

ALBERT JUSTICE

Interviewed by:

Sam Schrager

Oral History Project

Latah County Museum Society

I. Index

II. Transcript

# I. Index

## ALBERT JUSTICE

Bovill and surrounding area; b. 1898

cook in logging camps

3 hours

minute      page  
(approx.)

## Side A

01	1	Father a cook in Spokane. He helps out as a child.
05	2	Learning lumberjack cooking from an old cook.
10	4	Making pies quickly. Sources for recipes. Advantages of baking powder.
13	5	Limited variety of foods in early days.
15	6	Breakfast menu. Scarcity of canned milk. Daily schedule for meals. Breakfast bells.
25	9	Dinner menu. Problems with packing lunches.

## Side B

00	12	Supper menu. Ordering supplies.
07	15	Terrible conditions in early logging camps. Lice. IWWs justified in striking to improve conditions. They were not responsible for violence blamed on them. Men burn all blankets in the camp in protest.
21	20	Improvement of conditions in logging camps.
25	22	Great increase in variety of food. The change was gradual.

## Side C

00	24	Gradual change of conditions in logging camps.
02	25	Variation in cooks' abilities. Problem with drink among migratory cooks. Trouble with keeping flunkies was solved by hiring women. Details of the kitchen that flunkies often overlooked.
13	29	Cooks had good opinion of their cooking. Men were particular about their hotcakes being hot.
20	32	Cooking for over 300 men at Camp 35. Size of crew and dining set-up. Responsibilities of head cook. His insistence on washing hands after using toilet. (cont.)

Albert Justice

minute      page  
(approx.)

Side D

00	37	A man who washed his feet in the kitchen washbasin.
02	38	Importance of utilizing leftovers.
07	40	Why the lumber companies went to gyppo cooks and kitchens. The unions complained. Mr. Justice provided plenty of good food and variety.
15	43	Difficulty pleasing everybody. Lumberjacks liked to have a new cook because he always cooked differently. Monotony of camp life made men concentrate on the cooking. Monotony for the cook too. Time off.
23	46	Arrangements with the company for gyppo cooking. Mr. Justice's success with this set-up. Opposition from the union--they try to force him to work for wages, although they themselves gyped. (cont.)

Side E

00	49	(cont.) Billings, Potlatch general manager, asked Mr. Justice to join the union, because they were threatening to strike if he didn't. So Mr. Justice quit. His replacements.
05	51	Operating the Bovill restaurant during the war. Problems of getting food under rationing. Had to buy cases of inferior cigarettes and soap to get regular quality items. Long hours and little help available.
14	55	Feast in camp at Christmas. One year Axel Anderson gave the men a New Year's feast too. The cook worked closely with the foreman to get meals exactly on time.
20	57	Need for changing of cooks to provide something new.
22	58	A cook can learn something new every day. He can pick up great tips from dishwashers. Cooking in large amounts compared to small. Kitchen ovens and planning. (cont.)

Side F

00	62	Planning the cooking. Convenience of machines for baking.
02	63	Great problem with flies. A fly trap. Terrible summer heat.
10	66	Early kitchens and dining rooms. Mice and packrats.
18	69	Bears around camp. A cub is killed by drunk loggers.

Albert Justice

minute            page  
(approx.)

Side F (continued)

24	71	Kitchen wages.
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with Sam Schragar  
August 23, 1974

## II. Transcript

Albert Justice

Sam Schrager:

First a little background. I was wondering about-- you said that your father was a cook, also, right?

ALBERT JUSTICE: Yeah, that's right.

SS So how was it that he came to come out here from South Dakota?

AJ Yeah, we came out here from Dakota, I think it was about in 1907. And I went all through school here in Spokane. That is, I went to the old Hillyard High School over here at Hillyard. <sup>that my dad</sup> He worked in different restaurants and bakeries here in Spokane for a number of years. And at different times he had restaurants of his own here. I don't know, he had, I guess, over the years he probably had two or three different restaurants here in town. I kinda grew up in the food business and naturally when I started to work I gravitated to the kitchen. And that's what I followed nearly all of my life-- in the food industry one way and another. And when I was in high school during the summer vacations I would hire out into the lumber camps, you know, to work during the summer. Maybe a month-- <sup>or so</sup> maybe after school <sup>even</sup> started, to get money. Of course, we didn't get a lot of money those days, but it went quite a ways, what we did get. So that's how I started into the camps. I would go out in the summer, and work in the kitchen and come back in. But after I graduated from high school I went up to Bovill to work for the Potlatch Forests there. I stayed there quite a number of years. I think it was 1944 that my wife and I moved to Spokane.

SS Did you tell me that you remembered standing up on a box and washing



dishes, when you were just a... ?

AJ

Oh yes, I can remember that very well, because <sup>the</sup> my dad had restaur-  
ants here, I was a pretty young fellow, and <sup>well</sup> of course to help out I  
would do what I could around the kitchen and washing dishes was the  
easiest thing <sup>that I could do</sup>. And we had those big old wooden sinks in those days.  
There was no automatic dishwashers or anything like that, and we'd  
wash the dishes in one sink in the soapy water and then we'd rinse them  
in the other sink in the clear water, and then stack them up on what we  
called the draining boards and let 'em dry off there, and then wipe them  
with a towel, and that was what I did, you know, sometimes before school  
and after school. And that'd help out on the budget. <sup>But I</sup> had a box  
there. I was pretty little fellow, and I had a box to stand on so I  
could handle things a little better.

Well then after I grew a little older I ~~branch~~ed out on myself and I  
got into the kitchens ~~and~~ these different cooks, you know, that had  
been at <sup>the</sup> most all their lives. I picked up their methods and their  
secrets, they called 'em, making different things. I worked with some  
very good cooks up there <sup>very</sup> excellent cooks they were. And there  
were just quite a number of them <sup>that were</sup> very excellent cooks. I can look back  
now and realize that I worked with one man there, his name was  
Herman Gottschalk, and he was, I believe, <sup>the best</sup> the best all-around cook that I ever saw. He

could make anything and everything and make it good. <sup>When</sup>  
I went up there to work for him he was getting to be quite aged then,  
and he wouldn't work where they had <sup>the</sup> large crew of men. like we used  
to have ~~but~~...

SS

He didn't used to work for large crews, you say.

AJ

No, he wouldn't. When I knew him, he was getting

a little bit aged for a heavy, big crew, and he wouldn't work in a camp where there was over <sup>50</sup>fifty men or so. But for that steel reason they put him on what they call the ~~steel~~<sup>steel</sup> gang. That was a traveling car camp. All they did was lay steel and take up steel and all like that. Make new track and put it wherever they wanted a railroad, why, they'd call the steel gang. They had about forty-five, fifty men, I imagine in that crew. He was on that steel gang for quite a number of years. And I worked there

with Herman probably for a year, pretty near. And he taught me a lot of things because he was getting a little bit. And he had a chair there in one corner of the kitchen, and he would sit in that chair and he'd tell me what to do, see, of course I was washing dishes there and doing some other work. Well, I'd get my work through, you know, and then he'd say, "Well, kid, come on and I'll show you how to do this or do that." And he'd show me how to mix the bread, what they put in it and so forth. And pie crust and all, how to make all those different things. Cookies and cakes and all like that. He'd sit over there and tell me what to (do). And after while, you know, I got so I knew just about how to do it myself and I went <sup>right</sup> ahead.

SS

Was he patient with you?

AJ

Oh, yeah. Herman was a very nice fellow and we got along just fine.

And I think that this Ralph Hanson, if you talk to him, I think he knew Herman, too. Of course, Ralph didn't come into the camps until a little later, but I think he'll tell you too, that Herman was a very excellent cook.

SS

Do you remember still some of the tricks that he taught you that stayed

with you, and became the way you cooked?

AJ

Well, I'll tell you. I can't think of any tricks, actually. But the proper ingredients in anything that you're cooking, I think is more important than any kind of tricks. The main trick is when you're working, preparing food for a big group that way, is to get so you can do these things and do 'em fast. Get so you can do things fast. I think that's the main trick. And as far as being any tricks, like rolling out a pie crust or something like that, you get so you can do that fast if you persevere and practice. And that's the main trick, to get so that you can do it fast, because when you're making fifty, sixty pies every morning you can't be fooling around there till noon rolling out the piecrust. And that's the thing. I think the main trick in any kind of cookery is the right proportion of ingredients and learn to do it so that you don't have to look at the recipe every time. You got those things in your head. You know, like I say, piecrust and cakes and cookies and doughnuts and all those different things that we made, you had them in your head. Once in a great while you might look at the recipe just for, but when you got that amount of food to prepare, and you had to have it on time. too, I'll tell you, you have to learn to do these things and do 'em fast. Now we used to roll out-- Ralph'll tell you the same thing-- he used to roll a pie a minute there. And of course, we'd all our filling made the night before. Like as if we're gonna make a double faced pie, we'd have all the fillings and the piecrust and everything (Herman?) ready the night before, see. Well when Ralph would start he'd used-- make the pies in the morning. He would roll a pie a minute, right along. And what he did he put the bottom crust in, and he filled

it and put the top crust on, ~~and~~ <sup>practically</sup> sealed it, ~~and~~ that in a minute. And he'd do that for maybe an hour, and he'd ~~have~~ <sup>have</sup> sixty pies out there. Well that's like I say, you couldn't be foolin' around there until noon getting those pies done. So in order to get fast with things like that you have to have practice.

SS Where did the recipes come from that he used?

AJ Well, we got 'em from different cook books ~~and~~ different fellows. Now

I got quite a number of recipes from Herman because I knew they were all right, you know. And I got recipes from other different ones, like Red Watson here, you saw him there. Well you just kinda gather 'em as you go along. Maybe you'd go into some camp, and the cook-- well, gee, that's awful good-- that's a good looking cookie, and that's an awful good looking doughnut or something like that. "What's the recipe?" Well, he'd give you the recipe for it. Well, you try 'em out and if you like 'em, well, you just kinda accumulate and gather 'em as time goes on. Sometimes you can buy a good cookbook and use some of those; but the recipes, most of 'em that we went by were ones that ~~had~~ had been tried out. And that's the way we come by most of 'em.

SS Did they have baking powder when you first came into camp?

AJ No. Not when I first came to camp. We used soda and sour dough. We'd even make cakes with sourdough. No baking powder. A little cream of tartar. No, we didn't have baking powder for quite a while. <sup>101.4</sup> After we got baking powder, that simplified out baking to a great extent because it was much quicker and much handier, and we got better results from it after we learned how to use it. But no, no, there was just a lot of things we didn't have. But gradually things like that started to come into camp. The food kept getting better and better all the time, I think. But they always had abundance of good, substantial, healthful food, but <sup>There was</sup> it was a very limited variety. plenty of quantity-- and the quality

was all right, too-- but we didn't have fresh vegetables very much. We had potatoes and things like that, but canned fruit and canned vegetables--they were nonexistent in the camps for quite a few years when I first went in there. Dried apples and dried peaches and dried prunes and dried apricots. Of course then the dried fruit was reasonably cheap compared to what it is now. Dried fruit now is almost out of sight. But we had plenty of that. And dried apples and lots of dried prunes and raisins.

And we used to make our pies out of

dried apples and dried apricots and sometimes we'd make-- we didn't have eggs, you see, couldn't make custard pies or pumpkin pies, anything like that, because we didn't have any eggs there for a long time. To speak of. Once in a while we'd get a case of eggs. Well, we went very sparingly on those eggs. We were, you might say, handicapped in some ways to give the men a variety, because we just didn't have it.

5. eggs, you know, that's quite a versatile thing to cook with. You can do so many things with eggs. <sup>But</sup> custard puddings and all like that, you know, you can't make those without eggs.

SS What would the breakfast and mostly the big meals-- what would the breakfast be like? In the early days? What would they have for breakfast?

AJ Well, in early days one of the standard dishes for breakfast was baked beans. We had those every morning--baked beans and hotcakes. And every morning there was some kind of hot cereal -- oatmeal, usually. Sometimes we'd have what they used to call farina in those days. They call it cream of wheat now, but we used to get farina in big ten pound bags and we had farina and oatmeal. And we didn't have ham nor bacon. But we had salt pork. And quite often we'd give 'em salt pork for breakfast. The'd have baked beans and fried potatoes, nearly always fried potatoes, and hot cereal, and

of bread and usually hotcakes, lots of coffee. And milk was another thing. Well, it was kinda scarce, that is, canned milk. We used to take the canned milk and reduce it with water, you know, about half and half, and then we'd put that in the pitcher on the table, you know, for their mush. <sup>But</sup> we didn't have milk enough, that is canned milk, to set the can on the table for their coffee. If they wanted milk in their coffee-- like say, cream in their coffee, they'd put that in out of that pitcher. Well that was half and half, what they used to call sixteen to one. That's what the lumberjacks used to call <sup>it</sup> sixteen to one (chuckles). But it was about half and half. And then we would put these pitchers along on the table and then they'd put that on their mush, and put it in the coffee if they wanted, but it was not very rich or anything like coffee cream.

SS Were hotcakes as popular as they say, nowadays? They say hotcakes were real popular, the lumberjacks always ate hotcakes.

AJ Yeah, hotcakes--

SS Was that sort of a staple, a big thing for breakfast?

AJ Oh, yeah, hotcakes; <sup>get it</sup> Well, in the early times hotcakes wasn't quite so. And bread, there was lots of bread on the table and things like that. But in the early days you really didn't have the facilities to make hotcakes because they didn't have a big grid-dle. But. oh, along the way back, hotcakes were--that was just a must, you had hotcakes every morning regardless of what else or other things you had. Hotcakes. And of course, we always had toast--buttered toast and hotcakes.

SS When did you start there in the morning to get this breakfast on the table for the men? When did the crew get going?

