

LEO GUILFOY

Interviewed by:

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Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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I. Index

LEO GUILFOY

Bovill; b. 1886

scaler and treating plant operator at cedar pole yard

1.5 hours

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Leo Guilfooy

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with Sam Schragger
December 10, 1973

II. Transcript

Leo Guilfooy has a sharp eye for the humor in logging life. During his years with the cedar pole yard at Bovill he remembered the funny side of everyday incidents, and got a reputation as a joker himself. These stories tell about such things as Bill Deary meeting a countess at a Weyerhaeuser ball, a camp cook getting caught in a root cellar with a bear, an old lumberjack teasing a schoolmarm, Pat Malone being wakened by a sleepwalker, and Leo Guilfooy playing a nice trick on some hungry boy scouts.

LEO GUILFOY: This old Bill Deary, he was superintendent, he didn't have much of an education. But he was smart. I think I told you that one, about the Weyerhaeusers used to come out here, y'know, the Weyerhaeusers was some people, see. Their headquarters was in St. Paul. And they'd come out here, and they'd get acquainted with the men, call them by their first name. Well, when a bunch of the young Weyerhaeusers come out here, and old Bill Deary, he was superintendent of the whole outfit--oh they had quite a few camps, the Potlatch did, around here, around Bovill and all around that country. So he showed them a good time out in the logging camps, and they said, "Well, Bill, now believe me, when you come back, we'll get you back in St. Paul, and we'll show you a good time."

Well they got him cornered up there in St. Paul at a great big ball. And they got him sidetracked in the reception room with a countess. They got him in there to introduce him to the countess. He looked her up and down and he says, "So you're a countess!"

"Yes," she said, "I'm a countess."

"Boy," he says, "you're the first countess I ever saw," but geez you're some chicken!" (Laughs.) And they were peeking in, listening in on the door, y'know. (Laughs.)

They asked the countess afterwards, "What did you think of that old lumberjack?"

"Ohhh," she said, "I thought he was wonderful. There's one thing about him: he tells you what he thinks." (Laughs.)

SAM SCHRAGER: Is that the kind of a guy that Bill Deary was? He'd tell you

what he thought?

L G: Oh yeah, you bet, yeah. There was this train down there from Bovill down to Palouse. All the towns had a college name. And then people'd go in there and they had stump ranches y'know, and raise chickens, and all that. And one of the depot agents was going to see Bill Deary, he was in the headquarters there at Bovill. And he said, "Some of these families are kicking because their eggs are getting broken," he said, "and they want to be paid for them."

"Well," Bill says, "pay 'em," he said, "sure, pay 'em," he said. "The chickens are scratching their asses everyday to lay more. What do we care?" (Laughs.) And they give him a secretary, girl secretary? "All right," Bill said, the letter come in, you know? "All right, letter," he said to her. "Here, take this down. 'I have your letter of the fourteenth before me, and pretty soon it'll be behind me.'" (Laughs.) That's the way he was.

SAM: He's the man that bought up a lot of that timber for them to start with.

L G: Yeh, him and old Bill Helmer blew in here in the early days. They cruised that timber and bought it. From all around there, Elk River and all around that country. And they'd go out, old Bill would go out in the morning with a compass man and be gone all day, and maybe it'd snow. And then they'd sit in that snow and build a great big fire, and the heat would hit the snow, and it'd keep 'em warm. And they'd be gone all day, y'know.

SAM: This is Bill Helmer?

L G: Yeah. He was quite a cruiser. I think I told you about them, when he had a guy with him, a compass man with him, his name is Eddie Erickson. And they were about five miles from town, Eddie was quite a drinking guy. And he walked into town, y'know, and Bill stayed out in the woods there, sleep right on the floor. And the bacon they stuck under the mattress, so the bear wouldn't get it. And late at night someone was shoving under the mattress,

y'know, and Bill was sleeping there in the bed thought it was Eddie Erickson coming back drunk. He said, "Get in bed, you drunken sonofabitch," and he had ahold of the bear! (Laughs.) He thought he had Eddie Erickson. That put the bear in bed with him.

SAM: You told me he wasn't scared of bears or the big game.

L G: No. Well y'know, I was along with him there, and I had the compass, y'know. I had to go in a straight line, so that he could work that side from me, y'know, where he was at. And there was a bear with two cubs. The tree was a little sloping, and one of the cubs was up a little ways. And I stopped, and Bill says, "What's the matter with ya?"

"Well," I says, "I'm not goin' by that thing."

"Aw hell," he said, "give me the compass." And he come over and got it from me, y'know. And he walked to it. Keep on a-goin', talking to it, and he says, "Lady, if you don't get them cubs out of the way, there's gonna be something happen. The Potlatch'll shoot 'em." (Laughs.) Talking to the bears there right as he went by. 'Course, I got up there quite aways, and then I took the compass off him, then he went back where he belonged, sizing those trees up, see. And he was a good cruiser. You bet. Wonderful cruiser.

SAM: Do you think that the animals knew that...

L G: Now I was trying to tell you here about, I saw an old cedar maker. The olld cedar makers go out in the woods, and they'd get a strip, and the guy would show 'em what's their strip--all the timber on there, you'd make that. And this old guy told me. I went out to check some of the poles, and he told me, he says, "I can put my hand on the deer."

"Ahh, you can't do that." I stuck around there quite awhile, a couple hours there, and watched him. And he did touch it. It shook all over when he touched it. Yeah. Well, I don't know whether the deer...Well y'know there's some horses could trust ya and won't trust others.

SAM: That's right.

L G: ...And a dog likes ya and he hates somebody else, for no reason whatsoever. They have a second sight on people. Look at the fish, look at these salmon, steelhead. They go out tiny, that big. They leave the river and go down miles down the river, out in the ocean for four years. And they come back to where they were spawned. Now, nobody ever had any word what they do that for. But lately they're thinking they smell the water. Oh boy, that salmon, that's something. They go up all these dams. Now they come in, go up the Columbia, y'know, at Portland, and come on up here, and come up all these little creeks... Now they picked one up before it spawned and trucked it right across land, and put it back in the ocean. And that sonofagun--they have it marked--and that little sonofagun will come back, right back, go back up the same river... Go back down the river into the ocean, then down around and back up the mouth of the Columbia and up. Look at all the creeks and streams that flows into that Columbia, and all these little tributaries of the Columbia that flows in. Well they know just where they're going. And the poor damn things, y'know, they spawn, and the buck salmon goes with them. And when they spawn, then the buck goes ahead of them, and he covers the eggs with his spawn, see. And then they both go away and die! They don't get back to the ocean, they die. Right away! Set down the river. They're dead all along the river.

SAM: It's incredible.

L G: It is. Now they talk about pigeons and things like that finding their way, but that salmon is it. And you know, in their absence--a little tiny fish that big--and in their absence, a lot of those creek mouths and beds have changed! Probably they dam, in the four years, they dam one right up! How do they know? Now they claim now, they think they smell the water. Before they just said instinct and all that. And all the way up fisherman are trying to get 'em, all the way up the river. And they generally pick where they

spawn, it's a small place not very deep, and lots of loose gravel on it. And the male fish makes a hole with the tail and puts the sperm in there, and the male goes above her, and when he puts his sperm right in there it covers that hole. For every thousand that's hatched from the egg, there's only 10% of 'em ever survive to get back to the ocean. Look at all the dams all the way down!

SAM: It's incredible.

L G: Look at all the commerical fisherman all the way down. I got a kid here, the grandson here, he fishes for salmon right along, and steelhead. Yes it is, it's incredible, the return of the salmon. Gee, that's something that they can't figure out.

SAM: Do you think that Bill Helmer just had a real special instinct for working in the woods?

L G: Well, they get that way, yeah. They get that way. Yeah. They get that way, y'know, and the trees is his...And a white pine tree, in those days, the white pine trees was it. I used to go out and cut all my wood, y'know, but I cut tamarack and red fir, that was the best firewood. In those days everything was free. But you couldn't touch white pine. You could touch everything else, but not white pine.

