

AXEL ANDERSON
Second Interview

Interviewed by:
Sam and Laura Schragger

Oral History Project
Latah County Museum Society

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I. Index

AXEL A. ANDERSON

Elk River; Bovill; b. 1886

Potlatch logging camp foreman and walking boss

2 hours

minute

Side A page

- 01 1 The fires of 1910 started with lightning. The last rain was in April. Sent to spot fire on Elk Creek and corralled it. The next day the Tamarack fire flared up and went twenty miles in two hours. They were at the Bolés' cabin on ridge near Elk Creek when the fire passed. It came within a hundred feet of the clearing. It would twist a tree, take the top and carry it hundreds of feet. They stayed and worked on the fire and ate everything Bolés had in the cabin and potato patch. Didn't know the country and walked thirty miles to get to the main camp a few miles away by land.
- 17 5 Logging started going around Elk River in 1911. Built mill and town at the same time. At Elk River from 1909 - Dec., 1930 when the mill shut down. Married a flunky.
- 23 7 Never locked his door when he lived in Elk River. Three friends would stop by early Sunday morning and have a drink and talk. When mill closed there were 1400 in Elk River. Three schoolhouses near Elk River before the town started and the Trumball Post Office in Elk River.

Side B

- 0 9 Arrival in Elk River and catching fish in the creek. Whole townsite covered with big white pine, white fir and red fir.
- 03 10 Worked in the woods as a child in Sweden. Patron had a sawmill, four mill, foundry, sash and door factory, machine shop. Land farmed on a seven year rotation. Families lived in house owned by patron with a piece of ground. Axel worked for patron for five cents a day. Came to America because the wages sounded better here. Taught by one old man in grade school.
- 15 13 His experiences with the Weyerhaeuser's. They'd inspect once a year and they took them out to a camp and fed them. After the 1922 fire on Marble Creek they had 32 logging salvage camps and Charlie Weyerhaeuser stayed around for months. Charlie heard the Weyerhaeuser's bad-rapped in Bovill and he laughed about it.
- 24 16 Heard one story that Weyerhaeuser started with a homestead, bought more land and built a sawmill with backing from German money. Laird the assistant manager and major stockholder and often rode with Axel on the speeder. When people in Potlatch were promoted they moved into a bigger house.

Axel A. Anderson

minute

Side C page

- 00 18 Axel was a foreman at Camp B by the time of the IWW strike in 1917. Every camp and mill in the Inland Empire shut down. Axel had them burn brush around the camp a few days before the strike. Axel convinced the men to take down the IWW stickers they'd plastered everywhere. Twenty boxes of dynamite lay in plain sight. They hurry to get the time slips ready. The eight men left in camp fight fires (not set).
- 15 23 Axel returned to camp at midnight and wasn't shot by the nightwatchman because he started to whistle. Almost shot by the fire patrol, Jackson and Hayes, when the forest is closed. Axel unlocked the chain and stood in the pickup's light by chance and the men didn't shoot. Helmer had called Jackson to say a man who'd held up a poker game might be coming through. A few hours later Jackson was still shaking.
- 23 25 After the war there was clean linen and bedding, eight men to a car, showers and hot water in the camps. In the early days there were graybacks and bedbugs; when you carried blankets you couldn't keep a camp clean. Tried to steam them out and in a month worse than before. Wobblies did a good job.
- Side D
- 00 28 After the war you had to sign up with the 4-L's in order to work.
- 02 29 Axel was between management and the workers. He had to try to hold a crew and was often on the carpet for showing favors. Last Wobbly strike in 1948.
- 07 30 After war most of old crew came back to work with Axel and some buddies from France. Maybe half a dozen from Elk River enlisted. Most of the loggers were foreigners. Axel couldn't get a commission because he wasn't a citizen. 1921 slump.
- 12 32 In 1911 to 1914 built railroads - laid and picked up tracks and built beds. State land had to be logged quickly because Potlatch owned the timber but not the land. Railroad crew almost all immigrants. Sometimes he'd fire the whole crew, call Featherstone in Spokane and get a whole new crew of 60 or 70 men. After a few years they got to know Axel and he them and they stayed. The crew would get the Wobbly idea-"I won't work". Laid $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of track a day by hand. Gypped $\frac{1}{4}$ mile a day with 14 men often. Could make \$10 a day when gypped piling lumber.

Axel A. Anderson

minute

Side D (continued)

27 37

In France logged so the place looked like a park when they were done. Would set work loads for men for the week and they'd be done Thursday and they were given leaves and left camp.

with Laura and Sam Schrage
July 25, 1974

II. Transcript

SAM SCHRAGER: Fires in 1910?

AXEL A. ANDERSON: You mean? What do you mean about it?

SS: All I mean-- I heard it was the weather had a lot to do with the setting off those fires.

AAA: Well, 1910 was a dry year, you know. The last rain we had was in April. We didn't have no rain from April until in September. That was a drier year than it was last year. Then we had here last year, you know. Nobody ever paid much attention to the river then and the water shortage. We didn't use it so much, I guess, there was no ~~Spring~~ not so much like it is now. Nobody ever thought about the river going dry, never heard of it. (chuckles)

LAURA SCHRAGER: Were people pretty worried about the fact that it hadn't rained?

AAA: No, I don't think so. I don't think anybody worried about it at all til that big fire come along. There was fire everywhere, you know. No, I don't think they-- I don't remember anybody ever talked much about rain. They liked the good weather, worked every day. (chuckles)

SS: Do you remember how it got started? The fire, in 1910?

AAA: I think it was lightning, most of it. I think most of them fires. Them days, I don't think people roamed around the brush so much ~~on the~~ ^{cruisers} and they were pretty careful with fires. No, I'm pretty sure that-- 'course, I don't know, I don't remember just what happened, I never got any details of it. The fires that I was on, they were lightning fires. That one that I was on there-- that started on Tamarack Hill, that's between ^{Park} and Southwick. You ever drove ^{Park} through there? On the road from Elmer to ?

SS: That's as far as I've gone, to Park.

AAA: Then across the **Boulder Creek**, and go over to Southwick, go ^{right} straight through.
Oh, I've driven it hundreds of times.

SS: Oh, what happened at that time?

AAA: Well, they just-- that fire started on Sunday, or Saturday, it might have been on Saturday, when the fire started, but we didn't get the news to get out and go to it til Sunday afternoon. Then they took--- all them carpenters, you know, they were building the mill there at Elk River, and they took us out. The Milwaukee train was tied up there, and they took us out to Cameron: If you know where that is. Where the old road used to go to Pike, the old wagon road. And we walked halfway then we stopped over night. They took us out in the evening, and we went about half way to Pike; walked. Then we got supper then. Twenty two of us then, we got sent down to on the Elk Creek there to corral a little ^{little} spot fire, you know, a lightning fire just hit, hit down near the creek bottom, you know, way down in the hole. And we got that, well in the afternoon on Monday is when the other big fire over-- that was bigger on Tamarack Ridge, Tamarack hill. But the wind come up, you know, and she flared up, and they lost control of it. And it went twenty miles there in two hours. It went from Tamarack Ridge clean over to, well, let me see now, way past the Jericho Mine-- you heard of that-- that's on the-- between Elk River and the North Fork of the Clearwater, ^{it} on the ridge up in there on Swamp Creek, and in through there. But ^{When} went twenty miles in two hours. That's where we run across the Boles' cabin. We went to that little spot fire, you know, we passed the cabin and went down but we had no eats with us, or anything, and we corralled that little fire in the forenoon, and we went up there looking for something to eat, so we went up to Boles' cabin. Mrs. Boles, she was there. We had a cook in the crew. His name was John Kane. And we were down in the hole there. After dinner, I don't know what we et, I don't remember what he had, but, I think they knocked

in the head and they had a big potato patch, so there were plenty. And she had bread. So we had a good dinner. And in the afternoon there when the fire passed us, you know. We could hear it, you know; hear it coming, so we run up and got up there again and got Billie Bolts'-- everything that we could find loose, we dug a hole out in the potato patch in the clear, and buried it. Got a cover over that, and covered it with dirt. They didn't come, oh, probably, I would say, close to the clearing. It must have been within a hundred feet of the clearing, that the fire was. We could hear the roar of it when it went by, you know, you couldn't talk. We had to shout. Get right up and shout in a man's ear to make him hear us. It was quite a roar. You see half of the trees, you know, go-- twisted in the fire to make it's own draft, when you get a big fire. That makes it's own draft, you know, and when that hits towards the top, you know, boy, it's lots of **power** in it. It just twists them trees and break 'em off and take the top and go, and that'll carry it for hundreds of feet. And, so, that throws the fire, you know, it throws them sparks and tree tops and limbs, they were all burning. So, we looked afterwards, and there was just one big flame, all of 'em. It was quite a sight. If you'd a had a movie out of that, oh, boy! you would have had something.

