

ARTHUR SUNDBERG

Third Interview

Interviewed by:

Sam Schragar

Oral History Project

Latah County Museum Society

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## ARTHUR SUNDBERG

Potlatch; b. 1899

maintenance foreman and lead man at Potlatch mill.

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with Sam Schrager  
July 24, 1975

## II. Transcript

ARTHUR SUNDBERG

THIRD INTERVIEW

SAM SCHRAGER: This third interview with Arthur Sundberg is recorded at his home in Potlatch on July 25, 1975.

AS: You know all these little towns was great baseball fans years ago before the automobiles become too prevalent, you know. And there was a baseball game every Sunday, and it was men that had jobs and was working six days a week and then played baseball on Sunday. But, they used to come up here from as far away as Uniontown with horses and buggies and hacks and all kinds of horse motivated transportation, you know, and that's quite a ways to come with horses, clear from Uniontown. And St. John and Genesee and they had quite a baseball rivalry going on here for years and years. And, boy, they used to play some pretty hot ball!! Fact of the matter is, this town, of course I say this town, it was primarily motivated by Max Williamson. He was a great baseball player and he was-- he worked in the sales department of the company, and it was through his push and efforts that they built this big gymnasium now. I don't know whether you recognize the building or not, but as you come into town you make this turn, this great big building on the left there? Well, that was built as a gymnasium; a town gymnasium.

SS: Is that Town & Country Store?

AS: Yes. And Max Williamson, he was a prime mover in getting that built. But he was also the prime mover in getting the American League and National League All-Star team to play baseball here. That's the only small town in the whole Inland Empire that has that distinction. You know he first started contacting them about getting their team, "Oh, no, that town is too small, we can't bring the All-Stars in here to play." He kept at

'em, and he got enough backing to guarantee their expenses. And, oh, as far as most of us were concerned we all thought that was-- 'course in our country way of looking at it, you see, it was about the poorest baseball game we ever saw, 'cause those guys'd get up here and they'd hit that ball, 'course a few of 'em 'd go over the fence for a home-run, but <sup>then</sup> most of em'd be inside the field and there'd always be a man right there to catch it, you know. There was never any errors or anything like that. You take this country ball, it was hit and run and slide and errors and all kinds of excitement, you know, it was really fun to go to a baseball game. But anyway, --

SS: This American National League, that's like the current pro?

AS: Oh, yes, it's the same thing!!

SS: They had their All-Star game here?

AS: That's right. Well, they was touring the country. The American League All-Stars played the National League All-Stars, but on this tour, you see.

SS: And these were the best players?

AS: Oh, yes, they were the pick of the lot, of the entire country.

SS: Do you remember about when that was?

AS: Yeah, that was in 1912.

SS: So the game was a disappointment to people?

AS: Oh, no, no. I don't want to say that. But then, we were used to seeing all this excitement, you know. Scores being made, and errors being made and they'd slide and all that sort of thing. And then, of course, when these dudes get up there, why, whang!! One, two, three and they're down. And then the next side gets up and one, two, three and they're down!! And you know, that was really professional baseball. That was pretty hot stuff. People see that now-a-days, why, that's the hottest thing in the world, but as far as excitement goes, it's not exciting!



SS: Were there any great players or any-- was their one side that local people were for?

AS: No, no, I don't think so. There was individuals-- there always has been as long as there has been baseball-- there's been individuals that oh, they're all for St. Louis or they're all for Chicago, or they're all for-- Of course, they didn't have any teams out in the West at that time, see.

SS: That's right.

AS: But it was all in the East and <sup>in</sup> the Midwest, you see, you know out as far as St. Louis, and around-- I don't remember whether Kansas City had a team then or not. But anyway, that was part of the baseball history of this town!!

SS: Well, how important was baseball to the life of the town, do you think?

AS: Well, everybody, most everybody looked forward to it. That was a means of recreation. That was just a means of having some sport. You could think back in those times, why, if you had any fun you made it!! You didn't go out and buy <sup>your fun</sup>, like you do now. Everybody got together and made their fun. Well, of course, these baseball games, we had to pay to go in to see the baseball game, you know. But neverthe less, it was just a lot of sport, and of course these players they were all strictly amateur, they never got a dime. If they went to another town to play they got their transportation and they probably got one meal when they were away, but that was the size of it. Then of course, whatever money was taken in at the gate went for equipment. You know they had to buy baseballs and bats and-- but each man furnished his own glove or mitt or whatever he used. And another thing, too, if you would see the gloves ~~that~~ they wore them days compared with what they wear now, you'd laugh. You know, now-a-days a catcher's mitt is ordinarily quite small, you know,

but those days it was a great, big rig about like that (indicates with his hands) you know. But the first baseman, he wore a mitt similar to a mitt that they wear now except that it wasn't near as big, but it did have webbing between the thumb and the first finger, in the first baseman's glove. But all the infielders and outfielders, they didn't call it a glove, they called it a tip. And it was just a five fingered glove, no webbing or nothing, in fact, if there was any padding in it when they bought it, they'd take it out. It was mostly-- in the center part here it was just two pieces of leather, the inside lining and the outside lining. And they <sup>would</sup> form their own pocket in there, you know. They'd work on it. But a ball could go right through here, you see, on their glove.<sup>?</sup> Now-a-days all the outfielders got great, big-- webbed in all five fingers, you know, and just a great, big--well, <sup>just kind of</sup> a basket-like rig, is all the baseball players use now-a-days.

SS: Was it pretty competitive to get on the baseball team?

AS: Oh, you bet it was!! You bet it was!! You take locally, I'm just speaking about our local team here--that's one thing that was at fault with the local team, was that they didn't let enough of the young fellows to try out even, you know. Unless there was some guy on the team that had a pet friend <sup>of</sup> that had a boy, you know. You know how it goes. And, of course, they'd probably let 'em come down and play catch with 'em, or maybe a little batting practice, or something. But anyway, it was just like the old one-horse shay!! They all got old together and they all collapsed!! You see. But when it was going good it was really a hot team.

SS: So these guys on this team tended to be veterans who had a lot of experience, were middle aged men?

AS: Well they got to be middle aged men, you know. Yeah, they <sup>WAS</sup> men playing on the team here I imagine, well, I can't say definitely their age, but I just imagine that they were playing here when they was forty years old, you know. And probably older. And they were still quite active. But, you take as far as relief pitchers is concerned, that was something that-- unless a pitcher just got being beaten so darn bad that it was ridiculous, well, then they'd probably take a man in from the outfield and have him finish pitching the game, see? They didn't have relief pitchers like they have now-a-days. Man got in there, <sup>that</sup> pitched <sup>ball, he pitched</sup> nine innings of ball. And if it went overtime, why, he pitched ten or eleven or twelve innings of ball: one man pitched the whole thing!! They were pretty tough. And, I'm telling you, they'd throw hard too, they ain't no folling about that!! It was <sup>n't</sup> any lallgagging! As far as throwing hard is concerned, they threw just as hard as they do today, if not harder, they'd really pour it in there.

SS: Did they take signals from the catcher, like they do today?

AS: Not as much, I don't think. Not in these small towns. 'Course between innings they would talk it over, you know, the catcher. They'd go back to the dugout, they would probably talk some. But generally the catcher he would catch whatever comes. He didn't know whether it was gonna be insdie or outside or a low or high. And it was good baseball.

SS: Were these games high scoring?

AS: Not necessarily. As far as scoring is concerned, they were probably a little higher score than what you see ordinarily now-a-days, but they held 'em pretty close. But there was lots of excitement doing it!!

SS: I heard that Potlatch had maybe the most outstanding team in the Inland Empire.

AS: I'd agree with that, although a person can be prejudiced some. But, you

take Colton and Uniontown, Genesee and Colfax, and I think as far as baseball is concerned, I don't think Moscow could play really competitive ball against Potlatch at that time.

SS: What about these other towns?

AS: Well, they did. They had good, big, husky, farm<sup>er</sup> boys, you know. And then in this town, it was all lumber employed people on the team, see? But you take in these farm towns, they had mostly fellows that was going to the Un<sup>iv</sup>ersity or college, you see.

SS: Do you think that Potlatch was looked at the team to beat in this area?

AS: I think so. I believe it was, in that particular era, from the time the town started up until, oh about 1922, up to about '24, why this was really a baseball town.

SS: Would people often go with the team? To see them play?

AS: Yeah, there wasn't too many but-- on account of the transportation-- oh, you take after the First World War, well then they got to be a few Model T Fords and a few 490 Chevrolets, and there was a few of these farmers that had great big Case automobiles, as big as this room, and so on, you know. And they would go, most of 'em. I know I've driven part of the team to their games quite a few times. And of course, all the roads in the country them days was all dirt roads. You might find a little, just a little short stretch of river gravel on the roads where somebody'd graveled out in front of their place, but most of it was dirt roads all over. And when the game was over with there was just a mad scramble for to see who could get out first, because otherwise, boy, you'd be in a fog of dust that'd hang there for hours!! And we<sup>id</sup> run quite a race trying to get away from there.

SS: I know some little towns had rivalries that often ended in fights at the end of the games. Was Potlatch like that, too?

AS: Well, there was a few among the spectators, <sup>I think</sup> I don't think that you could say that there was much of that amongst the players, but spectators, you know would get pretty hot under the collar once in a while. But it wasn't what you might call a common thing, 'cause you could go to maybe a dozen games and everything was fine, and then maybe one game, why, there'd be two characters'd get-- one was pulling for one team and one the other, and one of 'em'd swear up and down that this team made an error and the other'd say ~~they didn't~~ and that the umpire was pulling for this side-- you know, all kinds of things, and then, of course, it might wind up in blows, but it wasn't very common.

SS: Do you have any idea what made Potlatch have such a good team? Do you know why it was outstanding?

AS: Well, yeah, I would give credit for that just to the motivation of a couple of players. There was Max Williamson, as I said, he was the prime mover and then Shelton Andrews, he was an outstanding player. And the fact of the matter is, he tried out for the Spokane Indians at that time, but he didn't make it. But anyway, he was an awful good player. He played shortstop, and he was really fast and he was a good player. And between those two, and of course, the efforts of everybody that was on the team, you know, they all pulled together pretty close. But those two were really <sup>the</sup> prime movers. But Max Williamson, I would credit him with being the prime mover.

SS: Did he play or coach?

AS: No, he played. Yeah, boy, he was a good player, too. He was a big man. To my estimation, he and Babe Ruth were pretty much-- they looked pretty much alike. Pretty heavy built fellow, but he was sure good on his feet, and a good baseball player.

SS: Was he a power hitter, like Ruth?

AS: No, no. Of course, there wasn't any of 'em in that category. But, of course, now you take on the other hand, now Babe Ruth, you know he's put up here on a pedestal and everybody in this country, <sup>that</sup> think<sup>s</sup> about baseball, they think about Babe Ruth because of his record. But they don't tell you how many thousand times he got up to bat and fanned out. All they tell you about is his home runs that he made, see? He'd get up there, maybe get one home run in ten or fifteen times up; other times it'd be a little infield hit or a strike out or something. And you take Willie Mays and some of these others done the same thing. You know, a lot of the people get the wrong impression; they just figure that when Babe Ruth or Lou Gehrig, or some of those fellows get <sup>UP</sup> to bat, why, it was a home run every time they got up there. That's not true!