SAM: It was too valuable?

L G: Yeah, it was the valuable, it was then. But 'course now it's sky high. Now cedar's sky high, because they make this beautiful cedar siding, y'know. I was talking to a sawmiller down in Clarkston not long ago. He said, "You were telling your dad that cedar wasn't near the price of white pine." He said, "I just want to show ya." And cedar now is a little above white pine, because this paneling they've got today, beautiful cedar paneling for all over the house. Years ago white pine was the lumber in the house. They'd make your cabinets, and all that, built-in, out of white pine. It's a light,

it's a nice colored wood, and easy to work. Tamarack is almost semi-hard-wood.

SAM: Was there much white pine disease when you were in the woods then, **or** has it just gotten much, much worse?

L G: It's getting much, much worse. You know, let's say 1920, then they realized how bad it was getting. So far they don't know how to curtail it. They thought some of these gooseberry bushes and things like that, which is right-- the pollen from them would go to the white tree and back, and then back to the white pine. And then they start in. They call it blister rust. They don't plant white pine anymore, because they can't control it. They can't control the disease. It just came from Europe to Canada, and then down here.

SAM: It hit the East coast and Maine first...

L G: They call it, well I think they've always called it white pine blister. It came to Canada and then up across Canada, and then came down this way. By that time when it got here in '20, '21, most of all the white pine, good virgin white pine that was in Maine, that was mostly all cut, see. I believe the forestry, I think has quit planting the white pine. Now there was some German, he was up here at a place called Pierce, up at Headquarters, and he brought a certain kind of bug from Germany, and oh they thought they had it. But it didn't work out. This bug would kill the white pine blister, but it didn't work out so good.

SAM: I remember the story that you told me about Bill Helmer and the cook. Would you tell me that one again?

L G: (Chuckles:) Well, I got it in there, yeah (pointing at his copy of The Trees Grew Tall). Well anyhow, Bill was a guy, he was 100% Potlatch. You ask him, he kept everything secret, see. "Well," he'd say, "do you want to go out?"

"Yeh, I want to go out with you. How long will you be out?"

"Ohhh..."

"Which way are we going?"

"We're going north, south." That's all see.

"How long will we be out?"

"Ohh, a week or so, maybe." Well, anyhow, he started out,--I wasn't with him then--he started out, he took about eight men. And he was going to run around a bunch of timber, and he had the men to blaze trails, so that you could go round. And he knew of an old homesteader's place that would just suit him to camp. The homesteader was gone. And so he told them which way he was going. And they got two wagons loaded with groceries, great big horses, y'know, loaded with groceries. A guy named Frank Mallory loaded 'em, I'll tell you a joke Frank played on him after that. And of course he said, "Bill how long are ya going?"

"Aw," Bill would tell him, "oh, maybe three or four days, a week." (Well, I'll tell ya this other story first, before I tell you the one I was gonna tell ya.) Well, Frank'd load up, y'know, and hell, he'd be gone only a couple of days, and he'd have enough grub there for a week, longer than that. So Frank got mad at him, and boy after that, one time he said, "Bill, how long are we going?"

"Oh, we'll be gone about, oh, a week or two." Well, Frank loaded up enough for a month. Got out there, and he was only there three days! (Laughs.) He had to haul all this stuff back, y'know. And they fed good, see. There was nothing they couldn't order. And they fed good.

Well anyhow this time, about that...There was an old Dutchman, and he was a good camp cook, wonderful. Bill always tried to get him. Well, this time Bill had hired him and about eight men to go out, about seven or eight men. Well, when he got out to this camp, he set the men all morning working on it, fixing everything up for the cook. And tables, fixing them all up.

They brought a nice big stove with them. And he said, "Now Dutch," he said, "I've done everything I can for ya. If you want me, I'll leave you a man here." He said, "We got all your wood cut, and everything else, and we got all groceries in that roothouse over there," good size roothouse.

Well Dutch says, "No," he says, "when will you be back?"

"Well," he said, "we'll be back by six o'clock."

"Well," Dutch said, "everything here will be ready." And he was a good cook, and he had everything to cook with. Well when they got through out there they come in, all tired out, y'know. Some of the men rushed to the kitchen. And they come back and said, "Bill, the stove ain't been lit." He said, "There's something wrong." Said, "Dutch isn't there."

Well, Bill told them, "Well now, scatter out and track him. See if you can track him. Now, this might be serious." So they got tracking all around. Well, two went over to the roothouse. And pretty soon when they got to it, "Hwweeey!" Dutch was hollering to beat hell. "There's a bear in here! There's a bear in here!" (Laughs.)

Those old lumberjacks are funny too. "Well Jesus Christ Dutch, what do you want to take a bear in there with ya for?" (Laughs.)

"I didn't take him in here. He was in here when I came in!" And so they went and told Bill he was in there with the bear. Bill said, "What the hell is a Dutchman doing in there with a bear?" (Laughs.) He spotted a tree there, he knew the door opened in, see. He'd been round there before. So he got them to this little dead cedar snag, it was a big long pole, y'know. "And now," he said, "we'll push that out and let the bear out."

Well, they got it there at the place, and the bear got his front part out, but not his hind part, his hips. "Grrrrr," he was tearing up like (pawing with his hands), a lumberjack said, "Hey Dutch, let go of his tail so he can get out!" (Laughs.) And they couldn't push the door any more,

because the bear was stronger than they were. And they hollered, "Let go of him."

"I'm not ahold of his tail, I'm in the corner way over here, I'm not ahold of his tail, I'm away from him!" Now he'd been in there about four hours I guess, with that bear. And he couldn't go forward 'cause the bear guarded the door, he wanted to get out.

Well, he told them, he took two of the men out, he said, "You take double bitted ax apiece and stand right there. Now that bear comes out, he's gonna jump us. So you know what to do when he starts out after us." And so they pushed it, y'know, some more. The bear got out.

And then they kidded, said, "Hey Dutch, where's his tail? He ain't got a tail on him." (Laughs.) "Where's his tail, Dutch?" (Laughs.) And Dutch got out, he's going home. A long ways over to Elk River.

"Oh," Bill said, "now wait a minute, Dutch. You're not going home," he said. "Not your fault," he said. And he says, "I'll stop these guys kidding ya about pulling the tail off the bear." And he went back, and Bill sent all the men over there to the kitchen to help him fix things up, y'know. And everything was wonderful from then on. After that, old Dutch, when he opened the door, he looked to see whether a bear in there. (Laughs.) He told Bill, he said, "If he's in there, he's going to stay in there because I'm not gonna go in with him" (laughing). And they stayed out there, oh I don't know, a couple of weeks maybe.

Boy, he could travel in the woods, holy moses. You see the way he dressed there with a compass in his hand?* Boy, could he travel in the woods--great big hat, and he'd dodge under this brush, y'know. This time I was out with him, y'know, and God, it was getting dark, y'know. "By God, Bill," I says, "we're lost." And he was little bit humorous once in awhile. We were lost and gee, we were going through dense brush when it got dark.

And we both came up into a clearing. And he looked over, and he said, "You'll be not lost. There's the moon." (Laughs.) There's the moon, we're not lost.

Now, I've been with him sometimes when he's looking for a corner, maybe 20 years ago that it had been established. They'd line for a witness tree, and then chop notches in the trees around it. "By golly," he said, "it should be right..." it's 20 years or more. "It should be around here somewhere," and "help me look." Well I wasn't much good at looking for it. "My God," he said. He looked at that tree, and there wasn't a blemish on it that I could see. Took his ax, and he chopped it out, and there it was. 'Cause it covered it over, see, the growth'd covered it over. And then he found where the corner was. That corner was established, and they used to use them old corners.

SAM: He'd remembered from when he'd been there before.

L G: Yeh. He remembered 20 years ago, longer than that. He remembered being there 20 years ago. Probably that same day it'd been 15 or 20 corners. But he remembered right there. He said there was a small white fir, and it was a big white fir then, grown up in 20 years.