LS: You'd gone down and worked the spot fire after lunch? You heard the fire coming?

a trench.

AAA: Well, we went down to kill it out, you see, but first we made a trench. Made a ditch all around it, so it couldn't spread. Down in the hole there it was pretty quiet, you know, there was no wind there, down in the canyon. The wind would hit on the hill, you know. So we went back again to corral it, then our idea was to go back, you know, that night and find the main crew again, and go up to the big fire. That'd take us all afternoon, you know, to go back, and we thought we'd go down and kill it, and be sure it was out, but we never got to do that. And then the rest, they come out from Bovill. The fire marshall and the

fire warden, that was Frank Mallory, he was fire warden then, that year. And this was no help, you know-- The husband, Bill Bole, was working at Bovill, the the family was out on this homestead. Mrs. Bole and Wallace and Naomi. They were just kids. So they come out and got 'em in the evening, and then we camped there, cause we had a fire line right there then to work on. So, we stayed there as long as we had --- I think we et everythingthat Bill Bole had in the cabin, and in the potato patch, too; dug it out. He had-- I think he had plenty stuff there for the winter, so, I don't know, but we stayed there three, four days, twenty two of us. And, that took quite a bit of groceries. But, we cleaned 'em out. (chuckles) And, then the funny part of it was, 'course we were all young in that country, and new. ===== I come in there in the fall of '09, and this was the next summer, in August, I think, when the fire was. And we hadn't- I hadn't been out in the woods there any, but they took us way clear down to the Bill Kizer's place, to go where they had they had established a camp over back of Jericho Mine somewhere, where it was water, where they could take care of a big crew, you know. And we walked down, way down to Elk River in the canyon, then we had to go back up the hill, again. If we'd a known the country, if they'd a told us, we could have walked over where the main crew was in there now, instead of that we walked pretty near all day, to get to them. We must have walked thirty miles, there to get to them, we only was a few miles from 'em. But none of us knew the country. We didn't know where to go, we had to follow what they told us, where to go. When we were going home from that fire-- we were there ten days, I think, somewhere around ten days. We had the end of it near Swamp Creek. Ten days.

SS: That fire never took out the Bole cabin?

AAA: Oh, no, that a long ways from Bole cabin. That's be up there-- twenty some miles, at least. No, we were down towards-- this would be somewhere half way between Bole's cabin and Ahsahka, I think, somewhere in that neighborhood. I think it would be closer to Ahsahka than up to Bole's cabin.

- LS: Were there other fires that came nearby, like that? Near where you were working?
- AAA: No, well, I don't remember. No, I don't think so. Because the other big one was way over there on Wallace, you know. Up on the Cemetery Ridge.
- SS: Can you remember, then, leaving the cabin? The kids and mother?
- AAA: I couldn't tell you the dates. I don't remember them at all.
- SS: Don't care about the dates.
- AAA: They come out there on saddle horses. Put them on saddle horses and took 'em home. I don't know how far they went that night, 'cause we went--- they had a fire station there and a few bunk houses. No, I don't if they had any bunk houses, there, I kind of doubt it. I think -- oh, maybe, I'm talking out of turn-- I don't remember that, too well. Well, they probably went through to Bovill that evening. That would be a long ways, close to forty miles.
- SS: Did you spend a lot of time in 1910 fighting fires, or was it just---?
- AAA: Oh, we were out there about, oh, I imagine, about ten days, I think. I forgot the name, but I think he was a lietenant governor, he was the fire boss. He was from Orofino. But I forget his name. They had quite a camp there established. And they -- if they packed the groceries from Elk River or from Ahsahka, I don't know. I don't remember. But chances are they packed them from Ahsahka, up by Dent. Could have; maybe both ways.
- SS: Did you go back to working on the mill after?
- AAA: Oh, yeah. The next morning, soon as we got in there, and forgot all about the fire.
- LS: When did the operation in Elk River really start out. I mean, when did a lot of people actually start logging out of there.
- AAA: Oh, in '11; 1911 . Of course, the start was in '10, when they started the mill, that's the time the population started to increase. If they get houses, if they get their houses built, you know, they-- the workers, married folks, you know,

they bring in their family. Rent houses, as soon as they get a house built, you know, it was occupied, right away. Then, they get the boardinghouse built, cookhouse started. Then they started to build the town, at the same time they built the mill, they built the town. Levelled up the streets, and put in sewers and water mains, and whatever have you. They had a little light plant first, little small one. I don't know how they done that. I can't remember now, how they run that first little light plant. I guess they must have been steam to run the generator. I think they had a little steam boiler, I don't remember that. But, I didn't pay no attention to then, either, too much.

LS: Did they spend the whole first summer building the mill up?

AAA: Oh, yes, the first summer and the first winter. Oh, that took, the mill started sometime in the summer of '11. You know, that's quite an operation. Three band saws, built a dry kiln with the planing mill. That was pretty big layout, you know. See, after they got started, you know, they handled about forty five, fifty million a year, lumber.

SS: So, how long did you stay at Elk River and work as a roustabout, and all that?

AAA: Well, I was there from 1909 to the mill went down in '30, 1930; was the last of it. Then they shut down there just before Christmas in 1930; they never started it again. So, I was there twenty years, worked on Elk River; only what time I put in the army. '17, '18, and '19, I was out of there. And, I lived there til the first wife--she died in '38. I didn't live there, since '41--- was the last I lived in Elk River.

SS: When did you get married?

AAA: 19-- about six months after I come out of the army. My wife, she was born in Nebraska. She was a sweet little girl. She come up there and flunkied in the camp in '19. She come up, let's see where she come from? She come from Caldwell, Idaho, where she worked. Her mother was cooking in the camp, second cook, and her husband, that's how she happened to come up. She come up there in June

and in September, we were married. I took hold right away.

SS: You spotted her right off the bat, huh?

AAA: Uh-huh. I drove up there two, three weeks ago. Took those damn Mathews with me. They lived there, too, they come in '11.

SS: What do you remember about Elk River from those early years, after the mill was built, the town started, up to the war? What was the town like? Before World War I?

AAA: Well, now, I don't know how to explain or if I could. It was a nice little town. Nice, little, friendly, little town. It was just like a big family, all of them. We didn't have a--- our door was never locked from the time we moved into it in 1920, I guess, up til I left there in '40. Didn't even have a key. Never locked the door. So, that was a good little town. Oh, some of the folks come in there in the night, you know--^W Wagner and Hambly, yeah, Joe Hambly, and and Bert Wagner, and let's see, who else, And Sulky Wagner, them three once in a while, they drop in, you know, come about four o'clock in the morning and have a little bottle and, "Come on in." And, sometimes they had a little bundle of kindling. They were all using wood, then, you know, for the cookstove and all; no electric stove them days. And they come in and they say, "We brought you a bundle of kindling, so you'd have it to start fire with in the morning." And they probably had a little bottle of moonshine; have a snort; take off, "Well, we gotta go up and see somebody else." So, they woke somebody else up. Give 'em a drink; talk a little bit. Outside ^{on} Sunday morning. (chuckles) Now, they were funny peoples. Lots of fun.

The train crews, they lived mostly, them Milwaukee crews, they lived in St. Maries. But, they stay over night. The freight come up one day and go back the next, you see: One each day. They just turned over, one would come up and one go down to Maries. And the one that come up, stay in Elk River over night the one stay in St. Maries, and the next day, ^{AGAIN} they reversedⁿ - There were two crews that way.

But they said Elk River was ahead of---
But they done pretty near all their shopping up in Elk River. Their meat,
and so forth, their groceries, I guess was about the same, but, they said they
got better meat. ^{in Elk River. CARL JUKECK}-----he was a good butcher.

SS: What was his name?