SS: Well, it's interesting to hear some about the Potlatch team, because they had a reputation, there's no question about it. Do you think the people followed the team's fortunes very closely?

AS: Yeah, yeah, I think that the majority of the people did, although there was--we discussed before--<sup>there WAS</sup> ethnic groups here, you know. There was groups of different nationalities, and, of course, most of those groups of foreign-born people, they weren't baseball oriented. Whatever interest they took in baseball, they acquired that after they come over here. I know that there was a lot of the Italians and <sup>the</sup> Japanese and whatever groups there were that would go to the baseball game because they learned to like it and they would go. But the prime interest was by people that was born and raised in this country. Of course, pretty near every one of us, in fact you might say all of us, we had a foreign background, someplace, you know. And then we don't want to leave out the Indians, <sup>either</sup> because the Indians were great baseball players. They had their own teams and they would go around and they would play against all <sup>of</sup> these

other towns. But as a team, I don't believe the Indians couldn't compete too strongly against most of these other teams, but I think that was mostly on account of they didn't have the team management that these other teams had, but there was a lot of those Indians were darned good baseball players.

SS: And you said, by the way, these guys didn't get time off from work or time to practice?

AS: Oh, no. You take those days up until the last few years, why, there was ten hours a day of work and that was six days a week, and then Sunday morning they'd go down and have a little batting practice and Sunday afternoon they had a game!! And, you know, if they knew they had a tough game coming up on Sunday, why then-- now they worked til six o'clock in the evening and by the time they got home and had a bite to eat and changed their clothes and so on, it'd be probably seven-thirty before they'd get down to the field and then they'd probably get in an hour of practice, you know, before it got dark, because they didn't have daylight saving time then. <sup>you know</sup> That daylight saving time didn't come out until the Second World War. So you see, now we've got daylight until approximately nine o'clock in the evening. But then, that's only eight o'clock standard time, so you see it'd be start getting dark about eight o'clock. So they wouldn't have much time after working ten hours a day.

SS: This ten hours a day, six days a week, you've mentioned that to me before. Those hours-- it's just hard for me to see how a person could work sixty hours a week and have much enthusiasm or much left in 'em after that. Especially with hard physical labor.

AS: Well, most of it was hard physical labor. But, you grew up with it and you didn't know any different, and that's <sup>what</sup> it was!! You just made the best of it. If you got rested up a little bit, well, then you'd go

out and play just as hard, possibly, as you worked. In this town, they used to blow the big mill whistle there at five-thirty in the morning. That was to wake everybody up. And then they'd blow the whistle at ten minutes til seven, and that meant that if you wasn't already in your place, you'd better be getting there, you know, because at seven o'clock when the whistle blew, why then everything was rolling and everybody had to be in their place and working! And there wasn't any smoke breaks or anything like that, they started up at seven in the morning and they shut her down at twelve, and everybody was supposed to be on that job for that <sup>entire</sup> five hours. Then they would blow their small whistle again at ten minutes to one, and that meant you was supposed to be there, and at one o'clock they started her rolling and she rolled then until six!! And that was six days a week!

SS: Did they blow a whistle at one? Or just ten to one?

AS: Oh, no, at one o'clock they blew the big whistle. See, they had three whistles down there, all <sup>with a</sup> different tone, and the one with the smaller chime, that was for this <sup>+</sup> starting up time and then <sup>they had</sup> the big whistle that you could hear for-- well on a clear day-- you could hear for ten miles, you know. And that was for the actual starting time. Then they had this other big whistle, that was for a fire whistle and that was just like a big foghorn, you know, it had an entirely different tone. Whenever you'd hear those three whistles, you knew what each one was.

SS: And that was the only time ---? (cassette change) (End of Side A)

AS: And then along about early 1930's, then they started blowing the fire whistle every Saturday at noon. And that was done primarily to see that the whistle was in working order. Because the mechanism that worked this fire whistle, that worked from signal boxes, they had signal boxes about every two blocks square, possibly three block square here in town.



And at that time all the power lines run up and down in the street, and the signal boxes was on one of the power poles. And then down at the plant, they had those spaced through all the departments and the lumberyard area and all over the entire plant, and each box had a different number and, of course, that whistle would blow that number, in other words, if the signal box was thirty-one, they would blow three-- you know, three blasts and then a pause and then one. There was no difference in the tone, except for the-- and <sup>of course</sup> this fire whistle was operated <sup>with</sup> a mechanism of gears, and, well, it was a good deal similar to what you might see now for a relay; timed relay. And, of course this signal come in-- that was all electric controlled, but then the whistle was steam and sometimes this mechanism, if it got a little cruddy, why, it might rotate around here to where it would open the whistle and it'd blow and there it'd stick and it'd just continue to blow until somebody got <sup>up</sup> there and released it, you see. And then sometimes, why, the pipe leading to the whistle might get a slug of water, and then it'd make a gurgly sound. And that's the reason that they-- fact of the matter is, they still have the same whistle. And we've got two fire calls here, one is operated from down at the plant, steam whistle, and then the other is an electric siren that's on the fire station.

SS: Were there any fires of consequence that you remember from the early days?

AS: Well, Not of any big consequences. ~~Fact~~ of the matter is, they had a volunteer fire department, and they had these two wheeled hose carts, you know the wheels were about five feet in diameter, and each cart would carry about three hundred feet of two-and-a-half inch hose and this cart had a reel under <sup>neath</sup> the handle where you'd reel in the rope, and when they'd take off these men would unlatch this reel and grab onto that rope and two men on the handle and the mud'd probably be ankle deep or deeper in the street, and here they'd come just a running and puffing

pulling them carts, you know!! And even with that antiquated fire system, I think in the life of the town, I don't believe there was over three or four houses that burned in the town up until this time. Now then they had a big fire here, they had a big church that burned, that was, oh, I can't remember exactly what year that was. About -- in the early 1940's. And that church had a full basement in it, where they had-- oh, it probably was seven or eight rooms down in this basement besides a big hall-like room where they could have dinners and so on. But they were doing some work down there-- somebody was doing some cabinet work or carpenter work or something-- but anyway, they seemed to think that somebody might have left a cigarette down there and it got in the shavings or something -- anyway, this church burned. And then they had a big-- this big brick building<sup>that</sup> had the mercantile store and the bank and all that-- why it burned. But ~~outside~~ of that-- of course now, when this church building burned, why, they even had help from the fire department from Moscow. And the same when the mercantile burned. But, this church it was all wood construction and it was just a big, beautiful building. And, gosh, you know, when that burned<sup>why</sup> they was big chunks of burning lumber that sailed for a mile back in here, you know. The updraft of this heat, you know; it was a big fire.

SS: Well, I want to ask you about the early day working in the mill and around it-- you told me the first job that you had was piling lumaber?

AS: No, in the box factory.

SS: Oh, the first job you did was in the box factory? How old were you then?

AS: Oh, I think about thirteen-fourteen years old.

SS: What was your job?

AS: Nailing boxes. Had to be done by hand with a hatchet. Didn't use hammers, <sup>we</sup> used shingler's hatchets.

SS: And that was ten hours a day?

AS: Yeah, yeah. 'Course, you know, that was <sup>summertime</sup> work. But when I was fifteen I got a job working steady. And I worked then in the lumber sheds stacking up lumber and taking it down. And then after that, for a while-- when I was in the shed there I was learning to grade lumber--well this loading cars on the loading dock, it was contract work. What they called gypso. And, of course, that sounded awful good because it figured that you'd make a little more money, <sup>then</sup>. So I went to loading cars. And if a person earned their money, they earned it there. We got fifteen cents a thousand for loading cars, and that had to be split between two men. In other words, you got seven and a half cents a thousand for loading cars. Well, those days, railroad cars were small compared with what they are now. Now a railroad car holds about-- approximately fifty thousand feet of lumber. Well ~~them~~ days the average railroad car held from twenty-eight to thirty thousand. Well, <sup>if</sup> you loaded three carloads a day, ~~that~~'d be somewhere in the neighborhood of ninety thousand, you probably earned six dollars or somewhere around there. But, boy, you'd done a day's work!! And you handled <sup>about</sup> around ninety thousand feet of lumber!!

SS: Could you do that in a day? Yourself?

AS: Oh, yes, yeah. We didn't do that every day. You see, they'd have what they called a mark-up and in the shipping office they would-- they had what they called a hard sheet, it was a hard paper, you know that they would write on. This order was all typed out on this and then, of course, the lumber checkers, they would check on this hard sheet the number of feet in each load that went in, you know, <sup>UN</sup>til they got the total out here. Well, they would put the crew's name on the hard sheet, you see, and as a rule they would designate two cars for each crew. But then there got to be quite a bit of hard feelings about it because the guy in the shipping office or the foreman, at least a lot of guys thought so, <sup>at least</sup> you know

they had pets, you know, they had friends that they would cater to, well if you had two carloads of, say, one-by-twelve white pine, why that was what everybody wanted, because there would be a lot of scale on that. You take three boards at a time and shove 'em in there, you had a lot of scale <sup>for</sup> every time you shoved 'em in. Where if you got two carloads of one-by-four, you couldn't hold that many boards. Well, we'd put in five pieces, but that was a pretty big handful when they were stacked on top of each other, five pieces. But you didn't have the scale in that that you had in three pieces of one-by-twelve, see. So, then finally they done away with that system because there got to be too much hard feeling. So then it was a scramble to see who could get what. Well then it got so that some of these favorite people, they would go into the shipping office and they'd look over these hard sheets, you see, and of course each one had the railroad car number on it. It would be a Great Northern <sup>number</sup> so-and-so or an N.P. so-and-so or Sioux Line, or whatever it happened to be. Well, then there were two men in a crew and each crew and there was only one man that wore an apron and that was the fellow that was on the inside of the car, cause he'd slide this lumber over his apron as he received it, you see. But, they got pretty foxy though. They got a second apron, one for each man. Well, they'd write down these car numbers, you know, and they'd go out in the yard before the cars were switched and throw their apron inside the car. Well, as the cars come in on the dock, well, these crews they was all lined up on the dock and as a car come in, why, if there was no apron there they'd throw their apron in, well, ordinarily they wouldn't know what was going into that car, but there was a few of these characters that knew exactly what was going in because they knew the car number, you see. And that's just the competition that went on in loading cars.

SS: Not everybody felt that they could just go in and look at that?

AS: Oh, no, no, that was a restricted area. 'Course this shipping office, that was all clerical, and about the only time that anybody, other than those that worked there went in there would be if they'd go in ~~here~~ to ask some particular question about some of the orders or something, you. But there was probably two or three crews that were good buddy-buddies and they'd go in and here'd be a big stack of orders laying there and they'd thumb through the whole works, you know and pick out the ones they wanted.

