

AXEL ANDERSON
Fourth Interview

Interviewed by:
Sam and Laura Schragar

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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AXEL A. ANDERSON

Elk River, Bovill; b. 1886

Potlatch assistant superintendent (walking boss)

2 hours

minute page

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Axel A. Anderson

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with Laura and Sam Schragar

August 20,1974

II. Transcript

AXEL ANDERSON 02000

SAM SCHRAGER: This is Axel Anderson interview number four.

AXEL ANDERSON: Yeah, in '50, 1950. I put in two days and two nights on that and I never went to bed. There was a crew at Camp 36 up there on the Palouse, oh five-six miles above Laird's camp, y'know, up there in the pocket. So we had that crew on it-- No, wait a minute-- it was-- oh no, not in '50, it was during the war days -- they had twelve hundred sailors on it-- from the camp out at Coeur d'Alene . What'd they call that?

SAM: I don't know the name of that one.

LAURA SCHRAGER: Was that Fort Wright?

(Note:- Camp Farragut- F.R.)

AA: No. No, that's here in Spokane. What the hell did they call that camp now? ^{I'll get its name in a minute.} Been several times since. Yeah, they had twelve hundred sailors there, and they couldn't do anything. The captain was sitting down in the valley there at the store down in the meadows, and they had a walkie-talkie, y'know you could talk to them, so if the ^{wind} come up, and flared up a little bit they had to retreat, he called 'em back, and what little they had done in the day, y'know they lost that and it cooled off a little bit and they go back and make a little more trail, and of course they get another wind puff come and away they go again, but they didn't get anything done. We got in there with a couple- three dozers and we had it corralled in there, after noon with that little crew, we had about seventy--

oh seventy-eighty men and we had four dozers; we corralled it in a little bit, then we back-fired.

LS: Which fire was this?

AA: They called it the Saunders fire.

SS: You can still see it when you're up--

AA: Oh yes, it burnt that whole sidehill, it burnt, y'know.

SS: It burned a big area.

AA: It burnt a hell of a big area.

AA: Well, maybe it was the '40's. Could have been '44 then maybe. It was during the war then anyway.

SS: Do you know how that fire started?

AA: I guess lightning, I suppose.

SS: When you came back after World War I, when you came back to the woods, did you start in as walking boss right away?

AA: No, I run camp there for-- No, by God, yes, I started in ^(?) ~~walking~~ camp for seven months, in the spring, early summer. No, I got the walking boss after the Spokane Fair, in September. I come back in March y'see.

LS: What did that mean when you became walking boss?

AA: Well you go-- I got charge of everything that belonged to the woods department, y'see. I was assistant superintendent, I had a man over me, and I was roadmaster, I looked after all the railroad tracks, and trainmaster, I looked after all the trains, and whatever have you-- I also went from one camp to the other. I had to go to the camp-- I saw each one at least once a week -- first one camp and then the other. But then I had all kinds of duties between that. They always needed something.

LS: Was that just for the Elk River area?

AA: For the Elk River mill then, y'see, the mill was running there then. That run up to 1930- the last. To December the 22nd, 1930. That' the end of it.

And they started in 1911. They built it in '10, started the next year.
^{she run that many years} They built it, I guess, for twenty years operation. ^{set it up} That, oh, I don't
 know why, ^{they do it, you never know} there ^{could} have been timber there yet, they could
 have had that mill running all the time and still running if they wanted
 to. They're still logging there. And hauling the timber over here to
 Newport, I guess most of it goes to Newport and Cusick, down the river.
 The Diamond National still logs up there and haul it over. And Potlatch,
 too, I think, all past Elk River and down to Potlatch.

SS: Well was your job to make sure that the foremen were doing the right work,
 or was it to help the foremen out?

AA: Help the foreman, if I could, yeah. ^{That was my job} And we all had to work together--
 all had to work together, see, just like any other team. We had the rail-
^{to transfer} road to get the logs away from 'em-- well if we didn't work together and
 have a train there and get the logs loaded and take 'em away from 'em,
 the foreman couldn't do nothing. We all had to work together as a team.
 And you got to do the same thing now. (Sam-- how many buzz saws did you
 borrow or rent to be sure you had the proper sound effects?--) And for
 supply and so forth, y'know, you had to more or less, had to see that
 (f.r.)
 the roads were open and equipment-- to bring it in to them. They were
 miles away from noplance. So every one-- we each one needed the other.
 I needed their help and they needed mine. From the mill out.

LS: Would you go back home then every night? Or would you--?

AA: Yeah, I did at Elk River, I usually come home about ten-eleven o'clock
 at night. I left at five in the morning.

SS: Did you sleep with your boots on, too? (chuckles)

AA: Well, most of the time I took my shoes off. But a lot of times that's
 the only thing I had off from Sunday morning -- Sunday night till Sat-
 urday evening, the only thing I took off was the shoes and the hat!

Laid on top of the bunk in the camp somewhere, ^{slept} a couple of hours. ^{to REMAIN}

After we got the trucks, y'know, one summer, there we had, that was up on the ~~Three Bear~~ up at Mason Meadow, we had eighteen log trucks and four ~~pole~~ ^{and} trucks, two loading crews . . . the double crew, three loading crews in the woods there at the camp. Each one had six trucks to load; twenty mile haul down to the railroad head, and double crew then too- so there was six loading crews every day in the woods and two more at the railroad, load 'em on flatcars. And they went to work at four o'clock in the morning and the first crew worked eight hours, ^{up} to noon, then the other crew come and took over and loaded till eight o'clock at night; sixteen hours. And I was on my feet all the way, and then after that they were gone and done with that, y'know, you see that was running smooth all day, then I'd go down and see how the train crews getting along and how the railroad track was--there was fifty miles of railroad from there in to Bovill that we hauled every day, on the rails. Had two camp ~~sections~~, one up in the woods, and one at the rail head. Six section crews on the road between there and Bovill, so I had to be able to-- in the morning when I got out I had to be able to stand there at the camp and look from there to Bovill fifty mile and see where the crews was. I had a phone along the road, but that was all, so I could talk to 'em, so they could talk to me too, once in a while. The train crew had to use it y'know, 'course they was two or three train crews along the road there and we had to keep them apart so they wouldn't run into each other. Well, fun, a lot of fun. Kept me busy, I was busy from morning to night.

SS: Sounds like a lot of work.

AA: The day was never long enough. The day was always too short and it's only twenty-four hours. So most of the time I worked for twenty-four hours, or a lot of times.

SS: Would you get-- would you walk that whole length on a lot of those days?

AA: Oh I had a little speed^{er} there on the rail most of the time that I used. Little bitty one that I could pick up^{take + off} and set it off, and I knew when the train whistle-- I heard them coming or see them coming, I'd pick it off set it on the track and they go and I'd go the other way. Till I met another one. I could go forty miles an hour on the rails, y'know, didn't take long to go-- about an hour I could go from one end of-- to the other-- fifty miles. Take little over an hour if I had a clear track, didn't get off the track.

SS: Is that all one camp.

AA: We had one camp there.

SS: Which camp was it?

Well, let me see--

AA: ⁽Thirty Four, I think they called it, Thirty Two and Thirty Four, one on the end of the rail and one on the other ^{that summer} truckload Two camps, [^] And that's the only one we had for Potlatch mill. They only run one shift-- we got thirty-two carloads every day.

SS: About how much wood would that be?

A: Oh that was, oh, anyway from two hundred and twenty to two hundred and forty thousand feet, the logs scaled, quarter of a million, pretty near a day^{we get}. Two shifts, y'know, then I used to have to get between fifty and sixty carloads, when they run double shift. Then we had five, six logging camps, but after the Depression it cut down. They had more-- they didn't waste so much in the mill, they got more particular after that, saved the lumber more. They got more board feet out of the logs than they did before. ^{They} Utilized the timber better, saved more of it. They even saved the sawdust, now they save the bark too.

LS: Did they use to burn an area after they logged it?

AA: Oh, ^{God} yes, you bet they burned it. You betcha, set fire to it every spring and burnt it. Stay away from the hazard in the summer when it got dry.

Yes, they used to burn that every spring, burn the slashing. Then later years when they piled it then burned it in the fall, piled the brush.

LS: But before that they just burned--

AA: Just broadcast it, yes, let ^{her} go.

LS: Did it get away often?