AJ Well, we'd usually have breakfast at six o'clock. That was about the standard time for breakfast. And lunch or dinner, <sup>we</sup> called it,

would be about eleven thirty. And then the evening meal, <sup>I think</sup> usually was five thirty. But way back before 1917, you see they were working ten hours in the woods then. Well, that necessitated the meals being a little farther apart. . . Like supper would be a little later, maybe six thirty. And dinner, like lunch, would be probably twelve, you see. Well, they were working ten hours in the woods then. Well, after they got the eight hour day, of course, that allowed us to shorten up the periods in between the meals a little bit, like we'd have breakfast at six o'clock, and lunch ~~at~~ about eleven thirty, well then the evening meal about five thirty. So that shortened up our day a little bit, all right.

SS When did your day start?

AJ Well, when they had a big crew, why you'd say maybe two hundred fifty, three hundred men, I would be in the kitchen at three o'clock in the morning, see. You didn't only have to get breakfast but you had to start lunch and also supper, you see, because those things had to be ooming. You couldn't wait til suppertime to get supper. Nor wait til lunchtime to get lunch, because there was a lot of other things. Now Ralph, he used to get up about four. Well, I guess the first thing Ralph would do would be to mix the batch of bread. That was about his first thing in the morning. Well, he'd be in there about four o'clock. <sup>used to have</sup> a great big washtub, <sup>one of the</sup> biggest we could get, and he'd mix that by hand. <sup>he</sup> had a little low table, about like this, <sup>then</sup> and he'd set that washtub on there he'd put his ingredients in, and the flour bin was right along side of him there and he'd mix that by hand. Then when he got his bread mixed, then he'd jump onto these pies. And he had those pies all made before the breakfast bell rang. We'd ring two bells every morning. One bell was to get 'em up

-- we used to call that the first bell. And then there was the second bell. The first bell was to give 'em notice down in the bunkhouse to get up that breakfast was;... And of course, a good many of 'em were up before that. but we'd give 'em half an hour, see, between the first bell and the second bell. <sup>we'd</sup> give 'em thirty minutes. Well, we'd <sup>the dot there</sup> ring that first bell right on ~~there~~ about five thirty, well, then the breakfast bell would be six o'clock. then we'd ring that. But they'd be standing out there, maybe a hundred of 'em, waiting to get in. And we had one of those big triangles, you know. And there was always one fellow's duty in the kitchen to watch that clock and ring that first bell. Usually the dishwasher was assigned to ringing the first bell. And I had to watch that myself because sometimes <sup>they'd</sup> forget, you know, <sup>if</sup> and I was responsible for everything that went on in there. And anything was wrong, well, I was the one that had to answer for it.

SS What about the second meal? Dinner, lunch. What was usually served at that in the early days?

AJ Well, of course, in the early days we had beef and pork and that was about it. Beef and pork. And usually in the early days we didn't get very choice beef, ~~it~~ it would be mostly be front quarters. And of course, front quarter is not really choice, I mean for steaks and things like that. So that give us quite a bit of roast beef and beef stew; and we had to grind our own hamburger. And we would have hamburger and stew and roast beef and then you could have boiled beef and all things like that. And of course, for lunch we would have vegetables, potatoes and meat and maybe beef stew or maybe roast beef or braised beef, or many different kinds of-- you know, fix the beef in many different ways. We would have potatoes and gravy and vegetable and always a dessert of some kind-- pie usually and pudding or lots of bread, and we always had cookies and



doughnuts, and so forth, like that. All that on the table for lunch.

Right up until quite late - an awful lot of the men would carry a lunch, you know, because they had so far to go. So they would take a lunch in a bucket. And that was quite a problem. That was really a problem, that lunch business. We tried it in several different methods how to pack these lunches. And one time we had a man, that's all he did, was pack lunches at night, see, for the men the next morning. And he'd pack these lunches at night. Now he'd make the sandwiches and put in whatever else went in the lunch - like a piece of pie or cookies. or whatever went in there, an orange or whatever. And that was his job. He'd slice the lunch meat and make the sandwiches and pack the lunch.

We had a big long table and he'd set these lunches all along that table so that these fellows, when they got up from the breakfast table, they could pick up their lunch. Well that didn't prove quite satisfactory either. There was some dissatisfaction about that because people, you know, have many different preferences in what they like to eat. I think more than any other one thing, people are fussy - some people are more fussy than others.

SS So some people weren't satisfied with whatever they got.

AJ Oh, no, if you had three hundred men, you couldn't satisfy all those fellows no matter what you put in that bucket. We'd try to make these sandwiches, of course, we'd put butter on 'em, and but the thing is when you're packing that many lunches you've got to pretty much pack them all the same. You can't hardly personalize a lunch, that is, pack an individual lunch for each individual man, just what he wants. You know, that'd be too much of a job. Maybe like there'd be some, "Well, now, I can't eat any butter, don't put any butter on my bread." And another one would say, "I

can't eat a boiled egg. I can't eat mayonnaise on my lettuce." Or something like that. Well, you just couldn't go ahead and pack what each man wanted separately.

SS So how did you deal with that?

AJ Well, you just couldn't deal with it. Like I say, there was some dissatisfaction because, well, this guy'd say, "I'm on a diet, don't give me any meat." Now, like maybe you'd have a roast pork sandwich, "No," he'd say, "I can't eat pork. I gotta have..." And many things'd come up like that. Different ones'd say, "I don't like so-and-so, and don't put any..." We'd have two or three different kinds of bread - rye bread, wholewheat bread, white bread. One guy'd say, "Oh, I can't eat wholewheat bread." Another guy'd say, "I can't eat rye bread, it makes me sick." Well, things like that, it gets to be quite a... So the only thing you can do was just say, "Well, if you can't eat wholewheat bread, just too bad, you'll just have to..." But later on we tried another system - let each man pack his own lunch. So what we did then - we had a separate room that they fixed up with a long table, see. And we set all the food out on that long table. Like the bread would be sliced and the butter was there and the meat would be sliced and all the different things that went in that lunch would be there, like pickles and everything on that table, see. And they could go along that table and make their own sandwiches; they could put in whatever they wanted. If they wanted a piece of pie, all right, if they wanted a doughnut, or a cookie, or whatever they wanted. Peanut butter sandwich, or anything, it was all there. And then down there there was a big pot of coffee and sugar and cream and all like that, they could fill their own -- they had vacuum bottles-- when they started that, the company furnished the lunch pail, see, and each lunch pail had a vacuum bottle in it for cof-

fee or whatever they wanted to put in it. So each man got a lunch pail and a complete kit there to pack his lunch. So then they would come before breakfast and pack their lunch. long about, sometimes it's be shortly after five o'clock even before the first bell, you'd see some of those guys coming in. We'd have that all set out there, see, early in the morning. And they'd start packing their lunch. Well, you could pack just what you want. Most fellows would really take more than they would eat, you know. I don't say everyone, but some of 'em would take more than they could eat. The attitude was. among a good many of those fellows that they were paying too much for their board, see, and they would figure, Oh, well, heck, I'm payin' for this anyway, and if I throw away a cookie or a sandwich, I'm payin' for it anyway. But actually I guess it was really more satisfactory for the men when they packed their own lunch, because they could take as much as they wanted whatever they wanted; and if they didn't have what they wanted, it was their own fault, because there was practically everything on that table. There'd be five or six kinds of sandwich meat, you know. Lunch meat and roast beef, roast pork, always ham, all the ham they wanted. And fried eggs. I'd always fry a bunch of eggs for their sandwiches. I'd fry them in the morning, so they'd be warm. If they wanted an egg sandwich they could have it, see. And there was everything; jelly and peanut butter and all those kind of things. there on the table.

SS Was supper a bigger meal than lunch. ~~the camp?~~

AJ Well, yes, it was. Well. of course, everybody was in for supper, you know. What I mean, like these fellows that took a cold lunch. well when you pack a cold lunch, I don't care what it is, it's not like a hot meal. And naturally when those fellows came in at night, some of them didn't take much lunch, you know, some of them would just take

a little paper sack, see. Well, naturally when they came in, especially in the wintertime after eating a cold lunch out there, maybe just grab a snack in a hurry. Well, they were pretty hungry, you know, and so the supper meal, the evening meal, was always the big meal because everybody was in for supper and they were pretty hungry. And we always tried to give them, really the biggest, most generous meal at suppertime because everybody was hungry.

SS Was it pretty similar to the dinner for the people that were in camp for dinnertime? Was it ~~similar~~ meal?

AJ Oh, yeah, there'd be quite a few in camp for dinner.

SS Would it be the same type food that you served at lunch?

AJ Well, say maybe there'd be a hundred men in camp for lunch for the noon meal. Well,

we'd give them, you know a regular lunch like hot-- maybe roast beef or roast pork, beef stew, potatoes, and gravy, and everything like that. But well what I mean for the evening meal, the whole crew was in, it was a big meal, you see, of course. And of course for breakfast they was all in too, but breakfast was not considered quite as full a meal as supper, you know, because, Oh yeah, for lunch, we'd give them a full meal.

SS What would supper be? What would you serve 'em at supper? For the big meal of the day?

AJ Well, just for an ~~instance~~ <sup>maybe</sup> we'd say, pork chops. This is just a sample. Well, maybe it would be pork chops and maybe baked potatoes. And there was always a second meat of some kind, like well, maybe we'd have pork chops, maybe we'd give 'em southern hash or something like that to go with the pork chops. Some people didn't like pork chops, you know. They had to have some other kind of a meat on there.

Maybe baked potatoes, and we'd have probably cream gravy, and with those pork chops usually we'd have applesauce. And then, of course, we'd have vegetables. There was always two hot vegetables besides potatoes. Maybe it'd be string beans and always two hot vegetables besides the potatoes.

SS Would this be in the early days as well?

AJ Well of course, in the early days, we didn't have quite the variety that we had later on. 'Course in the early days. we didn't have the canned vegetables, but we'd have lots of beef. But mostly we didn't have steaks and things like that very much in the early days because we didn't get the right kind of meat to get the steaks from. But it would be mostly roast beef and beef stew and hamburgers and things like that in the early days. But there was lots of it and it was usually well cooked ~~good~~.

SS So supper was the one big meal?

AJ Yeah, supper was really the big meal, because. I said here before, that when we got up in the morning we weren't only getting breakfast, we were starting lunch and supper too, because a lot of that stuff had to be brought up quite a while beforehand. You'd have to figure the room you'd have on the stove and your oven room and how long it takes to do these things, and it takes kind of a little planning ahead, because you've got to keep things coming one after the other there.

SS I think it would take a lot of planning, a lot of knowledge.

AJ Well it did take a lot of planning because I had to do all the ordering, you see. And I had to keep a certain supply on hand, but not too much. Because one of our big problems in the early days was no refrigeration. No place to keep anything, you see. Like our meats, we didn't have no place to, ... only just

outside in a little screened in shack out there. And leftovers--there was no refrigeration, no place-- it was quite a problem to keep enough things on hand and yet not get too much. And then in the early days, you know, you'd probably only get supplies once a week. Maybe in the wintertime you wouldn't get 'em that often if they was away back in the woods, and we had to go in after things with a sleigh. <sup>they</sup> Maybe only went in once or twice a week. Well, your supplies come once or twice a week.

SS You put in the order and then Potlatch got the supplies?

AJ Yeah, I put in the order, and it went into the warehouse there.

SS Where'd they usually come from? The supplies.

AJ Well, they'd buy 'em from the wholesale houses around, different places, you know, and a lot of it here in Spokane from these wholesale grocers<sup>res</sup> and meatpackers, and like that. They used to buy a lot of meat at Lewiston, I know, from the meatpacker down there. But in the early days we didn't get the best of meat, you know, but there was always lots of it. Like the front quarters were not choice beef, that is for steaks and things -- but plenty of roast beef and stews and hamburgers and braised beef and all like that.

SS I want to come back to the cooking, but I'd like to know when you first came out in the woods, what the conditions were like when you were very first there?

AJ When I first went into the woods? Well, I'll tell you-- actually, the conditions were terrible. That is for the men working in the woods. The conditions were very bad.

I was always in the kitchen and our conditions

were a little better because we had a little better opportunity to wash our clothes and things like that, you know. But when you're outside there with that crew of men-- maybe there'd be a hundred men in one big long bunkhouse, you see. And a big stove in the middle with bunks down each side. Well, no place to wash their clothes. If you can just imagine, if you didn't have any place to wash your clothes and no place to take a bath-- no place to take a bath. Well, you come in, especially in the wintertime, you get your feet wet, and maybe your shirt is wet, and your pants are wet. I used to wear what they called tin pants -- that was a kind of a khaki pants, but they had been dipped in paraffin and they were stiff. They'd almost stand alone on the floor, but they called 'em tin pants. because they were almost like tin when you had 'em on; but they all wore tin pants there in the wet weather. Well, you're bound to get wet. They'd get here where they broke the knees, see, that paraffin would crack, see, and that would get wet. Well anyway, they'd come in at night and their clothes are wet. Well, they gotta dry them out for the next morning. Well, they'd have two big long clotheslines the full length of this bunkhouse up above that stove, you see. That's the only place they had to dry their socks and their shirts or anything, underwear. Well, everybody'd hang their stuff on these lines, all the way down this. They'd be socks and shirts and underwear hanging all along that bunkhouse all night long. Well, you can imagine what kind of odor there'd be from all those drying clothes there. And then they'd build a fire in that stove, of course.