SS: Well, how did they in the scramble-- would you just, let's say you were there waiting, would you take just whatever come in, or would you look--

AS: You didn't have a chance to <sup>look, you didn't</sup> see that hard sheet until after you'd claimed your car.

SS: Then you didn't know what your car was, and you couldn't change once you got it?

AS: No, no, that's right. And you take the average mill now-a-days, why, it amused me ~~to hear down at the plant~~, the last few years that I was down here at the plant, I heard some of these characters that-- you know, supertindents and managers and what not talking- "Oh, we had the biggest month in the history of the plant." And they probably averaged six carloads a day, that they shipped. When I worked down there and after I left there and went to work on the railroad, you know, during World War I times, they averaged forty-two to forty-five carloads a day. <sup>out of that plant</sup> They hauled a hundred carloads a day for a long time. Of course, I say a carload of logs, <sup>a carload of logs,</sup> that would scale out ten thousand feet. But that's a million feet a day. That's a lot of timber.

SS: You could work ten hours and get your ninety thousand feet scaled?

AS: Well, not always, no. No, no, it'd depend a whole lot on what you were loading. And then, of course, there was a lot of time that we were asked

to come back for two and a half hours after supper, you see. Now then you'd start at seven in the morning and you'd work until twelve and you'd start at one and work til six and then you'd come back again at seven and work til nine thirty at night. And probably you'd get a hundred thousand

SS: You'd come back at their request?

AS: Oh, yes, yeah. Because they had orders that they had to get out.

SS: Did you get time and a half for that?

AS: On, no. There was no such thing as time and a half; double time or nothing like that. That wasn't even heard of until modern times.

SS: Well, at the age of fifteen, was that a real hard physical strain on you?

AS: Well, of course. I really didn't put out that much at that age, you know, but at fifteen I worked at the lumber shed stacking lumber and taking it down. And I guess I was about seventeen, I guess, when I was loading cars. But, it's just like I told you here once before, oh, kids used to mature a lot earlier than they do now. You take whether it was on a farm or in a lumber mill or a mine or anywhere else, you know. You take the average kid <sup>the average boy</sup> when he was fifteen-sixteen years old he was, you might say, just as mature as he ever would be, in all respects.

SS: How much money did you make, let's say, when you first started at thirteen and then when you were seventeen and eighteen?

AS: Well, you know, they hired water boys; boys that would carry a water bucket around to the crews, they would hire boys about twelve years old and they would get a dollar and a half a day for ten hours. But then, when you got into production jobs, regardless of what department you got into, if it was common labor, then you got two dollars and a quarter

a day for ten hours. That was the pay scale.

SS: But gypping on loading cars, you could make as much as six dollars a day?

AS: Yeah, yeah. It wasn't too long after, oh, I guess that probably the plant had run for <sup>probably</sup> five or six years before they started any gyppo work, and then, of course, you always had, regardless of what the work is, <sup>you've always got</sup> some eager beavers, you know. And you've got some men that are outstanding in physical strength and agility and all that sort of thing, stamina, and of course, they always feel like <sup>that</sup> they should be rewarded for all of that, over and above some guy that's slow and pokey, and all that, you know. And so, I think that's where the gyppo incentive was born. And of course, you can call it piece work or whatever you want to call it, but it developed into where they gyped on the loading dock and they gyped in the lumberyard hand piling green lumber, and they gyped in the lumberyard loading out dry lumber, you see. And, <sup>then</sup> of course they didn't have any dry kilns until about the time of the First World War, I guess it was along about 1918 or '19 that they had the <sup>ir</sup> first dry kiln. And that was something that <sup>was</sup> they were just experimenting with because there was nobody in the lumber industry that knew a particle about artificial drying, you see. So they put up this big brick building, and it was divided into six parts. Of course each one of them was classified as a kiln and they were numbered one to six. But all they had in there was just a mass of steam pipes, coils, you know underneath and it was just strictly radiation. They didn't have any way of controlling it or anything else. Well, then they did come out then with some charts, you know, it would regulate the heat and the humidity. But <sup>it</sup> wasn't very successful, although they did dry quite a bit of lumber in there. But they didn't come out with any real scientific dry kilns until about

1925. And then they built twenty-four big kilns, but instead of having these heat coils run the full area, they had the heat coils just in one package here and then they had fans that would blow the heat down through the kilns. Well, then, of course that's all been changed since then. Along about 1958 or '60, somewhere around in there, they come up with a more scientific kilns and they used the same building but then they changed their method of drying, and so what they use now <sup>is that</sup> they've got their heat coils running down each side of the kiln and then for a certain period of time the air flow is this way and then it --

SS: Goes across.

AS: Cross flow and then it reverses itself after a period of time and it goes the other direction.

SS: Goes across back?

AS: Yeah. And of course there's a one inch sticker between each course of lumber so that then the air--- On the old kilns they had what they called a chimney that they built right in the stack of lumber. It was wide at the bottom and then taper up until it was practically zero at the top, this opening and the heat would come in here and come ~~up~~ through this chimney and supposed to radiate out through this lumber, but you would find some of the lumber <sup>that</sup> would be too dry and then other parts of the lumber stack ~~that~~ would be too much moisture in it. But the way they dry lumber now, why, it's pretty uniform.

SS: What was the defect in the original dry kiln? method that they used? Why didn't it work very well.

AS: Well, because nobody knew anything about drying lumber. They didn't know anything about building a chimney in the stack and they didn't know anything about the proper location and the amount of heat transfer that they were supposed to have. And it was strictly an experient <sup>m</sup> and that went on for quite a few years. And it wasn't only this plant, but all



larger plants around the whole West, you might say, including California, they were all working on the same thing, you know, trying to come up with something.

SS: What kind of improvement in time could you expect from these earlier dry kilns? How long would it take?

AS: In the drying time?

SS: Yes.

AS: Well, of course, when they used to hand stack lumber in the yard and it was air dried, then that lumber stayed out there for approximately a year. Well, then when they started dry kilning, well, a stack of lumber'd go into the dry kiln and it would probably be in there for anywhere from a week to two weeks. And then it was-- the amount of moisture that was removed from the lumber would vary so much, you know, from one board to another. But now-a-days I think the average load is about seventy-two hours. And when I say a load, that means-- these stacks of lumber are eight foot wide and they're about eight foot high-- approximately, whatever length the lumber is-- sixteen foot average. And they would put six of those loads in one kiln at a time and they would load the whole kiln at once, where the original dry kilns, they would take out one load today that was supposed to be dry at this end and put in one load of green; it was progressive, you see, and they would move 'em ahead about one unit each day, or each two days, or whatever it take . But now, they load the whole kiln and then they empty the whole kiln all at once.

SS: How do they deal with the unequal drying in the wood. They get the wood out, half of it's dry, half of it's wet or partly dry?

AS: Well, the lumber graders would detect that and then they'd probably have to restack it and redry it. Either that or else, if it was surface, then

they would have to let it air dry. And then, of course, the customers, they weren't so scientific in their knowledge of lumber, either, you know, that they would accept a lot of this partly dry lumber. But I've seen ever so much of it, you'd take say a twelve inch board of white pine, <sup>(End of Side B)</sup> you could see these wet spots in it here and there, you know. You know they loom right up. But nobody thought anything about it, 'cause they said ~~after~~ it sets out here for a few days it'll dry. But they won't put up with that now. Now a customer he buys his lumber now-- he specifies the percentage of moisture. And they have moisture meters now where you take in inspecting the lumber, this meter is <sup>a</sup> hand held tool with some prongs or probes sticking out here and all you do is just touch it on the board and it reads right on the dial the amount of moisture that's in there. You can just touch it here, or here, or there and it'll give you the reading on the amount of moisture that's in that board. So they're getting pretty scientific that way. And, of course, you take as far as lumber is concerned, that's regulated by the architects. Architects can be kind of a queer bunch, as far as that goes. You take molding, you take molding that's used around the house. They had an immense molding department <sup>down</sup> here, and if you would go into the <sup>v</sup> molding sheds, that is where they had their molding that wasn't sold stacked up, you would probably find hundreds of patterns. And as a rule their lumber salesmen that was out in the territory would try to sell molding of a certain pattern, but here is an architect that's drawing plans for a new home, or a new office building or whatever it <sup>has</sup> see, and he has some cockeyed wild dream that he hatched out and he's got to have this molding-- he draws it out here on his drawing board-- this is the molding he's got to have. Well, that molding, it might vary from <sup>o</sup> standard pattern by just a small fraction of an inch in one particular detail of this molding, but he wouldn't accept it-- the

standard thing, because he's got to have what he drew on this drawing-board, see. So what do they do down here-- the molding man has to make a new set of knives and that set of knives has to correspond with this molding that he drew. And, of course, there's a drawing that's sent in with the order. And this drawing is drawn to scale. And when he makes this set of knives he has to match that thing up-- all these little doodads on there, you know--to where it's absolutely right, because the lines <sup>of</sup> his drawing, they can't stick out from this pattern or can't be in from it or anything, <sup>else, it</sup> ~~but~~ has to be right on that. Well, he's probably ordered a thousand lineal feet or maybe five thousand lineal feet in that pattern. But in running it down there they would probably-- in order to get the <sup>v</sup>grade exact and all that, and specified lengths, too, you know, they would probably run twice that much. Well all this overrun goes into the shed. Well, then somebody has to try to sell that cockeyed pattern then to somebody else. And that's what you run into.

SS: I want to go back to where you were just a youngster, or young people working there, in the mill these early years. When you worked there from when you were just a young man, the first work that you did, what would you do with the savings, the money that you'd made from the--?

AS: Ordinarily a kid going to work, why his dad took his paycheck. And then he'd dole it out to the kid then, you know, a little each Saturday night or something like that, you know. Maybe he'd get fifty cents on Saturday night to go to town. But that's usually the way it went because up until-- ordinarily when a kid was at home it generally went into one pot. And, of course, if a kid got out on his own, or if he was still at home and fully matured, grown up, why then of course, he'd say, "Well, Mama, I'll give you so much a month-- give you eighteen dollars a month for room and board." And then, of course, the rest of it went into his

pocket. But, as far as the young kids were concerned, why, I think most all of 'em -- their parents took care of that part of it.

SS: Well, a kid might be fully mature in every way <sup>but</sup> he didn't show any independence.

AS: That's right.

SS: Do you think that the maturity, that you're talking about, at a young age was caused because the kid worked? It was the work that created his maturity?

AS: Well, the work and the environment. You take even in girls, you know, gosh, there was girls that were twelve-thirteen years old that some woman'd have a baby and so they'd hire this girl to come over and she'd have to do all the housework; wash and cook and make bread and everything because that woman had had a baby, see? And <sup>probably</sup> the girl was only twelve-thirteen years old. But that's the way they used to do, they didn't know any different.

SS: Were the kids treated as adults besides in the work that they did?