AA: Ohhhh- not too much, no. No, we took the whole crew and they'd usually just had it trenched off and the slashing was pretty much in one area, so you could trench it first before you set fire, they set from the outside and work in. Have it all trenched up, y'know, start fire-- the way, if the wind was from the north, ^{well,} y'know, burn a good strip on the south side first, then go over on the north side and set it and boy in an hour and she was across. (Chuckle) But they had protection then, they had it burnt out so the spark wouldn't fly, and then a big crew there to watch it if anything should happen to come across, y'know, they were there to stop, get it out. Oh, yes, sure, burnt lot of slashing there. Sections of it every spring. Just as soon as the snow get off, ^{get} off the ground, you know, then it was dry enough. Some evening when you thought it might rain that night, set fire to it. (Chuckles)

LS: Did they then reseed it all?

AA: Most of it seeds itself, naturally. That ground is full of seeds, you know, so if a quick fire goes over that gives the seed a chance to come up again. 'Course, if it's like in the summer when a fire goes out it burns too deep, it burns all the-- that needles and moss and stuff, you know where the seed is laying, that burns that up and burns too deep, you know there's no seed left. But like we burnt in the spring, y'know, a couple of years then it was green like a wheat field. Sometimes, you know they come so damn thick, you know, when you step there you probably stepped on couple a dozen young seedlings. They were just like a mat come up. Then it dies out itself, them years. Now I see they thin it

out, prune the trees and thin out. That'll make 'em grow a lot faster. In the early years, they didn't do that. You know some places you could see along the road where they been in that-- they pruned the trees, you know, up as high as they can reach, and it look like a park in there, you can see a long ways. Haven't you noticed that? Along the ^{highway} ~~road~~ ^{around the} road when you go up in the upper country there? It look pretty nice, ~~down~~ toward Clarkia and on in that way. I see they do that quite a bit, or they used to do it, when they had the CC's in there they done a lot of that on around Clarkia on towards Bovill, and that look pretty nice. And I see they do it ^{now} more than they ever did.

LS: Did you have much to do with the Forest Service in that area?

AA: No. Just a few fires and so forth, that was all. Only I worked with them during the three C outfits. I was six months up there on the Pend'Orielle River and six months up on the St. Joe up at Herrick, worked ^{for} them a year there, during the hard years, ^{there} in '33. '33 it was, yeah. '33 and '34.

LS: When you were working around Elk River, they didn't ever complain about--?

AA: No. There was not too much forest land in there, that was state and they had the State fire patrol, y'know, in there, Potlatch. Potlatch Forest, Potlatch Protective. They got their office in Orofino, one in Orofino, and they used to have a station at Elk River, too. They had their own fire department, you know, Potlatch has. And he is also a State Fire Warden. So that take care of the state. Oh, the Forest Service come in there a little bit, not too much. They come in there with the blister rust, and had a few camps in there, but we never had too much set with the Forest Service until that first fire I was on ^{there} was on that Saunders fire, that was a Forest Service fire, and they come and got us.

SS: So they used to be there but they didn't have very much to do with most of the woods around the country.

AA: Only up when we logged up there at Avery. Half of that-- some of that was NP land, P land, you know ^{that they got} when they built the roads, they got every other section; Forest Service had one and NP had the other. That what we logged there for several years, ^{well} they're still logging part of it, I think now. Have been for the last thirty years. Then when they logged-- I don't remember now-- the NP had number one section and the Forest Service the even two. See-- so like the NP had one, three, five, seven, and Forest Service had two, four, six, and so on. And that ^{was that} whole damn country there was-- oh, I don't know, there was hundreds of sections, all them mountains belonged to the NP and the Forest Service. ^{Then they come in a little contact with them.} Now, I see they got-- when you go in on the Forest Service land, you know, you gotta build the road according to where the Forest Service want 'em. They stake 'em out for you, and you gotta build them to their specifications, I guess. When I was there, you know, you just went in and built 'em.

SS: Well, did you log on land that the Forest Service owned, or was it--?

AA: Oh, yeah. Yes.

SS: It was Forest Service owned that you logged on?

AA: Yes, yes, and they paid them the stumpage, paid that to the government, whatever they paid for I don't know. And the same the other owned by the NP Railroad, ^{they paid them} they scaled it and paid them so much stumpage, whatever that was. ^{I don't know} (Sam, I left out the "dog-talk"!!)

AA: Bull of the woods. (laughs)

LS: Did you have very much going on when you ^{first} started as walking boss? It seems like a big jump to have taken to, you know, being in charge, like that.

AA: That was. When you started out you didn't know what the hell you were looking for, didn't know what you'd run into before the day was out.

When you started out in the morning you had to be able to-- when I worked

around Bovill I had six camps and a steelgang, that was the seventh. And I'd six train crews and a loading crew with each one of them, and they had a section crew at each camp. That was my job, y'see, to look after all them train crews, after all them loading crews, look after all the railroad; I had section crews, ^{three,} one at each camp. That was part of it. And then in the meantime go and look up the camp boss and see what he needed and wanted. I started out Monday morning and usually I come back to Bovill Saturday afternoon unless something broke down and I had to go to the shop, you know, and that was usually during the night. We had a shop out of Bovill and every Sunday we brought in two or three-- usually two loading rigs and two locomotives or three, every Sunday, and rotated them back and forth, y'know, so every Sunday at the shop, so Sunday was just as busy as any other day, see that they got fixed up for the week. See them locomotives, we had to wash 'em-- that water is not too good-- we got the water for them, ^{three} out of the creek where ^{ever} we could siphon it up in the tank, mud and lots of alkali in it. They ^{got} coated, the boilers get coated on the inside and you had to wash that out about every two weeks, ^I had to wash 'em. Clean them boilers. And then towards the end of two weeks, you know, they start foaming. They got too much mud inside of that, you see, and that won't work very good. Just like soap, and they coat, you had to get that off, inside, have 'em clean. So I had seven days a week and that many nights, never missed, they all come!

LS: Is that when you started out?

AA: Oh, I done camp for a long time. I done camp, ^{from} oh, for ten years there.

I started in with the crew in '11, 'course part of the time I was in France, pretty near ^{three} years out of that, '17, '18 and '19-- part of '19.

SS: Were there many guy^s, Axel, that were working seven days and seven nights a week?

AA: Oh, everybody that was on the monthly payroll. You got paid by the month

you know, and you were sold, you were sold to the company. You were on twenty-four hour duty and they expect you to look after what you were supposed to do. And a lot of it, you know, the things broke down and you know you had to get it fixed. Break down in the afternoon or something you had to get it fixed and get out and go to work in the morning again. Somebody had to look after it. And the one in charge of it, he was usually the one that was hooked- because they paid the crews that were working under him. They were paid by the day you know, or night, ^{or} whatever when you call 'em out, you know, they were paid. But the monthly man he was the one that was hooked. (Chuckles) There was no day off for-- no vacation time and no overtime, you were paid by the month, so much a month and that was it. Now, you know, I think-- well I think there was a half a dozen of them -- it would take a half a dozen of 'em now to do what I did, almost. What I did forty years ago or fifty. Now, I see, you know they had-- they finally just before I left working they had a foreman for every eight, ten or twelve men and I had two hundred-- three hundred. (Laughs) Yeah. There were twice there around camp, you know, ~~we~~ only had one camp, 'course then I had a lot of assistants, I had three assistants and had a cat^t boss. (End of ^{side} A) / All around. We had a eleven man track crew work nights, fix up cats and dozers and locomotives and loaders, whatever we had on the rail that was moving. And they had to be serviced at night, greased and fueled and cleaned up and if they were broke down, ^{get} parts to them and fix 'em up so they go in the morning again. Cookhouse; that was a big item right there, to feed-- there ^(dr. Clarkin we were camp in) were three hundred and fifty men in one camp-- there was a little town. (Chuckles) We had hot water-- running water in the bunkcars and bathhouse, kitchen-- and that take a lot of food. That kitchen stove was never - never cooled off from spring to the next one-- the year around that stove was hot. Took lot of wood.

SS: What did you get paid a month, when you started as walking boss?

