tenth down payment on that. Well, now, you see, if they was gonna buy forty acres, all they had to pay down was forty dollars, and they could buy forty acres, see? Well, then, they could buy lumber and they could build a pretty decent house for about three hundred dollars, or maybe less, depend on the size of the house they wanted to build. And they got that under the same terms. And they kept on working and every payday they'd pay in a little bit on that til they'd own it, see. That's a big benefit that was created by the company. You know, without the company they wouldn't never have gotten any of that.

SS: Was most of the people who decided to do that, people who had farmed previous to coming out here? Or were they just sawmill guys?

AS: Noooo-- I think there was a combination there, ^{it} ~~there~~ was some that had previous farming experience, and then others that-- you know, there's always people, no matter where you go or where you live, there's always people that are wanting to get ^a home. And, of course, they can-- if they think they've got a piece of land, well then, of course, they've got it then. Of course, as far as making a living on that land was concerned-- they just couldn't possibly make ^{it} a living if they didn't have this job. That job was what was creating a living for 'em, because that land didn't ^{wouldn't} produce anything for several years and maybe a good many years before that land produced anything to speak of. And there was an awful lot of work to do on that land to get it in production.

SS: It was stumpage?

AS: Oh, yeah, just logged over, it was rough and brush and stumps and you can imagine what logged over land was. But they would stack up this trash wood and some of it they'd cut it up for their own wood, some of it they'd cut it up and sell it for wood, and some of it they'd just pile it up in big piles and burn it. Anyway ^{they'd} get it off the ground. Well then, most of them they'd take a harrow and scratch around in the ground a little bit between the stumps and throw some seed down and get enough so they got a little pasture there, to pasture a cow and a team of horses or something, and then every year they'd dig out a few more stumps or buy a little dynamite and shoot a few and that's the way it goes. There isn't any of this overnight stuff, you know. If you go buying a piece of stump land, why you've got a job ahead of you.

SS: We were talking about this land; this included pretty much land out of

Princeton and Harvard and land around there, all of that's part of this isn't it?

AS: Well, I wouldn't say that Potlatch owned all of that land, because there was a lot of privately owned land in between, but then they did own an awful lot of land. And even the land that was privately owned when they put the mill in here, those people'd benefitted, because they sold their timber to Potlatch, you see? And they didn't even have to log it themselves, they just sold it and Potlatch went in and logged it. Or, they could log it themselves and Potlatch would pay 'em for it as logs. Different ways that it could be handled. And--

SS: That's another complaint incidentally that I have heard against the company, with regard to buying stumpage -- buying the timber when they first came in from private people, and they'd just be looking back on the value of the timber-- they feel that the company picked it up for little or nothing, and when they logged the timber they-- a lot of these farmers, let's say over around Deary-- how they couldn't make any money doing that work. They logged the stumpage and hauled it out for them.

AS: Well, that's true, but then, you know hindsight is so darn much better than foresight. You know, you can look back and say, "Well, now, if I'd a done this or done that--" We'd all be millionaires, wouldn't we? But, you know-- Oh, I get kind of teed off and sometimes amused at some of our politicians-- now it's just a few years back, within the last ten years, I'd say, or so, this Nez Perce tribe of Indians down here around Lapwai and down in that part of the country, they got ahold of some of the politicians and told 'em, ^{that} by golly, that they had to get another settlement from the government because the government took over all so much of this land and they just paid 'em so much for it, and now then, that land around Lewiston ^{down} and ^{around} there the people are pay-

ing a thousand dollars or two thousand dollars an acre for it, so they ought to be reimbursed for what the government cheated 'em, see? Well, isn't that a stupid thing!! But then the politicians say, "Oh yes." ^{You bet} They shake their heads, so here ^{it's been} about ten years ago, they made a settlement, one settlement, with them there, I think there was -- paid 'em an additional sum of seventeen million dollars or something like that-- to that Lapwai tribe. And that was for gold that was supposed to have been taken out of the creeks down there a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago, see? But now, with the price of gold up we're supposed to pay the Indians the difference for what it was worth then and what it's worth now!! And the same for the value of their land!! Well, good heavens, at that time you could buy all the cock-eyed land that you wanted to surround for ten cents an acre!! You take on them hills down there in that part of the country, why they wouldn't even give ten cents an acre for it.

SS: Of course, where I think they have just grievances-- and a lot of those treaty obligations that the government agreed to when they signed 'em they never did come through on. Or if they did, the money went all in- to the pocket of the white Indian Agent. They made promises of schools, medical facilities, all kinds of things in some of those first treaties just to get them signed and looked good, but that was the end of it.

AS: Well, of course, I think we've got to recognize that too, that they just figured that they was dealing with savages, that they didn't know any- thing and never would know anything, but as far as the government was concerned, I think our government was honest in itself, but the rep- resentatives of the government was the ones that was just a lot of crooks, just deadbeats, you know, anyway that they could promote a swindle, and of course, that's carrying on right up until today. They're

doing the same thing every day back in Washington and in every state in the union, as far as that's concerned, wherever they get a chance.

SS: You know, Axel Anderson told me how he decided to come to work with Potlatch, was he was looking at the boards in Spokane to see what was available for work-- this was 1907-- and he said, he'd already been on a few jobs, around a lot of jobs, in fact, where he'd worked and the wages had been pretty good and he just didn't like it. Conditions were bad, one reason or another he just didn't like it. So this time he decided he'd find a place that offered the least wages on the board, go there and try that and see if it was any better and he said that was Potlatch, at the time compared to these others. But I guess he decided that what they give you in salary alone didn't maybe mean all that much, might be other things about the people you're working for that would make it a place you could stay and work for.