AAA: ^{CARL JUKECK} (guess again!!!) They're both dead. They died in Lewiston a few years back.
He had that butcher shop there a long, long, long, time. I think his daughter
lives in--- By, golly, look her up, too. Clark--- what's his first name? Well,
if you see Mary Fisher, Mary Fisher, By, Golly, you ask about Clark. He
worked in the print shop, ^{there} they had a little newspaper. They called it the Elk
River Sentinal. Durschland, was ~~the big~~ ^{MAN, he was} an old fellow. And Clark was working with
'em---
^but--- I can't, I can't---

SS: His wife? Is it Clark's wife, who is----?

AAA: ^{CARL JUKECK'S} daughter. Mary. I think, I can't remember. But they live
in Lewiston. But this Mrs. Fisher, she know 'em, and she know a heck of a lot
of them people from up around Bovill, there. She knows everybody. She used to
write for the Moscow paper, and I think for the Review, and I think she did write
some for the Lewiston paper, too. Gee, ^{whiz}, she's the girl, you know, that gets
around yet. Gets around pretty good, yet.

SS: Was Elk River a lot like Bovill? Were the two towns very much alike?

AAA: No. Well, in a way it was ~~tumber~~ Elk River was as big at one time, I think
there were fourteen hundred when the mill went down. It was quite a little town.
Next to Orofino, the biggest--- the second biggest town in Clearwater County, at
one time. But after the mill went down, you see, that took them all down. Now,
I imagine there's around four hundred--- but it's still quite a little village.

Now, when I first got there, there was a school house at Neva. There was
another schoolhouse at, oh, out there past Bull Run Creek; Meadow Ridge. And
there was another schoolhouse down near Elk River Falls. There were none at Elk
River when I first got there, but them three out there, you know, they were home-

steaders, and they built the schoolhouses. ^{and got teachers in} Meadow Ridge was quite a little place. Oh, there must have been twenty six ^{to} thirty homesteaders out there, when I first come to Elk River. There was a post office in Elk River, called it Trumball. And that was before Clearwater County was even started. it started in '11. Took it out of Nez Perce and is it Ada County next?

SS: Latah?

AAA: And, Ada, is it?

SS: No, it's down in Boise. Well, Shoshone is down.

AAA: No, Shoshone, that's Wallace. It's down there, and got Grangeville is in, that is in Clearwater, isn't it?

SS: No, no, Grangeville is in Idaho.

AAA: Is it Idaho? Well, it must be Idaho County, then. I think they took it out of two or three counties and made Clearwater County.

Side B AAA: -- The coffee, sugar and salt--- tin pan, and a tin can- the coffee, sugar, salt, ~~And we went down~~ in the meadow, and we built a fire, and before we had the fire---and when we got the fire built, we had plenty fish to fry. So we had a good dinner down there on the meadow. Fish, fried fish.

SS: This was right after you got there the first time?

AAA: Uh-huh. The first fall. Gee, there was nice trout there. And, see where the lumber yard was laid, oh, the fish go, just like that, you know, just meander up thr ough--- and every little puddle was full of fish, full of trout.

SS: What did the country look like then, before it was ever logged?

AAA: All timber; all timber; big timber. The townsite, it was pine trees three feet around the stump, and you could hardly look at the top of them. There was lots of timber on that whole townsite-- probably millions of feet, sawlogs on it. Cut her all out, and burned the ^{roots}, and cleaned it, there wasn't a twig left, 'cause they burned her up.

SS: What kind of pine was it? Was it white pine?

there. And he had a good crop. Oh, he had a lot of horses. He had twelve or fourteen head of horses, and he had that many more milk cows. That was the farming end of it. So, I worked there on the farm, and I worked in the sawmill, and I worked in the flour mill, part time. I never worked in the foundry, nor machine shop. And then, in the winter time, I was out with my dad—~~have~~ a log, get timber.

SS: Did he have more horses for his logging operation, aside from the farm horses?

AAA: No, he used the same ones. Used the same ones. Yep. Used single horses.

Each one of us had a single horse, skidding saw logs with. It was pretty handy.

One horse, you know, you could do a heck of a lot of work with one little horse.

Oh, some of 'em was big. They had, I guess they must have had up towards ^{a dozen, some of 'em,} they were big, good horses. Yes, he had one little team there, that he had for himself.

Riding horses.

SS: How many families lived on his place? Just about?

AAA: Oh, I couldn't tell you. I don't remember but there was quite a few of 'em. And each and every one of us had a house, you know, and they belonged to him. He had a place there and a little piece of land with it, so you had your own garden, and you had, oh, a little field there. You had, so you gather up pretty near feed enough so you had a cow and a pig and a sheep or two. So, every fall there at home, I remember, every fall we had a little yearling to butcher, and a fair size pig, and maybe a sheep. That was our winter meat. Or year's meat, for that lasted a year. There was no butcher shops, them days. And he had a smokehouse, if you want to smoke some of it, you could go over there and smoke it. But, most of them days, you know, why everybody had to make a brine, you know, and salt it down. Make a brine, you know, that's the only way, then hang it up and dry it. that's the only way you could keep meat then, you know, for the summer. We had no refrigerat~~ion~~^{ion}; none whatever, only ice, and you know, take a small family, they couldn't have no ice house to keep that. The owner, the Patron~~e~~^e, as we called him, we took up ice every year, and we had a sawdust pile. Stack that up, you

know, clean that out and when the ice get about two feet or three, you know, ^{thick, then you} cut ice, you know, and pile it up, and then put about six feet of sawdust over ^{wouldn't} it. That sun melt it. That stayed there and he had ice all summer.

Well, that's what they done here, too, I guess, long years ago. I never was in one of those ice houses out along the railroad track. I don't remember-- I ^{don't} know how they would have built them here. But, you know, the trains had a lot of ice, and towns had a lot of ice, and how their icehouses were built, I don't know. I never was inside one.

SS: How did you work for your family? Did your father get paid so much a year for being there?

AAA: So much a day. I worked for twenty--- that's be five cents a day, ten hours. ^{Daylight to dark,}

LS: Five cents a day?

AAA: Yep. Twenty----. A dollar them, days-- when I left home, the dollar went for five ^{CROWNS}, and that would be one fifth of a dollar, see, twenty cents, see that's be one fifth of twenty cents, that'd be five cents. I got twenty ----

SS: Did your father make a lot more than that?

AAA: Well, I guess he got crown or better. ^{Something.} Wages was small, that's how I happened to come over here, you know. They sounded better over here. So, when I got big enough, and got around to it, I left home. Haven't been back. Have no desire to go back there, either, never have. I tried ^{it} when I was in France, but then I had to transfer out of the-- after the war, ^{you} see, in '19, after the war was over. I was still over there. I tried it then, but then I had to go in-- transfer out of the outfit I was in and into the Army of Occupation, go to Germany first, see. Then, I don't know-- then I could get a chance to get a leave and go ^{across} back over across the Baltic and into Sweden, but, I figured I'd been there long enough, and I was tired of it. I'd had enough.

SS: Did you ever get to school there, when you were a kid? Was there a school in -?

AAA: Oh, you bet you. Oh, yes. I got through the grade school. That's all the schooling I ever had. And that was through '99, I guess. '99. 1899 was the last schooling I had. I was ~~thir~~teen. That was the end of it.

SS: Did you go very much in the year? I'm wondering what the schooling was like there?

AAA: Well, they had, in the summertime--- I guess the school started in the fall, just like here, and then, it was out, and had a month or so off, and then go right back to school again, six months or something. Just about half the time. Two terms to each year. Same as ^{we} have here. Practically the same system. But you know, we had only one teacher for four classes. We had quite a few kids. It was a man teacher when I went to school. I think I went to school under the same teacher for all the schooling, I ever had. He was an old man when I got through. ^{He had whiskers,} (chuckles) Oh, he was a nice old man. We all liked him, and I guess we learned-- we learned to read and write, anyway. After I come here, I learned most of it from the kids. I used to play around with the kids, you know, they were pretty good. Kids, are always good. They never get tired-- ^{beat.} (chuckles) I couldn't get it right, tried to get it right, you know, the kids would say it again.

SS: Did you know Bill Deary?