AS: No, no, not exactly, no. You take if a group of adults got together, socially, the kids wasn't included in that group at all. They, the kids, <sup>they</sup> had their own group, see. But 'course now, if they had a group picnic well then of course they were all there. The adults and the kids, too. But, the kids would have their games over here and the adults'd sit over here and drink beer or whatever they were doing. But, as far as the kid's thought, his line of thought or his line of action is concerned, I'd say he was just about as much adult as he ever would be. Now of course, all the kids didn't work that hard, it depended a whole lot on the financial standing of the family. There was a lot of 'em that still lallygagged around pretty much <sup>like</sup> they do now. But most of 'em worked because, every kid has got a lot of desires for personal things. He wants a new suit of clothes, or he wants a new pair of shoes or he wants

hat or he wants something. He wants to look as good as ~~the~~<sup>the</sup> other kid down there and all that. Well, in order to get it he'd probably have to get a job and earn some money to get it. You take now the average family that's got kids, why, they've at least got to buy 'em a bicycle by the time they're seven or eight years old!! And there's a lot of 'em that are buying 'em motorcycles now at seven or eight years old. And when they get to be ten or twelve <sup>years old,</sup> they've definitely got to have a motorcycle!! Well, of course, when I was growing up, in the particular area where I grew up, why, you'd probably find one kid in several hundred that had a bicycle, and he would be a pretty good sized kid. But he had a bicycle because his dad ~~had~~ probably worked in the bank or had a good job, or he was a lawyer or doctor or something else, you know. And he had the money and he liked his kid, so he bought him a bicycle. But we didn't have bicycles.

SS: Did you ~~feel~~, when you were a kid, that it was a big change in your life when you started to work?

AS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. There was a tremendous change because-- I think it's true with everybody-- because even though your dad took care of your money, you still had more money than you had before you went to work. And, of course, that would give you a little bit more freedom, because, you could go down and buy yourself a milkshake or a dish of ice cream where you couldn't before.

SS: What about the idea of self advancement, of getting <sup>ahead</sup> or the idea that young people had of where they were trying to go in life?

AS: That would depend on the individual and the initiative that the individual has, now I <sup>wouldn't</sup> want it to sound boastful, but I just went through the eighth grade in school, and that was the average for kids then. You take the number of kids that went to high school, ~~At~~ the time I went to

school, was, percentage wise, was a good deal less than those that go to college now. Most of them when they finished their eighth grade then <sup>they</sup> had their education and then went to work. But, in my case, Now I guess I was more or less born mechanically oriented, but I've always been interested in all phases of mechanics in mechanical as well as structural, and so I selfeducated myself to a big extent, because every time I had an opportunity to see something, that is in drawings or in the actual construction of it, why that'd stick by me, you know and I'd keep it, you know I'd kept it in my head. And, anyway I just naturally fell into the mechanical end of work, and so there was for several years that I done all the mechanical and structural drawings for the plant. In other words I was doing the engineering. And I could use a slide rule and all those things, and I only went through the eighth grade in school.

SS: Do you think that a lot of kids when they were starting to go to work in those days had high ideals about where they were going to go in life?

AS: There was a lot of 'em did. And I think the majority, their ideals more or less developed after they went to work as time would go by, and they'd have a chance to look around and see just what everything was all about. Maybe one of 'em <sup>he</sup> wanted to learn to be a draftsman or another one wanted to learn to be an engineer, another one wanted to be a steam engineer, and another one <sup>probably</sup> ~~thought~~ he wanted to be a farmer or a lumber grader or another one all he wanted to do was drive automobiles. You know they had a lot of different things that they wanted to do. And some of 'em would follow it up and some of 'em wouldn't.

SS: You know they talk about the rags-to-riches, I read about, it was a real strong idea that people had, that you could become a wealthy man if you applied yourself. Did that idea carry much weight, did they believe in getting wealthy?

AS: Well, I've never seen any of it in my lifetime, that is where we lived. I can't recall right off of any of 'em that started out poor and then become wealthy. You know, some of them got to where they made a real comfortable living, you know. But this Thomas Edison stuff, you know, that's something that's very far and few between, that isn't anything commonplace about anything like that, you know.

SS: What I'm wondering about for instance--

AS: This rags-to-riches<sup>theory</sup> that you're speaking of is-- I believe I told you something about what I knew about the Weyerhaeusers. The Old Man Weyerhaeuser. He come to this country and he had I believe six dollars when he landed in New York. And through his skill and manipulation he got to be a multimillionaire, I guess. But anyway, millions of dollars spread throughout his family. But the theory goes that the man started out with nothing and he become a millionaire and then the second generation, they carried it on and built it up still further. But then the third generation is a bunch of squanderers and they blew the whole thing. Now that's the theory of rags-to-riches. But that's true in some cases. Now you take the sugar heiress, you know, this Spreckles family and Huttons, you know the <sup>Woolworths</sup> five-and-ten and some of those that held very true. But, as far as rags-to-riches and back to rags again, some of those tried their best to go back to rags but their fortune was so big they couldn't make it, see? (Chuckles) You know ~~that~~ whenever you get a fortune so big that you could spend a million dollars a day and still make money, that's simply ridiculous. But <sup>that's</sup> in a very few cases that's what it was, see?

SS: Now like when you were young, did young people believe that there was a chance for them to become millionaires?

AS: Oh, I don't think-- where I grew up there wasn't any such thought in anybody's mind, you know. I think the average person was just thinking

about getting to the point where they could make a comfortable living and get some of the finer things in life. Not everything, but <sup>get</sup> some of it, and that is what their ambitions were. And I think that it's true right today, too.

SS: Do you think that in those days most people thought that materials things as the end of life was work or materials and goods, or more satisfaction out of what they did? I think now there is more of a cult, an idea that a person should find satisfaction in his work.

AS: Well, there is, but, I think they're in the minority, right now. I think the majority right now is trying to accumulate material things. Now you take this operation that's going on down here at Juliaetta, this Carla-- what's her name?

SS: Emery.

AS: Emery.

SS: School for Country Living.

AS: I think that's just one heck of a fine thing, right there. But, I think by the people that's living in that area and <sup>for</sup> a lot of areas outside, too, they're just classified as a bunch of hippies and they don't want anything to do with 'em. They don't want 'em to come into town and they don't want 'em to associate with 'em or anything else, <sup>be</sup> cause they're a bunch of kooks, see? Nevertheless though, whether or not all of these people are going to put all those things that they teach down there into practice, that's questionable, but it isn't going to hurt 'em <sup>a thing</sup> to learn a lot of these basic things in life. Because, after all, I think that the sooner that the whole world can get back to basics, I think the better off we're going to be. I don't mean to say that we got to go out here and dig stumps out by hand or have to go out here and butcher our own meat or anything like that. But, nevertheless the theory of the whole thing I think is good. And I hope that this woman and her group



that's working with her, I just hope that they make a big success of the whole thing.

SS: Well it seems to me for you yourself, though, you made money, made a living at the job you did, but at the same time, it seems like, you were doing work that you enjoyed.

AS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I did.

SS: Do you feel that you were a lucky one?

AS: Well, I think through my own efforts-- I don't give anybody any credit whatsoever of ever giving me anything. Everything I got I worked for it and I struggled for it and I worked hard for it. And, fact of the matter is, looking back on it I think that I was being used a whole lot too. But, nevertheless, I don't have any regrets because, as I say, we did make a living and of course, our goal wasn't sky high. We just wanted to be comfortable and that's what we were, but if you try to make some comparisons you go clear off the beam. When I was doing supervisory work where I had several men working under me and doing a lot of layout work along with it and all that, <sup>and</sup> I got up to where I got a dollar an hour-- I thought "I've got the whole world by the tail!" You know down at this plant right now, they're paying common labor, fellows that just go around sweeping up or something, five dollars and some cents an hour!! You can't make any comparison. And, another thing is, you take the way conditions are now, how are you going to build up any incentive? You can't build any incentive because they're making so darn much money there's no place for 'em to go. All they have to do is just go down there and put in eight hours, <sup>with</sup> every two hours they get a break for a smoke or lunch or whatever they want and payday comes, why, of course, Uncle Sam takes a big part of that payday-- But, we've got-- we really don't have any grandchildren-- we've got one grandson that's adopted. Our son married a

woman that had a boy and of course he adopted the boy <sup>so it's</sup> really ~~not~~  
our grandson. But he was working down here and he's one of these kids  
that he didn't care, he'd do anything. Tell him to drive lift ~~truck~~,  
"OK". Tell him to clean up over here, "OK". He'd do anything. He'd work  
nights, he'd work days, he'd work anytime. So, he was more or less on  
the extra board, but they kept him working steady because he'd do any-  
thing. But he really didn't have any incentive. I never could see where  
he had any incentive to try to work at one certain thing. So, consequent-  
ly he would probably work an eight hour shift and just before the shift  
was out, they'd come around and say, "Ted, how about, do you suppose you  
can work an extra shift, work tonight?" "Sure." He didn't care. So  
he'd go home and have a bite and come back and put in an extra shift.  
Well, then, of course, he'd get off at two-thirty in the morning, <sup>but</sup>  
he'd be back again at seven in the morning for his regular shift. And  
then, of course, the weekend come, why, they'd be some watchman, guard  
down there that couldn't come so they'd call up, "Ted, how about taking  
a shift on guard duty?" "Oh, OK, I'll be down." In one two week pay  
period here just a couple of months ago; they pay every two weeks. <sup>In that</sup> ~~^~~ One  
two week pay period he had earned over thirteen hundred dollars. Of  
course, he had about six hundred and something take home pay. The rest  
went to Uncle Sam. Now that's common labor. Now where you going to build  
up an incentive? You know, every day on television here on Channel Six,  
they have a program there from eleven-thirty until eleven fifty-five, Kal-  
eidscope, is what they called it, and they have a conglomerate of every-  
thing, discussions and interviews and everything. But there's one part  
of that program every day is where they read off these jobs that are av-  
ailable through the Washington State Job Bank, and everyday they're look-  
ing for skilled laborers, they want painters, they want stenographers,

they want bookkeepers, they want lab technicians and all kinds of things. And, you know, the average pay is two and a quarter to three and a quarter an hour!! And down here in the lumber business, your common labor is five dollars and some cents an hour!! And all them people that they're advertising for are all people with skills.

SS: Uh-huh. It's not as though every place is paying well, I know that, for a fact, it just depends on where you can manage to work. This isn't necessarily the average here. When you said that you were used, what do you mean? Were you thinking of piling lumber?

AS: No, no, no, I meant in compensation. I know that there -- I feel that there was a lot of... (End of Side C)  
My superior got full credit for it, and I didn't get any credit for it in particular. And I think that there's just a lot of-- just ever so many times, that the work that I <sup>actually</sup> performed that I should have drawn a higher scale of pay. But then that didn't fall into the category of customs in the industry, because if anything at all, why if there was some pay adjustment that they thought was due, probably give it to the other fellow. You know, maybe the superintendent got it; at least he got a pat on the back, and they'd have probably a dinner and tell about John Doe, the superintendent there, what he accomplished. Well, he didn't accomplish anything!! Somebody that was working under him that accomplished all these things, you know, but they didn't get any credit for it.