AS: Well, of course, you take as far as Axel Anderson is concerned, he worked in the woods all his life and if you was ever in a lumber camp and you'd see how some of those people eat, and see the food that is prepared for 'em, you could see why they wanted to make that their way of life, because, boy, they really did eat!! Now you take back in the days before refrigeration, why it was pretty hard to keep meat, especially, but they were pretty ingenious in some ways. Now I seen-- I've been in some of those Potlatch logging camps and they didn't have any refrigeration, but their meathouse was constructed of canvas, you know, it had a wood floor and low wood sidewalls in it but then it was just a big tent deal, but they kept a stream of water running over this on the outside all the time, day and night, ^{to where} that took care of all the evaporation and it was a cooler in itself, you see. And they could keep

meat fresh in there for several days. And, of course, their cured meats like hams and bacons and stuff, why that would keep for quite a little while. And their eggs and all that stuff they kept in there, and of course, their supply was replenished you know just every few days. But they didn't have the contamination and ^{the} rotten conditions like they had in some camps, you know. They were in pretty good shape.

SS: What period is this you're talking about?

AS: Oh, about ⁱⁿ 1920 and around in there, you know. Of course, at that time all the Potlatch camps, they furnished all the beds and blankets and all that stuff. But three or four years before that, that was when the so-called Wobblies were credited with a lot of stuff that I don't know-- I guess maybe the credit was due, but they did make conditions a lot better in the camps. You take prior to World War I when a man went to work in the logging camp he carried his own bedroll on his back. And, of course, they had bunks, but then the bunks were all empty. You'd go down to the barn and get an armful of straw or two armsfull or whatever you wanted and put in there and put your bed on top of it, and that was your bed!! And, you know, you could come from home and your wife had your bedding all washed up and your clothes all washed up and clean and you were just as clean as a button from one end to the other, and you carried your bed into the camp and spread it out and you went to work and when you come home then the next weekend you'd be so lousy that your bed'd walk off by itself!! But that wasn't the lice that you brought in, it was the lice this other dude brought in, the guy that never did wash or clean up, you know!! And that's one thing, too, that the Wobblies, I think should be credited with, and that was wash-rooms and after they got 'em they insisted that some of these guys that never had a bath in their life, by golly, they had to bathe and they had

to clean their clothes and stuff, and they got rid of these lice. But years ago it used to be terrible.

SS: Do you know what the men did to fight that kind of thing?

AS: Fight the lice?

SS: Yeah. You had to go on there living in the camp--

AS: I know, but then, one thing that they done was, well, of course, some of 'em they would take their clothes and they'd build a fire outside and they'd have a great big kettle out there, boiler or barrel or something, and they'd fill that with water on the fire, and they'd boil their clothes. They'd ^{just} boil 'em. Well, you know what that would do to wool, it would just ruin their wool clothes, and of course they all wore wool. And, then, of course, there was others, too, you could hear lots of different ways. Others, they'd take off their shirt and their undershirt and they'd turn the shirt inside out and they'd go down to the barn and they'd lay it on the horse's back!! Well, all the lice'd leave his shirt and ^{they'd} get on the horse!! And all them gimmicks, you know.

SS: Did you ever hear about carrying mercury in your pocket?

AS: No.

SS: Quick silver. I heard that one.

AS: For lice?

SS: Yeah. Keep 'em off you.

AS: Well, maybe it would, but I don't know how it would. Mercury's so darn hard to hold, well, and all the mercury that I've seen-- they generally had mercury in a little crockery-- kind of a glazed crockery jug, you know-- but how that-- of course, there could be some radiation from it, I don't know. But, you know, if you pour a little mercury out in your hand and you go to pick up-- you got a ball there, but you go to pick it up then you've got a hundred balls, and you go to pick

them up and you got a thousand balls, and that's the way mercury does, you know, and it's pretty hard to handle.

SS: Have you heard about rubbing with salves? I've heard that. Some guys used salves.

AS: Weeel-- I suppose there was some that, you know, carbolic salves, you know, that might help. But there was lots of different gimmicks.

SS: What you were trying to say is that the food was quite good in the camps during those--

AS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, you take-- Well, you know they charged a man so much a day for his board, but then you'd probably pay four times that much if you was to get the same food in a restaurant someplace. And, oh, I've seen men that, oh, they'd settle for a bowl of cornflakes and maybe an egg and a piece of toast and that would be enough for their breakfast. And maybe the next guy to 'em, he'd want a big steak and four or five eggs and some cereal and gosh, you name it, and that'd be his breakfast. Well, then they'd come in, most of 'em'd carry ^o lunch, but then every man made up his ~~own~~ lunch, well in the cookhouse they had big drawers about four feet wide and ten-twelve inches deep, and they'd pull these out and this draw'd be full of one kind of cookies, and that drawer'd be full of another kind of cookies, and that other drawer was full of donuts, and this drawer over here'd be maybe full of cake and then, of course, on top there'd be great big tables just stacked full of big plates of cheese, and every kind of lunchmeat you can think of. You know what boiled ham is, the most expensive kind of lunchmeat that you can buy, well, some fellers wouldn't take a few slices of that for their lunch, they'd take a whole can. And then, of course, some of 'em I suppose maybe would stash enough of that away so that when they'd go home on weekends they'd take it home with 'em. I don't know but then, I don't see how they could possibly eat that much.

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