SAM: I suppose if he hadn't been a timber cruiser maybe 20, 30 years before, he could have been a trail blazer or a trapper.

L G: Oh yeah, sure. Well he wasn't a trapper, he worked around timber all his life.

SAM: I wonder if he ever got lost.

L G: No. But his brother did, and that was my wife's dad. And his brother was better than he was. Well, of course this story I'm going to tell you now wouldn't mean anything with Latah County. But anyhow, her dad, his name was John Helmer. He was a iron man, y'know, he was one of the five iron men of Minnesota. A miner, and he was cruiser, and everything else with it. And he was gonna look for some gold. And he took a geologist, that is, a university

geologist--wasn't a field man, but he knew all about geology, y'know, minerals and stuff like that. And it was right in the middle of July, hot, and he took him up to some lakes up in Canada. And they had two canoes, one that him and his geologist was sitting in, and a great big sonofagun trailing it behind, with the grub and all that stuff in it. So the geologist was an office man and he'd never paddled a canoe, y'know. And John had pulled that canoe all the way up. And he come to a point and now he told the geologist, he said, "Now I'm going to investigate, look around here, and see what I can find." Well he was gone quite a bit, long time. The geologist got worried, and he pulled out to the other side of the lake. He left the big canoe, and he pulled out with the little canoe other side of the lake. And then got scared, and he didn't go back the next day. Well John, he knew he was lost. He waited quite awhile, and he couldn't figure out what the guy had done. Then he started, he knew that about 20 or 30 miles from there, there was two lakes came together. And there was a portage between the two lakes. You know what a portage is, where they drag the canoe over, where one lake pours into the other? And he said, "I'll get right there and wait, and catch somebody portaging down." Well he made that all right, he had nothing to eat, only mushrooms. And he made that place there, and he was just about gone. It took him quite a few days to get through the brush. And he was just about gone.

And there was a guy, his name was Jack Harkness, he was a trapper, and he was coming in for his six months grub stake? And he heard an animal there. Well, the wind was blowing on the wrong side, and Harkness come down on this side of the lake--otherwise he'd have been on that side, on his portage up above the lake. And he heard something in the brush when he was coming down that side because the wind was blowing that way, and he thought it was an animal. So he pulled the canoe up ashore and got his rifle out there.

And there was old John, and he was eaten up by black flies. So he got him into this little canoe, and he had some flour with him, and he shot a couple of birds and made soup with his flour, and fed him just a little bit, y'know. And he made three portages with him into this big main lake? And in the meantime this Bill here, right here from Bovill, and the other brother same as he was, down here in Oregon there--Baker, Oregon, you know where that is? All right, in Baker, Oregon--they got together, and they flew right back there.

SAM: To look for him?

L G: To Duluth, they flew back to Duluth, and got all ready to go on expedition to hunt for him. And the Northwest Mounties--they were in Canada then, see--and the Northwest Mounties helped them. And this one from Baker, he got Indians, a couple of Indians, and dogs, and a canoe, and he went up by water. And Bill, the Northwest Mounties flew him up there. They had no hydroplanes, y'know, those days, that landed on the lake. And in the meantime, this trapper bringing John down. There was an island in the middle of this lake. And this guy from Baker was going up that way, and the Indian said, "Oh, no, that's just Harkness coming around the island this way," with John. 'Course he was laying down flat in the canoe. "Oh," they said, "no, don't, you don't have to stop and see him, because he comes down about this time for his grub, to buy his grub. Well Harkness didn't know who they was. And they passed each other, they didn't pass by--one was just going the edge of the island, and he was coming around this side of the island. And he kept on, and he made a couple of more portages down there.

And there was a little mining shack, a young doctor there. And they got him in to this young doctor, and the young doctor savvied right away. He said, "We won't feed him, we'll just barely break him in." And he got him standing on his feet, and by that time the Northwest Mounties had brought

old Bill back. And then the other guy brought the Indians and the dogs back. And I forget now, Bill give this Jack Harkness, I think it was six or eight hundred dollars. And the other one from Baker, he gave him \$600. And that trapper said, "My God," he said, "that's the best trapping I ever had in my life." (Laughs.) And the young doctor told him, he said, "You done wonderful, just feeding him easy." He'd shoot a bird, y'know, and boil it, and use a little flour for soup.

But anyhow, they got him to a port in Canada, Fort William in Canada. And he knew so many of them oldtimers around there, they celebrated, and by God, they killed him, celebrating. Here they fed him up, y'know, and gee, he ate so much, and he got pneumonia and died. (Chuckles.) This young doctor, he told them what to feed him. He was just out of school. He told the trapper, "By god you done fine," he'd hauled him in good shape. He'd just shoot some kind of a bird, y'know, and boil it, and make soup with the flour.

SAM: So what ever happened to this geologist, did he get back all right himself?

L G: Yeah, he got back home all right. Of course they bawled the hell out of him. It wasn't his fault, he wasn't that kind of man.

SAM: Crazy.

L G: Yeah. That was Bill's brother John, Betty's father. He was quite a man. He had four, five kids go to school at one time, college. She went to Lawrence College in Appleton, Wisconsin. It's a wonderful college. She majored in the violin. That's a thing, water under the bridge now. Okay now, I'm just taking you away from...

SAM: That's okay, that's a good story.

L G: Yeah, but then that wouldn't be nothing to do with Latah County.

SAM: No. But still, it's Bill's brother.

L G: Yeah. A lot of these oldtimers, when I was down to Orofino, old Finlanders

around there, they all knew him. Said he came into the bank there one day and sold some of his claims, mining claims. He walked out with a quarter of a million dollars. A quarter of a million dollars those days was a lot of money today. But he had trouble with his wife. But they had four or five going to college at the same time. That's quite an expense.

SAM: Um-hm. It sure as heck is.

L G: Well now we'll get down to...I wish I had more of these...

(End of Side A)

Here, I'll give you an idea. All right. We had a guy in there, I can't think of his name now. He was what we call a carwhacker. Now I'll tell you what a carwhacker is. All right. They ship lots of poles and lots of timber, see. Well he got to examine the loads, see whether they were all right, see if they would make it. If you loaded a load of poles, he'd examine that the load was loaded and see that the clearance was all right. F'rinstance with an overhang like that, here's your flatcar, there are bunks across there and these big long poles, y'know, they'd have to stick right over the other car, see. 'Cause the flat car would only be about 40 feet long, 45. Well it'd be down this way and there'd be a bunk across there, and they'd stick probably out eight or nine feet. Well you have to timber them up good, y'know, and see that you had clearance when they swung around curves, see that the pole wasn't sticking a way out that way.

SAM: They called him a cowwhacker?

L G: A car.

SAM: A carwhacker.

L G: Flat car, yeah. Then when a passenger train'd come, he'd go along there and hit the wheels with a hammer. They don't do it anymore. And if they rang, sometimes there'd be a cracked wheel. They used them right in these

big cities, you'd see a passenger train'd pull in, and this guy'd go and hit the wheels with his hammer right along the train, both sides. And if they didn't ring they were cracked, and right there and then they'd take that section out and put a new one in. 'Course I don't think they do it anymore, no. Well anyhow, he drank a little, but he got to be a boy scout leader, not leader, but the guy that...You probably know more than I do.

SAM: Well, troupe, scoutmaster.

L G: That's it, scoutmaster, he got to be scoutmaster, and he was wonderful with them. Well I used to help them. There was one big outfit, lumber company. Old Jimmy Sullivan, I told Jimmy, I said, "Now you're leaving these cars out here," and I said, "you won't fix them. What's the matter with donating them? Let the boy scouts use them." Nice big dining rooms on them, y'know, and plenty of room and all that. Well, they'd say, "Okay." Well I'd get 'em, and I'd tell the scoutmaster, "Now you'll have that for camping." Oh, they had a wonderful time. And buddy they were a tough bunch. Oh boy, they were a tough bunch.