In the wintertime, they'd have a fire all night. Well, those fellows along close to the stove, they'd be roasting, you know. Well, these guys down at the end here, they'd be freezing to

death, see. (chuckles) Well, that was part of the conditions;

There was nowhere to wash. I mean there was just-  
a washbasin they had in the bunkhouse, you know. They'd have  
a basin there and they'd wash their face and hands in the morn-  
ing; but to wash your clothes, take a bath, there was no facilities to  
do that with. And that lead to, well, vermin, you  
know what I mean. The bedding, sleeping conditions were very bad be-  
cause all of the bunks were just like. say they had four one-by-twelve  
boards laid in a frame like this, see. And  
then there was a side on it about four-five inches high, see, just a ...  
Well, if you wanted a mattress, they had  
horses them days, you went out to the barn and you got an armload of  
hay or straw and threw in the bottom, say this is your bunk, see. And  
you threw this in the bottom, that hay. and then you threw a blanket  
over that. That was your mattress. Well, all right, say you were  
sleeping here in this bed and you got two or three blankets there, and  
you're sleeping there by yourself. Well OK, of course, the  
men are coming and going all time, some are quitting and some are coming.  
Well, here comes a strange guy in for a job. Well, they put him to  
work, see. He comes in here tonight, maybe this afternoon, and the camp  
foreman puts him to work. Well, you gotta have a place to sleep. Well  
here, you're alone in this bed, see, That's what they call a double bed,  
what I mean wide, see. Well, he's gotta have a place to sleep, so he  
crawls in there with you. He's got two or three blankets. You don't  
know who he is, you never saw him before. Maybe he's some, you know --  
maybe he's clean, maybe he isn't. You don't know. But the rule is  
that you've got to give him half of that bed,

Well, here's some strange guy you never saw before, maybe  
he's lousy, maybe he's anything, and he says, "Give me a bed, willya?"



You see, that's bad. I think that's very bad. Don't you?

SS It sounds terrible ~~to me~~

AJ Well, it is terrible. When you come to think about it. Because anybody coming along, like a stranger, you never saw him before. Maybe he's all right, maybe he's-- but maybe he isn't either. You see. Well, what you gonna do? Well, you've got to give that guy half of that bunk

because that is the way it was set up. And I think that was one of the very worst things. Well, maybe this guy's blanket's lousy, see. Nine times out of ten they were, - And you don't know who he's been sleeping with before and all over the country, they go from camp to camp. There was hundreds of camps them days, and you could maybe walk from one camp to another in maybe an hour or so, down the trail.

SS Was it hard to get rid of the lice?

AJ No, you couldn't get rid of 'em. It was impossible. How you gonna get rid of 'em? There's no way to wash your clothes. No way to take a bath. How you gonna wash those blankets? And even if you did wash 'em. it wouldn't kill those eggs. Those lice are in those blankets. They're not only in the blankets, they're down in that straw. They're in these little , boards. They're just nailed together. They're down in the cracks. You can get the lice pretty much that is, a lot of 'em. But you can't get those eggs, they're down in under. And that straw would probably be <sup>alive with them</sup> so how you gonna get 'em. You got no place to wash. No washroom. No bathhouse.

SS Do you think that those conditions were the main reason why they had the troubles in the camps? *why they had the trouble?*

AJ Yeah, that's right, the conditions in the camps <sup>as</sup> ~~what~~ brought about the strike of 1917 <sup>of</sup> the IWWs. And I think they were fully justified in almost whatever they did. I don't believe in destroying property,

burning timber anything like that, but I think that the Wobbl's, the IWWs, were fully justified to go on strike because the conditions were *practically intolerable*. This is absolute fact. I've seen ~~them~~ all.

It was the way that the lumber camps had started out back East in Minnesota and back in there, many, many years ago. That's the way it was. Those conditions just naturally followed through out here. But I give the IWWs credit more than any other organization for cleaning up, not only the lumber camps, but the mines as well. The mines were pretty bad too. But I never worked in the mines, but even at that I know they were pretty bad. Practically as bad as

SS Do you think that the IWW did do the things the kind of things that were pinned on them? The destruction of timber, burning things, destroying property? Do you think they did much of that in that period?

AJ I don't think they did near as much of that as what was blamed on to ~~them~~. But I think it was done to reflect onto the Wobbl's because they wanted to get rid of the Wobbl's. And I don't think that all those stories about fires and destruction, I don't think they were done by Wobbl's. I was in several camps when the Wobblies were on strike, and I didn't see any damage that they done. They went out on strike, and they patrolled the roads going into these camps. What I mean, like if there was a railroad they would put (like they say now) pickets and try to stop anybody that was going in there to go to work. They did that all right. But I don't think, as far as violence was concerned there might have been incidents, but I don't think it was near what they were given credit for. And, I never seen any. The only violence I ever saw was that time when they all piled up blankets out in the yard and

burned them. I'll never forget that. I was just a kid up here and ~~that~~ made an awful impression on my mind, because they had quite a crew of men there, and they all had agreed that this morning they would go on strike. Nobody went to work, see. And they were striking for better conditions in the camps, like clean bunks and all like that. So every man in that camp took his blankets out, and they piled 'em out up there in a pile, and they poured kerosene on it and they set that pile of blankets on fire. And they burned every blanket in that camp. (chuckles) I'll never forget that. There was a pile of blankets there that was half as big as this house. (chuckles)

SS Was a lot of 'em their own blankets that they were burning? Or was it all the company blankets?

AJ No, it was their own blankets. Their own blankets, because that's what they were striking for-- the company to furnish the blankets, and to furnish steel beds and bunks and mattresses, so that they would have a clean, decent place to sleep. Well, they got 'em. They got 'em. They finally got steel bunks. They were double bunks, what I mean, they were like one bunk above the other. Well, they got those. All steel bunks, and they furnished mattresses and pillows and blankets. We had sheet blankets. You know what sheet blankets is? A light cotton blanket. They furnished sheet blankets and they also furnished wool blankets for covering. And those sheet blankets were laundered every week. Everybody'd take your sheet blanket off of your bed and lay it right there, and what they called the bullcook, he'd come along in the morning and pick up all these. This fellow that done all the work around the camp, they called him the bullcock. Well, he would come along and collect all these sheet blankets, put 'em in a big basket, and then they'd take 'em to town and launder 'em, and in the meantime they had another supply there in camp. He'd come along and lay a

clean blanket on your bed, see, and you could make your own bed. Pillow slips the same way.

SS How often did they change?

AJ Once a week. Every once a week they'd change your sheet blanket - not all the blankets, but your sheet blanket, that you slept in. And they were laundered. And then they built bathhouses.

They built a big long building, and then they had some kind of a boiler in there to heat this water and sinks all along. And then they had shower baths in that same building. <sup>Now see</sup> one side there'd be a row of showers and on the other side there'd be a row <sup>of</sup> sinks to wash the clothes in. And clotheslines. Then there was heat in there so you <sup>that you could</sup> dry your clothes, see. Nobody slept in there, so they could open the doors, and get the. So that was how they finally got the sanitary conditions, you might say. Then you could wash your clothes. Then the lice disappeared. There was no blankets nor nothing to carry those, And you could wash your clothes everyday if you wanted to. And lots of hot water and clotheslines a hanging there, and soap there. And take a bath every night if you wanted, or three times a day if you wanted to. Well, that was different. That was really a revolutionary improvement, I think. Because then you had single bunk, see, you slept down here and some other guy slept above. Well, that was all right. 'Course, if you'd been here quite a while you'd get the lower bunk. New man come in, he'd have to get up above. But, still <sup>in</sup> all, you had a clean, <sup>sanitary</sup> bed. And then they got electric lights. They finally got electric lights. They had their own electric generating plant and there was electric lights in all the buildings, see. Even out in the yard. There at Clarkia there at Camp 42, I think it was, oh, it was like a small city. They had sidewalks built up, you know, and railings along the sidewalks; most of 'em were up off the ground. And there'd be a railing

along the side and then there were lights, you could see where you were going. That was a regular city there. You could see the lights all around.

SS Do you think that the changes did a lot for the attitude of the men?  
About the working that they do? Do you think it <sup>changed their feelings</sup> ~~about the work?~~

AJ I don't see how it could help it, because-- working in conditions like that, ~~it~~

I think you'd have a bad feeling about staying in camp, you know.

It was just a matter of how long could you endure conditions like that? Sleep in a lousy bed. No place to wash, no place to wash your clothes. You take the average man-- how long could he put up with that nowadays? How long would he put up with that? Well, you can just imagine yourself. Now you go out there and you're working for so much-- them days, it was so much a day, or so much an hour. Well, you go out there and you just do your best to stay as long as you can, and get what they used to call a little stake, and then go to town. But it was just a matter of how long you could stand that, see.

SS Did the change in the conditions in the camp-- at the same time, did they change the food at all? Did they make more variety?

AJ Oh, yes, oh yeah, the food-- well, it was just a revolutionary change I'd say. Because in later years, like I say, I was what they called a gypco cook there for a long time. I contracted the kitchens. And we had everything. I'd say we had practically everything, as far as the meats and fresh vegetables and fresh fruits. The one thing I can think of we didn't have would be crab legs or something like that, but we used to have oysters. Many and many a time I've fried five or six hundred oysters. Great big-- you know, for the evening meal, see. That would maybe be, like on maybe Friday night, see, something like

that. Well, we'd have a meat on Friday night but we'd also nearly always have some kind of a fish dish too. And quite often it would be fried oysters, not every Friday, but quite often there would be fried oysters and some kind of meat. And then other times, we'd have fried halibut or something like that to go with the you know, and shrimp salad and things like that. We even got canned shrimp, but we never got crab legs, but we had chicken, we had turkey, we had fish, beef, pork, and lots of it, and all kinds of fresh fruit. We even had oranges and apples and bananas, grapefruit. We had fresh grapefruit and canned grapefruit, but we found out that the fresh grapefruit didn't pay because they wouldn't take time to eat it. And they're in a hurry. They come in there and they want to get breakfast down 'em and get out of there. Well, so many of 'em -- we'd cut the grapefruit in half and all like that put it on the table. Well, there'd be a few of 'em would eat it, see, but the majority of 'em, they didn't take the time. So then we got canned grapefruit and put that on in dishes, and they could have segments. That went pretty good, and besides we'd have oranges and bananas and apples, and everything almost that's on the market.

SS I just want to get a rough idea of the timing <sup>of</sup> when the food got a lot more variety. About when in years did that happen? Was that a long time after the conditions improved in the camps, as far as you know -- getting this hot water and all that? Was it about the same time?

AJ Well, it was kind of a a gradual change. It didn't all come at once. Like from the early days, we just had dried fruits and all like that -- it didn't just happen in a day or two, or a week or a month or one year. It kinda come gradually. The war had a lot to do with that. Because men got scarce, and just

the natural conditions, I think, had a lot to do with it.

It's like it is now. It just was a gradual trend towards getting better food and better housing, better working conditions in the woods. More safety precautions and all like that. It didn't all just happen in just a couple of weeks, or maybe a year or two, anything like that. But it gradually-- I can remember when we gradually started to getting, like eggs. <sup>well</sup> get one case a week. Or maybe if we had a real big crew, we'd get two cases. Well, maybe we could give those men eggs one morning a week, see, and it'd always pretty near have to be hard boiled eggs, because that was all that we'd have enough for. And then gradually we got more eggs. Well, then after a while we gradually got all the eggs we needed, as far as baking and all like that is concerned, and putting on the table. And fresh fruits and things like that, they came gradually as the things got better,

For variety we used to buy these store bought cookies. They came in great big cans, like that, (measures with hands) that high. Big, round cans. I had some of 'em here.

And there was about, I don't know, about six or eight different varieties of cookies in that can, see. And they were all in there in layers-- there'd be a layer here, and a layer . . . Well, they got so they furnished them. Well, that helped a lot on our baking because we used to have to bake all the cookies, but we still did bake a lot of cookies. Anyway, we used to usually carry about five <sup>of cookies,</sup> different varieties, all homemade. And of course, we'd kinda vary 'em on the table. But we always had cookies, and everything like that on the table. . . .

(End of Side B)

Now like the bunks--the steel bunks--they got those pretty quick, right away, because the Wobblies wouldn't go to work unless they had those.

SS Do you remember which year that took place, and was it '17 when the  
AJ The big strike was in '17. *things got better*  
SS And the conditions got better the same year?  
AJ Oh, yeah, they gradually improved, you know.  
'Course that was quite an expense, you know, for the company to go to work and buy all those steel beds and mattresses and everything like that, springs and all. They didn't all get 'em right away, but they finally had to come to it. Some of the camps, of course, they put 'em in right away, but the Wobblies, they hung tough for their conditions.  
SS Do you think that there was a lot of variations *in* cooking in different camps? Were there both good and bad cooks in the camps?  
AJ Oh, yeah, sure. Yeah, it's like any other workmen, some of them were good and some were not so good, see. Just like I say, there was a lot of good, very good, cooks up there, a lot of 'em. Excellent cooks, and I knew a lot of 'em. Like Herman and Billy Mush and quite a few of those fellows were real cracker-jack cooks. And everything they made was good. But you know, them days there was so many camps -- there were hundreds of camps up in Idaho there. Well, they all had to have a cook, you know, see. Well, they'd have to send into Spokane here to get cooks out of the employment, you know. Joe Maloney, he furnished them for a long time. Well, they'd hire a cook out of Spokane here. Maybe he'd be pretty good; maybe he wouldn't be so good. But cooks as a class are awful drinkers, most of 'em, that is those migratory fellows, you know, like-- well they come in the camp and in a couple or three months they want to go to town again and get drunk. And maybe they'd bring liquor with 'em.  
That was another problem that I had in the camps, was that damn liquor. And, (I guess I'd better be careful)



SS That's Ok. You all got along pretty well.