AAA: Yes I-- not personally, no. No, I seen him a lot of times. Of course, he was the manager-- he was the big man. He didn't talk to us, ^{punks} out in the woods. Yes, I seen him a few times. That's all. ^{I seen} Old Man Weyerhaeuser too. Old man Weyerhaeuser, I met him---in Elk River. I was laying track into the planing mill one time when he was up there. He come, and he had white shirt on and he carried a coat under his arm. ^{He was gray whiskered} That ^{was} in 1911. And Charlie Weyerhaeuser. He was pretty good timber man. He was the youngest one of the Weyerhaeusers-- they had ^{three} boys. And, I don't know how many girls, ^{he had} But Charlie--John and ^{Charlie} Charlie-- Charlie was the ^{he was the} man he was the promoter, I'd say. And John was-- he had the finance end of it. And what's the third one's name?

SS: They were all Frederick's sons?

AAA Ya, the Old Man Frederick's sons. But one of the Weyerhaeuser's kids, he slept-- I had the bottom bunk and he had the top bunk, oh, for three months in the camp. One of the Weyerhaeuser boys. Ya, I think that was John's boy. ^{He sent him out.} He stayed in the camp there for about three months.

SS: To learn what it was like?

AAA: Ya, I think that was it. And Charlie--- the last time I saw Charlie, he was gonna send his son, his name was Carl, and stay with me a few months ^{here} at Elk River. But, then, that summer Charlie Weyerhaeuser, he went over to India, I guess, up in that country, in the islands, somewhere, looking for timber. And, he got the fever, and he come back in about-- oh, I never seen him anymore. Never seen the son anymore. Yes, Old Charlie, he was pretty good. He was a nice sort of a--. They used to come here once a year. Once a year, they come, have a little inspection look over and see what we were doing. What we were doing in the woods, and ^{the} mills, and, they were the all the head mens and the stockholders, you know. So, then, sometimes, I'd ^{w'd} fix up a boxcar, or another boxcar, or a flatcar and put seats on it, hook the old train onto it, and go on up the hills, and take 'em out and give 'em a good feed in the camp. And, sometime they had a special car there. Sometimes ^{they} took their car and just hooked onto it and pulled it up and give 'em a big feed in the camp and back again. They had their mettings, you know, at Potlatch or Spokane. But they took a train, and ^{then} there was a whole carload of them, sixty or seventy.

LS: Did they know much about the operations that they were checking out?

AAA: Oh, ya, I tell you, they did. You bet you. The Weyerhaeusers did. They checked. Old Charlie, there, he was the-- when they had that big fire at Clarkia ^{up Barber Creek} I think he stayed around there for, oh, God, I don't know-- for months. Oh, he'd make a little trip out, then he'd

come back in, look, see what-- When they built the incline, ypu know, out of Clarkia-- You heard of it, I suppose, of course, you never seen it. They built that incline, and went up in there, and tried to get-- They had thirty two logging camps in there the next year after the fire, to try to salvage that timber. The fire had killed it, you know, and they'd bet blued, or the pine beetles- the pine bettle get up in there and they lose so much of it, but,-- and sometime if it died, you know, the bark ^{it} fall off and check, split, would be no good. They were trying to salvage all that millions, or billions of feet-- saw logs. You know, that burned a hell of a big territory. That was 1922, when they had that big fire. Well, Old Charlie, there, he'd dress up, and oh, he had German socks on, and rubber boots and an old machinaw, and ~~the~~ pants. Looked like an old lumberjack, you know, walking down there among, you know.-- They were telling one time, he come into Bovill and he stayed there in the shack, you know, there was an old track, there near the warehouse, where he slept. And, Came on over to Billie---- for breakfast, or supper, whichever it was, you know, -- in there and they talk about Weyerhaeuser, you know, and he was sittin' there, and he says, nobody knew him. So, he started talking with 'em, "You working now?" "Oh, yes." He says, "How do you like it?" "Oh, that God damned Weyerhaeuser outfit," he said, "It never was any good, and they won't pay anything." And he said, "That's what I heard, too." (chuckles) He sit there and talk, you know, and he had a heck of a good time of it. He really enjoyed it, you see. And someone asked after he left, and someone said, "You know who you were talkin' to?" "No", he says, "And, I give a Goddamn." They said, "That was Weyerhaeuser: Charlie Weyerhaeuser." "Well," he said, "that's fine," he said, "Now, ^{that son of a gun} he knows what I think of him, anyway." (laughter) Charlie, when he come over, you know, he'd

tell it. He'd talk about it, he'd talked about it to the others, you know. T.P. Jones, he was ~~the~~ was the Superintendent, and I don't know if ~~he~~ was with him or not, but I doubt it though. I don't think he went over for breakfast or ^{for} supper. I think Charlie was alone. But he'd tell 'em about it, you know, what ~~that~~ fellow said. (chuckles) And laugh. You bet, he was a good old scout. Yeah, they were a good outfit to work for. Weyerhaeusers, they were fine, ^{Too} I think they paid a little less than more so. But usually,

You always had a job, if you want to stay with them, there was always a job. And, they're still at it. Now, there's lots of old stories about the Weyerhaeusers; how they got started.

SS: How'd they say they got started?

AAA: Huh-huh-huh. Well, that's hard to tell ^{you} whether it's true or not - All I could tell you is stories.

SS: I'm curious to know, I don't care whether or not it's true, I'd like to know what people thought.

AAA: Well, the way I heard it, that they come over, I think-- I believe he took a homestead. That was one of the stories. Now, whether it's true or not, that's the other side of it. But, they were telling that he either took a homestead, or bought someone out, and bought several of 'em out, and he got quite a little holding. And, they claim, that he went back to Germany and got the money; come back and bought up some more, and built a sawmill. That was the beginning of it, a little sawmill. Then he kept on logging, start logging, they say they didn't pay no attention to lines, I guess, too much, what they tell us. Til they stopped 'em, and and he said, "OK," he was sorry he went over. (chuckles) That was all there was to it, and I guess he paid a little damage, you know to the other homestead. But it had to be in the early days of the Weyerhaeusers', whenever that was. ^{cause he was there} A long time before me.

AAA; ^{By God,}
I don't know as I ever heard of Weyerhaeuser when I was in Minnesota.
I don't think so. Til I come out here to Washington. I think Potlatch was the first one I ever heard of. And, Weyerhaeuser only owned, what they tell me, ^{that} when they start beginning, he had forty nine percent, and the Laird Norton family had the other fifty one percent: Stock. But, you know, they come up there every year, the Weyerhaeusers, and really ^{Laird, he} was the ones that started it. ^{he built it.} was the first one out, to get located. Cruised, more or less. Then he got to be the first Manager. Laird was assistant manager. And, he was a stockholder, too, Laird and Norton family, I think they was. There was another nice man. Mr. Laird. A.W. Laird.

SS: I heard that he put a lot of his own time and effort into building up Potlatch. He really took an interest in the town.

AAA: Oh, they did. I heard, I don't know whether it's true or not, I don't think they ever raised the rental. They never changed that. Charged the same rental from the beginning to the end. Now, you know, it's an open town. They sold the-- I think each one, each family that was working there, each one of 'em bought their own house. Bought the house they were living in. I believe that's open town now. Before that, you know, it's a company town. Didn't sell anything. Nobody could hold any property in town. And they had-- like Deary's house, you know, that was a big one: the manager, and the assistant manager, then on down a little lesser, you know, down to the little fellow. I think the smaller one, they paid about twenty dollars ^{or something,} a month, something like that. And the others would pay a little more. Course, bigger job, you know, then they had to move over. If you got promoted, you moved over to another house. Paid a little more.

SS: Their house was a little bigger, too?

AAA: Oh, yes, oh, yes. You know they had a Nob Hill, there, too, you know, where the higher ones lived. ^{None of} the little fellows were near 'em.

SS: So, you got to know Mr. Laird, pretty well, huh?

AAA: Yes, fairly well. I talked to him ^{A lot} several times. Had a motof on ^{the speeder} and run around over the ^{rails}, lucky enough, I never got off the track. Won't hurt 'em any. (chuckles) But we had quite a few trips on the little speeder, on the rails. Yes, he was a pretty nice old man.