And this time, I told ya about this one, where we fixed up this old logging camp up in the woods? We got the dining room up there, and we fixed it all up. We took the boy scouts out, and we kept them away from where they could eat for quite awhile. And we got 'em in a sled and took 'em waaay out and back. We got the big team from the Potlatch, and the kids was all in this big hay, there was hay on the bottom. And god they were kicking about being hungry, and took a long time, y'know. And turned around and on the way back, I said, "Now listen, just suppose, look at that shack there. All in darkness and wilderness there," y'know. I said, "Now just suppose some guy'd come out there and rang the triangle bell and hollered 'Come and get it!'"

"Oh rrrrrghrrrrghrrrrgh, come and get it. We're starving to death!"

He said, "It's going to take about five hours to get back to town. And we've got nothing to eat, and you wouldn't bring anything with you. What's the matter with you?"

Well I was working up to this. And when we got right to this place, well there was a word I hollered, I forget what it was. And they heard it. And pretty soon--they had gasoline lamps--and it was all lit up there, and a cook came out with a white hat on, and he rung the triangle there, "Come and get it!" And those kids, their eyes popped out! You could knock their eyes off with a stick. And they looked at that. "Well," I said, "what the hell's the matter with you kids? You're dreaming!" (Laughs.) And boy they had a great big feed, oyster stew and everything else on the table. Yeah, right on the table there, y'know. Oh, you coulda died.

SAM: You kept them on their toes.

L G: Oh yeah, kept them. Before that we kept them away from eating. We said we were going to eat over there before we leave town. An old lumberjack driver, I told him, y'know, he said, "I'll fix them." He said, "I'll go way around out on the other side of town." Come right out in the brush, and (chuckles) nothing to eat, y'know. Oh boy, when they saw that, they never forgot that. Some of those kids live their life today, and they never forgot that.

SAM: When you say they were pretty tough, what do you mean they were a pretty tough bunch?

L G: Well, y'know, they'd never been trained like regular boy scouts. They would do anything, y'know. They'd always been on their own in the woods. Shoot and everything else. They wasn't trained, but good shots and all that. They'd shoot anything they seen. They didn't live up to the law very good.

Yeah. Then coming back there (from Camp Grizzly), wanting to throw old Marvin out because he threw up on the bedding. "Stop at the creek and we'll throw him in the creek!" (Chuckles.) The creek was deep! "Here, throw him in the creek, no you got to!" All together, stuck together, "Throw him in the creek." (And Marvin's sick up here now in a rest home.) And gonna throw him in the creek. Well when she (Leo's wife) stopped, I could see there was something wrong.

And she said, "You'll have to take this bunch, I can't handle them."

I said, "I got a pretty good bunch here, and you're having trouble with them." Now I said, "But stop and wait for me." Well I took this other bunch, y'know, and gee, I bawled the hell out of them. And when they got to this guy, The State of Mainer we called him. Oh he was a great big guy, he had a hand that was as big as an arm, you know. I told him, I says. "I'm having trouble with these kids, and you are the sheriff, the deputy sheriff."

"Okay," he said. And he come up there. "Where are they?"

Well, I said, "What are you gonna do with them, sheriff?"

"Well," he said, "I've got a place that's dug down in the ground." He said, "It's deep enough they can't climb out of it." And he said, "I can keep 'em there about a week, and throw them a little bread and something once in awhile."

Oh boy, "We'll be good, we'll be good!" (Laughs.) "We'll be good." They was good the rest of the way. Then when we got to town the women come out, y'know.

"How was the boy?"

"Ohhh," I said, "they were wonderful." (Chuckles.)

SAM: That was the same trip with the bears?

L G: Yeah, the damned idiots. They'd captured two cubs, and they told me. They said one of them got away--the mother come and got one of them. I said, "By

god, you crazy bastards." I said, "It's a wonder she didn't take you instead of the cub." They were living in an old tent. Here's that grizzly sorting out his cubs and taking one of them. Oh I called them all the nuts I could think of.

SAM: I'd think they'd know better than that coming from woods country.

L G: No, that's why they were so tough. They were gonna bring one of them home. (Chuckles.) Yeah. There used to be a lot of cubs picked up in the woods.

SAM: Oh?

L G: Yeah. There was one not so very long ago picked up. A couple of wood cutters dropped one across the momma bear, see, and the next time they went back, the little cub was crying in the tree, see. So they brought him into town. They give him to a guy that run a poultry yard up here. And this Gene, my grandson, he was just about five or six. And this little girl, her name was Olson, she was a little bit older. And she had a little apron on, and she had a couple cookies in the pocket. And I said, "No," I said, "I'm watching this kid now," I said, I forget her first name. "No he's not gonna go up with you to feed the bear," cub, y'see, well grown too. I said, "He's not gonna go up there." And she got mad and pushed him on his own little tricycle, pushed him way over. And she went up there, and she went out and I guess the bear got mad at her because she wasn't feeding him enough out of her pocket. And he suddenly grabbed her and he scalped her from there right down. The hair--took the hair and everything, he scalped her right there with his claws. I was asking Gene the other day, I said, "How is she?" "Well," he said, "she's in college." The head, after she was scalped, got leathery, like leather. It wasn't white, you know. And they couldn't do a thing with her until she grew up, her head grew up, see. And she went that way, and now I guess they fixed her with a wig and everything else. She looks pretty good

now.

SAM: This was just a cub, huh?

L G: Well, full grown cub. And everybody in those families down there carried a gun.

SAM: Is this families in Bovill you mean?

L G: Yeah, quite a few of them. And there was a family named Hall's, they all came from Kentucky. They were all out and lived in the woods in Kentucky. And they come, in this family they had a girl and a boy, and the old man and a woman. They logged and sold timber and all that. And the CC's, you've heard of the CC's? OK, they dug out a bear with four cubs, and as a rule two is all they have. But this one had four. And they raised them, and they took them down and had them in a store here for awhile. And then when they got ready to leave, they couldn't take 'em with 'em, and they give this Hall's man two of the cubs, two of these cubs. And they put them in a little shack, it wasn't a trailer, a little shack. And they kept 'em in that little shack, and them bears'd tear the core up, woooooo, even the windowsills and everything. And they called them after George Washington, George and Martha is what they called them.

Well, one day Ed was coming to town. He had 'em in a truck, panels on the side on the truck. And they'd climb up the side and then they'd hang out, cccchh, they'd hang by the collar. Then they'd climb back in and go back in. Well when they were passing by my place...My kid was just about eight years old, they were playing baseball. And it was Martha--not George, Martha hung on. Getting pretty big now. And slammed, y'know, and broke--the collar broke. And he didn't see it, he kept on going to town. And she saw these kids playing baseball, and she rambled right over. And the kids shot right over. And I had the door already open for 'em, y'know, to come in. And they had a collie dog, and boy he was the last one (chuckles). He was yelping though,

the bear was catching up with him. And I got my kids in there, and they had a couple of kids with them. I got 'em in the door and I closed the door. And there was one guy, he had infantile paralysis, and boy you ought to see him go! God, his name was Evans--geez, he flew right up the steps. And he couldn't hardly walk. And the bear come and stayed around my place, and he went up a tree in the back yard.

SAM: The bear?

L G: Yeh. I told the kids, "Now you stay in there." So I found out where Ed was, he was downtown, and I called him up, and he come up there. And I said, "What are ya gonna do?"

"Well," he said, "will you help me?"

I said, "It all depends." Well, she was up the tree, Martha. And he hit her on the feet, telling her to come down, so he could put a collar on her. Geeee, laying with his paws, y'know, "Ggggrrrh!"

Well I said, "Now wait a minute Ed. Don't hit that bear while I'm around, because I'm not going to help ya." He beat the hell out of her with a club (chuckles). Well he got the collar back on it and got it back in there.

And it wasn't very long later, his wife was in the kitchen. From the house to the barn they'd covered it in so they could walk out to the barn without the snow in winter, see. And here was one of them bear coming down, and she knew that there was something wrong. He was growling and coming down. And she couldn't get time to close the kitchen door. But they always carried guns, rifles. And there was a rifle there, 30-30 rifle, and she got it and leaned it right over the table. And she let him have it right there. She hit him right square where it'd kill him, do the work. He fell down right there. And he was coming after her. I often wondered why the hell he kept the things at all.