AJ There were some cooks that just didn't care too much for one thing. They didn't figure they'd be there long, and they thought, well, get by a couple of months, you know. And after they got kind of tired they'd want to go to town, they didn't care what they put on the table. Yeah, there was quite a variance there in the cooks, because there was so many of 'em, you know. There'd have to be for all those camps. And most of 'em were migratory fellows - they'd be down in California, and then they'd be over in Oregon, and they'd be in Washington and Idaho, and they just went from camp to camp, you know. And some of them were pretty good, but some of them were not so good. They'd bring liquor out to the camp with 'em, you know. Well, you can't work and drink, I don't think. (chuckles) But like I say, cooks as a rule, that is the ones I knew - those migratory cooks, they were all of 'em pretty heavy drinkers. There like Red Watson, why he was an excellent cook. He was one of the best - but not for very long, because about a month, and that was it for Red Watson. And he had to get drunk and go someplace else and work. But there was a few of us guys that lived there, like Ralph Hanson and Billy Mush, and we lived there and we had our family, we had to stay; we couldn't very well migrate any place, (chuckles) because it was a matter of stay there. But yeah, there was a lot of difference in cooks, but most of 'em were good cooks, those fellows. There was another one there by the name of Herman B yers, my wife worked for him and her sister - they both worked for Herman B yers. He was a good cook too. But he was one of those fellows, he didn't stay too long. He was a good cook, a very excellent cook.

SS Was the kitchen help the same way?

AJ Oh, yeah. That was our problem. That was one of our problems, was to

get qualified men, kitchen help that would be steady and stay with you, you know. You'd hire a second cook, well, those fellows they traveled here and there. And good steady help was a problem. And then they got the girls in the dining room, well they stayed better, of course, than the men. And the women -- they kind of solved our problem of dining room help.

You never knew when some guy was gonna say, "Well, I'm going to town this morning." And that would be it. Well, somebody had to pick up his end there, and that was usually me.

SS Is that why they went to women flunkies, to *try to be steady*  
AJ Quite a bit. I think that was the primary reason, because the men flunkies were so undependable. And then they would drink a lot. They'd go to town, maybe like on Friday night or Saturday night and maybe they'd get drunk in town and wouldn't even come back. And I'd come back in camp and they'd be drunk. Well, you'd go to get 'em the next morning and they'd be so darn stupid drunk over there in that bunk they couldn't even get up. We had a lot of that too, you know. Well, then they'd bring liquor back to camp with 'em, and they'd be drinking until that was gone. You can't drink *and* keep your mind on what you're doing. But that was one of the problems with men-flunkies, they called 'em.

Once in a while you'd get a good man who would stay but now, like I say, maybe some guy'd say, "Oh, I'm going to town this morning." Somebody had to pick up his work until you got a man to take his place. Well, you'd probably have to send to Spokane, and maybe it took three, four days, maybe a week to get a man to replace him. Well, somebody had to pick up his tab while he's, Well, the other flunkies, they didn't like that, that put more work onto them. But I couldn't help

it. Well, they'd gripe to me about it. Well, I couldn't help it. I couldn't manufacture a man right there. And so that was one of our problems-- the help. There was a few, like the key personnel, they'd call it, most of them stayed pretty good. I'd usually try to get local fellows there to work in the kitchen with me, and they stayed better than these migratory fellows. They kind of give <sup>me</sup> a name up there of being a slave driver. I heard that quite a number of times, remarks about that "Shorty Justice is a slave driver". Well, maybe I was - I didn't realize it at the time, but I liked to have people do their work and do it right.

Not sloppy, you know, because they had plenty of time as a rule to do their work in a workmanlike manner. But like I say, maybe they'd have a bottle of liquor over there in the bunkhouse, and they'd be nippin' on that, you know.

They'd neglect, like on the table, they'd neglect to clean the tables properly and things like that. Now just for one example;

they used to have ketchup on the table in a bottle, see, and Worcestershire sauce, and all that, salt and pepper.

But you use the ketchup, there's always be a little get around the top of the bottle, see, you've seen that. Well, them darn guys, you know, they wouldn't wipe them off, maybe they'd leave them go there for a week at a time, and they'd get so goshdarn goood up, you know, under that cap that it was just terrible. Well, come to things like that, I had to watch all <sup>-them little</sup> things, you see. Well, they'd just neglect that, and they thought, "Oh, well, heck with it!" Little things like that. And then the salt and pepper shakers, you know, I've seen them darn salt and pepper shakers, fellows pick 'em up, you know, with their hands. And salt and pepper shakers would get-- you ask wife-- they <sup>get</sup> so sticky you couldn't hardly let go of 'em. <sup>any thing</sup>

Like in the morning when the flunkies were going along the table wiping off the oilcloth, you know--they had oilcloth on the tables-- instead of taking a clean, damp rag and wiping those salt shakers off, you know, and the ketchup bottles, and all things like that, they just let 'em go, see. Well, things like that, you know, you go along the table, here the ketchup bottle is all smeared up, salt and pepper shakers are all sticky, and the sugar bowls-- well, we have sugar bowls with a lid on 'em, them days, we had just a regular sugar bowl with a lid on it. Well, a lot of guys, you know, they had their spoon in their coffee, and they'd dip in the sugar bowl; well, maybe they'd get a spot in that sugar bowl. Instead of those guys cleaning those sugar bowls and getting those things, they'd just put the lid on and let it go. All those little things annoy you. Well, I was responsible for all that, see. The guys'd kick about that, and they'd kick about it-- "What's the matter with that cook in there?" Well, it's kind of hard to get around to see to all those little details when you got all your other work to do.

SS You'd tell 'em, and they would let 'em go.

AJ Well you'd tell 'em and they'd get mad. They don't like to have you tell 'em. Pretty soon they'd get up and quit. And you got so you're kind afraid to say anything to 'em because they'd walk out. Maybe two-three of 'em'd go at the same time, see. Well, that left you in kind of a bind there when, you know, ---

SS The cooks; they got a reputation for being touchy, you know, that's what you hear. And I wonder if that's part of the reason why. It was really hard to keep the kitchen going, to the satisfaction of everybody.

AJ You mean the cooks?

SS Yeah, the cooks in the kitchen crew, they had a reputation for being touchy.

AJ Well, they are. Yeah, I think you're perfectly right about that. They are. They're quite touchy, all right. And most of them are, I'd say

sensitive about the quality of their cooking. . They all think that they're pretty good. Naturally all these cooks, good or bad, they all thought they were one of the best, 't doesn't make any difference whether he could boil a pot of beans or not, they all thought they were good, you know. And to criticize their cooking in any way,

they're pretty touchy about that. And of course, a lot of 'em could just laugh it off and say, "Well, I'm doing the best I can," or something like that. Like that guy told me that time, he said, "Kid", he said, "you're a pretty good cook, 'but you can't bake beans worth a damn." (chuckles) "Well," I said, "Tom, maybe you're right.

<sup>seriously</sup> I got a lot to learn about it all right." But we just joked about it, you know. Oh, they kick about the soup and they kick about the hotcakes--heavy hotcakes. One thing they did like, these lumberjacks, and what they were darn particular about <sup>was to have</sup> their hotcakes hot. And we try to do that as much as humanly possible, you know, to have 'em as hot as we could. But even the best, some of them

<sup>Sam. How could you keep 'em hot like that?</sup> would gripe about the hotcakes being cold. Well, it was almost an impossible task to keep 'em hot all the time. We had great big long griddles there and we'd fry 'em as fast as we could while they were eating, but. . . you had to fry enough ahead in order

to put on the table so they'd have some to start on when they came in and sat down. Well now, maybe we had thirty, forty

set-ups, you know, thirty or forty different plates of everything.

Well, you had to have thirty or forty plates of hotcakes to go around.

Well it took, you know, you'd have to put four or five hotcakes on each plate. Well, to keep those hot, right off of the stove, it was almost impossible to have 'em; but then we'd fry while they were eating, and the girls would bring the plates back as fast they could and <sup>well</sup> refill 'em with hot hotcakes. But once in a while some guy'd get one that wasn't

smokin' hot. And that was one of those things, it's not like a restaurant. You come in and order hotcakes, and he fried your hotcakes and takes it right to you. But the way you got maybe forty different plates in order to go all around, you just can't have every one of 'em red hot. But even at that, they never got very cold because those girls picked those plates up pretty fast, I'll tell you. And they'd bring 'em back and we'd take 'em right off the griddle, put 'em on the plate and away they'd go out there with 'em again. So they never got too cold. But anyway some of those guys got pretty particular. You know, when you've got so much food in front of you all the time, three times a day, nothing looks good to you anymore, You know what I mean?

At home you don't probably have that, see. Well, the crew gets, some of 'em, a little bit cantankerous. They don't like this and they don't like that. It might be good wholesome food and everything, but when you got so much in front of you all the time--just like a horse, you turn him into the oats bin, you know, and he'll kill himself eating. But a mule won't do that. You can turn a mule into a bin of oats and he'll just eat so much and he'll quit; he'll not make himself sick. I don't mean these men make themselves sick, but, you know, there's a philosophy that when there's too much in front of you all time-- just like a boy with so many toys he didn't know what to do with 'em; he don't know what to play with. Well,

There was always a number of them in the crew that, well-- they didn't like this, they didn't like that. Of course, there's always something on the table that you don't like perhaps. You can't put food on the table and have everybody like every-

thing that's on there. There'll be things on there that maybe I didn't like. But even at that, there was always something there.

SS Can you give me an idea of the size of that operation, when you had the real big crew there, what was it? Camp 35, <sup>where you</sup> all those men? What <sup>was</sup> the <sup>size</sup> the dimensions of the cooking shed there, as far as the number of <sup>men</sup>?

AJ Dimensions?

SS Yeah, I mean, how much did you have to bake for those people, <sup>lets</sup> say?

AJ How much to bake?

SS Yeah. And how many <sup>men</sup>?

AJ Well, just on an average-- like the bread. We had to bake bread for the lunches and everything. Well, it would run around sixty loaves of bread a day, I'd say. Maybe some days a little less, some days a little more, <sup>but</sup> I'd think sixty loaves of bread would be pretty close average, and about the same number of pies. And you'd have to have pies for those lunches, and of course sometimes it'd depend a little bit on what kind of pie. Now like apple pie--everybody eats apple pie. Well, it would probably take a few more apple pies than it would some other kind. But it would run pretty close to sixty pies a day. Well, then we always had hot rolls of some kind for the evening meal. Either bread rolls <sup>like</sup> or <sup>like</sup> baking powder biscuits or corn bread or maybe bran muffins, or something like that. But we always had some kind of hot rolls. Well, that took probably four hundred rolls, at least, you know, for that many men.

SS You talking about three hundred <sup>and</sup> fifty men, <sup>is that</sup> right?

AJ Well, about three hundred men or along there, <sup>three</sup> hundred twenty five or three hundred and fifty men,

But if you're gonna have hot rolls, you gotta figure a little better than a roll to <sup>one</sup> man, you know. Like say

if you got three hundred men. you'd have to figure better than four hundred rolls. Of course, some don't eat any, some'll eat bread, but some'll eat two or three hot rolls.

Of course, if you run out of hot rolls it's not a serious thing because you've always got plenty of bread--that is, you better have! And then cookies and doughnuts and all those things, we kept those coming all the time. Maybe you wouldn't make doughnuts every day--maybe you'd make 'em today and then you'd skip a day or so, and then cookies--we kept three-four-five kinds of cookies on the table. Be sugar cookies, molasses cookies, oatmeal cookies, then we'd make what we called a honey cookie and different things like that. Well, we didn't make 'em all every day, but we kinda kept 'em in stock so they could put 'em on the table. Maybe they'd have about two or three kinds of cookies on the table, and doughnuts and pie and cake. Make cake about every day, keep it fresh. And then we'd make cupcakes, things like that.

SS What about the size of the crew that was involved there at the kitchen? How many people did you have in the kitchen?

AJ Well, there at Clarkia we had two bakers, and I had one baker nights and one in the daytime. Ralph, he used to work in the daytime with me. He was the head baker. I had a meatcutter, a second cook, and then there was myself. And then we had two dishwashers--they all had to be washed by hand--all the dishes.

And I think we musta had about nine to ten girls in the dining room. We had about fifty tables and there was about six men to a table. Sometimes there was more tables. The crew would fluctuate up and down, maybe twenty five to thirty men maybe from one day to the next, but it would run around fifty to fifty-two, fifty-five tables, and six men to a table. Well,



each girl would wait on about thirty men; that'd be about five tables. We had three diningrooms; we had one that way out of the kitchen, and another one this way, and another one this way. So they went three ways from the kitchen there, and then the storeroom was back here where we kept all our supplies, see. Well, I think in one of those diningrooms there was seventeen or eighteen tables, see. They was car camps, and the tables were on each side six men and then there was an aisle in between. Well, the girl that had these six tables here, you see, she was close haul to the kitchen; she could handle more tables than that girl way down there, see, 'Cause that was as far as from here to that garage door there, she had a long haul. by the time she come clear back here to the kitchen to fill or refill her dishes; she had quite a hike, see. Well, this girl here, she could wait on three or four tables while that girl down there was waiting on about two. So we had to break it up that way. Oh, I forget exactly how many girls we did have there. It'd be eight or ten. And of course, there was usually, out of that many, usually one of 'em was laid off or sick or something like that. Used to have an extra one to kinda fill in. But that'd be about the crew. Probably be eight or ten in the dining room, and then two dishwashers, and then there'd be the two bakers, and a meatcutter and myself. There'd be twenty people, I guess, along in there.

SS Could you delegate most or a lot of that responsibility? These people working under you would take care of their own jobs pretty well?