AA: Two hundred and fifty dollars a month. See wages didn't come up till along about the time I quit, that's when the wages come up, after '50. I guess the last there when I quit, I think I got six hundred and board, see. They didn't charge me 'cause I was eating in every place and I had a charge account[^] so if I was in town, you know, I just turn it in wherever I stayed^{over}, in the hotel, 'cause I couldn't always get to where I wanted to go so I stop in Maries or Moscow, Orofino, or Coeur d'Alene, wherever I was, you know, go to the hotel and at the end of the month turn it in for meals and lodging. Meals and lodging and carfare if I used the train. A little book mark down each day whatever I spent, at the end of the month, turn it in, and I get my money back. Now, I imagine, ^{Now} probably pay fifteen-hundred a month, eighteen, three or four times as much as when I was working. And it's all days now. And they have so many assistants^{I see} now the logging superintendent over there at Bovill he got eight or ten walking around doing nothing just under him. And the same with the camp foreman, you know, he's the foreman in the camp and he's got- for every nine men he ^{have} an assistant. Two unions and all of that stuff. I think that's overdone. Everybody thinks they're doing so damn much, you know, I can hear people now, them young fellas you know, they're so tired, and they're sitting around driving a car all day-- they're so tired. I never got tired until I was hurt so bad that I couldn't hardly walk and I was still working. But, you know then I knew what tired was. After I got hurt there-- so ^{the} later ~~thirty~~ years there I knew what it is to get tired. But until after I got up in the sixties I never felt tired, got a cup of coffee and a doughnut and I could go another eight hours. Nothing to it, ^{really} no sleep or anything that didn't bother me. Now the young fellas, now they get so Goddamn tired, they say if they drive^{SAY} four or five hours along the road sitting

in the car, "Oh, By God, I'm just all in, I get so tired!" (Laughs)
I can drive from here to Frisco and I don't get tired yet, that won't hurt me any. Only that I got to slow down now in the evening. I don't want to be out on the road after dark. That bothers me, ^{drive} otherwise that wouldn't bother me. I'm going down there next month, I'm going to take a little trip to Oregon, California, maybe go down as far as Frisco.

SS: Axel, if you'd wanted to just work five or six days a week, could you have done it, if you'd have wanted to?

AA: Now?

SS: No. Back then. Did you have any choice about how hard, how long you worked?

AA: No. It was daylight to dark, see. There was no hours then, you know, they expected you daylight to dark. And it was supposed to be ten hours, you know, but in the wintertime it was daylight to dark. And there was no hours. When I first started to keep time there for one crew, if they were out a little bit in the morning you always give 'em a quarter of a day; two hours and a half or something, ^{took it up that way,} and if they were a little over half of that time, you know, then you put in half a day. Or if they were out working a little while after dinner, you know, you give 'em a full day. That's the way were doing it then. Now, it's by the hour. Everything is by the hour now. All they think about now is they get the hour in and they don't care much about the work, whether they do anything or not, long as they get the hour. All the cookhouse crews they got so much a month. Cook-- and now I think everything is hourly work. You see, anything you work past eight hours is got to be time and a half. And Sunday double.

SS: When you were walking boss what kind of amount of territory would you cover in a day? Where would you go? Let's say you started out in the morning.

AA: Well, I tried to make a system out of it. See, now when I worked around Bovill we had we had a camp over toward Clarkia. That was the one-- and one on the Moscow Mountain, down in from Princeton, and we had one up Palouse River, out of Harvard, and we had one on Bear Creek, out of Avon. And we had two of them in from ^HElmer. I tried to make out a system, So, ^{I don't} start, maybe -- run up there to Clarkia on Monday. I was in Bovill there to see that the train crews got out Sunday evening to each camp where they belonged, so they was ready for Monday morning. Some had to go clean down there to Moscow Mountain, go down around to Princeton and then go ^{about} eight or ten, fifteen miles up on the mountain. And one or two more, one out of Avon or Deary up Bear Creek. They had to be out there, they couldn't leave Bovill and go to work, they had to be there in the morning to go to work, so we head 'em out Sunday afternoon. They come in Saturday evening and go out Sunday afternoon. The ^{same} with the one goes Clarkia, ^{TRAIN CREW} and so forth, you know. Well, I had to do the same thing, and so I figured on leaving Bovill Monday morning and I had to go to one camp, ^{or the other} stay overnight in that one and the next day go to the next, look over see what they were doing, how it look. Next night, you know, I was in the third camp, so forth. The next night in another one. Towards Saturday afternoon I'd worked my way and I was up around Bovill. I lived in Elk River.

LS: You'd spend a whole day in a camp?

AA: Oh, God, yes, you know. There's a lot of territory. ^{THAT} camp covered six, seven sections.

LS: You'd go out and check out?

AA: Yeah, see what they were doing ,mosey around, checking. Everything going fine. Me and the boss walk around, he showed me what they were doing, fine. Anything he needed I'd get it for him and he'd ^{HAVE} it the next day. And the supply wagon come around with it. We had a phone in the camp, you know,

and I could call in every night if I wanted to to the warehouse and tell 'em what they needed and the next day it would come out. We had a tote team, go in from the camp, you know, from each camp, horses, they load 'em up with what they needed, so at night they'd have it back there. Yes.

LS: Was it that they wanted to have someone else check out the camps, that they had you go around? (tape noisy)

AA: Well they only had one, they didn't want to pay any more.

LS: Well, I meant, each of these camps had a camp foreman.

AA: Yes.

LS: And they wanted someone to go out and check with the camp foreman?

AA: Sure, sure, go with them. You know, when you do anything, you know, two heads sometime is better than one. At least we think so. (Chuckles)

Lots of times, you know, the foreman had something that he was doubtful about, well he'd have to have authority to go ahead and do it if it was all right and if it wasn't all right, you know, talk it over then maybe I had a better suggestion than he did, or maybe his was better than mine, ^{so we} _{Agreed} so go ahead.

You know, ^{you take} the camp usually had around a hundred and fifty men to the camp ~~them~~ days, for each camp, and there was six of them. I don't know, the foreman there - you know, he paid them ^{even though that} wages only two dollars two and a quarter, two and a half- lot of money, and they got to have a little work out of 'em.

SS: Did you help the foreman work out the ^(more buzz saws) ~~skidding~~ chances ? that sort of thing?

Oh,

AA: Yes, yes. We go over look over see where he build the road. If they had a railroad ^{I built them for them, then} up there, I built them. ^{I'd get} _{19y ppc} crews up there. Build that road, get the steel on it, have the track crew and then it was up to him after I get the logs to it. Oh a lot of places, no, probably we

couldn't get there to build a railroad, you know, ~~where~~ they ^{go} ~~could~~ with the horses and get it. Other places ^{Probably} put a donkey in and got it, things like that, you know. That come up every day first one camp and then the other.

I think. 'Course now they got an engineer, Potlatch has, and he's got a crew and he's staking roads all the time, you know, for truck roads. Them days, we had to do it ourself. Had nobody. I staked out miles, hundreds of miles of railroad. We had nobody then, you know, could ^{go} stake it. Had two, three axe men with me and we'd stake out a couple of miles of railroad in a couple, three hours, fast as we could go. We had a ~~ebony~~ ^(?) level, you know, site it up and go on percentage, you know, five percent or whatever it took, or if it was steeper than that-- we built a lot of road on ten percent, up the side-hill, line it up, make the kickbacks and loop-the-loops. Follow the contour of the ground and build it by hand. Pick and shovel. That was before we had the dozers. The dozer, then, come in in the '30's see. And the later part of the '30's the railroad went out, so we didn't use the-- we had steam shovels there a little bit we could use, the last few years in the '20's, but there were no dozers. They didn't come til the '30's. So in the early days everything was done by hand. Strong back and weak in the top!! (Chuckles)

SS: Did you have any special way that you learned to lay out those railroads, or was it just plotting it out by the contour of the land?

AA: That's it. Best, easiest, quickest way we could get there, see.

SS: Did you just sight as you went along? Just keep moving? Keep walking along as you were marking it out?

AA: No, you had to have a certain, you know-- you got to have - the steepest way we could go in the curves was twenty-four degrees. That's about as much-- you could bend the rail, you know, and keep any machinery on the

rail. You had to watch for that. When you come with the train, you know, you gotta have a little piece of (?) so the car come out of one curve so they can level up again before they hit the next one, otherwise they get off the rail. Oh, no, you had to figure, you had to know what you were doing. I tell you, now, you couldn't-- that wasn't throwed in just by guess and be damned, no, no, you had to know what you were doing, or else they wouldn't stay on the rail, them cars. But I had good luck.