SS: What do you think Potlatch thought of these IWW's and the labor troubles when they started ^{the management?} END REEL 0200A Side I

Reel 0200A- Side II

Side C

AAA: I don't know, they didn't work-- The idea was, you know, to ^{try to hold them} ^{out} as much as they could. The upper- the higher ups, I don't know, they didn't have too much to do with them. They come back onto us, little saps out in the woods. We were the ones that had to put up with it.

LS: Well, what were you doing at that time? What was your job?

AAA: Well, I was kinda foreman. I was in that ~~categories~~ since '10. Since 1910, So I was--- in the heat ^{of it} with them all of the time. I got along pretty fair, never got any lickin'! Oh, we had quite a few disputes with them, talk about it. I ^{tell} them what I thought about it and what I felt about 'em, but it never got to any blows.

SS: Do you remember about when you first started hearing about the IWWs in the woods?

AAA: Well, let's see, that must a been around, right after the mill started ^{there} in Elk River. See, the first strike we had was in (lots of outside noise) musta been '15-- no, the first really strike we had ^{there} was in '17, in the First World War, you know. ^{IN} '17. That's when they had the big strike, the first one. When it broke out, I think every camp and mill ^{here} in the in-land was shut down through that strike. You see, they struck ^{there}--

Every camp from Elk River to St. Maries struck the same day: Every camp. Every one of them. And, let's see, there was Potlatch, and Rutledge, Blackwell--- well, they were the big companies. And Diamond Match, and Ohio Match, and ^{you had} Herrick-- Oh, I ferget all them-- there were several down there in St. Maries and Coeur d' Alenes. But they had that all timed, you know. Every camp, ^{and then} because when the camps shut down, well, the sawmills did, too. They were out of logs then.

LS: You knew they were going to strike ahead of time, didn't you?

AAA: Oh, yes. I knew it. I knew it. I worked with them. I was in the camp, you know. I knew it. They were striking on a Monday. So, Sunday, I went down, oh, our camp was just about four miles out of Elk River. We had a lot of snow that winter, but we worked with horses in twelve feet of snow. Logged all winter. But in the spring there, you know,-- But I knew it before. I was lucky enough -- on Thursday before that I-- we moved the camp in there in the snow in December, I guess, somewhere before Christmas. Then we worked all winter. So I burnt all the slashing, all the brush, all of it. Took the whole crew there one afternoon, when it was nice, you know, sunny and warm in the first part of June, or May. And I burnt all my brush and got it put out, so I didn't have any fires. That was one thing. I knew they were going to strike, and we logged a couple of days after that. Sunday, I went downtown, you know. ^{The upper.} They all knew it, everybody knew it, knew that was comin' there was no secret. And, I was deputized, deputy sheriff. The sheriff was out there in town, and I got a gun and ammunition, for something, I don't know what for, but-- So, I come up to camp again and the sheriff made out a little ^{proclamation, a little} notice, you know, and put up-- I nailed ^{it} up at the camp, you know, that disturbing or anything, they wouldn't stand for any part of that. I got back to

camp, you know; every sticker,-- IWW on every stump, every cars, and wherever they could hang one, there was a sticker. I got up to the barn first, and the teamsters, they were all sitting there, and stickers all 'round 'em. And, I says to 'em, I said, "Why the hell don't you--?" Said, "That don't look very nice. Why don't you take 'em off? Cut 'em off," I said. "This is our home, Jesus, we're working here, we're livin' here. All of us. Me, too." And, I said, "I don't like that junk stick- ing around." Come up to the camp, and they were sitting a bunch here and a bunch there, all around the camp, and sunning themselves on the stumps. So, I asked 'e m the same thing, and I said, "You know, this is our home, your home and my home," and I said, "we don't need that stuff here." I said, "We know what's up," and I said, "I know it, and you know it." And, I said, "We don't need that stuff." I said to em', "Why don't you take it off?" I said, "It look better." And, I had twenty boxes of dynamite laying in plain sight there. Was sent up the day before. And, I was worried. I didn't feel any damn good. But, I went in, and I had a cup of coffee in the kitchen, and I come out again and looked around, and you know, by God, they took all the stickers. They took and they cleaned 'em off. Why, I don't know. But they took 'em. They disappeared, all of 'em, and they was sittin' there talkin'. But they'd took 'em all off, it looked pretty clean. Before breakfast the next morning, you know, by golly, they started in, and I don't think I was out of bed when they come in and they wanted their time. Says, "I'm going down, I'm going down." Well, I said, "As far as ^{I know,} Says, "You all want your time." And, I says, "Why don't you-- breakfast is pretty near ready, will be in a few minutes." I said, when we get out there, I tell 'em not to bother, I said, "Wait, and give give us a chance." And, I said, "Wait til after breakfast, then," I said, "come on in and we'll try to get you fixed up as fast we can, all of you.

We're all going, anyway, so you might as well wait a while and give us a better chance in here. The quicker you get out of here. Don't come and bother us." By golly, you know, ^{they spread that news right away, so} they left us alone til about noon. All we had to do, was just make out a timeslip and they were paid at the main office downtown, you see, where they got their paycheck. And, it won't take 'em long there, you know, they got their timeslip right in front of them, and their was their wages, and it was all filled out, and all they had to do was make the check, like that, and go to the next one. And, so, we went over right after dinner they were all through. I had two brothers working there, and this Oscar Edboom, and two or three more old timers that'd been with me there for years. So, I told them, I said, "Slip out, take here and go on up the creek. We're moved." There was a cabin up there, up Elk Creek a little bit a few miles up the river, and I said, "Slip out and get over there, and take a fish rod with you. But get out of here." They said, "What you going to do!" And, I said, "I'm going to stay til I get fixed up. Then I come up and see you. Now you go on up there fishing a day or two, and I'll come up and have a feed with you. I'll bring some bread and stuff, and bacon, and so forth. To fry fish, you gotta have a little grease." So they did. So, I had-- so, when the strike was over, I had eight men, I think, ^{left} of the old crew. And, by golly, there for a month, through June, through the fest of June, and July. We fought fire, , the others didn't. You know, what the idea was, what they used to tell us, that they tried to burn us out. But my camp was OK. I didn't have any brush to set fire to, it was all out, but the other camps, wasn't quite so fortunate. So, we fought fire. We worked sixteen, eighteen hours every day. Had a train crew, and we run from one place to another, from one fire to another. Each day, leave at three o'clock - , come home after dark, sleep a couple of

of hours and then get out again. 'Til I went and enlisted in the army, I finally went down and enlisted. *Here in Spokane.*

SS: What camp was this?

AAA: I had camp B. The Bovill side, you know ^{there} was Potlatch, and the Elk River side that was Potlatch, too, and they were two separate outfits. So, Bovill had numbers and our camp was letters; ours were A,B,C,and D. And ⁱⁿ Bovill was 1,2,3,and 4. Otherwise the orders would be mixed up.

LS: Where did all those men go when they struck?

AAA: Oh-- *Spokane* most of 'em. Spokane and St. Maries, Coeur d'Alene.

LS: And was it ~~some~~ of a strikers that were setting the fires that you had to fight, or?

AAA: No, not necessarily, now. I don't think so. I don't think they set any ^{fires} that I know of. No, they just sprung up, you know. Sometimes lightning set it. No, we were fortunate up our way. I don't think anybody ever set a fire that I know of. But, that afternoon, there, I picked out, what I thought, was the leaders in the IWWs, and I gave them a half a dozen boxes of matches, matches boxes, that big kind, you know. They used to charge *a nickle* for them, and either Ohio Match or Diamond Match, they made them. So, I gave them five or six boxes of them, you know, and designated so many men, ten to twelve men with them. I said, "You take them and go up that draw and anything you can see that you can set fire to, set fire to it." By God, that afternoon, they burned the whole ---- burned all of ^{everything}. So, we were pretty clean then. We had two more days to kill it off if there was any snags left, an y butts burning or stumps, or something. So, I was clean, didn't have any fires.