SS: What about the people that lived on Nob Hill here? The Brass? Were they-- How did they fit in the community? Was that really a separate group pretty much?

AS: Well, there wasn't-- not as a group. But they did more or less hang together. But they didn't really have anywhere near the social life that the common people had. The common people had a lot more fun, I think.

Socially. But I think I give you that company paper there, where <sup>this</sup> Laird's daughter was telling about her years here. I think she was correct in some of those things that she mentioned there and the idea that her mother kept her finger down on 'em and wouldn't let her and her sister watch the ball game, or they wouldn't let 'em do this or wouldn't let 'em do that. That was true, but that was because they were snobs, you know. Their mother, she was one of these women that she was perfectly willing to isolate herself from everybody just so as to impress people that she was the big shot's wife, see? In other words, just coop herself up in the house and probably look out the window, because, "I'm the manager's wife!" You know, how some people might feel. Where the common people, they were out here on the street visiting and going down to the town here and there, you know, they were living like people should live. But you take as far as the Brass <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ concerned, you know, they used to have, for a good many years there the milkman was a independent merchant, or milk merchant, he peddled his milk in these glass bottles and put it right on the doorstep, but when it come to paying for that milk that Brass up there was the hardest people in the world to get the money out of. And the same with the paperboy. The paper, that Spokesman Review, it cost seventy cents a month for a good many years, and you got it thirty days a month, that is, you got it every day; Christmas and every holiday and everything, you got a newspaper every day. And in the wintertime the paper kid'd have to slog through snow clear up to his hips because they didn't shovel their sidewalks off, and he'd bring the paper there every day, but when he come to collect for the paper, he'd probably have to go back a dozen times to get that seventy cents. <sup>where</sup>, you take the common people in town here, why they was happy to pay him every time he'd come.

SS: How do you explain that kind of difference?

- AS: That kind of difference was just because most of those people up there wasn't making as much money as they'd have people think they were, you see, and they were just living beyond their means. They didn't have seventy cents to pay him, that's all. And that's the reason they'd have him come back, they thought maybe they might get ahold of seventy cents someplace. But that was true with pretty near all of 'em up on the Hill up there.
- SS: The superintendent or the one or two big cheeses, they must have been making good money.
- AS: Oh, yeah, yeah. You take the manager and the assistant manager, I suppose they were up in the pretty high categories as far as pay is concerned. But then <sup>when it</sup> come to superintendents-- they had superintendents of manufacture and then they had superintendents of shipping and then they had a superintendent of power. And then, of course, each one of those were on a different pay scale undoubtedly. And, of course, they made good money in comparison with the people that was working under 'em. But they still didn't make the money that they should have been making to live the way they would like to impress the people that they were living, see?
- SS: Sounds like a question of class, you know. They felt they were the upper class, because of their position, or something like that.
- AS: Well, that's true. And I don't think that has changed any. I don't know, you could go back <sup>just</sup> as far back into history as you want to go and I think you'd find the same thing. There's always been a lot of class distinctions and there still is. There always will be, I imagine as long as we live under this form of government. 'Course, if you went to Russia or <sup>went</sup> to China well then, you wouldn't have that, because they're all the same, supposed
- SS: ~~Maybe~~, they are, I don't know.
- AS: Well, they are. You take the Premier of Russia, you know he's the main-spring of an awful big country and an awful big population.

AS: And getting to be a lot of industry, too. He probably makes four hundred dollars a month!! And that wouldn't even pay for the cigars that one of our executives gets, you know. You know, here, we pay our president two hundred thousand plus another half a million for expenses and so on, but what do we pay <sup>some of</sup> the heads of some of our corporations? They get twice as much as the president gets. And of course, they're undoubtedly, you might say, earn it. I don't know. But <sup>then</sup> there's nobody earns what they get, you know, that's an absolute fact. And you take the chairman of the board of some of these corporations, he'll spend half of his time touring around the world with his family and the other half of the time he spends playing golf, and he'll probably have a board meeting once every three months or six months or maybe once a year, and he presides over that board meeting. So what do they do when the board meeting sets -- they don't want to raise his salary 'cause they're paying him two hundred and fifty four thousand dollars a year, so what do they do? They vote him a big block of stock, because he's the one that earned this big profit and there all he'd done is played golf and traveled around!! Well then, the president of that company, he's pretty near as bad, so they vote him a big block of stock. (Chuckles) So we've got a good setup, you know!!

SS: Somebody told me that they used to have dances. The Brass used to have their own dances here occasionally. That was their affairs.

AS: I can't remember of any of 'em here. You know, I could be wrong in that. Say, for instance now that one of these daughters had a birthday or was going to put on a party and they'd get some music and they'd have a dance. But that really wasn't-- they <sup>wouldn't really</sup> didn't put on a dance just for the Brass, they didn't do that. 'Cause, you know, whenever they put on a dance here-- Now in this big brick building that burned here, this mercantile building, that housed the bank and all that-- well up over the bank they had

this big hall and it was quite an auditorium. Fact of the matter is, when they built the thing, you know, why, they built it for all purposes. They even had, what we called a nigger heaven, you know, where you could get cheaper seats by going upstairs there, and of course, that was blocked off here, but that hall, it had a real good floor and it was all varnished and waxed and everything, and the entire auditorium there was covered by one big canvas, and it was pulled up tight along the edges through eye hooks. And so, whenever they'd have a dance they would roll that up, you see, and <sup>then</sup> they had a real good dance floor. And this place, it had a huge stage and two dressing rooms, so they would have plays and sometimes there'd be traveling theatrical troupes that would come in, you know, and they'd put on a show in this hall. So that's where they held their public dances. But then, oh, after being used for twenty-five years or so, why, they just-- ~~this~~ canvas covering just went to pot and it wasn't taken care of and the hall was bieng used for more purposes, and so then, of course, they just took it off and it just had the wood floor and it got a little <sup>bit</sup> rough then for dancing, but they still had dances in there occasionally. They'd put on lots of borax and wax, or whatever they use, and they seemed to have a good time.

SS: You were telling me a little bit about Laird before, once when I was here and it sounds that he was more or less like his wife, so far as his attitude toward the people.

AS: Yeah, yeah. You take Old Bill Deary, was the first general manager, he's the one that-- the mainspring in building this plant-- he was a squat, heavy built man. Typical logger; typical lumberjack. And he talked like a lumberjack and he acted like one and he'd meet some guy on the street, he'd say, "By God, Bill, how are you doing?" or something like that you know. But after he died and Laird got to be the manager, why, of course,

people used to see him, he'd go back and forth from his home down to his office, you know. But that's the only time they'd ever get a glimpse of him, and as far as anybody going up to his office to talk to him about something, well, that was just almost unheard of, you know. You had to have a lot of guts in order to ask for an appointment to talk to him, you know. But that was just the difference in <sup>the</sup> two different people.

SS: And you couldn't just go and knock on the door and ask the secretary to see him?

AS: Oh, no, no. Weeel, you could, but then who in the world had guts enough to do it? You had to have something that was bothering you pretty bad, something that couldn't be taken care of in any other way.

SS: He was that forbidding?

AS: Well, I don't know as he ever asked people to be that way, but then that's the impression that he formed and that's just the way people were. And of course, -- I've seen it any number of times, you know, he would probably walk from his office and up to the bank, because he was always <sup>the</sup> head of the bank, too, you know, and maybe on the street he had to pass the store, but maybe on the street there'd be some guy, he might be from Italy he might be from Sweden, or he might be from some other foreign country, but when he met Laird he tipped his hat to the bugger, you know!! That's the only man in town they ever done that to, but they would do it, and he would nod, he just thought that was great stuff, you know, these characters tipping their hat to him!! And it was , you know, only just a hoot-and-holler from his office down to the mill, but he only crossed that railroad track and went down on that plant, oh, I'd say about once a year. And that'd be some special occasion where he had-- And, gosh, when word got around that Laird was coming down to the plant why everybody knew there was something up, you know. But that was just the kind of character he



was, you know.

SS: He had that little contact with the---?

AS: Oh, he didn't have any contact at all with the working people, absolutely zero. And you take as far as his superintendents were concerned, why, they had very little contact with them, because their contact back and forth was mostly in paper correspondence, just interplant, you know. He was a banker, educated man when he come here. He didn't know any more about lumber than a hog knows about Sunday!! And Bill Deary, he was a man that knew logs and he knew lumbering and he was the one that was put in here as the manager, but then they hired Laird, and he was going to look after the financial end of it. So Deary, he was manager here for about eight years and he died. That is, about nine years, he started here in 1904 and he died in 1913.

SS: And then it was all Laird's.

AS: It was all Laird after that. And then Humiston, he was-- from the beginning he looked after the building of the houses and putting up the buildings and so on. I don't know as he ever had any engineering qualifications, but, nevertheless, that's the job he had. Well, then when Laird got to be manager, well then they made Humiston the assistant manager. But as assistant manager he didn't have a thing to do with the plant. His duties was mostly timberholdings and physical parts of the company. But Humiston didn't have anything to do with the plant at all.

SS: What was the story you told me about Laird's talking to ~~the men~~ before an election?

AS: Oh, yeah. It was just before election and the news around the country was, <sup>that it was</sup> very doubtful how the election was going to go--

SS: Which one was it?

AS: . Herbert Hoover. It was when Hoover was elected. And, of course, Hoover was a Republican, and of course, that's what Laird was. So he sent word down to the plant there that he wanted everybody-- he wanted to talk to everybody there during the noonhour. Now, you see, he wouldn't donate any company time to talk to these men, but he had to do it on their time. So, of course, everybody didn't show up, there was some of them that, you know, went home for their lunch and to heck with it!! But then, the big majority of the employees, if they went home, they hurried right back, or most of 'em carried their lunches and they'd hurry up and eat and got over there to this building. This was in one of those big sheds. They had a big sorting table running down through the middle of this shed. And the sorting table was up about six feet above the floor level and this building was three hundred feet long, and it was about a hundred feet wide. So he got up on this sorting table, so he was about six feet above everybody, so that <sup>WAY</sup> even if you were down at the far end of the building you could still see him, you see. And he got up there and reminded everybody that the election was so many days away. And he says, "I can tell you one thing, now, this is a free country and it's a free election, everybody is given the right to vote as he sees fit." "But," he says, "I can tell you one thing sure," he said, -- I forget who was running against Hoover--

SS: I think it was Smith.

AS: Oh, Al Smith. "If he's elected, this plant will be shut down. Everyone of you will be out of a job the next day!" He said, "That's a promise, that isn't a threat," he said, "that's <sup>JUST</sup> a promise!" And, of course, I don't know how much bearing that had on the election, but I know that there's a lot of 'em here that voted for Hoover, for fear of that threat. And that was the same thing that carried on throughout the United States.

That was part of their election strategy, was to threaten people all over.

SS: This was very rare, that he spoke to the whole plant?

AS: Oh, yeah. I think this was probably the first and only time. Because he didn't have anything in common with the people down there. You know, ordinarily if he had any message that he wanted to convey to the people down there, he would send it down there in the form of a memo to the superintendent and he would pass it on to the foreman of the department and so on, see?