Now, we had this rail up by three double switchbacks, going up on Elk Butte, but we went up there on seven percent grade. You take four loaded cars, that was all we dared to hook onto one locomotive; seven percent, that pretty steep, you know-- seven feet up to a hundred. If anything should happen, you know, we had a lot of runs. But, you know, on the sidehill you going up on seven ~~this way 'til~~ ^{you hit} you go no farther, then come back just enough for a tailend, so you have room for five, six car and the locomotive, then go the other way again as far as you can, then keep agoing; switchback, what we called 'em. I had three of 'em going up there to-- four-- to go up on Elk Butte. Four switchback(s). You see, you start out and go up as far as you can, then turn around and go the other way as far as you can, back up, then go again ~~the other~~, ^{just reverse} and keep on going up this same sidehill till you got up where you wanted to go, till you got up to the top of it. And we took the locomotive almost ^{up} on top of Elk Butte. (Chuckles) That's why I could stay downtown, you know, even down in Elk River and hear them trains going and see them going up the sidehill there, see the smoke going up and hear them. And you knew where they were. Going up in the upper basin there, up Elk Creek itself, we made just like a horseshoe, they come up the creek, you know and here was a fourth of it, we come up with a five percent grade and here was one prong going and the other one went ~~there~~, well, we come on up here across the creek and come on and made a loop here, come in

here again and turn around, cross this one, and then come back and *go on*
 up that one up to the end. It was just like a horseshoe. Then
 you come down ^{with} the locomotive, you know,-- the biggest train we took down
 there was forty two loaded cars *we had* four hundred and twenty thousand
 feet of sawlogs behind that little locomotive of eighty ton, little rod
 in them, three wheeler, go down there with it. I was on the engine here
 and I could see the tail end up here, it was up about fifty feet higher
 and it was right above us. (Chuckles) And there was forty two cars be-
 tween that caboose and the locomotive, they were going down to turn it,
 but we pretty near met the caboose. But that was better than a switch-
 back. We didn't have room enough for a switchback and you had to gain
 that much-- there was so many hundred feet of elevation, you had to get
 up that high, and we had to try to get that much distance to get up that
 to make that down there, so we stayed under five percent, you know on the
 sharp curve and that was down to three, 'cause, you know, you can't
 pull so many on a curve as you could on a straight track. Oh,
 we took twenty-one empties up that way and we took twice many loads going
 down.

LS: Would shays ever get away?
 they run away.

AA: Oh, yes, I picked up a lot of them, they were all laying in a heap up
 against a sidehill somewhere or in the creek. (Chuckles) Oh, pick 'em
 up, take 'em in, fix 'em up again. Next day we had 'em out, few
 days and they were going again.

LS: How fast would they go?

AA: ^{the train} Oh, they could get up to twelve, oh about ten, twelve miles an hour.

They're geared, you see, locomotive. They had what they called a line
 shaft and a pinion gear on each -- just like a pinion gear in a car and
 that turned-- for each one of them wheels, and every wheel:

had power on it, they were all pulling. There was six double trucks under them and there was the water tank and they all work and everything had power underneath of them. Three cylinders on them shays -- they were up and down on the side. ~~Then~~ we had another type, they called the climax- them two piston they come into the drive gear right under the boiler, in the middle, them two piston they went up and down this way-- and then they had another one-- what the hell did they call that? Them were lying like this ~~on~~ front on the outside, and then the simple one, 'oourse you've seen them, --

SS: They're straight back.

AA: But the geared one, they ^{were} either come this way down, worked on that pinion underneath there, you know, from both sides, had them on both sides, and the same on the-- and the others laid like this on the driveshaft, and they worked like that on the pinion. Underneath.

SS: Would the guys that did the shay crews, were those guys as good at doing shays as say the guys were on the regular railroads?

AA: Oh, yes, every bit of it. You betcha. They had to know the gear and the steam and watch it, you betcha they--There ^{were} a lot of difference in men, you know, some could do pretty damn good, and others didn't have quite the knack to get the work out of 'em. You know, like a driving car, you know, you see there a lot of difference in drivers, on a car. Some is just perfect and the others, you know, it's nip and tuck to get there, but that-- Yes, you bet, there were a lot of difference. And to know how much they could -- draw off a few pound, you know, 'cause they had ^{to have} air pumps on there, and sometime you had to draw it down quite a little bit and see that everything was working, so they didn't stop on you when you -- when we started down there from the-- I took a lot of them Milwaukee locomotive engineers up with us, but, by God, they got off and walked. (Laughs)
They wouldn't ride down on it.

They have, well, you know they have a one percent, and we were on ten, and you take that little machine that we had, you know, and you see them flatcars up there two hundred feet higher than you were, had a lot of pressure, lot of weight there. When they see them up coming down the sidehill there, so they said they won't try it. Oh, no, they said, too much for me, I walk!!! (Chuckles) I'll catch you at the bottom. Probably had a couple of switchbacks to go through and you can go straight down, walk down and catch 'em at the bottom.

SS: How many men were on a shay crew?

AA: A fireman and an engineer, conductor and a brakeman; there were four, sometime five. If they had long trains ^{they} put two brakemen, but just for loading, four men crew, two run the machine and two on the ground to do the coupling and set handbrakes and do ~~the certain~~. Yeah, that was the best job in the whole damn woods. The train crew they got paid from the time they left camp till they come back, so they made good money. They made more than I did.

LS: Did they work hard all the times they were out, or would they have more slack time?

AA: The train crew?

LS: Yeah.

AA: Well, they set on a load, they ^{probably} set on their butt there for ten hours, never moved. Sit. One go out there and do a little flagging now and then. ^{engineer and the} And the fireman they were sitting in the machine, you know, just back up a little bit, come ahead a little bit, that's all where they were loading. But they had to be there. They were part of it. No, that was the best job in the woods, was the train crews. They worked by the hour. They got paid by the hour. ^{They wouldn't spend no monthly on them 'cause} Sometime they got a day rest and the next time, you ^{only} know, they probably work fifteen, seventeen hours, and they got paid so much an hour. That was the best job in the woods. I never got onto that.

(Laughs) I could have got onto the Milwaukee, and I thought I got a hundred dollars a month and board, and you know, by God, I thought that was better. ^{100\$ a mo} Railroad _^ wasn't so much like it is now then, either. I don't know what they did, but I made more money than a hundred dollars and board, you know, ^{and 100\$} and I thought was something. But I could have got on there and in a few years I'd a been a conductor. I was talking to one of 'em got on after I could have got on when they had the NRA, and he worked twenty-one days that month and he had nine hundred dollars. He worked for the Milwaukee, conductor. And I worked thirty-one days, and I got a hundred and forty! And I worked thirty-one days and partly nights, most of the summer a lot of it nights, too, and I only got a hundred and forty dollars, twenty year later. So you see I made a lot of foolish moves that I didn't take.

SS: Well, there must have been some good things about being walking boss or you wouldn't have done it for so long.

AA: Well, that's what they say. Well, you get tied up in it and you're-- and after you get a family, ^{and} start raising a family, you know, you can't jump the fence like you can when you're single. And like on the rail-- to get back on the railroad, there is a time ^{when you} _^ it always a time when-- in your life, for all of us, if you could see it and take it when that time is there, but if you miss that boat, well, then you're out. You had to go on with what you started, stay with it. I did, I missed that boat, I didn't take it. Course I thought there was a future in the woods, and it didn't happen. The machine age come in and the machine, and you know that's up now, you know you take the conductor on the rails nowadays-- they got the run, you know, like, I talked to some of 'em that was starting in on the rail when the Milwaukee first come out there-- There's one of 'em living down there in Spokane now, Downey, Jack Downey, I've known him since 1911, he lives down in Spokane, and the last time

I saw him when he was working, he had the run from Seattle to, oh, Mobridge-- that's in South Dakota, is it? on a fast train. He go down this way and he go back again and make that, oh, two trips a week or something like that, you know, and he'd have ...