Oh, by golly, I forgot to tell you, I had a night watch. Well, usually in the summer, always in the summertime, we had a nightwatch around the camp. You know, watch for fires or anything. ^{that happened} And he was an old

self, used to be. I couldn't tell you his name now, but, anyway, but, so I put him on there, he was nightwatch. And I had an old 30-30 rifle and I give it to him. And, he was out there all by himself, and oh, you didn't know-- somebody come up there a couple of times early--^{few} come up to the camp, but I was watching them then, in the daytime, too, kind of a guard, you know for a few days, so nobody come and do any harm to any of us. So, I walked downtown there one night, you know, and I didn't come back, well, it must have been towards midnight when I come hiking up the railroad track. And, I had forgotten this old nightwatch I had. But, for some reason when I come walking, you know, I start to whistle or sing or something, and all at once, you know, he said, "Is that you, Axel?" And I said, "Yes.", and I said where the hell are you?" "Oh," he said, "I'm here." And he said, "Goddamn you," he said, and he was back of a stump- he says, "I had that rifle lined direct in your gut," he said, "if you hadn't start whistling," he says, "you would have got it." And, so, maybe that ^{saved} me that time. Whether he had shot or not, I don't know. But he said that's what he did. But he said, "I had that lined right on your gut, if you hadn't whistled." But ^{he said,} when you whistled or sing," or whatever I did, that showed that I-- that there was no intention that I wanted to be heard. Well, one more time, I had that-- but then that was in a fire. I know it must have been. What the hell was it at that time? I was up at----- Basin, there at Elk River, and we broke down, one of them engines broke down. One of the side dogs on the little locomotive . We were coming up the hill, you know, and we broke whatever you call it on the-- that holds the side rods-- on the wheel- that broke off and one fell down, and it bent, broke, didn't break, but it bent it, so we couldn't use it, see. I took it off and I had it in the pickup and drove across the hill, and I think there was a fire patrol ^{guard} there, let

nobody come in, it was a very dry season. That fellow's name was Jackson and his partner was Hayes. Two of them, they had a tent up there and I'd forgotten all about it, I never thought about them. But they had this chain across the road, there so nobody could come ^{go} up in the timber, you know, picking berries; they had it blocked off. And they were kinda guarding it, on that main road. And, I saw the light, and I had a brakeman with me, his name was Hilton, and I was driving and I saw the tent, you know, the light was on. And in a little bit, you know, I see, ^{got} a little closer, they turned off the light. Well, I had a headlight on the pickup, you know, well, we got up against the gate, where they had the chain across, and Hilton was a young man, you know, 'cause I was an old buck, you know. He wanted to go out and open the chain, and I said, "No, wait," I said, "and I'll go." I said, "I want to talk to 'em, anyway." So, for some reason, instead of going over to the tent, I walked up, and I walked in front of the pickup, you know, in the light, and I stayed there a little bit-- so, I was ^{standing} right in the light and I couldn't see anybody, somebody hollered, they said, "You Axel?" And, I said, "Yes." And here they come, one had a 30-30, and the other had a double barreled shot gun. One on each side the road. But, if I'd of let Hilton go, they wouldn't know about it, you see, and he was shaking, he was pretty nervous, ^{that old man,} this Jackson. I went in the tent with them and talked with them a while, and he said, ^{there was} somebody had ^a call, and said that in the camp up there they had a poker game on, and somebody came in and held up the table, and did they crawl through the fence-- ^{if that son of a} ^{gun} come over there, you see who they are. I didn't know anything about it, you know, by golly, that was Helmer, ^{Bill} Helmer done that. Called Jackson----- 'cause I borrowed his pickup to go over and he called ahead there, and we were both on ~~the~~ same line, we had the same phone in our camp, you know. He went in there and called and got

Jackson on the phone. That was done for fun. But when I come back, Jackson told me, "By God," he said, "When you come back I was going to---" I had to go to the shop and get this thing straightened, and the steam hammer, you know, ^{heat} up, and then, you know put the brake on it with the hammer, press it down, and that was kind of a *straightage* on that table, you know where the hammer worked. It didn't take too long, and so----- when I come back again. Well, I come back in a couple of hours, you know, that old man was still setting on the bed, the same-- and he was still shaking. *Whatever his intention was* I don't know, what he'd a done if it was a stranger, I don't know.. But he was a little nutty, *Anyway, that's all* I don't know, the old man, I don't know. But he was more scared than I was. I wasn't scared a bit, didn't bother me any. But he was still setting there on the bed and hadn't even laid down, he's still setting on the same place a couple of hours later.

SS: ^{Bill} Helmer was just joking?

AAA: Well, I think so. He done it for a joke, you know. But, I tell you now, I put a scare into Helmer, after that, I said, "You'd better look out," I said, "I wouldn't-- I don't know what the hell," I said, "that man was so Goddamn nervous," I said, "I don't know what he could have done. And, I said, "He sure got it in for you, now, Bill, because you scared him so much." By golly, I don't think Helmer went back for three weeks or more, but he surely went in daylight now the next time he went over.

(chuckles)

LS: How did things go at that strike? How did they work out their differences? Between the management, you know? The Wobbly strike, in 1917?

AAA: I don't know. I don't know, I wasn't here. I was in France, when that was over. No, I don't know, but they won out, but after that when I come back again, we had-- there was no more packing blankets. That was

that was out. The company furnished blankets and clean sheets, linen sheets and pillow slips and the big camp cars, you know, where they used to sleep twelve to sixteen men, they had partitioned off four, there were four to each-- four times four- . There were twoⁱⁿ each-- They cut it down to eight men, I guess, or half, or more, instead of having a^{whole} camp crew in one car, they were down to so many, and there were bunks on both sides. And they had a table in front, and they put up showers in the camp, and hot water, so you could ^{take} three- four showers in each camp, you know, so three or four could take a shower at the same time. So, that was a good blessing, that they--- and the Wobblies won out there for conditions in the camp. ^{I mean} After that, we had it a lot cleaner, and I believe the company --- no, I don't think they furnished towels. I guess they had to have their own soap and towels.

SS: Had the conditions been pretty tough before that? Was there a lot of---?

AAA: Oh, yes, it was in winter-- Yes, it was, at times it was ^{tough}. I know I worked in the camps at Bovill quite a little bit before that time and there was bedbugs and graybacks and fleas, and whatever have you. The camp was full of 'em. ^{And later,} And, the same at Elk River, but that was all new but that didn't take long, you know, for some reason bedbugs got in pretty bad. But, we got rid of 'em. First, we tried to steam the cars and that was no good. That was no good, either. You know, you could set there and put the steam pipe in there and set the locomotive along side of it, and close the doors and then there was-- and you steamed 'em til the pitch was running on the outside of the car, but-- the outside wall ^{but still,} that seemed to force out all the nits-- in the cracks in the lumber, so that in a month or so, they were worse than they was before. So, in later years, when we used the cars, we painted 'em, every year, ^{that took it out} use a lot of turpentine, and you painted all the cracks full, you know, they

couldn't come out. That paint, you know, you fill them cracks full with paint, and let it set, you know. So, there were no bedbugs, any- more. So, I think there through the Wobblies, there during the war days ^{in the first world war} they did a good job then, and before that time, each one of us carried their own blankets, from camp to camp, you know. There was no way any- body could keep ~~the~~ camp clean, 'cause, you know, they go from one camp to another and unload their bundle, and that might have been full of bed- bugs, and they stayed. One way we got a new batch, when they walked from one camp to another one.

SS: Well, I was just wondering about -- you mentioned there was dynamite in that came into the camp there, and you worried about that? Whatever hap- pened with the dynamite?

AAA: No, nothing happened to it. You know, they way they got it, you know, -- there was nothing could fall in ^{any} better for them, than to have a ton of dynamite in front of them, if they had a notion to do any damage to us.

That was a heck of a big help for them, you know, there was nobody ever have any- nothing come out of it. And there was no place to put 'em, they had no place to put 'em, so I left 'em there. ^{They were gone.} I didn't want to go out there in front, I tried to carry it any farther away from the camp you know, that'd be more or less a help-- that showed that I was afraid of it. Well, I was kinda worried about it, but that's all. No, no, they didn't do nothin'. ^{Nothing happened to us,} not any of us.

SS: Did you think they really didn't really intend to do any harm?

AAA: I don't think that crew did, they-- no, no. They didn't either, they didn't do no harm. I don't know what they did in other places. I don't know, but they were settin' fire and soforth, you know. That was supposed to be the aim of it, but then, whether it was or not, I don't know. But that was what the impression they give to us fore-

men, to be on the lookout for-- but we had no trouble. I didn't. And, I don't know, I never heard of ^{ANY} either. Them days the news didn't go as fast around as it does now. From one place to another. All we had was the newspaper and the phone. Had no TVs, no radios. And the phone most of the time was out. (laughter) Wire broken.