Another time these two guys was sawing a tree down, a wood tree, hollow.

And I was up there watching them. And "By God, wait a minute!" I said. And there was hair coming out, you know, with those crosscut saws? There was hair coming out every once in awhile. I said, "There's a bear in there!"

And he said, "W-w-was there?"

"Yeah," I said. "Looka here." Every once in awhile it would catch him a little bit with the saw. And he was hibernating in there.

"Well," he said, "what do we do?"

"Well," I said, "the only way to do is..." You know when you fall a tree, for instance, here's the tree right there. Now there's a certain way you want to fall it--you want to fall it that way or this way see, so it would easier for you to saw it up. Well you notch this part right here, and then chop in, and then you go in the back of the tree, and saw it back there, and it'll fall that way.

SAM: The side that your notch is on.

L G: Yeah. When it leans a little bit, it will go that way. Well I said, "The only way to do now is fall the tree, and then run when you see the tree going." They knew which way they were going to fall it. Well, as soon as the tree was felled, the bear got down a little bit low, and he jumped, flew right out through the tree, and he took off. (Chuckles.) You know, a cub, a bear when he's born, he's only about that long. A little bit of a, it's the smallest animal there is for the size of animal that gives it birth. Nothing to it.

SAM: Do you think bears are pretty intelligent? Do you think they're pretty smart?

L G: Oh yeah. Now, you ever see these on television, these Russians with the bear? Oh God, do they train 'em. Oh they're really wonderfully trained, wonderful. There's a lot of bear in Russia, that's a great country for bear. Wonderfully trained, you've never seen...You'd think they were really human with some of the stunts they do with 'em. I believe they're far better

trained than a lion or a tiger or any of the cat family.

SAM: They seem to have a real, almost human kind of intelligence.

L G: Yeah.

SAM: They remind me of people.

L G: That's right, yeah. And the way they walk around y'know. They'll walk on their hind feet better than most animals do. Oh the bears are wonderful, they catch these cub bears and they train them pretty good. Those Russians, they bring 'em over to this country, and geez, they took 'em on the circus and things like that. They're wonderful.

SAM: I want you to tell me some more that happened around early Bovill.

L G: Yeah, I wish I could really think of them now. Y'know, sometimes you're hopped up and you can think of them one after the other.

SAM: Well, one starts another one.

L G: Yeah, that's right.

SAM: You told me one that I could think of...

L G: Now here's what would be better. Now like for Johnny Miller, he'd start one and I'd think of another one.

SAM: I'm thinking of the one that you told me about the guy with the movie theatre. The movie theatre one. That's a good one.

L G: Oh yeah. I'd hate like hell to put his name in because...

SAM: Don't say his name. Go ahead, you can leave his name out.

L G: Well now, she (Leo's wife) was postmaster see (at Bovill). And business wasn't very rushing. And he didn't have enough money on a Saturday to get these out. A good run would be maybe \$40, maybe 60--the films, see, to take up there and run through. And she let him take them for quite awhile, and then she got to thinking...

SAM: Let him take what?

L G: The films, without paying for 'em.

SAM: Oh he was supposed to pay at the post office.

L G: Yeah, they'd come in parcel post, see, maybe \$60 on 'em, something like that. And she lent it to him a few times there, and then she got to thinking. She said, "Now, that'd be terrible if they found out, 'cause I'm not supposed to do that."

Then he made a deal with us. He said, "Well, all right. I'll let them all in, take all the money, and come and get you and your wife, and we'll go down and get the film, and pay her the money. And then start up." (Chuckles.)

And he had a little gas engine outside that run 'em--chug, chug, chug, chugging along. And lots of times that'd go "Bcccch," and it'd blow out and stop, y'know. And he's running around working on the sonofabitch, trying to crank it to get it going. We'd be sitting in there watching--nothing. It'd be a couple of hours, and he wouldn't give you your money back (chuckles), no. He would, but you'd have to set there a long time before he'd give it to you back.

SAM: You sat and waited until he got it going again?

L G: Oh yeah, waited until he could get the thing started. Then we got electricity in there. They built a plant of their own right there. They bought a great big steam engine and built a plant of their own, electrical plant. And at eleven o'clock, you'd be sitting around and the light would blink, three times. You'd better get in bed right now! The lights are all going out. All right, supposing you were throwing a party, which we did pretty often. Throwing a party. Well when the lights started to blink, you'd pass the hat around to all the guests, and put something in. And then you'd take the hat down to the guy that run the engine down there. And you'd take his fingers and push 'em all around in there. "All right," he'd say, "Leo, you can have two hours more." When our two hours come up... 'Course there was a big pot in there, you could have three hours, four hours, and all night (laughs).

SAM: He left the light on the whole town, huh?

L G: Of course all the others, as soon as they seen that blink go, they'd shut off. All the others, they'd all go to bed. They were used to it. And he'd leave the light on, we could use it then, see. The others wouldn't want to use it, because they was gone to bed. And then on a Wednesday, in the morning he'd turn her on, and you got two hours of ironing. It was ironing, y'know, two hours.

SAM: So everybody ironed Wednesday morning, huh?

L G: Wednesday, and sometime that afternoon, sometime Wednesday, he'd give you two or three hours to get your iron out and iron. It was different than this kid of electricity we've got now. It was straight electricity. It was good. Then the Washington Water Power bought this outfit out.

SAM: Then the lights started to stay on all the time.

L G: Then we got the same light as this, yeah. But he was laughable, we'd pass the hat around, y'know (chuckles). His name was Perd Hughes. You'd take his finger and push it all around. "Well..."

I said, "Well what?"

"Well, go over it again." He missed a nickel (laughs). "All right Leo, two hours."

SAM: Did he own the power plant or just run it?

L G: No, it belonged to the city.

SAM: So he pocketed the money.

L G: Yeah, he pocketed the money. And he was the cop and everything else, y'know.

SAM: Ahh.

L G: He was everything, every damn thing. Cop and everything.

SAM: What was this guy's name?

L G: Perd Hughes. P-e-r-d, he's dead now. H-u-g-h-e-s. No, he was quite a character. And then we had old Pat Malone. This old Pat Malone, he was

a deputy sheriff, Latah County deputy sheriff. 25 a month he got, and the Potlatch Lumber Company paid him \$25 at night to walk around their buildings.

SAM: That much?

L G: \$25. Month, mind you, month. And the hotel there, they gave him \$25, he took care of the stove, and he'd sit up late. Salesmen would come in those days, come in on the caboose on the train? Passenger trains just run in the daytime, and they'd be late in St. Maries, and they'd come in on the caboose. Well he'd sit up, y'know, and he'll tell 'em where their room was, get 'em their room that way. I think I told you about the time he was sitting there in a big leather couch, y'know. He was sitting there, dozing off there, waiting for the two o'clock freight, y'know. He's sitting there dozing. And there was steps upstairs to the room right there. He was dozing like that (nodding head), old guy, y'know. Pretty soon he heard (knocking table) somebody coming down the steps. And he looked over there, and here was a guy walking in his nightshirt. And Old Pat said, "Hey! What the hell's the matter with ya?" And the guy woke up. He's a sleepwalker.

"Oh, pardon me," he said. "I'm a somnambulist."

"Well," Old Pat says, "I don't give a goddamn what religion you are, you ain't gonna walk around here in your nightshirt!" (Laughs.) Somnambulist, I guess that's the word for it. He said, "You're ain't gonna walk around in your nightshirt." The guy woke up. Old Pat didn't know what the religion a somnambulist was.

SAM: You told me that one about the woman that came and thought she knew Pat from the old times. You remember that one?