END OF SIDE C

- Side C SS: But probably there weren't many guys that had the kind of responsibility that you did.
Maybe you didn't make the money, but you sure had the responsibility.
- AA: Well, I got the work, yeah, yes, I had plenty work. I agree with you there.
(Laughs) But according to now, there's no comparison with it now as it was then.. It changed so much, you know that.
- SS: What did your wife think that you were out so much, and worked so hard all the time?
- AA: She worked like hell too we had six kids. She worked like hell, she didn't have much time to think about ^{ANY} thing, only take care of the kids! Yeah.
No, there's no comparison now and what it was forty years ago, or thirty.
- LS: Did your job change very much in the '20's? Did the way they log change very much?
- AA: The only way I can explain it to you is-- you got a new ground to work on every day. The ground tomorrow isn't like it was today. You're on new ground altogether. See, when they cut the trees down like when you cut this lot here today, tomorrow you got to be over there and that's different. Everything is new to you, you got to start ^{it} again. You're starting new every morning in the woods. You ain't building-- like when they build a sawmill. They build that, you know every fifty years. Well tomorrow is just like it was today. You see that the ^{di} maines are running, just sitting on the same place, but when you're out in the timber you're on new country every morning. New ground, altogether. And you got to go look and look ahead, you go up there in the timber and look ahead so you know--

Today, you know, you're right there, tomorrow we build that road up there a little bit there alright. You go over in that direction, the same thing. But you got to go and look ^{up} ahead a little bit when you build a road, so you might walk up five miles to see-- someday you got to get there and when you start to build a road in the bottom, you can't build it that one day you're working ^{work} your way up there, and you gotta figure the percentage that's against you and have that figured out so that by the time you get that road up to the top you gotta get them logs, too. So you gotta go and look a hell'va lot ahead for miles and miles ahead. And that was mostly my job to do when I got to the camp, you know, -- I built the road for most of them so they got up to the top of the hills, and we had rails them days-- well that had to be figured out ahead, you know. So I had to work-- my work was mostly miles ahead of the camp foreman in the timber. If I couldn't do it today, next week I come back there and I run up there again and ^I put in two, three hours. I come down to camp, you know, oh, supper time, a little after. And then probably I had fifteen miles to walk back home. I had to be down town in the morning get them train crews out again. See that they were all set. So I walked home every night, you know, fifteen, twenty miles, when I was through working. We worked longer hours than any of them in the camp, then I head to town. In the morning I was out at five o'clock and they usually left town, the train crews we tied them all in town first, and get them out and they were up in the camp to go to work at seven o'clock.

SS: I just can't believe how far that must have been. It just seems like the amount of walking and the amount of work you did was just more than a man could do.

AA: I'm here!

SS: And you're in good health too. (Chuckles)

AA: I'm still here starting in on the eighty-ninth year!! But I can feel it. I can feel the age now. I'm always thinking about what Allen Luden said when you get into the seventies you're pretty well at the end of the rope, tie a knot in it and hang on, and I been hanging on for quite a while!!! Still hanging on! (Laughs) I won't forget that, that was a pretty good reminder.

SS: Did you run into situations where you thought the foreman wasn't doing a good job?

AA: Oh yes, yes. Sure thing, that happen. Most of the time we try another one. Tie a can to him and try another one . Oh, yes, that can happen, you know.

LS: Would you fire him?

AA: Oh, yes, yes. I never fired anybody in the camp, always fired 'em on the work. I always fired 'em when they out working; anybody, I never fired anybody in the camp. Like in the morning a lot of foremens, you know--
Go on and pick 'em in the morning, "you go on!"
 "The clerk want see you, you got a partner?"
 "Take 'em with you, the clerk want see you". That was the paycheck.
(Chuckles) No, I always ^{if I} fire anybody it was when we were working. Got to catch 'em when they were working, if they were slacking, I'd just tell 'em, "You ain't even trying to work with me, so go on in and get the hell out of here." That's the only thing you could do; but do it on the job where everybody see it. And you do that a few time and you don't have very much trouble after that. They all work. No, I never picked out anybody when they come out in the morning and go to work, I'd let 'em go to work sure, I catch 'em out on the job, you know doing nothing, OK, you don't want to work so, I ain't gonna hold you here, go on in to camp. That was my way of doing it.

SS: Would you watch pretty carefully before you decided, or would you just catch a guy and say---

AA: No, you don't have to stay there and watch it, you know you get a-- I had a-- you know what they call a- when they come in and the work's turned in at night and you can watch the scaler board, see how many logs you got on this one and what you got on that one everywhere, so you got your man and go and talk to 'em the next day and, "What's the matter with you, you don't get the sawlogs, what's wrong here?" And some of 'em just lay down, you know and don't do it. "You don't care to work, so I can't hold you, I gotta have sawlogs. We gotta keep that sawmill going, and by God we can't do it with the likes of you, so I gotta get somebody else here to take your job." That's about the only way you could handle it. You see at night, see how many sawlogs you got in when the skidder reports come in, and you can look at the scale sheet you know for each crew, either was a donkey or a team or whatever they was, you watch each one of them and see there was something wrong, and you go up there the next day and see what was wrong. 'Cause there had to be something. Maybe I could help him, and maybe it was the crew, if everything was OK-- so you can see where that crew was just goldbricking, they wasn't doing anything. They were just trying to get the day in and that's all. So you might as well get rid of him and try somebody else. But you do that a few times and you won't have to-- they know what you meant. They would rest a few days and that's all.

SS: Did you ever hire guys back after you fired them?

AA: Oh yes, oh, lots of times. Hell yes, maybe the next morning. (Laughs) Sure, you bet. Oh no, you can't carry no grudge against 'em, no. Oh no. Hell yes, you know, meet 'em in town and they still out of a job, well, "Come on back, come on and go to work." Sure. No, no that wouldn't work. Wife used to tell me ^{one} time they come up to the house, you know, some of them come over and we'd argue there and almost come to fists and in a

little bit we'd talk it over, ^{my} "I can't see it, how in the hell can you just sit there and one minute they were ready to fight and next minute sit there and talk like you're two old friends." Well sure, you thrashed it out, level it all up again, now he's all right and I feel better. And he's going to work again. (Chuckles) Well, he feel good about it, so do I. Heck, yeah.

SS: I've been told about once or twice when you got cursed out by a guy, ^{that you fired} they said you didn't care.

AA: Oh well. What's the use? No. 'Cause you meet them every day. That was my job to meet them. Hell, yes, you know. I had so many names, they ain't all in the book!! (Laughs)

LS: Once you became walking boss, would you still fire crews on the job? Or was that up to the foreman to do?

AA: Well, that depends on-- no, I never went to camp ^{cause that was} ^{his job} then fired 'em in the camp. You could-- something that you didn't like, you could call 'em and say- "I saw so-and-so doing so-and-so and I don't think it's right, it's up to you ^{now} to straighten it out. I don't like to find it again." Oh no, you go to the foreman and ^{that's} his duty. But I had too many on my own. I had hundreds of them. I had more than he did. And my own, they were scattered all over the place, over a hundred mile circuit, he only had eight or ten.

SS: Did you find the men worked better under some foremen than others?

AA: Oh, yes, I think that happened, yes. I believe so. I think it is yet, sure thing. There is no man that can suit everybody, that's impossible. He isn't born yet, never will be. No, you take in that operation we had oh eight hundred men, I guess, scattered around or nine, up to a thousand men, you see, scattered all over the woods. Well, you know, no matter who it is, you're a good fellow on this side and you're a sonofabitch on that

side and that's it. One thinks you're all right and the next one say, "Oh that son-of-a-bitch, he's absolutely no good." That's it. That the way the foreman had to put up^{with it}. You can't- no matter how you try, you know, you can't - no matter how honest and level and square you try to be, you know^{you feel} there is somebody think you're not doing the right thing with him, personally. I kept time, run the crew^{all the} and someone you couldn't raise their wages that was set from the main office, they set the wages, and you like the man and you'd like to do something for him, so I slip in a day that he didn't work, he might of felt rotten that morning, so I marked^{when the time} in the day just the same and he was laying in the bunk. Well at the end of the month when payday come, sometimes you got by with it for a long time and after while, you know, they start to compare the checks and they went around, "Well, how did you get so much more than I did? How did you get a day more than I did. You even laid in camp a day, and by God, your check is the same as mine, or maybe more." Then the boss is in hot water. They come to you and ask why the hell did he get so much more than I did? So you can't be-- no matter what you do, sometime you do the wrong thing. You're trying to do the right, the square thing and you're doing the wrong thing. You get your own butt in it. Oh, yes, I was on the carpet a lot of times just over trying to be -- favor a man, you know, working. 'Cause I was favoring the man working and I was still standing between the company and the man working and you can get by with it for a little bit and the first thing you know I was on the carpet. Explain why this was done.^{'cause they'd always get in.} There's always somebody you know that carry it to headquarters.