SS: Were the guys who were the Wobbly leaders-- what were they like? Were they good workers, most of them? Or were they?

AAA: Yes, lot of them, yes. You bet. Tops. Most of 'em. You bet, they were good. Good men. I don't know what they were trying to build them days. They said the one---

(new cassette tape)

Side D

AAA: When I come back from France they had the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumberman: The Four L's, Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumberman. And most of them called it the Loyal Legion. They said the Loyal Legion of the Loggers and Ladies. They got drunk, you see--(laughter) The Loyal Legion of Loggers and Ladies, that's the way it went. Well, then they worked again and let the--- so the Wobblies wouldn't come in there. The Wobblies wouldn't stay if you told 'em that they belonged to the -- You had to-- in order to get a job in the camp you had to sign up, you know, in this new union: company union. That didn't go over very good. I don't know how they had it. The army come up there, that was more or less from the army, I guess. I guess they were telling me they had an army officer come up and kind of having an inspection now and then through the camps during the war, which I don't know anything about. But when I come back-----

SS: Did those guys sings the songs? The Wobblies. Did they have Wobbly song? I've heard--

AAA: Oh, I suppose they may have, ^{I think so,} yes, I think they did, I don't know. I

don't know.

SS: I'm real curious about how you felt about that, because it seems like on the one hand you were management, and on the other hand you --

AAA: I was between. I was standing between the management and the Wobblies when you were foremen in the camp, you gotta try both ways. You gotta to get along with the crew, and you've got to try and do what the company asks you to do. You can't-- you're standing there between 'em. You're sitting on top of the fence. (chuckles) You can't jump off on this side, you can't j-- you're trying-- you're a mediator-- you're in between. And you just have to try to do the best you can, and the best you know how. Try to do your level-headed best. You've to to-- when you're working, you know you've got to try and hold a crew, and at the same time, you've got to try to do what the company expects you to. Most of the time you have to use your own judgement, you have to, 'cause you can't go over to the letter T-- either one way or the other. Company tell you one thing, and by God, you know, maybe you have your own way of thinking and you still got to work with those people, and try to get something out of it. Now, the foreman in them days was sitting between the Devil and the deep sea. (Laughter)

SS: Did the company get you on the carpet at all for not doing what they wanted you to?

AAA: Oh, you bet. I was on the carpet a lot. I guess more'n anybody else. I think. Yes, you bet I was on the carpet. You know you got to show favors, you can't have any pets, when you're a foreman, that's for one thing. But you know, you know that to hold a crew, you've got to try to be as fair as you can, both ways. You gotta be fair to the company and you gotta try to be fair to the laborer. And lot of time, you know, you're judgement is not exactly what the company says, and you're

on the carpet. Explain why in the hell, was that done. What did you do that for? ^{THAT WAS AGAINST OUR WISH-} And you get out there in the morning and face a front like that moreorless. And sometimes, a lot of times, you feel guilty, and then a lot of times you think, by God, you're doing the right thing. Yes, it was hard times. We had a little ~~strike~~^{me}, I was up at Avery then and they walked out. That's the last Wobbly strike. That was in '48 I believe. We walked out-- oh, there were five, six of us left there, they were all monthly men. ^{me} And a couple of assistants, and I think I had a mechanic left, and I believe there was -- we had one there, kind of a watchman. We worked a little, you know what we could do, I worked a little bit, we all worked a little bit, and read a little bit. ^{played a little bit, too.} That strike was never ended, but finally got working again, and they come drifting back, got'em back again. Most of the old fellows come back, in about a month or two. But I think we put in two-three months there in the summer time, just a few of us. Pick huckleberries do a little fishing, do a little work.

LS: When you came back after the war were there many of the same guys back?

AAA: In that particular camp when I come back I started in on the same camp where I left off before they moved. No, the old crew that I had, they were all gone-- yes, there was one or two left. I think the old barn boss was left.

LS: Had they left the country, entirely?

AAA: No, I got'em back in about three weeks. I had most of my old crew back, ^{again} And then for the first summer, in '20, I had about twenty five or thirty of my old buddies in ^{I had} France ^{work} come and work for me, ^{with me} again. The old buddies I had in France, in that outfit over across the water-- I had quite a few of them. A couple a dozen or more.

But then in '21, it was-- something hit -- the lumber went haywire, so they were ^{shut} down, mill and all. The freight rate went up for one thing, I remember. Nobody-- Potlatch had their orders that deep one day for lumber, next morning they had nothing. Everybody cancelled it. They won't pay that freight ~~rate~~. So they shut down then for three-four months and I lost 'em all. 'Cause then they all scattered again, all over. So I didn't have very many left. They didn't come back then. 'Course they'd go and get jobs any place they could, they had to. Oh, there were quite a few there from Elk River, not too many. Maybe there was about a dozen of us that enlisted. Most of them, you know, them early days, you know, they was not citizens, you know, in the ^{woods} ~~the~~ ^{there, in} timber they were mostly foreigners working. Most of us. I was included. I didn't have my citizen papers, either. I'd a went a long ways in the army if I'd a had 'em. But I didn't. Even with what little schooling I had I'd a made it all right there. But I was not a citizen, so I couldn't get a commission, you see. Couldn't hold it, couldn't get one. 'Til the last few days of October, then I was sworn in as a citizen. They come up to camp and swore me in, in France. And if the war had a lasted another two months I'd been a second lieutenant. But the Armistice was declared the eleventh of the month, two-three weeks after I had my -- was sworn in as a citizen. A Summary Court-- a colonel, two majors and two captains and two first lieutenants, come up in the camp where I was, up near the border of Switzerland, we were ~~up~~ in the corner there, near Alsace-Lorraine, way up in ~~the~~ Ural Mountains. They come up there from ----- or Pershing's headquarters, which ever way it was. But I didn't get it. No more promotions after the eleventh. That was out the next day on the bulletin. But if I'd had my citizen papers, you know, I'd have got promotion in the field.

SS: I want to talk to Axel about-- huh?-- No, we'll talk about the war a little later. Before we talk more about the war more, I'd like to know-- I was thinking maybe you could describe to us some of what the logging operations were like in the teens, when you got out there, out of the mill and started logging in the woods. What methods they were using, and what you remember about some of the different operations.

AAA: Well the first in '11, '12, '13, '14-- I was building railroads. I was building roads,----- all the logs come in on rails, then, you see. ^{No trucks} Logging with horses and steel donkeys. And they had, they had a lot of timber they owned up in there on state and government land. And that had to be logged before a certain date or it'd go back. The company that bought the timber, ^{but they} didn't buy the land, and so long to take the timber off. So I was busier than the dickens, you know, ^{lead a track in or} either set a donkey or set a team camp, or whatever they had, and get them timbers off from a certain section (s) or certain forties or eighties, or whatever ^{acre} it was. And then as soon as they was through there, ^{they pick} that steel out and put it some place else. So I was a laying rails all the time, you know. Building road and pick up whatever there was there and put it someplace else, because there was another part of it that had to be logged. Right away. That lasted for, oh, four or five years before I caught up with it. I didn't get into the logging end 'til in '15. So between the time then time, then, I was working on the rails, with steel on the railroad.

SS: Were you in charge of the crews that were laying the track?

AAA: Yes. And building the roadbed, too. Built the roadbed and then, then put the rail on. I had a train crew. I had a train crew with me

and a camp on rails, you know. We probably worked-- work here to-
night and after supper, pick up the little platform we had between
the bunkhouse and the kitchen cars, you know. Stick them supports
underneath them -- to tighten the car, you know, to carry the
center. There was kind of side bars you could tighten to hold the
flat car level, otherwise it'd sag, you know. But stick all of them
underneath the bunkhouse, steps to come up to them and the platform
and after supper move them ⁱⁿ morning. We were camped ten miles
away from where we had supper, ^{where we had breakfast} the next morning. We had a water
tank with us. We had water, ^{with us} Filled that water tank for the kitchen
and the bunkhouse, you know. No matter where we was, we had water.
We always take a bunch of wood with us, no matter where the company
had the car, so we always had wood and water. ^{And groceries.} So, we might work over
near Neva in the evening and the next morning, you know, when we had
breakfast, we were way up Elk Creek above the sawmill there, up that
creek somewhere, ten, fifteen miles away from the camp. So, I had that there
from '11 to '15 when the boss come over there one day, and said, "I
want you to come in with me," he said, "I want you to go up to Camp
B." ^{take that out,} and that was sittin in town, and he said, "You take that out in
the morning, and ^{run that} that camp logging." "I don't know nothing
about logging." I didn't know anything about it. I said, "What's
the matter with that fellow you had last?" "Oh," he said, "he'll
go back scaling." So, I said, "Is that it?". And he said, "Yes."
And, I said, "If that's it, that's it." "And I guess, I'll go with
you." ^{Try it.} "Never know anything about it, but I'll do my best." So I
went, put out another new camp, set, and got along fine, and kept on
logging from that time on. '15, '16 and up into '17. Two years
that I was in there the war broke out. Before we got into it.