L G: Well he used to be a cop in Duluth, Minnesota. And I don't think I told you that one. Y'know he was getting old, y'know. And somebody, a drunk that was in the hotel, y'know, and they told Pat to put him out. And Old Pat had rheumatism, y'know. He got up, and he put his arms and both hands and

jammed the door like that. Then he put his foot up (showing great exertion)-- and he kicked the guy out (chuckles). Some crime would come up, y'know, and they'd say Old Pat couldn't track an elephant in four foot of snow (laughs). He'd find a match, "Oh tut-tut-tut, I've got him!" (Chuckles.) "Tut-tut-tut, I got him."

SAM: What do you mean, just lighting a match?

L G: No, he'd found a match laying there where the crime had been committed. He'd got the evidence. They had a little jail made out of two by fours. Put guys in there, and the guys before them had got a place on the corner cut out. Just push it out, and they'd go to town, y'know. And they'd come back and they'd pull it back in (laughs). It was all made out of two by fours, and they'd push and pull it back in, see.

SAM: Did Pat know about that?

L G: Not for a long time. He was downtown there, and here was one of his prisoners getting drunk. And he went back to the jail, the prisoner was back in jail (laughs).

SAM: He saw Pat and he ran back.

L G: He didn't know Pat seen him, and well, he was on his way back anyhow. He had a few beers on his way back, and he got there before Pat got back there. He was asleep. Some of them old lumberjacks had built some old shacks along the little river there. And they had a fire chief there, y'know, their fire department fire chief. All volunteer, I was one of 'em. And this guy was on the other side of this creek, and this cabin caught fire. And the guy that was on nights there, oh he was madder than hell, because the thing blazed up at two in the morning, and 30 below zero y'know. And when he got over there, this guy, an old drunken lumberjack, was fast asleep. And he got mad at him. "Goddamn you," he said, "you set this place on fire." "When I come over here to go to bed it was burning, back there then when I come

to bed!" (Laughs.) It was burning when he went to bed, so he knew he didn't do it. Oh boy, it was things like that, one after the other. I've got a picture of Old Pat someplace.

SAM: Now there's one picture in here of Pat (in The Trees Grew Tall). Is that the one?

L G: Yeah, that's the one I give. He was getting old then, see. But he was fearless when he was in good shape. Nobody could run over him.

SAM: What about this other guy that you were saying, this Perd Hughes? What kind of character was he?

L G: Oh, he was quite a guy. He run an engine, see. Some outfit made bricks down Deary went out of business. And this was a great big Corliss engine, and they bought this engine to run the generator supplied the town, like I'm telling ya, with electricity. They've a different current on this kind than that current there that they had on that. That was direct, and they charge you so much an hour.

SAM: So what about this Hughes?

L G: Well, there was quite a big family of those Hughes'. This Perd was quite a guy. He went up where the (Dworshak) dam is overflowed now, he went up, and he was raising a garden down there where the dam, but 'course the dam covered it all over. I was telling you about that big cedar tree, 52 feet around it? Didn't tell ya about it? Well there was a little patch of cedar up there, it was about ten acres, and one tree was 52 feet around it--that would make it 18 feet diameter. And so the Potlatch gave this 10 acres to the state of Idaho, and course they gave 'em more timber somewhere else, see. And he lived up around in that country there, Perd did. But he run this plant there for quite awhile. And there was a lot of bootleggers around there, a lot of 'em. So anyhow the place caught fire, and I got over there first. They had a stove, all wood stove, see. And I lifted the lid off and there was

a still in the stove. A great big still, y'know, with the coils going around. You ever see a whiskey still?

SAM: Never have.

L G: Yeah? Well, you put the mashing stuff in the big rig, and then you heat it. And there's copper coils 'round, and as the vapor is going through these copper coils, and then it goes out down through water (you put water around part of copper coil), then the coolness goes up, and that's whiskey that comes through there. And I said, "Jesus Christ, Perd," I said, "geez, you want to hide that." (Chuckles.) Oh, there used to be a lot of bootlegging around there.

SAM: Was he doing the bootlegging himself?

L G: Well, I suppose him and somebody else had it together. There was a lot of them around there.

SAM: Was he in the law that time?

L G: Yeah, he was a cop. Oh that didn't make any difference. Cop and the law.

SAM: I want to change this tape.

(End of Side B)

L G: You're getting it down, eh? I didn't know that.

SAM: Don't let it affect you at all. It's just the best way to get it down.

L G: All right now. Peewee Eller was second cook and baker at the camp.

Peewee's gone a day or two when shouldn't have been gone, and when he got back the first cook was gonna can him. So Peewee was a faster runner than the first cook, and he rushed up to the office to quit. Getting it?

SAM: Yeah.

L G: When he got up to the office the superintendent of the camps happened to be there. Peewee told him and the superintendent wouldn't let him quit. So then comes the cook running after him to can him, and the superintendent says,

"What's the matter with you?"

"Well," he says, "I want to can Peewee." "Well," the superintendent says, "I just hired Peewee for your job." (Laughs.)

SAM: That took care of that.

L G: Well, is that still on?

SAM: Yeah, yeah, don't pay any attention to it.

L G: Peewee was baker, and he started to make cream puffs. And something happened to them, more air had got under there than cream. When the lumber-jacks sitting around the table starting biting into them, they exploded right in their face. You bite into one and (slaps hands)...He's a car salesman now.

SAM: Is he?

L G: Good one. Comes up here and sees me every once in awhile. Have you got it on now?

SAM: Yes.

L G: You can shut it on this. This is about his store down there, 'cause this is Grofino. All right. Peewee had a second hand store and upholstery there. And when I moved down there I spent quite a bit of time, passed time away helping him, and for company too. He had a cigar store Indian in the window, bought it from somebody. And a squaw came over there and she said, "Is Peewee here?"

I said, "No, he's gone out buying."

She said, "How much does he want for the cigar store Indian in the window?" Well I told her what I thought he wanted for it. And she said, "Wait a minute. When he comes back, tell him he can have my husband Sam, and his fishing rights and hunting rights go with him for \$80. (Chuckles.)

SAM: When we stopped before you were starting to tell me about Prohibition and about some of bootlegging that was going on. I really wanted you to keep telling me some of that stuff.

L G: It was really a fight around here, y'know. And it was a serious crime, really serious. Down at the county jail there they had it full of bootleggers from Orofino and around Bovill and Southwick and those countries around there. Years afterwards one would meet the other one that he'd met in jail, and they always claimed they went to all same college together. "An old college friend of mine."

SAM: Would they be pretty hard on a bootlegger when they'd catch him?

L G: Nine months. 'Course they were good here, Moscow was good. Good jail.

SAM: Did they get caught very often?

L G: Well they'd do their nine months, y'know.

SAM: Did they arrest a lot of people? Did many guys get caught?

L G: Well, some of them never got caught, never got caught. But others, y'know, probably the deputy sheriff'd blow in there and pretend he was a lumberjack with caulked shoes on and everything, and by god, there'd be a guy that wanted to sell him something--the bootlegger. 'Course the bootleggers, all of 'em had little places out here, ranches or something. And then they claim the Greeks piled in here from Spokane. I went out one time with a bunch from Bovill. Somebody come in and told us that Pat Malone was taking a bunch to search for an outfit that had wrecked a car out of town. We all went out there, you know, and Pat gave a lot of them flashlights to search around. Maybe I shouldn't tell the rest of this.

SAM: No go ahead, it sounds like it's going to be a good story.

L G: Well I went out with another guy, and we drove out there, and he walked up on a windfall. Right at the end of the windfall, gee, there was a bunch of bootleg liquor there, genuine whiskey, and about a five gallon keg of wine. And these guys they grabbed the whiskey and they left the wine sticking out there. There was two Greeks in charge of that, they got them.

SAM: I heard that Pat wasn't very tough on the moonshiners because he was drinking

so much himself.

L G: That's so. Yeah. He was a pretty good old soul though. He'd been a cop in Duluth, Minnesota. (Pause.) Well you've got quite a bit of dope there tonight.

SAM: Yah. Well, we've been talking for an hour.

L G: It was really funny those days. Well a fella talks and then he thinks of more to say, you know. One brings on another.

SAM: I was thinking of the story that you told me about the new teacher in Bovill.

L G: Oh yeah.

SAM: Tell me that one again?