SS: Who was the guy you had to do your explaining to?

AA: Oh, the manager. The one that was top boss, see. He's the superintendent, or the manager. For a long time we had Laird in Potlatch, he was the head man for Potlatch Lumber Company, up to, he died in the '30's. Then after

that, you know, after he died they merged Potlatch Lumber, Clearwater
 Timber and the Rutledge Timber Company. ^{made} the Potlatch Forests
 the three
 out of . Well then the headquarter was at Lewiston, so all the
 orders come from Lewiston then after that. And the other had ⁶ kind of
 assistant manager, one or two, one was for the woods and one for the mill
 crew and then the big boss, you know, he set in the office, or maybe in
 Frisco, I don't know where. But then they come and eat on you, on us the
 fellow out in the field.

SS: Do you remember anythings that made 'em real mad ? I mean things that got
 them the ⁿagriest, things that they called you on the most, the company?

AA: Oh mostly about all the wages. Paychecks. Pretty near all-- not the
 work, not the work, but just me trying to pacify workers, you know, I liked
 'em and they were good workers and sometime I felt that they didn't get
 quite enough so I was trying to pat 'em on the back a little bit. I hit
 the carpet every so often. That happened, and that was pretty near always,
 just overpaying some body. Just slip in -- you know, I felt-- a ten dol-
 lar bill looked pretty nice to a young feller, he's trying his best and I
 liked him, and I'd-- 'course that was stealing from the company, sure, I
 knew it, and I paid for it. I'd get on the carpet every so often, "Why
 in the hell did you do that? Why?" Well, anyway I guess I got by with it
 'cause I stayed with 'em. I didn't get fired, and I quit, I wasn't laid
 off either, I quit in '51. I even quit six months before I left the work.
 I was going home, my wife was in Oregon and we bought a little place there
 'cause I figured when I got old enough, by God, I want to get just as far
 away from Bovill and Elk River as I possibly could, so I went six hundred
 miles out of there. I knew everybody for that whole circle from Moscow to
 Lewiston to Orofino, Coeur d'Alene, St. Maries, that whole circle inside
 of that I think I knew every man ^{that} was in there, in that circuit. And
 ^

hit to town, well, you know, well a lot of it was, "Let's go and have one," which we did, well, I had to buy one too, have a beer, have a drink, and walk to the temple or some place, you know, and if I got into the temple in Coeur d'Alene, Elk Temple, I was an Elk, and if I got in the temple I knew half of 'em that was in there. Got into the temple in St. Maries, you know the same thing, go to Orofino, ^{it's} the same thing, go down to Lewiston, same thing. Even as far as Missoula, I got over there I knew half of them was in there, ~~they were everywhere~~ At the ballroom. And that way, you know-- and I was on the road the last ten years I was on the road most of the time so you meet a lot of people and by god, that little paycheck I got, ^{by God} it pretty near took that in drinks. (Chuckles) You can't always take without you gotta give too. And most of the time I usually give. I often thought about Harry Lauder's little song, he said, "When I was twenty-one," he said, "I never had much money but," he said, "I always had lots of fun." And that little piece always hung in my craw. (Chuckles) I guess that was just like me. I never had any money, but I guess I had a lot of fun. I never took the job with me at home, and if I got to town I never logged! I never talked about it, only just little what had to do with-- to get-- of course when I went to town had mail to pick up or a few men and get 'em to work. If I headed up towards Avery, there was a camp up there, Ok, and I got in St. Maries, I look around. I always drove a sedan so I could pick up four, five and take 'em in the car and take 'em up to camp and put 'em to work. Come back toward Bovill, coming back to Maries and heading for Clarkia, there was another camp and I'd look all the way and usually when I drove up to camp there I had a car full, and I'd say, "Do you need 'em Mark?" Who ever was camp foreman, "Here's four, five of 'em, a couple of saw gangs, ~~had~~ a good cat driver or choker man. You're short, here they are, there are five of 'em." You know what I mean OK. Got up towards Elk River there was another camp and I'd pick 'em along the road, drive 'em

and take 'em up there. Buy 'em a beer or so when we went through Elk River. "Thirsty ? All right, let's go in and have a stubby, two, three." Well it was all in a day's work. My superintendent, ^{Joe Parker} he was with me one time and we were at Clarkia down at Camp Forty, Art ^{Henderson} was running it and he was short; no help during the war. So I was riding with Joe then I left my car in Clarkia and got in with him and ^{we} drove into camp and he says, "What the hell do we do to get some help." "The only thing we can do is go to- let's go to Maries and see if we can find anybody." It's after supper in the evening. Well, he said when we got to St. Maries, he said, "What do we do now?" He said, "Let's go to ^{Temple} there." I said, "Okay." So we had a snort there, him and I, and so I said, "We come down here to see if we could pick up some sawyers and men to sent up to Art." "Yeah," he said, "but where'll we get 'em?" I said, "You've got to get out in the barrooms. Go over in the tavern, go down there on the boat-houses, anyplace. Anyplace, " I said, "Anybody comes in here to the temple they are like you and me, they go in here to have a drink," I said, "but the lumberjacks don't come in here, they don't belong here." I said, "They go in the tavern, that's where they belong, and that's where they are , and you got to go to them. They won't come to you." And he said, "Do we have to do?" And, I said, "You have to do it if you want to get any men, you gotta go that way." ^{of course} And he said, "Will you do it?" And I said, "I'm doing it every day, Joe, that's what I'm doing every day," I said, "I go all over that in the first ^{whatever} town I get to, that's what I'm doing." ^{right along} I said, "I don't like to, but I have to, that's my job." And he said, "Well you go ahead." And I says, "Alright, Joe," I says, "but," I said, "you know I may come back here drunker than a hoot ow!." ^{try it} But, I said, "I'll try it ." So I took off and left him in the temple, and I come back, oh along about mignight, I guess when they started close up, the barrooms the tavernns, and in the meantime, I was pretty well-- Oh, I had a lot of beers, ^{and drunk} but he

was in worse shape than I was. He'd stayed there at the bar in the temple all evening. He said, "How'd you make it out?" And I told him, "I got so many, three cars that went out of here loaded." I said, "There was five in each car, there were fifteen," and, I said, "there's that many more going in the morning, so," I said, "I done pretty well. But," I said, "it cost like hell to do that. I had to buy a hell of a lot of beer." "God damn it," he said, "and we got to do that." So then after that, by God I had to drive to Bovill. I drove his car. I drove him home. (Chuckles)

SS: Well, that's too bad. Potlatch should be paying you beer money when you do that kind of work.

AA: Well, it was part of the job.

LS: Why did you say that you hated to do that? Did you say that?

AA: Yes, I could have said that, but I didn't. Because, I liked the job. I was satisfied.

LS: I meant the going around to the bars.

AA: Well, that was part of it. You know when you're trying to help someone, and I was trying to help that foreman to give him the help he needed. ^{well} If I hadn't done it he wouldn't have got them men. I was helping him, I wasn't helping myself any. But they asked me, they said, "For God's sake see if you can't get somebody." I drove into Spokane time and time again, you know, fill the car up and take 'em back to camp. Drove over to Missoula, Montana and took 'em out to Avery. Had a car full when I come back, with men. Orofino the same way. Go to Orofino, down to Lewiston, went over to Moscow.

SS: Did you know people in these towns? Were they people that you knew?

AA: Hell, yes, yes. You know them lumberjacks they was scattered around all them towns. When they quit, you know, some of 'em go down to Lewiston, some of 'em go to Spokane, some of them went to St. Maries and blow in.

And just about the time they are broke and then they are ready ^{for} work again. (Chuckles) Sure. Hell yes, I knew all of 'em.

SS: They were probably waiting around town for you to come and get 'em.

AA: That too. That too. And they knew they'd have a glass of beer when I come in anyway. Even if they didn't come with me. Oh, maybe a meal, I don't know, just whatever happens. Lots of 'em probably hadn't had any breakfast, and I said, "Okay, come on over, I haven't either. Let's go and eat." But I couldn't turn in any beer money, but I could turn in the meals.