SS: Who was the railroad crew? Were they Italians?

AAA: Oh, everybody. Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Germans, Frenchman, Italians, Turks. They even had an Indian with a big blanket on his head. Montenegroes, Serbians, Austrians. Oh, I can't name all of 'em, they were all mixed. All immigrants. All come from the foreign countries. Oh, a few of 'em, they was a few old timers, a few Irishmen and Scots men. Got along with all of them. Best I could. Sometimes I'd fire the whole outfit and the next day, you know, call up-- they had a employment office here in Spokane, call in, they call in-- And Featherstone, he worked for Potlatch, he was in the employment agency down there, down there on Main--- oh, not main, but on the street there. Between Main and Front or Trent- Call in there and the next day he come up with a whole sixty- seventy of them.

AS: What did you fire your whole crew for?

AAA: Oh, they, just- just as well hire a new crew, they didn't get along any more. Take em off. Couple of days and we had a new crew again. That happened every so often. But then after a few years-- that was in the beginning-- after a few years, you know, by God, I started to know them, and they started to know me pretty well, , so they they shut down there and left, two three years stayed. By God, when there or more, before the war. I had the same crew. If you shut down for snow - too much in the winter, you know, you couldn't build roads, six or eight feet of snow. Shut down for a couple of months or three. By God, in the spring they were all there. They all come without asking back. By God, they come. They hardly ever used the employment office any more, ^{then} They all come back.

SS: Now, in the early days, did you fire them, or did they quit on you?

AAA: No, they quit on me, not all the crew, but some of them quit, you know they quit. Sure. That's natural. Wanna quit, one or two. 'Cause no matter how you try, ^{you know} you can't suit all. The foreman can't suit all. That's impossible. You gotta have somebody think you're a S.O.B., sure. And they said, "I wouldn't work any more for that fellow, and that's it."

SS: But, if you fire fifty-sixty at once, they must have been doing something you didn't like.

AAA: Well, you know they. They get this Wobbly idea, that 'I won't work, see.' Or, slow down, slow down, you see. You know, I had to hold my job too. And if you don't get anything done, I'd be the one to go, and I figured out, by God, I'm gonna . . . to stay. (chuckles) So, I fired 'em all. We had the train crew right with us and I wheeled 'em into town, had the time slips all made up. Most of the time I rode in with them. ^{took a couple of flatcars} Load 'em all up and go into town ~~so-n~~ ^{they could be} paid off. Then I walked back to camp again. Oh, that happened a few times.

SS: How did you lay the steel? The tracks, what did you use to lay 'em with?

AAA: By hand. Carry 'em. Carry the rails out. Carry the tracks out. We had to load it on flat cars, ^{you know.} Then we had rollers on the side of the cars we loaded 'em back there. The steel car was first, . . . , that was right up ahead. Just laid them rails out, and they pick 'em up and carry 'em out. And the tie come out of the side of it. So they get 'em there in the front of the train all the time. And a man with the pickaroon and pulled 'em. Roll it on roller. We didn't have no drive shaft on it, ^{they were} just hand rollers and we hauled 'em with pickaroons. Two take the tie, one on each end, pick it up, when we had enough ties there, they used sixteen ties to the rail, and we

put out one rail or two rails, most of the time we took one rail
and you took eight ties, you know, then a rail. Then ^{spiked} up and
take eight ties and another rail and the train would shove it up you
know. We went out on the end of the steel all the time. And when
they run out of-- had to go in ^{and switch} sometimes, you know. We had to
go a mile or more to get another car or two, steel ^{on} ties. We us-
ually took a steel car and two ties, two car loads of ties, to it.
And you had to go and switch, you know, then you had a new set, then
we spiked up then. Spiked ^{the track} while they gone. We had a little ----
that we put in between 'em and hold it so they wouldn't spread, And
when the train crew come back again, that was all set. Go
ahead, down the track. Oh, we laid a quarter of a mile or more a
day. ^{Pretty good.} I laid a quarter of a mile when there were only fourteen of us.
We ^{me with them} gyppoed then. I told them, by God, we lay that much, and then
two o'clock we go to camp. Everybody took a tie, me, too, and heaved
them rails out, you know, and spiked it up. But then we were gyp-
poing. ^{I done that lot a times. By god,} Then sometimes I got just as much work out of a small bunch
as fifty-sixty men. And I worked with them. But you had to do that,
you know, so ^{to} tell 'em anyway, get that done then we go home, And
everybody after that, no matter what time it was we quit, we went
home, back to camp..

SS: Do you think that they got a lot more done gyppo than ...?

AAA: Oh, yes, yes. By far. They got their price, you know. I started
to gyppo piling lumber when I first come out there. Now for two-
three years - ^{I fooled with that a bit} before I come out
there to Elk River. We got twenty one cents a thousand. And some
days, you know, we piled a hundred thousand feet of lumber. Put up

three piles and they were about thirty thousand to the pile, you know. That's a lot of lumber.

SS: That's twenty bucks a day, too.

AAA: But there were two of us. There were two of us, see. We split that. So we made about, oh, a little better than ten dollars a piece. One day I had four partners. I played out four of them in one day. I was pretty husky them days. I could do it. Two men. Two men, it was hot, too, and it was over at Spirit Lake, Idaho. We had 2x10's- sixteen foot. I was on all day, I think I was on ^{the?} all day, and I "stuck" up a hundred and ten thousand feet, I think, that day. ^{Every time the boss come along,} I had to ^{ask them} get me a new partner. (chuckles) (?)

SS: Do you think that the men liked to gyppo better than working for wage?

AAA: It seems -- they're still doing it. They're still doing it. I know when I was over across, we started it there, but you know, we had to clean up, we had to pile the brush, and cut anything that was that size, had to save that for wood, in France. And the stump couldn't be under eighteen inches. I think it was sixteen inch stumps we had, and get 'em with a crosscut saw, you know. The boys had to go down there on their knees, ^{pretty near,} to saw that off in the bottom. And then everything that-- when we were through on a passel of timber there, it looked like a park. It just as clean. We raked up the needles and everything and burnt it. And, anything that was, like your finger there, saved it for wood. They called it stairs. Piled up a meter, and meter is between nine inches--- square. Thirty nine inches ^{and we piled up there} square and that long. ^{And} used to give them-- and I picked up the brush, I think I give them four-- if they build four of them a day, and burned the brush, burned the leaves and the needles and the little stuff out of it. That was a day, and when -- if they got

we worked six day--four times six, would be twenty four, wouldn't it? For the week. And if they had that done by Thursday night, I used to give them Friday, Saturday and Sunday leave. By golly, I tell you, that saved me so much, and the sawyers, I give 'em six thousand feet lumber scale, and if they got that for the week--whenever they got so much, you know--that'd be four times six, that'd be twenty four thousand for the week, then they got--then I could give them--I had to cut, and I was all by myself and I had to cut and-sign a bunch of fulough tickets of leave to go out, and I gave it to 'em. I put their name on 'em and give it to 'em. And the captain's name was on and I had a stack of 'em that high. That was up to me, and by God, you know, that way I could save so much--our ration was so much per man per day, and if I could get thirty or forty men out, you know, for four days, oh, gee, in the kitchen. So we had plenty eat. That saved so much on the kitchen. They were out on their own, they wasn't even in the camp. And we had that much more. And all I done that way, and, by golly, that worked out good. That hung into my system from here, that kind of gyppo. I tried the same thing at CCC camp, and that was good there, too. The same way

(End of side D)