SS: Did he have friends, Laird?

AS: No. Uh-huh. Not the way we classify it.

SS: I thought maybe among the management types, among the superintendents--

AS: I know, but then, you know, as far as his having a social life is concerned-- don't get me wrong, he had a social life, but not locally. He maintained a suite of rooms in the Davenport Hotel, <sup>that is</sup> paid for by the year, and he kept his clothes and everything else there, and, boy, the old guy he had a lot of fun!! And the same way in San Francisco and Chicago and New York and all over. He would spend most of his time traveling and in every one of these cities he would keep <sup>maintain</sup> a suite of rooms in a big hotel. And the old guy he had his fun alright enough, but then, not locally. He was-- You know this Max Williamson I was telling you about a while ago that was a prime mover on this baseball and the gymnasium? He was a feller that-- everybody liked Max, he didn't have an enemy in the world. He was such a outgoing, openhearted sort of a guy. If he just barely knew you and then <sup>say</sup> happened to see you ten years later, boy, you were just a long lost friend and all that!! That was the kind of a character he was. Well, it was about 1921, he'd bought himself an automobile; first one he ever had. And of course, them days pretty near all the cars were touring cars, had a canvas top that would fold back, you know, would lay down. And he

went up to Spokane one day and, by golly, you know he was about ready to go home and there was a bakery up there that every time he'd go up to Spokane he used to like to go into this particular bakery and buy some of these hard rolls and take home, because there was just he and his mother that lived up there together. His mother was a widow, and he was single. But, anyway, he was just getting ready to go home so he went in and he bought a couple dozen of these hard rolls, and he got down on the street and he run into a couple of guys that he knew real well, and they insisted, by golly, that he come up<sup>to the room</sup> and have a drink. Well, Max wasn't a drinking man; I never knew him to ever drink. But anyway, he got tight and these three characters, they got down on the street and they got to playing baseball with these hard rolls. (Chuckles) And so a cop come along and he didn't pinch 'em, but he just told 'em to hold it down because it was getting up into the night, you see, and he told 'em to quiet down and kind of take it easy. But anyway, somehow or other the word of that got back down here and you know, Old Man Laird, he just come within a fraction of an inch of canning-- putting the can to Old Max over that!! 'Cause he didn't want anything like that to reflect on any of their upper class employees down here. 'Course Max, he was in the sales department, you see, and so, boy, he just about-- he called him into his office and, boy, he read the riot act to him and he just come within a fraction of tying the can to him, just because he had a few drinks and felt good and was having fun throwing them biscuits around!! (Laughter) (End of Side D)

SS: When Laird went, was he gone a good part of the year from here?

AS: He'd be gone, <sup>for</sup> you know, <sup>for</sup> two weeks at a time or a week at a time, and sometimes longer. But I can never remember that he took his family with him. I shouldn't be telling you some of these things on that thing there! In 1920, early in the spring, in fact, in February, I'd been working over

on the Coast and I'd worked for a time in automobile industry over there in Seattle. So I come over here and I went to work in the garage down here selling cars. And at that time, the company owned half interest in the garage and they sold half interest to the fellow that run it. Well, being as I worked in there, and being as I wore fairly decent clothes most of the time, why, I used to drive Laird's car for him once in a while. It was very seldom that he drove himself and he'd always have a driver and he had a Hudson touring car. And they got the word here at the office you know, that Mr. Laird was coming home, he'd been back in the East on some business for the company, and I was supposed to meet him at the Davenport Hotel at a certain hour, on a certain day. So that day come, I was supposed to meet him at, I think at ten o'clock in the morning at the Davenport Hotel. So I was up there a little before ten, so I sat down in the lobby and I thought maybe he was in the lobby; I didn't see him, so I thought he'd probably come through the lobby here, and I waited and waited and so I finally went over and I had him paged. So they went around hollering his name all over the hotel and couldn't find him. So I waited longer and so about twelve-thirty I went into the coffee shop to have lunch. To go from the lobby into the coffee shop <sup>in the Davenport Hotel</sup> you had to go through a big flower arbor; they sold flowers, but they had these plants growing in there and everything else, just beautiful place, and you had to zig and zag to get through there, you know. So I went into the coffee shop for my lunch and it was about one o'clock I guess when I come out of the coffee shop, and I just started through this flower department there going back into the lobby <sup>when</sup> and I come around a corner and I run face-to-face with the Old Man Laird and here he had a chick on his arm, you know!! Just a fine looking dame. Boy, she was really swinging onto him, and he was just getting ready to pay for a great big bouquet of roses, about so big, you know!

Well, here he had this bunch of folding money in his hand, just ready to pay for it, so I just spoke to him, so that he'd know that I was there. And I didn't try to embarrass him or nothing, but he got flusterated when he seen me and he didn't know what to do with this money, you know, and he took it from one hand to the other and finally he tucked it into his pocket up here, you know. And he told me, he said, "You go into the lobby and wait," he says, "I'll be there in fifteen minutes." So I went in there and sat for two hours and a half before he showed up! The old bugger, he had his fun, alright!!

SS: You know, I've heard that, well not the same type of thing, but I've heard that Bill Deary-- that that was probably Bill Deary's biggest problem, was that he was a woman chaser.

AS: It wasn't any problem, but then it wasn't any secret, either. That's the difference between the two. One was all secret, you see. One could really have his fun where no <sup>body could</sup> ~~one~~ see him, see, but when he come home he was just strict as the devil, then the other one, he had his fun right here and his whole family did too. His whole family was the same way. I wouldn't say about his wife, but then he had, I think it was three daughters, and boy, they were all wilder than---!! But they didn't pull any punches. You take the Bill Deary family, why, they had all the young people from in town was up at their house and having parties and having fun and they were down here and they were horsing around all over. <sup>That was</sup> Bill Deary's house, <sup>just</sup> that was <sup>up</sup> running over with kids all the time from all over town. It didn't make any difference who you were or how you were dressed or anything else <sup>up</sup> at Bill Deary's house. Boy, you didn't get into old Laird's house, I'll tell you that! The only way you ever got in there was if you had to go in and fix something.

SS: You drove him around occasionally? You took him where he wanted to go?

AS: Oh, yeah. You know it wasn't steady, but then it was just---

SS: Did he treat you just like a chauffeur?

AS: Oh, no, no. He was real decent. I've got nothing to say about that at all because-- but then he didn't-- well, he didn't break a leg to try to be on the same level with you, because, everybody knew who he was and treated him accordingly, see? I know one time, fact of the matter is, I believe it was the last time I drove him, he probably didn't want me after that. But they was going down in this Clearwater country and look over a bunch of timber. 'Course that was all virgin timber, most of it down in that Clearwater country. And so I was supposed to pick him up at the office, and the office was what's now the townhall, you know, coming in- to town, and there's a little bit of slope there and I was supposed to pick him up there at seven o'clock in the morning. And then, let's see who else was it-- anyway, there was somebody else <sup>there</sup> that I was supposed to pick up with him, I forget who it was. It was one of the stockholders from the East, that's who it was, I remember now. Then we was supposed to go up here to Helmer, this side of Bovill and pick up Old Bill Helmer, that's what the village was named after, and he was a company cruiser. And then we cut off there at Helmer and went down through the Potlatch Canyon and up over the ridges, you know, and was going to go to Orofino. But, as I went down here at the office to pick him up I put the car in neutral and <sup>I</sup> set the emergency brake and, by gosh, the car just moved right along!! And, of course, cars them days had the long stick here for a shift from the floor and the emergency brake was down there, too, <sup>big,</sup> ~~A~~ long lever. And so I had to sit there and hold the car with my foot, I put it in gear and then held it with the foot brake and I set there until he come out. And when he come out I told him about this emergency brake wouldn't hold. Well, he always kept his car in the garage downtown there, they kept his

car and they was supposed to see to it that it was full of gas and oil and clean and everything else all the time. "Well," he said, "Art," he said, "I'll tell you, that's my fault. The last time I drove the car," he said, "I noticed that," he says, "I forgot to tell Felix", Felix Devilton was the manager of the garage, "about it." "But," he said, "when we come back, we'll have it fixed." <sup>So</sup> ~~But~~ knowing that the emergency brake wasn't any good-- 'course I didn't get down and try to fix it-- he had a good service brake. <sup>A foot break.</sup> They didn't have the hydraulic brakes like they got now or anything; power brakes, just footpower. But we made it fine and dandy up the line to Helmer and then went down through Park, you know down the canyon and going up the other side of the canyon, why, 'course it was just narrow, dirt, roads, you know. Just wide enough for one rig to drive on, but the road was rough, you know, in places and rocky and so on. Now the brakes worked fine going down into the canyon, but then going up the other side, didn't have any occasion to use a brake. And so, we got up on top and the road was just winding around through the timber, and we come around a sharp bend in the road and here was a doggone tree laying right across the road. And it was a tree <sup>that</sup> must have been two feet or better in diameter. Well, I slammed on the brake and pulled up on the emergency brake automatically, but it wouldn't do no good, the car just kept right on agoing, it never made any attempt to slow down at all. Well, the way the cars was built them days, the frame used to extend out in front of the radiator for a foot and a half or so, and that's where the springs would fasten on, you know your front springs was always out there a foot and a half or so in front of the radiator. Well, this frame, you know, hit this tree and the car went up in the air and the front wheels went over the tree and when it stopped one hind wheel was behind the tree and the other hind wheel was on top of the tree, because the tree was a



little bit slanting, you know. Well, first thing that come to my mind was; was anybody hurt? The top on this car, you know it had these wooden bows that supported the top, and of course they stuck down there an inch and a half or something below this top, and of course, these two characters, Laird and this stockholder, they were in the back seat, and Old Bill Helmer and I was in the front seat. They flew up and Old Laird he cracked his nose, the bridge of his nose on the bow up there as to where he was bleeding a little bit, <sup>there</sup> but that was all the damage that was done there. Well, here we was, a hundred miles from no where and the car was on top of this tree, but it just happened that Bill Helmer, he'd never went anywhere without a cruise's axe. If he went in to sit down to eat dinner, why, he'd have his cruiser's axe with him, and it had a little handle on it about that long. So he started in and he started chopping on that tree and he cut that tree off on both sides of the car. While he was doing that I was looking the car over to see what damage was done. The frame that extended out in front there, it was buckled under some, you know, and the front wheels were cocked around, so I crawled underneath the car to see what was wrong, and here these brake rods, they were coupled together with a turnbuckle, that you could adjust your brake pedal by adjusting that turnbuckle. Well, evidently these locknuts weren't locked tight enough, it had a locknut on both ends of the turnbuckle, you know, but they wasn't locked tight enough, so in driving up over this <sup>out of this</sup> canyon and so on, why this thing jiggled and jiggled and loosened up, and that's the reason I didn't have any brakes. Well, I screwed that back together again. And we pried and jacked and lifted and grunted and got the car up over that piece of log, to roll that piece of log out of the way. Well, then we got in, and then we-- of course we'd lost two or three hours there getting this car off'n that log. So then we started up and got in

the car, and just a little ways ahead of us was another turn to the left and by golly, you couldn't get the car around that turn, see, because the steering mechanism was all goofed up on it. So I'd get part way around and then I'd have to back up. But that's the way I'd have to do on every left turn. It didn't do too bad turning to the right. Well, then from on top of the mountain and going down into Ahsahka, that was a long grade, I'll tell you, that was seven miles, or something like that. It was a long grade. And there was only two or three places in that entire road there where there was a turnout where you could pass anybody. They had a hole dug in the side of the hill where you could pull in if you heard somebody coming. But we made it down there, but it was pitch dark before we got into Ahsahka. We was way up on this canyon rim, you know, and you could look way down in the canyon and see a few little lights glimmering down in there!! Well, you know, these fellers had never been over that road-- Old Helmer had, you know-- but Laird hadn't and neither had this other guy. And if they'd had any idea, if it had been daylight when we went down I know they'd awalked the whole darned distance, because that was a bad road, and the way the car was goofed up, you know!! But, anyway, we finally made it into Orofino that night. It was eight-thirty, nine o'clock, nine-thirty or <sup>something</sup> ~~so~~ time we got into Orofino. And by that time I was so darned tired that I didn't care whether school kept or not! So we went to the restaurant and had our supper.