(end of ^{the} C)

AA: It was easier, he worked with the Swedes, ^{and I think} and they had a-
the section boss there, I think he was the one that put ^{on} ^{Call him} dynamite

I had an Italian one time, his name was Melefonte ^{te} Andria So I called
him Andrew. ^{Melefonte - Andrew} Andrews, ^{what} I called him, all the time. He
went back to Italy in World War I. There were a lot of them out my crew
went. They were called back from the Old Country. Hell of a lot. Austrians
and Serbians and Italians, Germans, French.
the people

SS: Most of them never came back, did they ^{from} the Old Country, did they?

AA: No. They was most of 'em killed, I think. 'Course they killed 'em by the millions in the First World War and the Second, World War II.

SS: They were called back to fight?

AA: Yeah. Called 'em back, asked 'em to come back, and they did. They were not citizens here, you know. Been here two, three years, so they went back. I had a bunch there, you know, after the World War they worked on the section, and they raised their wages-- come up to six dollars a day for the section hand ^{there} in the '20's. One old man, you know, he was figuring and figuring and finally, by God, he told me one day, "I got to go." He said, "I'm going home, I'm going back to Austria." He said, "I got some money--" He figured out he had so many dollars, and he got so many, what-

ever they call^{ed} it-- against a dollar. In Sweden it was kronor, but I don't know what they call it-- some country lires-- and in England it was something different again, and in France, you know, they had the francs. When I was in France, you know, we got five francs for a dollar. And in Sweden now it's five crowns for a dollar. Well, after World War I, ^{there} you know, it was up in the forties and he figured out how much money six crowns would make him. He made between a hundred and fifty and two hundred crowns, whatever it was over there-- and he figured out he had enough money so he could buy a son of a gun of a big farm; good sized farm, you know; he had nothing when he left there, and he come back. So he said, "I can't take it no more," he says, "I got to go home." He took what money he had and by God he left^{it}. I know in Sweden there right after the-- in the '20's he sold what he had around Spokane and he stayed in Sweden for three, four years and he cashed in again and it went the other way, and he was there three, four years and he come back^{with} more money than he had when he left. Never worked, just had a good time. Had a good visit at home. And just in the exchange, the money, you see, in the money exchange. When he went over he got so many crowns for the dollar, and when he come back, you know, just after the war there, when he come back again, the price of the dollar went up and it took just a few crowns to buy the dollar back, so he had more money when he come back ~~than he had~~ when he left, in dollars.

SS: There's one thing that I've been wanting to ask you about Potlatch, and that is, from this kind of stuff you say about the money and salaries being low and then getting mad at you about giving them money: Is that where they tried to make their profit, was it by trying to give as little salaries as they could?

AA: Yes. Yes, that was one way, yes.

SS: Was that a big deal with them?

AA: Oh yes, of course it is. You know, if you can get a man to work like for two dollars a day, and you have eight hundred in the woods, that's quite a few dollars, isn't it? Two dollars a day, that'd be sixteen hundred dollars you were paying out each day, just in wages. Now that's one way, yes. And then the lumber, just the same, if you can get-- the price goes up and down like it does now-- now it's up so Goddamn far you know, that nobody knows-- I don't think even the higher up know^s really what it is from one day to the next one. Wages up, and lumber's out of sight.

SS: Did they give you many rules to follow? Were there many things they told you to do or not to do?

AA: Well they give me one there one time. ^{MANAGER} The assistant¹ come up and he says, "Split the nickel, when you let a gyppo job." That's getting down pretty close, when they go down to pennies. (Chuckles) That was quite a jolt, wasn't it? He says, "You gotta split the nickel." "If you can get it for two and a half, don't give 'em that nickel, don't give 'em five when you can get it for two and a half cents." That's pretty tough for the foreman to work against, isn't it?

LS: Did you set the wages for the gyppo workers?

AA: Yes. The camp foreman did, yeah.

SS: That's a place where I've heard guys say that they would really have disagreements. They wouldn't see the same way.

AA: Sure, sure thing, sure thing, certainly you got ^{there} arguments, each one. But most of the time you had to tell 'em, "That's it. Now you can either take it or leave it. It's up to you." You can't stay there and argue all day you got too many places to go. You can't spend all your time with one man. You say, "Either take it or leave it." ^{that's all} That's all you're gonna get anyway. Now it's up to you whether you want to take it or not. If you want to go to work, OK, there it is. You get so much. If you don't want it, say so,

and I'll try somebody else." You can't stay there and argue all day about it. Now like for sawyers, we had a set rate, it was a dollar and twenty cents, ^{more} some years there and they never changed that. So that was either they go falling timber or they don't; that's all there was to it. When they set it from the main office you know, then you can't change it. I did a few times and of course I got on the carpet, tried to do something that I shouldn't. "OK, go to work, I like to see you go to work, take it at so much and I will do so-and-so on the side of it to help you out." And they go to work. And the first thing you know they just ^{By Jesus, here's that} ~~just~~ Old Axel he had to get on the carpet and explain why that was done. So the only thing that I could say, "Well, maybe I tried a little too hard to get the job going." And they took it, they didn't fire me.

SS: I wonder if they knew what you did for 'em? I wonder if they really understood----?

AA: Oh, I don't know. I don't know that. The uppers, you know, they never did, they never had been in that particular place themselves. So I don't think they really understood, or really realized what all the camp foreman has got to go through. I had one remark there one time, you know-- Billings was the manager that time and he rode with me all day in the pickup and when we come ^{over} back after dinner, middle of the afternoon, they were going back to Lewiston, and he said, "Axel," he said, "something I want to ask you," he said. "Don't you ever get tired of looking at those old faces?" I says, "I don't know, Mr. Billings," I said, "I don't know if I can answer that or not, " ^{but} I said, "I'll try," I said, "I'll tell you," I said, "you put your foot in my shoe and come out here at four o'clock in the morning", I said, "that's when we go to work. First crew goes to work, the loading crews go to work at four". "And," I said, "I'll go out with them and see that they're all set. Go to each one of them loading

rigs, I got four of 'em, scattered out. I go to each one of 'em," I said, "then I'll come back again and we have breakfast." They have two breakfasts, one at four in the morning and one at six. So I'm back at camp again for breakfast, and I said, "They ^{come} out after breakfast" And I got out where you and I are standing now, and here's two, three saw gangs come and I said, "They want to know what they were doing on the strip they were on, they want a place to go." And I tell 'em to go to strip so-and-so, they're all fixed, go around and start in, ~~walks~~ on, I called 'em spurs, those roads we had stock roads scattered out, and I said, "You go down there and find that number and start sawing. Skid rails in, start falling 'em across there and go to work," and I said, "I'll be with you sometime today, and if I don't get there today, I'll go tomorrow and we'll talk a little more about it." I said, "Go on and go to work." Here comes another one. I tell them the same thing, and here comes a teamster or two or three. They're done and I tell 'em the same thing, "Go on over and find so-and-so. Skid rails in, now all you got to do is go to work." "And," I said, "I'll see you in the day sometime." So in about fifteen minutes they're all gone, me and the one boss and the blacksmith, we was the only three left. "Now", I said, "if I had to get a new crew all the way-- if I didn't have them old faces, I'd have to go with each one of them-- take each one of them out and the rest of them had to stay and wait till I come back. That'd take all day before they got to work," I said, "this way, the way I feel about it, the way I'm trying it, in fifteen minutes they're all gone," I said, "I'll go and look them up after that and ^{we} talk about it." "Well," he said, "I was ^{just} wondering how you done it," he said, "you always run the biggest crew of any of our foremens, and," he said, "you've got the smallest turnover." (Turnover-quitting, you know) "Well," I said, "that's my way of doing it, and," I said, "I know them, and,"

I said, "I believe in them, and", I said, "I hope, at least that they're believing in me, ^{of} course, just take my word for it, and go to work, you know, don't lose any time, they're back and go to work the next morning again."

"Well," he said, I often wondered how you did it." I said, "That's it. If it's a kick in the butt or a button in the cap," I said, "I don't know, but that's the way it is with me." And sometime, I guess I tried a little too freely, went a little too far trying to hold a crew, ^{that} I admit. 'Course, I tried to hold a crew when I got 'em. If they played fair with me I done every darn thing that I possibly could to hold 'em. I wanted 'em to stay. I didn't want a green crew, and I didn't want to fire anybody. If they ~~could~~ get along with me, I try to get along with them the best I knew how.

SS: You tried to see that their work kept going?