AJ Well, I used to hope they would. That was the understanding that they'd take care of their own job to the best of their ability. And of course, it was my responsibility to see that they did take care of their job as well as they could. And if they weren't doing their

job as well as they could, something had to be done about it. <sup>of these little details</sup> You kinda had to look after and see that they were being taken care of besides ordering the supplies. And then I had to do a lot of work besides <sup>the</sup> on the stove there; and bringing up the meals, you might say, was my responsibility, to see that the meals were up there and on time and prepared to the best of my ability, And I didn't only have to do my own job, I had to look to see that the other fellow was doing a reasonably good job, too. Of course, you couldn't always see everything.

SS So you spent a lot of your time cooking and also a lot of your time over-seeing what was going on. *You did both.*

AJ Well, yes, you had to do that. That was all included in your job, to see that the whole operation was running as smooth as possible. *And the ordering, that's quite a responsibility too, to keep <sup>enough</sup> supplies on hand.* and yet not too much of any one thing. Of course, dry staples like flour and sugar and things like that, not so much, but some things you don't want to get too big a supply on hand, because they deteriorate. And like I say, in early days we had no refrigeration to keep things; so it was kind of a battle to know just about how much of these things you were gonna have to have and keep that amount coming or keep it on hand. There was always problems and some

that were pretty hard to solve. You're working with people and you have all different kinds of people. You have to be able to get along with people and see that they get along among themselves as much as possible. The crew works together and you kinda got to keep an ear cocked for dissension and dissatisfaction and so forth among the help. But, like calling me a slave driver because I guess I did kinda pressure 'em a little bit—because I liked to see things kept clean. And I'm kinda of a crank about that. And there was one thing, I don't know whether I ought to mention <sup>it on this one</sup> or not, but <sup>(there's)</sup> one thing that I used to be a crank about and I still am.

We say now we'll go to the bathroom, but in them days it was on the side of the hill, you know. Well, I hate to see a man or anybody go to the toilet—we'll be plain about it—and come back and start right to work without washing his hands.

I had many and many an argument about that. And I made enemies, I know I did, about a little thing like that. Because I used to watch that *particularly*, because that's something I don't like.

Well, they'd go up there in the morning. naturally, everybody. There was always a certain amount of those guys that I used to keep an eye on. They'd come back and <sup>the</sup> their apron and go right to work. Well, I could not help but to mention that to <sup>a man.</sup>

I never come out and where everybody could hear it or anything like that, but I would always ask him in private to be sure when you go to the toilet, please when you come back, be sure and wash their hands before they go to work.

SS Nowadays they got the signs in all the bathrooms and restaurants for employees, they say, "Wash your hands" <sup>in the rest of places</sup> it's got a sign right there.

AJ Yeah, oh, yeah.

I don't

mean that I'm any more ~~so~~ or clean maybe than anybody else — but something like that was so plain, you could see, put on the apron and start right into work. Maybe <sup>the</sup> peel potatoes or something like that. I don't like that. I don't mean that I'm any better than anybody else, but there's no excuse for it, actually. Because there's always plenty of water there, and

it was just carelessness, see. I think that's very careless. Things like that, I guess, lot of fellows they say, "That Shorty, you can't get along with him, he's a slave driver." Well, I couldn't get along with anybody with a habit like that. I just couldn't. You'd be surprised — now there in the kitchen, we used to have a wash basin.

(End of Side C)

I didn't know it for quite a while, but he had some kind of an itch or something on his feet, and every night he'd come back in the kitchen and he'd soak his feet in this washbasin, see. Well, we all had to wash our hands in there, well, I was probably back in my bunkroom there and I didn't notice that until I think Ralph told <sup>He said,</sup> me about it. "You know that guy's soaking his feet in our washbasin?" "No," I said, "no." He said, "He's doing it every night, before he goes to bed he comes in here and soaks his feet in that washbasin." Holy Smoke, he could have got an old bucket or something. Well, I asked him about it. "Oh, well," he says, "you're too particular." And he went on to tell me, "That won't hurt nobody." And all this and that. I said, "Maybe so, but we can't have that." "Well," he said, "I've always done that, and nobody ever said anything to me about it before." "Well," I said, I'm very sorry, but we just can't — If you can get an old pail or a bucket or something it's all right.

have to wash our hands and face in that basin, and I don't think it's quite right that you should soak your feet in there." Well 'course, he got mad and so he persisted in doing that, and I had to let him go because there was nothing else I could do. And things like that -- well, he'd probably come to town and say, "Oh, that short guy, he's crazy," or something like that.

But I've always been kind of a crank about being as sanitary as we could, and with the equipment we had to use 'course we had to mix the bread and things with our hands. But we tried to keep our hands clean anyway. And most everything had to be mixed by hand. We didn't have any mixers or nothing.

But when it comes

to

SS

cleanliness. There are a couple of things you <sup>have</sup> said to me when we were talking that made the difference between an average or not so good cook and a good one, and I'd like you to tell me a little bit about them. <sup>I know</sup> One was being able to use the left-overs good, and the other one was being able to make the food different so you got a lot of variety.

AJ Oh, you mean to work up your left-overs?

SS Yes, and also to use your food differently.

AJ Well, actually, now you've struck something. Being able to utilize your left-over to a great extent. You can't use like everything--that's impossible. But being able to utilize these left-overs to a great extent, that is what separates the men from the boys. That's one thing right there. That <sup>is</sup> is the mark of a good cook and a good planner, and a man that can utilize these things to advantage.

There had to be ways to use up things that came back from the table as much as possible. Well, that is where you have to rack your

brain. Instead of throwing it in the garbage can, to utilize it again and make it something that's appetizing and something you can put on the table again. Anybody can go into that storeroom there, where there is everything you can imagine, and haul out enough stuff for a meal and serve that meal. <sup>most</sup> Anybody can do that. But then where you've got maybe fifty tables there, there's gonna be considerable things come back on those dishes off of those fifty tables. There's gonna be meat and potatoes and vegetables and everything come back. What you gonna do with that? <sup>then</sup>

Well, . . .

there's a lot of different ways to use or utilize come-back meats. And of course, potatoes and things, you can use those up in different ways, but that's where the work comes in. A lot of work comes in utilizing these left-overs. because you've got to figure out what to do with them, and it's a lot more work to use something the second time than it is the first time.

SS Would you stick 'em in stews or something like that?

AJ Well, sometimes you can use part of 'em in a stew and maybe ground up, maybe hash and things like that. Oh, different ways of cooking you use some of those things, like

if you had baked potatoes, you can always peel them and

put 'em in fried potatoes and things like that. Vegetables, you can pretty near always use come-back vegetables. But really the hardest thing to work over was come-back meat. You've got to figure out how to use that come-back meat, because you can't put it in the garbage can.

SS What do they call that putting in the garbage can? You told me they had a word, <sup>past year</sup> they had something they used to describe that, when they throw it out? You said that they <sup>was it</sup> eighty-six it? Or something like that?

AJ Oh, yeah. Well, like the things coming back from the table from supper--well, maybe there's something on there that's been worked over, see, and they bring it back. Well, pretty hard to work it over again, a lot of times. <sup>and</sup> So here comes all these dishes back, the cook, he's there of course, <sup>and</sup> there's guys helping you take care of this come-back stuff. "Well," he says, "what're you gonna do with so-and-so?" Well, maybe that's been on the table a couple of times. "Well, eighty-six." That means garbage can. Well, you're gonna keep away from that eighty-six because that's where the profit goes, down that garbage can. <sup>But</sup> you can't, just keep working over and over all the time. There's got to be a time when some of it's gotta go out. But to the best of your ability--that's one of the big jobs, is to utilize and work over this come-back food, whatever it is.. And that sometimes can be a time-consuming <sup>work</sup> to pick it over and sort out what you want, and what you can use, and what you can use in this and what you can use in that. 'Course, there's stews and hash and what they <sup>But</sup> call casseroles and things like that, you can work 'em into that. it always takes some other ingredients usually to be able to work it over.

SS What about the gyppo cooking? You said that..?

AJ The which?

SS The gyppo cooking? <sup>What</sup> was the reason they went to that? Because they had had their troubles keeping cooks?

AJ Yeah, that's about the primary reason. <sup>And</sup> I think another thing was that these migratory cooks wasted so much. They were trying to get away from that terrible waste, because these fellows come in for just a month or two or three, they didn't care.

They didn't care. It was too much trouble to try to utilize these leftover things, they'd just throw it in the garbage can, and go in and get new. Of course, that's the easiest way to get up a meal. Just to go in to the storeroom, and you got unlimited supplies of things there almost, and just haul out whatever you need and put it on the table, and when it comes back throw it in the garbage can. That's the easy way to do, you see. You can clean everything up every night. You don't have anything to "What am I gonna use that for? What am I gonna put this in, and what am I gonna put that in?" You don't have to worry about that--throw it in the garbage can. Well, the cookhouses were running way in the hole, see. And they were trying to figure out some way to offset that, so they could get cooks that would take an interest and stay on the job and not waste so much. Well, they thought that if you were, like they say, working for yourself, gyppoing, you would be more careful, more interested, and then if you got a percentage of what was made, you would be more interested, you'd have more of an incentive to save things.

They give them a certain percentage of what the cookhouse made. Well, they tried that. But even that didn't seem to work out too good. I think I was about the only one really that worked under that system for any length of time and made any kind of a success. because they just didn't take that much interest in it. And then the camps began to dwindle down; there wasn't as many, <sup>first</sup> the camps got bigger and fewer of them. And then the men, they seemed to resent that--especially the union. They resented a gyppo cook. They didn't like me there. They didn't like it because I was a gyppo cook. And they said, "Well, he's trying to make all the money he can, and he's taking it out of our bellies." Actually just the opposite was true, because we were putting more on the table, that



is, I know I was in our camp there. We were putting more variety on the table than they had ever had before. And I think it was pretty well cooked. And Ralph was there with me for years, and I think he'll tell you the same thing. I might of done some things wrong, but from what I could observe I think that most of the gyppo cooks put more variety on the table. But the union didn't like that. They didn't like that. And they were the ones that put up the big squawk. They said, "Well, he's gonna make all the money he can, and he's gonna cut down on the food!" And all like this, but that was not true, that was absolutely not true at all, because we had everything in the camp. We had everything that you could imagine. Just like I said before, we even had little tiny cans of fruit and sardines and things like that they would put on the table. Now like on Friday morning, we would have cases and cases of sardines. We'd put a can of sardines behind each man's plate, see, so that he could take those sardines out for his lunch. Something for just a little variety, change. You know, variation of the lunch. Something besides a sandwich. And they had those little cans of fruit, same thing. But those behind a man's plate, see, and they could take those to the woods and eat 'em with their lunch to vary the lunch, you know, make it a little bit more. Because a cold lunch is bad enough at best, so they furnished those. And oranges and bananas apples, and all those kind of things to try to make the lunch in the woods. Of course, those that didn't take a lunch in the woods, they had the same thing, but we strive to please these men as much as humanly possible with the food. But any person in the food business will tell you that it's impossible to satisfy everybody, even if you go into a restaurant and order a meal. Well a lot of people kick on that, because it isn't seasoned quite right. Food is something, I think, people are more fin-

icky about-- what they like to eat and how they like it seasoned. And you can take eggs, for one thing, -- If you're gonna have fried eggs for a big crew of men in the morning, you can't fry every egg separate just to suit every person. You've got to fry 'em, -- just average, just fried eggs, not hard, not too soft. But a lot of people, they want their eggs turned over -- they want 'em fried hard. And the next guy he wants his soft, and the next guy he-- break the yolks-- just turn mine over easy, and all like that. Well, you can't do that. And the same way with boiled eggs. "Well," the guy said, "I don't like soft boiled eggs, I want my eggs hard boiled." The other guys say, "I can't eat a hard boiled egg." Well, there you've got a case of, (chuckles) So it all boils down to do the best you can. But it's a known fact though that after they've been in camp for three or four months, maybe six months and the same cook, the food -- the food don't taste near as good as it did at first. Like a new cook comes in the camp, maybe. Well, a lot of times, gee whiz, he's great, he's fine, everything's just right, see. It's a little different -- but each cook is a little different, no matter whether he's good or bad or indifferent, -- Maybe it doesn't taste any better but it tastes different, and that's a change. A change is what they need, see. Actually, I don't think any cook should stay in a camp more than about three months, -- then bring in somebody else.

The food in these camps was a big topic of conversation. really, because that's something they all talk about, the grub. -  
No matter how good it is, it gets kinda tiresome,

[illegible]

But a new man comes in, and what he puts on the table, maybe it's better, maybe it isn't, but anyway it's different, see? Two men can go to work and <sup>take</sup> the same <sup>piece</sup> of meat, cook it anyway you want it, and it'll taste different. It's just like you'd go to different restaurants and things taste different, see. And, two housewives can get a dinner, one gets dinner here one gets dinner there, and it taste different.

SS Well, did you try to make your food as different from night to night as you could? I mean did you try for a lot of variety?

AJ Well, you try for variety, yes, you do, you try for variety, because that is something that is very essential. Not have the same. ~~What I make, and~~ what this other fellow makes, might be the same thing, maybe take a beef stew, or anything- Well, maybe they're both good, see, maybe this other man's got a better stew than I have, but anyway it tastes different, see? Maybe they'd been eating stew I made for four, five, six months. Well, of course, I can make different kinds of stews, and all like that, but this man comes in and he makes his different. Well, it's a change, see? And that's a great thing, to have a change. To have something taste different. Maybe I can make a half a dozen different kinds of beef stews, well now this man can do the same thing, sure. Well, his tastes a little different than mine, see? Maybe it tastes better, and maybe it don't, but anyway it's different. And they know that right away, you see. You can tell that yourself. And like I say, the food in these camps, when the men stayed for months and months and months--it was a big topic of conversation. Everybody talked about the cook. Everybody, all the men. He was either good or bad, or he was a no-good son-of-a-gun <sup>something like that.</sup> Because, I'll tell you,

when you stay out in one of those camps for a summer of months, it gets pretty monotonous. There wasn't much to talk about, actually. And in them days they didn't have radios and daily newspapers and televisions and all like that. There wasn't much topics for conversation, only just kick about the camp foreman and the cook. Them two guys is the ones that's really got the brunt of all the abuse, because the foreman, he was a no-good slave driving son-of-a-gun, and the cook he was a mulligan-mixer, and all like that. Well, it really didn't mean anything, actually, but like I say, they had to talk about something. And they didn't have magazines much to read either, or newspapers, no diversion, you know.