L G: Yeah. Okay. Y'know, when school was over there'd be lots of outsiders apply for a job for the next school teaching period. Some of them would quit and there'd be an opening for others. Well they got letters from all over, and they got one letter from some young girl. She was in one of these finishing girls' schools back East, and she got the job. And at that time Mrs. David run the boarding house. And they had a guy there, an old lumber-jack kinda looked after it. For a few days some of these outsiders that had come in from different places, they had nowhere to board right away until the women of the town found them out and picked them up and took them home to board. This girl, the first chance for the first few days she had was in this boarding house. And they had pork and beans for dinner, and of course she always used big big words whenever she mentioned, talked about anything, teacher did. And the boarding boss, he shoved the pork and beans over to her, and she took the pork and beans. The pork was strong. A few days later they had pork and beans again. And the boarding boss said, "Lady, will ya have some pork and beans?"

She said, "No. The pork is too astute."

And he laughed, he said, "Lady, it ain't the pork makes your ass toot, it's the beans." (Laughs.) Now that's on there. Well they'll sort that out.

SAM: That's a good story.

(Break.)

L G: And we'd be together. OK. You'd go in and you'd buy yourself a beer, and you'd give 'em a twenty dollar bill. Well your chum'd got the number of this bill. He didn't go in with you, he got the number off it. About two or three hours later he'd come in and plank down a dollar bill, buy himself a drink. He'd be carrying a package of laundry over his arm, y'know, they used to. And the bartender'd gave him change for a dollar. "Oh," he says, "you made a mistake." He said, "It was twenty. In fact," he said, "I didn't have anything to do, and I had that bill in my hand, and I wrote the number on my laundry here."

"Well," the guy'd say, "I don't..."

"Well, call the manager!" The manager'd come over and here was the 20 dollar bill with that number that was on the man's laundry. "Give him the change!" And that was an old gag years ago. And not very long ago down at Orofino they pulled the same gag, and they got by with three places. And the only reason they didn't get by on the last place is there was a long bar, it had a cash register at that end and a cash register on the other. When the 20 dollar man come in, y'know, "Oh," he said, "no, by god." And the guy looked in both cash registers, and it scared the guy. And they pulled out, but they caught 'em, the cops caught 'em there.

(Break.)

SAM: Was the chuck in the camps good?

L G: Oh yeah, you bet. Keep the men in good shape, y'know. You keep 'em contented, and that means a lot to the work they do outside.

(Break.)

SAM: And the jokes that you played on guys in the cedar mill? I read in the book, according to John Miller, that you liked to play jokes.

L G: Yeah, I did. I wish I could think of them right quick. Yeah, I did.

SAM: Well I read about that one story about the guy that you were scaling that log, and it was defective.

L G: Oh yeah.

SAM: You want to tell me that, 'cause you haven't told me that one yet.

L G: Okay. He's dead too, that guy. Well, a pole, see? Well a pole'd come in when I was head scaler. You had to classify the length and the width and everything like that. Classifications, it was six feet from the butt, and the top classification, all come in together, y'know. Oh, dozens and dozens of different classifications on even one pole. Well this guy brought in a bunch of poles, his own poles, see, selling them to them. I'd always give him a good break, he knew that. And this pole, I sized her up and it looked kind of funny to me, and I said, "By gosh, I'm positive that's rotten right there."

He come in and he said, "No, theré's nothing wrong with that."

"Well" I says, "I think there is."

"Well now," he says, "I'll tell you Leo," he says, "if you cut that pole you're gonna pay for both ends, you're going to pay for the pole the way it is."

"OK." I said, "They take my check." You don't know what an increment borer is, do you?

SAM: No.

L G: All right. It's about that long, and there's a hole there, and there's another part of it with a handle. It fits in that hole and you snap this thing on it. And this is hollow in here, and when you screw that in, the thread is

on the outside. By the way, it was made in Sweden. And then you turn it down, and this will screw way down in there as far as you turn it. If you only want it three-eighths, you size that pole up, I'd want to go eight inches, see. I'll screw it down eight inches, and you push a needle down in there, the length of this, there's room for a needle inside. And then you pull it out, it's just the size of a cigarette. And you can count all the rings on it. I've handled that thousands of times. It'll show you the rings on it, and if there's any rot it'll show you the rot. It's called an increment borer. I-n-c-r-e-m-e-n-t.

SAM: Yeah.

L G: I'd have to tap hundreds of poles sometimes in a day, just three-eighths, a half inch, give you ^{the} penetration of the creosote. Before he came after I scooped down into there, pulled her out and I could see the rot. "Well, he said, "Leo," he said, "that don't show any..."

I said, "It does." I said, "There's something funny about it to me."

"Okay," he says, "if you cut that pole you'll pay me for the pole."

"Okay. Now," I said, "if I cut that pole and it's rotten, who's going to cut the rest of the way 'til it stops being rotten?"

"By God, I will!" Fine and dandy. He says, "I will." Okay. I called a couple of guys, two saw gangs see, if I'd mark it to cull they'd cull it, trim too. Oh boy, there was rot like that. "Now," I said, "you will finish that, cut that every five feet if it's rotten." He cut it twice I think, five foot off, pret'near ruined it for him, y'know, because the bottom part was just a piling and the top part was a small pole. I think the pole was 50, 55 foot long.

So, he started a gas station at Troy, and oh, he was always tickled for me to come over, y'know, and talk to him. I'd go through from Orofino, I lived there for a little while, go in to Moscow, and I'd go through his place

there, and stop every time there. His name was Hilding Linderman. I said to him one time, "By God I'm going to quit coming in and buying gas from you." I said, "Remember that pole?" And he laughed to beat hell. He said, "I've been gypping you everytime you come here on account of that pole." He hadn't.

"Well," I said, "I figured you had." But I knew he hadn't. Honest guy. He couldn't figure that out, but it did look off to me, 'cause I'd seen so many of 'em, y'know. Got a break in there when it was young or something, catface started in there.

SAM: Tell me about catface, what's catface now?

L G: A bruise on a pole when it's young, it will leave a bruise, and then the bark will cover that over, and keep covering it over, and there's rot in there, see. Rot will get in there. And you don't want to take anything with a catface on it. God I used to know the classifications and the size of the poles just like that. Most guys would have a big sign board up there, so much around here and the top, and he'd have to look down. I could stand right on one end. I had a guy on the other end, he just measured the top, if he measured it there he'd call the number back to me. I could remember them all just (snaps fingers) that quick. One day there it was maybe it was 10 or 11 hours, one thousand and eight poles, checked and remanufactured. They were a wonderful bunch of poles, and mostly big long ones, 40's and 45's and longer. And they were a wonderful bunch of poles, trucks bringing 'em in and some of 'em come on flat cars. Then I'd have to mark any that were cut see, and then go back and reclassify them. 1008 in a day. And this sonofagun that was on the other end with me, young guy, his name was Wayne Smith. Oh he was fast, of course all that he knew was to number it, y'know. You had a tape that goes round them, and he'd call a number back to me and then I'd have the number at the top or the butt, where he was at, and then

I'd place the top with 'em, the size that was around the top--1,2,3,4, the size on top. There was 1008, not counting these we had to saw back. We had two saw gangs working, three men in each saw gang. We'd mark 'em with chalk and they'd go out and cut 'em up. You get to be fast. If you have a good memory you get fast.

SAM: What else did you do besides scale on that cedar yard?

L G: Well I run the treating plant for a long time.

SAM: You did them both the same time?

L G: No, no, one at a time. Yeah, the treating plant. I could have been the yard foreman, but I didn't want it, 'cause I'd make just as much the other way. I scaled all the poles that come in. I had a guy helping me. They had a big long runway and rails up to where the truck would dump 'em or where the flat car would dump 'em. And then the gang would roll 'em down, and I'd be on the end with the tape and measure 'em and mark 'em with yellow chalk, yellow crayon, won't wash off. Classify 'em and then mark them. 'Course the moment there was something wrong with it, I'd have to stop on them a little bit and cut and measure them back, and then go back after they sawed it. And there was horses, and they had rollers on this big long rollway. And the guy with the horse would pull 'em down and then he'd dump 'em off on different sides to the class, size of the pole and all that, all the way down there. If they had 50's, 60's, and all just classes of them, they'd have a pile from each side, y'know, then he'd just roll them off. He'd have some guys rolling them out for him. Then he'd turn around, probably had three or four poles, the horse pulling, and they were on dead rollers see, great big four foot rollers. And he'd pull them down there.