AA: Oh, they work-- lots of time the company ask me, they said, "Why don't you come up and see us sometime?" I said, "I see enough of you." I said, "I'm watching the skidway, and," I said, "as long as the logs are coming in to that landing," ^{well} I said, "I ain't got nothing to talk to you about." I said, "You go right ahead." I said, "But you slow up a little bit, and I'll be up and see you. See what's wrong, so don't worry about me", I said, "I'm worrying about you, and I'm watching you." (Chuckles) I worked a little bit in the woods in Minnesota, and I worked in Sweden, ⁱⁿ the Old Country, with my dad quite a little bit, ⁱⁿ I was in the timber all my life. Timber and the railroad.

LS: When a guy got hurt in the woods, you know, when he was working for the company, would the company pay for-- if he needed some hospital?

AA: Oh yeah, you had-- you paid so much a month for hospital. Hospital ticket, see. The company paid for that, and they held out a dollar from your- two dollars, ^{or} whatever it was a month. They took that out whether you needed it or not. That ~~you~~ paid every month. And anytime you got sick, you know, it was the company to see that you got to the hospital. You betcha. Dropped everything and got them to the hospital, whoever got hurt.

Lots of time, took a train crew off from their work and hauled 'em in to town, ^{and} get 'em in to the hospital, you bet, right away. That was the first thing that you had to do, anybody got sick in camp, get 'em to the hospital. You bet. And then they started a group insurance, everybody had to take out insurance, you know, anybody got killed, ^{well} they paid two thousand dollars, see. Free hospital. Even the wife, you know, they had that group insurance and the wife, you know, she go to the hospital, and you paid ten dollars, I think.

(What you doing there kids? Huh? Somebody in there? Do you hear something? Do you hear somebody? You did? Well, go and take a look.)

LS: Would they get paid salary?

AA: Huh-uh. Well, the monthly men did, but the day worker, no. They got compensation, you see.

LS: Did the gyppo workers, did they get hospitalized, too?

AA: Oh, yes. Anybody, everybody. Everybody had hospital assignment, you got to sign that, that's the first thing before you went to work. You had to sign that agreement, see. Oh, yes, they had hospitalization, you bet you.

SS: Did you have to look at safety a lot in work? Were you keeping your eye out for that? Did the company make that a big deal?

AA: Oh, you betcher life. They didn't have too many, that happened once in a while, but not too many. Yes, that happened every so often, ^{that} someone get hurt, where there are so many, and so many things happen, and like I said, it's new every day--^{you couldn't} see, today you're working in section I and tomorrow you're probably working in section III. Well, you know, you're on new ground and everything is new, and you don't know what's going to happen. You're using a lot of dynamite, you're using lots of machinery; falling timber and men moving, you know in all directions all through the brush and the timber, there, you know. Nobby knows what's going to happen be-

fore the day is over. Like in the mill plant, you know, you can put guards -- see where somebody got hurt, you know, well, ^{5' 11"} they could figure out something to prevent it. But in the woods, you know, it pretty hard to figure out from day-to-day because it's new, and the next day it's something new again. You're on new ground, ^{you're on} _A new everything, and even you walk from one tree to the next one, you're on something different.

LS: Did you have a guy come in that didn't know much about logging, you know, but wanted to work, could you hire him?

AA: Sure.

LS: What would you stick him with?

AA: Anything that was open. Whatever he said-- if he said he was a teamster, "OK, ^{you + your son, we} got none today, but first chance there is, you can go swamping. You can go swamping, you can go ^{pull logs} or go tail down on the skidway or something. ^{first team} _A The first time I need a team, you got it." He'd start at something and stay with us. Oh, you bet you.

SS: How far ahead could you plan, when you say-- you had to check out all the country before you started logging in there. I'm real curious about how you went about sizing up the land, and how you decided what you were going to do.

AA: Walk over it and try to use your best judgement, the best you know how. Set the camp you know so it'll be convenient, and set it as much as you could in the middle of the work, so they won't have too far to walk to work each morning. Oh, yes. You go in there first and try to get centralized first, with the camp. And then work out from there.

LS: Was it the management that would sort of tell you what area they wanted to log next?

AA: Oh, yes, yeah. As we started from Bovill, from Elk River, (Somebody in there walking? SS: Somebody came home. AA: I see a note left there for the boy. I guess maybe that was it. I see his dad left a note there for him.

I guess he was coming in. Well, he didn't come out here anyway)

AA: - at first, we had to change quite a bit. They had a lot of state land, and that had to be logged first. They didn't own the land, they owned the timber, and so many years to cut it, or else it go back to the state. So then they had to switch around quite a little bit, you know, lay track up in the creek you know, cut out a section or forty-- few forties and clean everything that you could from that camp, then move it the hell out of there and probably go back years later and come back and pick up some more right off'n the same ground, but they had to move the rails you know back and forth a few times to get it, or else they'd lose the timber. That went that way for several years to begin with, but after that they got centralized and got started and bought some of the land. They owned the timber but they bought the land. And in the Depression I see they turned back to the state, oh, thousand upon thousands of acres that they had logged; give the land back to the state instead of paying taxes on it. 'Cause as long as they owned the land they had to pay taxes; give it back to them; cut the taxes out. ^{Potlatch} wasn't very strong there in '31. Bill Billings said, he told us one time, he said, "By God"-- he had a cruiser there in Orofino there, Peterson, he told me ~~there was~~ so much timber up on a certain locality, and he said, "do you want me to go up there and cruise that and see if-- and buy it?" "Well," he said, "you can if you want to," ^{he said} "we ain't got any money, I give you a check for it, if you can cash it, it's up to you," he said, "I don't know-- maybe we haven't got money enough to cash it," he said, "but I give you a check, if you want to take it. Go ahead and do it." Said they were that far up, close up, you know, he said, "We didn't have any money." And now they're rolling in billions, not millions, but billions!! So they made money on us, we know that. But now they're making a hell of a lot, oh they're making money hand-over-fist now. I get a report from there every-- they send me one every year. Lot of

changes, lot of personnel. Can't find very many names any more that I knew. ^{They're All new.} And they're-- Jesus, they're big. Down South, Minnesota, Wisconsin, down South and out in Northern California, they got quite a few plants. They're getting to be pretty near as big as Weyerhaeuser I guess.

SS: Well, you helped 'em.

AA: Anyway, I was a cog, cog in the wheel, and she was rolling. Small cog. But they all had to work together. That was the main thing. See, if everybody works in them cogs, everybody works, you know, and that keeps the wheel a-rolling. And that's what the management was sitting on top to see that it works.

SS: Different jobs that you had there-- was there any one that you liked better than others? Was like walking boss-- did you like getting around, or was that too much worse?

AA: (Laughs) Well, ^{I had} like I said here a minute ago, I had five six jobs, you see, all in one. (Chuckles) I had to fit into all of them. See now they have trainmasters, they run all the trains, well, I had six of them. I was the boss of them, and they have roadmasters, he builds the road and looks after that on the railroad, well, I had that job, too, I built all the roads. (Chuckles) And I was assistant to the logging superintendent, I had that job, too. So I don't know, I had five-six jobs there in one, you know- I got a long ways, took a lot of work, lot of time, took lot of effort, wore out a lot of shoes. And my feet can feel it now, they're broken down pretty bad.

SS: How many miles a day did you walk?

AA: Well, I would say at least for probably ten years there, I bet you I covered better than thirty miles a day, every day! You know, you walk up a back draw and come down again, take another one and walk and walk that side of the hill, come down again and start out again in another direction and keep on a-going all day and look at timber, and figure out and see what you had to do with it. After I got hiking from the woods down at home again

I had a lot of time- I could think about it, had it in my head. Next day go up there again and start stake railroads, and get a few gyppos going. And build 'em, so much a station. They cut the ^{rightef} way and blewed the stump, fixed up the grade and we had a steel gang there, all they did was picking up rails and moving from one place to another, pick 'em up one place and go someplace and lay 'em down again. ^{But I was} fun. ^{AS} Fun.

SS: Sounds like it would have been fun, to me. 'Cause I don't think I ever could have done it. I would have been working away at (crews?)

AA: Well, there's only one man can get it, that what I used to tell 'em. Either I was lucky or unlucky, one or the other. I got to be boss, and I said, "Now, by God, you do what I tell you", I says, "only one of us can be it. And I happened to got it, whether it was lucky or unlucky, fortune or misfortune. And, by God, I gonna try and hold it."
be

SS: That must about dinner, 'cause it's getting there.

AA: There's somebody there. - (Come on out!!!)