You take a cook, he comes into this camp. Well, he's working seven days a week, around the clock, you might say. He's gotta figure these meals around the clock. He gets up early in the morning, and he works practically all day, maybe he gets to lay down in the afternoon for an hour or so, but, anyway he's working every day, seven days a week, he's got no diversion. You know, that gets pretty monotonous too, after a while. Day in and day out, day after day, week after week. Well, if he isn't pretty interested in his work, it gets monotonous. You begin to think, "Oh, heck, that's good enough." If a man is not pretty dedicated to his job, and if the job isn't a real necessity, after a while, he begins to get careless. I can realize that, and I think anybody can stop and consider that. You take long hours, every day, seven days a week. Now like when your work is done in the evening, what're you gonna do? There's no newspaper, very seldom. There's no radio, no TV to look at, no nothing. Well, maybe you can go and play cards some place for a little while in the evening.

or something like that. It's <sup>and it</sup> monotonous, sometimes couldn't hardly blame these fellows for bringing a bottle of whiskey back with 'em for a little diversion. ~~because it was~~

SS How long would you be in that camp before you get to go away on just days off? How long would you cook before you get time off?

AJ Well, there was really no set time. You just go there and stay until- maybe something come up. You'd want to go to town, or maybe you'd get a toothache, or maybe you get sick and you have to go into the doctor, something like that. Otherwise, sometimes you'd stay for six months, and never... Well then, you want to maybe go home. Well, I can remember I went home for a day--Christmas, and that was about the only vacation I had there for. And then later on, we would get, like on the Fourth of July. They got so they had roads into the camps later, and a lot of the fellows would drive their cars in, and they'd go out for. But in the early <sup>days</sup> when there was no roads to them camps, you had to either walk in or ride a horse something. But you'd stay there, by gosh, until you just tired and wanted to go to town. But it was pretty monotonous because the only thing you could do was take a walk around <sup>through</sup> the woods maybe. (chuckles)

SS Well, what I was gonna ask you about was how the gyppo worked, when you gypiped the kitchen? How was that set up for you, as far as the arrangement with the company for pay? <sup>out of</sup> people and that sort of thing?

AJ Well, the way it was set up - the company - had a book-keeper, and they kept track of all the books, all the income and all the outgo. And each man was charged so much for each meal, and it kept going

up and up. I forget just what it was--a dollar and something a meal. But anyway, the company bookkeeper kept track of how many meals was served. Maybe like for breakfast would be three hundred.

We had to check on those meals, see, pretty close. Because everybody that eat there was supposed to give credit to the kitchen for that meal. Well, all the supplies and all the labor costs had to come out of what was taken in for those meals during the month. And then what was left, that was mine. I had to pay all the labor cost in the kitchen and all the supplies, food and everything, whatever that come to. Then that was deducted from what was taken in by the men's board. Now, like if you was paying a dollar and a quarter a meal,

well the company bookkeeper he kept track of all that, see; I didn't have to worry about that. I ordered the supplies and supervised the help and then we'd take an inventory every month--the last of every month, see. We'd take inventory of all the supplies that were on hand. Well, of course, that was all figured against what we'd bought, see? All the canned goods and all the meats.

Not the equipment, but just the things that had been. I didn't have to pay any rent or anything like that on the kitchen or the equipment. That belonged to the company, of course. But that was all figured, what came in and what was paid out, and whatever difference was, I got that. I was guaranteed wages, anyhow, because the law requires that.

SS Did what you made vary much from month to month?

AJ Well, I used to do pretty good, yeah, I did pretty good, there. Of course, you had to have a big crew in order to make good. You couldn't come out on a small crew, because volume is what you had to have to make money, you know, like any other business, practically.

But if we had a big crew I used to make pretty good money. I made <sup>like</sup> as high as twelve hundred dollars a month there. Of course, it would vary, it wasn't always like that. <sup>And</sup> that is the thing that the union didn't like. I don't know how it got around, but it would get around--you can't keep those things, you know. Even the kids in town would throw it up to my daughter in school there. And I don't know how in the world, because I never told anybody. So that was one of the agreements, that I was not to reveal one way or the other--whether I was going broke or not. But anyway it gets out somehow. Of course, I didn't make that much money every month, but I made pretty good there for a while. And of course, I worked hard-- I done two men's work, you might say. And that was the argument that I put up to the union. They wanted me to work for wages, see. And I said, "Well, I'll do that, if you will let me work eight hours like you're working, see? The same as you work-- the union men in the woods. I'll do that." But you'll have to put another cook in here, another shift, because you can't do this work in one eight hour shift-- nobody.

If you'd put another cook in there, I will go for straight wages, and work on a shift, and this other man can take the other shift." Oh, gee, they wouldn't do that. "Well," I said, "What do you want me to do, work twodays every day for one day's labor? I'm working anywhere from twelve to fourteen hours a day, every day in this kitchen, you can't get away from it. You wouldn't want to go out there and work twelve hours a day in the woods for the same wages.

"Would you?" "Well, that's different" They don't like the gyppo. But they were gypping out there; they were all working by the thousand. The sawyers got so much a thousand feet. But they didn't want the cookhouse to be gyppo because

they said, "Well, they're taking it out of our stomachs." But it finally boiled down to the thing--- they got me out, there's no doubt about that, the union. They put the pressure on the company. And during the war there, they could almost dictate the policy to the company, because lumber was number one priority. They had to have lumber, and they wanted lumber, and they threatened to strike that camp. Well, that was the biggest camp in the country, and they didn't want a strike in that camp, because that would be a very serious thing for the lumber industry, because they were getting out a lot of timber.

(End of Side D)

AJ Yeah, that was what they told 'em. Because the union sent a committee down to Lewiston, see, that was the headquarters. They sent this Johnson up there, they called him. He was the head organizer up there in Bovill. They sent a committee of three down to the manager at Lewiston--his name was Billings. And they told him, "If that cook doesn't join the union, we're gonna strike up there at camp." Well, that was a serious thing, you know, they didn't want that to happen. So Billings came up to camp one day, he and another couple of fellows. So they were for lunch, and after lunch he called me in the office there. "God, Al," he said, "we've got a problem here. The union, you know they're pretty strong, and they'll shut this camp down unless you join the union. There'd been a committee down there talked to <sup>and</sup> me about it. They told me that they want this camp one hundred per cent union, and they said the kitchen crew was about the only one that's not lined up, not organized. And if you don't join the union, of course, the rest of the crew don't join. Well God, Al, I don't like to see you leave, and I know we can't shut this camp down. Why don't you join the union?" I said, "No, Mr. Billings,



I won't join the union, but I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a week to get another cook. I've been here a long time and I'm tired, anyway. I think it'd be a good change, so I think I'll go home for a while. They'll be more satisfied, maybe. I don't like to have this dissension anyway."

"Well," he said, "that's up to you, of course, that's your decision." "Well," I said, "I'll stay a week, and that'll give you a chance to get another man. I'll do what I can ." So I did. I told him, "You get another man and I'll stay til' he comes." I did. I think it was only about four, five days they had a man up there from Spokane. I forget his name - I knew him too - but I can't think of who it was now.

He was an old timer at that business. Well, anyway he came in there. But Ralph Hanson, he stayed on, see? Of course, I didn't blame him for that. He stayed on. But this fellow only stayed three, four days, he said, "Well, God <sup>al</sup>mighty, I never saw that many men in my life before. I ain't gonna stay." He only stayed a couple or three days. Well, they got another fellow, Lyle Pearson - I knew him real well. They got him out of Spokane. He was a good man too; Lyle was a real good man. But Ralph <sup>al</sup> said he was drunk the night he got there. (laughter) And he said "the next morning he got up to get breakfast, he come in and got me and said, 'By God Ralph, come on out and give me a hand a getting breakfast. I'm not feelin' too good.'"

But anyway, Lyle stayed on <sup>and</sup> I guess he done a good job. Ralph told me, <sup>he</sup> said, "Lyle done a real good job," but they cut the crew right down there after just a short time; I don't think it was more than a couple of weeks, something like that.

So they didn't have too much of a crew

there after that, but Lyle, he stayed on, I guess. And he was a good man. But like I say, he used to drink a little, but he was a good cook. From what Ralph said, he stayed there and he got sobered up. But anyway, they cut the crew way down so that he didn't have that problem.

SS Was that the last that you cooked in the woods?

AJ Me? No, I went back and cooked for the Potlatch again, after that a while, up at Elk River. But I don't remember now how long I was there. But I don't remember now how long I was there. They were stationed right in town there, in a car camp, and I went up there. I was staying at home there, and they called me down to the office, and they said they needed a man up at Elk River. And so, I said, "Well, I'll go up for a while." So I went up there, and it was right in the dead of winter, so I stayed there a while. I was there four-five months, up there. So then I negotiated for the restaurant there in town. This woman that was running the restaurant, she'd been in there for a good many years; she was getting quite old and she wanted to get out, so, I thought, "By gosh, I'm gonna try that." So I bought the restaurant there from this lady, and we ran that, I think, for about two years. And we did pretty good there - real well, in fact. But it was right during the rationing time, you know, like meat and all those kind of things were awful hard to get. All restaurants were having trouble getting meat; and well, eggs and milk and all those things, had to have red points for things like that. And they were awfully hard to come by. And of course, the camps they had been cut back real drastic on their meat supplies of all kinds, and it was getting pretty rough in camp too, to put out a meal. I remember up at 32, there, the last order of meat I got while I was there, all it

was was a front shoulder. Well, it was a big one, it was a big front shoulder. Well, what you gonna do with that? About the only thing you can do is make a big stew out of it. And so I was kinda disgusted, anyway, ~~and was a tree~~.

SS You left the camp ~~right in that period of time there?~~

AJ We lived in Bovill. I stayed home for a while and then they called me to go up to Elk River there.

SS Is that where the restaurant was, in Elk River?

AJ No, the restaurant was in Bovill. <sup>we</sup> We bought the restaurant there in Bovill, and we stayed in that but it was awful hard to get anything, you couldn't hardly buy soap or anything like that. It was terrible. And meat, I just used to have to go around and scrounge ~~the~~ meat where I could. And well, <sup>even</sup> the fellows out in camp weren't getting much meat. They were cut down, way back on meat, you know. And of course, I knew all them lumberjacks around there. Well, they'd come in from camp, you know, and they'd want a meal; they'd come in the restaurant there, "By gosh, Shorty, you got a T-bone steak or something?" I said, "Where would I get a T-bone steak?" "Well," they'd say, "Come on, now, give us something. We haven't had no meat out in camp for a week." And like this. Well, I'd scrounge around and get 'em something, you know. I had ways and means there- (chuckles) Well, you know the menu was not supposed to have more than one meat item on the menu, see? Well, I'd have macaroni and cheese and stuff like that, you know, but they didn't want that. They wanted a steak or some pork chops or something. But I was doing a tremendous business there. I was the only place to eat there for miles around, and I was working myself to death.

SS Could you get meat from the farmers?

AJ Well, this don't go on record too much. I was getting meat from the

farmers, alright.

SS That's what I would figure.

AJ Yeah, had to. There was nowhere else because you had to have points to get this meat from a legitimate source, and I couldn't get them points. Because I had to have points for eggs, cheese, milk-- red points for all those kind of things. Like all this animal stuff, like cheese, milk..

SS Was this at the end of the war, right after the war?

AJ Yeah, right during '42, '43, along in there, I think it was. My memory's playing tricks on me, I can't exactly remember. But I remember, gosh, I used to go out at night farmers down around

Kendrick, down in there, they'd come into town and they'd come in there and say, "Well, Al, I got-so-and-so, if you want it I'll bring it in for you." "Well, bring it in," I'd say. They'd bring in a couple of hogs and I had a big storage plant in the back there, and I used to cut all my own meat there. Then I bought meat down at Deary there from Anderson in the store, and he was pretty good, he give me a lot of meat that way. I really wasn't entitled to it. I had a lot of meat there, alright, but I didn't have it on the menu. (chuckles)

SS I'll bet a lot of guys were doing the same thing.

AJ Oh, they were all doing the same thing. I know those fellows in Moscow why, they were agoing gettin' meat from these farmers around. If you didn't use any more meat than what you'd get for those points, you wouldn't have had. But it was a kind of a dog-eat-dog proposition. I got tired of that too, you know, fighting around, trying to get a little meat, and some eggs. And you couldn't even buy soap. I sold cigarettes there. Well, they'd come in there with all these oddball brands of cigarettes. In order to get a case of, you know, the good cigarettes like what was selling-- Lucky Strikes, and so forth,

... you had to take four-five cases of odd-  
ball like Dominos, and that kind of stuff. Well, I had cigarettes like  
that piled up under the counter there, and nobody'd buy 'em. You put  
a package of Chesterfields, or something like that out on the counter,  
they'd go like that, and here I had all these other darn things. I'd  
say, "Do you want some Dominos?" or whatever I had. No, nobody'd buy 'em.  
In order to get a case of saleable cigarettes, I had to take three or  
four cases of that junk, see? Same way with soap. To get a case of  
decent soap to wash dishes with and so forth, I had to buy a lot of  
other darn junk. I just used to throw it out in the garbage. But  
they took advantage of you that way, see?

SS Well, was it after that that you came up to Spokane?