But anyhow this guy--poor soul's dead. I'll think of his name after awhile. Very serious guy. And he'd come up, and I'd have it marked y'know, and he'd throw the chain around it and then he'd hook up to the horse, see. So he'd

stand back and (clicks tongue), "Get up," y'know, a little bit hard to start. Well this time there was a great big pole, oh I think it was about a 70, a good size one. And I sized it up, I sawed five foot off the butt. I already had the thing marked its right length with the five foot still on it, and then I had the guy saw five foot off the butt. And it stayed right there, it didn't move when he sawed her off. And I just pushed it down a little bit and marked the length on the rest of it, see, and pushed that piece back. This guy come up there and he looked at it and he threw the chain around it and hooked her up, five foot long. And he dug down y'know and had the horse dig down--off they went and they had a five foot chunk! (laughs). God, he never forgot that. He never forgot that. And it worked fast too, those rollers worked fast, probably three horses there, three guys. One'd pull away and the next'd hook onto the rest and pull 'em away.

SAM: Do you think he knew right away?

L G: Oh, well a little ways he had, because he never looked back. But when he noticed the horse wasn't doing anything, hardly pulling it (chuckling). I used to go down and see him, he moved down to Clarkston. God he loved to see me come, gee. His wife lives there now alone. He sure loved to see me come in there. Well we was always laughing and pulling stunts, y'know.

SAM: Yah. What about that old vat in the treating plant? It seemed to me from what I read about that in John Miller's book, that was a pretty dangerous place, somebody could fall in that.

L G: Well, they had these great big tanks, y'know, 12 foot deep, and you hold a carload of poles, standing them up on end. And the creosote, I've had it lots of times up to 260 degrees fahrenheit. Y'know boiling is 212. Many a time, when you're hooking 'em, going on top of a load after you've pumped 'em out, you had to watch you didn't fall in. And I wouldn't let 'em work, fool around a pole until I got every drop of boiling creosote out of it. Wait, 'cause it'd

drip anyhow on them. Creosote's a sonofagun, burns you, and anything. Oh I forgot a lot of them jokes I used to play on 'em, I forgot 'em. Told you the one about old man Miller, y'know, he had a peg leg?

SAM: No, you didn't tell me that one.

L G: Okay, Johnny didn't want that. Well, when I was running the plant, old man Miller, they were kinda up against it. And I give him a job firing, after we was all ready to fire, if we'd got the pump out in the morning, we had to have the steam and all that. Well this night it had snowed to beat hell, and he had to take the wheelbarrow and get wood, see. And I come down and I thought I was seeing things. They'd be two holes, a foot print and one hole, and then a straight line. (Softly:) God am I that mad, I wonder what in the...That's the way it'd be right along there. There'd be two holes, then a foot print and one hole, and a straight hole, after that there'd be another couple of straight holes down, and then a footprint. And I got there, it took me a long time to figure: it was old peg leg Miller with a wheelbarrow, and he'd rest the wheelbarrow, and it had legs on it y'know, and they'd make two holes. When he started off, his foot on this side and his peg leg on that side. And then the wheel would make a straight line way down. (Chuckles.)

SAM: That one must of been a hard one to figure out. That really must have been.

L G: Yeah, sure. I thought I was seeing things.

SAM: How did this Catface, what was his name, Catface Ed?

L G: Catfaced Ed, yeah.

SAM: How did he get his name?

L G: I give it to him! I'd go out and these poles would come in with catface on 'em, y'know. I'd have to turn 'em over and if I spotted that catface I'd have to cut it, y'know.

SAM: You mean you always had to turn it over, you didn't find them on top?

L G: No, they'd turn 'em over so you couldn't see 'em. Y'know it's hard to turn

a big pole over in the woods, real hard, with a peavey y'know. And all the time I was there I don't remember ever having a broken pole.

I had to laugh at this guy now, he's quite a logger now, he's not very old either. (Well I was over at a party with him. Phil, him and his wife give parties for their best customers, see, and this Gould, he's shoved lots of business to Phil, all these different truckers and a couple of sawmills down around Orofino and all that country. So they invite him up to a big meal once in awhile.) We was putting out a big bunch of poles for REA, Y'know what that is? Rural Electrification, that come in right after Roosevelt. Rural Electrification. Well they'd give you how to frame the poles see, some of 'em framed down one way, and some of 'em would be framed hip, like that. This REA got had a system of their own, and so many holes this way for cables to hold them here and there, y'know. And again where to put the crossarm, they had machineries to do all of that. This Gould--his dad, he's retired now, his dad hauled some of these logs down the Clearwater Valley down around Orofino and all that country. Those engineers would make mistakes, and change 'em. When you bored a hole in you had to plug it with a hot creosote plug, see. Of course the bolts would go in in the field, but these holes were wrong. Well we had to plug them see, in the field. So I got a big bunch of plugs, and I treated 'em. I put 'em in a gunnysack and I boiled 'em in with the rest of the poles, see. (I forget whether it was young Gould? Anyhow, somebody went in for Gould.) When they got ready to to haul this load of poles, I threw this up on the pole pile, y'know, on with the poles. And he said to me, "What's that?"

"Ah, it's a dead cat!" And I'll be goddamned if he didn't throw it off. Got down the road and he threw it out. And these engineers want to know, "Didn't he give you any plugs?"

"No."

He said, "Well, didn't he give you any at all?"

"No." He didn't know I was kidding him. And he took this sack of plugs about that long, y'know.

SAM: That's what happens when you joke people.

L G: Yeah.

SAM: This sometimes happens to me too. People think I'm serious when I'm just kidding 'em.

L G: He threw it off. Jesus, had to search for hours to look find it. They searched for hours to find it.

Another time there they put a bunch of poles down someplace, and the trucker come back and he told me, he said, "Say those guys, the government outfit set the poles up, but" he said, "there's one there," and y'know a woodpecker, if there's any worms in the pole, (pecking) "ww-ww-ww-ww-ww-ww-ww," see--bad.

And I said, "Now, God, none of those poles was rotten, I know they wasn't." Well he told me were it was, out about 20 miles out there, 15 or 20 miles. So I went out there, and here was the bastard in there, "Bb-bb-bb-bb-bb-bb-bb." Well they hadn't gotten any machinery or no wires onto it or crossarms or anything, they hadn't put that on yet. And I told them, I said, "You ought to pull that out, saw it. Pulled it out and sawed it, not a stain of a worm. The company paid for it. They'd rather do that then have it wormy. He pulled it out. They couldn't figure out why that woodpecker was pecking in there. They don't peck unless they listen and then peck.

SAM: Did they ever figure it?

L G: No, neither did I. Well I figured it'd be a nutty woodpecker, a nutty son-of-a-b, "Now next time you hear him, shoot him." Yeah, nutty woodpecker. I'll tell ya how nutty they are. We had a great big boiler, y'know, to heat this creosote, a big smokestack sticking way up, and I seen one up there picking

on that, on this iron smokestack. Pecking on it! And I called 'em out, I said, "Take a look at this."

"Oh," **ore** guy says, "that's that sonofabitch that's picking on that pole up around Avon!"

Now the pole business is gone to hell now. Because where they buy poles from these guys, big companies and all that, would rather cut the poles up into lumber--they get more out of it. Like I was telling you about siding and all that beautiful cedar siding and that, y'know, in these homes. Otherwise you only get so much for a pole in the woods. Now they take one of them a saw them up into this stuff here where it's three or four hundred dollars a thousand. And they like that knotty stuff...

Transcribed and typed by Sherrie Fields