SS: You didn't care whether what kept?

AS: School kept or not!!

SS: School Kept?

AS: That's just a saying.

SS: What does that mean?

AS: You don't care which way it goes, one way or the other.

SS: School?

AS: That's just a hillbilly saying you know, that he didn't care whether school kept or not. See, you could go to school or not. <sup>ANYWAY</sup> And we had rooms at the hotel there in Orofino. 'Course, we was supposed to, the trip was planned to be gone for a week or two, you know, traveling-- cruising all over ~~there~~ looking timber over, you see. But then, the next morning, why instead of me going on that cruise, why I had to take the car to Spokane and get it fixed. And then they rented a car to go on their journey, see? So going from Orofino I come across the hill to Kendrick and then from Kendrick to Troy. Well, going from Orofino up over the hill and then down into Kendrick, it was just like this, and then going down, why you could see your own tail light, you know, as you went around some of these hairpin turns, you know, and then you could look right down-- it was just like looking down a chimney. And here was this car all goofed up, and every turn I'd come to the left, I'd have to make maybe two or three times-- back up two or three times to get around the turn. And so I finally made it back in one day from Orofino back to Potlatch. And then the next morning I was going to go from here to Spokane. Well, Harley Decker, he was just getting ready to marry Laird's daughter and this Harley Decker was a heck of a nice fella-- so he found out I was going to Spokane, so he wanted to know if he could ride up with me, because he had to go up and buy himself some clothes for to get married in. So I says, "Fine." I was glad to have him come. Well, I drove that car up to Spokane and there I had to stay at the Davenport Hotel for a week while they was fixing that car. It was sure tough duty!! (Chuckles)

SS: When you were out fixing that car on the road off of that log, I imagine that Laird and the stockholder just looked on and watched you and--

AS: Oh, they just went over to the side-- oh, they were both concerned, but

there wasn't a thing-- you know neither one of 'em knew a thing about work. And of course, we got a pry pole under it, we'd tell 'em to kind of lean on it, give us a little leverage. They helped a little bit, but they wasn't too much help. Any anyway, when this tree went down it broke a telephone line down-- fell down across a telephone line--and so I cut off a chunk of that telephone wire and I had to jack the front end of the car up, because the shackles were broke, see. And I got a chunk of wood and put in between the frame and the axle so's to keep the fenders off'n the tires and then had to wire that all in there with some of this wire; telephone wire. It was sure a haywire job, I'll tell you!!

SS: What about Deary? I've heard him called the selfmade man. That he was a man that really got a long ways on--

AS: Jawbone.

SS: Yeah.

AS: I think that's true, although there wasn't any of us, you know the ordinary people here that knew him before he come here. Although I guess maybe there was some of the older fellows that was in the logging end of it that knew him from back in the Midwest, you know. But from what we always heard, was that he never had any particular education, only just the common education. But the reason that he got up in his position was that-- just the drive that he had. He had a tremendous amount of drive to him. I think if a mountain was in his way he'd move that mountain!! He was just that kind of a guy. And he was built that way, too. He was built just like a little stud horse.

SS: He was Irish, right?

AS: Well, that's what we all figured. Of course, I don't know as anybody that I knew of asked him what particular nationality he come from, but we all took him to be-- and I think that Deary, I think the name of Deary, I

think has a pretty strong bearing on Ireland.

SS: I've heard that he was a pretty tough guy; had to be, as far as willing to fight.

AS: Well, he never had to resort to anything like that after he come out to this part of the country, he might have had that in his earlier days, on his way up. But, undoubtedly, he probably had a pretty rough row to hoe on his way up to the top. I wouldn't say that he done anything wrong or anything like that, but in that particular era, the way you got up there was just through hard work and then sometimes your fists would help a little.

SS: Do you think when he was out here that he really-- did he have much to do with the men, as far as the work-a-day man?

AS: No, I wouldn't think so. Although, if he met a person anyplace, you know, he'd speak. But, you know, after he got out here his job kept him pretty well in the office, although you take at the time <sup>that</sup> he was the manager, the office was down at the plant. They didn't build this office uptown here until 1916, and he died in 1913. So, down at the plant they had a big, long clapboard building, you know, with the twelve inch boards going up and down and then one-by-four batten on the cracks, and the inside was whitewashed and the outside was-- didn't have nothing on it, just boards. And that was their office. And of course, he had a little private cubicle in this office for himself, and then the rest of it was space for bookkeepers and everything else. 'Course those days all the bookkeepers would work at a desk, you know, that stood up about this high, and they all had to stand up and do their bookwork.

SS: Oh, really?

AS: Yeah.

SS: Just a little table they stood at?

AS: Oh, it had a sloping top on it, and it was generally a pretty big table. But if you were a bookkeeper, you stood up all day long. And all the bookkeeping was done with pen and ink. And they used to have some pretty fancy scribes, <sup>those days</sup> a boy, some of that scroll work was really something to look at. The penmanship was really fancy.

SS: I've heard that Bill Deary didn't know much at all about business; figures and that sort of thing.

AS: That's the reason they brought Laird in. He was a man that was educated for that end of it.

SS: Did Bill Deary know-- did he set the lumbering policies-- I mean was that all his--?

AS: No. No. It was a big corporation and of course, they had sales departments in Minneapolis and you know, all their sales went through the sales department. And, of course, they had their salesmen that traveled all over the country in different territories and selling their lumber. And whatever orders come in they would try to produce that. But their way of making lumber, their way of grading lumber and selling and all that, was so far <sup>(End of Side E)</sup> strictly, you might say, strictly a white pine, although they did cut a lot of fir and larch and <sup>they</sup> made red fir and larch dimension and then of course, they cut an awful lot of vertical grain larch for flooring. And that was pretty near like a hardwood floor and that was all run into four inch tongue and groove flooring. But the bulk of their lumber was white pine. And they'd cut a lot of yellow pine, too. But, it was, you might say, <sup>a</sup> white pine mill. Well, they would cut----

A big percentage of their output was one-by-twelve boards. And of course, they were dried in the open-- air dried-- and they were brought in and run through the planer. Well, in air drying there's a lot of these boards that the tension ~~in~~ the board would make the board cup a

little bit; the tension then in the planer, because you've got the bottom rolls and the top rolls, you know that feeds the lumber through, they're set-- you know - if the board is, say, one inch thick well these rolls are set down to about half inch apart and heavy springs on 'em so that when the board come in this top roller would jump up a little bit and keep enough pressure on it. Well, if there was a little cup in that board, why, then it would probably develop a little crack or split in the end. It would probably be split for two feet or three feet or four feet on the end of this board. Well, ordinarily, if that board wasn't split that board would probably be a number one common. 'Course now-a-days they've got all kinds of other names for their lumber but then it used to be graded as number one, two or three common; number four boards. And then there was D select and C select lumber. That was just select boards with no knots, no blemishes in it. Well, this one-by-twelve board that had this crack in <sup>the end</sup> -- well, just because it had a crack there, instead of being a number one board, it was graded down to a number three board and it was sold that way. Well, the purchaser of that board, he could rip that board and get a lot of select trim for the inside of his house. Well, they found out a good many years after that when they got some of their college educated people in the industry, they got to looking at it as being hard money, and they said, "Well, now a C select board one-by-four, four inches wide and twelve feet long is worth so much in money, so many cents or whatever it might be. Where this one-by-twelve board sixteen feet long in a number three common with this crack in it, it's worth so many cents, so it's worth less money than this four inch board twelve feet long is worth. So what do they do? They started in ripping and trimming, ripping and trimming, and all this stuff, this natural resource going to somebody that could use it, there's two-thirds of that board probably would wind up in the

hog and just chop it up for hog fuel and go to the boilers and burn it up for fuel, see? You get what I mean?

SS: Yes.

AS: You see, if you were to buy that board, you could cut off here at the end of this crack, you could cut it off so you'd have a twelve inch board, say, maybe ten feet long. And then this other <sup>one</sup> ~~two~~ feet here, you could rip that by hand and get maybe a six inch board out of it and a four inch board, and use that for trim someplace around a window or around a door, or something, see? But after they started getting smart, then you didn't get that "goody", see? 'Cause all this other-- the part that wasn't profitable went to the hog. It <sup>took</sup> a long time for me to get that in my head, to see the sense in it and I don't right to this day, I don't see the sense in it. But nevertheless, that's the way the lumber business is run.

SS: Do you think that in the early days of Potlatch that there was much of a return on their investment? I think about the tremendous amount of money that had to go into this just to create a town here for people to live in. And the good deal that you told me that the people got pretty much, now. Now, with all that huge outlay (capital) and the lack of some of these refined methods of getting every nickle out of the board, did they do all that well?

AS: Well, take now for quite a few years there in the beginning, as I said awhile ago, <sup>there</sup> they probably manufactured in the neighborhood of a million feet a day, and probably the average price that they received for the lumber was somewhere around twenty-five to thirty dollars a thousand, and I think the thing that brought the average up that high was all this pattern <sup>stock</sup> -- I told you about that before-- three and four inches thick and that had to be clear, white pine. And in these foundries



they used that for making patterns for foundries, see? And so that brought a pretty high price. And then they got a good price for match stock, and match stock was four inch thick white pine, and of course, that had to be very few knots in that, because that was all cut up in little blocks and split for matches, you see, and that brought a pretty good price. Well, then of course, their method of logging would be that they would make logs up-- they wouldn't quit at the first branches but then they didn't take the tops, you know, they got down to ten or twelve inches in diameter, then they left that in the woods, see? So they got a lot of select lumber, that is, lumber without any knots in it, clear, and that brought a good price. But, the average lumber that they sold was probably fifteen to eighteen dollars a thousand. So this is a far cry from what it is now, when you go to paying two hundred and fifty to three hundred, four hundred dollars a thousand for it, you know! And, of course, the reason that these so-called lumber barons become millionaires, you know in the early days, was because they got so doggone much timber for nothing, or practically for nothing, you know. See, the railroads-- the government granted the railroads every other section. And you take the Burlington Northern and the Milwaukee, they still own an awful lot of timber right to this day, after selling timber for sixty or seventy years, they still own a lot of it, so you can see how much timber land <sup>that</sup> they were given for nothing.