AJ Yeah, yeah. We sold the restaurant and came to Spokane. It was  
such a dogfight to get things, and I just got disgusted. I was working,  
gee whiz, because we had the train crews there, see. The company didn't  
seem to have any place to board 'em at that time, and we had the train  
crews there. And sometimes there'd be twenty five or thirty of them.  
They wanted breakfast around five o'clock; they wanted to get out early  
in the morning. I had to be down there and get breakfast. ...  
... They wanted to eat. Well,  
pretty long hours, you know. And then they'd be way late in the evening.  
They'd work over-time. Maybe they wouldn't get in there for supper till  
seven or eight o'clock. Well, I'd stay there and have supper for them  
guys. There'd be ten, fifteen of 'em, twenty of 'em, and they'd  
want supper. No place else to eat. Well, I was puttin in pretty long  
hours there. I was making money, all right.

SS Is that place on Main Street in Bovill, near the fire department?

AJ Yeah, yeah, it's right there. It's still there yet. You been in there?

SS Yeah.

AJ Well, I ran that for two years.

SS I see.

AJ I don't know who's got it now. Bailey had it for a long time. There was a local fellow bought us out, there. I don't think he was in there long. And then, I guess it changed hands several times. <sup>Said</sup> had a lot of the company men there. We had a big business there, and I couldn't get no help, you know. In fact, during the war you couldn't hire. I had a couple of girls there, but they got married. My wife and I there, we couldn't do it all. I hired what I could, but it got pretty hard to find any. Oh, you know, they <sup>wanted to</sup> go to the city, and there just wasn't any young people around there to hire any more. Seemed like all the young people were going to the city.

SS I want to ask you about the holidays in the camps there. When you had the kitchen you really laid out some spreads, on the big holidays?

AJ Big holidays?

SS You said on the holidays in the camps. You said, like on Christmas and Thanksgiving you had a real big spread?

AJ Well yes, now like, Christmas and maybe New Years, we would give them. Now, of course, this wasn't really way back in the early days, but well, probably it started in around about the '30's along in there. Well for Christmas, we would have just about everything. We'd always have roast turkey and fried oysters. We'd always have that for Christmas dinner. And of course, the men didn't work on Christmas. We'd have that at noon, usually, the big dinner probably at noon. We'd always have roast turkey and we'd have fried oysters as a rule, they liked fried oysters. Well, we'd have all the trimmings like they say. We'd have cranberries and sweet potatoes, and mashed potatoes and a couple of vegetables, and two or three kinds

of pie. Be mince pie and pumpkin pie and nearly always a soft pie, a lemon pie or something like that. Usually have about three kinds of pie. And then we'd have some kind of a plum pudding or something like that, you know, a regular Christmas pudding. And of course, everything else that went with, you know, potatoes and gravy and vegetables and dessert. And a lot of times, they even give 'em cigars, and a package of cigarettes behind their plate, and there'd be oranges, and apples and all those things. Everything almost that you could imagine for a Christmas dinner, and a lot of times it'd be the same thing on New Years. I know Axel come in up there one time when we was up to Clarkia there, and he said, "Al," he said, "you know the boys have been doing a real good job of getting the timber out this winter.

I think we ought to give 'em a little treat. Why don't we give 'em a big dinner for New Years?" "Well," I said, "that's fine, we'll do that." So we did. We give 'em another Christmas dinner on New Years. We had pretty near the same thing, a little variation, but I think we had fried chicken that time, and everything that went with it, you know, potatoes and gravy and dessert, and all that stuff.

Didn't have cigars and cigarettes, but we had everything, pies and puddings and cakes and everything on the table.

He said, "What do you think, we give 'em another big dinner?" "Well," I said, "fine, we'll give 'em everything we got." They were happy with that, and that's the way. But of course in the early times they didn't get all those things. But I think that was the last Christmas I was up there.

SS

Did you have much to do with the foreman? Like Axel? Did you work much with him?

AJ Oh, you bet, right with the foreman, yeah, you betcha. Like I said before, they wanted these meals on time, that is, give or take maybe a minute. but not more. And I'd check with Axel every morning. Of course, he always come through the kitchen.

They always eat right on this end of the dining room, and they'd come through from the office, and I'd check with him <sup>sometimes</sup> a couple of times a day, whenever I'd happen to think of it, with our time, see? Of course, I'd try to keep my time with his. He was the camp boss, and if I was a minute off, we'd check on it. Oh, yeah, you had to work close with the foreman because he was the big cheese around there. And Axel, I'd check with him every morning, and lots of times every evening when he'd come in. We'd try to keep coordinated that way, because them guys ~~wanted breakfast~~ they wanted it at that time, they didn't want it twenty-five minutes to seven--the same way at night. They were pretty particular about that night meal, boy. They wanted that right on time.

SS I think it's pretty interesting that in this real big camp that they had the two of you there because from what I've heard, Axel Anderson had quite a reputation as a good boss, and you had quite a reputation as a good cook.

AJ Well, I don't know about that. I had a lot of enemies there, <sup>for</sup> There's no doubt about all that because, the union-- maybe they have another version of why I got out of there. But I wasn't let out or anything, but I would have been let out; <sup>because</sup> rather than shut that camp down. they woulda let me go. I couldn'ta blamed 'em for it, but I wasn't going to be <sup>because</sup> that stubborn there was no sense in it, And anyway, I'd been there a long time and I was tired. And like I said before, I think a change is good for the crew. It's



just like you getting up in the morning, and maybe you have ham and eggs, or something, well, ham and eggs is very good, but you probably don't want it three hundred and sixty-five days in a year. You'd rather have maybe a bowl of mush sometimes. Well, it's that way with a different cook coming in. Maybe he's better and maybe he ain't better, but anyway it's different. I thought it was time, anyway, for a change that way. Well, the same way when I went up to Elk River, relieved that fellow up there. Well, gee whiz, I relieved Shorty Tribble one time, you know. Well, Shorty was a real good cook, there's no doubt about it, one of the very best, and he was a lot better than I was at that time, I know that. But, anyway, I went up there and relieved Shorty; and well, everything was fine, see, because I'll tell you, Shorty was one of these physical culture guys. .

I mean, he was quite a guy to take his physical exercises, and he got so, I guess, from what I heard now, he got so he was paying more attention to his exercises than... But anyway, out in the storeroom he had a place fixed up with a punching bag out there, and he'd be out there, you know, working on them and it got so, I guess, he kinda got neglecting things. But anyway, I understand they let him go, and so I went up there and took over for Shorty Tribble. But Shorty was one of the best cooks in the country, I'll say that, but he was getting tired, I guess, but anyway, .

SS How many years do you think it took you to really master the kitchen, so you became a top-notch cook, I mean when you started, you must have had a lot of learning to do.

AJ You learn something every day, Sam. Cooking is something-- just like going to school, you learn something every day. You can work in the kitchen for your lifetime, and you can still pick up things that I've had fellows come along, practically on the bum, looking for jobs.

Put 'em to work washing dishes, you know, and those guys, some of them, I've even had them show me pointers, pretty good things, too.

... They picked that up someplace else. There's always somebody that knows, you know, that knows some things too, about... He might be a tramp cook, but he might have some pretty good ideas too that you've never thought about. And I've had guys come along on the bum and work in the kitchen there, maybe with me for a while, washing dishes or doing something. And they'd see you doing something. They'd say, "Well, <sup>Some of 'em</sup> you ever try so-and-so, do this or that?" "No." "Well, why don't you try so-and-so." "Well, by golly that's a good idea, why didn't I think of that?" But you know, you can't never master it all, and I've worked with some good <sup>chefs</sup> too, at the hotel down here. I've seen six chefs come and go down at the hotel while I was there, and they were pretty good ones, most of 'em. If they hadn't a been they wouldn't a been there. But even at that, they didn't know it all. We had some good topnotch chefs down there, and I was in the purchasing department, I didn't have much to do with the chefs, only to order. But I used to be up there once in a while <sup>and</sup> I'd watch those fellows, and even I knew some things that they didn't know. I don't claim to be a chef or anything like that, I'm just a plain cook, but I used to watch them guys sometimes and I'd see them doing things, and I thought, 'Well, I'd be gosh darned if I don't think I got a better way than that.' But I never said anything because I have nothing to do with that department. But even as good as they were, they didn't know it all. And I don't think anybody can learn all about food no matter if he lived to be a hundred years old.

I've seen some darn good cooks in those

camps, excellent cooks. But, even at that, they didn't know everything.

*You can learn something every day, that is if you're in the mind to.* Of course, some guys just go along, they don't pay no 'tention, but if you're interested and want to improve your skill, you can pick up cookbooks and you can read them and pick up pointers. There's many ways to learn things about cooking because food is so many varieties, and so many ways of preparing things: eggs, and all kinds of meats. You could study for two or three lifetimes, I don't think you could know it all, becaus<sup>e</sup>.

SS How do you think cooking for a lot of men or a lot of people compares with cooking , like a chef does <sup>he</sup> just makes a dish for one person. Can you cook almost as good for a lot of people as you can for just making it individual-like?

AJ Well, I don't know, I think in a lot of ways you can. If you have the proper facilities and the ingredients and you have the time, I think you can. Now I know I used to go ahead and get a better meal there than I can here at home. (chuckles) But, of course, there's a lot of things that they say should be put together in small portions,

I imagine you can do better cooking for a small group than a large . . . I've cooked for the army. And like I was talking about Herman Gottschalk, he said he wouldn't cook for a big crew, he said, "You can't do the same. I'm not gonna take on more than I can do and do it right."

- Certain kinds of cakes and things, you can do better by making those, you know, really in a smaller batch, I think. But I've seen the time when I made fifty angel food cakes, you know. Well, you

couldn't mix 'em all at once. I'd make about maybe ten at a time, see? And angel food cakes was pretty particular to make. Well, I didn't make them too often. But maybe these big bakeries have a way of making 'em now in big-- but of course, we had to do everything by hand. I think for things like that, perhaps like a sponge cake--that's something that takes a little care, and I think you can do better by making not too much at one time. But of course, roasting meat and things like that, you can roast a large amount. We used to roast ,

maybe fifteen, eighteen turkeys. But things you have to mix and put together, I guess, perhaps certain things that is better all right in smaller amounts.

SS How many ovens did you have there at the camp?

AJ Well, let's see, I think we had seven. We had two kitchens, see. We had <sup>one</sup> in the big kitchen; we had three oven Lang-- they were big Lang stoves, they're made in Seattle. <sup>and the other</sup> we had two of them. And then in the other kitchen we had one big stove <sup>single</sup> with one big oven in there.

So that <sup>that</sup> give us seven ovens there, altogether. And <sup>and many</sup> was the main kitchen and then another smaller kitchen down here.

Yeah, we had, I'm pretty sure, seven ovens there; and I'm pretty sure they were three oven Langs. But you know, you got your meats to roast, you got your pies to bake, and you got your bread to bake, and the rolls to bake, and you've got cookies, and all those things. Takes quite a bit of oven space. You've got to plan

-- what you can do this day in your ovens, you know, see?

Ralph and I, we'd talk that over.

SS The night before?

AJ Well, sometimes the night before, maybe in the morning. Ralph, he'd usually take inventory in the dining room-- what pastry they had, see?

He'd go in after breakfast and size up what he thought we needed.  
*(End of Side E)*  
 "We got so-and-so, today." "Well," I'd say, "we got so-and-so to go in the oven." And we'd kind of figure out what we could do that day, what we could get through the ovens, you know. Maybe there was something we couldn't get through the ovens, maybe we'd have to postpone that. Well, we'd make what we could, we'd kinda have to plan that together, you know -- what he had to go in the oven and what I had to go in the oven and things like that. So we had to work that out together. There was no use mixing up a batch of something if <sup>you</sup> couldn't bake it. But there was always bread and pies ~~that~~ had to go in, and meats, and things like that. And then sometimes there'd be big <sup>bakes</sup> puddings and things like that that go in the oven.

Well, we'd have to kind of figure on just what you could do and what you couldn't do. <sup>And</sup> depend <sup>ing a good deal</sup> on what I had coming up and what he had. He'd go in and inventory-- maybe a certain kind of cookies would be low. "Well," he'd say, "we need so-and-so today." "Well, can we get by?" <sup>we</sup> "Maybe can get by til tomorrow or the next day."

"We got so-and-so to go in the oven today, we can't hardly get those cookies through." "Well, that's all right". Well, maybe the next day we could <sup>put</sup> it on and make a lot of cookies, see? But just like planning anything else, you had to plan your moves, what you could do. You had to work together with your baker because he had a lot of things to go in those ovens. <sup>Help of any kind, what it means</sup> *(best)* no mixes or anything like that. Everything had to be done by hand. Bread mixed by hand. But that's the way it was done, they didn't think anything about it. But

now, like in the hotel down there, they had in the bakeshop

every mechanical convenience you could think of, you know.

And it makes it easy, see? And faster, too. Great big bread mixer there as big around <sup>as</sup> you know you can mix your bread there, rolls; automatic machine to make the loaves of bread and make the buns. And you just throw the dough in there and they come out-- if you're gonna make hot rolls, they come out <sup>everyone</sup> exactly alike and the bread exactly the same. The baker, about all he had to do was mix it up, that is, put the ingredients in and turn on the mixer. And that's quite a lot different than <sup>having</sup> to mix that bread by hand. So if a person never seen that, you can't hardly visualize how that was done. But we had problems too, I tell you. Some serious problems in those days. And I'll tell you what one of 'em was; <sup>flies</sup> flies. That was a bad problem in those camps for a long time. More so years ago when they had the horses. And then another thing, there was no sanitary facilities of any kind, like outside, there was no-- you take a big crew like that, you know, it takes a good many outside facilities.