SS: And Weyerhaeuser, too, when they came out here.

AS: Well, they bought-- they supposedly bought timber, but then, gosh, when you say bought-- you know you could give some guy ten dollars and you bought it, didn't you? And, prices today, that same tract of timber would be worth <sup>up</sup> probably in the millions. So you see, they could hire a lot of people and still sell their lumber at what we think <sup>now</sup> is a

very low figure, and still make millions of dollars. But, of course, what we consider now as a low figure wasn't by any means a low figure at that time.

SS: You told me that Old Man Weyerhaeuser actually stopped and talked to you?

AS: You bet he did.

SS: Do you remember how that happened?

AS: Well, as I say, the stockholders used to come in about once a year and they had a special train. They would have ten or eleven great big main-line railroad cars, sleepers and diners, you know, all staffed with a bunch of niggers all dressed in white, and it was quite a show for the natives here when that special train come in. And of course, they would-- this train-- all the stockholders would ride this train.

SS: They'd come all the way from the East on it?

AS: Yeah. They'd come from Chicago. It think it would start at Chicago. And of course, these stockholders lived in different parts of the United States, but they would congregate there and get on and then they'd come through, and of course, wherever they had a holding they would stop. But, of course, this one here was the big deal for the Weyerhaeusers; this was the biggest thing they had, the showpiece of the whole Weyerhaeuser organization. Well, when they'd get here-- of course now, they didn't just jump off the train and come right on-- it took a little while to get there. They'd probably have a meeting together with some of the local officials. But then, they always had to make a tour of the plant and they wanted to see everything, you know. And of course, there was a lot of these stockholders that had their wives with 'em. It was a family affair. But, this whole thing was just a big bore to the old Man Weyerhaeuser. It used to bore him to death, these people. They were bankers and they were millionaires, and they were all kinds of people. Although

he, in some respects fit in the same category, but by nature he didn't, you know. And so, they all come like a herd of sheep into this department, looked this all over and then they'd go into another department, then sometimes they'd <sup>break</sup> take off in different little groups, you know and they'd go here and there and after while they'd get back together. But the Old Man Weyerhaeuser every time he'd come he'd take off by himself. He didn't go with that bunch at all. And, you know, he wanted to see the plant, but he also wanted to talk to the people. And <sup>whenever</sup> any department that he come in that wasn't too noisy, anyplace where he could talk and be heard, he used to like to stop and talk. He didn't care, he could talk with one of these Italians or anybody else just as easy as anybody. And, that is, if they'd talk to him he'd talk to them. And he was a pretty nice old fellow. And I was working down in the lumber shed down there stacking up lumber, this old guy come in the door, they had big sliding doors on both ends of the alley there, and they had two sets of these narrow gauge railroad tracks down in each shed, and you'd have a load of lumber on there taking it down and stacking it in different places wherever the grade mark called for, and you always had a couple of sawhorses there where you'd lay lumber down on when you was grading it. This old guy come in there and looked around and <sup>kind of</sup> looked at the lumber and he said "Hello," he said, "my name is Weyerhaeuser." And so it kind of took a minute or two for me to soak in <sup>to</sup> who he was, although I knew that the train was in, and I knew that this group was here. And so, he just started visiting just casually, just like anybody else would, you know.

SS: Just with you alone?

AS: Yeah. And so, 'course when he was visiting he just set down on this sawhorse and set there and looked around and talked. "Well," he said, "sit down." So I set down. Well, he visited there for, oh, I don't

know, five-ten minutes or so and then he got up and wandered off some-  
place else, I guess.

SS: What did he talk to you about?

AS: Oh, just nothing in particular, just about the lumber and the job, how  
I liked my job. I can't remember what he talked about, but just, you  
know, <sup>just</sup> talk. But you take all the rest of those characters in that whole  
trainload, I don't know of any of 'em that even nodded to anybody, they  
had to come and see what they owned, you know!!

SS: Was he interesting in the way ~~you~~ talked? (Clock chimes loudly)

AS: I don't think so, I don't think he looked at it that way. He was just  
friendly, that was all. He didn't care what I thought about Weyerhaeuser's  
or about anything else, I don't think it even entered his mind. Now,  
you take his sons, you were talking about rags-to-riches a while ago, this  
Old Man Weyerhaeuser's sons, he didn't baby them one bit, I'll tell you,  
I really didn't know 'em <sup>I'd seen 'em</sup> several times on these stockholders tours, but  
I worked with a man down here, Old Charlie Parker was his name, and he  
had worked for the Weyerhaeusers in one of their mills back in the Mid-  
west. And, you take at the time <sup>that</sup> this Parker was working here, well then,  
this Old Man Weyerhaeuser's son, he was president of the company at that  
time, but when Parker worked in that mill back there, this fellow that  
was president of the company, he was a millwright in the sawmill, because  
the Old Man Weyerhaeuser, his sons they had to learn this work from the  
beginning, right from the bottom up, and they worked in the grease and  
they repaired the machinery and they done everything; they didn't pull  
no punches with them. But ~~when~~ when the third generation come around,  
they got to be bankers-- they'd go to Harvard or they'd go to Yale or  
somewhere back there, you know, and got an education where the Old Man  
Weyerhaeuser's sons, they didn't have any of that formal education, they

had just, I think, if I'm not badly mistaken, I think they just had a common school education and then they went to work in the mills.

SS: Were they successful, the sons?

AS: Oh, you bet they were! They were part of the machinery that built the thing up to the empire that it finally developed. Of course it's spread out now in such a conglomerate that you take Potlatch Forests-- Potlatch Corporation as they call it now-- started out as Potlatch Lumber Company. Well, then you take in the early '30's, well in the latter part of the '20's, they started building that mill in Lewiston, and so one of the young Weyerhaeusers, he was <sup>the</sup> head of that plant down there, but from all the information ~~that~~ we could get was, he got that in such a financial bind down there that they was about to loose the whole thing. And then Rutledge Mill in Coeur d'Alene, that was strictly a Potlatch Corporation layout. But then, of course, each outfit was run as an individual corporation. Well it was out of timber. They had the mill but they was out of timber. Well, Potlatch had the mill; Potlatch had the timber. Lewiston had all this Clearwater timber, they had lots of timber. So the story goes that we got at least, whether it's true or not, I wouldn't say that it's true, but <sup>ANYWAY</sup> the <sup>INFORMATION</sup> ~~impression~~ that we got was that in order to save that plant at Lewiston, they incorporated all three mills into one outfit; Potlatch, Lewiston and Coeur d'Alene and made it Potlatch Forests. But now then that they've changed the name to Potlatch Corporation, but since that time they've had half a dozen presidents of the company and chairmen of the board, none of them have ever been a Weyerhaeuser, they've all been men that were brought in from other industry, you know, from the chemical industry or the oil industry or some other industry has been brought in as the head. But they was brought in on account of their management ability. So now Potlatch Corporation, they own several plants

in California, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Minnesota-- they own pretty near the whole state of Arkansas, so they're scattered over the entire United States, see? But it's still classified as a Weyerhaeuser operation, see? But Weyerhaeuser was the parent corporation, but since then, you know, you've got Potlatch Forests and <sup>then you get</sup> over on the Coast you've got Weyerhaeuser at Longview and over at Snoqualamie Falls. But, nevertheless these stockholders, they all own stock in each one or maybe just one. It's just a big financial deal now.

SS: Do you think that that's-- as you look back at it --retrospect you know-- hindsight, but does it seem like the way of that kind of a development of a corporation with the stockholders and all that is the best way to distribute-- to use the resources, like of the timber or forests? Is that the only way?

AS: Well, all I can say is, most of us figure that the United States is the foremost and the outstanding <sup>COUNTRY</sup> in the world in-- financially and mechanically and productionwise and everything else. Don't we figure that way, most of us? Well, how did that get that way? It got that way just because a man like Old Man Weyerhaeuser come to this country with six dollars in his pocket and through-- start out with a partnership and then branched out into selling stock-- they need a million dollars, so what did they do? They sell <sup>a bunch of</sup> some stock. well then, here's some guy that owns an oil well or maybe he's got a flour mill, but he's got a hundred thousand dollars that he puts into this, buys stock, see? So he's a big stockholder, well then, another one he's got fifty thousand dollars, another one's got two hundred thousand. But anyway, that's the way the kettle boils!! You take in some of these other countries around the world, it's a family affair, it isn't a corporate affair, see? And you take if there's a family that's got a foundry to make castings, and then of course,

as the sons grow up they are brought into here to learn this business, but it's management end of it. All these people in the village or in the town where this foundry is, not a single soul owns any stock in that, because that's a closed deal, that's just a family deal. It's different in the United States. In the United States you can go out here and start up a garage to repair automobiles, but you've got to have ten thousand dollars <sup>here</sup> for equipment and for a lease on this building. So you come around and you say, "By golly, <sup>Art,</sup> I need ten thousand dollars to get going." Well, I know that you've got the ability to run the thing, so I've got a thousand dollars I'll loan you and somebody else'll loan you a thousand dollars, so you get going on that thing. That's the way they do it in this country.

SS: That's real clear to me, but it's when you get up to the big stockholders and you describe these people coming in from Chicago who don't know a thing about lumbering, a lot of them don't care at all about the town or really about the people or anything, and they're the ones, because the mill makes money, but the people who work in it, you know the average people in Potlatch, they're probably not going to be stockholders-- they don't have the chance to become stockholders.

AS: No. Without those people back there, without their money, we wouldn't have a job here. Their money created jobs. They don't know anything about the lumber industry, lumber production, the people here know a lot about lumber production and how to make lumber, and how to load it and ship it and that sort of thing. But those people back there, they know how to sell it and how to get the money out of it. And even those that don't even know that, without their money this thing here could never have been built. Couldn't have been possible. Weyerhaeusers didn't have the money. If it was Weyerhaeusers themselves, they couldn't have built

this plant. They had to have money from other people to help them build this plant. And that's just the way the whole country is run. You know you can take a look at the financial section of the paper every day and here's General Motors stock is selling for so many dollars and cents a share and here's Ford and Chrysler and here's Weyerhaeuser and here's this chemical outfit and that chemical outfit and they're all listed.. Here's a water power company and power and light and all that, they're all listed there. Well, you got a little money in the poke and you think, "Well, maybe I can make a little money on it so you buy some of that stock. Well, if you've got some stock in one of those companies or corporations, then you're entitled to sit at their stockholders meeting, because you're a stockholder. You might only have five hundred dollars in <sup>there</sup>, but still, when they have stockholders' meeting, why then of course, when it comes to vote ---

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END OF TAPE OF THIRD INTERVIEW