Well, the flies were a problem, I'll tell you. You can't visualize, you can't imagine if I'd tell you, you couldn't hardly believe the flies that would accumulate around a camp like that. The horses, <sup>brought</sup> for one thing <sup>and</sup> of course, the smell of the food.

There just didn't seem to be any way to get rid of them darn things. We used to rack our brain-- <sup>I</sup> used to make fly traps, you know,

We'd use them, set 'em around, different spots around there. Of course, the kitchen was where the darn flies really were the worst. Didn't both anything out in the barn, or anything like that, but around the kitchen--

the flies on the food. They were a problem, they were a big problem. <sup>H</sup> And of course, we had no means to combat the darn things.

SS

How did a fly trap work? What was that?

AJ A fly trap? Well, I'll tell you.

They'd be just a big cone, see,

bigger'n that stool. One big cone. Then there was a place underneath for the flies to go in, and

that cone would sit on a wooden base,

held off of that a little bit. Then inside of that cone was another little cone, see, and there was a

little hole up in the top of it, about as big as the end of my finger, just big enough for a fly to get through, see? Well, those two cones

come down here, see, Well, we could put something there on that for kind of a bait, a piece of meat, or anything like that. And those flies would congregate on that platform there, Well, naturally they'd fly up when they wanted to get out, they'd

never come back out the way they went in, They'd go up through this little hole; then they were in there, they couldn't get out. There was quite a space between the little cone and the big cone, Well, that's where they would be trapped,

because they never knew enough to go back down through that little hole where they went in. They'd come down here and maybe they'd eat some of that meat or something, and of course, naturally when a fly goes, he'll go up. Well, ninety-nine out of a hundred'll go up through that little hole in that inside cone and then he'd be up in there they never get out.

SS Did that really keep the flies down?

AJ Oh, no, it didn't keep 'em down. It caught a lot of 'em. You'd look at that thing and in a couple of days and it'd just be packed in there with flies, see. Thousands of 'em. But that didn't hardly make a dent in 'em. And then we'd empty that. It was fixed so you could empty it and throw 'em out and then put it back. And we had several of them

settin' around. But even at that, the flies come by the millions, you can't imagine. And then they'd get in the kitchen, of course, you couldn't keep 'em out.

they'd get in the dining room, and they'd get on the food, you know. Like before supper you had to put things on the table, you know, like the cold things:

... cookies and cakes and things like that, or anything that happened to be ready to put on the table before you put on the hot food. Well, maybe you had a nice fresh cake, see; well, you icing or something on that cake. Well, you have to put that on before the supper's ready, just set it on the table. Well, the damn flies, they light on that and they put fly specks on that. Well, we used to try to keep 'em-- but you couldn't keep 'em away. In spite of everything we'd do, there'd be some of 'em get on something. Maybe not on all the tables. There'd be maybe two or three fly specks on the cake. Well, maybe it'd be just be a couple of minutes before the men come in, that the damn flies are flying all around. Well, we had sprayers, and we'd go around and spray. Well, you can't get that on the food, you know, you had to be careful. Well, we'd go around the windows and spray 'em where we could. And then, of course, the darn things, you had to be careful they didn't drop down onto the food, too. You spray them and they'd circle and fly around and maybe they'll light down into a dish of--maybe you got some fruit settin' there, and they'll light in that fruit. Well, you got a dead fly in there. Well, you had to be awful careful.

SS What about the heat? Was that a problem in the kitchen with all the stoves going? Was it real hot in there?

AJ Oh, yeah, in the summertime, I'll tell you--terrific, terrific. Yeah, you bet. 'Course we'd have the doors open, what we could, screens on them. And we always had one of those things on top



that it was

SS Big type fan?

AJ Well, yeah, it was a thing that circulated all time, it goes 'round and 'round. It wasn't a fan, it didn't have any power or anything, it was just a natural draft going up through there that kept that thing circulating all the time. And it was probably

bigger around than that stool there and set up about so high off of the roof there. It circulated all the time, twenty-four hours a day. But, anyway it gets terrible. Just imagine standing over them big ranges fryin' pork chops. And summertime, we'd have a towel or something we'd wrap around our neck, you know. The sweat'd just run right down off your nose there, and you'd wipe yourself with that towel and stand there frying pork chops or steak or whatever it happened to be. But there was no way to get away from that heat. You just had to take it, that's all there was to it. Like I say, it was monotonous, seven days a week and you had to be pretty dedicated in order to stay. You just get tired and no diversion. After supper you could go out and take a walk down the road, the loggin' road. you were pretty tired you didn't want to do that even. (Huckles)

SS There's one more thing that I thought of, and that's what the kitchens were like when you first started? What kind of facilities did they have back around 1920, and in there? Were the kitchens real small then?

AJ Well, I'll tell you, Sam, most of them those days were built out of logs. They were just a big long, log building. That is way back.

The kitchen would be like in this end, see? And the dining room in that end.

Well, sometimes there'd be a little partition between the kitchen and dining room, but very often there was no partition, just

the kitchen here and the stove against, maybe this was a back wall. Well, your stove would probably be against that wall, and your bake table where you made your bread and things'd be on that side, and then maybe out beyond you'd have a storeroom or something like that to keep your supplies. But most of them was just a kitchen here on this end, a diningroom on that end, and there'd be a bunk, maybe, in one corner for the cook and a flunky. But most of 'em were just big, long log buildings, And that's where everything was prepared, right in that. And then, of course, those log buildings, after a couple of years they'd get infested with mice, you know, And that was another problem in those days was mice, and rats. We used to have a lot of mice and quite a few rats, because the rats would naturally get into those logs and the mice would get in them logs after they were there several years. And then that was a problem because everything had to be mouse-proof and covered and mice'd gnaw their way into. You had to be very sure and very careful that everything you put away was in such a shape that the mice couldn't get into it. (chuckles) Because some places they were pretty bad. we'd have mousetraps settin' around. Everybody had mousetraps. And we had mousetraps in the camps in the early days, and we'd set 'em around here and there, and we'd be setting around there in the evening and you'd hear a mousetrap. Well, then a lot of times, there'd be a mousetrap down there that'd get overlooked, and a mouse'd get in there and maybe be in there for quite a while. (chuckles) And then we had other things. We had them darn packrats, you know. They'd get in, and they were a terrible thing -- packrats, they used to call 'em. Pretty big rat, bigger than the average rats. Well, they liked to carry things, you know. Some people called 'em traderats; but I don't think they trade, but they just carry things away. They don't see very

good, you know. Their eyesight is not very good. But they always prowl around at night, you know, and they're always looking for something. But they don't see very good, but they can see something kinda shiney. They can see that. Now, like maybe a teaspoon or anything like that. Now, like you had your teaspoons all put on the table at night ready for the next morning. Well, you'd go along there and maybe there'd be a couple of teaspoons missing or maybe a fork, or something like that, anything that looked kinda shiney, they could see that at night, see? Well, they'd pack it off, no telling where they'd carry it. Might carry it outside, maybe anyplace. But, I've known 'em to take ~~something~~. But some people say they'll take something away from here and bring something else back, but I don't think that's true. They'll just take something and they might take it any place. They don't take it to their nest, they don't seem to have a nest. Maybe they'll pick up a teaspoon here and take it over behind the desk there, or maybe in another room. But them packrats stink like the very dickens. You can smell 'em. They'll come in from outside, see, and they'll get maybe in your storeroom, maybe behind sacks or something, or cans or boxes, they'll get down behind there. And you can smell 'em. They got the darndest odor. Well, the only thing you can do is get 'em out of there. But you can't trap 'em. They are too sharp. I know we've tried to trap th<sup>ese</sup> things time and time again, but they are just too smart, they'll go right around that trap just like that.

SS Well, what about big game? Did you have trouble with bear or the other big animals getting into the storeroom?

AJ Well, actually not any trouble to speak of. There used to be a lot of 'em come down around the camps there,

but they didn't really give us any trouble,

I was up in Metalline Falls, I worked up there for the Ohio Match. We were burning wood in the stove. They had a big wood range there and they had a deal fixed right in the wall, just away from the stove a little ways.

The bullcook,

he'd put the wood in there from the outside, and then it would kinda fall in so I could reach it from the inside, see. And then there was a big lid kinda on that thing out there, so that if it would rain or <sup>something</sup> you could close that lid and the wood wouldn't get wet. I could reach right there and put in the stove. But, anyway, one time he'd forgot to close that lid, somehow it got opened.

In the evening I'd put out in big pans, we had them great big pans. And I'd have it over there on the table ready for the next morning. We always cook our bacon in the oven,

It was kinda on one end where the woodbox was, see. And that darn lid was open out there, and this bear smelled that bacon, of course.

Well, I slept just off the kitchen, and I woke up there at night and I heard the <sup>honey</sup> out there. And I laid a minute and I thought, 'well god somebody finally' So I got up and I turned on the light and that bear, he was just about half way in that. He just had his paws. He'd got through that wood, see, and he'd kinda kicked it to one side so he could get in under that.

When I turned on the light, why he smelled me and he took off. But one of the bears one night, he broke into the roothouse. You know what they called a roothouse, kinda dug down in and sided up with logs, and had a roof on it. The roof wasn't very high off the ground, you know. And they had kind of a cupola on it for ventilation; we kept our vegetables and a lot of stuff in there. And so, by golly, that son-of-a-gun, them things are powerful, he tore that cupola off of that roothouse. And it was a big, strong thing made there, you know,

And then he dropped down in- to the roothouse, down in where that was. Then of course he couldn't get out. (chuckles) He was in there the next morning. So one of the flunkies went out there, used to go out there to get the potatoes

out of the roothouse and bring 'em up to the kitchen.

And here that bear was in there. Well, the bear come tearing out of there, I guess he was more scared than Well, I never had any trouble with 'em.

SS I thought of one more thing I was gonna ask you. *Is this because we could just keep going on...*

AJ There used to be a lot of 'em. Oh, I wouldn't say a lot of 'em. Of course, they had what they used to call a garbage hole, you know, it'd be quite a ways from the camp, maybe a quarter of a mile, something like that. What they'd do, they'd take the bulldozer and they'd gouge out a great big hole, maybe be as big as this room, for all the garbage. And then every day they'd haul the garbage and dump it in that big hole. Well, of course, there was a lot of things in there, bones and everything. The bears'd come there and scavenge on that slop hole. Well, that's what used to draw 'em, you know. But they

did one terrible thing there one night. I never would forgive him for that. There was just Mel Anderson, Axel's brother. He was running camp there, and there was a big tree, right close to camp.

And this little bear, he come down there, kinda scavenging around the camp there. And so some of the guys went out there and they kinda scared him and he went up that tree, see. Well, pretty high. I don't think he'd

weigh a hundred and fifty pounds but anyway, some of them guys had been drinking, see. Walker that was Axel's brother, he was a terrible drinker. He was a real good guy;

he was camp foreman. He was kinda drunk and he saw that bear up that tree, see. Oh, a bunch of 'em got around there and they was all kinda half drunk. So, what they decided to do was saw the tree down. Well, I hated to see that because the bear wasn't hurting anything, and I knew he'd never survive that tree coming down that way. So they sawed the tree down and it fell way off across

creek. And of course, the bear, he was away up pretty near at the top. Well, when the tree fell, it broke his back, I guess. Well, they all ran over there to see. Well, the bear he couldn't run, so they had to kill the bear. Well, I didn't like that. But they were all drunk, you know, and they were having a big time, they were gonna get that bear. I thought that was kind of a unnecessary thing to do. Well, that's the way, you get a bunch of guys like that. But they didn't hurt anything. They were no problem.

SS I wanted to ask you what the kitchen crew wages were. I forgot to ask you that. What the guys working in the kitchen made.

AJ Naw not very much, I'll tell you. Well, the food industry, has always been a low paid industry, even the hotels in town here. I think

they're the poorest paid class of people compared with the other workers, like carpenters and all that. Well, the wages in the kitchen was a good deal like the food. The wages kept going up and up and up. But when I first started, I think I worked for thirty dollars a month in the camp. And that was seven days a week, you remember, every day of the week, every day of the month.

SS Was that a cook, or kitchen help?

AJ Just a flunky, kitchen help, or a dishwasher, you know. And out of that thirty dollars they took one dollar out for what they used to call the hospital fee, you know, if you got sick or something.

Most of those big companies had their company hospital, you know. Well, if you got real sick or something, they'd take you to the hospital and it didn't cost anything. But they did take a dollar a month out of your wages every month. And that was all that came out of it them days. But anyway, of course, the wages kept coming up and up and up.

My first job, I got about a hundred and twenty five dollars a month, as near as I can remember.

What was the year you came to work there? '26 or '24.

LENA  
ERIKSON  
JUSTICE

Where? Where at?

AJ At old Camp 7 there, how much were you getting? You were getting about forty dollars a month, weren't you?

LJ Sixty, May said. No, that was '22.

LJ First time I seen you guys. You and your brother.

AJ Well, wages kept coming up and they got up to be forty , forty five dollars a month. <sup>A</sup>nd then, of course, they kept coming up.

And, I think when I left Clarkia there, I think, they <sup>was</sup> about three hundred and forty a month, you know, monthly wages for the cooks.

SS For the cooks?

AJ Uh-huh.

SS ~~Was~~ was the baker higher paid?

AJ Oh, no, no. I don't know what Ralph was getting there exactly, but oh he was probably getting about three hundred. I can't just remember.

But miscellaneous help,

I can remember when they worked for forty, forty five dollars a month and got up to sixty dollars a month. Oh, I don't know, I guess the cooks now in camp, what few there is, they're making around six hundred a month. But 'course, it was just changing times. Just like now, wages keep going up and up and up.

*(Handwritten: 3/10/61)*  
Transcribed by Frances Rawlins

03-17-75